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A HISTORY

OF THE

EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRE

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A HISTORY

OF THE

EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRE

FROM THE FALL OF IRENE TO THE ACCESSION OF BASIL I.

(A.D. 802–867)

BY

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PREFACE

THE history of Byzantine civilization, in which social elements of the West and the East are so curiously blended and fused into a unique culture, will not be written for many years to come. It cannot be written until each successive epoch has been exhaustively studied and its distinguishing characteristics clearly ascertained. The fallacious assumption, once accepted as a truism, that the Byzantine spirit knew no change or shadow of turning, that the social atmosphere of the Eastern Rome was always immutably the same, has indeed been discredited; but even in recent sketches of this civilization by competent hands we can see unconscious survivals of that belief. The curve of the whole development has still to be accurately traced, and this can only be done by defining each section by means of the evidence which applies to that section alone. No other method will enable us to discriminate the series of gradual changes which transformed the Byzantium of Justinian into that—so different in a thousand ways—of the last Constantine.

This consideration has guided me in writing the present volume, which continues, but on a larger scale, my *History of the Later Roman Empire from Arcadius to Irene*, published more than twenty years ago, and covers a period of two generations, which may be called for the sake of convenience the Amorian epoch. I think there has been a tendency to regard this period, occurring, as it does, between the revival under the Isaurian and the territorial expansion under the

Basilian sovrans, as no more than a passage from the one to the other; and I think there has been a certain failure to comprehend the significance of the Amorian dynasty. The period is not a mere epilogue, and it is much more than a prologue. It has its own distinct, co-ordinate place in the series of development; and I hope that this volume may help to bring into relief the fact that the Amorian age meant a new phase in Byzantine culture.

In recent years various and valuable additions have been made to the material available to the historian. Arabic and Syriac sources important for the Eastern wars have been printed and translated. Some new Greek documents, buried in MSS., have been published. Perhaps the most unexpected accessions to our knowledge concern Bulgaria, and are due to archaeological research. Pliska, the palace of the early princes, has been excavated, and a number of interesting and difficult inscriptions have come to light there and in other parts of the country. This material, published and illustrated by MM. Uspenski and Shkorpil, who conducted the Pliska diggings, has furnished new facts of great importance.

A further advance has been made, since the days when Finlay wrote, by the application of modern methods of criticism to the chronicles on which the history of this period principally depends. The pioneer work of Hirsch (*Byzantinische Studien*), published in 1876, is still an indispensable guide; but since then the obscure questions connected with the chronographies of George and Simeon have been more or less illuminated by the researches of various scholars, especially by de Boor's edition of George and Sreznevski's publication of the Slavonic version of Simeon. But though it is desirable to determine the mutual relations among the Simeon documents, the historian of Theophilus and Michael III. is more concerned to discover the character of the sources

which Simeon used. My own studies have led me to the conclusion that his narrative of those reigns is chiefly based on a lost chronicle which was written before the end of the century and was not unfavourable to the Amorian dynasty.

Much, too, has been done to elucidate perplexing historical questions by the researches of A. A. Vasil'ev (to whose book on the Saracen wars of the Amorians I am greatly indebted), E. W. Brooks, the late J. Pargoire, C. de Boor, and many others.[1] The example of a period not specially favoured may serve to illustrate the general progress of Byzantine studies during the last generation.

When he has submitted his material to the requisite critical analysis, and reconstructed a narrative accordingly, the historian has done all that he can, and his responsibility ends. When he has had before him a number of independent reports of the same events, he may hope to have elicited an approximation to the truth by a process of comparison. But how when he has only one? There are several narratives in this volume which are mainly derived from a single independent source. The usual practice in such cases is, having eliminated any errors and inconsistencies that we may have means of detecting, and having made allowances for bias, to accept the story as substantially true and accurate. The single account is assumed to be veracious when there is no counter-evidence. But is this assumption valid? Take the account of the murder of Michael III. which has come down to us. If each of the several persons who were in various ways concerned in that transaction had written down soon or even immediately afterwards a detailed report of what happened, each

[1] I regret that the paper of Mr. Brooks on the Age of Basil I. (in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, xx.) was not published till this volume was corrected for press. His arguments for postponing the date of Basil's birth till the reign of Theophilus have much weight. But, if we accept them, I think that the tradition retains such value as it possessed for dating the return of the Greek refugees from Bulgaria (cp. below, p. 371).

endeavouring honestly to describe the events accurately, it is virtually certain that there would have been endless divergencies and contradictions between these reports. Is there, then, a serious probability that the one account which happens to have been handed down, whether written by the pen or derived from the lips of a narrator of whose mentality we have no knowledge,—is there a serious probability that this story presents to our minds images at all resembling those which would appear to us if the scenes had been preserved by a cinematographic process? I have followed the usual practice—it is difficult to do otherwise; but I do not pretend to justify it. There are many portions of medieval and of ancient "recorded" history which will always remain more or less *fables convenues*, or for the accuracy of which, at least, no discreet person will be prepared to stand security even when scientific method has done for them all it can do.

It would not be just to the leading men who guided public affairs during this period, such as Theophilus and Bardas, to attempt to draw their portraits. The data are entirely insufficient. Even in the case of Photius, who has left a considerable literary legacy, while we can appreciate, perhaps duly, his historical significance, his personality is only half revealed; his character may be variously conceived; and the only safe course is to record his acts without presuming to know how far they were determined by personal motives.

J. B. BURY.

ROME, *January* 1912.

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CHAPTER I

NICEPHORUS I., STAURACIUS, AND MICHAEL I. (A.D. 802-813)

§ 1. *The Fall of Irene*

THE Isaurian or Syrian dynasty, which had not only discharged efficiently the task of defending the Roman Empire against the Saracens and Bulgarians, but had also infused new life into the administration and institutions, terminated ingloriously two years after the Imperial coronation of Charles the Great at Rome. Ambassadors of Charles were in Constantinople at the time of the revolution which hurled the Empress Irene from the throne. Their business at her court was to treat concerning a proposal of marriage from their master. It appears that the Empress entertained serious thoughts of an alliance which her advisers would hardly have suffered her to contract,[1] and the danger may have precipitated a revolution which could not long be postponed. Few palace revolutions have been more completely justified by the exigencies of the common weal, and if personal ambitions had not sufficed to bring about the fall of Irene, public interest would have dictated the removal of a sovran whose incapacity must soon have led to public disaster.

The career of Irene of Athens had been unusually brilliant. An obscure provincial, she was elevated by a stroke of fortune to be the consort of the heir to the greatest throne in Europe. Her husband died after a short reign, and as their son was a mere child she was left in possession of the supreme power. She was thus enabled to lead the reaction against iconoclasm, and connect her name indissolubly with an Ecumenical

[1] For this negotiation see further below, Chap. X.

Council. By this policy she covered herself with glory in the eyes of orthodox posterity; she received the eulogies of popes; and the monks, who basked in the light of her countenance, extolled her as a saint. We have no records that would enable us to draw a portrait of Irene's mind, but we know that she was the most worldly of women, and that love of power was a fundamental trait of her character. When her son Constantine was old enough to assume the reins of government, she was reluctant to retire into the background, and a struggle for power ensued, which ended ultimately in the victory of the mother. The son, deprived of his eyesight, was rendered incapable of reigning (A.D. 797), and Irene enjoyed for five years undivided sovran power, not as a regent, but in her own right.

Extreme measures of ambition which, if adopted by heretics, they would execrate as crimes, are easily pardoned or overlooked by monks in the case of a monarch who believes rightly. But even in the narrative of the prejudiced monk, who is our informant, we can see that he himself disapproved of the behaviour of the "most pious" Irene, and, what is more important, that the public sympathy was with her son. Her conduct of the government did not secure her the respect which her previous actions had forfeited. She was under the alternating influence of two favourite eunuchs,[1] whose intrigues against each other divided the court. After the death of Stauracius, his rival Aetius enjoyed the supreme control of the Empress and the Empire.[2] He may have been a capable man; but his position was precarious, his power was resented by the other ministers of state, and, in such circumstances, the policy of the Empire could not be efficiently carried on. He united in his own hands the commands of two of the Asiatic Themes, the Opsikian and the Anatolic, and he made his brother Leo stratêgos of both Macedonia and Thrace. By the control of the troops of these provinces he hoped to compass his scheme of raising Leo to the Imperial throne.

We can hardly doubt that the political object of mitigating

[1] ἐπιστήθιοι ὄντες τῆς βασιλείας, Theoph. A.M. 6290.

[2] We may describe his position as that of first minister—an unofficial position expressed by παραδυναστεύων (a word which occurs in Thucydides, ii. 97, of Odrysian nobles who had influence with the king). In the tenth and eleventh centuries the παραδυναστεύων regularly appears in the reigns of weak emperors.

her unpopularity in the capital was the motive of certain measures of relief or favour which the Empress adopted in March A.D. 801. She remitted the "urban tribute," the principal tax paid by the inhabitants of Constantinople,[1] but we are unable to say whether this indulgence was intended to be temporary or permanent. She lightened the custom dues which were collected in the Hellespont and the Bosphorus. We may question the need and suspect the wisdom of either of these measures; but a better case could probably be made out for the abolition of the duty on receipts. This tax, similar to the notorious Chrysargyron which Anastasius I. did away with, was from the conditions of its collection especially liable to abuse, and it was difficult for the fisc to check the honesty of the excise officers who gathered it. We have a lurid picture of the hardships which it entailed.[2] Tradesmen of every order were groaning under extravagant exactions. Sheep-dealers and pig-dealers, butchers, wine-merchants, weavers and shoemakers, fullers, bronzesmiths, goldsmiths, workers in wood, perfumers, architects are enumerated as sufferers. The high-roads and the sea-coasts were infested by fiscal officers demanding dues on the most insignificant articles. When a traveller came to some narrow defile, he would be startled by the sudden appearance of a tax-gatherer, sitting aloft like a thing uncanny.[3] The fisherman who caught three fishes, barely enough to support him, was obliged to surrender one to the necessities of the treasury, or rather of its representative. Those who made their livelihood by catching or shooting birds[4] were in the same predicament. It is needless to say that all the proceeds of these exactions did not flow into the fisc; there was unlimited opportunity for peculation and oppression on the part of the collectors.[5]

We learn that Irene abolished this harsh and impolitic system from a congratulatory letter addressed to her on the

[1] For this tax see below, Chap. VII. § 1. Theoph. A.M. 6293.

[2] See Theodore Stud. *Epp.* i. 6, who says that the *στραγγαλία* of violent and unjust exactions which existed had escaped the notice of Irene's predecessors. By her measure *πόρος ἀδικίας πολυπλάσιος συνεξεκόπη* (p. 932).

[3] Theodore, *ib.* *οὐκέτι αἱ ὁδοὶ τελωνοῦνται ὅσαι κατὰ γῆν ὅσαι κατὰ θάλασσαν, οὐκέτι ἠπειρῶται ἐξαργυρίζονται ἄδικα κατὰ τοὺς στενωποὺς ἐκ τῶν ἐπικαθημένων ὥσπερ ἀγρίου τινὸς δαίμονος.*

[4] The *τοξότης* and the *ἱξευτής*.

[5] Theodore also mentions the removal of a hardship suffered by soldiers' wives, who, when they lost their husbands, were required to pay death duties—*τὴν ὑπὲρ τοῦ θανόντος ἐλεεινὴν καὶ ἀπάνθρωπον ἐξαπαλίτησιν.*

occasion by Theodore, the abbot of Studion. We must remember that the writer was an ardent partisan of the Empress, whom he lauds in hyperbolic phrases, according to the manner of the age, and we may reasonably suspect that he has overdrawn the abuses which she remedied in order to exalt the merit of her reform.[1]

The monks of Studion, driven from their cloister by her son, had been restored with high honour by Irene, and we may believe that they were the most devoted of her supporters. The letter which Theodore addressed to her on this occasion shows that in his eyes her offences against humanity counted as nothing, if set against her services to orthodoxy and canonical law. It is characteristic of medieval Christianity that one who made such high professions of respect for Christian ethics should extol the "virtue" of the woman who had blinded her son, and assert that her virtue has made her government popular and will preserve it unshaken.

Even if Irene's capacity for ruling had equalled her appetite for power, and if the reverence which the monks entertained for her had been universal, her sex was a weak point in her position. Other women had governed—Pulcheria, for instance —in the name of an Emperor; but Irene was the first who had reigned alone, not as a regent, but as sole and supreme autocrat. This was an innovation against which no constitutional objection seems to have been urged or recognized as valid at Constantinople; though in Western Europe it was said that the Roman Empire could not devolve upon a woman, and this principle was alleged as an argument justifying the coronation of Charles the Great. But in the army there was undoubtedly a feeling of dissatisfaction that the sovran was disqualified by her sex from leading her hosts in war; and as the spirit of iconoclasm was still prevalent in the army, especially in the powerful Asiatic Themes, there was no inclination to waive this objection in the case of the restorer of image-worship.[2]

[1] It is remarkable that Theophanes (*loc. cit.*) does not mention directly the existence of the abuses described by Theodore. The reforms for which Theodore chiefly thanks her must be included in the chronicler's σὺν ἄλλοις πολλοῖς.

[2] That her sex was regarded as a disadvantage by public opinion seems to be disclosed undesignedly by an admirer, the deacon Ignatius, who speaks of her as a woman, and then almost apologizes for doing so. *Vit. Nicephr.* 146 τὸ κραταιόφρον ἐκεῖνο καὶ φιλόθεον γύναιον· εἴπερ γυναῖκα θέμις καλεῖν τὴν καὶ ἀνδρῶν τῷ εὐσεβεῖ διενεγκοῦσαν φρονήματι.

The power exercised by the eunuch Aetius was intolerable to many of the magnates who held high offices of state, and they had good reason to argue that in the interests of the Empire, placed as it was between two formidable foes, a stronger government than that of a favourite who wielded authority at the caprice of a woman was imperatively required. The negotiations of the Empress with Charles the Great, and the arrival of ambassadors from him and the Pope, to discuss a marriage between the two monarchs which should restore in Eastern and Western Europe the political unity of the Roman Empire once more, were equally distasteful and alarming to Aetius and to his opponents. The overtures of Charles may well have impressed the patricians of New Rome with the danger of the existing situation and with the urgent need that the Empire should have a strong sovran to maintain its rights and prestige against the pretensions of the Western barbarian who claimed to be a true Augustus. It might also be foreseen that Aetius would now move heaven and earth to secure the elevation of his brother to the throne as speedily as possible.

These circumstances may sufficiently explain the fact that the discontent of the leading officials with Irene's government culminated in October A.D. 802, while the Western ambassadors were still in Constantinople.[1] The leader of the conspiracy was Nicephorus, who held the post of Logothete of the General Treasury, and he was recognized by his accomplices as the man who should succeed to the Imperial crown. His two chief supporters were Nicetas Triphyllios, the Domestic of the scholarian guards, and his brother Leo, who had formerly been stratêgos of Thrace. The co-operation of these men was highly important; for Aetius counted upon their loyalty, as Nicetas had espoused his part against his rival Stauracius.[2] Leo, who held the high financial office of Sakellarios, and the quaestor Theoktistos joined in the plot, and several other patricians.[3]

[1] Theoph. 475_{27}, 478_{23}. The manner in which the presence of the ambassadors (ἀποκρισιάριοι) is noticed in the second passage (ὁρώντων τὰ πράγματα) suggests that Theophanes derived some of his information from their account of the transactions.

[2] For this reason Theophanes calls them τῶν ἐπιόρκων καὶ δολερῶν Τριφυλλίων (476). Michael Syr. iii. 12 assigns a leading rôle to Nicetas.

[3] As Leo Serantapêchos and Gregory, son of Musulakios (formerly Count of the Opsikian Theme). Also some of the chief officers of the other Tagmata (the Excubitors and the Arithmos).

On the night of October 31 the conspirators appeared before the Brazen Gate (Chalkê) of the Palace, and induced the guard to admit them, by a story which certainly bore little appearance of likelihood. They said that Aetius had been attempting to force the Empress to elevate his brother to the rank of Augustus, and that she, in order to obviate his importunities, had dispatched the patricians at this late hour to proclaim Nicephorus as Emperor. The authority of such important men could hardly be resisted by the guardians of the gate, and in obedience to the supposed command of their sovran they joined in proclaiming the usurper. It was not yet midnight. Slaves and others were sent to all quarters of the city to spread the news, and the Palace of Eleutherios, in which the Augusta was then staying, was surrounded by soldiers. This Palace, which she had built herself, was probably situated to the north of the harbour of Eleutherios, somewhere in the vicinity of the Forum which was known as Bous.[1] In the morning she was removed to the Great Palace and detained in custody, while the ceremony of coronation was performed for Nicephorus by the Patriarch Tarasius, in the presence of a large multitude, who beheld the spectacle with various emotions.

The writer from whom we learn these events was a monk, violently hostile to the new Emperor, and devoted to the orthodox Irene, who had testified so brilliantly to the "true faith." We must not forget his bias when we read that all[2] the spectators were imprecating curses on the Patriarch, and on the Emperor and his well-wishers. Some, he says, marvelled how Providence could permit such an event and see the pious Empress deserted by those courtiers who had professed to be most attached to her, like the brothers Triphyllios. Others, unable to believe the evidence of their eyes, thought they were dreaming. Those who took in the situation were contrasting in prophetic fancy the days that were coming with the blessed condition of things which existed under Irene. This description represents the attitude

[1] It is supposed that Ak Serai, "White Palace," the present name of the quarter where the Forum Bous was situated, is derived from Irene's palace. See Mordtmann, *Esquisse*, p. 76. In any case, it must have been situated in the Eleutherios quarter (τὰ Ἐλευθερίου), which stretched northward from the harbour of that name.

[2] Theophanes (476) καὶ πάντες ἐπὶ τοῖς πραττομένοις ἐδυσχέραινον κτλ., and again κοινὴ δὲ πάντας κατεῖχε ζόφωσις καὶ ἀπαράκλητος ἀθυμία.

of the monks and the large number of people who were under their influence. But we may well believe that the populace showed no enthusiasm at the revolution; Nicephorus can hardly have been a popular minister.

The new Emperor determined, as a matter of course, to send the deposed Empress into banishment, but she possessed a secret which it was important for him to discover. The economy of Leo III. and Constantine V. had accumulated a large treasure, which was stored away in some secret hiding-place, known only to the sovran, and not communicated to the Sakellarios, who was head of the treasury. Nicephorus knew of its existence, and on the day after his coronation he had an interview with Irene in the Palace, and by promises and blandishments persuaded her to reveal where the store was hidden. Irene on this occasion made a dignified speech,[1] explaining her fall as a punishment of her sins, and asking to be allowed to live in her own house of Eleutherios. Nicephorus, however, banished her first to Prince's Island in the Propontis, and afterwards to more distant Lesbos, where she died within a year. We cannot accept unhesitatingly the assertion of the Greek chronographer that Nicephorus broke his faith. There is some evidence, adequate at least to make us suspicious, that he kept his promise, and that Irene was not banished until she or her partisans organized a conspiracy against his life.[2]

[1] Theophanes professes to give Irene's speech *verbatim*; and the substance of it may perhaps be genuine. Some patricians were present at the interview, and the chronographer may have derived his information from one of these. Irene's steadfast bearing after her sudden misfortune made an impression.

[2] Michael Syr. 12-13. The passage is literally transcribed by Bar-Hebraeus, 138: "Imperium igitur adeptus est anno 1114 et honorifice habuit Irenem reginam et Aetium. Hi caedem ejus parare voluerunt manu monachorum. Insidiis vero manifestatis Irene in exilium missa est Athenas ubi monache facta est [*leg.* obiit]. Aetio retribuit uti ei facere voluit." The details of Michael's statements concerning Roman history are frequently inaccurate and confused, but it seems probable that there was some real foundation for this explicit notice of a conspiracy in which Irene was concerned after her dethronement. The silence of Theophanes proves nothing. He wished to tell as little as possible to the discredit of the Empress and to blacken the character of the Emperor. The last sentence in the above passage means that Aetius was spared, because he had concealed Nicephorus from the anger of Irene.

§ 2. *Nicephorus I.*

According to Oriental historians,[1] Nicephorus was descended from an Arabian king, Jaballah of Ghassan, who in the reign of Heraclius became a Mohammadan, but soon, dissatisfied with the principle of equality which marked the early period of the Caliphate, fled to Cappadocia and resumed the profession of Christianity along with allegiance to the Empire. Perhaps Jaballah or one of his descendants settled in Pisidia, for Nicephorus was born in Seleucia of that province.[2] His fame has suffered, because he had neither a fair historian to do him justice, nor apologists to countervail the coloured statements of opponents. He is described[3] as an unblushing hypocrite, avaricious, cruel, irreligious, unchaste, a perjured slave, a wicked revolutionary. His every act is painted as a crime or a weakness, or as prompted by a sinister motive. When we omit the adjectives and the comments and set down the facts, we come to a different conclusion. The history of his reign shows him a strong and masterful man, who was fully alive to the difficulties of the task of governing and was prepared to incur unpopularity in discharging his duty as guardian of the state. Like many other competent statesmen, he knew how to play upon the weaknesses of men and to conceal his own designs; he seems indeed to have been expert in dissimulation and the cognate arts of diplomacy.[4] It was said that tears came with convenient readiness, enabling him to feign emotions which he was far from feeling and win a false reputation for having a good heart.[5]

[1] Michael Syr. 15 (Bar-Hebraeus, 139). Tabari says: "the Romans record that this Nikephoros was a descendant of Gafna of Ghassan" (*apud* Brooks, i. 743).

[2] It is strange that Theophanes calls him a swineherd (476), but the point of the contumely may be his provincial birth. Michael Syr. 12 calls him a Cappadocian. His head on coins is—as generally in Byzantine coinage—purely conventional.

[3] By Theophanes. Over against Theophanes, however, we may place the brief eulogy of another contemporary monk, Theosteriktos (who wrote the Life of Nicetas of Medikion *c.* A.D. 824-829), who describes him (*Vit. Nicet.* xxix.) as ὁ εὐσεβέστατος καὶ φιλόπτωχος καὶ φιλομόναχος. He is also praised for piety and orthodoxy in the *Ep. Synod. Orient. ad Theoph.* 365.

[4] Theoph. 477, cp. 483 (ὁ πολυμήχανος).

[5] *Ib.* 480. The same faculty was attributed to Lord Thurlow. When the Regency question came up, on the occasion of George the Third's first seizure with insanity, as the Chancellor was trimming between loyalty to the King, whose recovery was uncertain, and the favour of the Prince of Wales, a seasonable display of emotion in the House of Lords was one of his arts.

Most of the able Roman Emperors who were not born in the purple had been generals before they ascended the throne. Nicephorus, who had been a financial minister, was one of the most notable exceptions. It is probable that he had received a military training, for he led armies into the field. He was thoroughly in earnest about the defence of the Empire against its foes, whether beyond the Taurus or beyond the Haemus; but he had not the qualities of a skilful general, and this deficiency led to the premature end of his reign. Yet his financial experience may have been of more solid value to the state than the military talent which might have achieved some brilliant successes. He was fully determined to be master in his own house. He intended that the Empire, the Church as well as the State, should be completely under his control,[1] and would brook no rival authorities, whether in the court or in the cloister. He severely criticized his predecessors, asserting that they had no idea of the true methods of government.[2] If a sovran, he used to say, wishes to rule efficiently, he must permit no one to be more powerful than himself,[3]—a sound doctrine under the constitution of the Roman Empire. The principles of his ecclesiastical policy, which rendered him execrable in the eyes of many monks, were religious toleration and the supremacy of the State over the Church. Detested by the monks on this account, he has been represented by one of them, who is our principal informant, as a tyrannical oppressor who imposed intolerable burdens of taxation upon his subjects from purely avaricious motives. Some of his financial measures may have been severe, but our ignorance of the economic conditions of the time and our imperfect knowledge of the measures themselves render it difficult for us to criticize them.[4]

In pursuance of his conception of the sovran's duty, to take an active part in the administration himself and keep its various departments under his own control, Nicephorus resolved to exercise more constantly and regularly the supreme judicial functions which belonged to the Emperor. His immediate predecessors had probably seldom attended in person the Imperial Court of Appeal, over which the Prefect

[1] Theoph. 479 *εἰς ἑαυτὸν τὰ πάντα συγκεῖν.*
[2] *Ib.* 489.
[3] *Ib.*
[4] For these measures see below, Chap. VII. § 1.

of the City presided in the Emperor's absence;[1] but hitherto it had been only in the case of appeals, or in those trials of high functionaries which were reserved for his Court, that the sovran intervened in the administration of justice. Nicephorus instituted a new court which sat in the Palace of Magnaura. Here he used to preside himself and judge cases which ordinarily came before the Prefect of the City or the Quaestor. It was his purpose, he alleged, to enable the poor to obtain justice speedily and easily. It is instructive to observe how this innovation was construed and censured by his enemies. It was said that his motive was to insult and oppress the official classes, or that the encouragement of lawsuits was designed to divert the attention of his subjects from Imperial "impieties."[2] The malevolence of these insinuations is manifest. Nicephorus was solicitous to protect his subjects against official oppression, and all Emperors who took an active personal part in the administration of justice were highly respected and praised by the public.

Not long after Nicephorus ascended the throne he was menaced by a serious insurrection.[3] He had appointed an able general, Bardanes Turcus, to an exceptionally extensive command, embracing the Anatolic, the Armeniac, and the three other Asiatic Themes.[4] The appointment was evidently made with the object of prosecuting vigorously the war against the Saracens, in which Bardanes had distinguished himself, and won popularity with the soldiers by his scrupulously fair division of booty, in which he showed himself no respecter of persons.[5] He was, as his name shows, an Armenian by

[1] Cp. Zachariä, *Gr.-röm. Recht*, 357.

[2] Theoph. 479, 489.

[3] The sources are Theoph. 479; Gen. 8 *sqq.*; *Cont. Th.* 6 *sqq.* The narratives in the two latter works are told à propos of the history of Leo the Armenian, and though they are cognate (and must be derived ultimately from the same source), *Cont. Th.* is here independent of Genesios (cp. Hirsch, *Byz. Stud.* 189).

[4] *Cont. Th.* 6 μονοστράτηγον τῶν πέντε θεμάτων τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἀνατολήν. Theoph. and Gen. designate Bardanes as stratêgos of the Anatolic Theme. Probably he had held this post at first, and the Emperor afterwards extended his command. We meet again the commission of this large military sphere to one general in A.D. 819, when we find τὰ πέντε θέματα under one stratêgos. Theod. Stud. *Epp.* ii. 63 (Migne, 1284) τοὺτ τῆς ἐξαρχίας λόγους (ἐπὶ γὰρ τῶν ε' θεμάτων τεθείται), where ἐξαρχία suggests those large administrations which had been introduced in the sixth century (Italy, Africa). The other three Themes were the Opsikian, Thrakesian, and Bukellarian. See below, Chap. VII. § 2.

[5] *Cont. Th.* 8-9.

descent, but we are not told whence he derived the surname of "Turk." The large powers which were entrusted to him stirred his ambitions to seize the crown, and the fiscal rigour of the new Emperor excited sufficient discontent to secure followers for a usurper. The Armeniac troops refused to support him, but the regiments of the other four Themes which were under his command proclaimed him Emperor on Wednesday, July 19, A.D. 803.[1]

This revolt of Bardanes has a dramatic interest beyond the immediate circumstances. It was the first act in a long and curious drama which was worked out in the course of twenty years. We shall see the various stages of its development in due order. The contemporaries of the actors grasped the dramatic aspect, and the interest was heightened by the belief that the events had been prophetically foreshadowed from the beginning.[2] In the staff of Bardanes were three young men who enjoyed his conspicuous favour. Leo was of Armenian origin, like the general himself, but had been reared at a small place called Pidra[3] in the Anatolic Theme. Bardanes had selected him for his fierce look and brave temper to be a "spear-bearer and attendant," or, as we should say, an aide-de-camp. Michael, who was known as Traulos, on account of his lisp, was a native of Amorion. The third, Thomas, probably came of a Slavonic family settled in Pontus near Gaziura.[4] All three were of humble origin, but Bardanes detected that they were marked out by nature for great things and advanced them at the very beginning of their careers. When he determined to raise the standard of rebellion against Nicephorus, he took these three chosen ones into his confidence, and they accompanied him when he rode one day to Philomelion[5] for the purpose of consulting a hermit said to be endowed with the faculty of foreseeing things to come. Leaving his horse to the care of his squires, Bardanes entered

[1] Theoph. and *Cont. Th.*

[2] The story is told by Genesios (p. 8). The account in *Cont. Th.* 7 is taken from Genesios; see Hirsch, 184 *sqq.*

[3] Cf. Ramsay, *Asia Minor*, 246 n.

[4] The town of Gaziura (Ibora) is on the river Iris, south-east of Amasea, on the road to Tokat. It corresponds to the modern Turkhal. Cp. Ramsay, 326 *sqq.* On the birth of Thomas this region, Genesios and *Cont. Th.* agree. But Genesios makes Thomas out to be an Armenian (though in another place he says σκυθίζων τῷ γένει, 32), while in *Cont. Th.* 50 his parents are called Σκλαβογενῶν τῶν πολλάκις ἐγκισσευθέντων κατὰ τὴν Ἀνατολήν. The stories about his early life will find a more fitting place when we come to his rebellion in the reign of Michael II.

[5] In Pisidia, not far east of Antioch.

the prophet's cell, where he received a discouraging oracle. He was bidden to abandon his designs, which would surely lead to the loss of his property and of his eyes. He left the hermit's dwelling moody and despondent, and he was mounting his horse when the holy man, who had followed to the door and espied his three companions, summoned him to return. Eagerly expecting a further communication Bardanes complied, and he heard a strange prophecy: "The first and the second of these men will possess the Empire, but thou shalt not. As for the third, he will be merely proclaimed, but will not prosper and will have a bad end." The disappointed aspirant to the throne rushed from the hut, uttering maledictions against the prophet who refused to flatter his hopes, and jeeringly communicated to Leo, Michael, and Thomas the things which were said to be in store for them. Thus, according to the story, the destinies of the two Emperors Leo V. and Michael II. and of the great tyrant Thomas were shadowed forth at Philomelion long before it could be guessed how such things were to come to pass.[1]

The destiny of their patron Bardanes was to be decided far sooner. The insurgent army advanced along the road to Nicomedia,[2] but it was soon discovered that the Emperor was prepared for the emergency and had forces at his disposition which rendered the cause of the tyrant hopeless. Thomas, the Slavonian, stood by his master; but Leo, the Armenian, and Michael, of Amorion, deserted to Nicephorus, who duly rewarded them. Michael was appointed a Count of the tent,[3]

[1] This prediction *post eventum* was probably manufactured soon after the death of Thomas, in A.D. 824.

[2] Apparently coming from Nicaea (*Cont. Th.* 9).

[3] There is a difficulty, which historians have not noticed, as to the meaning of this appointment. There was, so far as we know, no official entitled *κόμης τῆς κόρτης par excellence*, while in every Theme there was an officer so named. It may be held that in the reign of Nicephorus there was a Count of the Imperial tent, who had duties when the Emperor took part in a campaign, and that the office was abolished soon afterwards. It appears, however, possible that Michael was appointed *κόμης τῆς κόρτης* of the *Anatolic* Theme. In support of this view, I adduce the fact that when Leo, the Armenian, became *stratêgos* of that Theme under Michael I. he is said to have renewed his friendship with Michael, the Amorian. This suggests that Michael was connected with the Anatolic Theme. Moreover, at the time of Leo's elevation to the throne he appears as attached to *his* staff. The Counts of the tent of the various Themes attended on the Emperor's tent in campaigns (*περὶ ταξ.* 489). The Foederati were the foreign guard of the Palace, afterwards known as the Hetaireia; the Count of the Federates was the later Hetaeriarch. See Bury, *Imp. Administrative System*, 107.

Leo to be Count of the Federates, and each of them received the gift of a house in Constantinople.[1] When Bardanes found it impracticable to establish on the Asiatic shore[2] a basis of operations against the capital, of which the inhabitants showed no inclination to welcome him, he concluded that his wisest course would be to sue for grace while there was yet time, and he retired to Malagina.[3] The Emperor readily sent him a written assurance of his personal safety,[4] which was signed by the Patriarch Tarasius and all the patricians; and the promise was confirmed by the pledge of a little gold cross which the Emperor was in the habit of wearing. The tyranny had lasted about seven weeks, when Bardanes secretly left the camp at midnight (September 8) and travelling doubtless by the road which passes Nicaea and skirts the southern shores of Lake Ascanias, escaped to the monastery of Heraclius at Kios, the modern town of Geumlek.[5] There he was tonsured and arrayed in the lowly garment of a monk. The Emperor's bark, which was in waiting at the shore, carried him to the island of Prôtê, where he had built a private monastery, which he was now permitted to select as his retreat. Under the name of Sabbas,[6] he devoted himself to ascetic exercises. But Nicephorus, it would seem, did not yet feel assured that the ex-tyrant was innocuous; for we can hardly doubt the assertion of our sources that it was with the Emperor's knowledge that a band of Lycaonians[7] landed on the island by night and deprived the exiled monk of his eyesight. Nicephorus, however, professed to be sorely distressed at the occurrence; he shed the tears which were

[1] The details are recorded in Gen., more fully in *Cont. Th.* The house of Karianos was assigned to Michael, the palace of Zeno and a house called Dagistheus (*τὸν Δαγισθέα*) to Leo.

[2] He waited at Chrysopolis for eight days (Theoph. 479).

[3] The great cavalry depot, about twenty miles east of Nicaea on the road to Dorylaion. See Ramsay, *Asia Minor*, 204-205.

[4] *Ib. Cont. Th.* (cp. Gen. 10) mentions the gold cross; it was probably an *enkolpion* (worn on the breast). A cross was regularly used as a pledge of imperial faith in such cases. Compare the story of Theophilus and Manuel, below, p. 258, and the assurance given to Ignatius, below, p. 198.

[5] Theoph. *ib.*

[6] *Cont. Th.* 10.

[7] Theoph. 480 *Λυκάονάς τινας ἢ Λυκανθρώπους, ὁμογνώμονας καὶ ὁμόφρονας ἀποστείλας κτλ.* I would not, with some historians, quote this expression of Theophanes as a proof of the character of the Lycaonians. Theophanes is a partisan of Bardanes, and neither he nor any of his contemporaries could resist the temptation of playing on proper names. Besides Lycaonia was infected with the Paulician heresy.

always at his disposal, and did not leave the Imperial bedchamber for seven days. He even threatened to put to death some Lycaonian nobles; and the Senate and the Patriarch could hardly venture to doubt the sincerity of his indignation. As for the rebellious army, it was punished by receiving no pay; several officers and landed owners were banished; the property of the chief insurgent was confiscated. Such was the fate of Bardanes Turcus and his revolt.

In February 808 a plot was formed to dethrone Nicephorus by a large number of discontented senators and ecclesiastical dignitaries. It is significant that the man who was designated by the conspirators to be the new Emperor was on this occasion also an Armenian. The patrician Arsaber held the office of Quaestor; and the chronicler, who regarded with favour any antagonist of Nicephorus, describes him as pious. The plot was detected; Arsaber was punished by stripes, made a monk and banished to Bithynia; the accomplices, not excepting the bishops, were beaten and exiled.[1]

Nicephorus had two children, a daughter and a son. Procopia had married Michael Rangabé,[2] who was created Curopalates; and one of their sons, Nicetas (destined hereafter to occupy the Patriarchal throne), was appointed, as a child, to be the Domestic or commander of the Hikanatoi, a new corps of guards which his grandfather had instituted. Stauracius was doubtless younger than Procopia, and was crowned Augustus in December 803, a year after his father's succession.[3] Theophanes, perhaps malevolently, describes him as "physically and intellectually unfit for the position."

[1] Among the conspirators were the Synkellos, and the sakellarios and chartophylax of St. Sophia (Theoph. 483). Finlay justly remarks that the conspiracies formed against Nicephorus are no evidence of his unpopularity, "for the best Byzantine monarchs were as often disturbed by secret plots as the worst" (ii. p. 99).

[2] From Nicetas, *Vita Ignatii* (Mansi, xvi. 210 *sqq.*), we learn that Michael and Procopia had five children—(1) Gorgo, (2) Theophylactus, (3) Stauracius, (4) Nicetas, (5) Theophano. Nicetas (whose monastic name was Ignatius) was 14 years old in 813, and therefore was born in 799. From this we may infer that Procopia's marriage cannot have taken place much later than 794. Assuming her to have been married early, she might have been born in 778; and assuming that her father married early, he might have been born in 758. Thus Nicephorus must have been 45 at least when he ascended the throne, and was probably older. Stauracius was childless.

[3] During his sole reign the coinage of Nicephorus reverted to the old fashion of exhibiting a cross on the reverse. After the association of his son he adopted the device (introduced by Constantine V.) of representing the head of his colleague. See Wroth, *Imp. Byz. Coins*, I. xl.

His father took pains to choose a suitable wife for him. On December 20, 807, a company of young girls from all parts of the Empire was assembled in the Palace, to select a consort for Stauracius.[1] For a third time in the history of New Rome an Athenian lady was chosen to be the bride of a Roman Augustus. The choice of Nicephorus now fell on Theophano, even as Constantine V. had selected Irene for his son Leo, and nearly four centuries before Pulcheria had discovered Athenais for her brother Theodosius. Theophano had two advantages: she was a kinswoman of the late Empress Irene; and she had already (report said) enjoyed the embraces of a man to whom she was betrothed.[2] The second circumstance gave Nicephorus an opportunity of asserting the principle that the Emperor was not bound by the canonical laws which interdicted such a union.[3]

If a statement of Theophanes is true, which we have no means of disproving and no reason to doubt, the beauty of the maidens who had presented themselves as possible brides for the son, tempted the desires of the father; and two, who were more lovely than the successful Athenian, were consoled for their disappointment by the gallantries of Nicephorus himself on the night of his son's marriage. The monk who records this scandal of the Imperial Palace makes no other comment than "the rascal was ridiculed by all."

The frontiers of the Empire were maintained intact in the reign of Nicephorus, but his campaigns were not crowned by military glory. The death of the Caliph Harun (809 A.D.) delivered him from a persevering foe against whom he had been generally unsuccessful, and to whom he had been forced to make some humiliating concessions; but the Bulgarian war brought deeper disgrace upon Roman arms and was fatal to Nicephorus himself. In an expedition which, accompanied by his son and his son-in-law, he led across the Haemus, he suffered himself to be entrapped, and his life paid the penalty for his want of caution (July 26, A.D. 811).[4]

[1] For these bride shows see below, p. 81.

[2] *μεμνηστευμένην ἀνδρὶ καὶ πολλάκις αὐτῷ συγκοιτασθεῖσαν, χωρίσας αὐτὴν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τῷ ἀθλίῳ Σταυρακίῳ συνέζευξεν* (Theoph. 483).

[3] Cp. below, p. 34.

[4] The Saracen and Bulgarian wars of Nicephorus are described below in Chaps. VIII. and XI.

§ 3. *Stauracius*

The young Emperor Stauracius had been severely wounded in the battle, but he succeeded in escaping to the shelter of Hadrianople. His sister's husband, Michael Rangabé, had come off unhurt; and two other high dignitaries, the magister Theoktistos,[1] and Stephanos the Domestic of the Schools, reached the city of refuge along with the surviving Augustus. But although Stauracius was still living, it was a question whether he could live long. His spine had been seriously injured, and the nobles who stood at his bedside despaired of his life. They could hardly avoid considering the question whether it would be wise at such a crisis to leave the sole Imperial power in the hands of one who had never shown any marked ability and who was now incapacitated by a wound, seemingly at the door of death. On the other hand, it might be said that the unanimity and prompt action which the emergency demanded would be better secured by acknowledging the legitimate Emperor, however feeble he might be. So at least it seemed to the Domestic of the Schools, who lost no time in proclaiming Stauracius *autokrator*.[2] Stauracius himself, notwithstanding his weak condition, appeared in the presence of the troops who had collected at Hadrianople after the disaster, and spoke to them. The soldiers had been disgusted by the unskilfulness of the late Emperor in the art of war, and it is said that the new Emperor sought to please them by indulging in criticisms on his father.

But the magister Theoktistos,[3] although he was present on this occasion, would have preferred another in the place of

[1] Theoktistos is undoubtedly the same person as the quaestor who supported Nicephorus in his conspiracy against Irene; he was rewarded by the high order of magister.

[2] The reign of Stauracius, reckoned from the date of his father's death, July 26, to the day of his resignation, Oct. 2, lasted 2 months and 8 days (*Cont. Th.* 11). Theophanes gives 2 months and 6 days (495), but he reckons perhaps from the date of his proclamation at Hadrianople, which might have been made on July 28. It is worth noticing that Muralt and Hirsch (190) adduce from Theophanes July 25 as the date of the death of Nicephorus. This is due to a wrong reading, corrected in de Boor's edition, 491. In *Cont. Th.* 11 the date is also given as July 26, but the death of Stauracius is wrongly placed on the day of his resignation (Oct. 2). He survived till Jan. 11, 812 (Theoph. 495).

[3] The divergent views of Stephanos and Theoktistos are expressly noted by Theophanes, 492.

Stauracius. And there was one who had a certain eventual claim to the crown, and might be supposed not unequal to its burdens, Michael Rangabé, the Curopalates and husband of the princess Procopia. It would not have been a violent measure if, in view of the precarious condition of her brother, Procopia's husband had been immediately invested with the insignia of empire. Such a course could have been abundantly justified by the necessity of having an Emperor capable of meeting the dangers to be apprehended from the triumphant Bulgarian foe. Theoktistos and others pressed Michael to assume the diadem, and if he had been willing Stauracius would not have reigned a week. But Michael declined at this juncture, and the orthodox historian, who admires and lauds him, attributes his refusal to a regard for his oath of allegiance "to Nicephorus and Stauracius."[1]

The wounded Emperor was removed in a litter from Hadrianople to Byzantium. The description of the consequence of his hurt[2] shows that he must have suffered much physical agony, and the chances of his recovery were diminished by his mental anxieties. He had no children, and the question was, who was to succeed him. On the one hand, his sister Procopia held that the Imperial power rightly devolved upon her husband and her children. On the other hand, there was another lady, perhaps even more ambitious than Procopia, and dearer to Stauracius. The Athenian Theophano might hope to play the part of her kinswoman Irene, and reign as sole mistress of the Roman Empire.[3]

Concerning the intrigues which were spun round the bedside of the young Emperor in the autumn months (August and September) of 811, our contemporary chronicle gives only a slight indication. The influence of Theophano caused her husband to show marked displeasure to the ministers Stephanos and Theoktistos, and to his brother-in-law Michael, and also to regard with aversion his sister Procopia, whom he suspected of conspiring against his life.[4] As his condition

[1] *Ib.*

[2] The wound is characterized as mortal (*καιρίως*) *κατὰ τοῦ σπονδύλου τὸ δεξιὸν μέρος*. The consequence was, *δι' οὔρων αἱμορραγήσας ἀμέτρως κατεξηράνθη μηροὺς καὶ σκέλη*.

[3] *αὐτίκα γὰρ ἡ τάλαινα κατὰ μίμησιν τῆς μακαρίας Εἰρήνης κρατήσειν ἤλπιζε τῆς βασιλείας ἅπαις οὖσα.*

[4] The words of Theophanes are here ambiguous, and the sense depends on the punctuation. De Boor punctuates thus: *ἀποστρεφόμενος πάντη καὶ Προκοπίαν τὴν ἰδίαν ἀδελφήν, ὡς ἐπιβουλεύ-*

grew worse and he saw that his days were numbered, he wavered between two alternative plans for the future of the Empire. One of these was to devolve the succession on his wife Theophano.

The other alternative conceived by Stauracius is so strange that we hardly know what to make of it. The idea comes to us as a surprise in the pages of a ninth-century chronicle. It appears that this Emperor, as he felt death approaching, formed the conception of changing the Imperial constitution into a democracy.[1] It was the wild vision of a morbid brain, but we cannot help wondering how Stauracius would have proceeded in attempting to carry out such a scheme. Abstractly, indeed, so far as the constitutional aspect was concerned, it would have been simple enough. The Imperial constitution might be abolished and a democratic republic established, in theory, by a single measure. All that he had to do was to repeal a forgotten law, which had regulated the authority of the early Caesars, and thereby restore to the Roman people the powers which it had delegated to the Imperator more than seven hundred years before. Of the *Lex de imperio* Stauracius had probably never heard, nor is it likely that he had much knowledge of the early constitutional history of Rome. Perhaps it was from ancient Athens that he derived the political idea which, in the circumstances of his age, was a chimera; and to his wife, thirsty for power, he might have said, "Athens, your own city, has taught the world that democracy is the best and noblest form of government."

The intervention of the Patriarch Nicephorus at this juncture helped to determine and secure the progress of events. He was doubtless relieved at the death of his stark namesake, however much he may have been distressed at the calamity which brought it about; and we are told that, when Stauracius arrived at Constantinople, the Patriarch hastened to give him ghostly advice and exhort him to console those who had been pecuniarily wronged by his father, by making

σασαν αὐτῷ ταῖς Θεοφανοῦς τῆς αὐγούστης ὑποβολαῖς. The meaning of this would be that Theophano suborned Procopia to plot against Stauracius. It is clear that we should punctuate after αὐτῷ and connect ταῖς ὑποβολαῖς with ἀποστρεφόμενος. The insinuations of his wife caused the aversion of Stauracius to his sister.

[1] *Ib.* ἡ δημοκρατίαν ἐγεῖραι Χριστιανοῖς ἐπὶ τοῖς προλαβοῦσι κακοῖς ("to crown their misfortunes").

restitution. But like his sire, according to the partial chronicler, Stauracius was avaricious, and was unwilling to sacrifice more than three talents[1] in this cause, although that sum was but a small fraction of the monies wrongfully appropriated by the late Emperor. The Patriarch failed in his errand at the bedside of the doomed monarch, but he hoped that a new Emperor, of no doubtful voice in matters of orthodoxy, would soon sit upon the throne. And it appeared that it would be necessary to take instant measures for securing the succession to this legitimate and desirable candidate. The strange designs of Stauracius and the ambition of Theophano alarmed Nicephorus, and he determined to prevent all danger of a democracy or a sovran Augusta by anticipating the death of the Emperor and placing Michael on the throne. At the end of September he associated himself, for this purpose, with Stephanos and Theoktistos. The Emperor was already contemplating the cruelty of depriving his brother-in-law of eyesight, and on the first day of October he summoned the Domestic of the Schools to his presence and proposed to blind Michael that very night. It is clear that at this time Stauracius placed his entire trust in Stephanos, the man who had proclaimed him at Hadrianople, and he knew not that this officer had since then veered round to the view of Theoktistos. Stephanos pointed out that it was too late, and took care to encourage his master in a feeling of security. The next day had been fixed by the conspirators for the elevation of the Curopalates, and throughout the night troops were filing into the Hippodrome to shout for the new Emperor.[2] In the early morning the senators arrived; and

[1] It is to be presumed that three talents means three litrai (£129 : 12s.). The mere fact that Stauracius could offer such a sum shows that the Patriarch's demand must have referred to some small and particular cases of injustice suffered by individuals.

[2] Theoph. 493 *ἐν τῷ σκεπαστῷ ἱππο-δρόμῳ*. Labarte (131-2) supposed that this covered hippodrome was inside the Palace (Paspates actually assumed two hippodromes, one roofed, the other unroofed, within the Palace: *τὰ Βυζ. ἀν.* 249 *sqq.*). In *περὶ ταξ.* 507 *ὁ κάτω ἱππαστὸς ἱππ.* and *ὁ ἀσκέπαστος ἱππ.* mentioned together. Bieliaev supposes that they are only different parts of the Great Hippodrome, the northern part being roofed over, the southern uncovered. But this view is untenable, and Bieliaev is also wrong in placing the Kathisma—the building in which the Emperor sat when he witnessed the races—between these two portions. The Kathisma was at the north end of the Hippodrome. Ebersolt (*Le Grand Palais*, 157-8) holds that the northern part was uncovered, the southern covered. This view is equally improbable. I hope to show elsewhere that "the roofed Hippodrome" was contiguous to the great "unroofed" Hippodrome, though not part of the Palace.

the constitutional formalities of election preliminary to the coronation were complied with (Oct. 2, A.D. 811). Michael Rangabé was proclaimed "Emperor of the Romans" by the Senate and the residential troops[1]—that remnant of them which had escaped from the field of blood beyond the Haemus. Meanwhile the Emperor, who had been less lucky on that fatal day, escaping only to die after some months of pain, was sleeping or tossing in the Imperial bedchamber, unconscious of the scene which was being enacted not many yards away. But the message was soon conveyed to his ears, and he hastened to assume the visible signs of abdication by which deposed Emperors were wont to disarm the fears or jealousy of their successors. A monk, named Simeon, and a kinsman of his own, tonsured him and arrayed him in monastic garb, and he prepared to spend the few days of life left to him in a lowlier place and a lowlier station. But before his removal from the Palace his sister Procopia, in company with her Imperial husband and the Patriarch Nicephorus, visited him. They endeavoured to console him and to justify the step which had been taken; they repudiated the charge of a conspiracy, and explained their act as solely necessitated by his hopeless condition. Stauracius, notwithstanding their plausible arguments, felt bitter; he thought that the Patriarch had dealt doubly with him. "You will not find," he said to Nicephorus, "a better friend than me."[2]

Nicephorus took the precaution of requiring from Michael, before he performed the ceremony of coronation, a written assurance of his orthodoxy and an undertaking to do no violence to ecclesiastics, secular or regular.[3] The usual procession was formed; the Imperial train proceeded from the Palace to the Cathedral; and the act of coronation was duly accomplished in the presence of the people.[4] The rejoicings, we are told, were universal, and we may believe that there was a widespread feeling of relief, that an Emperor sound in

[1] The Tagmata (Theoph. *ib.*).

[2] Theoph. 493 *φίλον αὐτοῦ κρείττονα οὐχ εὑρήσεις*. Anastasius seems right in rendering *αὐτοῦ* by *me*. Perhaps *ἐμοῦ* should be inserted, or perhaps we should read *εὑρήσειν*. I suspect, however, that the last pages of his chronography were insufficiently revised by the author.

[3] The importance of this undertaking, in its constitutional aspect, will be considered below in Section 5.

[4] The proclamation in the Hippodrome was at the first hour (6 o'clock), the coronation at the fourth. Theoph. *ib.*

limb was again at the head of the state. The bounty of Michael gave cause, too, for satisfaction on the first day of his reign. He bestowed on the Patriarch, who had done so much in helping him to the throne, the sum of 50 lbs. of gold (£2160), and to the clergy of St. Sophia he gave half that amount.[1]

The unfortunate Stauracius[2] lived on for more than three months, but towards the end of that time the corruption of his wound became so horrible that no one could approach him for the stench. On the 11th of January 812 he died, and was buried in the new monastery of Braka. This was a handsome building, given to Theophano by the generosity of Procopia when she resolved, like her husband, to retire to a cloister.[3]

§ 4. *Reign and Policy of Michael I.*

It is worth while to note how old traditions or prejudices, surviving from the past history of the Roman Empire, gradually disappeared. We might illustrate the change that had come over the "Romans" since the age of Justinian, by the fact that in the second year of the ninth century a man of Semitic stock ascends the throne, and is only prevented by chance from founding a dynasty, descended from the Ghassanids. He bears a name, too, which, though Greek and common at the time, was borne by no Emperor before him. His son's name is Greek too, but unique on the Imperial list. A hundred years before men who had names which sounded strange in collocation with *Basileus* and *Augustus* (such as Artemius and Apsimar) adopted new names which had an

[1] At the end of the ninth century the custom was for the Emperor, on his accession, to give 100 lbs. of gold to the Great Church (St. Sophia) (Philotheos, ed. Bury, 135). This would include the present to the Patriarch.

[2] Michael Syr. (70) has recorded a serious charge against Procopia, which he found in the chronicle of Dionysios of Tell-Mahre. An intelligent and well-informed inhabitant of Constantinople told Dionysios that Procopia administered a deadly poison to her brother.

οἷς καὶ ἐπίσημον οἶκον εἰς μοναστήριον τὰ Ἑβραϊκὰ λεγόμενον αὐτῇ παρέσχεν [Μιχαὴλ] ἔνθα Σταυράκιος ἐτάφη (*ib.* 494). The locality is not known. It is called τὰ Βρακᾶ in George Mon. 776. Is the name really derived from *Stauracius*: Σταυρακίου being taken for στὰ Βρακίου? Pargoire (*Les Mon. de Saint Ign.* 72) says: "τὰ Σταυρακίου dont le peuple fit plus tard τὰ βρακᾶ et les demi-savants τὰ Ἑβραϊκά." This is a seductive idea; my difficulty is that the form Ἑβραϊκά occurs in Theophanes, who wrote only a couple of years later, and must have known the true name, if that name had been only then given to the monastery.

Imperial ring (such as Anastasius and Tiberius). It was instinctively felt then that a Bardanes was no fit person to occupy the throne of the Caesars, and therefore he became Philippicus. But this instinct was becoming weak in a city where strange names, strange faces, and strange tongues were growing every year more familiar. The time had come when men of Armenian, Slavonic, or even Semitic origin might aspire to the highest positions in Church and State, to the Patriarchate and the Empire. The time had come at last when it was no longer deemed strange that a successor of Constantine should be a Michael.

The first Michael belonged to the Rangabé family, of which we now hear for the first time.[1] He was in the prime of manhood when he came to the throne; his hair was black and curling,[2] he wore a black beard, and his face was round. He seems to have been a mild and good-humoured man, but totally unfit for the position to which chance had raised him. As a general he was incapable; as an administrator he was injudicious; as a financier he was extravagant. Throughout his short reign he was subject to the will of a woman and the guidance of a priest. It may have been the ambition of Procopia that led him to undertake the duties of a sovran; and she shared largely in the administration.[3] Ten days after her lord's coronation, Procopia—daughter and sister, now wife, of an Emperor—was crowned Augusta in the throne-room of Augusteus, in the Palace of Daphne, and she courted the favour of the Senators by bestowing on them many gifts. She distributed, moreover, five pounds of gold

[1] *Cont. Th.* 12 *ἐκ γενεᾶς δὲ καταγομένου τοῦ* Ῥαγγαβέ. Before his elevation he dwelled near the Mangana. His father's name was Theophylactus: Nicetas, *Vit. Ignatii* (Mansi, xvi. 210). Family surnames begin to become frequent in the ninth century. They are constantly indicated by the idiom *ὁ κατά* (as well as *ἐκ*). For instance, a man of the family of the Melissenoi might be called M. *ὁ Μελισσηνός* or M. *ὁ κατὰ τὸν Μελισσηνόν* or M. *ὁ κατὰ τοὺς Μελισσηνούς* or M. *ὁ ἐκ τῶν Μελ.* (*κατάγων τὸ γένος*). For Byzantine surnames see H. Moritz, *Die Zunamen bei den byz. Historikern und Chronisten*, Teil i. 1896-97, Teil ii. 1897-98 (Landshut).

[2] Scr. Incert. 341 *ἐπίσγουρον* (= *σγυρόν*, curly), the right reading, as de Boor has shown (*B.Z.* ii. 297). It may be noted here that the Byzantines regularly wore beards. There was a strong prejudice against beardless men (*σπανοί*), who were popularly regarded as dangerous; cp. the modern Greek proverb, *ἀπὸ σπανὸν ἄνθρωπον μακρυὰ τὰ ρουχά σου*: see for this, and for further illustration, Krumbacher, *G.B.L.* 809. Michael, of course, appears bearded on his coins, but the face is only conventional.

[3] Scr. Incert. 335 *αὕτη γὰρ ἦν διατιθοῦσα πάντα τὰ τῆς βασιλείας.*

(£216) among the widows of the soldiers who had fallen with her father in Bulgaria. Nor did she forget her sister-in-law, who, if things had fallen out otherwise, might have been her sovran lady. Theophano had decided to end her life as a nun. Her triumphant rival enriched her, and, as has been already mentioned, gave her a noble house, which was converted into a cloister. Nor were the poor kinsfolk of Theophano neglected by the new Augusta. It was said at least that in the days of Nicephorus they had lived in pitiable penury, as that parsimonious Emperor would not allow his daughter-in-law to expend money in assisting them; but this may be only an ill-natured invention.

The following Christmas day was the occasion of another coronation and distribution of presents.[1] Theophylactus, the eldest son of Michael, was crowned in the ambo of the Great Church. On this auspicious day the Emperor placed in the Sanctuary of St. Sophia a rich offering of golden vessels, inlaid with gems, and antique curtains for the ciborium, woven of gold and purple and embroidered with pictures of sacred subjects.[2] It was a day of great rejoicing in the city, and people surely thought that the new sovran was beginning his reign well; he had made up his mind to ask for his son the hand of a daughter of the great Charles, the rival Emperor.[3]

The note of Michael's policy was reaction, both against the ecclesiastical policy of Nicephorus, as we shall see, and also against the parsimony and careful book-keeping which had rendered that monarch highly unpopular.[4] Procopia and Michael hastened to diminish the sums which Nicephorus had

[1] To the Patriarch were given 25 lbs. of gold, to the clergy, 100 (Theoph. 494). According to Philotheos (136) the second or subordinate Emperor gave only 50 lbs. altogether to the Church. See above, p. 21, n. 1. Theophanes says that Michael crowned his son ὑπὸ Νικηφόρου. Nicephorus assisted, but Michael, if present as he presumably was, placed the crown himself on the head of Theophylactus. Cp. Bury, *Const. of Later R. Empire*, 16 and 46, n. 11.

[2] These curtains were called τετράβηλα, and are often mentioned in the *Liber pontificalis* (cp. i. p. 375). Paul the Silentiary mentions them thus (*Descr. S. Soph.* v. 767):

τέτρασι δ' ἀργυρέῃσιν ἐπὶ πλευρῇσι καλύπτρας
ὀρθοτενεῖς πετάσαντες.

See Ducange, *Const. Christ.* B. iii. lxv. p. 37.

[3] συναλλαγῆς εἰς Θεοφύλακτον (*ib.*). Theophylactus was only a boy; he is beardless on the coins on the reverse of which his bust appears (Wroth, ii. 405 *sqq.*).

[4] In temper Michael resembled the parsimonious Anastasius I., who (like Nerva) was called *mitissimus*; Michael is γαληνότατος (Theoph.) Cp. Scr. Incert. 335 (πρᾶος) and 341.

hoarded, and much money was scattered abroad in alms.[1] Churches and monasteries were enriched and endowed; hermits who spent useless lives in desert places were sought out to receive of the august bounty; religious hostelries and houses for the poor were not forgotten. The orphan and the widow had their wants supplied; and the fortunes of decayed gentle people were partially resuscitated. All this liberality made the new lord and lady highly popular; complimentary songs were composed by the demes and sung in public in their honour.[2] The stinginess and avarice of Nicephorus were now blotted out, and amid the general jubilation few apprehended that the unpopular father-in-law was a far abler ruler than his bountiful successor.

It was naturally part of the reactionary policy to recall those whom Nicephorus had banished and reinstate those whom he had degraded.[3] The most eminent of those who returned was Leo the Armenian, son of Bardas. We have met this man before. We saw how he took part in the revolt of Bardanes against Nicephorus, and then, along with his companion in arms, Michael the Amorian, left his rebellious commander in the lurch. We saw how Nicephorus rewarded him by making him Count of the Federates.[4] He subsequently received a command in the Anatolic Theme, but for gross carelessness and neglect of his duties[5] he was degraded from his post, whipped, and banished in disgrace. He was recalled by Michael, who appointed him General of the Anatolic Theme, with the dignity of Patrician—little guessing that he was arming one who would dethrone himself and deal ruthlessly with his children. Afterwards when the General of the Anatolics had become Emperor of the Romans,

[1] See Theoph. 494, and Scr. Incert. 335, 336.

[2] Scr. Incert. *ib.*

[3] *Ib.*

[4] See above, p. 13. According to Genesios (10) he was *ὑποστράτηγος τῶν Ἀνατολικῶν* subsequently to his tenure of the captaincy of the Federates, and then Michael advanced him to the dignity of Patrician. It is probable that Leo was a turmarch of the Anatolics when he was disgraced; but observe that Genesios (1) knows nothing of his disgrace, which we learn from the Fragment of the Scriptor Incertus and *Cont. Th.*, and (2) omits to mention in this passage that Michael made him *στρατηγὸς τῶν Ἀνατολικῶν*.

[5] He gave himself up to luxury and idleness *ἐν τοῖς Εὐχαϊτῶν* (*Cont. Th.* 11). Euchaita, in the Armeniac Theme, lay west of Amasea, on the road to Gangra; see the discussion in Anderson, *Studia Pontica*, i. 7 *sqq.* He equates it with the modern Elwan Chelebi.

it was said that signs and predictions of the event were not wanting. Among the tales that were told was one of a little slave-girl of the Emperor, who was subject to visitations of "the spirit of Pytho."[1] On one occasion when she was thus seized she went down from the Palace to the seashore below, near the harbour of Bucoleon,[2] and cried with a loud voice, addressing the Emperor, "Come down, come down, resign what is not thine!" These words she repeated again and again. The attention of those in the Palace above was attracted; the Emperor heard the fatal cry, and attempted to discover what it meant. He bade his intimate friend Theodotos Kassiteras[3] to see that when the damsel was next seized she should be confined within doors, and to investigate the meaning of her words. To whom did the Palace belong, if not to its present lord? Theodotos was too curious himself to fail to carry out his master's order, and the girl made an interesting communication. She told him the name and mark of the true Lord of the Palace, and urged him to visit the acropolis at a certain time, where he would meet two men, one of them riding on a mule. This man, she said, was destined to sit on the Imperial throne. The cunning spatharo-candidate took good care not to reveal his discovery to his master. Questioned by Michael, he pretended that he could make nothing of the ravings of the possessed girl. But he did not fail to watch in the prescribed place at the prescribed time for the man who was to come riding on a mule. It fell out as the damsel said; Leo the Armenian appeared on

[1] This story is told by Genesios (10, 11), but I doubt whether *he* had the tale from popular hearsay, which he mentions as one of his sources (3) *ἐκ τε φήμης δῆθεν δραμούσης ἠκουτισμένος*. See Hirsch, 124. The story of the possessed woman who brought forth a monster, in the *Epist. Synod. Orient. ad Theoph.* 367, is regarded by Hirsch as a variant; but it is quite different; this Pythoness was consulted by Leo.

[2] Millingen (*Walls*, 269 *sqq.*) shows that Hammer was right in identifying the port of Bucoleon with Chatlady Kapu (a water-gate on the level ground below the Hippodrome), and that the port and palace of Hormisdas were the older names for the port and palace called by tenth-century writers Bucoleon (from a marble group of a lion and bull). Genesios here (10) says that the girl stood *ἐν χωρίῳ λιθίνῳ ὃ προσαγορεύεται Βουκολέων*. Perhaps this was a paved place round the group. I think it may be inferred from this passage that in the time of the writer from whom Genesios derived the story *Bucoleon* had not yet been applied to the port and palace.

[3] He belonged to the important family of Melissenos. His father, Michael, was stratégos of the Anatolics under Constantine V., and married a sister of that Emperor's third wife Eudocia (*σύγγαμβρος*, Scr. Incert. 360). He afterwards became Patriarch. For the family of the Melissenoi, see Ducange, *Fam. Byz.* 145.

a mule; and the faithless Theodotos hastened to tell him the secret and secure his favour. This story, noised abroad at the time and remembered long afterwards, is highly characteristic of the epoch, and the behaviour of Theodotos is thoroughly in the character of a Byzantine palace official.

In matters that touched the Church the pliant Emperor was obedient to the counsels of the Patriarch. In matters that touched the State he seems also to have been under the influence of a counsellor, and one perhaps whose views were not always in harmony with those of the head of the Church. No single man had done more to compass the elevation of Michael than the Magister Theoktistos. This minister had helped in the deposition of Irene, and he was probably influential, though he played no prominent part, in the reign of Nicephorus. Nicephorus was not one who stood in need of counsellors, except in warfare; but in Michael's reign Theoktistos stood near the helm and was held responsible by his contemporaries for the mistakes of the helmsman. The admirers of the orthodox Emperor were forced to admit that, notwithstanding his piety and his clemency, he was a bad pilot for a state, and they threw the blame of the false course on Theoktistos among others.[1] It was Theoktistos, we may suspect, who induced Michael to abandon the policy, advocated by the Patriarch, of putting to death the Paulician heretics.[2]

But Michael's reign was destined to be brief. The struggle of the Empire with the powerful and ambitious Bulgarian kingdom was fatal to his throne, as it had been fatal to the throne of Nicephorus. In the spring, A.D. 813, Michael took the field at the head of a great army which included the Asiatic as well as the European troops. Michael was no general, but the overwhelming defeat which he experienced at Versinicia (June 22) was probably due to the treachery of the Anatolic regiments under the command of Leo the Armenian.[3]

Michael himself escaped. Whether he understood the import of what had happened or not, it is impossible to

[1] Theoph. 500; also 497 *ταῖς τῶν κακοσυμβούλων εἰσηγήσεσιν.*

[2] We can infer from some words of Theophanes that Theodore of Studion was an ally of Theoktistos: 498 *οἱ δὲ κακοὶ σύμβουλοι* (*i.e.* Theoktistos chiefly) *σὺν Θεοδώρῳ* were in favour of war with Bulgaria. See also a letter addressed to him by Theodore in A.D. 808, *Epp.* i. 24, p. 981.

[3] For the Bulgarian war in A.D. 812, 813, and the circumstances of the defeat, see below, Chap. XI. § 3.

decide; but one would think that he must have scented treachery. Certain it is that he committed the charge of the whole army to the man who had either played him false or been the unwitting cause of the false play. A contemporary author states that he chose Leo as "a pious and most valiant man."[1] A chronicler writing at the beginning of Leo's reign might put it thus. But two explanations are possible: Michael may have been really blind, and believed his general's specious representations; or he may have understood the situation perfectly and consigned the power to Leo in order to save his own life.[2] Of the alternatives the latter perhaps is the more likely. In any case, the Emperor soon foresaw what the end must be, and if he did not see it for himself, there was one to point it out to him when he reached Constantinople two days after the battle. A certain man, named John Hexabulios, to whom the care of the city wall had been committed, met Michael on his arrival, and commiserating with him, inquired whom he had left in charge of the army. On hearing the name of Leo, Hexabulios exclaimed at the imprudence of his master: Why did he give such an opportunity to such a dangerous man? The Emperor feigned to be secure, but he secretly resolved to abdicate the throne. The Empress Procopia was not so ready to resign the position of the greatest lady in the Empire to "Barca," as she sneeringly called the wife of Leo,[3] and the ministers of Michael were not all prepared for a change of master. Theoktistos and Stephanos consoled him and urged him not to abdicate.[4] Michael thought, or feigned to think, that the disaster was a divine punishment, and indeed this supposition was the only alternative to the theory of treachery. "The Christians

[1] Theoph. 502.

[2] This alternative did not occur to Hirsch. He regards the fact that Michael charged Leo with the command as a proof of Leo's innocence. The story of Hexabulios is told independently by Genesios and *Cont. Th.*

[3] Theophanes, *ib.*, mentions her unwillingness, but in *Cont. Th.* 18 her jealousy of "Barca" is mentioned. She was furious at the idea that Leo's wife should place the *modiolon* on her head. This was a head-dress worn by Empresses (perhaps the same as the *τυμπάνιον*, see Ducange, *Gloss.*, *s.v.*), so called from its shape. Compare the hat worn by Theodora, wife of Michael VIII., shown in Ducange, *Fam. Byz.* 191 (from a MS. of Pachymeres). The bronze Tyche in the Forum of Constantine had something of this kind on her head (*μετὰ μοδίου*, *Patria Cpl.* p. 205).

[4] Theoph. *ib.* Manuel the protostrator is specially mentioned in *Cont. Th.*, *ib.*, as opposed to Michael's resignation.

have suffered this," said the weeping Emperor in a council of his patricians, "on account of my sins. God hates the Empire of my father-in-law and his race. For we were more than the enemy, and yet none had heart, but all fled."[1] The advice of the Patriarch Nicephorus did not coincide with the counsels of the patricians. He was inclined to approve Michael's first intention; he saw that the present reign could not last, and thought that, if Michael himself proposed a successor, that successor might deal mercifully with him and his children.

Meanwhile the soldiers were pressing Leo to assume the Imperial title without delay. The general of the Anatolics at first resisted, and pretended to be loyal to the Emperor at such a dangerous crisis, when the enemy were in the land. But when he saw[2] that the Bulgarians intended to advance on Constantinople, he no longer hesitated to seize the prize which had been placed within his reach. He did not intend to enter the Imperial city in any other guise than as an Emperor accepted by the army; and the defence of Constantinople could not be left in the hands of Michael. It may be asked why Leo did not attempt to hinder Krum from advancing, by forcing him to fight another battle, in which there should be no feigned panic. The answer is that it was almost impossible to inveigle the Bulgarians into a pitched battle when they did not wish. Their prince could not fail to have perceived the true cause of his victory, and he was not likely to be willing to risk another combat.

July had already begun when Leo at length took the step of writing a letter to the Patriarch. In it he affirmed his own orthodoxy; he set forth his new hopes, and asked the blessing and consent of the head of the Church. Immediately after this he arrived at Hebdomon, and was proclaimed in the Tribunal legitimate[3] Emperor of the Romans by the

[1] This is related by Scr. Incert. 339-340. It is stated in *Cont. Th.* that Michael secretly sent by a trusty servant the Imperial insignia (the diadem, the purple robe, and the red shoes) to Leo; hence the anger of Procopia, mentioned in the last note but one. Theophanes does not mention this. In the richly illustrated Madrid MS. of Skylitzes (14th cent.)—in which older pictures are reproduced—Michael is represented as crowning Leo; both are standing on a raised shield. See Diehl, *L'Art byzantin*, 778. For another story of the resignation see Michael Syr. 70.

[2] This moment in the situation is mentioned by Theophanes, *ib.*

[3] *ἐννομώτατος*, *ib.* For the Palace of Hebdomon (which van Millingen

assembled army. On Monday, July 11, at mid-day, he entered by the Gate of Charisios[1] and proceeded to the Palace; on Tuesday he was crowned in the ambo of St. Sophia by the Patriarch.

When the tidings came that Leo had been proclaimed, the fallen Emperor with his wife and children hastened to assume monastic garb and take refuge in the Church of the Virgin of the Pharos.[2] Thus they might hope to avert the suspicions of him who was entering into their place; thus they might hope to secure at least their lives and an obscure retreat. The lives of all were spared;[3] the father, the mother, and the daughters escaped without any bodily harm, but the sons were not so lucky. Leo anticipated the possibility of future conspiracies in favour of his predecessor's male children by mutilating them. In eunuchs he would have no rivals to fear. The mutilation which excluded from the most exalted position in the State did not debar, however, from the most exalted position in the Church; and Nicetas, who was just fourteen years old when he underwent the penalty of being an Emperor's son, will meet us again as the Patriarch Ignatius.[4] Parents and children were not allowed to have the solace of living together; they were transported to different islands. Procopia was immured in the monastery dedicated to her namesake St. Procopia.[5] Michael, under the name of

proved to be situated at Makri-Keui on the Marmora) and the Tribunal, see Bieliaev, iii. 57 *sqq.* The Tribunal was evidently a large paved place, close to the Palace, with a tribunal or tribunals. Theodosius II., Constantine V., and others had been proclaimed Emperors in the same place.

[1] This gate (also called the Gate of Polyandrion) was on the north side of the river Lycus and identical with Edirne Kapu, as van Millingen has proved (83 *sqq.*). The street from this gate led directly to the Church of the Apostles, and Leo must have followed this route.

[2] This church had been built by Constantine V. It was easily accessible from the Chrysotriklinos, being situated apparently between this building and the Pharos, which was close to the seashore. There is a description of the church in Mesarites (29 *sqq.* in Heisenberg's Programm, *Nikolaos Mesarites, Die Palastrevolution des Johannes Komnenos*, 1907). See further Ebersolt, 104 *sqq.*

[3] On the fate of Michael and his family, the most important records are *Cont. Th.* 19-20, and Nicetas, *Vit. Ign.* 212-213. Genesios is not so well informed as *Cont. Th.*, and speaks as if Ignatius alone suffered mutilation.

[4] The eldest son, Theophylactus, his father's colleague, was less distinguished. He also became a monk and changed his name, but Eustratios did not rival the fame of Ignatius. Of the third, Stauracius, called perhaps after his uncle, we only hear that he died before his father.

[5] The site is unknown. It was founded by Justin I., who was buried there (cp. Ducange, *Const. Christ.* Bk. iv. p. 112), and is to be distinguished from the monastery of Procopius, which the Empress Procopia is said to have founded (*ib.*).

Athanasius, eked out the remainder of his life in the rocky islet of Plate,[1] making atonement for his sins, and the new Emperor provided him with a yearly allowance for his sustenance. By one of those strange coincidences, which in those days might seem to men something more than chance, the death of Michael occurred [2] on an anniversary of the death of the rival whom he had deposed. The 11th day of January, which had relieved Stauracius from his sufferings, relieved Michael from the regrets of fallen greatness. He was buried on the right side of the altar in the church of the island where he died. Opposite, on the left, was placed, five years later, the body of the monk Eustratios, who had once been the Augustus Theophylactus. This, however, was not destined to be the final resting-place of Michael Rangabé. Many years after, the Patriarch Ignatius remembered the grave of his Imperial father, and having exhumed the remains, transferred them to a new monastery which he had himself erected and dedicated to the archangel Michael at Satyros, on the Bithynian mainland, opposite to the Prince's islands. This monastery of Satyros was also called by the name of *Anatellon* or the Riser, an epithet of the archangel. The story was that the Emperor Nicephorus was hunting in the neighbourhood, where there was good cover for game, and a large stag was pulled down by the hounds. On this spot was found an old table, supported by a pillar, with an inscription on this wise: "This is the altar of the Arch-Captain (*ἀρχιστρατήγου*) Michael, the Rising Star, which the apostle Andrew set up." [3]

[1] Oxeia and Plate are the two most westerly islands of the Prince's group. *Cont. Th.* states (20) that Michael went to Plate, Nicetas (*Vit. Ign.* 211) says vaguely *πρὸς τὰς πριγκιπείους νήσους* (and that Procopia went with him). Some modern historians follow Skylitzes (Cedrenus, ii. 48; Zonaras, iii. 319) in stating that he was banished to the large island of Prote, the most northerly of the group (Finlay, ii. 112; Schlumberger, *Les Îles des Princes*, 36; Marin, 33). For a description of Plate see Schlumberger, *ib.* 296 *sqq.*

[2] *Cont. Th.* 20, A.M. 6332 = A.D. 839-840 (reckoning by the Alexandrine era); cp. Muralt, *sub* 840. Theosteriktos, writing in the latter years of Michael II., speaks of Michael I. as alive (*Vit. Nicet.* xxix. *ὁ νῦν ἔτι ἐν μοναδικῷ διατρέπων ἀξιώματι*).

[3] The anecdote is told in *Cont. Th.* 21. Hirsch (178) referred the anecdote to Nicephorus II., and drew conclusions as to the revision of *Cont. Th.* But Nicephorus I. is unquestionably meant. Cp. Brooks, *B. Z.* x. 416-417. Pargoire has shown that Ignatius did not found this monastery till his second Patriarchate in the reign of Basil I. (*Les Mon. de Saint Ign.* 71 *sqq.*), and has proved the approximate position of the monastery. For the topography of the coast, see below, p. 133.

§ 5. *Ecclesiastical Policies of Nicephorus I. and Michael I.*

The principle that the authority of the autocrat was supreme in ecclesiastical as well as secular administration had been fundamental in the Empire since the days of Constantine the Great, who took it for granted; and, in spite of sporadic attempts to assert the independence of the Church, it always prevailed at Byzantium. The affairs of the Church were virtually treated as a special department of the affairs of the State, and the Patriarch of Constantinople was the minister of religion and public worship. This theory of the State Church was expressed in the fact that it was the function of the Emperor both to convoke and to preside at Church Councils, which, in the order of proceedings, were modelled on the Roman Senate.[1] It was expressed in the fact that the canons ordained by ecclesiastical assemblies were issued as laws by the Imperial legislator, and that he independently issued edicts relating to Church affairs. It is illustrated by those mixed synods which were often called to decide ecclesiastical questions and consisted of the dignitaries of the Court as well as the dignitaries of the Church.

The Seventh Ecumenical Council (A.D. 787) marks an epoch in the history of the relations between Church and State. On that occasion the right of presiding was transferred from the sovran to the Patriarch, but this concession to the Church was undoubtedly due to the fact that the Patriarch Tarasius had been a layman and Imperial minister, who had been elevated to the Patriarchal throne in defiance of the custom which had hitherto prevailed of preferring only monks to such high ecclesiastical posts. The significance of the epoch of the Seventh Council is that a new principle was signalized: the assertion of ecclesiastical independence in questions of dogma, and the assertion of the autocrat's will in all matters pertaining to ecclesiastical law and administration. This was the view which guided the policy of Tarasius, who represented what has been called "the third party,"[2] standing between the extreme theories of thorough-going absolutism,

[1] Gelzer, *Staat und Kirche*, 198. See this able article for the whole history of the Imperial authority over the Church.

[2] Gelzer, *ib.* 228 *sqq.* He compares it to the *parti politique* in France in the reigns of Henry III. and Henry IV.

which had been exercised by such monarchs as Justinian, Leo III. and Constantine V., and of complete ecclesiastical independence, of which the leading advocate at this time was Theodore, the abbot of Studion. The doctrine of the third party was ultimately, but not without opposition and protest, victorious; and the ecclesiastical interest of the reign of Nicephorus centres in this question.

Tarasius, who had submitted by turns to the opposite policies of Constantine VI. and Irene, was an ideal Patriarch in the eyes of Nicephorus. He died on February 25, A.D. 806,[1] and the Emperor looked for a man of mild and complacent disposition to succeed him. The selection of a layman was suggested by the example of Tarasius; a layman would be more pliable than a priest or a monk, and more readily understand and fall in with the Emperor's views of ecclesiastical policy. His choice was judicious. He selected a learned[2] man, who had recently retired from the post of First Secretary[3] to a monastery which he had built on the Bosphorus, but had not yet taken monastic vows. He was a man of gentle disposition, and conformed to the Imperial idea of a model Patriarch.

The celebrated Theodore, abbot of the monastery of Studion, now appears again upon the scene. No man contributed more than he to reorganize monastic life and render monastic opinion a force in the Empire. Nicephorus, the Emperor, knew that he would have to reckon with the influence of Theodore and the Studite monks, and accordingly he sought to disarm their opposition by writing to him and his uncle Plato before the selection of a successor to Tarasius, and asking their advice on the matter. The letter in which Theodore replied to the Imperial communication is extant,[4] and is highly instructive. It permits us to divine that the abbot would have been prepared to fill the Patriarchal chair himself. He begins by flattering Nicephorus, ascribing his

[1] Theoph. A.M. 6298, p. 481_{15}. All the MSS. have κε' (*i.e.* the 25th). De Boor reads ιη', on the ground that the version of Anastasius, which has *duodecimo Kalendas Martias* (*i.e.* the 18th), represents an older and better text. This is not confirmed by Ignatius, *Vit. Tar.* 27 Φευρουαρίῳ μηνὶ συντελουμένῳ πέμπτην φέροντι σὺν τεταρτῇ τετράδι.

[2] See Ignatius, *Vit. Nic. Patr.* 149 *sqq.* His learning is also shown by his extant writings.

[3] Protoasecrêtês. For his monasteries see below, p. 68.

[4] *Epp.* i. 16, p. 960.

elevation to God's care for the Church. He goes on to say that he knows of no man really worthy of the Patriarchate, and he names three conditions which a suitable candidate should fulfil: he should be able, with perfect heart, to seek out the judgments of God; he should have been raised by gradual steps from the lowest to higher ecclesiastical ranks; he should be experienced in the various phases of spiritual life and so able to help others. This was manifestly aimed at excluding the possible election of a layman. But Theodore goes further and actually suggests the election of an abbot or an anchoret,[1] without mentioning a bishop. We cannot mistake the tendency of this epistle. It is probable that Plato proposed his nephew for the vacant dignity.[2] But Theodore's bigotry and extreme views of ecclesiastical independence rendered his appointment by an Emperor like Nicephorus absolutely out of the question.

Respect for Church tradition, with perhaps a touch of jealousy, made Theodore and his party indignant at the designation of Nicephorus, a layman, as Patriarch. They agitated against him,[3] and their opposition seemed to the Emperor an intolerable insubordination to his own authority. Nor did their attitude meet with much sympathy outside their own immediate circle. A contemporary monk, who was no friend of the Emperor, dryly says that they tried to create a schism.[4] The Emperor was fain to banish the abbot and his uncle, and break up the monastery; but it was represented to him that the elevation of the new Patriarch would be considered inauspicious if it were attended by the dissolution of such a famous cloister in which there were about seven hundred brethren.[5] He was content to keep the two leaders in prison for twenty-four days, probably till after Nicephorus had been enthroned.[6] The ceremony was solemnised on Easter

[1] A ἡγούμενος or στυλίτης or ἔγκλειστος. The mention of a στυλίτης is remarkable, and I conjecture that Theodore had in his mind Simeon (A.D. 764-843) who lived on a pillar in Mytilene; see *Acta S. Davidis*, etc.

[2] Theodore, *Epitaph. Plat.* 837. Cp. Schneider, *Der hl. Theodor*, 27.

[3] Plato went at night to a monk who was a kinsman of the Emperor, seeking to make him use his influence against the appointment of Nicephorus (Theodore, *ib.*). This monk was doubtless one Simeon, to whom we have several letters of Theodore.

[4] Theoph. A.M. 6298.

[5] *Ib.* Michael, *Vit. Theod. Stud.* 260 says the number nearly approached 1000.

[6] Theodore, *Epitaph. Plat.*, *ib.* Other members of the community were imprisoned too.

day (April 12) in the presence of the two Augusti,[1] and the Studites did not persist in their protest.[2]

The Emperor Nicephorus now resolved to make an assertion of Imperial absolutism, in the sense that the Emperor was superior to canonical laws in the same way that he was superior to secular laws. His assertion of this principle was the more impressive, as it concerned a question which did not involve his own interests or actions.

It will be remembered that Tarasius had given his sanction to the divorce of Constantine VI. from his first wife and to his marriage with Theodote (Sept. A.D. 795).[3] After the fall of Constantine, Tarasius had been persuaded by Irene to declare that both the divorce and the second marriage were illegal, and Joseph, who had performed the marriage ceremony, was degraded from the priesthood and placed under the ban of excommunication. This ban had not been removed, and the circumstance furnished Nicephorus with a pretext for reopening a question which involved an important constitutional principle. It would have been inconvenient to ask Tarasius to broach again a matter on which his own conduct had been conspicuously inconsistent and opportunist; but soon after the succession of the new Patriarch, Nicephorus proceeded to procure a definite affirmation of the superiority of the Emperor to canonical laws. At his wish a synod was summoned to decide whether Joseph should be received again into communion and reinstated in the sacerdotal office. The assembly voted for his rehabilitation, and declared the marriage of Constantine and Theodote valid.[4]

In this assembly of bishops and monks one dissentient voice was raised, that of Theodore the abbot of Studion. He and his uncle Plato had suffered under Constantine VI. the penalty of banishment from their monastery of Sakkudion, on account of their refusal to communicate with Joseph, who had transgressed the laws of the Church by uniting Constantine

[1] Theoph. *ib.* It is interesting to observe the tendency of the writer here. He approved of the election of Nicephorus, but could not bear to attribute a good act to the Emperor, and therefore adds casually *πρὸς δὲ καὶ τῶν βασιλέων*, as though the presence of Nicephorus and Stauracius were something unimportant or hardly to be expected.

[2] Cp. Theodore, *Epp.* i. 25, p. 989; 30, p. 1008.

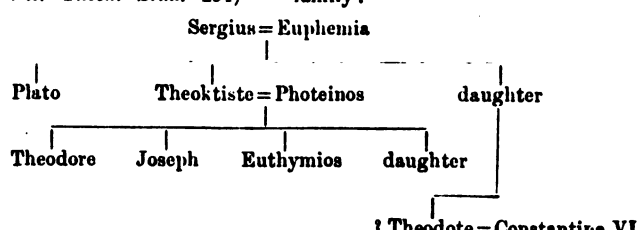
[3] Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, ii. 487.

[4] Mansi, xiv. 14. Hefele (iii. 397) speaks inadvertently of the affair of the "Abt Johannes." Cp. Theodore, *Epp.* i. 33, p. 101.

with Theodote. It has been thought that the firm attitude which they then assumed may have been in some measure due to the fact that Theodote was nearly related to them; that they may have determined to place themselves beyond all suspicion of condoning an offence against the canons in which the interests of a kinswoman were involved.[1] Now, when the question was revived, they persisted in their attitude, though they resorted to no denunciations. Theodore wrote a respectful letter to the Patriarch, urging him to exclude Joseph from sacerdotal ministrations, and threatening that otherwise a schism would be the consequence.[2] The Patriarch did not deign to reply to the abbot, and for two years the matter lay in abeyance, the Studites saying little, but declining to communicate with the Patriarch.[3]

The scandal of this schism became more public when Joseph, a brother of Theodore, became archbishop of Thessalonica.[4] He was asked by the Logothete of the Course, why he would not communicate with the Patriarch and the Emperor. On his alleging that he had nothing against them personally, but only against the priest who had celebrated the adulterous marriage, the Logothete declared, "Our pious Emperors have no need of you at Thessalonica or anywhere else."[5] This occurrence (A.D. 808) roused to activity Theodore's facile pen. But his appeals to court-dignitaries or to ecclesiastics outside his own community seem to have produced little effect.[6] He failed to stir up public opinion

[1] Pargoire, *Saint Théophane*, 65. Theodote was an ἐξαδέλφη of Theodore (Michael, *Vit. Theod. Stud.* 254)— perhaps a daughter of Plato's sister. A table will illustrate Theodore's family:



See Pargoire, *ib.* 36-37.

[2] *Epp.* i. 30. Theodore did not object to Joseph's restoration to the office of Oikonomos (see i. 43).

[3] *Ib.* i. 26.

[4] For the circumstances of his election see *ib.* i. 23.

[5] *Ib.* i. 31.

[6] Cp. i. 24 to Theoktistos the magister; 21 and 22 to Simeon the monk, a relative of the Emperor, of

against the recent synod, and in their schism the Studites were isolated.[1] But the attitude of this important monastery could no longer be ignored.

The mere question of the rehabilitation of a priest was, of course, a very minor matter. Nor was the legitimacy of Constantine's second marriage the question which really interested the Emperor. The question at issue was whether Emperors had power to override laws established by the Church, and whether Patriarchs and bishops might dispense from ecclesiastical canons. Theodore firmly maintained that "the laws of God bind all men," and the circumstance that Constantine wore the purple made no difference.[2] The significance of Theodore's position is that in contending for the validity of canonical law as independent of the State and the Emperor, he was vindicating the independence of the Church. Although the Studites stood virtually alone—for if any sympathised with them they were afraid to express their opinions—the persistent opposition of such a large and influential institution could not be allowed to continue. A mixed synod of ecclesiastics and Imperial officials met in January A.D. 809, the legality of the marriage of Theodote was reaffirmed, and it was laid down that Emperors were above ecclesiastical laws and that bishops had the power of dispensing from canons.[3] Moreover, sentence was passed on the aged Plato, the abbot Theodore, and his brother Joseph, who had been dragged before the assembly, and they were banished to the Prince's Islands, where they were placed in separate retreats.[4] Then Nicephorus proceeded to deal with

whom Theodore complains (i. 26, addressed to the abbot Simeon, a different person) that he was *ἀμφοτερόγλωσσος*.

[1] If there were secret sympathisers, they had not the courage of their opinion (see i. 31, p. 1009 *νυκτερινοὶ θεοσεβεῖς*, afraid to come out into the light).

[2] *Ib.* i. 22. At this time Theodore wrote (i. 28) to an old friend, Basil of St. Saba, who was then at Rome, and had renounced communion with him; and we learn that Pope Leo had expressed indifference as to the "sins" of Joseph (p. 1001).

[3] The date is given by Theophanes (484) whose words, however, admit the possible interpretation that the synod was held in Dec. 808 and the expulsion followed in January (cp. Hefele, iii. 397). For the acts of the synod (*σύνοδος δημοσία*) see Theodore, *Epp.* i. 33, pp. 1017-19 *οἰκονομίαν οὖν τὴν ζευξιμοιχείαν δογματίζουσιν· ἐπὶ τῶν βασιλέων τοὺς θείους νόμους μὴ κρατεῖν διορίζονται· . . . ἕκαστον τῶν ἱεραρχῶν ἐξουσιάζειν ἐν τοῖς θείοις κανόσι παρὰ τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς κεκανονισμένα ἀποφαίνονται.* Of course this is Theodore's way of putting it. The Acts assuredly did not speak of *τοὺς θείους νόμους*. For the composition of the Synod cp. *ib.* i. 34, p. 1021.

[4] Plato in the islet Oxeia (Theodore, *Epitaph. in Plat.* c. 39, p. 841, where

the seven hundred monks of Studion. He summoned them to his presence in the palace of Eleutherios, where he received them with impressive ceremonial. When he found it impossible to intimidate or cajole them into disloyalty to their abbot or submission to their sovran, he said: "Whoever will obey the Emperor and agree with the Patriarch and the clergy, let him stand on the right; let the disobedient move to the left, that we may see who consent and who are stubborn." But this device did not succeed, and they were all confined in various monasteries in the neighbourhood of the city.[1] Soon afterwards we hear that they were scattered far and wide throughout the Empire.[2]

During his exile, Theodore maintained an active correspondence with the members of his dispersed flock, and in order to protect his communications against the curiosity of official supervision he used the twenty-four letters of the alphabet to designate the principal members of the Studite fraternity. In this cipher, for example, *alpha* represented Plato, *beta* Joseph, *omega* Theodore himself.[3] Confident in the justice of his cause, he invoked the intervention of the Roman See, and urged the Pope to undo the work of the adulterous synods by a General Council. Leo wrote a paternal and consolatory letter, but he expressed no opinion on the merits of the question. We may take it as certain that he had other information derived from adherents of the Patriarch, who were active in influencing opinion at Rome, and that he considered Theodore's action ill-advised. In any case, he declined to commit himself.[4]

The resolute protest of the Studites aroused, as we have seen, little enthusiasm, though it can hardly be doubted that many ecclesiastics did not approve of the Acts of the recent synod. But it was felt that the Patriarch had, in the circumstances, acted prudently and with a sage economy. In later times enthusiastic admirers of Theodore were ready to

read Ὀξεία), Theodore in Chalkitês, now Halki (*id.*, *Epigramm.* 98-104, p. 1804).

[1] Michael, *Vit. Theod. Stud.* 269; cp. Anon. *Vit. Theod. Stud.* 160.

[2] Theodore, *Epp.* i. 48, pp. 1072-73. Some were exiled at Cherson, others in the island of Lipari.

i. 41.

[4] The first letter that Theodore wrote to Leo he destroyed himself (see *ib.* i. 34, p. 1028). The second is extant (i. 33). We learn the drift of the Pope's reply from i. 34, written in the joint names of Plato and Theodore. See also their letter to Basil of Saba, i. 35. For the activity of the other side at Rome, see i. 28.

allow that Nicephorus had wisely consented lest the Emperor should do something worse.[1] And after the Emperor's death he showed that his consent had been unwillingly given.

If the Emperor Nicephorus asserted his supreme authority in the Church, it could not be said that he was not formally orthodox, as he accepted and maintained the settlement of the Council of Nicaea and the victory of Picture-worship. But though his enemies did not accuse him of iconoclastic tendencies, he was not an enthusiastic image-worshipper. His policy was to permit freedom of opinion, and the orthodox considered such toleration equivalent to heresy. They were indignant when he sheltered by his patronage a monk named Nicolas who preached against images and had a following of disciples.[2] The favour which he showed to the Paulicians gave his enemies a pretext for hinting that he was secretly inclined to that flagrant heresy, and the fact that he was born in Pisidia where Paulicianism flourished lent a colour to the charge. These heretics had been his useful supporters in the rebellion of Bardanes, and the superstitious believed that he had been victorious on that occasion by resorting to charms and sorceries which *they* were accustomed to employ.[3] Others said that the Emperor had no religion at all.[4] The truth may be that he was little interested in religious matters, except in relation to the State. He was, at all events, too crafty to commit himself openly to any heresy. But it is interesting to observe that in the policy of toleration Nicephorus was not unsupported, though his supporters may have been few. There existed in the capital a party of enlightened persons who held that it

[1] Michael, *Vit. Theod. Stud.* 268 *ᾠκονόμησεν μὴ βουλόμενος ἀλλὰ βιασθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ ἄνακτος.* Ignatius in his Life of Nicephorus completely omits this passage in his career. Theophanes touches on it lightly in his *Chronography*, and we know otherwise that he did not blame the policy of the Patriarch and therefore incurred the severe censure of Theodore, who describes him as a Moechian, *i.e.* one of the adulterous party. See Theodore, *Epp.* ii. 31, p. 1204, where *μου ὁ τοῦ σχήματος ἀνάδοχος* refers to Theophanes, who had been Theodore's sponsor when he became a monk, as Pargoire has shown (*Saint Théophane*, 56 *sqq.*). See also *ib.* ii. 218, p. 1660.

[2] Theoph. 488. In writing to the monk Simeon (i. 21) Theodore Studites himself speaks thus of Nicephorus: *οἱ δεσπόται ἡμῶν οἱ ἀγαθοὶ μεσῖται καὶ κριταὶ τοῦ δικαίου. φιληταὶ τῶν παρρησιαζομένων ἐν ἀληθείᾳ· ὡς αὐτὸ τὸ τίμιον αὐτῶν στόμα πολλάκις διαγορεύει.*

[3] Theoph. *ib.* He is said to have slaughtered a bull in a particular way, and to have ground garments of Bardanes in a mill.

[4] Anon. *Vit. Theod. Stud.* 153: he was "nominally a Christian, really an enemy of Christianity." Ignatius, *Vit. Nicephori Patr.* 153, admits that he was orthodox.

was wrong to sentence heretics to death,[1] and they were strong enough in the next reign to hinder a general persecution of the Paulicians.

But for the most part the policy of Nicephorus was reversed under Michael, who proved himself not the master but the obedient son of the Church. The Patriarch knew the character of Michael, and had reason to believe that he would be submissive in all questions of faith and morals. But he was determined to assure himself that his expectations would be fulfilled, and he resorted to an expedient which has a considerable constitutional interest.

The coronations of the Emperors Marcian and Leo I. by the Patriarch, with the accompanying ecclesiastical ceremony, may be said to have definitely introduced the new constitutional principle that the profession of Christianity was a necessary qualification for holding the Imperial office.[2] It also implied that the new Emperor had not only been elected by the Senate and the people, but was accepted by the Church. But what if the Patriarch declined to crown the Emperor-elect? Here, clearly, there was an opportunity for a Patriarch to do what it might be difficult for him to do when once the coronation was accomplished. The Emperor was the head of the ecclesiastical organization, and the influence which the Patriarch exerted depended upon the relative strengths of his own and the monarch's characters. But the Patriarch had it in his power to place limitations on the policy of a future Emperor by exacting from him certain definite and solemn promises before the ceremony of coronation was performed.[3] It was not often that in the annals of the later Empire the Patriarch had the strength of will or a sufficient reason to impose such capitulations. The earliest known instance is the case of Anastasius I., who, before the Patriarch crowned him, was required

[1] Theophanes calls them *κακοτρόπων συμβούλων* (495). They argued on the ground of the possibility of repentance, *ἐδογμάτιζον δὲ ἀμαθῶς μὴ ἐξεῖναι ἱερεῦσιν ἀποφαίνεσθαι κατὰ ἀσεβῶν θάνατον, κατὰ πάντα* (adds the writer) *ταῖς θείαις γραφαῖς ἐναντιούμενοι περὶ τούτων.*

[2] The case of Marcian is not quite certain.

[3] Cp. Bury, *Constitution of Later R. Empire*, 27-29. In later times a regular coronation oath (we do not know at what date it was introduced) rendered special capitulations less necessary. In the tenth century the Patriarch Polyeuktos was able to extort a concession from John Tzimisces as a condition of coronation. It must always be remembered that coronation by the Patriarch, though looked on as a matter of course, was not a constitutional *sine qua non* (*ib.* 11 *sq.*).

to swear to a written undertaking that he would introduce no novelty into the Church.

Nicephorus obtained from Michael an autograph assurance —and the sign of the cross was doubtless affixed to the signature—in which he pledged himself to preserve the orthodox faith, not to stain his hands with the blood of Christians, and not to scourge ecclesiastics, whether priests or monks.

The Patriarch now showed that, if there had been no persecutions during his tenure of office, he at least would not have been lacking in zeal. At his instance the penalty of capital punishment was enacted against the Paulicians and the Athingani,[1] who were regarded as no better than Manichaeans and altogether outside the pale of Christianity. The persecution began; not a few were decapitated; but influential men, to whose advice the Emperor could not close his ears, intervened, and the bloody work was stayed. The monk, to whom we owe most of our knowledge of the events of these years, deeply laments the successful interference of these evil counsellors.[2] But the penalty of death was only commuted; the Athingani were condemned to confiscation and banishment.

The Emperor had more excuse for proceeding against the iconoclasts, who were still numerous in the army and the Imperial city. They were by no means contented at the rule of the orthodox Rangabé.[3] Their discontent burst out after Michael's fruitless Bulgarian expedition in June, A.D. 812. We shall have to return to the dealings of Michael with the Bulgarians; here we have only to observe how this June expedition led to a conspiracy. When the iconoclasts saw Thrace and Macedonia at the mercy of the heathen of the north, they thought they had good grounds for grumbling at the iconodulic sovran. When the admirers of the great Leo and the great Constantine, who had ruled in the days of their fathers and grandfathers, saw the enemy harrying the land at will and possessing the cities of the Empire, they might bitterly

[1] The Athingani, if not simply a sect of the Paulicians, were closely related to them. The name is supposed to be derived from ἀ-θιγγάνειν, referring to the doctrine that the touch of many things defiled (cp. St. Paul, *Colossa.* ii. 21 μηδὲ θίγῃς). They seem to have chiefly flourished in Phrygia. It has been supposed by some that *Zigeuner* (gipsy) is derived from the Athingani; since ἀθίγγανος means gipsy in Modern Greek.

[2] Theoph. 495.

[3] It may be noted that Michael made no changes, significant of orthodoxy, in the types of the coinage; cp. Wroth, I. xli.

remember how heavy the arm of Constantine had been on the Bulgarians and how well he had defended the frontier of Thrace; they might plausibly ascribe the difference in military success to the difference in religious doctrine. It was a good opportunity for the bold to conspire; the difficulty was to discover a successor to Michael, who would support iconoclasm and who had some show of legitimate claim to the throne. The choice of the conspirators fell on the blind sons of Constantine V., who still survived in Panormos, or as it was also, and is still, called Antigoni, one of the Prince's Islands. These princes had been prominent in the reign of Constantine VI. and Irene, as repeatedly conspiring against their nephew and sister-in-law. The movement was easily suppressed, the revolutionaries escaped with a few stripes, and the blind princes were removed to the more distant island of Aphusia.[1] But though the iconoclasts might be disaffected, they do not seem to have provoked persecution by openly showing flagrant disrespect to holy pictures[2] in the reigns of Nicephorus and Michael. Michael, however, would not suffer the iconoclastic propaganda which his father-in-law had allowed. He edified the people of Constantinople by forcing the iconoclastic lecturer Nicolas to make a public recantation of his error.

The Emperor and the Patriarch lost no time in annulling the decisions of those assemblies which the Studite monks stigmatised as "synods of adulterers." The notorious Joseph, who had celebrated the "adulterous" marriage, was again suspended; the Studites were recalled from exile; and the schism was healed. It might now be alleged that Nicephorus had not been in sympathy with the late Emperor's policy, and had only co-operated with him from considerations of "economy."[3] But the dissensions of the Studite monks, first

[1] Theoph. 496. Aphusia, still so called, is one of the Proconnesian islands, apparently not the same as Ophiusa, for Diogenes of Cyzicus (Müller, *F.H.G.* iv. 392) distinguishes *Φυσία καὶ Ὀφιόεσσα*. The other chief islands of the group are Proconnesus, Aulonia, and Kutalis; the four are described in Gedeon, *Προικόννησος*, 1895. Cp. Hasluck, *J.H.S.* xxix. 17.

[2] The fact that Theophanes only records one case in Michael's reign (*ib*). is significant. A vagabond (*ἐμπερίακτος*) hermit scraped and insulted a picture of the Mother of God, and was punished by the excision of his tongue.

[3] It is not known whether the Emperor or the Patriarch was the prime mover. It is interesting to note that the Emperor Nicephorus had given the brothers of the Empress Theodote quarters in the Palace, thus emphasizing his approbation of her marriage, and that Michael I. expelled them (Scr. Incert. 336).

with Tarasius and then with Nicephorus, were more than passing episodes. They were symptomatic of an opposition or discord between the hierarchy of the Church and a portion of the monastic world. The heads of the Church were more liberal and more practical in their views; they realized the importance of the State, on which the Church depended; and they deemed it bad policy, unless a fundamental principle were at stake, to oppose the supreme authority of the Emperor. The monks were no politicians; they regarded the world from a purely ecclesiastical point of view; they looked upon the Church as infinitely superior to the State; and they were prepared to take extreme measures for the sake of maintaining a canon. The "third party" and the monks were united, after the death of Michael I., in a common struggle against iconoclasm, but as soon as the enemy was routed, the disagreement between these two powers in the Church broke out, as we shall see, anew.

CHAPTER II

LEO V. (THE ARMENIAN) AND THE REVIVAL OF ICONOCLASM (A.D. 813-820)

§ 1. *Reign and Administration of Leo V.*

LEO V. was not the first Armenian[1] who occupied the Imperial throne. Among the Emperors who reigned briefly and in rapid succession after the decline of the Heraclian dynasty, the Armenian Bardanes who took the name of Philippicus, had been chiefly noted for luxury and delicate living. The distinctions of Leo were of a very different order. If he had "sown his wild oats" in earlier days, he proved an active and austere prince, and he presented a marked contrast to his immediate predecessor. Born in lowly station and poor circumstances, Leo had made his way up by his own ability to the loftiest pinnacle in the Empire; Michael enjoyed the advantages of rank and birth, and had won the throne through the accident of his marriage with an Emperor's daughter. Michael had no will of his own; Leo's temper was as firm as that of his namesake, the Isaurian. Michael was in the hands of the Patriarch; Leo was determined that the Patriarch should be in the hands of the Emperor. Even those who sympathized with the religious policy of Michael were compelled to confess that he was a feeble, incompetent ruler; while even those who hated Leo most bitterly could not refuse to own that in civil administration he was an able sovran. A short description of Leo's

[1] On one side his parentage was "Assyrian," which presumably means Syrian (Gen. 28; *Cont. Th.* 6 *κατὰ συζυγίαν ἐξ Ἀσσυρίων καὶ Ἀρμενίων*). The statements are vague. His parents (one or both ?) are said to have slain their (?) parents and been exiled for that reason to Armenia.

personal appearance has been preserved. He was of small stature and had curling hair; he wore a full beard; his hair was thick; his voice loud.[1]

On the very day of his entry into Constantinople as an Augustus proclaimed by the army, an incident is related to have occurred which seemed an allegorical intimation as to the ultimate destiny of the new Emperor. It is one of those stories based perhaps upon some actual incident, but improved and embellished in the light of later events, so as to bear the appearance of a mysterious augury. It belongs to the general atmosphere of mystery that seemed to envelop the careers of the three young squires of Bardanes, whose destinies had been so closely interwoven. The prophecy of the hermit of Philomelion, the raving of the slave-girl of Michael Rangabé,[2] and the incident now to be related,[3] mark stages in the development of the drama.

Since Michael the Amorian had been rewarded by Nicephorus for his desertion of the rebel Bardanes, we lose sight of his career. He seems to have remained an officer in the Anatolic Theme, of which he had been appointed Count of the tent, and when Leo the Armenian became the stratêgos of that province the old comrades renewed their friendship.[4] Leo acted as sponsor to Michael's son;[5] and Michael played some part in bringing about Leo's elevation. The latter is said to have shrunk from taking the great step,

[1] Pseudo-Simeon, 603. This is one of the notices peculiar to this chronicle and not found in our other authorities. I have conjectured that the source was the Scriptor Incertus, of whose work we possess the valuable fragment frequently cited in these notes. See Bury, *A Source of Symeon Magister B.Z.* i. 572 (1892). Note de Boor's emendation *σγυράν* for *ὀγυράν* (*κόμην*) in this passage, and cp. above, p. 22, n. 2. On most of the coins of Leo, which are of the ordinary type of this period, his son Constantine appears beardless on the reverse. A seal, which seems to belong to these Emperors, with a cross potent on the obverse, and closely resembling one type of the silver coinage of these Emperors and of their predecessors Michael and Theophylactus (see Wroth, Pl. xlvii. 4, 11, 12), is preserved in the Russian Arch. Institute at Constantinople (Panchenko, *Kat. Mol.* viii. 234).

[2] Constantine Porphyrogennetos was conscious of this dramatic development. We may trace his hand in the comment (in *Cont. Th.* 23) that the prophecy of Philomelion was the first vague sketch, and the words of the slave-girl "second colours"—*δεύτερά τινα χρώματα ὡς ἐν ζωγραφίᾳ ταῖς πρωτεραῖς ἐμμορφωθέντα σκιαῖς.*

[3] Told by Genesios, 7, and in *Cont. Th.* 19 (after Genesios).

[4] *Cont. Th.* 12_{11}. See above, p. 12. It is not clear whether Michael's office was still that of *κόμης τῆς κόρτης* of the Anatolic Theme. Gen. 7 describes him as *τῶν αὐτοῦ ἱππικόμων πρωτάρχῳ* (cp. *Cont. Th.* 19), which seems to mean that he was the private *protostrator* of Leo as stratêgos.

[5] Gen. 12_{18}.

as he was not sure that he would obtain simultaneous recognition in the camp and in the capital, and Michael the Lisper, threatening to slay him if he did not consent, undertook to make the necessary arrangements.[1] When Leo entered the city he was met and welcomed by the whole Senate near the Church of St. John the Forerunner, which still stands, not far from the Golden Gate, and marks the site of the monastery of Studion. Accompanied by an acclaiming crowd, and closely attended by Michael his confidant, the new Augustus rode to the Palace. He halted in front of the Brazen Gate (Chalkê) to worship before the great image of Christ which surmounted the portal. The Fifth Leo, who was afterwards to be such an ardent emulator of the third Emperor of his name, now dismounted, and paid devotion to the figure restored by Irene in place of that which Leo the Isaurian had demolished. Perhaps the Armenian had not yet decided on pursuing an iconoclastic policy; in any case he recognized that it would be a false step to suggest by any omission the idea that he was not strictly orthodox. Halting and dismounting he consigned to the care of Michael the loose red military garment which he wore. This cloak, technically called an *eagle*,[2] and more popularly a *kolobion*, was worn without a belt. Michael is said to have put on the "eagle" which the Emperor had put off. It is not clear whether this was strictly according to etiquette or not, but the incident was supposed to be an omen that Michael would succeed Leo. Another still more ominous incident is said to have followed. The Emperor did not enter by the Brazen Gate, but, having performed his act of devotion, proceeded past the Baths of Zeuxippos, and passing through the Hippodrome reached the Palace at the entrance known as the Skyla.[3] The Emperor walked rapidly through the gate, and Michael, hurrying to keep up with him, awkwardly trampled on the edge of his dress which touched the ground behind.

It was said that Leo himself recognized the omen, but it certainly did not influence him in his conduct; nor is there

[1] Gen. 5, repeated in *Cont. Th.*

[2] *δερὸς*, also *θάλασσα*, *Cont. Th.* 19. Genesios says it was called a *κολόβιον* (a garment with very *short* sleeves, whence its name; cp. Ducange, *Gloss. s.v.*). The incident is the subject of an illustration in the Madrid MS. of Skylitzes (reproduced in Beylié, *L'Habitation byzantine*, 122).

[3] Compare the route of Theophilus on the occasion of his triumph. See below, p. 128.

anything to suggest that at this time Michael was jealous of Leo, or Leo suspicious of Michael. The Emperor made him the Domestic or commander of the Excubitors, with rank of patrician, and treated him as a confidential adviser. Nor did he forget his other comrade, who had served with him under Bardanes, but cleaved more faithfully to his patron than had either the Amorian or the Armenian. Thomas the Slavonian returned from Saracen territory, where he had lived in exile, and was now made Turmarch of the Federates. Thus the three squires of Bardanes are brought into association again. Another appointment which Leo made redounds to his credit, as his opponents grudgingly admitted. He promoted Manuel the Protostrator, who had strongly opposed the resignation of Michael and his own elevation, to the rank of patrician and made him General of the Armeniacs. Manuel could hardly have looked for such favour; he probably expected that his fee would be exile. He was a bold, outspoken man, and when Leo said to him, "You ought not to have advised the late Emperor and Procopia against my interests," he replied, "Nor ought you to have raised a hand against your benefactor and fellow-father," referring to the circumstance that Leo had stood as sponsor for a child of Michael.[1]

The revolution which established a new Emperor on the throne had been accomplished speedily and safely at a moment of great national peril. The defences of the city had to be hastily set in order, and Krum, the Bulgarian victor, appeared before the walls within a week. Although the barbarians of the north had little chance of succeeding where the Saracen forces had more than once failed, and finally retired, the destruction which they wrought in the suburbs was a gloomy beginning for a new reign. The active hostilities of the Bulgarian prince claimed the solicitude of Leo for more than a year, when his death, as he was preparing to attack the capital again, led to the conclusion of a peace.

On the eastern frontier the internal troubles of the Caliphate relieved the Empire from anxiety during this

[1] Or perhaps Michael for a child of Leo (*Cont. Th.* 24). Leo was the godfather of a son of Michael the Amorian (Theophilus—unless Michael had another son who died early), *ib.* 23. There is perhaps no need to suspect a confusion of the two Michaels. The advancements of Michael and Thomas are told in Gen. 12, that of Manuel only in *Cont. Th.*

reign, and, after the Bulgarian crisis had passed, Leo was able to devote his attention to domestic administration. But of his acts almost nothing has been recorded except of those connected with his revival of iconoclasm. His warfare against image-worship was the conspicuous feature of his rule, and, occupied with execrating his ecclesiastical policy, the chroniclers have told us little of his other works. Yet his most bitter adversaries were compelled unwillingly to confess[1] that his activity in providing for the military defences of the Empire and for securing the administration of justice was deserving of all commendation. This was the judgment of the Patriarch Nicephorus, who cannot be accused of partiality. He said after the death of Leo: "The Roman Empire has lost an impious but great guardian."[2] He neglected no measure which seemed likely to prove advantageous to the State; and this is high praise from the mouths of adversaries. He was severe to criminals, and he endeavoured, in appointing judges and governors, to secure men who were superior to bribes. No one could say that love of money was one of the Emperor's weak points. In illustration of his justice the following anecdote is told. One day as he was issuing from the Palace, a man accosted him and complained of a bitter wrong which had been done him by a certain senator. The lawless noble had carried off the poor man's attractive wife and had kept her in his own possession for a long time. The husband had complained to the Prefect of the City, but complained in vain. The guilty senator had influence, and the Prefect was a respecter of persons. The Emperor immediately commanded one of his attendants to bring the accused noble and the Prefect to his presence. The ravisher did not attempt to deny the charge, and the minister admitted that the matter had come before him. Leo enforced the penalties of the law, and stripped the unworthy Prefect of his office.[3]

Our authorities tell us little enough about the administration of this sovran, and their praise is bestowed reluctantly. But it is easy to see that he was a strenuous ruler, of the

[1] Gen. 17-18.

[2] Gen. 17. The account in *Cont. Th.* 30 is taken from Genesios, but the writer, on his own authority, lays out Leo to have been a hypocrite, to have feigned a love of justice for show. Gieseler regarded him as "einer der besten Regenten" (*Lehrbuch der Kirchengeschichte*, ii. 1, p. 4, ed. 4, 1846).

[3] Gen. 18.

usual Byzantine type, devoted to the duties of his post, and concerned to secure efficiency both in his military and civil officers. He transacted most of his State business in the long hall in the Palace which was called the Lausiakos. There his secretaries, who were noted for efficiency, worked under his directions.[1] In undertakings of public utility his industry was unsparing. After the peace with Bulgaria he rebuilt and restored the cities of Thrace and Macedonia, and himself with a military retinue made a progress in those provinces, to forward and superintend the work.[2] He personally supervised the drill and discipline of the army.[3]

§ 2. *Conspiracy of Michael and Murder of Leo*

The reign of Leo closes with another act in the historical drama which opened with the revolt of Bardanes Turcus. We have seen how the Emperor Leo bestowed offices on his two companions, Michael and Thomas. But Michael was not to prove himself more loyal to his Armenian comrade who had outstripped him than he had formerly shown himself to his Armenian master who had trusted him. Thomas indeed had faithfully clung to the desperate cause of the rebel; but he was not to bear himself with equal faith to a more legitimate lord.

The treason of Thomas is not by any means as clear as the treason of Michael. But this at least seems to be certain, that towards the end of the year 820[4] he organized a revolt in the East; that the Emperor, forming a false conception of the danger, sent an inadequate force, perhaps under an incompetent commander, to quell the rising, and that this force was defeated by the rebel.

But with Thomas we have no further concern now; our instant concern is with the commander of the Excubitors, who was more directly under the Imperial eye. It appears that Michael had fallen under the serious suspicion of the Emperor.

[1] Gen. 18.

[2] *Ib.* 28. For his new wall at Blachernae see below, p. 94.

[3] *Cont. Th.* 30.

[4] The date is not given, but may be inferred with tolerable certainty. If the rebellion had broken out sooner than a month or two before Leo's death, Leo would have been constrained to deal seriously with it, and we should have heard about the operations. For the statement of Michael in his letter to Lewis the Pious see Appendix V.

The evidence against him was so weighty that he had hardly succeeded in freeing himself from the charge of treason. He was a rough man, without education or breeding; and while he could not speak polite Greek, his tongue lisped insolently against the Emperor. Perhaps he imagined that Leo was afraid of him; for, coarse and untrained as he may have been, Michael proved himself afterwards to be a man of ability, and does not strike us as one who was likely to have been a reckless babbler. He spoke doubtless these treasonable things in the presence of select friends, but he must have known well how perilous words he uttered. The matter came to the ears of the Emperor, who, unwilling to resort to any extreme measure on hearsay, not only set eavesdroppers to watch the words and deeds of his disaffected officer, but took care that he should be privately admonished to control his tongue. These offices he specially entrusted to the Logothete of the Course, John Hexabulios, a discreet and experienced man, whom we met before on the occasion of the return of Michael Rangabé to the city after the defeat at Hadrianople.[1] We may feel surprise that he who then reproved Michael I. for his folly in leaving the army in Leo's hands, should now be the trusted minister of Leo himself. But we shall find him still holding office and enjoying influence in the reign of Leo's successor. The same man who has the confidence of the First Michael, and warns him against Leo, wins the confidence of Leo, and warns him against another Michael, then wins the confidence of the Second Michael, and advises him on his dealing with an unsuccessful rebel.[2] Had the rebellion of Thomas prospered, Hexabulios would doubtless have been a trusted minister of Thomas too.

Michael was deaf to the warnings and rebukes of the Logothete of the Course; he was indifferent to the dangers in which his unruly talk seemed certain to involve him. The matter came to a crisis on Christmas Eve, A.D. 820. Hexabulios had gained information which pointed to a conspiracy organized by Michael and had laid it before the Emperor. The peril which threatened the throne could no longer be overlooked, and the wrath of Leo himself was furious. Michael was arrested, and the day before the feast

[1] Above, p. 27.

[2] Below, p. 106.

of Christmas was spent in proving his guilt. The inquiry was held in the chamber of the State Secretaries,[1] and the Emperor presided in person. The proofs of guilt were so clear and overwhelming that the prisoner himself was constrained to confess his treason. After such a long space of patience the wrath of the judge was all the more terrible, and he passed the unusual sentence that his old companion-in-arms should be fastened to a pole and cast into the furnace which heated the baths of the Palace. That the indignity might be greater, an ape was to be tied to the victim, in recollection perhaps of the old Roman punishment of parricides.

This sentence would have been carried out and the reign of Leo would not have come to an untimely end, if the Empress Theodosia had not intervened. Shocked at the news of the atrocious sentence, she rose from her couch, and, not even taking time to put on her slippers, rushed to the Emperor's presence, in order to prevent its execution. If she had merely exclaimed against the barbarity of the decree, she might not have compassed her wish, but the very day of the event helped her. It was Christmas Eve. How could the Emperor dare, with hands stained by such foul cruelty, to receive the holy Sacrament on the morrow? Must he not be ashamed that such an act should be associated with the feast of the Nativity? These arguments appealed to the pious Christian. But Theodosia had also an argument which might appeal to the prudent sovran: let the punishment be postponed; institute a stricter investigation, and discover the names of all those who have been implicated in the plot. The appeal of the Empress was not in vain. Her counsels and her entreaties affected the mind of her husband. But while he consented to defer his final decision, it would seem that he had misgivings, and that some dim feeling of danger entered into him. He is reported to have said: "Wife, you have released my soul from sin to-day; perhaps it will soon cost me my life too. You and our children will see what shall happen."

In those days men were ready to see fatal omens and

[1] Gen. 20 περὶ τὸν τῶν ἀσηκρητίων χῶρον. These offices were situated not far from the Lausiakos (cp. Bieliaev, i. 157).

foreshadowings in every chance event and random word. The Emperor lay awake long on the night following that Christmas Eve, tossing in his mind divers grave omens, which seemed to point to some mortal peril, and to signify Michael as the instrument. There was the unlucky chance that on the day of his coronation Michael had trodden on his cloak. But there were other signs more serious and more recent. From a book of oracles and symbolic pictures[1] Leo had discovered the time of his death. A lion pierced in the throat with a sword was depicted between the letters Chi and Phi. These are the first letters of the Greek expressions[2] which mean Christmas and Epiphany, and therefore the symbol was explained that the Imperial lion was to be slain between those two feasts. As the hours went on to Christmas morning the Lion might feel uneasy in his lair. And a strange dream, which he had dreamt a short time before, expressly signified that Michael would be the cause of his death. The Patriarch Tarasius had appeared to him with threatening words and gestures, and had called sternly upon one Michael to slay the sinner. It seemed to Leo that Michael obeyed the command, and that he himself was left half dead.

Tortured with such fears the Emperor bethought him to make further provisions for the safety of the prisoner whose punishment he had deferred. He summoned the keeper (*papias*) of the Palace and bade him keep Michael in one of the rooms which were assigned to the Palace-sweepers, and to fasten his feet in fetters. Leo, to make things doubly sure, kept the key of the fetters in the pocket of his under-garment. But still his fears would not let him slumber, and as the night wore on he resolved to convince himself with his own eyes that the prisoner was safe. Along the passages which led to the room which for the time had been turned into a dungeon, there were locked doors to pass. But they were not solid enough to shut out the Emperor, who was a strong man and easily smashed or unhinged them. He found the prisoner sleeping on the pallet or bench of the keeper, and the keeper himself sleeping on the floor. He saw none save these two, but unluckily there was another present who saw

[1] ἐκ τινος συμβολικῆς βίβλου (Gen. 21).
[2] Χριστοῦ ἡ γέννησις and (τὰ) φῶτα.

him. A little boy[1] in the service of Michael, who had been allowed (doubtless irregularly) to bear his master company, heard the approaching steps and crept under the couch, from which hiding-place he observed the movements of Leo, whom he recognized as the Emperor by his red boots. Leo bent over Michael and laid his hand on his breast, to discover whether the beating of his heart pointed to anxiety or security. When there was no response to his touch, the Emperor marvelled much that his prisoner enjoyed such a sound and careless sleep. But he was vexed at the circumstance that the keeper had resigned his couch to the criminal; such leniency seemed undue and suspicious. Perhaps he was vexed too that the guardian was himself asleep. In any case the lad under the bed observed him, as he was retiring from the cell, to shake his hand threateningly at both the guardian and the prisoner. The unseen spectator of Leo's visit reported the matter to his master, and when the keeper of the Palace saw that he too was in jeopardy they took common counsel to save their lives. The only chance was to effect a communication with the other conspirators, whose names had not yet been revealed. The Emperor had directed that, if Michael were moved to confess his sins and wished for ghostly consolation, the offices of a priest should not be withheld from him, and the matter was entrusted to a certain Theoktistos, who was a servant of Michael, perhaps one of the Excubitors. It certainly seems strange that Leo, who took such anxious precautions in other ways, should have allowed the condemned to hold any converse with one of his own faithful dependants. The concession proved fatal. The keeper led Theoktistos to Michael's presence, and Theoktistos soon left the Palace, under the plea of fetching a minister of religion, but really in order to arrange a plan of rescue with the other conspirators. He assured the accomplices that, if they did not come to deliver the prisoner from death, Michael would not hesitate to reveal their names.

The plan of rescue which the conspirators imagined and carried out was simple enough; but its success depended on the circumstance that the season was winter and the mornings dark. It was the custom that the choristers who chanted the

[1] The boy was an eunuch (Gen. 23).

matins in the Palace Chapel of St. Stephen[1] should enter by the Ivory Gate at daybreak, and as soon as they sang the morning hymn, the Emperor used to enter the church. The conspirators arrayed themselves in clerical robes, and having concealed daggers in the folds, mingled with the choristers who were waiting for admission at the Ivory Gate. Under the cover of the gloom easily escaping detection, they entered the Palace and hid themselves in a dark corner of the chapel. Leo, who was proud of his singing (according to one writer he sang execrably, but another, by no means well disposed to him, states that he had an unusually melodious voice[2]), arrived punctually to take part in the Christmas service, and harbouring no suspicion of the danger which lurked so near. It was a chilly morning, and both the Emperor and the priest who led the service had protected themselves against the cold by wearing peaked felt caps. At a passage in the service which the Emperor used to sing with special unction, the signal was given and the conspirators leaped out from their hiding-place. The likeness in head-dress, and also a certain likeness in face and figure, between Leo and the chief of the officiating clergy, led at first to a blunder. The weapons of the rebels were directed against the priest, but he saved his life by uncovering his head and showing that he was bald. Leo, meanwhile, who saw his danger, had used the momentary respite to rush to the altar and seize some sacred object, whether the cross itself, or the chain of the censer, or a candelabrum, as a weapon of defence. When this was shattered by the swords of the foes who surrounded him and only a useless fragment remained in his hands, he turned to one of them who was distinguished above the others by immense stature and adjured him to spare his life.

[1] *Acta Davidis*, etc., 229 *κατὰ τὸν τοῦ πρωτομάρτυρος Στεφάνου ναὸν τὸν ἔνδον ὄντα τῶν βασιλείων ἐν τόπῳ τῷ ἐπιλεγομένῳ Δάφνῃ*. But Nicetas (*Vit. Ign.* 216) places the murder in the Church of the Virgin of the Pharos, and this is accepted by Ebersolt (155), who consequently gets into difficulties about the Ivory Gate. From Gen. 24 it is clear that this gate was an *exterior* gate of the Palace (this is in accordance with Constantine, *Cer.* 600), doubtless communicating with the Hippodrome, and close to the Daphne Labarte (122; followed by Bieliaev) thought that the church (which Gen. and *Cont. Th.* do not identify) is that of the Lord, which was also close to Daphne. The Armenian historian Wardan (see Marquart, *Streifzüge*, 404) says that the keeper of the prison was a friend of Michael and bribed the *μαγγλαβῖται* (palace-guards), and that they executed the murder. He also mentions the intervention of the Empress.

[2] Gen. p. 19 *σοβαρὸν ἐμβοῶν καὶ κακόρυθμος*, but *Cont. Th.* 39 *ἦν γὰρ φύσει τε εὔφωνος καὶ ἐν ταῖς μελῳδίαις τῶν κατ' ἐκεῖνο καιροῦ ἀνθρώπων ἡδύτατος*.

But the giant, who for his height was nicknamed "One-and-a-half,"[1] swore a great oath that the days of Leo were numbered, and with the word brought down his sword so heavily on the shoulder of his victim that not only was the arm cut from the body, but the implement which the hand still held was cleft and bounded to a distant spot of the building. The Imperial head was then cut off, and the work of murder and rescue was accomplished.[2]

Thus perished the Armenian Leo more foully than any Roman Emperor since Maurice was slain by Phocas. He was, as even his enemies admitted (apart from his religious policy), an excellent ruler, and a rebellion against him, not caused by ecclesiastical discontent, was inexcusable. Michael afterwards declared, in palliation of the conspiracy, that Leo had shown himself to be unequal to coping with the rebellion of Thomas, and that this incompetence had caused discontent among the leading men of the State. But this plea cannot be admitted; for although Thomas defeated a small force which Leo, not fully realizing the danger, had sent against him, there is no reason to suppose that, when he was fully informed of the forces and numbers of the rebel, he would have shown himself less able or less energetic in suppressing the insurrection than Michael himself. Certainly his previous conduct of warfare was not likely to suggest to his ministers that he was incapable of dealing with a revolt. But in any case we have no sign, except Michael's own statement, that the rebellion of Thomas was already formidable. We must conclude that the conspiracy was entirely due to Michael's personal ambition, stimulated perhaps by the signs and omens and soothsayings of which the air was full. It does not appear that the religious question entered into the situation; for Michael was himself favourable to iconoclasm.

The body of the slain Emperor was cast by his murderers into some sewer or outhouse[3] for the moment. It was after-

[1] *ἓν καὶ ἥμισυ*, see Gen. 25. From *Cont. Th.* 39 we get another fact about the giant: he belonged to the family of the Krambónites.

[2] There was a story told that at the very hour at which the deed was wrought, four o'clock in the morning, some sailors, sailing on the sea, heard a strange voice in the air, which they interpreted to signify some portentous event. See Gen. 26, *Cont. Th.* 40. Cp. the story told of the death of Wala of Corbie (A.D. 836): Simson, *Ludwig*, ii. 157.

[3] Gen. 26 *ἐν εὐλοειδέσι χώροις τοῖς πρὸς τὸ δέξιμον* (δ. seems to mean a receptacle for sewerage; not noticed in Ducange's *Gloss.*).

wards dragged naked from the Palace by the "Gate of Spoils" to the Hippodrome,[1] to be exposed to the spurns of the populace, which had so lately trembled in the presence of the form which they now insulted. From the Hippodrome the corpse was borne on the back of a horse or mule to a harbour and embarked in the same boat which was to convey the widow and the children of the Emperor to a lonely and lowly exile in the island of Prôtê. Here a new sorrow was in store for Theodosia: the body of the son who was called by her own name was to be laid by that of his father. The decree had gone forth that the four sons were to be made eunuchs, in order that they might never aspire to recover the throne from which their father had fallen. The same measure which Leo had meted to his predecessor's children was dealt out to his own offspring. Theodosius, who was probably the youngest of the brothers, did not survive the mutilation, and he was buried with Leo. There is a tale that one of the other brothers, but it is not quite clear whether it was Constantine or Basil,[2] lost his power of speech from the same cause, but that by devout and continuous prayer to God and to St. Gregory, whose image had been set up in the island, his voice was restored to him. The third son, Gregory, lived to become in later years bishop of Syracuse. Both Basil and Gregory repented of their iconoclastic errors, and iconodule historians spoke of them in after days as "great in virtue."[3]

But although Michael, with a view to his own security, dealt thus cruelly with the boys, he did not leave the family destitute. He gave them a portion of Leo's property for their support, but he assigned them habitations in different places. The sons were confined in Prôtê, while the wife and the mother of Leo were allowed to dwell "safely and at their own will" in a more verdant and charming island of the same group, Chalkitês, which is now known as Halki.[4]

[1] There is a picture of the scene in the Madrid MS. of Skylitzes (Beylié, *L'Habitation byzantine*, 106). Partisans of Michael appear above the roof of the Palace to illustrate the chronicler's words (Cedrenus, ii. 67) διὰ τὸ τὴν βασίλειον αὐλὴν ὅπλοις οἰκείοις πάντοθεν περιφραχθῆναι.

[2] *Cont. Th.* 47 Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ μετονομασθεὶς Βασίλειος. This, of course, is a mistake. Constantine was not Basil. The renaming was of Symbatios, who became Constantine (*ib.* 41; below, p. 58). It seems probable that Basil was meant, as we find the story told of him in Pseudo-Simeon, 619.

[3] Gen. 99.

[4] *Cont. Th.* 46, where their retreat is designated as the monastery τῶν

§ 3. *The Revival of Iconoclasm*

The revival of image-worship by the Empress Irene and the authority of the Council of Nicaea had not extinguished the iconoclastic doctrine, which was still obstinately maintained by powerful parties both in the Court circles of Byzantium and in the army. It is not surprising that the struggle should have been, however unwisely, renewed. The first period of iconoclasm and persecution, which was initiated by Leo the Isaurian, lasted for more than fifty, the second, which was initiated by Leo the Armenian, for less than thirty years. The two periods are distinguished by the greater prominence of the dogmatic issues of the question in the later epoch, and by the circumstance that the persecution was less violent and more restricted in its range.

We have already seen that Leo, before he entered Constantinople to celebrate his coronation, wrote to assure the Patriarch of his orthodoxy.[1] No hint is given that this letter was a reply to a previous communication from the Patriarch. We may suppose that Leo remembered how Nicephorus had exacted a written declaration of orthodoxy from Michael, and wished to anticipate such a demand. We know not in what terms the letter of Leo was couched, but it is possible that he gave Nicephorus reason to believe that he would be ready to sign a more formal document to the same effect after his coronation. The crowned Emperor, however, evaded the formality, which the uncrowned Emperor had perhaps promised or suggested; and thus when he afterwards repudiated the Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council he could not legally be said to

Δεσποτῶν. I know no other reference to this cloister, but infer that it was in Halki from the letter of Theodore of Studion to Theodosia and her son Basil (ii. 204 *ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἀπεδόθη ὑμῖν παρὰ τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως ἡ νῆσος τῆς Χαλκίτου εἰς κατοικητήριον*). Theodore complains that the abbot and monks had been turned out of their house to make room for Theodosia, and have no home. The letter might suggest that Basil was with Theodosia (in contradiction to the statement of *Cont. Th.*), but the inference is not necessary and the superscription may be inaccurate. For a description of Halki and its monasteries, see Schlumberger, *op. cit.* 102 *sqq.*

[1] Theoph. 502 *γράφει μὲν Νικηφόρῳ τῷ πατριάρχῃ τὰ περὶ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ὀρθοδοξίας διαβεβαιούμενος, αἰτῶν μετὰ τῆς εὐχῆς καὶ ἐπινεύσεως αὐτοῦ τοῦ κράτους ἐπιλαβέσθαι*. This statement of Theophanes is most important and seems to be the key to the difficulty. Theophanes does not say a word in prejudice of Leo. He wrote probably very soon after Leo's accession and before the iconoclastic policy had been announced. If Leo had signed, like Michael, a formal document, Theophanes would almost certainly have mentioned it.

have broken solemn engagements. But his adversaries were eager to represent him as having broken faith. According to one account,[1] he actually signed a solemn undertaking to preserve inviolate the received doctrines of the Church; and this he flagrantly violated by his war against images. According to the other account,[2] he definitely promised to sign such a document after his coronation, but, when it came to the point, refused. The first story seizes the fact of his reassuring letter to Nicephorus and represents it as a binding document; the second story seizes the fact that Leo after his coronation declined to bind himself, and represents this refusal as a breach of a definite promise.

The iconoclastic doctrine was still widely prevalent in the army, and was held by many among the higher classes in the capital. If it had not possessed a strong body of adherents, the Emperor could never have thought of reviving it. That he committed a mistake in policy can hardly be disputed in view of subsequent events. Nicephorus I., in preserving the settlement of the Council of Nicaea, while he allowed iconoclasts perfect freedom to propagate their opinions, had proved himself a competent statesman. For, considered in the interest of ecclesiastical tranquillity, the great superiority of image-worship to iconoclasm lay in the fact that it need not lead to persecution or oppression. The iconoclasts could not be compelled to worship pictures, they had only to endure the offence of seeing them and abstain from insulting them; whereas the adoption of an iconoclastic policy rendered persecution inevitable. The course pursued by Nicephorus seems to have been

[1] Scr. Incert. 340 *πρότερον ποιήσας ἰδιόχειρον*; cp. 349. Simeon (*Leo Gr.* 207) *βεβαιώσας αὐτὸν ἐγγράφως περὶ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ὀρθοδοξίας* (cp. *Vers. Slav.* 90; *Add. Georg.* ed. Mur. 679 has *τὸ ἔγγραφον—ἀθετήσας*). Hirsch is the only modern authority since Lebeau (xii. 297) who accepts this account (22). According to *Vit. Theod. Grapt.* 665, Leo gave an undertaking at the time of the coronation.

[2] Ignatius, *Vit. Niceph. Patr.* 163, 164: Nicephorus sent an elaborate form (*τόμος*), containing the orthodox creed, to Leo before his coronation; Leo assented to its contents, but post-poned signing until the diadem was placed on his head; then *δευτέρᾳ τῆς βασιλείας ἡμέρᾳ καὶ αὖθις ὁ θεοφόρος τῷ τῆς ὀρθοδοξίας τόμῳ τὸν ἀρτιφανῆ βασιλέα κατήπειγεν ἐνσημήνασθαι ὁ δὲ κραταιῶς ἀπηρνεῖτο*. This story may be near the truth though it is told by a partisan. It is repeated by Genesios, etc., and accepted by Finlay, ii. 113 (who here confounds the Patriarch with the deacon Ignatius), Hergenröther, i. 234, and most writers. Hefele leaves the question open (iv. 1). Ignatius relates that the Patriarch, when placing the crown on Leo's head, felt as if he were pricked by thorns (164).

perfectly satisfactory and successful in securing the peace of the Church.

All this, however, must have been as obvious to Leo the Armenian as it seems to us. He cannot have failed to realize the powerful opposition which a revival of iconoclasm would arouse; yet he resolved to disturb the tranquil condition of the ecclesiastical world and enter upon a dangerous and disagreeable conflict with the monks.

Most of the Eastern Emperors were theologians as well as statesmen, and it is highly probable that Leo's personal conviction of the wrongfulness of icon-worship,[1] and the fact that this conviction was shared by many prominent people and widely diffused in the Asiatic Themes, would have been sufficient to induce him to revive an aggressive iconoclastic policy. But there was certainly another motive which influenced his decision. It was a patent fact that the iconoclastic Emperors had been conspicuously strong and successful rulers, whereas the succeeding period, during which the worship of images had been encouraged or permitted, was marked by weakness and some signal disasters. The day is not yet entirely past for men, with vague ideas of the nexus of cause and effect, to attribute the failures and successes of nations to the wrongness or soundness of their theological beliefs; and even now some who read the story of Leo's reign may sympathize with him in his reasoning that the iconoclastic doctrine was proved by events to be pleasing in the sight of Heaven. We are told that "he imitated the Isaurian Emperors Leo and Constantine, whose heresy he revived, wishing to live many years like them and to become illustrious."[2]

To the ardent admirer of Leo the Isaurian, his own name seemed a good omen in days when men took such coincidences seriously; and to make the parallel between his own case and that of his model nearer still, he changed the Armenian name of his eldest son Symbatios and designated him Constantine.[3] The new Constantine was crowned and proclaimed Augustus at the end of 813, when the Bulgarians were still

[1] That the iconoclastic policy of Leo III. and Constantine V. is not to be explained by "considerations of administrative and military interest" has been shown by Lombard, *Constantin V*, cap. viii. See also Schenk, *B.Z.* v. 272 *sqq.*; Bréhier, 41-42. This applies to the later iconoclasts also.

[2] Scr. Incert. 346, 349.

[3] *Ib.* 346. Cp. Gen. 26.

devastating in Thrace or just after they had retreated, and it pleased Leo to hear the soldiers shouting the customary acclamations in honour of "Leo and Constantine." Propitious names inaugurated an Armenian dynasty which might rival the Isaurian.

Stories were told in later times, by orthodox fanatics who execrated his memory, of sinister influences which were brought to bear on Leo and determine his iconoclastic policy. And here, too, runs a thread of that drama in which he was one of the chief actors. The prophecy of the hermit of Philomelion had come to pass, and it is said that Leo, in grateful recognition, sent a messenger with costly presents to seek out the true prophet. But when the messenger arrived at Philomelion he found that the man was dead and that another monk named Sabbatios had taken possession of his hut. Sabbatios was a zealous opponent of image-worship, and he prophesied to the messenger in violent language. The Empress Irene he reviled as "Leopardess" and "Bacchant," he perverted the name of Tarasius to "Taraxios" (Disturber), and he foretold that God would overturn the throne of Leo if Leo did not overturn images and pictures.[1]

The new prophecy from Philomelion is said to have alarmed the Emperor, and he consulted his friend Theodotos Kassiteras on the matter. We already met this Theodotos playing a part in the story of the possessed damsel who foretold Leo's elevation. Whatever basis of fact these stories may have, we can safely infer that Theodotos was an intimate adviser of the Emperor. On this occasion, according to the tale, he did not deal straightforwardly with his master. He advised Leo to consult a certain Antonius, a monk who resided in the capital; but in the meantime Theodotos himself secretly repaired to Antonius and primed him for the coming interview. It was arranged that Antonius should urge the Emperor to adopt the doctrine of Leo the Isaurian and should prophesy that he would reign till his seventy-second year. Leo, dressed as a private individual, visited the monk at night, and his faith

[1] Gen. 13 (repeated in *Cont. Th.*). It may be one of the tales which Genesios derived from rumour (φήμη), but it is also told in the *Epist. Synod. Orient. ad Theoph.* 368, where Sabbatios describes himself as Sesuch the lord of earthquakes, addresses Leo as "Alexander," and prophesies that he will reduce the Bulgarians if he abolishes icons.

was confirmed when Antonius recognised him. This story, which, of course, we cannot unreservedly believe, became current at the time, and was handed down to subsequent generations in a verse pasquinade composed by Theophanes Confessor.[1]

The Emperor discovered a valuable assistant in a young man known as John the Grammarian,[2] who had the distinction of earning as many and as bitter maledictions from the orthodox party of the time and from subsequent orthodox historians as were ever aimed at Manes or at Arius or at Leo III. He was one of the most learned men of his day, and, like most learned men who fell foul of the Church in the middle ages, he was accused of practising the black art. His accomplishments and scientific ability will appear more conspicuously when we meet him again some years hence as an illustrious figure in the reign of Theophilus. He was known by several names. We meet him as John the Reader, more usually as John the Grammarian; but those who detested him used the opprobrious titles of Hylilas,[3] by which they understood a forerunner and coadjutor of the devil, or Lekanomantis, meaning that he conjured with a dish. His parentage, if the account is true, was characteristic. He was the son of one Pankratios, a hermit, who from childhood had been possessed with a demon. But all the statements of our authorities with respect to John are coloured by animosity because he was an iconoclast. Patriarchs and monks loved to drop a vowel of his name and call him "Jannes" after the celebrated magician, just as they loved to call the Emperor Leo "Chame-leon."

The project of reviving iconoclasm was begun warily and silently; Leo had determined to make careful preparations before he declared himself. At Pentecost, 814, John the Grammarian, assisted by several colleagues,[4] began to prepare

[1] Gen. 15.

[2] See Scr. Incert. 349, 350.

[3] *Ib.* It is not quite clear, however, whether this obscure name was applied to John or to Pankratios his father. Pseudo-Simeon (606) interprets the passage in the former sense, and I have followed him. See Hirsch, 332. He belonged to the family of the Morocharzanioi (Morocharzanioi in Cedrenus, ii. 144), *Cont. Th.* 154—a distinguished family in Constantinople, which St. Martin (*apud* Lebeau, xiii. 14) thinks was of Armenian origin. His brother bore the Armenian name Arsaber, and his father's name Pankratios may be a hellenization of Bagrat.

[4] Besides Bishop Antonius, mentioned below, the other members of

an elaborate work against the worship of images. The Emperor provided him with full powers to obtain access to any libraries that he might wish to consult. Rare and ancient books were scattered about in monasteries and churches, and this notice suggests that it was not easy for private individuals to obtain permission to handle them. It is said that the zeal of the scholar was increased by a promise of Leo to appoint him Patriarch, in case it should be found necessary to remove Nicephorus. John and his colleagues collected many books and made an extensive investigation. Of course their opponents alleged that they found only what they sought, and sought only for passages which might seem to tell in favour of iconoclasm, while they ignored those which told against it. The Acts of the Synod of 753 gave them many references, and we are told how they placed marks in the books at the relevant passages.[1]

It was desirable to have a bishop in the commission, and in July a suitable person was found in Antonius, the bishop of Syllaion in Pamphylia.[2] He is said to have been originally a lawyer and a schoolmaster, and in consequence of some scandal to have found it advisable to enter a monastery. He became an abbot, and, although his behaviour was loose and unseemly, "God somehow allowed him" to become bishop of Syllaion. His indecent behaviour seems to have consisted in amusing the young monks with funny tales and practical jokes. He was originally orthodox and only adopted the heresy in order to curry favour at the Imperial Court. Such is the sketch of the man drawn by a writer who was violently prejudiced against him and all his party.[3]

Private apartments in the Palace were assigned to the committee, and the bodily wants of the members were so well provided for that their opponents described them as living like pigs.[4] In the tedious monotony of their work they were consoled by delicacies supplied from the Imperial kitchen, and

the commission were the laymen Joannes Spektas and Eutychianos, members of the Senate, and the monks Leontios and Zosimas (Theosteriktos, *Vit. Nicet.* xxix., who adds that Zosimas soon afterwards died in consequence of having his nose cut off as a punishment for adultery).

[1] Scr. Incert. 350 (*σημάδια βάλλοντες εἰς τοὺς τόπους ἔνθα ηὕρισκον*).

[2] Syllaion was near the inland Kibyra (see Anderson's Map of Asia Minor).

[3] Scr. Incert. 351.

[4] Ignatius, *Vit. Nic. Patr.* 165 *τὸ πρὸς τρυφὴν συῶν δίκην ἀποτάξας αὐτοῖς σιτηρέσιον.*

while the learning and subtlety of John lightened the difficulties of the labour, the jests and buffoonery of the bishop might enliven the hours of relaxation. The work of research was carried on with scrupulous secrecy. Whenever any curious person asked the students what they were doing they said, "The Emperor commissioned us to consult these books, because some one told him that he has only a short time to reign; that is the object of our search."[1]

In December the work of the commission was completed and the Emperor summoned Nicephorus to a private interview in the Palace.[2] Leo advocated the iconoclastic policy on the ground that the worship of images was a scandal in the army. "Let us make a compromise," he said, "to please the soldiers, and remove the pictures which are hung low." But Nicephorus was not disposed to compromise; he knew that compromise in this matter would mean defeat. When Leo reminded him that image-worship was not ordained in the Gospels and laid down that the Gospels were the true standard of orthodoxy, Nicephorus asserted the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in successive ages. This interview probably did not last very long. The Patriarch was firm and the Emperor polite. Leo was not yet prepared to proceed to extremes, and Nicephorus still hoped for his conversion, even as we are told that Pope Gregory II. had hoped for the conversion of his Isaurian namesake.

The policy of the orthodox party at this crisis was to refuse to argue the question at issue. The Church had already declared itself on the matter in an Ecumenical Council; and to doubt the decision of the Church was heretical. And so when Leo proposed that some learned bishops whom the Patriarch had sent to him should hold a disputation with some learned iconoclasts, the Emperor presiding, they emphatically declined, on the ground that the Council of Nicaea

[1] According to the *Epist. Synod. Orient. ad Theoph.* 373, Nicephorus at length obtained an inkling of what was going on in the Palace and summoned a synod in St. Sophia, at which he charged the members of the commission with heretical opinions; and the synod anathematized Antonius. It may be questioned whether the authors of this document were accurately informed. See C. Thomas, *Theodor*, 104, n. 2. The synod, at which 270 ecclesiastics are said to have been present, was doubtless a *σύνοδος ἐνδημοῦσα*, for which see Hergenröther, i. 38, and Pargoire, *L'Égl. byz.* 55-56.

[2] This interview is described by Scr. Incert. 352-353.

in A.D. 787 had settled the question of image-worship for ever.

Soon after these preliminary parleys, soldiers of the Tagmata or residential regiments showed their sympathies by attacking the Image of Christ over the Brazen Gate of the Palace. It was said that this riot was suggested and encouraged by Leo; and the inscription over the image, telling how Irene erected a new icon in the place of that which Leo III. destroyed, might stimulate the fury of those who revered the memory of the Isaurian Emperors. Mud and stones were hurled by the soldiers at the sacred figure, and then the Emperor innocently said, "Let us take it down, to save it from these insults." This was the first overt act in the new campaign, and the Patriarch thought it high time to summon a meeting of bishops and abbots to discuss the danger which was threatening the Church. The convocation was held in the Patriarch's palace. All those who were present swore to stand fast by the doctrine laid down at the Seventh Council, and they read over the passages which their opponents cited against them.[1] When Christmas came, Nicephorus begged the Emperor to remove him from the pontifical chair if he (Nicephorus) were unpleasing in his eyes, but to make no innovations in the Church. To this Leo replied by disclaiming either intention.[2]

These preliminary skirmishes occurred before Christmas (A.D. 814). On Christmas day it was noticed by curious and watchful eyes that Leo adored in public a cloth on which the birth of Christ was represented.[3] But on the next great feast of the Church, the day of Epiphany, it was likewise observed that he did not adore, according to custom. Meanwhile, the iconoclastic party was being reinforced by proselytes, and the Emperor looked forward to a speedy settlement of the question in his own favour at a general synod. He issued a summons to the bishops of the various dioceses in the Empire to

[1] The riot of the soldiers and the meeting of the bishops occurred in December before Christmas: so expressly Scr. Incert. 355 *ταῦτα ἐπράχθη πρὸ τῶν ἑορτῶν*. C. Thomas (*ib.* 107, n. 5) seems to have overlooked this. The Patriarch's palace was on the th side of St. Sophia, probably rds the east; see Bieliaev, ii. 133-135; Ebersolt, *Sainte-Sophie de Constantinople*, 26-27 (1910).

[2] He evidently had an audience of the Emperor, perhaps on Christmas day, *φθασάντων* (*sic*) *τῶν ἑορτῶν* (Scr. Incert. *ib.*).

[3] *βουλόμενος διαβάσαι τὴν ἑορτήν* (*ib.*).

assemble in the capital, and perhaps stirred the prelates of Hellas to undertake the journey by a reminiscence flattering to their pride. He reminded them that men from Mycenae in Argolis, men from Carystos in Euboea, men from Corinth, and many other Greeks, joined the Megarians in founding that colony of the Bosphorus which had now grown to such great estate.[1] According as they arrived, they were conducted straightway to the Emperor's presence, and were prohibited from first paying a visit to the Patriarch, as was the usual practice. The Emperor wished to act on their hopes or fears before they had been warned or confirmed in the faith by the words of their spiritual superior; and this policy was regarded as one of his worst acts of tyranny. Many of the bishops submitted to the arguments or to the veiled threats of their sovran, and those who dared to resist his influence were kept in confinement.[2] The Patriarch in the meantime encouraged his own party to stand fast. He was supported by the powerful interest of the monks, and especially by Theodore, abbot of Studion, who had been his adversary a few years ago. A large assembly of the faithful was convoked in the Church of St. Sophia, and a service lasting the whole night was celebrated.[3] Nicephorus prayed for the conversion of the Emperor, and confirmed his followers in their faith.

The Emperor was not well pleased when the news reached the Palace of the doings in the Church. About the time of cockcrow he sent a message of remonstrance to the Patriarch and summoned him to appear in the Palace at break of day, to explain his conduct. There ensued a second and more famous interview between the Emperor and the Patriarch, when they discussed at large the arguments for and against image-worship. Nicephorus doubtless related to his friends the substance of what was said, and the admirers of that saint afterwards wrote elaborate accounts of the dialogue, which they found a grateful subject for exhibiting learning,

[1] Gen. 27 ἐντεῦθεν καὶ γράψας παντὶ ἐπισκόπῳ καταίρειν ἐν Βυζαντίῳ τῷ ὑπὸ Μεγαρέων κτισθέντι καὶ Βύζαντος, κατ' Εὐρώπην συνελθόντων ἐν τῇ τούτου πολίσει Καρυστίων Μυκηναίων καὶ Κορινθίων ἄλλων τε πολλῶν, φιλοσόφοις ἅμα καὶ ῥήτορσι. The mythological flourish may be due to Genesios.

[2] Ignatius, *Vit. Nic. Patr.* 166. An assembly of the bishops was held in the Palace (τοῦ δευτέρου Καϊάφα συνίστη τὸ βουλευτήριον, *ib.*) before the Patriarch's counter-demonstration; but of course it was not a "synod."

[3] Ignatius, *Vit. Nic. Patr.* 167 τὴν πάννυχον ἐπιτελέσοντας σύναξιν.

subtlety, and style. Ultimately Nicephorus proposed that the bishops and others who had accompanied him to the gate should be admitted to the Imperial presence, that his Majesty might become fully convinced of their unanimity on the question at issue. The audience was held in the Chrysotriklinos,[1] and guards with conspicuous swords were present, to awe the churchmen into respect and obedience.

The Emperor bent his brows and spake thus:[2]

Ye, like all others, are well aware that God has appointed us to watch over the interests of this illustrious and reasonable flock;[3] and that we are eager and solicitous to smoothe away and remove every thorn that grows in the Church. As some members of the fold are in doubt as to the adoration of images, and cite passages of Scripture which seem unfavourable to such practices, the necessity of resolving the question once for all is vital; more especially in order to compass our great end, which, as you know, is the unity of the whole Church. The questioners supply the premisses; we are constrained to draw the conclusion. We have already communicated our wishes to the High Pontiff, and now we charge you to resolve the problem speedily. If you are too slow you may end in saying nothing, and disobedience to our commands will not conduce to your profit.

The bishops and abbots, encouraged by the firmness of the Patriarch, did not flinch before the stern aspect of the Emperor, and several spoke out their thoughts, the others murmuring approval.[4] Later writers edified their readers by composing orations which might have been delivered on such an occasion. In Theodore, the abbot of Studion, the Emperor recognised his most formidable opponent, and some words are ascribed to Theodore, which are doubtless genuine. He is reported to have denied the right of the Emperor to interfere in ecclesiastical affairs:

Leave the Church to its pastors and masters; attend to your own province, the State and the army. If you refuse to do this, and are bent on destroying our faith, know that though an angel came from heaven to pervert us we would not obey him, much less you.[5]

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[1] *πρὸς τὰ χρυσόροφα ἀνάκτορα* (Ignatius, *Vit. Nic.* 168).

[2] I translate freely from Ignatius. The general tenor of the speech is doubtless correct.

[3] *τὴν μεγαλώνυμον καὶ λογικὴν ποίμνην.*

[4] Theosteriktos, *Vit. Nicet.* 29, enumerates those who took a prominent part: the bishops Euthymios of Sardis, Aemilian of Cyzicus, Michael of Synnada, Theophylactus of Nicomedia, and Peter of Nicaea.

[5] Theosteriktos, *Vit. Nicet.* 30; George Mon. 777; Michael, *Vit. Theod.* 280 *sqq.* (where, however, the strong figure of an angel's descent is omitted).

The protest against Caesaropapism is characteristic of Theodore. The Emperor angrily dismissed the ecclesiastics, having assured Theodore that he had no intention of making a martyr of him or punishing him in any way, until the whole question had been further investigated.[1]

Immediately after this conclave an edict was issued forbidding members of the Patriarch's party to hold meetings or assemble together in private houses. The iconodules were thus placed in the position of suspected conspirators, under the strict supervision of the Prefect of the City; and Nicephorus himself was practically a captive in his palace, under the custody of one Thomas, a patrician.

The Patriarch did not yet wholly despair of converting the Emperor, and he wrote letters to some persons who might exert an influence over him. He wrote to the Empress Theodosia,[2] exhorting her to deter her lord from his "terrible enterprise." He also wrote to the General Logothete to the same effect, and in more threatening language to Eutychian, the First Secretary. Eutychian certainly gave no heedful ear to the admonitions of the pontiff. If the Empress saw good to intervene, or if the General Logothete ventured to remonstrate, these representations were vain. The Emperor forbade Nicephorus to exercise any longer the functions of his office.[3]

Just at this time[4] the Patriarch fell sick, and if the

[1] Michael, *Vit. Theod.* 281-284.

[2] She was the daughter of Arsaber, patrician and quaestor (Gen. 21). Dark hints were let fall that there was something queer about her marriage with Leo. Perhaps she was a relative within the forbidden limits. Cp. *ib.* 19.

[3] Ignatius, *Vit. Nic.* 190. A curious story is told by Michael Syr. 71, that the crown of a statue of "Augustus Caesar," which stood on a high column, fell off. It was difficult, but important, to replace it, for it was believed that the crown had the power of averting pestilence from the city. When a man was found capable of the task, the Patriarch secretly gave him some coins and instructed him to say that he had found them at the foot of the statue. He wished to prove that the representation of sacred images was ancient. When the man descended and showed the old coins, the Emperor asked him whether he found them exposed to the air or in a receptacle. He said "exposed to the air." The Emperor had them washed with water and the images disappeared. The man confessed the imposture, and the Patriarch was discredited. The motif of this fiction is doubtless an incident which occurred in the reign of Theophilus, when the gold circle (*τοῦφα*) of the equestrian statue of Justinian in the Augusteum fell, and an agile workman reached the top of the column by the device, incredible as it is described by Simeon (*Leo Gr.* 227), of climbing with a rope to the roof of St. Sophia, attaching the rope to a dart, and hurling the dart which entered so firmly into the statue (*ἱππότην*, the Lat. transl. has *equum*) that he was able to swing himself along the suspended rope to the summit of the column.

[4] Probably in February.

malady had proved fatal, Leo's path would have been smoothed. A successor of iconoclastic views could then have been appointed, without the odium of deposing such an illustrious prelate as Nicephorus. If Leo did not desire the death of his adversary, he decided at this time who was to be the next Patriarch. Hopes had been held out to John the Grammarian that he might aspire to the dignity, but on maturer reflexion it was agreed that he was too young and obscure.[1] Theodotos Kassiteras, who seems to have been the most distinguished supporter of Leo throughout this ecclesiastical conflict, declared himself ready to be ordained and fill the Patriarchal chair.[2]

But Nicephorus did not succumb to the disease. He recovered at the beginning of Lent[3] when the Synod was about to meet. Theophanes, a brother of the Empress,[4] was sent to invite Nicephorus to attend, but was not admitted to his presence. A clerical deputation, however, waited at the Patriarcheion, and the unwilling Patriarch was persuaded by Thomas the patrician, his custodian, to receive them.[5] Nicephorus was in a prostrate condition, but his visitors could not persuade him to make any concessions. Their visit had somehow become known in the city and a riotous mob, chiefly consisting of soldiers, had gathered in front of the Patriarcheion. A rush into the building seemed so imminent that Thomas was obliged to close the gates, while the crowd of enthusiastic iconoclasts loaded with curses the obnoxious names of Tarasius and Nicephorus.[6]

After this the Synod met and deposed Nicephorus. The enemies of Leo encouraged the belief that the idea of putting Nicephorus to death was seriously entertained, and it is stated that Nicephorus himself addressed a letter to the Emperor, begging him to depose him and do nothing more violent, for

[1] Scr. Incert. 359. The disappointment of John was doubtless due to the interest of Theodotos.

[2] He belonged to the important family of the Melissenoi. His father Michael, patrician and general of the Anatolic Theme, had been a leading iconoclast under Constantine V. (cp. Theoph. 440, 445). For the family see Ducange, *Fam. Byz.* 145*a*.

[3] Scr. Incert. 358. In the meantime, some of the duties of the Patriarch had been entrusted to a patrician, whose views were at variance with those of the Patriarch (see Ignatius, *Vit. Nic. Patr.* 190). From the Scr. Incert. we know that this patrician was Thomas.

[4] *Ib.* 191 *τὸν τῆς βασιλίσσης ὁμαίμονα.*

[5] *Ib.* 193. The deputation brought a pamphlet with them — *τῷ ἀτόμῳ ἐκείνῳ τόμῳ*—which they tried to persuade him to endorse, threatening him with deposition.

[6] *Ib.* 196. Scr. Incert. 358.

his own sake. But there is no good reason to suppose that Leo thought of taking the Patriarch's life. By such a course he would have gained nothing, and increased his unpopularity among certain sections of his subjects. It was sufficient to remove Nicephorus from Constantinople, especially as he had been himself willing to resign his chair. On the Bosphorus, not far north of the Imperial city, he had built himself a retreat, known as the monastery of Agathos.[1] Thither he was first removed, but after a short time it was deemed expedient to increase the distance between the fallen Patriarch and the scene of his activity. For this purpose Bardas, a nephew of the Emperor, was sent to transport him to another but somewhat remoter monastery of his own building, that of the great Martyr Theodore, higher up the Bosphorus on the Asiatic side. The want of respect which the kinsman of the Emperor showed to his prisoner as they sailed to their destination made the pious shake their heads, and the tragic end of the young man four years later served as a welcome text for edifying sermons. Bardas as he sat on the deck summoned the Patriarch to his presence; the guards did not permit "the great hierarch" to seat himself; and their master irreverently maintained his sitting posture in the presence of grey hairs. Nicephorus, seeing the haughty and presumptuous heart of the young man, addressed him thus: "Fair Bardas, learn by the misfortunes of others to meet your own."[2] The words were regarded as a prophecy of the misfortunes in store for Bardas.[3]

On Easter day (April 1) Theodotos Kassiteras was tonsured and enthroned as Patriarch of Constantinople. The tone of the Patriarchal Palace notably altered when Theodotos took the place of Nicephorus. He is described by an opponent as a good-natured man who had a reputation for virtue, but was lacking in personal piety.[4] It has been already observed that he was a relative of Constantine V., and as soon as he was consecrated he scandalised stricter brethren in a way

[1] Ignatius, *Vit. Nic.* 201. It is not certain on which side of the Strait Agathos lay, but it can be proved that St. Theodore was on the Asiatic (see l'argoire, *Boradion*, 476-477). The date of the deposition is given by Theoph. *De exil. S. Nic.* 166, as March 13, by Michael, *Vit. Theod.* 285, as March 20.

[2] γνῶθι ταῖς ἀλλοτρίαις συμφοραῖς τὰς ἑαυτοῦ καλῶς διατίθεσθαι.

[3] See below, p. 72. The edifying anecdote may reasonably be suspected.

[4] Scr. Incert. 360.

which that monarch would have relished. A luncheon party[1] was held in the Patriarcheion, and clerks and monks who had eaten no meat for years, were constrained by the kind compulsion of their host to partake unsparingly of the rich viands which were set before them. The dull solemnity of an archiepiscopal table was now enlivened by frivolous conversation, amusing stories, and ribald wit.[2]

The first duty of Theodotos was to preside at the iconoclastic Council, for which all the preparations had been made. It met soon after his consecration, in St. Sophia, in the presence of the two Emperors.[3] The decree of this Synod reflects a less violent spirit than that which had animated the Council assembled by Constantine V. With some abbreviations and omissions it ran as follows:—

"The Emperors Constantine (V.) and Leo (IV.) considering the public safety to depend on orthodoxy, gathered a numerous synod of spiritual fathers and bishops, and condemned the unprofitable practice, unwarranted by tradition, of making and adoring icons, preferring worship in spirit and in truth.

"On this account, the Church of God remained tranquil for not a few years, and the subjects enjoyed peace, till the government passed from men to a woman, and the Church was distressed by female simplicity. She followed the counsel of very ignorant bishops, she convoked an injudicious assembly, and laid down the doctrine of painting in a material medium the Son and Logos of God, and of representing the Mother of God and the Saints by dead figures, and enacted that these representations should be adored, heedlessly defying the proper doctrine of the Church. So she sullied our latreutic adoration, and declared that what is due only to God should be offered to lifeless icons; she foolishly said that they were full of divine grace, and admitted the lighting of candles and the burning of incense before them. Thus she caused the simple to err.

"Hence we ostracize from the Catholic Church the unauthorised manufacture of pseudonymous icons; we reject the adoration defined by Tarasius; we annul the decrees of his synod, on the ground that they

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[1] Scr. Incert. 360 *ἀριστόδειπνα, déjeuner.*

[2] *Ib.* *γέλοια καὶ παιγνίδια καὶ παλαίσματα καὶ αἰσχρολογίας.*

[3] The proceedings of this Council were destroyed when images were restored; but the text of the decree has been extracted literally from the anti-iconoclastic work of the Patriarch Nicephorus entitled *Ἔλεγχος καὶ ἀνατροπὴ τοῦ ἀθέσμου κτλ. ὅρου* (preserved in cod. Paris, 1250) by D. Serruys (see Bibliography; *Acta conciliі*, A.D. 815). In the first part of this treatise (unpublished, but see Fabricius, *Bibl. Gr.* ed. Harles, vii. 610 *sq.*) Nicephorus reproduced and commented on the principal decrees of the iconoclastic councils. The other sources for the synod of 815 are: Theodore Stud. *Epp.* ii. 1; Michael II. *Ep. ad Lud.*; Scr. Incert. 360-361; Theosteriktos, *Vit. Nicet.* xxx. Cp. Mansi, xiv. 135 *sqq.* 417.

granted undue honour to pictures; and we condemn the lighting of candles and offering of incense.

"But gladly accepting the holy Synod, which met at Blachernae in the temple of the unspotted Virgin in the reign of Constantine and Leo as firmly based on the doctrine of the Fathers, we decree that the manufacture of icons—we abstain from calling them *idols*, for there are degrees of evil—is neither worshipful nor serviceable."[1]

The theological theory of image-worship must be left to divines. In its immediate aspect, the question might seem to have no reference to the abstract problems of metaphysical theology which had divided the Church in previous ages. But it was recognised by the theological champions of both parties[2] that the adoration of images had a close theoretical connexion with the questions of Christology which the Church professed to have settled at the Council of Chalcedon. The gravest charge which the leading exponents of image-worship brought against the iconoclastic doctrine was that it compromised or implicitly denied the Incarnation. It is to be observed that this inner and dogmatic import of the controversy, although it appears in the early stages,[3] is far more conspicuous in the disputations which marked the later period of iconoclasm. To the two most prominent defenders of pictures, the Patriarch Nicephorus and the abbot of Studion, this is the crucial point. They both regard the iconoclasts as heretics who have lapsed into the errors of Arianism or Monophysitism.[4] The other aspects of the veneration of sacred pictures are treated as of secondary importance in the writings of Theodore of Studion; the particular question of pictures of Christ absorbs his

[1] *ἀπροσκύνητος καὶ ἄχρηστος.*

[2] In the Acts of the Synod of A.D. 753 (754), the iconoclasts attempted to show that image-worship involved either Monophysitism or Nestorianism (Mansi, xiii. 247-257). Cp. Schwarzlose, *Der Bilderstreit*, 92 *sqq.*

[3] John of Damascus (*Or.* i. 4, 16, etc.) bases the legitimacy of pictures on the Incarnation.

[4] See the First *Antirrhesis* of Nicephorus, who observes that Constantine V. made war *κατὰ τῆς τοῦ Μονογενοῦς οἰκονομίας* (217). Cp. also *ib.* 221, 244, and 248-249. The works of Theodore on this question are subtler than those of Nicephorus. His *Third Antirrhetikos* would probably be considered by theologians specially important. It turns largely on the notion of *περιγραφή*, expounding the doctrine that Christ was *περίγραπτος* (as well as *ἀπερίγραπτος*), circumscript and capable of being delineated. Theodore constructed a philosophical theory of iconology, which is somewhat mystical and seems to have been influenced by Neo-Platonism. It is based on the principle that not only does the copy (*εἰκών*) imply the prototype, but the prototype implies the copy; they are identical *καθ' ὁμοίωσιν*, though not *κατ' οὐσίαν*. See passages quoted by Schwarzlose, 180 *sqq.*; Schneider, 105 *sq.*

interest, as the great point at issue, believing, as he did, that iconoclasm was an insidious attack on the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation.

We must now glance at the acts of oppression and persecution of which Leo is said to have been guilty against those who refused to join his party and accept the guidance of the new Patriarch. Most eminent among the sufferers was Theodore, the abbot of Studion, who seemed fated to incur the displeasure of his sovrans. He had been persecuted in the reign of Constantine VI.; he had been persecuted in the reign of Nicephorus; he was now to be persecuted more sorely still by Leo the Armenian. He had probably spoken bolder words than any of his party, when the orthodox bishops and abbots appeared before the Emperor. He is reported to have said to Leo's face that it was useless and harmful to talk with a heretic; and if this be an exaggeration of his admiring biographer, he certainly told him that Church matters were outside an Emperor's province. When the edict went forth, through the mouth of the Prefect of the City, forbidding the iconodules to utter their opinions in public or to hold any communications one with another, Theodore said that silence was a crime.[1] At this juncture he encouraged the Patriarch in his firmness, and when the Patriarch was dethroned, addressed to him a congratulatory letter, and on Palm Sunday (March 25), caused the monks of Studion to carry their holy icons round the monastery in solemn procession, singing hymns as they went.[2] And when the second "pseudo-synod" (held after Easter) was approaching, he supplied his monks with a formula of refusal, in case they should be summoned to take part in it. By all these acts, which, coming from a man of his influence were doubly significant, he made himself so obnoxious to the author of the iconoclastic policy, that at length he was thrown into prison. His correspondence then became known to the Emperor, and among his recent letters, one to Pope Paschal, describing the divisions of the Church, was conspicuous. Theodore was accompanied into exile by Nicolas, one of the Studite brethren.[3] They were first sent to a fort named Metopa situated on the Mysian Lake of

[1] Theodore, *Epp.* ii. 2; Michael, *Vit. Theod.* 284.

[2] Michael, *Vit. Theod.* 285.

[3] *Vit. Nicolai Stud.* 881.

Artynia.[1] The second prison was Bonita,[2] and there the sufferings of the abbot of Studion are said to have been terrible. His biographer delights in describing the stripes which were inflicted on the saint[3] and dwells on the sufferings which he underwent from the extremes of heat and cold as the seasons changed. The visitations of fleas and lice in the ill-kept prison are not omitted. In reading such accounts we must make a large allowance for the exaggeration of a bigoted partisan, and we must remember that in all ages the hardships of imprisonment endured for political and religious causes are seldom or never fairly stated by those who sympathize with the "martyrs." In the present instance, the harsh treatment is intelligible. If Theodore had only consented to hold his peace, without surrendering his opinions, he would have been allowed to live quietly in some monastic retreat at a distance from Constantinople. If he had behaved with the dignity of Nicephorus, whose example he might well have imitated, he would have avoided the pains of scourgings and the unpleasant experiences of an oriental prison-house. From Bonita he was transferred to the city of Smyrna, and thrown into a dungeon, where he languished until at the accession of Michael II. he was released from prison. In Smyrna he came into contact with a kinsman of Leo, named Bardas, who resided there as Stratêgos of the Thrakesian Theme. There can be little doubt that this Bardas was the same young man who showed scant courtesy to the fallen Patriarch Nicephorus, on his way to the monastery of St. Theodore. At Smyrna Bardas fell sick, and someone, who believed in the divine powers of the famous abbot of Studion, advised him to consult the prisoner. Theodore exhorted the nephew of Leo to abjure his uncle's

[1] Called at this time the Lake of Apollonia (*Vit. Nic. Stud.*), after the important town at its eastern corner. Cp. Pargoire, *Saint Théophane*, 70. Theodore remained for a year at Metopa, April 15, 815-816 spring, *ib.* 71.

[2] Our data for the location of Bonita are: it was 100 miles from the Lycian coast (Theodore, *Ep.* 75, p. 61, ed. Cozza-Luzi), near a salt lake (*ib.*), in the Anatolic Theme (*ib. Ep.* 10, p. 10); and Chonae lay on the road from it to Smyrna. Hence Pargoire, *op. cit.* 70-71, places it close to Aji-Tuz-Göl, "the lake of bitter waters," *i.e.*, Lake Anava, east of Chonae. For this lake see Ramsay, *Phrygia*, i. 230. (Cp. also Pargoire, in *Échos d'Orient*, vi. 207-212, 1903.)

[3] In the *Vit. Nic. Stud.* it is stated that Theodore and Nicolas received a hundred strokes each, for writing certain letters. Afterwards they were beaten with fresh withies called *rhecae*. Moreover, their hands were bound with ropes which were drawn very tight. Their imprisonment at Smyrna lasted 20 months, so that they left Bonita in May–June 819 (Pargoire, *Saint Théophane*, *ib.*).

heresy. The virtue of the saint proved efficacious; the young man recovered; but the repentance was hollow, he returned to his error; then retribution followed and he died. This is one of the numerous stories invented to glorify the abbot of Studion, the bulwark of image-worship.[1]

One of the gravest offences of Theodore in the Emperor's eyes was doubtless his attempt to excite the Pope to intervene in the controversy. We have two letters which he, in conjunction with other image-worshippers, addressed to Pope Paschal I. from Bonita.[2] His secret couriers maintained communications with Rome,[3] where some important members of the party had found a refuge,[4] and Paschal was induced to send to Leo an argumentative letter in defence of images.[5]

The rigour of the treatment dealt out to Theodore was exceptional. Many of the orthodox ecclesiastics who attended the Synod of April A.D. 815 submitted to the resolutions of that assembly. Those who held out were left at large till the end of the year, but early in A.D. 816 they were conducted to distant places of exile. This hardship, however, was intended only to render them more amenable to the gentler method of persuasion. After a few days, they were recalled to Constantinople, kept in mild confinement, and after Easter (April 20), they were handed over to John the Grammarian, who presided over the monastery of Saints Sergius and Bacchus. He undertook to convince the abbots of their theological error, and his efforts were crowned with success in the case of at least seven. Others resisted the arguments of the seducer, and among them were Hilarion, the Exarch of the Patriarchal monasteries, and Theophanes the Chronographer.[6]

[1] These details about Theodore's banishment are derived from Theodore's Letters, from Michael's *Vita Theodori*, and a few from the *Vita Nicolai*.

[2] Theodore, *Epp.* ii. 12 and 13. Paschal was elected in Jan. 817, and the letters belong probably to 817 and 818 respectively. John of Eukairia, a signatory of the first letter, did not sign the second; he had in the meantime joined the iconoclasts (*ib.* ii. 35).

[3] Dionysios who was in Rome at the beginning of 817; Euphemian (*ib.* ii. 12); and Epiphanes, who was ught and imprisoned at Constantinople (*Ep.* 277, Cozza-Luzi).

[4] Methodius, abbot of Chênolakkos (afterwards Patriarch of Constantinople); John, Bishop of Monembasia (*Ep.* 193, Cozza-Luzi).

[5] Part of this epistle is preserved in a Greek version and has been edited by G. Mercati, *Note di letteratura biblica e cristiana antica = Studi i Testi*, 5), 227 *sqq.*, 1901. It contains some arguments which appear to be new.

[6] Our chief source here is Theosteriktos, *Vit. Nic.* xxx. *sq.* Nicetas, abbot of Medikion, was taken to Masalaion (possibly in Lycaonia, cp. Ramsay, *Asia Minor*, 356), where he

Theophanes, whose chronicle was almost our only guide for the first twelve years of the ninth century, had lived a life unusually ascetic even in his own day, in the monastery of Agros, at Sigriane near Cyzicus.[1] He had not been present at the Synod nor sent into exile, but in the spring of A.D. 816 the Emperor sent him a flattering message, couched in soft words, requesting him to come "to pray for us who are about to march against the Barbarians." Theophanes, who was suffering from an acute attack of kidney disease,[2] obeyed the command, and was afterwards consigned to the custody of John. Proving obstinate he was confined in a cell in the Palace of Eleutherios for nearly two years, and when he was mortally ill of his malady, he was removed to the island of Samothrace where he expired (March 12, A.D. 818) about three weeks after his arrival.[3]

When we find that Leo's oppressions have been exaggerated in particular cases, we shall be all the more inclined to allow for exaggeration in general descriptions of his persecutions. We read that "some were put to death by the sword, others tied in sacks and sunk like stones in water, and women were stripped naked in the presence of men and scourged."[4] If

remained for only 5 days. He succumbed to the arguments of John, but afterwards repented, and was banished to the island of St. Glyceria "in the Gulf," which Büttner-Wobst (*B.Z.* vi. 98 *sq.*) identifies (unconvincingly) with Niandro. See also Theodore, *Ep.* 79, Cozza-Luzi, and *Epp.* ii. 9; Sabas, *Vit. Macar.* 154 (Makarios of Pelekete was one of those who did not yield); and the *Vitae* of Theophanes. John was assisted in his work by Joseph, famous as the subject of the Moechian controversy. Theodore Stud. wrote to Theophanes (while he was in SS. Sergius and Bacchus), congratulating him on his firmness (*Ep.* 140, Cozza-Luzi).

[1] Sigriane has been located in the environs of Kurchunlu, at the foot of Karadagh, between the mouth of the Rhyndakos and Cyzicus. See T. E. Euangelides, Ἡ Μονὴ τῆς Σιγριανῆς ἢ τοῦ Μεγάλου Ἀγροῦ (Athens, 1895) 11 *sqq.*; Pargoire, *op. cit.* 112 *sqq.* The island of Kalonymos (ancient Besbikos, modern Emir Ali Adasse), mentioned in the biographies of Theophanes, who founded a monastery on it, lies due north of the estuary of the Rhyndakos. Sigriane is to be carefully distinguished from Sigrêne near the river Granikos, with which Ramsay (*Asia Minor*, 162) and others have identified it (Pargoire, *ib.* 45-47).

[2] Nicephorus Blach. *Vit. Theoph.* 23. Theophanes had stone in the bladder.

[3] For the day see Anon. B. *Vit. Theoph.* 397 (and Anon. C. 293). For the year see Pargoire, *op. cit.* 73 *sqq.*, who fixes 818 by a process of exclusion. Note that Anon. A. (p. 12) and Theod. Prot. *Enkomion* 616, say that Theophanes received 300 strokes before his removal from Constantinople; if this were true, the other biographer would not have failed to mention it.

[4] Ignatius, *Vit. Nic.* 206. The best evidence for the severity of the persecution is in Theodore Stud.'s letters to Pope Paschal and the Patriarch of Alexandria (*Epp.* ii. 12, 14). He mentions deaths from scourging and drownings in sacks (εἰσὶ δὲ οἱ καὶ σακκισθέντες ἐθαλασσεύθησαν ἀωρίᾳ, ὡς σαφὲς γέγονεν ἐκ τῶν τούτους θεασαμένων, p. 1156).

such atrocities had been frequent, we should have heard much more about them. The severer punishments were probably inflicted for some display of fanatical insolence towards the Emperor personally. His chief object was to remove from the capital those men, whose influence would conflict with the accomplishment of his policy.[1] But there may have been fanatical monks, who, stirred with an ambition to outstrip the boldness of Theodore of Studion, bearded the Emperor to his face, and to them may have been meted out extreme

[1] The statements about the sufferings of individuals in hagiographical literature (in which the principle that suffering for orthodoxy enhanced merit guided the writers) cannot be accepted without more ado. It is said that Leo scourged Euthymios of Sardis and banished him to Thasos (*Acta Davidis*, 229). George the bishop of Mytilene was sent to Cherson, and replaced by Leo an iconoclast; he excited the Emperor against the holy Simeon of Lesbos, who, imitating his namesake the Stylite, lived on a pillar at Molos, a harbour in the south of the island, having fastened his calves to his thighs with chains. The inhabitants were ordered to bring wood to the foot of the column; when the fire was kindled, Simeon allowed himself to be taken down, and was banished to Lagusae, an island off the Troad (*ib.* 227 *sqq*). Theophylactus of Nicomedia is said to have been struck in the face by the Emperor and banished to Strobilos in the Kibyrrhaeot Theme (see *Synax. Ecc. Cpl.* 519-520, cp. Loparev, *Viz. Vrem.* iv. 355). Michael, the Synkellos of Jerusalem (born *c.* 761, made Synkellos 811), his friend Job, and the two Palestinian brothers Theodore and Theophanes (see below, p. 136), were persecuted by Leo. But the *Vita Mich. Sync.* is full of errors and must be used with great caution. Theodore and Theophanes seem to have been among those monks who fled in the reign of Michael I. (on account of Mohammadan persecution: A.D. 812 monasteries and churches in Palestine were plundered) to Constantinople, where the monastery of Chora was placed at their disposal. Michael seems to have been sent by the Patriarch of Jerusalem on a mission to [illegible]e in Leo's reign, and, tarrying on [illegible]ay in Constantinople, to have been thrown into prison. (Theod. Stud., writing to him in A.D. 824, *Epp.* ii. 213, p. 1641, asks him, "Why, when you had intended to go elsewhere, were you compelled to fall into the snares of those who govern here?") It is not clear why he did not return to Jerusalem under Michael II.; he is said to have lived then in a convent near Brusa. Theodore and Theophanes were confined by Leo in a fortress near the mouth of the Bosphorus (see Vailhe's study, *Saint Michel le Syncelle*). For the persecution of Makarios, abbot of Peleketê (near Ephesus) see *Vit. Macarii* 157-159, *sq.* (Cp. Theodore Stud. *Ep.* 38, ed. Cozza-L., p. 31.) John, abbot of the Katharoi monastery (E. of the Harbour of Eleutherios), is said to have suffered stripes and been banished first to a fort near Lampe (Phrygia) and then to another in the Bukellarian Theme (*A.S.* April 27, t. iii. 495). Hilarion, abbot of the convent of Dalmatos (or Dalmatoi; n. of the Forum Arcadii), was tortured by hunger by the Patriarch Theodotos, and then confined in various prisons (*A.S.* June 6, t. i. 759). Others who were maltreated, exiled, etc., were Aemilian, bishop of Cyzicus (*Synax. Ecc. Cp.* 875, cp. 519), Eudoxios of Amorion (*ib.* 519), and Michael of Synnada (*ib.* 703, cp. Pargoire, *Échos d'orient*, iv. 347 *sqq.*, 1903). The last-named died in A.D. 826. Joannes, abbot of Psichâ (at Cple.), suffered according to his biographer (*Vit. Joann. Psich.* 114 *sqq.*) particularly harsh treatment. He was flogged, confined in various prisons, and then tortured by one "who outdid Jannes." This must mean not, as the editor thinks, John the Grammarian, but Theodotos. Cp. the story of the treatment of Hilarion.

penalties. Again, it is quite possible that during the destruction of pictures in the city, which ensued on their condemnation by the Synod, serious riots occurred in the streets, and death penalties may have been awarded to persons who attempted to frustrate the execution of the imperial commands. We are told that "the sacred representations"[1] were at the mercy of anyone who chose to work his wicked will upon them. Holy vestments, embroidered with sacred figures, were torn into shreds and cast ignominiously upon the ground; pictures and illuminated missals were cut up with axes and burnt in the public squares. Some of the baser sort insulted the icons by smearing them with cow-dung and foul-smelling ointments.[2]

[1] Ignatius, *Vit. Nic.* ἐκτυπώματα.

[2] *Ib.* βολβίτοις καὶ ἀλοιφαῖς καὶ ὀδμαῖς ἀηδιζούσαις κατέχραινον.

CHAPTER III

MICHAEL II., THE AMORIAN
(A.D. 820-829)

§ 1. *The Accession of Michael* (*A.D. 820*). *The Coronation and Marriage of Theophilus* (*A.D. 821*)

WHILE his accomplices were assassinating the Emperor, Michael lay in his cell, awaiting the issue of the enterprise which meant for him death or empire, according as it failed or prospered. The conspirators, as we have seen, did not bungle in their work, and when it was accomplished, they hastened to greet Michael as their new master, and to bear him in triumph to the Imperial throne. With his legs still encased in the iron fetters he sat on his august seat, and all the servants and officers of the palace congregated to fall at his feet. Time, perhaps, seemed to fly quickly in the surprise of his new position, and it was not till midday that the gyves which so vividly reminded him of the sudden change of his fortunes were struck off his limbs. The historians tell of a difficulty in finding the key of the fetters, and it was John Hexabulios, Logothete of the Course, who remembered that Leo had hidden it in his dress.[1]

About noon,[2] without washing his hands or making any other seemly preparation, Michael, attended by his supporters, proceeded to the Great Church, there to receive the Imperial crown from the hands of the Patriarch, and to obtain recognition from the people. No hint is given as to the attitude of the Patriarch Theodotos to the conspiracy, but he seems

[1] According to *Cont. Th.* (41), however, the key was not forthcoming, and the fetters were loosened or broken with a hammer (*μόλις θλασθέντων*).

[2] At the seventh hour, Gen. 30.

to have made no difficulty in performing the ceremony of coronation for the successful conspirator. The Amorian soldier received the crown from the prelate's hands, and the crowd was ready to acclaim the new Augustus. Those who held to image worship did not regret the persecutor of their faith, but thought that he had perished justly; and perhaps to most in that superstitious populace the worst feature in the whole work seemed to be that his blood had stained a holy building.[1] We have already seen how Michael dealt with the Empress Theodosia and her children.

The new Roman Emperor[2] was a rude provincial, coarse in manners, ill-educated, and superstitious. But he was vigorous, ambitious, and prudent, and he had worked his way up in the army by his own energy and perseverance. Amorion, the city of his birth, in Upper Phrygia, was at this time an important place, as the capital of the Anatolic province. It was the goal of many a Saracen invasion. Its strong walls had defied the generals of the Caliphs in the days of the Isaurian Leo; but it was destined, soon after it had won the glory of giving a dynasty to the Empire, to be captured by the Unbelievers. This Phrygian town was a head-quarter for Jews, and for the heretics who were known as Athingani.[3] It is said that Michael inherited from his parents Athingan views,[4] but according to another account he was a Sabbatian.[5] Whatever be the truth about this, he was inclined to tolerate heresies, of which he must have seen much at his native town in the days of his youth. He was also favourably disposed to the Jews; but the statement that his grandfather was a converted Jew does not rest on very good authority.[6] It is certain that his parents were of humble rank, and that his youth, spent among heretics, Hebrews, and half-Hellenized Phrygians, was subject to influences which were very different from the Greek polish of the capital. One so trained must have felt himself strange among the men of old nobility, of Hellenic education, and ecclesiastical ortho-

[1] Such was the thought of the Continuer of Theophanes, 42.

[2] His age on his accession is not recorded, but he was certainly well over forty.

[3] See above, p. 40.

[4] *Cont. Th.* 42.

[5] Nicetas, *Vit. Ign.* 216. The Sabbatians were a fourth-century offshoot from the Novatians; they held that Easter should be celebrated on the same day and in the same manner as the Jewish feast.

[6] Michael Syr. 72.

doxy[1] with whom he had to deal in Constantinople. He did not disguise his contempt for Hellenic culture,[2] and he is handed down to history as an ignorant churl. Such a man was a good aim for the ridicule of witty Byzantines, and it is recorded that many lampoons were published on the crowned boor.[3]

The low-born Phrygian who founded a new dynasty in the ninth century reminds us of the low-born Dardanian who founded a new dynasty exactly three hundred years before. The first Justin, like the second Michael, was ignorant of letters. It was told of Justin that he had a mechanical contrivance for making his signature, and of Michael it was popularly reported that another could read through a book more quickly than he could spell out the six letters of his name.[4] They were both soldiers and had worked their way up in the service, and they both held the same post at the time of their elevation. Justin was the commander of the Excubitors when he was called upon to succeed Anastasius, even as Michael when he stepped into the place of Leo. But Michael could not say like Justin that his hands were pure of blood. The parallel may be carried still further. The soldier of Ulpiana, like the soldier of Amorion, reigned for about nine years, and each had a successor who was a remarkable contrast to himself. After the rude Justin, came his learned and intellectual nephew Justinian; after the rude Michael, his polished son Theophilus.

Michael shared the superstitions which were not confined to his own class. He was given to consulting soothsayers and diviners; and, if report spoke true, his career was directed by prophecies and omens. It is said that his first marriage was brought about through the utterances of a soothsayer. He had been an officer in the army of the Anatolic Theme, in days before he had entered the service of Bardanes. The general of that Theme, whose name is not recorded, was as ready as most of his contemporaries to believe in prognostication, and when one of the Athingan sect who professed to

[1] Cp. Finlay, ii. pp. 128, 129.

[2] *Cont. Th.* 49 τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν παίδευσιν διαπτύων, where Hellenic is not used in the bad sense of *pagan*.

[3] *Ib.* In the *Acta Davidis*, 230, he is described as not so cruel as Leo, but τὰ πάντα γαστρὶ χαριζόμενος καὶ σχεδὸν ἐν ἀνθρωπείῳ σώματι κτηνώδη ἀναστροφὴν καὶ δίαιταν ἀναδειξάμενος.

[4] *Cont. Th.* 49, clearly taken from one of the popular lampoons.

tell fortunes, declared to him that Michael and another officer of his staff were marked out for Imperial rank in the future, he lost no time in taking measures to unite them with his family. He prepared a feast, and chose them out of all the officers to be his guests, to their own astonishment. But a greater surprise awaited them, for when they were heated with wine, he offered them his daughters in marriage. At this unexpected condescension, the young men, of whom one at least was of humble birth, were stupefied and speechless. They drew back at first from an honour of which they deemed themselves unworthy; but the superstitious general overcame their scruples, and the marriages took place. Thus it came about that Michael won Thecla,[1] who became the mother of the Emperor Theophilus. The other son-in-law, whoever he may have been, was not so fortunate; in his case the soothsayer was conspicuously at fault.[2]

Theophilus, for whom Leo V. had probably stood sponsor,[3] was adult when his father came to the throne, and on the following Whitsunday (May 12 A.D. 821) Michael, according to the usual practice, secured the succession by elevating him to the rank of Basileus and Augustus.[4] The ceremony of his marriage was celebrated on the same occasion.[5] Having

[1] Her name is known from Constantine, *Cer.* 645, and Michael Syr. 72. Simeon and the *Vita Theodorae* state that Theophilus was the son of Michael's second wife, Euphrosyne.

[2] The story is told by Gen. 31 (= *Cont. Th.* 44.)

[3] Gen. 12.

[4] The true date of the elevation of Theophilus and his marriage has been ascertained by Brooks (*B.Z.* 10, 540 *sqq.*). The will of Justinian, Duke of Venice, equates indiction 7 (A.D. 828-829) with the ninth year of Michael and the eighteenth (mistake for eighth) of Theophilus. This is compatible with his coronation in A.D. 821 or 822. Now there are no coins of Michael II. alone (see Wroth, ii. 416), and this fact, combined with the probability that the Emperor would not delay long to crown his son, justifies us in deciding for 821. The day of the ceremony is recorded by Simeon.

[5] Simeon (*Theod. Mel.* 147), *στέφει δὲ Θεοδώραν ἐν τῷ εὐκτηρίῳ τοῦ ἁγίου Στεφάνου, στεφθεὶς καὶ αὐτὸς ἅμα αὐτῇ ὑπὸ Ἀντωνίου πατριάρχου καὶ τῷ τοῦ γάμου καὶ τῷ τῆς βασιλείας στέφει τῇ ἁγίᾳ πεντηκοστῇ.* (Cp. *vers. Slav.* 93, and *Add. Georg.* 790; the text of Leo Gr. is imperfect.) See Brooks, *op. cit.* 542, who rightly says that this is an authentic notice which must be separated from the legend which precedes it. It is not clear whether all these ceremonies were performed on the same day. The crowning of Theophilus with the diadem (*στέμμα* or *διάδημα*) must have come first, and was performed in St. Sophia; the ceremony is described in Constantine, *Cer.* i. 38. We must not press the notice so as to imply that Michael was absent himself and deputed the Patriarch to crown his son. Except in the Emperor's absence, the Patriarch handed the crown to him, and he placed it on his colleague's head. The marriage ceremony was always performed in the Church of St. Stephen in Daphne, and is described *Cer.* i. 39 (the nuptial crown is *στεφάνωμα*, as distinguished from the Imperial

received the Imperial crown from his father's hands in St. Sophia, he was wedded by the Patriarch, in the Church of St. Stephen in the Palace, to Theodora, a Paphlagonian lady, whose father and uncle were officers in the army.[1] The ceremony was followed by her coronation as Augusta.

It is probable that the provincial Theodora, of an obscure but well-to-do family, was discovered by means of the bride-show custom which in the eighth and ninth centuries was habitually employed for the purpose of selecting brides for Imperial heirs. Messengers were sent into the provinces to search for maidens who seemed by their exceptional physical attractions and their mental qualities worthy of sharing the throne of an Emperor. They were guided in their selection by certain fixed standards; they rejected all candidates who did not conform, in stature and in the dimensions of their heads and feet, to prescribed measures of beauty.[2] It was thus that Maria, discovered in a small town in Paphlagonia, came to be the consort of Constantine VI.,[3] and we saw how a bride-show was held for the wedding of Stauracius.[4] In later times Michael III. and Leo VI. would win their brides in the same fashion;[5] and it is not improbable that Irene of Athens owed her marriage with Leo IV. to this custom.

The bride-show of Theophilus has been embroidered with legendary details, and it has been misdated, but there is no reason for doubting that it was actually held. The story represents Theophilus as still unmarried when he became sole Emperor after his father's death. His stepmother Euphrosyne

στέμμα). The coronation of the Augusta was celebrated in the same place (*ib.* i. 40). The procedure where the marriage and coronation of an Augusta were combined is described *ib.* i. 41. For the succession of Antonius to the Patriarchate, see below, p. 115.

[1] Her father was Marinos, a drungarios, if not a turmarch. He belonged to the town of Ebissa (*Cont. Th.* 89). In the same passage the fact that Theodora had been crowned "long ago," πάλαι δή, *i.e.* before her husband's accession to the autocracy, is recorded. For the family relations of Theodora see below, Chapter V. p. 156, Genealogical Table. She was of Armenian descent at least on one side, for her uncle, the general Manuel, was an Armenian (*Cont. Th.* 148).

[2] *Vita Philareti*, ed. Vasil'ev, in *Izv. Kpl.* v. 76. The Imperial agents measured Maria's height, her λαυράτον, *i.e.* her head and face, and her foot (τοῦ ποδὸς τὸ πέδιλον).

[3] *Ib.* 74 *sqq.*

[4] Above, p. 15.

[5] Michael III.: *Vita Irenes*, 603. Leo VI.: *Vita Theophanus*, ed. Kurtz (*Zapiski imp. Ak. Nauk.* viii[e] sér. iii. 2 (1898), p. 5). The custom, but perhaps in a modified form, made its way into France: Lewis the Pious chose his wife Judith, *inspectis plerisque nobilium filiabus* (*Ann. r. Fr.* 150, A.D. 819).

assembled the maidens, who had been gathered from all the provinces, in the Pearl-chamber in the Palace, and gave the Emperor a golden apple to bestow upon her who pleased him best.[1] Theophilus halted before Kasia, a lady of striking beauty and literary attainments, and addressed to her a cynical remark, apparently couched in metrical form,[2] to which she had a ready answer in the same style.

Theophilus:

A woman was the fount and source
Of all man's tribulation.

Kasia:

And from a woman sprang the course
Of man's regeneration.

The boldness of the retort did not please the Emperor, and he gave the golden apple to Theodora.

It was in the spring of A.D. 821, and not nine years later, that Theophilus made his choice, and it was his mother, Thecla, if she was still alive, and not Euphrosyne, who presided over the bride-show.[3] Some may think that the golden apple, the motif of the judgment of Paris, must be rejected as a legendary trait in the story; yet it seems possible that the apple had been deliberately borrowed from the Greek myth as a symbol by which the Emperor intimated his choice and was a regular feature of the Byzantine bride-shows. Nor does there seem any reason to doubt that the poetess Kasia was one of the chosen maidens; and the passage between her and the Emperor is, if not true, happily invented so far as her extant epigrams reveal her character.[4] Dis-

[1] The story in its genuine form is told by Simeon (*Add. Georg.* 790). It is completely altered and corrupted in *Vita Theodorae*, 4 (see below). The Pearl-chamber (*μαργαρίτου τρίκλινος*) is an anachronism. It was one of the new buildings of Theophilus himself (see below, p. 131). The bride-show of Leo VI. was held *ἐν τινι βασιλικῷ ταμιείῳ τῆς περιβλέπτου Μαναύρας* (*Vita Theophanus, loc. cit.*).

[2] With slight change the dialogue in the chronicle falls into the "political metre," which I have reproduced in English:

Θ. <ὦ γύναι>, διὰ γυναικὸς <εἰσ>ερρύη τὰ φαῦλα.
Κ. ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ γυναικὸς τὰ κρείττονα πηγάζει.

(text: πηγ. τὰ κρ.). I pointed this out in Gibbon, v. 199 note, and *Engl. Hist. Rev.* xiii. p. 340 (1898).

[3] Eudocia, his mother (not Basil), manages the bride-show of Leo VI. (*Vita Theophanus, loc. cit.*).

[4] Her strong opinions came out in her epigrams; she did not suffer fools gladly: see the verses on the *μῶρος* in Krumbacher, *Kasia*, p. 362, cp. p. 365. Three hymns of Kasia are printed in

appointed in her chance of empire, Kasia resolved to renounce the world, and a letter of Theodore, the abbot of Studion, is preserved in which he approves of her design, and compliments her on the learning and skill of some literary compositions which she had sent him.[1]

The pleasing story of the bride-show of Theophilus, in which Kasia is the heroine, did not find favour with the monk who wrote an edifying biography of the sainted Theodora. He would not allow that she owed her elevation to the too ready tongue of her rival who had presumed to measure wits with the Emperor, and he invented a different story in which Kasia is ignored.[2] According to this frigid fiction, Theophilus selected seven of the maidens, gave each of them an apple, and summoned them again on the morrow. He asked each of them for her apple, but the apples were not forthcoming. Theodora alone produced hers, and along with it offered a second to the Emperor. "This first apple, which I have kept safe," she said, "is the emblem of my maidenhood; the second, do not decline it, is the fee[3] of the son which shall be born to us." When Theophilus, in amazement, asked her to explain this "oracle," she told him that at Nicomedia, on her way to Constantinople, she had visited a holy man who lived in a tower, and that he had prophesied her elevation to the throne and had given her the apple.[4]

Christ and Paranikas, *Anth. Graeca carm. Christianorum*, 103-104; another in Krumbacher, 347 *sqq.* Krumbacher has shown that her name was Kasia, not Eikasia or Ikasia as the chronicle has, and he conjectures that Εἰκασία arose from ἡ Κασία (317). Accepting the date of the bride-show as *c.* 830, he places her birth *c.* 810; but the true date of the marriage of Theophilus shows that the year of her birth must have been in the neighbourhood of 800. She was still a very young girl when she decided to become a nun (see next note), so that we might conjecture the date to be *c.* 804.

[1] *Ep.* 270, Cozza-Luzi (cp. A. Gardner, *Theodore*, 266 *sqq.*). The tenth-century author of the Πάτρια Κπόλεως (ed. Preger, 276) notices the convent founded by Kasia and describes her as τῆς μοναχῆς, εὐπρεποῦς καὶ εὐλαβοῦς καὶ σεβασμιᾶς γυναικός, ὡραίας τῷ εἴδει, τῆς τε κάνονας καὶ στίχους ποιησάσης ἐν τοῖς χρόνοις Θεοφίλου καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ. The convent seems to have been somewhere on the Seventh Hill, near the Constantinian Wall (cp. van Millingen, *Walls*, 22-23).

[2] *Vita Theodorae*, 4. Melioranski characterises this narrative as "a polemical pendant" to the story of Kasia (*Iz sem. ist.* 12). He thinks that the use of ἀμφοτέρας, p. 3, is an allusion to Kasia's rivalry; but ἀμφοτέρας here means *all*.

[3] δηνάριον.

[4] The beauty of Theodora was celebrated in Spain by the poet Yahya al-Ghazzal, who was sent by Abd ar-Rahman as an envoy to the Court of Theophilus (A.D. 839-840). He was conversing with the Emperor when Theodora entered "dressed in all her finery—a rising sun in beauty. Al-Ghazzal was so surprised that he could not take his eyes from her," and

§ 2. *The Civil War* (A.D. 821-823)

Of the three actors in the historical drama which was said to have been shadowed forth by the soothsayer of Philomelion, one has passed finally from the scene. The last act is to take the form of a conflict between the two survivors, Michael of Amorion and Thomas of Gaziura. This conflict is generally known as the rebellion of Thomas, but it assumed the dimensions and the dignity of a civil war. Two rivals fought for a crown, which one of them had seized, but could not yet be said to have firmly grasped. Michael had been regularly elected, acclaimed, and crowned in the capital, and he had the advantage of possessing the Imperial city. His adversary had the support of most of the Asiatic provinces; he was only a rebel because he failed.

We have seen how Thomas clung to his master and patron Bardanes whom others had deserted (A.D. 803). When the cause of Bardanes was lost, he probably saved himself by fleeing to Syria and taking up his abode among the Saracens,[1] with whom he had lived before. For in the reign of Irene he had entered the service of a patrician,[2] and, having been discovered in an attempt to commit adultery with his master's wife, he was constrained to seek a refuge in the dominions of the Caliph, where he seems to have lived for a considerable time. His second sojourn there lasted for

ceased to attend to the conversation. Theophilus expressed astonishment at his rudeness, and the poet said to the interpreter, "Tell thy master that I am so captivated by the charms of this queen that I am prevented from listening. Say that I never saw in my life a handsomer woman." "He then began to describe one by one all her charms, and to paint his amazement at her incomparable beauty, and concluded by saying that she had captivated him with her black eyes" (Makkari, ii. 115).

[1] There is an explicit statement in the *Acta Davidis* (a well-informed source), 232: having served Bardanes, he fled, on account of misdeeds, to the Saracens and lay quiet during the reigns of Nicephorus, Stauracius, Michael I., and a great part of Leo's reign (this is incorrect). Michael II., in *Ep. ad Lud.* 417, says that he abode among the unbelievers until the reign of Leo, and during that time became a Mohammadan in order to gain influence with the Saracens.

[2] For a discussion of the difficulties, see Bury, *B.Z.* i. 55 *sqq.*, where it is shown that the patrician was not Bardanes, as Genesios alleges (35). Michael (*Ep. ad Lud.*, *ib.*) does not name the patrician. The fact seems to be that Thomas first fled *c.* A.D. 788, and only returned in A.D. 803 to assist Bardanes; so that he might be roughly described as having lived with the Saracens for twenty-five years (Gen. *ib.*). This I now believe to be the true explanation of the twenty-five years, and not that which I suggested *loc. cit.*

about ten years (A.D. 803-813). We saw how he received a military command from his old fellow-officer, Leo the Armenian, and he rose in arms shortly before that Emperor's death.[1]

If he was tempted to rise against Leo, much more was he tempted to dispute the crown with Michael, with whom he seems to have had a rivalry of old standing.[2] Thomas was much the elder of the two; at the time of his rising he was an old man. One of his legs was maimed; but his age and lameness did not impair his activity. The lame man was personally more popular than the lisper; for, while Michael's manners were coarse and brusque, Thomas was courteous and urbane.[3] His Slavonic origin hardly counted against him;[4] men were by this time becoming familiar with Romaeized Slavs.

But Thomas did not come forward as himself; and this is a strange feature of the rebellion which it is difficult to understand. He did not offer himself to the inhabitants of Asia Minor as Thomas of Gaziura, but he pretended that he was really one who was generally supposed to be dead, a crowned Augustus, no other than Constantine the Sixth, son of Irene. That unfortunate Emperor, blinded by the orders of his mother, had died, if not before her dethronement, at all events in the first years of Nicephorus.[5] The operation of blinding had not been performed in public, and a pretender might construct a tale that another had been substituted, and that the true Constantine had escaped. But it is hard to see how the fraud could have been successful even for a time in the case of Thomas. He might easily enough have palmed himself off among barbarian neighbours as the deposed Emperor. Or if he had produced an obscure stranger and given out that this was Constantine who for more than twenty years had lurked in some safe hiding-place, we could understand that the fiction might have imposed on the Themes of Asia. But we cannot easily conceive how one who had been recently before the eye of the world as Thomas, Commander

[1] See above, p. 46 and p. 48.

[2] Gen. 32 *ἀνέκαθεν γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἀντιπεπονθότως διέστασαν.*

[3] *Cont. Th.* 53.

[4] But observe the *εἰ καὶ σκυθίζων τῷ* of Genesios, 32. A Slav had filled the Patriarchal chair seventy years back—Nicetas, in the reign of Constantine V.

[5] Before the year A.D. 806, as is proved by Theodore Stud. *Epp.* i. 31 (and cp. Gen. 35); see Brooks, *B.Z.* ix. 654 *sqq.*

of the Federates, and whose earlier career must have been more or less known by his contemporaries, could suddenly persuade people that all this time he was not himself. One almost suspects that some link in the chain of events is lost which might have explained the feasibility of the deceit. If Thomas had withdrawn for some years to Syria, he might have returned in the new character of an Augustus who was supposed to be dead. And indeed in one account of the rebellion it is implied that he started from Syria, perhaps with some Saracen support at his back.[1]

The pretender was not content with being Constantine, son of Irene; he resolved, like Constantine the Great, to have a son named Constantius. Accordingly he adopted a man of mongrel race, whose true name is unknown, and called him Constantius. Our record describes this adopted son in terms of the utmost contempt,—as a base and ugly mannikin.[2] But he must have had some ability, for his "father" trusted him with the command of armies.

It is impossible to distinguish with certainty the early stages of the insurrection of Thomas, or to determine how far it had spread at the time of Michael's accession. He established his power by winning the district of Chaldia, in eastern Pontus. He also secured some strong places in the Armeniac Theme, in which Gaziura, his native town, was situated, but the soldiers of this Theme did not espouse his cause. It was to the eastern provinces that he chiefly looked for support at first, but his power presently extended to the west. The false Constantine and his son could soon reckon the greater part of Asia Minor, from the borders of Armenia to the shores of the Aegean, as their dominion. The Paulician heretics, who were persecuted by Leo, flocked to their standard. They intercepted the taxes which should have been conveyed to Constantinople and used the money for winning adherents to their cause.

[1] Gen. 36; *Cont. Th.* 51; *Acta Dav.* 232. There is a confusion in this tradition between the beginning of the rebellion and the alliance of Thomas with the Saracens in A.D. 821. According to Michael Syr. 37, Thomas, whose father's name was Mosmar, was with the Saracens before the death of Harun, and pretended to be the *son* of Constantine VI. He tried to persuade Harun, who treated him with honour as an Emperor's son, to give him an army to overthrow the Emperor (Nicephorus). Mamun, however, gave him an army "soit pour s'emparer de l'empire des Romains et le lui livrer (ensuite), soit pour les troubler par la guerre." Cp. Bar-Hebraeus, 150.

[2] *Ib.*

The cities which would not voluntarily have acknowledged them were constrained by fear. Soon they could boast that only two armies in Asia had not joined them, the Opsikian and the Armeniac. The patrician Katakylas, Count of Opsikion, was a nephew of Michael, and remained true to his uncle. Olbianos, stratêgos of the Armeniacs, espoused the same cause. But the meagre and disorderly accounts of the war which have reached us do not inform us what Olbianos and Katakylas did, or whether they did anything, to stem the torrent of rebellion. No dates are given, and even the order of events is obscure.

But if Michael and his supporters made no signal effort to oppose the progress of the danger, the attention of Thomas was diverted to another enemy. The civil war in the Empire was an opportunity for the Caliph, and the Saracens began to make excursions in the Roman lands which were left insufficiently protected, as the regular defenders had abandoned their posts to swell the army of Thomas. Perhaps the murmurs of his soldiers[1] convinced Thomas that he must relinquish for a time his war against his countrymen to repel the common foe. But if he was yielding to the wishes of his followers, in taking measures to protect their homes, he made a skilful use of the danger and turned it completely to his own advantage. His long sojourns among the Moslems stood him in good stead now. His first movement was to invade Syria[2] and display his immense forces to the astonished eyes of the Saracens. Perhaps such a large Roman army had seldom passed the Taurus since Syria had become a Saracen possession. But the object of this invasion was not to harry or harm the invaded lands, but rather to frighten the enemy into making a treaty with such a powerful commander. The design was crowned with success. The Caliph Mamun empowered persons in authority to meet the pretender, and a compact of alliance was arranged. Thomas or Constantine was recognised as Emperor of the Romans by the Commander of the Faithful, who undertook to help him to dethrone his rival. In return for this service, Thomas is said to have

[1] *Cont. Th.* 54. This point is not ...ios. ...εἰς τὴν αὐτῶν εἰσβάλλων.

Genesios does not mention this movement. The Syrian episode evidently belongs to the summer of A.D. 821.

agreed not only to surrender certain border territories which are not specified, but to become a tributary of the Caliph.[1]

After the conclusion of this treaty, which turned a foe into a friend, we expect to find the Emperor Constantine hastening back to recover the throne of the Isaurians. But before he left Syria he took a strange step. With the consent or at the instance of his new allies he proceeded to Antioch, in order to be crowned by the Patriarch Job as Basileus of the Romans. The coronation of a Roman Emperor in Antioch in the ninth century was a singular event. We cannot imagine that Thomas was accompanied thither by his army; but doubtless the Greek Christians of the place flocked to see the unaccustomed sight, and when the Patriarch Job placed the crown on the head of the Basileus they may have joined his attendants in acclaiming him. We have to go back to the fifth century for a like scene. It was in Syrian Antioch that Leontius, the tyrant who rose against Zeno, was crowned and proclaimed Augustus. The scale and gravity of the rebellion of the Isaurian Leontius render it not unfit to be compared with the rebellion of the later pretender, who also professed to be of Isaurian stock.

But when we consider the circumstances more closely the coronation assumes a puzzling aspect. If Thomas had been simply Thomas, we can understand that he might have grasped at a chance, which was rare for a rebel in his day, to be crowned by a Patriarch out of Constantinople, even though that Patriarch was not a Roman subject. But Thomas, according to the story, gave out that he was an Emperor already. He had borrowed the name and identity of the Emperor Constantine VI.; he had therefore, according to his own claim, been crowned Augustus by the Patriarch of Constantinople forty years before. What then is the meaning of his coronation at Antioch? One would think that such a ceremony would weaken rather than strengthen his position. It might be interpreted as a tacit confession that there was some flaw in the title of the re-arisen Con-

[1] *Cont. Th.* 54 *ὑπισχνούμενος τὰ Ῥωμαίων τε προδοῦναι ὅρια καὶ τὴν αὐτῶν αὐτοῖς ὑπὸ χεῖρας ποιῆσαι ἀρχήν.* The last clause must be interpreted to mean that Thomas undertook to pay a tribute to the Caliph. Genesios does not mention this, but it may explain (see below) the coronation at Antioch. The author of the *Acta Davidis* says (232) that Thomas promised to subject the Empire to the Saracens. This doubtless was generally believed.

stantine. It would have been requisite for an Emperor who had been first crowned at Antioch to repeat the ceremony when he had established himself on the Bosphorus; but it is strange that one who had declared that he had been formally consecrated at Constantinople by the chief Patriarch should come to Antioch to receive an irregular consecration from a lesser prelate. It does not appear that the tyrant had abandoned his claim to be another than himself, and, having won his first followers by an imposture, now threw off the cloak and came forward as Thomas of Gaziura. It may be suggested that the coronation was not contrived by the wish of the pretender, but by the policy of Mamun. The reception of the emblem of sovranty at the hands of a Patriarch, who was the subject of the Caliph, may have been intended as a symbolical acknowledgment of the Caliph's overlordship and a pledge of his future submission as a tributary.[1]

The prospect of the tyrants looked brighter than ever when they returned to the lands of the Empire. Men of all sorts and races and regions had flocked to their standards—Slavs, Persians, Armenians, Iberians, and many from the regions of the Caucasus and the eastern shores of the Euxine.[2] The total number of the forces is estimated at eighty thousand. Reports meanwhile reached Constantinople of the gathering of this large host. But Michael took it for granted that rumour outran the truth, and deemed it enough to send into the field a small army, totally insufficient to cope with the foe. The

[1] The difficulty about the coronation at Antioch has not been noticed, so far as I know, by any historian. If Thomas had pretended to be a *son* of Constantine (as Michael Syr. alleges, see above, p. 86, n. 1), all would be clear. It is curious that Michael Syr. (75) states that in A.D. 831-832 a Roman, pretending to be of Imperial lineage, came to Mamun in Cilicia and asked him to help him to the throne; Mamun caused him to be crowned by the Patriarch Job; the impostor afterwards became a Mohammadan. When the news reached Constantinople, the bishops met and excommunicated Job. The Greek sources give no support to this story.

[2] Michael, *Ep. ad Lud.* 417-418, mentions Saracens, Persians, Iberians, Armenians, Abasgians (Avassis), and speaks as if all these had been in the rebel army at the very beginning of the revolt against Leo V. Besides these, Genesios (33) mentions Alans, Zichs, Colchians, Indians (that is, negroes), Kabeiroi, Slavs, Huns, Vandals, and Getae. The Kabeiroi are probably the Turkish Kabars of the Khazar Empire (see below, p. 426). For the Alans (Ossetians), see below, p. 408 *sq.* The Getae may be the Goths of the Crimea, the Huns may be Magyars or Inner Bulgarians, or something else. It is difficult to discover ninth-century Vandals (Wends do not come into range).

thousands of Michael were swallowed up by the tens of thousands of Thomas.[1] As no formidable resistance was offered to the tyrant's progress in Asia Minor, he prepared to attack the city itself. For this enterprise, in which so many had failed before him, it was judged indispensable to possess a fleet. The City of the Bosphorus had over and over again defied a joint attack by land and sea; it was naturally inferred that an attack by land alone would have no chances of success.[2] The pretender therefore set himself to gather a fleet, and it would seem that he had no difficulty in seizing the fleets of the Aegean and the Kibyrrhaeot Themes, which together formed the Thematic or provincial navy.[3] Thus all the warships stationed in the eastern parts of the Empire were in his hands, except the Imperial fleet itself, which lay at the Imperial city. In addition to these, he built new warships and new ships of transport. When all was ready, he caused his naval forces to assemble at Lesbos and await his orders, while he himself advanced to the Hellespont and secured Abydos. And now he met his first reverse. All had yielded to him as he swept on through the Asiatic Themes, except one place, whose name our historians do not mention. He did not think it worth while to delay himself, but he left a considerable part of his army under the command of Constantius, to reduce this stubborn fortress. It seems probable too that this dividing of his forces formed part of a further design. We may guess that while Constantine was to cross by the western gate of the Propontis and advance on the city from the west, Constantius was to approach the eastern strait and attack the city on the south. But if this was the plan of operations, Constantius was not destined to fulfil his part of it. Olbianos, the general of the Armeniac Theme, was biding his time and watching for an opportunity. His army

[1] This engagement is recorded only by the Continuer, who uses the expressive metaphor *ὥσπερ τι ποτὸν διψῶν ἀνερρόφησεν* (55). Part of Michael's army, however, escaped.

[2] It is, however, well remarked by van Millingen (*Walls*, 179) that in Byzantine history "there is only one instance of a successful naval assault upon Constantinople, the gallant capture of the city in 1204 by the Venetians," and that was largely due to "the feeble spirit" of the defenders. He remarks that currents of the Marmora, and "the violent storms to which the waters around the city are liable," were natural allies of the besieged.

[3] *ἐντεῦθεν καὶ τοῦ θεματικοῦ στόλου γίνεται ἐγκρατής* (*ib.*); *ἤδη τὸ ναυτικὸν ἅπαν τὸ ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίους ὄν, πλὴν τοῦ βασιλικοῦ κληθέντος ὑποποιεῖται* (Gen. 37).

was not large enough to try an issue with the united forces of the enemy, but his chance came when those forces were divided. He set an ambush to waylay the younger tyrant, who, as he advanced securely, supposing that the way was clear, allowed his men to march in disorder. Constantius was slain and his head was sent to Constantine. This was the first check in the triumphant course of the war, though the death of the "son" may have caused little grief to the "father."

The scene of operations now shifts from Asia to Europe. The Emperor, seeing that his adversary was preparing to cross the straits, had gone forth at the head of a small army and visited some of the cities of Thrace in order to confirm them against the violence or seductions of the tyrant and assure himself of their stedfast faith. But his care availed little. On a dark moonless night Thomas transported his troops to various spots on the Thracian shore, starting from an obscure haven named Horkosion.[1] About the same time the fleet arrived from Lesbos and sailed into the waters of the Propontis. No resistance was offered by the inhabitants of Thrace when they saw the immense numbers of the invading host. Michael seems to have lingered, perhaps somewhere on the shores of the Propontis, to observe what effect the appearance of his foe would produce on the cities which had yesterday pledged themselves to stand true, and when he learned that they were cowed into yielding, he returned to the city and set about making it ready to withstand a siege. The garrison was recruited by loyal soldiers from the Asiatic Themes, now free from the presence of the pretender. The Imperial fleet, supplied with "Marine Fire," was stationed not in the Golden Horn, but in the three artificial harbours on the southern shore of the city,—the port of Hormisdas, which was probably already known by its later name of Bucoleon;[2] the Sophian

[1] Gen. 37 implies that Horkosion was on the Hellespontine coast, not necessarily that it was close to Abydos. We may therefore identify it with Ὅρκος, which lay between Parion and Lampsacus (Theod. Stud. *Epp.* i. 3, p. 917), which is doubtless the Lorco of later times, placed with probability by Tomaschek in the crescent bay a little N.E. of Lampsacus (*Top. v. Kleinasien*, 15).

[2] The position of Michael's fleet on the Marmora appears in the sequel. Of the harbours along this shore the best account is in van Millingen, *Walls*, 268 *sqq*. There were two other harbours besides the three above-mentioned; but there is no evidence that the Kontoskalion (between the Sophian and the Kaisarian) existed in the ninth century, while that of Eleutherios or Theodosius, the most westerly of all, had probably been filled up before this period (the author of

harbour, further to the west;[1] and beyond it the harbour of Kaisarios.[2] The entrance to the Golden Horn was blocked by the Iron Chain, which was stretched across the water from a point near the Gate of Eugenios to the Castle of Galata.[3] In making these dispositions Michael was perhaps availing himself of the experience of previous sieges. When the Saracens attacked the city in the seventh century, Constantine IV. had disposed a portion of his naval forces in the harbour of Kaisarios.[4] In the second attack of the same foe in the eighth century, Leo III. had stretched the Iron Chain, but he seems to have stationed his own ships outside the Horn.[5]

The host of Thomas had been increased by new adherents from the European provinces, and Slavs from Macedonia flocked to the standard of the Slavonian pretender.[6] But he needed a new general and a new son. To succeed the unlucky leader, whom he had destined to be Constantius the Fourth, he chose a monk, already bearing an Imperial name, and worthy in the opinion of the tyrant to be Anastasius the Third; not worthy, however, of such an exalted place, in the opinion of our historians, who describe him as an ugly man, with a face like an Ethiopian's from excessive wine-drinking, and of insane mind.[7] But the monk was not fitted to lead troops to battle, and for this office Thomas won the services of a banished general named Gregory, who had perhaps better cause than himself to hate the name of Michael. Gregory Pterôtos was a nephew of Leo the Armenian, and, on the death of his uncle, whom he loved, fear had not held him back from entering the presence of his successor, where, instead of falling among those

the Ἡάτρια, 184, 248, says this happened in the reign of Theodosius I.; but the alternative name suggests rather that he repaired it). It may be noticed that the harbours in which Phocas expected Heraclius (A.D. 610) to land were those of Kaisarios, Sophia, and Hormisdas (John Ant., in Müller, *F.H.G.* v. 1. 38).

[1] Also called Harbour of Julian and New Harbour.

[2] Van Millingen has shown that it is almost certainly identical with the Neorion of Heptaskalon, and there is archaeological evidence for placing it between Kum Kapussi and Yeni Kapu (310 *sqq.*).

[3] From Theoph. 396 we know that in A.D. 717 it was attached to the καστέλλιον τῶν Γαλάτου (as in later times). The southern end was fastened, in later times, to the Kentenarion tower close to the Porta Eugenii, and we know that this existed in the ninth century (Ἡάτρια 264, where Constantine I. is said to have built the tower). Cp. van Millingen, 228.

[4] Theoph. 353.

[5] *Ib.* 396.

[6] Michael, *Ep. ad Lud.* 418: Thrace, Macedonia, Thessalonia, *et circumiacentibus Sclavinüs.*

[7] Gen. 39.

who grovelled at the Imperial feet, he overwhelmed him with reproaches for the murderous deed. The Emperor merely said, "I know the greatness of your sorrow and the ocean of your distress," but two days later he banished this fearless kinsman of his predecessor to the island of Skyros.[1] Gregory was not unwilling to attach himself to the rival of him who had banished himself and dethroned his uncle, and he was speedily entrusted with the command of ten thousand men and sent on to open the assault on the Imperial city.

It was already winter, and the first year of Michael's reign was drawing to a close, when Gregory took up his station on the north-west of the city, in the suburbs outside Blachernae, while the fleet, under another unnamed commander, reached the same quarter by sailing up the inlet of the Golden Horn, having evidently unfastened the Iron Chain where it was attached to the Castle of Galata.[2] On the banks of the Barbyses,[3] a stream which flows into the Horn, the leaders of the sea forces and the land forces could concert their plans together. No action, however, was taken until Constantius and Anastasius arrived with their mighty host. The leaders seem to have imagined that when this vast array spread out before the walls of the city, and their ships filled the Golden Horn and threatened the harbours on the Propontis, the inhabitants would be so utterly dismayed by the sight of the overwhelming numbers that they would throw open their gates in despair. But it soon became clear that the city and its masters were resolved to withstand even such a vast force; they trusted in their impregnable walls. It was the first business of Thomas, when he saw that a siege was inevitable, to reduce the suburbs and villages which lay north

[1] The details about this Gregory (his kinship with Leo, the cause of his exile, and his name Pterôtos) are recorded in *Cont. Th.* 57, but not by Genesios.

[2] This is an inference, but I think evident. Thomas controlled the northern shore of the Horn. In exactly the same way the Venetians, having captured the Galata Tower, removed the chain in A.D. 1203 (Nicetas, ed. Bonn. 718-719).

[3] Gen. 38. The Barbyses (or Barbyssos) is now called the Kiat-hanch Su, one of the streams known as the Sweet Waters of Europe. It flows into the Horn close to the Cosmidion (Church of SS. Cosmas and Damian, now the Eyub mosque), which is not far to the west of Blachernae. See van Millingen, *Walls*, 175-176. There was a bridge across the Barbyses (Niceph. Patr. ed. de Boor, 14 and 26), which must have been quite distinct from the bridge across the Golden Horn, of which the southern point was in Aivan Serai; though Ducange (*Const. Christ.* iv. 125) and van Millingen seem to connect the two bridges.

of the city along the shores of the Bosphorus.[1] These places could not resist. The inhabitants were doubtless glad to submit as speedily as possible to any one engaged in besieging the city, remembering too well how but a few years ago they had been harried by another and more terrible enemy, the Bulgarian Krum.[2]

The siege began in the month of December.[3] The course of events from this point to the end of the war may be conveniently divided into five stages.[4]

1. *December 821 to February or March 822.*—Thomas spent some days in disposing his forces and preparing his engines. He pitched his own tent in the suburbs beyond Blachernae,[5] not far from the noble building which rose towards heaven like a palace, the church of St. Cosmas and St. Damian, the physicians who take no fee for their services to men. Until the reign of Heraclius the north-western corner of the city between the Palace of Blachernae and the Golden Horn must have been defended by a fortification of which no traces survive.[6] Heraclius, whether before or after the siege of the Avars (A.D. 626),[7] had connected the Palace with the seaward fortifications by a wall which is flanked by three admirably built hexagonal towers.[8] But the assaults of the Bulgarians in A.D. 813 seem to have proved that this "Single Wall of Blachernae," as it was called, was an insufficient defence, and Leo V., in expectation of a second Bulgarian siege,[9] constructed a second outer wall, parallel to that of Heraclius, and forming with it a sort of citadel which was known as the Brachionion.[10]

[1] Gen. 39.

[2] Above, p. 46.

[3] The date comes from Michael, *Ep. ad Lud.* 418, where we also learn that the blockade lasted for the space of a year.

[4] There has been no full and critical relation of the siege by modern historians. See Lebeau, xiii. 50 *sqq.*; Schlosser, 440 *sqq.*; Finlay, ii. 131 (very brief). Much the best is that of Vasil'ev, *Viz. i. Ar.* 33 *sqq.*

[5] The suburb between Cosmidion and Blachernae was known as τὰ Παυλίνου (and is so designated here in *Cont. Th.* 59), from Paulinus (famous for his love-affair with Athenais, the wife of Theodosius II.), who founded the Cosmidion. Cp. Ducange, *Const. Chr.* 127.

[6] Extending, I conjecture, from the north-east corner of the Palace to the sea-wall. Cp. van Millingen, *Walls*, 120. The outer walls of the Palace itself formed the fortification as far as the northern extremity of the Theodosian Walls.

[7] Pernice (*L'Imperatore Eraclio*, 141) has given some reasons for thinking that the wall was built after the Avar attack in A.D. 619. Cp. my note in Gibbon, v. 92.

[8] Van Millingen, *Walls*, 164 *sqq.*

[9] See below, p. 359.

[10] Van Millingen, *Walls*, 168: "The Wall of Leo stands 77 feet to the west

The troops on whom it devolved to attack the long western walls of Theodosius, from the Palace of Blachernae to the Golden Gate, were assigned to the subordinate tyrant Anastasius,[1] to whose dignity a high command was due, but others were at hand to keep the inexperienced monk from blundering. The main attack was to be directed against the quarter of Blachernae. Here were gathered all the resources of the engineer's art, rams and tortoises, catapults and city-takers; and over these operations Thomas presided himself.

In the city meanwhile the aid of Heaven and the inventions of men were summoned to defend the walls. On the lofty roof of the church of the Mother of God in Blachernae, the Emperor solemnly fixed the Roman standard, in the sight of the enemy, and prayed for succour against them. Presently the besiegers beheld the young Emperor Theophilus walking at the head of a priestly procession round the walls of the city, and bearing with him the life-giving fragments of the holy Cross, and raiment of the mother of Christ.[2]

But, if he employed superstitious spells, Michael did not neglect human precautions. He too, like his opponent, called to his service all the resources of the art of the engineer, and the machines of the besieged proved in the end more effectual than those of the besieger. Simultaneous attacks by land and sea were frustrated, and on land at least the repulse of the assailants was wholly due to the superior machines of the assailed. The missiles which were shot from the city carried farther than those of Thomas, and great courage was required to venture near enough to scale or batter the walls. Ladders and battering-rams were easily foiled by the skilful handling of engines mounted on the battlements, and at last the attacking host retired from the volleys of well-aimed missiles within the shelter of their camp. At sea, too, the assailants were discomfited, but the discomfiture was perhaps chiefly caused by the rising of an adverse wind. The ships of Thomas were

of the Wall of Heraclius, running parallel to it for some 260 feet, after which it turns to join the walls along the Golden Horn. Its parapet walk was supported upon arches which served at the same time to buttress the wall itself, a comparatively slight structure about 8 feet thick. . . . It was flanked by four small towers, while the lower portion was pierced by numerous loopholes."

[1] This is recorded in *Cont. Th.*, not by Genesios.

[2] The clothes of the Virgin were "discovered" in a coffin at Blachernae in A.D. 619 (see my note in Gibbon, v. 81). We shall meet this precious relic again in A.D. 860 (below, p. 420).

provided both with "liquid fire" and with four-legged city-takers,[1] from whose lofty storeys flaming missiles might be hurled upon and over the sea-walls of the city. But the violent wind rendered it impossible to make an effective use of these contrivances, and it was soon clear that the attack on the seaside had failed.

Foiled at every point, Thomas was convinced that he had no chance of succeeding until the severity of winter had passed, and he retired from his position to await the coming of spring, whether in the cities of Thrace or on the opposite coasts of Asia.[2]

2. *Spring, 822 A.D.*—At the coming of spring Thomas reassembled his land forces and his ships at Constantinople and prepared for another simultaneous attack on both elements. Michael meanwhile had made use of the respite from hostilities to reinforce his garrison considerably, and during this second siege he was able to do more than defend the walls: he could venture to sally out against the enemy. It was also probably during the lull in the war that some repairs were made in the Wall of Leo, recorded by inscriptions which are still preserved.[3]

We are told that when the day dawned on which a grand assault was to be made on the walls of Blachern, the Emperor ascended the wall himself and addressed the enemy, who were within hearing.[4] He urged them to desert the rebel and seek

[1] τετρασκελεῖς ἑλεπόλεις.

[2] The words of our source (*Cont. Th.* 61 ἄλλως δὲ καὶ ἡ ὥρα δριμύτερον ἐδείκνυ τὸν καιρὸν ἅτε χειμῶνος ἐπιγενομένου καὶ τῆς Θρᾴκης τῶν ἄλλων οὔσης δυσχειμέρου ἐπὶ παραχειμασίαν ἑτράπη καὶ τὴν τοῦ στρατοῦ ἀνακομιδήν) may merely mean that winter in Thrace was too severe for military operations, not that Thomas wintered elsewhere.

[3] Those inscriptions are near the south end of Leo's Wall; both are defective. One records the names of Michael and Theophilus; the other gives the date A.M. 6330, which corresponds to A.D. 822. See van Millingen, *Walls*, 168. An inscription on one of the towers of the Heraclian Wall is in honour of an Emperor Michael; if this was Michael II. (as van Millingen thinks, 166), the name of Theophilus must also have occurred. Fragmentary inscriptions of M. and T. have been found near the Charisian Gate in the Theodosian Wall (*ib.* 101).

[4] *Cont. Th.* 61 τεῖχος τῶν Βλαχερνῶν was to be the object of attack, *i.e.* chiefly the Wall of Leo; then Michael is said to have spoken ἐκ τοῦ τῶν τειχῶν μετεώρου, but it does not follow that this also was the Wall of Leo. We may suspect that Michael stood on the battlements of the Palace of Blachernae, nearly opposite the point where the wall which Manuel Comnenus, in the twelfth century, built outside the Palace, was pierced by the gate of Gyrolimne. This conjecture (which I owe to Mr. van Millingen) is suggested by (1) the fact that at Gyrolimne the younger Andronicus, during his rebellion, more than once held parley with his father's ministers;

pardon and safety in the city. His words were not received with favour, nor did he imagine that they would move those whom he addressed. But he achieved the effect which he desired, though not the effect at which his speech seemed to aim. The foe concluded that the besieged must needs be in great straits, when the Emperor held such parley from the walls. With confident spirits and in careless array they advanced to the assault, supposing that they would encounter but a weak resistance. Suddenly, to their amazement and consternation, many gates opened, and soldiers, rushing forth from the city, were upon them before they had time to apprehend what had happened. The men of Michael won a brilliant victory, and Thomas was forced to abandon the assault on Blachernae. A battle by sea seems to have been fought on the same day, and it also resulted in disaster for the besiegers. The details are not recorded, but the marines of Thomas, seized by some unaccountable panic, retreated to the shore and absolutely refused to fight.

Time wore on, and the taking of the city seemed no nearer. One of the generals in the leaguer concluded that there was little chance of success, and weary of the delay he determined to change sides. This was Gregory, the exile of Skyros, and nephew of Leo the Armenian. His resolve was doubtless quickened by the fact that his wife and children were in the power of Michael;[1] he reckoned that their safety would be assured if he deserted Thomas. Accordingly, at the head of his regiment, he left the camp and entrusted a Studite monk with the task of bearing the news to the Emperor.[2] But the approaches to the city were so strictly guarded by the blockaders that the messenger was unable to deliver his message, and Michael remained in ignorance of the new accession to his cause. As it turned out, however, the act of Gregory proved of little profit to any one except, perhaps, to him, whom it was intended to injure. Thomas saw that the

(2) the hill opposite this gate must inevitably have been occupied by troops of Thomas, and in 1203 the Crusaders on this hill were nearly within speaking distance of the garrison on the wall. Cp. van Millingen, *ib.* 126-127.

[1] *Cont. Th.* 63 gives us this fact. From the same source we learn that Gregory was given to deep potations (62); he seems to have been a man who acted generally from impulse more than from reflexion.

[2] This, too, we learn from *Cont. Th.*, not from Genesios.

traitor must be crushed immediately, for it would be a serious disadvantage to have an enemy in his rear. Accordingly, he marched against him with a band of chosen soldiers; his army being so large that he could easily divert a portion without raising the blockade. The followers of Gregory were defeated, we know not where nor how; and Gregory himself, a fugitive from the field, was pursued and slain. There is a certain propriety in the part which this soldier plays in the last act of the drama, in which Leo, Michael, and Thomas were the chief performers. Leo had passed away before that last act; but his nephew, as it were, takes his place, and oscillates between his rivals, is banished by Michael and slain by Thomas.

3. *Summer and Autumn A.D. 822.*—The false Constantine, if he still sustained that pretence, made the most of his easy victory over the renegade. He proclaimed that he had conquered by land and sea, and sent letters to Greece and the islands of the Aegean, bearing this false news.[1] His purpose was to reinforce his navy, which hitherto had accomplished nothing worthy of its size, by fresh ships from these regions. Nor was he disappointed. It was clearly thought in Greece, where the population was devoted to image-worship, that the pretender was carrying all before him, that the capture or surrender of the city was merely a matter of days, or at most months, and that Michael's days were numbered. A large fleet was sent, with all good-will, to hasten the success of one who professed to be an image-worshipper.[2] No less than three hundred and fifty ships (it is alleged) arrived in the Propontis. Under given topographical conditions, when the same object is in view, history is apt to repeat itself, and we find Thomas mooring these reinforcements in the harbour of Hebdomon and on the adjacent beach,[3] exactly as the Saracens

[1] γράμμασι πεπλασμένοις, Gen. 41.

[2] Hopf (126) sees here "the old opposition of the oppressed provinces against the despotic centralisation in the capital."

[3] τῇ τῶν καλουμένων Βυρίδων ἀκτῇ, *ibid.* τῷ τῶν B. λιμένι, *Cont. Th.* 64. From a passage in John of Antioch it is clear that Byrides was a place on the coast between Hebdomon (Makrikeui) and the Golden Gate. The harbour of Hebdomon was east of the palace (and just to the east of the harbour was the Kyklobion). It is clear, therefore, that B. λιμήν = the harbour of Hebdomon; but it could not have held all the ships, and so some of them were moored to the east along the shore. Hopf (119) curiously says that Thomas took "Berida" by storm. On the πίναξ of the Hell. Syllogos (see Bibliography) Byrides is marked near Selymbria.

had disposed their fleet on the two occasions on which they had attempted to capture the city.[1]

He had formed the project of a twofold attack by sea.[2] On the northern side the city was to be assailed by his original fleet, which lay in the Golden Horn; while the new forces were to operate against the southern walls and harbours, on the side of the Propontis. But Michael foiled this plan by prompt action. Sending his fire-propelling vessels against the squadron at Hebdomon, he destroyed it, before it had effected anything. Some of the ships were entirely burnt, others scattered, but most were captured, and towed into the city harbours, which the Imperial navy held.[3] Such was the fate of the navy which the Themes of Hellas and Peloponnesus had sent so gladly to the discomfiture of the Phrygian Emperor.

On the seaside the danger was diminished; but by land the siege was protracted with varying success until the end of the year. Frequent excursions were made from the city, and sometimes prospered, whether under the leadership of the elder Emperor or of his son Theophilus, with the General Olbianos or the Count Katakylas.[4] But on the whole the besieged were no match in the field for their foes, who far outnumbered them. Both parties must have been weary enough as the blockade wore on through the winter. It was at length broken by the intervention of a foreign power.

[1] Theoph. 353 (664 A.D.) *ἀπὸ τῆς πρὸς δύσιν ἀκρότητος τοῦ Ἐβδόμου . . . μέχρι πάλιν τοῦ πρὸς ἀνατολὴν ἀκρωτηρίου τοῦ λεγομένου* Κυκλοβίου (a description indeed which does not naturally suggest a harbour), and 395 (717 A.D.) an equivalent description.

[2] Gen. *ib.*

[3] *Ib. τὰς πλείους δὲ αὐτῶν . . . τῷ βασιλεῖ προσάγουσιν.* George Mon. (795) mentions the destruction of the fleet as a critical event in the siege. Finlay, whose account of this rebellion is not very satisfactory, makes a strange mistake here (ii. 131): "The partisans of Michael collected a fleet of 350 ships in the islands of the Archipelago and Greece, and this fleet, having gained a complete victory over the fleet of Thomas, cut off the communications of the besiegers with Asia." He has thus reversed the facts. The Greek of the historical Commission of Constantine Porphyrogennetes seems to have been too much for Finlay here, but the story is told simply enough by Genesios.

[4] Here, again, *Cont. Th.* 64 has information not vouchsafed by Genesios: *νῦν μὲν τοῦ* Μιχαήλ, *νῦν δὲ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Θεοφίλου αὐτοῖς ἐπεξιόντος μετὰ* Ὀλβιανοῦ *καὶ* Κατακύλα. This suggests that Olbianos and Katakylas were in the city during the siege. Finlay knows that the troops of the Armeniac and Opsikian Themes interrupted the communications of Thomas with the centre of Asia Minor: "These troops maintained a constant communication with the garrison of Constantinople from the coast of Bithynia" (*loc. cit.*). There is no authority for this, though it is what we should expect. We only know that before the blockade began in spring Michael imported many troops into the city, doubtless regiments of these Themes.

4. *Intervention of the Bulgarians, Spring, A.D. 823.*—It was from the kingdom beyond Mount Haemus that Michael received an opportune aid which proved the turning-point in the civil war. The Bulgarians had been at peace with the Empire, since Leo and king Omurtag, not long after the death of Krum, had concluded a treaty for thirty years.[1] Communications now passed between Constantinople and Pliska, but it is uncertain who took the first step, and what was the nature of the negotiations. The simplest and earliest chronicle of the siege represents Michael as requesting Omurtag to take the field against Thomas, and Omurtag readily responding to the request.[2] But an entirely different version is adopted in records which are otherwise unfavourable to Michael.[3] According to this account, the proposal of alliance came from the Bulgarian king, and the Emperor declined the offer because he was reluctant to permit Christian blood to be shed by the swords of the heathen. He tendered his sincere thanks to Omurtag, but alleged that the presence of a Bulgarian army in Thrace, even though acting in his own cause, would be a virtual violation of the Thirty Years' Peace.[4] Omurtag, however, took the matter into his own hands, and, unable to resist the opportunity of plunder and pillage, assisted Michael in Michael's own despite. It was obviously to the interest of the Emperor that this version should obtain credit, as it relieved him from the odium of inviting pagans to destroy Christians and exposing Roman territory to the devastation of barbarians. We must leave it undecided whether it was Michael who requested, or Omurtag who offered help, but we cannot seriously doubt that the help was accorded with the full knowledge and at the desire of the besieged Emperor. It may well be that he declined to conclude any formal alliance with the Bulgarians,[5] but merely gave them assurances that, if they marched against Thomas and paid themselves by booty, he would hold them innocent of violating the peace. The negotiations must have been

[1] See below p. 360.

[2] George Mon. p. 796 *μαθὼν ὡς ὁ βασιλεὺς Μιχαὴλ τοὺς Βουλγάρους εἰς συμμαχίαν κατ' αὐτοῦ προσεκαλέσατο.* This is accepted by Hirsch, 134.

[3] Gen. 41-42; *Cont. Th.* 65.

[4] See Gen. *ib.* *ἀπολογεῖται μὴ χρῆναι τοὺς ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον χρόνον ὡμολογηκότας Χριστιανικῶν αἱμάτων ἀφέξεσθαι ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν στασιωτῶν πολέμῳ τὰ καλῶς δόξαντα καταλύειν.*

[5] Gen. 41 *διαπρεσβεύεται πρὸς βασιλέα καὶ συμμαχεῖν αἰτεῖται αὐτῷ.*

conducted with great secrecy, and the account which represented Michael as unreservedly rejecting the proffered succour gained wide credence,[1] though his enemies assigned to his refusal a less honourable motive than the desire of sparing Christian blood, and suggested that his avarice withheld him from paying the Bulgarians the money which they demanded for their services.[2]

Omurtag then descended from Mount Haemus and marched by the great high road, by Hadrianople and Arcadiopolis, to deliver Constantinople from the Roman leaguer, even as another Bulgarian monarch had come down, more than a hundred years before, in the days of Leo III., to deliver it from the Saracens.[3] When Thomas learned that the weight of Bulgaria was thrown into the balance and that a formidable host was advancing against him, he decided to abandon the siege and confront the new foe.[4] It was a joyful day for the siege-worn citizens and soldiers, when they saw the camp of the besiegers broken up and the great army marching away from their gates. Only the remnant of the rebel navy still lay in the Golden Horn, as Thomas did not require it for his immediate work. The Bulgarians had already passed Arcadiopolis and reached the plain of Kêduktos, near the coast between Heraclea and Selymbria.[5] Here they awaited the approach of Thomas, and in the battle which ensued defeated him utterly. The victors soon retired, laden with booty; having thus worked much profit both to themselves

[1] We must suppose that Michael deliberately circulated it. It is characteristic that he does not mention or even hint at the Bulgarian episode in his letter to the Emperor Lewis. He wished the Franks to suppose that the subjugation of Thomas was due to his unaided efforts, and it would have been humiliating to confess to the rival Emperor that the Bulgarians had invaded the Empire even in his own cause.

[2] *Cont. Th.* 652.

[3] Tervel (A.D. 717).

[4] Michael Syr. (37) says that Michael employed Saracen captives who were in the city to fight for him, promising them freedom (a promise which he did not keep), and with their help routed Thomas. It is quite possible that he did enlist them in his forces during the siege.

[5] Gen. 42 *κατὰ τὸν Κηδούκτου καλούμενον χῶρον*. (For the date of the battle of Kêduktos see Appendix V.). For the location of Kêduktos (*A-quaeductus*), the important passage is Nicephorus Bryenn. 135 (ed. Bonn) = Anna Comnena I. 18-19 (ed. Reifferscheid) describing the battle between Alexius Comnenus and Bryennios *ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τοῦ Κηδούκτου πεδίοις*, near the fort of Kalavrye and the river Halmyros. The Halmyros seems to be the stream to the west of Erekli (Heraclea), and the name of Kalavrye (Γαλαβρία in Attaleiates, 289 ed. Bonn) is preserved in Gelivrê near Selymbria (Tomaschek, *Zur Kunde der H.-h.* 331). Cp. Jireček, *Heerstrasse*, 101.

and to their ally, for whom the way was now smoothed to the goal of final victory. They had destroyed the greater part of the rebel army on the field of Kêduktos, and Michael was equal to dealing with the remnant himself.

5. *Siege of Arcadiopolis and end of the Civil War, 823* A.D.—When the Bulgarians retreated, Thomas, still hopeful, collected the scattered troops who had been routed on the day of Kêduktos, and marching north-eastward pitched his camp in the marshy plain of Diabasis, watered by the streams of the Melas and Athyras which discharge into the lagoon of Buyak Chekmejè, about twenty miles west of Constantinople. This district was well provided with pasturage for horses, and well situated for obtaining supplies; moreover, it was within such distance from the capital that Thomas could harry the neighbouring villages.[1] The month of May, if it had not already begun, was near at hand, when Michael went forth to decide the issue of the long struggle. He was accompanied by his faithful generals Katakylas and Olbianos, each at the head of troops of his own Theme. It is not recorded whether the younger Emperor marched with his father or was left behind to guard the city. But the city might justly feel secure now; for the marines whom Thomas had left in the Golden Horn espoused the cause of Michael, as soon as they learned the news of Kêduktos.[2]

Thomas, who felt confident of success, decided to entrap his foes by the stratagem of a feigned flight. But his followers did not share his spirit.[3] They were cast down by the recent defeat; they were thoroughly weary of an enterprise which had lasted so much longer than they had dreamt

[1] Gen. (42) indicates the character of the place. Its distance from Constantinople is vaguely suggested in *Cont. Th.* 66 *σταδίους ἀπέχον τῆς πόλεως ἱκανούς*, and *κἀκεῖθεν τὰς προνομὰς ποιῶν πάντα μὲν πρὸ τῆς πόλεως ἔκειρε κόσμον*, but Thomas did not come within sight of the city. Diabasis has been identified by Jireček (*ib.* 53, 102) with the plains of Choirobakchoi, described by Kinnamos (73-74 ed. Bonn) and Nicetas (85-86 ed. Bonn). The Melas (Kara-su) and Athyras flow from the hill of Kushkaya near the Anastasian Wall; and near here Tomaschek (*op. cit.* 304) would place the fortress Ἀόγγοι, which commanded the plain (according to Kinnamos), identifying it with Cantacuzene's ἡ Λόγους, i. 297 ed. Bonn. (Ighlighus in Idrisi's geography). North of the lagoon there is an extensive marsh, through which there is a solid stone dyke of Roman work; this was doubtless called the Crossing, *Diabasis*.

[2] That the naval armament joined Michael *after* the Bulgarian victory is stated in *Cont. Th.* Genesios is less precise.

[3] The spirit of the army is described in *Cont. Th.* 67.

when they lightly enlisted under the flag of the pretender; their ardour for the cause of an ambitious leader had cooled; they were sick of shedding Christian blood; they longed to return to their wives and children. This spirit in the army of the rebels decided the battle of Diabasis. They advanced against their enemies as they were commanded; when the word was given they simulated flight; but, when they saw that the troops of the Emperor did not pursue in disorder, as Thomas had expected, but advanced in close array, they lost all heart for the work, and surrendered themselves to Michael's clemency.

The cause of Thomas was lost on the field of Diabasis. The throne of the Amorian Emperor was no longer in jeopardy. But there was still more work to be done and the civil war was not completely over until the end of the year. The tyrant himself was not yet captured, nor his adopted son, Anastasius. Thomas, with a few followers, fled to Arcadiopolis [1] and closed the gates against his conqueror. The parts of the tyrant and the Emperor were now changed. It was now Michael's turn to besiege Thomas in the city of Arcadius, as Thomas had besieged Michael in the city of Constantine. But the second siege was of briefer duration. Arcadiopolis was not as Constantinople; and the garrison of Thomas was not as the garrison of Michael. Yet it lasted much longer than might have been expected; for it began in the middle of May, and the place held out till the middle of October.[2]

Arcadiopolis was not the only Thracian town that sheltered followers of Thomas. The younger tyrant, Anastasius, had found refuge not far off, in Bizye.[3] Another band of rebels seized Panion,[4] and Heraclea on the Propontis remained devoted to the cause of the Pretender. These four towns, Heraclea, Panion, Arcadiopolis and Bizye formed a sort of

[1] The united authority of the contemporary George Mon. (797) and Genesios (43) would be decisive for the city of Arcadius, as against *Cont. Th.* in which the city of Hadrian is mentioned. Ἀδριανούπολιν there (68) is probably a slip; in any case it is an error. All doubt on the matter is removed by Michael's own statement (*Ep. ad Lud.* 418) from which we learn the duration of the siege. Arcadiopolis, the ancient Bergyle, corresponds to the modern Lüle Burgas, and was a station on the main road from Hadrianople to Constantinople. Cf. Jireček, *Heerstrasse*, 49.

[2] See Appendix V.

[3] Bizye lay nearly due east of Hadrianople, and N.E. of Arcadiopolis.

[4] On the Propontis coast, not far from Heraclea (Suidas, *s.v.*).

line, cutting off Constantinople from Western Thrace. But the subjugation of the last refuges of the lost cause was merely a matter of months. It would not have been more than a matter of days, if certain considerations had not hindered the Emperor from using engines of siege against the towns which still defied him. But two lines of policy concurred in deciding him to choose the slower method of blockade.

In the first place he wished to spare, so far as possible, the lives of Christians, and, if the towns were taken by violence, bloodshed would be unavoidable. That this consideration really influenced Michael is owned by historians who were not well disposed towards him, but who in this respect bear out a statement which he made himself in his letter to Lewis the Pious.[1] He informed that monarch that he retreated after the victory of Diabasis, "in order to spare Christian blood." Such a motive does not imply that he was personally a humane man; other acts show that he could be stark and ruthless. His humanity in this case rather illustrates the general feeling that prevailed against the horrors of civil war. It was Michael's policy to affect a tender regard for the lives of his Christian subjects, and to contrast his own conduct with that of his rival, who had brought so many miseries on the Christian Empire. We have already seen how important this consideration was for the purpose of conciliating public opinion, in the pains which were taken to represent the Bulgarian intervention as a spontaneous act of Omurtag, undesired and deprecated by Michael.

But there was likewise another reason which conspired to decide Michael that it was wiser not to storm a city of Thrace. It was the interest and policy of a Roman Emperor to cherish in the minds of neighbouring peoples, especially of Bulgarians and Slavs, the wholesome idea that fortified Roman cities were impregnable.[2] The failure of Krum's attack on Constantinople, the more recent failure of the vast force of Thomas, were calculated to do much to confirm such a belief. And Michael had no mind to weaken this impression by showing the barbarians that Roman cities might yield to the force of skilfully directed engines. In

[1] ἅμα μὲν τὸν ἐμφύλιον ἀποδιδράσκων πόλεμον, *Cont. Th.* 68. Michael, *Ep. ad Lud.* 418.

[2] *Cont. Th.* 68.

fact, Michael seized the occasion to show the Bulgarians that he regarded Arcadiopolis as too strong to be taken by assault.

In following these two principles of policy, Michael placed himself in the light of a patriot, in conspicuous contrast to his beaten rival, who had been the author of the Civil War, and had used all his efforts to teach barbarians how the Imperial city itself might be taken by an enemy. The garrison of Arcadiopolis held out for five months,[1] but Thomas was obliged to send out of the town all the women and children, and the men who were incapable of bearing arms, in order to save his supplies. By the month of October, the garrison was reduced to such straits that they were obliged to feed on the putrid corpses of their horses which had perished of hunger.[2] Part of the garrison now left the town, some with the knowledge of Thomas, others as deserters to Michael. The latter, desperate with hunger, let themselves down by ropes, or threw themselves from the walls at the risk of breaking their limbs. The messengers of Thomas stole out of the gates and escaped to Bizye, where the younger tyrant Anastasius had shut himself up, in order to concert with the "son" some plan for the rescue of the "father." Then Michael held a colloquy with the garrison that was left in Arcadiopolis, and promised to all a free pardon, if they would surrender their master into his hands. The followers who had been so long faithful to their leader thought that the time had come when they might set their lives before loyalty to a desperate cause. They accepted the Imperial clemency and delivered Thomas to the triumphant Emperor.

The punishment that awaited the great tyrant who was so near to winning the throne was not less terrible than that to which Michael himself had been sentenced by Leo, the Armenian. All the distress which the Emperor had undergone for the space of three years was now to be visited on his head. The pretender, who had reduced his conqueror to dire extremities and had wasted three years of his reign, could hope for no easy death. The quarrel between Michael and Thomas was an old one; it dated from the days when they had both been officers under the general Bardanes. The time had now come for settling accounts, and the reckoning

[1] Michael, *Ep. ad Lud.* 419. [2] Gen. 44.

against the debtor was heavy indeed. The long war had inflicted immeasurable injury on the lands of the Empire, and it would be hard to estimate how much Thrace alone had suffered. The private ambition of the old Slav of Gaziura, the impostor who had deceived his followers, for a time at least, that he was a legitimate Emperor, was answerable for all this ruin and misery. When he was led in chains to the presence of his hated rival, Michael, not disguising his joy, set his foot upon the neck of the prostrate foe,[1] and pronounced his doom. His hands and feet were to be cut off, and his body was to be pierced on a stake. The miserable man when he was led to punishment, cried aloud for mercy: "Pity me, O thou who art the true Emperor!"[2] Hope may have been awakened in his heart for a moment, hope at least of some alleviation of the doom, when his judge deigned to ask him a question. It was one of those dangerous questions which tempt a man in the desperate position of Thomas to bear false witness if he has no true facts to reveal. Michael asked whether any of his own officers or ministers had held treacherous dealings with the rebel. But if the rebel had any true or false revelations to make, he was not destined to utter them, and if he conceived hopes of life or of a milder death, they were speedily extinguished. At this juncture John Hexabulios, the Logothete of the Course, intervened and gave the Emperor wise counsel. The part played in history by this Patrician was that of a monitor. We saw him warning Michael Rangabé against Leo; we saw him taking counsel with Leo touching the designs of Michael the Lisper; and now we see him giving advice to Michael. His counsel was, not to hear Thomas, inasmuch as it was improper and absurd to believe the evidence of foes against friends.

The sentence was carried out,[3] probably before the walls of Arcadiopolis, and doubtless in the Emperor's presence; and the great rebel perished in tortures, "like a beast."[4] A like

[1] George Mon. 797 *κατὰ τὴν ἀρχαίαν συνήθειαν*. We remember how Justinian II. set his feet on the necks of Leontius and Tiberius.

[2] In *Cont. Th.* (69), it is said that he was exhibited on an ass: *ἐπὶ ὄνου τε θεατρίζει πᾶσι, τοῦτο μόνον ἐπιτραγῳδοῦντα, ἐλέησόν με ὁ ἀληθῶς βασιλεῦ.* Genesios does not notice the ass, which often played a part in such scenes.

[3] The punishment is described by Michael himself in his letter to Lewis (419).

[4] *ὥσπερ τε ζῷον δισθανατοῦν*, *Cont. Th.* 70.

doom was in store for his adopted son. But Bizye caused the Emperor less trouble than Arcadiopolis, for when the followers of Anastasius heard the news of the fate of Thomas, they resolved to save their own lives by surrendering him to Michael. The monk, who in an evil hour had exchanged the cloister for the world, perished by the same death as Thomas. But even after the extinction of the two tyrants, there was still resistance offered to the rule of Michael. The inland cities, Bizye and Arcadiopolis, had surrendered; but the maritime cities, Heraclea and Panion,[1] still held out. In these neighbouring places there was a strong enthusiasm for image-worship, and Michael had given clear proofs that he did not purpose to permit the restoration of images. But the resistance of these cities was soon overcome. The wall of Panion was opportunely shattered by an earthquake, and thus the city was disabled from withstanding the Imperial army. Heraclea, though it was visited by the same disaster, suffered less, and did not yield at once; but an assault on the sea-side was successful, and here, too, Michael had a bloodless victory.

The Emperor, having completely established his power in Thrace, returned to the city with his prisoners. If his dealing with the arch-rebels Thomas and Anastasius had been cruel, his dealing with all their followers was merciful and mild. Those who were most deeply implicated he punished by banishment. On the rest he inflicted only the light ignominy of being exhibited at a spectacle in the Hippodrome with their hands bound behind their backs.

But there was still some work to be done in Asia, before it could be said that the last traces of the rebellion of Thomas had been blotted out. Two adherents of the rebel still held two strong posts in Asia Minor, and plundered the surrounding country as brigands. Kaballa,[2] in the Anatolic Theme, to the north-west of Iconium, was in the hands of Choereas, while

[1] Michael, *ib.*, calls it Panidus.

[2] There were two places of this name (in one of which Constantine V. Kaballinos was probably born), one in Phrygia, south of Trajanopolis, the other on the borders of Pisidia and Lycaonia and not far from Laodicea Kekaumene (Ramsay, *Lycaonia*, 69). The latter, which is doubtless the Kaballa in question, is placed by Ramsay in Pisidia, near the village of Chigil on the road from Iconium to Philomelion. Anderson (cp. his *Map*) places it at Kavak, considerably nearer Iconium, and in Lycaonia; see *J. H. S.* xviii. 120-1 (1898).

Gazarenos of Kolonea held Saniana, an important fortress on the Halys.[1] Michael sent a golden bull[2] to these chiefs, announcing the death of Thomas and offering to give them a free pardon and to confer on them the rank of Magister, if they submitted. But they were wild folk, and they preferred the rewards of brigandage to honours at the Imperial Court. The messenger of Michael, however, accomplished by guile what he failed to accomplish openly. He seduced some of the garrisons of both towns, and persuaded them to close the gates upon their captains while they were abroad on their lawless raids. The work of tampering with the men of Choereas and Gazarenos demanded subtlety and caution, but the imperial messenger was equal to the emergency. The manner in which he won the ear of an oekonomos or steward of a church or monastery in Saniana, without arousing suspicion, is recorded. He found a peasant, by name Gyberion, who had a talent for music and used to spend his leisure hours in practising rustic songs. The envoy from the Court cultivated the friendship of this man and composed a song for him, which ran thus:

Hearken, Sir Steward, to Gyberis!
Give me but Saniana town,
New-Caesarea shalt thou win
And eke a bishop's gown.[3]

When these lines had been repeatedly sung by the man within the hearing of the oekonomos or of his friends, the meaning of the words was grasped and the hint taken. Shut out of their "cloud-capped towns"[4] the two rebels, Choereas and Gazarenos took the road for Syria, hoping to find a refuge there, like their dead leader Thomas. But before they could reach the frontier they were captured and hanged.

[1] Saniana has been identified by Ramsay (*Asia Minor*, 218 *sqq.*) with Cheshnir Keupreu, on the east side of the Halys, south-east of Ancyra, a point at which the military road from Dorylaeum forked, one branch going eastward, the other south-eastward. If he is right, its military importance (implied, I think, in *Cont. Them.* 28) is clear.

[2] χρυσοβούλλιον, *Cont. Th.* 72.

[3] Krumbacher has restored the verses as follows, *G.B.L.* 793 *ib.*:

ἄκουσε, κῦρι οἰκονόμε,
τὸν Γυβέριν, τί σου λέγει
ἂν μοι δῶς τὴν Σανιάναν,
μητροπολίτην σε ποίσω,
Νεοκαισάρειάν σοι δώσω.

If this is right, the lines are eight-syllabled trochaics with accent on the penultima. For Neocaesarea in Pontus = Niksar, cp. Anderson, *Studia Pontica*, i. 56 *sqq.*

[4] *Ib.* 73 ὑπερνεφῶν τούτων πολιχνίων.

The drama is now over; all the prophecies of the soothsayer of Philomelion have come true. The star of the Armenian and the star of the Slavonian have paled and vanished before the more puissant star of the man of Amorion; both Leo and Thomas have been done to death by Michael. He now wears the Imperial crown, without a rival; he has no more to fear or hope from unfulfilled soothsay.

We may now turn from the personal interest in the story to the more general aspects of this great civil war, which caused abundant misery and mischief. The historians describe how "it filled the world with all manner of evils, and diminished the population; fathers armed themselves against their sons, brothers against the sons of their mothers, friends against their dearest friends."[1] It was as if the cataracts of the Nile had burst, deluging the land not with water but with blood.[2] The immediate author of these calamities was Thomas, and there is no doubt that his motive was simply personal ambition. The old man with the lame leg was not fighting for a principle, he was fighting for a diadem. But nevertheless he could not have done what he did if there had not been at work motives of a larger and more public scope, urging men to take up arms. It must not be forgotten that he originally revolted against Leo, and that his war with Michael was merely a continuation of that revolt. Now there were two classes of subjects in the Empire, who had good cause to be discontented with the policy of Leo, the image-worshippers and the Paulicians. The policy of Thomas, which he skilfully pursued, was to unite these discordant elements, orthodoxy and heresy, under a common standard. His pretence to be Constantine VI. may have won the confidence of some image-worshippers,[3] but he was possibly more successful in conciliating Paulicians and other heretics.

It is more important to observe that the rebellion probably initiated or promoted considerable social changes in the

[1] *Cont. Th.* 49.

[2] *Ib.* 53.

[3] He seems to have professed image-worship himself (Michael, *Vit. Theod. Stud.* 320 ἐλέγετο ἱερὰς εἰκόνας ἀποδέχεσθαί τε καὶ προσκυνεῖν) and the precautions of Michael, lest Theodore Stud. and his party should embrace his cause, bear this out. But Thomas won no sympathy from the image-worshippers of Constantinople, and his memory was execrated by such a bigoted iconolater as George Mon. (793). Cp. below, p. 116. Ignatius the deacon (biographer of the Patriarch Nicephorus) wrote iambic verses on Thomas (τὰ κατὰ Θωμᾶν), Suidas *s.v.* Ἰγνάτιος.

Asiatic provinces. The system of immense estates owned by rich proprietors and cultivated by peasants in a condition of serfdom, which had prevailed in the age of Justinian, had been largely superseded by the opposite system of small holdings, which the policy of the Isaurian Emperors seems to have encouraged. But by the tenth century, vast properties and peasant serfs have reappeared, and the process by which this second transformation was accomplished must be attributed to the ninth. The civil war could not fail to ruin numberless small farmers who in prosperous times could barely pay their way, and the fiscal burdens rendered it impossible for them to recuperate their fortunes, unless they were aided by the State. But it was easier and more conducive to the immediate profit of the treasury to allow these insolvent lands to pass into the possession of rich neighbours, who in some cases might be monastic communities. It is probable that many farms and homesteads were abandoned by their masters. A modern historian, who had a quick eye for economic changes, judged that the rebellion of Thomas "was no inconsiderable cause of the accumulation of property in immense estates, which began to depopulate the country and prepare it for the reception of a new race of inhabitants."[1] If the government of Michael II. had been wise, it would have intervened, at all costs, to save the small proprietors. Future Emperors might thus have been spared a baffling economic problem and a grave political danger.

§ 3. *The Ecclesiastical Policy of Michael*

It was probably during or just after the war with Thomas that Thecla, the mother of Theophilus, died. At all events we find Michael soon after the end of the war making preparations for a second marriage, notwithstanding the deep grief which he had displayed at the death of his first wife. A second marriage of any kind was deprecated by the strictly orthodox, and some thought that at this juncture, when the Empire was involved in so many misfortunes, the Emperor showed little concern to appease an offended Deity. But the Senators were urgent with him that he should marry. "It is

[1] Finlay, ii. 133.

not possible," they said, "that an Emperor should live without a wife, and that our wives should lack a Lady and Empress." The writer who records this wishes to make his readers believe that the pressure of the Senate was exerted at the express desire of Michael himself.[1] However this may be, it is interesting to observe the opinion that an Augusta was needed in the interests of Court society.

But those who carped at the idea of a second marriage were still more indignant when they heard who she was that the Emperor had selected to be Empress over them. It was not unfitting that the conqueror of the false Constantine should choose the daughter of the true Constantine for his wife. But Euphrosyne, daughter of Constantine VI., and grand-daughter of Irene, had long been a nun in a monastery on the island of Prinkipo, where she lived with her mother Maria. Here, indeed, was a scandal; here was an occasion for righteous indignation.[2] Later historians at least made much of the crime of wedding a nun, but at the time perhaps it was more a pretext for spiteful gossip than a cause of genuine dissatisfaction.[3] The Patriarch did not hesitate to dissolve Euphrosyne from her vows, that she might fill the high station for which her birth had fitted her. The new Amorian house might claim by this marriage to be linked with the old Isaurian dynasty.

The ecclesiastical leanings of Michael II. were not different from those of his predecessor,[4] but he adopted a different

[1] *Cont. Th.* 78. Our Greek authorities do not tell us directly that Thecla was alive when Michael acceded to the throne. But Michael Syr. 72 states that she died "when he had reigned four years"; and the language of *Cont. Th.* 78, in noticing his second marriage, seems decidedly to imply that she had died very recently. Michael Syr. adds a dark and incredible scandal that Euphrosyne bore a male child, and reflecting that it was of Jewish race and would "corrupt the Imperial stock" caused it to be killed.

[2] Theodore of Studion denounced the Emperor for this unlawful (ἐκνόμως) act in a catêchêsis, *Parva Cat.* 74, p. 258, and he wrote a letter to Maria, exhorting her not to go and live with her daughter in the Palace (*Epp.* ii. 181; cp. *Ep.* 148 Cozza L.).

[3] Compare Finlay ii. 142. He gives no reason for this view, but I find one in the silence of the contemporary George, who does not mention Euphrosyne. In the chronicle of Simeon (*Add. Georg.* 783, 789), she is mentioned, but the author does not know who she was and takes her for the mother of Theophilus.

[4] It is a mistake to suppose (as Schwarzlose does, p. 73) that Michael was neutral. Grossu (*Prep. Theodor.* 151) properly calls him "a convinced iconoclast, though not a fanatic." Finlay (ii. 129) speaks of his "indifference to the ecclesiastical disputes

policy. He decided to maintain the iconoclastic reform of Leo, which harmonized with his own personal convictions; but at the same time to desist from any further persecution of the image-worshippers. We can easily understand that the circumstances of his accession dictated a policy which should, so far as possible, disarm the opposition of a large and influential section of his subjects. Accordingly, he delivered from prison and allowed to return from exile, all those who had been punished by Leo for their defiance of his authority.[1] The most eminent of the sufferers, Theodore of Studion, left his prison cell in Smyrna, hoping that the change of government would mean the restoration of icons and the reinstallation of Nicephorus as Patriarch. He wrote a grateful and congratulatory letter to the Emperor, exhorting him to bestow peace and unity on the Church by reconciliation with the see of Rome.[2] At the same time, he attempted to bring Court influence to bear on Michael, and we possess his letters to several prominent ministers, whom he exhorts to work in the cause of image-worship, while he malignantly exults over the fate of Leo the Armenian.[3] Theodore had been joined by many members of his party on his journey to the neighbourhood of Constantinople, and when he reached Chalcedon, he hastened to visit the ex-Patriarch who was living in his own monastery of St. Theodore, on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus.[4] Here and in the monastery of Crescentius, where

which agitated a church to many of whose doctrines he was at heart adverse"; but this "indifference" was relative; it would be misleading to describe him as an "indifferentist." His own iconoclastic convictions are expressed clearly in his Letter to Lewis (420 *sq.*). On his actual policy, all writers agree; it is briefly summed up in the *Acta Davidis* 230: *κατέχω· ἕκαστος δὲ τὸ δοκοῦν αὐτῷ ποιείτω.*

[1] In the *Epist. syn. ad Theoph.* 377 Michael is described as *τὸν πραότατον καὶ γαληνότατον βασιλέα*, who *χριστομιμήτως* said to those who were in chains, "Come forth."

[2] Theodore, *Epp.* ii. 74.

[3] *Ib.* ii. 75, 76, 80, 81, 82. These and the letter to the Emperor were probably written at Pteleae, where Theodore stayed for some time, before proceeding to Prusa and Chalcedon (Michael, *Vit. Theod.* c. 58). On leaving Smyrna, Theodore proceeded to Pteleae, by way of Xerolopha and *Ἀάκκου μετάρα*, unknown places (*ib.* c. 48). The position of Pteleae, on the river Onopniktes (*ib.* c. 51), is unknown, but it is probably the same as Pteleae on the Hellespont (for which see Ramsay, *Asia Minor*, 163). In that case, Theodore must have followed the coast road from Smyrna.

[4] Grossu (145) is wrong in saying that Theodore crossed the Bosphorus and visited Nicephorus in the monastery of Agathos. This monastery may have been on the European side of the Bosphorus, but Nicephorus was in the monastery of St. Theodore (Ignatius, *Vit. Niceph.* 201), which was on the Asiatic side (Pargoire, *Boradion*, 476-477).

Theodore took up his abode somewhere on the Asiatic shore of the Propontis,[1] the image-worshippers deliberated how they should proceed.

Their first step seems to have been the composition of a letter[2] which Nicephorus addressed to the Emperor, admonishing him of his religious duties, and holding up as a warning the fate of his impious predecessor. In this document the arguments in favour of images were once more rehearsed. But Michael was deaf to these appeals. His policy was to allow people to believe what they liked in private, but not to permit image-worship in public. When he received the letter of Nicephorus he is reputed to have expressed admiration of its ability and to have said to its bearers words to this effect: "Those who have gone before us will have to answer for their doctrines to God; but we intend to keep the Church in the same way in which we found her walking. Therefore we rule and confirm that no one shall venture to open his mouth either for or against images. But let the Synod of Tarasius be put out of mind and memory, and likewise that of Constantine the elder (the Fifth), and that which was lately held in Leo's reign; and let complete silence in regard to images be the order of the day. But as for him who is so zealous to speak and write on these matters, if he wishes to govern the Church on this basis,[3] preserving silence concerning the existence and worship of images, bid him come here."

But this attempt to close the controversy was vain; the injunction of silence would not be obeyed, and its enforcement could only lead to a new persecution. The Emperor

[1] Michael, *Vit. Theod.* c. 59, names the monastery, and seems to imply it was on the Gulf of Nicomedia. But in *Vit. Nicol. Stud.* 900, the place of Theodore's abode at this time is described as a παρακόλπιος τόπος τῆς Προύσης, which would naturally mean on the bay of Mudania.

[2] Ignatius, *Vit. Niceph.* 209, where Michael's reply πρὸς τοὺς τὸ γράμμα διακομισαμένους is given. George Mon., without mentioning Nicephorus or his letter, cites Michael's reply (from Ignatius), referring to it as a public harangue, ἐπὶ λαοῦ δημηγορήσας (792). The texts of Simeon have ἐπὶ σελεντίου instead of ἐπὶ λαοῦ (Leo Gr. 211; *Vers. Slav.* 92, *na selendii*). There has, I think, been a confusion here between Michael's reply to the Patriarch and his subsequent reply to the audience of ecclesiastics whom he received, doubtless at a silention in the presence of the Senate. We do not know whether Nicephorus wrote his letter before or after the appearance of Theodore on the scene. Grossu (144 *sqq.*) is right, I think, in his general reconstruction of the order of events, but it cannot be considered absolutely certain.

[3] From these words, I think we may infer that the Patriarchate was already vacant through the death of Theodotos.

presently deemed it expedient to essay a reconciliation, by means of a conference between leading representatives of both parties, and he requested the ex-Patriarch and his friends to meet together and consider this proposal.[1] The image-worshippers decided to decline to meet heretics for the purpose of discussion, and Theodore, who was empowered to reply to the Emperor on behalf of the bishops and abbots, wrote that, while in all other matters they were entirely at their sovran's disposition, they could not comply with this command,[2] and suggested that the only solution of the difficulty was to appeal to Rome, the head of all the Churches.

It was apparently after this refusal[3] that, through the intervention of one of his ministers, Michael received in audience Theodore and his friends.[4] Having permitted them to expound their views on image-worship, he replied briefly and decisively: "Your words are good and excellent. But, as I have never yet till this hour worshipped an image in my life, I have determined to leave the Church as I found it. To you, however, I allow the liberty of adhering with impunity to what you allege to be the orthodox faith; live where you choose, only it must be outside the city, and you need not apprehend that any danger will befall you from my government."

It is probable that these negotiations were carried on while the Patriarchal chair was vacant. Theodotos died early in the year, and while the image-worshippers endeavoured to procure the restoration of Nicephorus on their own terms, the Emperor hoped that the ex-Patriarch might be induced to yield. The audience convinced him that further attempts to come to an understanding would be useless, and he caused the

[1] Theodore, *Epp.* ii. 86.

[2] They based their refusal on an apostolic command, *sc.* of Paul in Titus iii. 9-10.

[3] So Schneider, 89; Grossu, 147. C. Thomas places the audience almost immediately after Theodore's return from exile, and before the letter of Nicephorus (136). The difficulty as to the order arises from the fact that the three negotiations—(1) the letter of Nicephorus, (2) the proposal for a conference, (3) the audience—are recorded in three sources, each of which mentions only the one transaction. We can, therefore, only apply considerations of probability.

[4] Michael, *ib.* c. 60 (cp. *Vita Nicol. Stud.* 892). The Patriarch was not present (*ib.*; and Theodore, *Epp.* ii. 129, p. 1417; from which passage it appears that at this audience the Emperor again proposed a conference between representatives of the two doctrines, and offered to leave the decision to certain persons who professed to be image-worshippers—τοῦτον κἀκεῖνον τῶν δῆθεν ὁμοφρόνων ἡμῖν).

vacant ecclesiastical throne to be filled by Antonius Kassymatas, bishop of Syllaion, who had been the coadjutor of Leo V. in his iconoclastic work.[1] By this step those hopes which the Imperial leniency had raised in the minds of Theodore and his party were dissipated.

The negotiations, as they were conducted by Theodore, had raised a question which was probably of greater importance in the eyes of Michael than the place of pictures in religious worship. The Studite theory of the supremacy of the Roman See in the ecclesiastical affairs of Christendom had been asserted without any disguise; the Emperor had been admonished that the controversy could only be settled by the co-operation of the Pope. This doctrine cut at the root of the constitutional theory, which was held both by the Emperors and by the large majority of their subjects, that the Imperial autocracy was supreme in spiritual as well as in secular affairs. The Emperor, who must have been well aware that Theodore had been in constant communication with Rome during the years of persecution, doubtless regarded his Roman proclivities with deep suspicion, and he was not minded to brook the interference of the Pope. His suspicions were strengthened and his indignation aroused by the arrival of a message from Pope Paschal I. Methodius (who was afterwards to ascend the Patriarchal throne) had resided at Rome during the reign of Leo V. and worked there as an energetic agent in the interests of image-worship.[2] He now returned to Constantinople, bearing a document in which Paschal defined the orthodox doctrine.[3] He sought an audience of the Emperor, presented the Papal writing, and called upon the sovran to restore the true faith and the true Patriarch. Michael would undoubtedly have resented the dictation of the Pope if it had been conveyed by a Papal

[1] Theodotos was Patriarch for six years (Theoph. 362; Zonaras xiv. 24, 14, p. 350: Zonaras probably had a list of Patriarchs before him, see Hirsch, 384). As he became Patriarch at Easter 815, his death occurred in 821. Cp. Andreev, *Konst. Patr.* 200. His successor Antonius was already Patriarch at Whitsuntide (see above, p. 80 n. 5); we may conjecture that he was inaugurated at Easter. See further Vasil'ev, *Pril.* 147-148.

[2] See *Vit. Meth.* 1 § 4, p. 1248; cp. Theodore, *Epp.* ii. 35. Methodius was a native of Syracuse. He went at an early age to Constantinople, and became abbot of the monastery of Chenolakkos. He went to Rome in A.D. 815. See Pargoire's papers in *Échos d'Orient*, 6, 126 *sqq.* and 183 *sqq.* (1903).

[3] *Vit. Meth.* 1 § 5 τόμους δογματικοὺς ἤτοι ὅρους ὀρθοδοξίας.

envoy; but it was intolerable that one of his own subjects should be the spokesman of Rome. Methodius was treated with rigour as a treasonable intriguer; he was scourged and then imprisoned in a tomb in the little island of St. Andrew, which lies off the north side of the promontory of Akritas (Tuzla-Burnu), in the Gulf of Nicomedia.[1] His confinement lasted for more than eight years.[2]

After the outbreak of the civil war Michael took the precaution of commanding Theodore and his faction to move into the city, fearing that they might support his opponent, who was said to favour images. The measure was unnecessary, for the iconolaters of the better class seem to have had no sympathy with the cause of Thomas, and the ecclesiastical question did not prove a serious factor in the struggle.[3] On the termination of the war, the Emperor made a new effort to heal the division in the Church. He again proposed a conference between the leading exponents of the rival doctrines, but the proposal was again rejected, on the ground that the question could be settled only in one of two ways—either by an ecumenical council, which required the concurrence of the Pope and the four Patriarchs, or by a local council, which would only have legal authority if the legitimate Patriarch Nicephorus were first restored.[4]

[1] *Vit. Meth.* 1 § 5. For the island see Pargoire, *Hiéria*, 28.

[2] *Vit. Meth.* 1 § 6, says nine years. As he was imprisoned in spring 821, and released (*ib.*) by Michael just before his death (Oct. 829), eight and a half would be more accurate.

[3] Michael, *Vit. Theod.* c. 61. *Vit. Nicol. Stud.* 900. Grossu (149) and others think that Theodore, while he was in the city, was probably reinstalled at Studion. I doubt this. During the latter part of the war (Grossu omits to notice) he was in the Prince's Island, as we learn from a letter written there, *Epp.* ii. 127, p. 1412. (Nicephorus, it would seem, was allowed to remain in his monastery on the Bosphorus.) From *Epp.* ii. 129, p. 1416, we learn that Theodore had no sympathy with the rebel: *φονίσκος ἐπὰν κρατηθῇ δικαίως ἀποτίσει πρὸς τοῦ νόμου τὴν ἀντισηκοῦσαν ποινήν.*

[4] The source is Theodore's letter to Leo, the Sakellarios (whom Michael had charged with the negotiation), rejecting the proposition on behalf of his party (*Epp.* ii. 129). The writer refers to the audience which the Emperor had accorded to him and his friends in 821 as *πρὸ τριῶν ἐτῶν*. This enables us to assign the date to the first months of 824. At the same time Theodore addressed a letter directly to the Emperors Michael and Theophilus (ii. 199), setting forth the case for pictures. At the end of the war Theodore retired (along with his disciple Nicolaus) to the monastery of St. Tryphon, close to the promontory of Akritas, in the Gulf of Nicomedia (Michael, *Vit. Theod.*, *ib.*; *Vit. Nicol. Stud.* 900), where he lived till his death, Nov. 11, 826 (*Vit. Nicol.* 902; Naukratios, *Encyclica*, 1845; Michael, *Vit. Theod.* c. 64). He was buried in Prince's Island, but the remains were afterwards removed to

The Emperor was convinced that the obstinacy of the image-worshippers rested largely on their hopes that the Roman See would intervene, and that if he could induce the Pope to assume a cold attitude to their solicitations the opposition would soon expire. In order to influence the Pope he sought the assistance of the Western Emperor, Lewis, to whom he indited a long letter, which contains an interesting description of the abuses to which the veneration of images had led.[1] "Lights were set in front of them and incense was burned, and they were held in the same honour as the life-giving Cross. They were prayed to, and their aid was besought. Some used even to cover them with cloths and make them the baptismal sponsors for their children. Some priests scraped the paint from pictures and mixed it in the bread and wine which they give to communicants; others placed the body of the Lord in the hands of images, from which the communicants received it. The Emperors Leo V. and his son caused a local synod to be held,[2] and such practices were condemned. It was ordained that pictures which were hung low in churches should be removed, that those which were high should be left for the instruction of persons who are unable to read, but that no candles should be lit or incense burned before them. Some rejected the council and fled to Old Rome, where they calumniated the Church." The Emperors proceed to profess their belief in the *Six* Ecumenical Councils, and to assure King Lewis that they venerate the glorious and holy relics of the Saints. They ask him to speed the envoys to the Pope, to whom they are bearers of a letter and gifts for the Church of St. Peter.

The four envoys[3] who were sent on this mission met with a favourable reception from the Emperor Lewis at

Studion in 844 (Michael, *ib.* c. 68). During his last years he continued his epistolary activity in the cause of orthodoxy, and many people came to see and consult him (*ib.* c. 63).

[1] Mich. *Ep. ad Lud.* 420. It is dated April 10, A.D. 824.

[2] "Propterea statuerunt orthodoxi imperatores et doctissimi sacerdotes locale adunare concilium." This statement, which of course refers to the synod of A.D. 815, seems to have led to the false idea of some historians that Michael held a council in 821. He simply adhered to the acts of 815.

[3] Theodore, a stratêgos of protospathar rank; Nicetas, bishop of Myra; Theodore, oekonomos of St. Sophia; Leo, an Imperial candidatus. The Patriarch Fortunatus of Grado (who had fled to Constantinople in 821) accompanied them (*Ann. r. F.*, *sub* 824).

Rouen, and were sent on to Rome, where Eugenius had succeeded Paschal in St Peter's chair.[1] It is not recorded how they fared at Rome, but Lewis lost no time in making an attempt to bring about a European settlement of the iconoclastic controversy. The Frankish Church did not agree with the extreme views of the Greek iconoclasts, nor yet with the doctrine of image-worship which had been formulated by the Council of Nicaea and approved by the Popes; and it appeared to Lewis a good opportunity to press for that intermediate solution of the question which had been approved at the Council of Frankfurt (A.D. 794). The sense of this solution was to forbid the veneration of images, but to allow them to be set up in churches as ornaments and memorials. The first step was to persuade the Pope, and for this purpose Lewis, who, like his father, was accustomed to summon councils on his own authority, respectfully asked Eugenius to permit him to convoke the Frankish bishops to collect the opinions of the Fathers on the question at issue. Eugenius could not refuse, and the synod met in Paris in November 825. The report of the bishops agreed with the decision of Frankfurt; they condemned the worship of images, tracing its history back to the Greek philosopher Epicurus; they censured Pope Hadrian for approving the doctrine of the Nicene Council; but, on the other hand, they condemned the iconoclasts for insisting on the banishment of images from churches.[2] Lewis despatched two learned bishops to Rome, bearing extracts from the report of the synod,[3] but the story of the negotiations comes here to a sudden end. We hear of no further direct communications between Rome and Constantinople, but we may reasonably suspect that a Papal embassy to Lewis (A.D. 826), and two embassies which passed between the Eastern and Western Emperors in the following years,[4] were concerned with the question of religious pictures.

Till his death, from disease of the kidneys, in October

[1] Paschal seems to have died some time in spring 824; cp. Simson, *Ludwig*, i. 212, n. 1.

[2] For all this, see Simson, *ib.* 248 *sqq.*, where the sources are given.

[3] Sickel, *Acta Lud.* 235, 236, pp. 154 *sq.*

[4] *Ann. r. F.*, *sub* 826, 827, 828. See below, p. 330.

A.D. 829, Michael adhered to his resolution not to pursue or imprison the leaders of the ecclesiastical opposition. The only case of harsh dealing recorded [1] is the treatment of Methodius, and he, as we have seen, was punished not as a recalcitrant but as an intriguer.

[1] For the alleged persecution of Euthymios of Sardis (Gen. 50 = *Cont. Th.* 48) see below p. 139.

CHAPTER IV

THEOPHILUS

(A.D. 829-842)

§ 1. *The Administration of Theophilus*

For eight years Theophilus had been an exemplary co-regent. Though he was a man of energetic character and active brain, he appears never to have put himself forward,[1] and if he exerted influence upon his father's policy, such influence was carefully hidden behind the throne. Perhaps Michael compelled him to remain in the background. In any case, his position, for a man of his stamp, was an education in politics; it afforded him facilities for observing weak points in an administration for which he was not responsible, and for studying the conditions of the Empire which he would one day have to govern. He had a strong sense of the obligations of the Imperial office, and he possessed the capacities which his subjects considered desirable in their monarch. He had the military training which enabled him to lead an army into the field; he had a passion for justice; he was well educated, and, like the typical Byzantine sovran, interested in theology. His private life was so exemplary that even the malevolence of the chroniclers, who detested him as a heretic, could only rake up one story against his morals.[2] He kept a brilliant Court, and took care that his palace, to which he added new

[1] He emerges only on two occasions in our meagre chronicles—(1) as helping in the defence of the city against Thomas, and (2) as responsible for the death of Euthymios of Sardis (but for this see below, p. 139).

[2] The scandal was that he misbehaved with a pretty maid of his wife. When Theodora discovered his conduct and showed her chagrin, he swore a tremendous oath that he had never done such a thing before and would never repeat the offence (*Cont. Th.* 95).

and splendid buildings, should not be outshone by the marvels of Baghdad.

We might expect to find the reign of Theophilus remembered in Byzantine chronicle as a dazzling passage in the history of the Empire, like the caliphate of Harun al-Rashid in the annals of Islam. But the writers who have recorded his acts convey the impression that he was an unlucky and ineffective monarch.[1] In his eastern warfare against the Saracens his fortune was chequered, and he sustained one crushing humiliation; in the West, he was unable to check the Mohammadan advance. His ecclesiastical policy, which he inherited from his predecessors, and pursued with vigour and conviction, was undone after his death. But though he fought for a losing cause in religion, and wrought no great military exploits, and did not possess the highest gifts of statesmanship, it is certain that his reputation among his contemporaries was far higher than a superficial examination of the chronicles would lead the reader to suspect. He has fared like Leo V. He was execrated in later times as an unrelenting iconoclast, and a conspiracy of silence and depreciation has depressed his fame. But it was perhaps not so much his heresy as his offence in belonging to the Amorian dynasty that was fatal to his memory. Our records were compiled under the Basilian dynasty, which had established itself on the throne by murder; and misrepresentation of the Amorians is a distinctive propensity in these partial chronicles. Yet, if we read between the lines, we can easily detect that there was another tradition, and that Theophilus had impressed the popular imagination as a just [2] and brilliant sovran, somewhat as Harun impressed the East. This tradition is reflected in anecdotes, of which it would be futile to appraise the proportions of truth and myth,—anecdotes which the Basilian

[1] Cp. esp. *Cont. Th.* 139 (δυστυχής).

[2] The hostile chroniclers admit his love of justice, and Nicetas (*Vita Ignatii*, 216) describes him as "not otherwise bad" (apart from his heresy) and as δικαιοκρισίας ἀντεχόμενος. Gelzer (*Abriss*, in Krumbacher, *G.B.L.* 967) judges Theophilus severely: "Ein Grössenwahn nach dem Vorbilde orientalischer Sultane, ein Allwissenheitsdünkel der selbständig militärische, kirchliche wie Verwaltungsfragen allein entscheidet, und eine vollendete Verständnislosigkeit für die Zeichen der Zeit sind die Eigentümlichkeiten dieses stark überschätzten, im Grunde keineswegs bedeutenden Regenten." His ecclesiastical policy was a failure, but otherwise I fail to see the grounds for this verdict.

historiographers found too interesting to omit, but told in a somewhat grudging way because they were supposed to be to the credit of the Emperor.

The motive of these stories is the Emperor's desire to administer justice rigorously without respect of persons. He used to ride once a week through the city to perform his devotions in the church of the Virgin at Blachernae, and on the way he was ready to listen to the petitions of any of his subjects who wished to claim his protection. One day he was accosted by a widow who complained that she was wronged by the brother of the Empress, Petronas, who held the post of Drungary of the Watch. It was illegal to build at Constantinople any structure which intercepted the view or the light of a neighbour's house; but Petronas was enlarging his own residence at Blachernae, with insolent disregard for the law, in such a way as to darken the house of the widow. Theophilus promptly sent Eustathios the quaestor, and other officers, to test the accuracy of her statement, and on their report that it was true, the Emperor caused his brother-in-law to be stripped and flogged in the public street. The obnoxious buildings were levelled to the ground, and the ruins, apparently, bestowed upon the complainant.[1] Another time, on his weekly ride, he was surprised by a man who accosted him and said, "The horse on which your Majesty is riding belongs to me." Calling the Count of the Stable, who was in attendance, the Emperor inquired, "Whose is this horse?" "It was sent to your Majesty by the Count of Opsikion," was the reply. The Count of the Opsikian Theme, who happened to be in the city at the time, was summoned and confronted next day with the claimant, a soldier of his own army, who charged him with having appropriated the animal without giving any consideration either in money or military promotion. The lame excuses of the Count did not serve; he was chastised with stripes, and the horse offered to its rightful owner. This man, however, preferred to receive 2 pounds of gold (£86, 8s.) and military promotion; he proved a coward and was slain in battle with his back to the enemy.[2]

Another anecdote is told of the Emperor's indignation on

[1] Simeon, *Add. Georg.* 793.

[2] *Ib.* 803. The story is told otherwise in *Cont. Th.* 93.

discovering that a great merchant vessel, which he descried with admiration sailing into the harbour of Bucoleon, was the property of Theodora, who had secretly engaged in mercantile speculation. "What!" he exclaimed, "my wife has made me, the Emperor, a merchant!" He commanded the ship and all its valuable cargo to be consigned to the flames.[1]

These tales, whatever measure of truth may underlie them, redounded to the credit of Theophilus in the opinion of those who repeated them; they show that he was a popular figure in Constantinople, and that his memory, as of a just ruler, was revered by the next generation. We can accept without hesitation the tradition of his accessibility to his subjects in his weekly progresses to Blachernae, and it is said that he lingered on his way in the bazaars, systematically examining the wares, especially the food, and inquiring the prices.[2] He was doubtless assiduous also in presiding at the Imperial court of appeal, which met in the Palace of Magnaura,[3] here following the examples of Nicephorus and Leo the Armenian.

The desirability of such minute personal supervision of the administration may have been forced on Theophilus by his own observations during his father's reign, and he evidently attempted to cross, so far as seemed politic, those barriers which hedged the monarch from direct contact with the life of the people. As a rule, the Emperor was only visible to the ordinary mass of his subjects when he rode in solemn pomp through the city to the Holy Apostles or some other church, or when he appeared to watch the public games from his throne in the Hippodrome. The regular, unceremonial ride of Theophilus to Blachernae was an innovation, and if it did not afford him the opportunities of overhearing the gossip of the town which Harun al-Rashid is said by the story-tellers to have obtained by nocturnal expeditions in disguise, it may have helped a discerning eye to some useful information.

The political activity of Theophilus seems to have been directed to the efficient administration of the existing laws and the improvement of administrative details;[4] his govern-

[1] Gen. 75; told differently and with more elaboration in *Cont. Th.* 88.
[2] *Cont. Th.* 87.
[3] Cp. *ib.* 88 *ἐν κριτηρίοις*.
[4] For the new Themes which he instituted, see below, Chap. VII. § 2.

ment was not distinguished by novel legislation or any radical reform. His laws have disappeared and left no visible traces—like almost all the Imperial legislation between the reigns of Leo III. and Basil I.[1] Of one important enactment we are informed. The law did not allow marriage except between orthodox Christians.[2] But there was a large influx, during his reign, of orientals who were in rebellion against the Caliph,[3] and Theophilus, to encourage the movement, passed a law permitting alliance between Mohammadan "Persians" and Romans.[4] This measure accorded with his reputation for being a friend of foreigners.[5]

One of the first measures of the reign was an act of policy, performed in the name of justice. According to one account[6] the people had gathered in the Hippodrome to witness horse-races, and at the end of the performance the Emperor assembled the Senate in the Kathisma, from which he witnessed the games, and ordered Leo Chamaidrakon, the Keeper of the Private Wardrobe, to produce the chandelier which had been broken when Leo V. was cut down by his murderers in the chapel of the Palace. Pointing to this, Theophilus asked, "What is the desert of him who enters the temple of the Lord and slays the Lord's anointed?" The Senate replied, "Death," and the Emperor immediately commanded the Prefect of the City to seize the men who had slain Leo and decapitate them in the Hippodrome before the assembled people. The astonished

[1] A law concerning the fashion of wearing the hair is attributed to him in *Cont. Th.* 107. His own hair was thin, and he decreed (*ἐθέσπισεν* and *νόμων ἐξέθετο*) that no Roman should allow his hair to fall below the neck, alleging the virtuous fashion of the ancient Romans. Such an edict is grossly improbable. We may suspect that he introduced a regulation of the kind in regard to soldiers; and some light is thrown on the matter by an anecdote (recorded about A.D. 845-847) in *Acta* 42 *Mart. Amor.* 21-25. Kallistos, a count of the Schools (*i.e.*, captain of a company in the Scholarian Guards), presented himself to the Emperor with long untidy hair and beard (*αὐχμηρᾷ τινι κόμῃ καὶ ἀφιλοκάλῳ γενειάδι*). Theophilus very naturally administered a severe rebuke to the officer, and ordered him to be shorn at once. This incident, which is undoubtedly genuine, may have actually prompted the regulation.

[2] Marriages with heretics were forbidden: *Acta Conc. Trullani*, c. 72. Cp. Zachariä v. L. *Gr.-röm. R.* 61 *sq.*

[3] See below, Chap. VIII. p. 252.

[4] *Cont. Th.* 112.

[5] *φιλοεθνὴς τῶν πώποτε βασιλέων*, *Acta* 42 *Mart. Amor.* 27 where he is said to have been fond of negroes (*Αἰθίοπες*), of whom he formed a military *bandon*. This passage also refers to marriages of foreigners with Roman women: *συναγηγερκὼς ἐκ διαφόρων γλωσσῶν ὅτι πλείστην συμμορίαν οὓς καὶ ζεύγνυσθαι ταῖς θυγατράσι τῶν πολιτῶν πρὸς δὲ καὶ ἀστιγειτόνων βιαστικῶς συντάξας ἀνέτρεψε τὰ Ῥωμαίων αἴσια.*

[6] Simeon, *Add. Georg.* 791.

victims of such belated justice naturally exclaimed, "If we had not assisted your father, O Emperor, you would not now be on the throne." There are other versions of the circumstances, and it is possible that the assassins were condemned at a formal silention in the Magnaura.[1] It would be useless to judge this punishment by any ethical standard. Michael II. had not only a guilty knowledge of the conspiracy, but had urged the conspirators to hasten their work. The passion of a doctrinaire for justice will not explain his son's act in calling his father's accomplices to a tardy account; nor is there the least probability in the motive which some image-worshippers assigned, that respect for the memory of Leo as a great iconoclast inspired him to wreak vengeance on the murderers.[2] The truth, no doubt, is that both Michael II. and Theophilus were acutely conscious that the deed which had raised them to power cast an ugly shadow over their throne; and it is noteworthy that in the letter which they addressed to the Emperor Lewis they stigmatize the conspirators as wicked men.[3] Michael, we may be assured, showed them no favour, but he could not bring himself to punish the men whom he had himself encouraged to commit the crime. The conscience of Theophilus was clear, and he could definitely dissociate the Amorian house from the murder by a public act of retribution. It may well be that (as one tradition affirms[4]) Michael, when death was approaching, urged his son to this step. In any case, it seems certain that the purpose of Theophilus was to remedy a weakness in his political position, and that he was taking account of public opinion.

The Augusta Euphrosyne, last Imperial descendant of the Isaurian house, retired to a monastery soon after her stepson's accession to the supreme power. Michael is related to have bound the Senate by a pledge that they would defend the rights of his second wife and her children after his death.[5] If this is true, it meant that if she had a son his position should be secured as co-regent of his stepbrother. She had no children, and found perhaps little attraction in the prospect of

[1] Gen. 51.
[2] *Add. Georg., ib.*
[3] *Ep. ad Lud.* 418, "a quibusdam improbis."
[4] Gen. 51.
[5] *Cont. Th.* 78. The statement in *Add. Georg.* 789, that Theophilus reigned along with Euphrosyne is a corollary from the error that she was his mother, and brought about his marriage with Theodora after his father's death.

residing in the Palace and witnessing Court functions in which Theodora would now be the most important figure. There is no reason to suppose that she retired under compulsion.[1]

The first five children born to Theophilus during his father's lifetime were daughters, but just before or soon after his accession Theodora gave birth to a son, who was named Constantine and crowned as Augustus. Constantine, however, did not survive infancy,[2] and the Emperor had to take thought for making some provision for the succession. He selected as a son-in-law Alexios Musele,[3] who belonged to the family of the Krênitai, of Armenian descent, and betrothed him to his eldest daughter, Maria (*c.* A.D. 831). Alexios (who had been created a patrician and distinguished by the new title of anthypatos,[4] and then elevated to the higher rank of magister) received the dignity of Caesar, which gave him a presumptive expectation of a still higher title. The marriage was celebrated about A.D. 836, but Maria died soon afterwards, and, against the Emperor's wishes, his son-in-law insisted on retiring to a monastery. There was a story that the suspicions of Theophilus had been aroused by jealous tongues against the loyalty of Alexios, who had been sent to fight with the Saracens in Sicily. It is impossible to say how much truth may underlie this report, nor can we be sure whether the Caesar withdrew from the world before or after the birth of a son to Theophilus (in A.D. 839), an event which would in any case have disappointed his hopes of the succession.[5]

[1] On the retirement of Euphrosyne, see Melioranski, *Viz. Vrem.* 8, 32-33. The statements of Simeon (*Add. Georg.* 790) and *Cont. Th.* 86 contradict each other; according to the latter she was (laudably) expelled from the Palace by Theophilus (accepted as true by Hirsch, 205). I think Melioranski is right in following the former (*Viz. Vrem.* 8, 32-33), but his observations about the chronology do not hold. *Cont. Th.* is undoubtedly right in stating that Euphrosyne withdrew to the cloister in which she had formerly been a nun (in the island of Prinkipo; see above, p. 111); she had nothing to do with the monastery of Gastria, to which Simeon sends her (*Add. Georg.* 790; cp. *Vit. Theodorae Aug.* p. 6). Gastria belonged to Theoktiste, the mother-in-law of Theophilus. See Melioranski, *ib.*

[2] He probably died *c.* A.D. 835. For the evidence for Constantine, for the argument that Maria was the eldest daughter, for the chronology, and for the coins, see Appendix VI.

[3] Mushegh, in Armenian; cp. St. Martin *apud* Lebeau, xiii. 118, who thinks he was descended from the Mamigonians. His namesake, who held high posts under Irene and Constantine VI., may have been his father.

[4] See Bury, *Imp. Administration*, 28.

[5] Cp. Appendix VI. *ad fin.* Theophilus gave Alexios three monasteries, one of them at Chrysopolis. But Alexios wished to found a cloister himself; and taking a walk ward from Chrysopolis along

While he was devoted to the serious business of ruling, and often had little time for the ceremonies and formal processions[1] which occupied many hours in the lives of less active Emperors, Theophilus loved the pageantry of royal magnificence. On two occasions he celebrated a triumph over the Saracens, and we are so fortunate as to possess an official account of the triumphal ceremonies.[2] When Theophilus (in A.D. 831) reached the Palace of Hieria, near Chalcedon, he was awaited by the Empress, the three ministers —the Praepositus,[3] the chief Magister, and the urban Prefect— who were responsible for the safety of the city during his absence, and by all the resident members of the Senate. At a little distance from the Palace gates, the senators met him and did obeisance; Theodora stood within the rails of the hall which opened on the court, and when her lord dismounted she also did obeisance and kissed him. The train of captives had not yet arrived, and ten days elapsed before the triumphal entry could be held. Seven were spent at Hieria, the senators remaining in ceremonial attendance upon the Emperor, and their wives, who were summoned from the city, upon the Empress. On the seventh day the Court[4] moved to the Palace of St. Mamas, and remained there for three days. On the tenth, Theophilus sailed up the Golden Horn, disembarked at Blachernae, and proceeded on horseback outside the walls to a pavilion which had been pitched in a meadow[5] near the Golden Gate. Here he met the captives who had been conveyed across the Propontis from Chrysopolis.

Meanwhile, under the direction of the Prefect, the city had been set in festive array, decorated "like a bridal chamber,"

he came on a site which pleased him in the suburb of Anthemios, somewhere near the modern Anadoli-Hissar. The ground belonged to the Imperial arsenal (*manyana*), but, through the influence of Theodora, Alexios was permitted to buy it. His tomb and that of his brother existed here in the following century (*Cont. Th.* 109). Pargoire (*Boradion*, 456 *sqq.*, 473-475) has shown that the *suburban* quarter of Anthemios was near Anadoli-Hissar—north of Brochthoi, which was near Kandili, and south of Boradion, which was near Phrixu-limen = Kanlija (for these districts see Hammer, *Constantinopolis*, ii. 297-304). The *urban* quarter of Anthemios (*ib.* 467-469) was north-north-west of the Cistern of Mokios (Chukur-Bostan), in the west of the City.

[1] See *Cont. Th.* 88.

[2] *περὶ ταξ.* 503 *sqq.* Cp. below, pp. 254, 261.

[3] In the performance of his function as regent during Imperial absences, the praepositus was designated as ὁ διέπων or ὁ ἀπομονεύς. Cp. Bury, *Imp. Adm. System*, 124.

[4] The ladies perhaps returned to the city.

[5] The meadow of the *κομβινοστάσιον*.

with variegated hangings[1] and purple and silver ornaments. The long Middle Street, through which the triumphal train would pass, from the Golden Gate of victory to the place of the Augusteon, was strewn with flowers. The prisoners, the trophies and the spoils of war preceded the Emperor, who rode on a white horse caparisoned with jewelled harness; a tiara was on his head; he wore a sceptre in his hand, and a gold-embroidered tunic framed his breastplate.[2] Beside him, on another white steed similarly equipped, rode the Caesar Alexios, wearing a corslet, sleeves, and gaiters of gold, a helmet and gold headband, and poising a golden spear. At a short distance from the triumphal gate the Emperor dismounted and made three obeisances to the east, and, when he crossed the threshold of the city, the Praepositus, the Magister, and the Prefect, now relieved of their extraordinary authority, presented him with a crown of gold, which he carried on his right arm. The demes then solemnly acclaimed him as victor, and the procession advanced. When it reached the milestone at the gates of the Augusteon, the senators dismounted, except those who, having taken part in the campaign, wore their armour, and, passing through the gates, walked in front of the sovran to the Well of St. Sophia. Here the Emperor himself dismounted, entered the church, and, after a brief devotion, crossed the Augusteon on foot to the Bronze Gate of the Palace, where a pulpit had been set, flanked by a throne of gold, and a golden organ which was known as the Prime Miracle.[3] Between these stood a large cross of gold. When Theophilus had seated himself and made the sign of the cross, the demes cried, "There is one Holy." The city community[4] then offered him a pair of golden armlets, and wearing these he acknowledged the gift by a speech,[5] in which he described his military successes. Amid new acclamations he remounted his horse, and riding through the Passages of Achilles and past the Baths of Zeuxippus, entered the Hippodrome and reached the Palace at the door of the Skyla. On the next

[1] *σκαραμάγγια.*

[2] *ἐπιλώρικον* (cp. Ducange, s.v. *λωρίκη*). The tunic was *ροδόβοτρυς*: does this mean that the design represented roses and bunches of grapes?

[3] *πρωτόθαυμα.*

[4] *τὸ πολίτευμα*, the whole body of the citizens of the capital, of whom the prefect of the city was the "father." He and his subordinates were the *πολιτάρχαι.*

[5] Delivered evidently from the pulpit.

day, at a reception in the Palace, many honours and dignities were conferred, and horse-races were held in the Hippodrome, where the captives and the trophies were exhibited to the people.

§ 2. *Buildings of Theophilus*

The reign of Theophilus was an epoch in the history of the Great Palace. He enlarged it by a group of handsome and curious buildings, on which immense sums must have been expended, and we may be sure that this architectural enterprise was stimulated, if not suggested, by the reports which reached his ears of the magnificent palaces which the Caliphs had built for themselves at Baghdad.[1] His own pride and the prestige of the Empire demanded that the residence of the Basileus should not be eclipsed by the splendour of the Caliph's abode.

At the beginning of the ninth century the Great Palace[2] consisted of two groups of buildings—the original Palace, including the Daphne, which Constantine the Great had built adjacent to the Hippodrome and to the Augusteon, and at some distance to the south-east the Chrysotriklinos (with its dependencies), which had been erected by Justin II. and had superseded the Daphne as the centre of Court life and ceremonial. It is probable that the space between the older Palace and the Chrysotriklinos was open ground, free from buildings, perhaps laid out in gardens and terraced (for the ground falls southward). There was no architectural connexion between the two Palaces, but Justinian II. at the end of the seventh century had connected the Chrysotriklinos with the Hippodrome by means of two long halls which opened into one another—the Lausiakos and the Triklinos called after his name. These halls were probably perpendicular to the Hippodrome, and formed a line of building which closed in the principal grounds of the Palace on the southern side.[3]

[1] See below, Chap. VIII. § 2.

[2] *Palace* suggests to us a single block of building, and is so far misleading, though it can hardly be avoided. The Byzantine residence resembled the oriental "palaces" which consisted of many detached halls and buildings in large grounds. Compare, for instance, the residence of the Heian Emperors of Japan at Kyoto, described by F. Brinkley, *Japan, its History, Arts, and Literature*, vol. i. 198-199 (1901).

[3] The eastern door of the Lausiakos faced the western portico of the Chrysotriklinos; its western door opened into the Triklinos of Justinian, on the west of which was the Skyla which opened into the Hippodrome.

It is probable that the residence of Constantine bore some resemblance in design and style to the house of Diocletian at Spalato and other mansions of the period.[1] The descriptions of the octagonal Chrysotriklinos show that it was built under the influence of the new style of ecclesiastical architecture which was characteristic of the age of Justinian. The chief group of buildings which Theophilus added introduced a new style and marked a third epoch in the architectural history of the Great Palace. Our evidence makes it clear that they were situated between the Constantinian Palace on the north-west and the Chrysotriklinos on the south-east.[2]

These edifices were grouped round the Trikonchos or Triple Shell, the most original in its design and probably that on which Theophilus prided himself most. It took its name from the shell-like apses, which projected on three sides, the larger on the east, supported on four porphyry[3] pillars, the others (to south and north) on two. This triconch plan was long known at Constantinople, whither it had been imported from Syria; it was distinctively oriental. On the west side a silver door, flanked by two side doors of burnished bronze, opened into a hall which had the shape of a half moon and was hence called the Sigma. The roof rested on fifteen columns of many-tinted marble.[4] But these halls were only the upper storeys of the Trikonchos and the Sigma. The ground-floor of the Trikonchos[5] had, like the room above it, three apses, but differently oriented. The northern side of this hall was known as the *Mysterion* or Place of Whispers,

See my *Great Palace* in *B.Z.* xx. (1911), where I have shown that Labarte's assumption that the Lausiakos was perpendicular to the Triklinos of Justinian is not justified and has entailed many errors. It has been adopted by Paspates and Ebersolt and has not been rejected by Bieliaev. That the line of these buildings was perpendicular to the Hippodrome cannot be strictly proved. It is bound up with the assumption that the east-west orientation of the Chrysotriklinos was perpendicular to the axis of the Hippodrome.

[1] See Ebersolt, *Le Grand Palais*, 160 *sqq.*, whose plan of the Constantinian palace, however, cannot be maintained; cp. my criticisms, *op. cit.*

[2] *Cont. Th.* 139 *sqq.* gives the detailed description of the buildings. Their situation is determined by combining the implications in this account with data in the ceremonial descriptions in *Cer.* I have shown (*op. cit.*) that the Trikonchos was north of the Chrysotriklinos (not west as it is placed by Labarte, Ebersolt, etc.).

[3] So-called "Roman" stone, really Egyptian (*Cont. Th.* 327): red porphyry with white spots (Anna Comnena, vii. 2, ed. Reifferscheid, i. p. 230). Cp. Ebersolt, 111.

[4] From Dokimion in Phrygia, near Synnada. The stone in these quarries presents shades of "violet and white, yellow, and the more familiar brecciated white and rose-red" (Lethaby and Swainson, *Sancta Sophia*, 238).

[5] Known as the Tetraseron.

because it had the acoustic property, that if you whispered in the eastern or in the western apse, your words were heard distinctly in the other. The lower storey of the Sigma, to which you descended by a spiral staircase, was a hall of nineteen columns which marked off a circular corridor. Marble incrustations in many colours[1] formed the brilliant decoration of the walls of both these buildings. The roof of the Trikonchos was gilded.

The lower part of the Sigma, unscreened on the western side, opened upon a court which was known as the Mystic Phiale of the Trikonchos. In the midst of this court stood a bronze fountain *phiale* with silver margin, from the centre of which sprang a golden pine-cone.[2] Two bronze lions, whose gaping mouths poured water into the semicircular area of the Sigma, stood near that building. The ceremony of the *saximodeximon*, at which the racehorses of the Hippodrome were reviewed by the Emperor, was held in this court; the Blues and Greens sat on tiers of steps of white Proconnesian marble,[3] and a gold throne was placed for the monarch. On the occasion of this and other levées, and certain festivals, the fountain was filled with almonds and pistacchio nuts, while the cone offered spiced wine[4] to those who wished.

Passing over some minor buildings,[5] we must notice the hall of the Pearl, which stood to the north of the Trikonchos. Its roof rested on eight columns of rose-coloured marble, the floor was of white marble variegated with mosaics, and the walls were decorated with pictures of animals. The same building contained a bed-chamber, where Theophilus slept in

[1] ἐκ λακαρικῶν ταμπακίλων (*Cont. Th.* 140).

[2] στροβίλιον. Fountains in the form of pine-cones seem to have been common. There were two in the court of the New Church founded by Basil I. (*Cont. Th.* 327), and representations occur often in Byzantine art. Such a fountain has been recognised in the Theodora mosaic of St. Vitale at Ravenna. See Strzygovski, "Die Pinienzapfen als Wasserspeier," in *Mittheilungen des d. arch. Instituts, Rom*, xviii. 185 *sqq.* (1903), where the subject is amply illustrated, and it is shown that the idea is oriental. The pine-cone occurs in Assyrian ornament, and is used symbolically in the Mithraic cult. Strzygovski argues that, a symbol of fruitfulness in Assyria and Persia, it was taken by the Christians to symbolize fructification by the divine spirit, and he explains (p. 198) the name "*mystic* Phiale" in this sense.

[3] These ἀναβάθραι were on the west side of the Phiale (perhaps also on north and south), as we may infer from *Cont. Th.* 143$_{4}$.

[4] κονδίτος.

[5] The Pyxites and another building to the west, and the Eros (a museum of arms), near the Phiale steps, to the north, of the Sigma.

summer; its porticoes faced east and south, and the walls and roof displayed the same kind of decoration as the Pearl. To the north of this whole group, and fronting the west,[1] rose the Karianos, a house which the Emperor destined as a residence for his daughters, taking its name from a flight of steps of Carian marble, which seemed to flow down from the entrance like a broad white river.

In another quarter (perhaps to the south of the Lausiakos) the Emperor laid out gardens and constructed shelters or "sunneries," if this word may be permitted as a literal rendering of *hēliaka*. Here he built the Kamilas, an apartment[2] whose roof glittered with gold, supported by six columns of the green marble of Thessaly. The walls were decorated with a dado of marble incrustation below, and above with mosaics representing on a gold ground people gathering fruit. On a lower floor[3] was a chamber which the studious Emperor Constantine VII. afterwards turned into a library, and a breakfast-room, with walls of splendid marble and floor adorned with mosaics. Near at hand two other houses, similar yet different, attested the taste of Theophilus for rich schemes of decoration. One of these was remarkable for the mosaic walls in which green trees stood out against a golden sky. The lower chamber of the other was called the Musikos, from the harmonious blending of the colours of the marble plaques with which the walls were covered—Egyptian porphyry, white Carian, and the green riverstone of Thessaly,—while the variegated floor produced the effect of a flowering meadow.[4]

If the influence of the luxurious art of the East is apparent in these halls and pavilions which Theophilus added to his chief residence, a new palace which his architect Patrikes built on the Bithynian coast was avowedly modelled on the palaces of Baghdad. It was not far from the famous

[1] The Karianos faced the Church of the Lord (*Cont. Th.* 139), which was in the extreme north of the palace grounds, near to the south-east corner of the Augusteon and to the gate leading into the grounds of the Magnaura.

[2] The Kamilas and the two adjacent houses are described as *cubicula* (*Cont. Th.* 144).

[3] *μεσόπατον*, not the ground-floor, but the *entresol* (as Ebersolt renders, 116). From here one had, through a *κλουβίον*, railing or balustrade (*cancelli*, cp. Ducange, s.v. *κλωβός*), a view of the Chrysotriklinos.

[4] The Musikos had only two walls, east and north; on the other sides it was columned and open (*Cont. Th.* 146). It was thus a hēliakon.

palace of Hieria, built by Justinian. The Asiatic suburbs of Constantinople not only included Chrysopolis and Chalcedon, but extended south-eastward along the charming shore which looks to the Prince's Islands, as far as Kartalimen. Proceeding in this direction from Chalcedon, one came first to the peninsula of Hieria (Phanaráki), where Justinian had chosen the site of his suburban residence. Passing by Rufinianae (Jadi-Bostan), one reached Satyros, once noted for a temple, soon to be famous for a monastery. The spot chosen by Theophilus for his new palace was at Bryas, which lay between Satyros and Kartalimen (Kartal), and probably corresponds to the modern village of Mal-tépé.[1] The palace of Bryas resembled those of Baghdad in shape and in the schemes of decoration.[2] The only deviations from the plan of the original were additions required in the residence of a Christian ruler, a chapel of the Virgin adjoining the Imperial bedroom, and in the court a church of the triconch shape dedicated to Michael the archangel and two female saints. The buildings stood in a park irrigated by watercourses.

Arabian splendour in his material surroundings meant modernity for Theophilus,[3] and his love of novel curiosities was shown in the mechanical contrivances which he installed in the audience chamber of the palace of Magnaura.[4] A golden plane-tree overshadowed the throne; birds sat on its branches and on the throne itself. Golden griffins couched at the sides, golden lions at the foot; and there was a gold

[1] For these identifications, and the Bithynian *προάστεια*, see Pargoire's admirable *Hiéria*. Cp. also his *Rufinianes*, 467; he would seek the site of the palace in ruins to the east of the hill of Drakos-tépé.

[2] *ἐν σχήμασι καὶ ποικίλῃ*, *Cont. Th.* 98, cp. Simeon (*Add. Georg.*) 798. The later source says that John the Synkellos brought the plans from Baghdad and superintended the construction; there is nothing of this in Simeon, but it is possible that John visited Baghdad (see below, p. 256). The ruins of an old temple near the neighbouring Satyros supplied some of the building material for the palace of Bryas. The declension of this name is both Βρύου and Βρύαντος. Some modern writers erroneously suppose that the nominative is Βρύος.

[3] It is to be noticed that he renewed all the Imperial wardrobe (Simeon, *ib.*).

[4] The *triklinos*, or main hall, of the Magnaura (built by Constantine) was in form a basilica with two aisles, and probably an apse in the east end, where the elevated throne stood railed off from the rest of the building. See Ebersolt, 70. There were chambers off the main hall, especially the nuptial chamber (of apse-shape: *κόγχη τοῦ παστοῦ*), used on the occasion of an Imperial wedding. The situation of the Magnaura was east of the Augusteon; on the north-west it was close to St. Sophia; on the south-west there was a descent, and a gate led into the grounds of the Great Palace, close to the Church of the Lord and the Consistorion.

organ in the room.[1] When a foreign ambassador was introduced to the Emperor's presence, he was amazed and perhaps alarmed at seeing the animals rise up and hearing the lions roar and the birds burst into melodious song. At the sound of the organ these noises ceased, but when the audience was over and the ambassador was withdrawing, the mechanism was again set in motion.[2]

One of the most remarkable sights in the throne room of the Magnaura was the *Pentapyrgion*, or cabinet of Five Towers, a piece of furniture which was constructed by Theophilus.[3] Four towers were grouped round a central and doubtless higher tower; each tower had several, probably four, storeys;[4] and in the chambers, which were visible to the eye, were exhibited various precious objects, mostly of sacred interest. At the celebration of an Imperial marriage, it was the usage to deposit the nuptial wreaths in the Pentapyrgion. On special occasions, for instance at the Easter festival, it was removed from the Magnaura to adorn the Chrysotriklinos.[5]

If the Emperor's love of magnificence and taste for art impelled him to spend immense sums on his palaces, he did not neglect works of public utility. One of the most important duties of the government was to maintain the fortifications of the city in repair. Theophilus did not add new defences, like Heraclius and Leo, but no Emperor did more than he to strengthen and improve the existing walls. The experiences of the siege conducted by Thomas seem to have shown that the sea-walls were not high enough to be impregnable.[6] It was decided to raise them in height, and this work, though commenced by his father on the side of the Golden Horn,[7] was mainly the work of Theophilus. Numerous inscriptions

[1] Two gold organs were made for Theophilus, but only one of them seems to have been kept in the Magnaura. Simeon (*Add. Georg.*), 793.

[2] Constantine, *Cer.* 568-569; *Vita Bas.* 257 = *Cont. Th.* 173. For such contrivances at Baghdad see Gibbon, vi. 126.

[3] Simeon, *ib.* (cp. Pseudo-Simeon, 627); it was made by a goldsmith related to the Patriarch Antonius. If not of solid gold, it was doubtless richly decorated with gold. The same artist made the golden organs and the golden tree (*ib.*).

[4] Compartments, *μεσοκάρδια*. See *Cer.* 582, cp. 586-587.

[5] Constantine, *Cer.* 580, cp. 70.

[6] Gen. 75 *τῶν τειχῶν . . χθαμαλῶν ὄντων καὶ τοῖς πολεμίοις ἐντεῦθεν ἐμπαρεχόντων τὸ εὐεπίβατον.*

[7] This follows from two inscriptions of "Michael and Theophilus," now lost; see van Millingen, *Walls*, 185. Other inscriptions existed inscribed "Theophilus and Michael," and therefore dating from the years 839-842

—of which many are still to be seen, many others have disappeared in recent times—recorded his name, which appears more frequently on the walls and towers than that of any other Emperor.[1] The restoration of the seaward defences facing Chrysopolis may specially be noticed: at the ancient gate of St. Barbara (Top-kapussi, close to Seraglio Point),[2] and on the walls and towers to the south, on either side of the gate of unknown name (now Deïrmen-kapussi) near the Kynegion.[3] Just north of this entrance is a long inscription, in six iambic trimeters, praying that the wall which Theophilus "raised on new foundations" may stand fast and unshaken for ever. It may possibly be a general dedication of all his new fortifications.[4] But the work was not quite completed when Theophilus died.[5] South of the Kynegion and close to the Mangana, a portion of the circuit remained in disrepair, and it was reserved for Bardas, the able minister of Michael III., to restore it some twenty years later.

§ 3. *Iconoclasm*

It was not perhaps in the nature of Theophilus to adopt the passive attitude of his father in the matter of image-worship, or to refrain from making a resolute attempt to terminate the schism which divided the Church. But he appears for some years (perhaps till A.D. 834) to have continued the tolerant policy of Michael, and there may be some reason for believing, as many believe, that the influence of his friend John the Grammarian, who became Patriarch in A.D. 832,[6] was chiefly responsible for his resolution to suppress icons. He did

[1] Gen. *ib.* notes the inscriptions as a feature.

[2] Van Millingen, 184. Hammer, *Constantinopolis*, i. Appendix, gives copies of inscriptions which have disappeared.

[3] Van Millingen, 250, 183.

[4] Van Millingen's conjecture. The inscription is in one line 60 feet long. The last verse should be restored

ἄσειστον ἀκλόνητον ἐστ[ηριγμένον].

[5] I infer this from the Bardas inscription, which, with the restorations of Mordtmann and van Millingen (*op. cit.* 185-186), runs as follows:

πολλ]ῶν κραταιῶς δεσποσάντων τοῦ σ[άλου]
ἀλλ' οὐ]δενὸς πρὸς ὕψος ἡ εὐκοσμίαν
τὸ [βλ]ηθὲν εἰς γῆν τεῖχος ἐξηγερκότος
[ταν]ῦν ἀκάμ]πτως Μιχαὴλ ὁ δεσπότης
διὰ Βάρ[δα τοῦ τ]ῶν σχολῶν δομεστίκου
ἤγειρε τερ[π]νὸν ὡράεισμα τῇ πόλει.

Some of these supplements can hardly be right. In l. 1 I would read θ[ρόνου]; in 2 καὶ μηδενὸς, for there is an upright stroke before δενὸς; in 4 ἀκάμπτως is inappropriate, perhaps νῦν ἀκλονήτως. The slabs bearing the legend were in the wall close to Injili Kiosk, once the Church of St. Saviour (*ib.* 253 *sqq.*).

[6] *Cont. Th.* 121, see Vasil'ev, *Viz. i Ar., Pril.* 147 *sqq.* Before his elevation he held the office of Synkellos. For his work under Leo V. see above, p. 60 *sq.*

not summon a new council, and perhaps he did not issue any new edict; but he endeavoured, by severe measures, to ensure the permanence of the iconoclastic principles which had been established under Leo the Armenian. The lack of contemporary evidence renders it difficult to determine the scope and extent of the persecution of Theophilus; but a careful examination of such evidence as exists shows that modern historians have exaggerated its compass, if not its severity.[1] So far as we can see, his repressive measures were twofold. He endeavoured to check the propagation of the false doctrine by punishing some leading monks who were actively preaching it; and he sought to abolish religious pictures from Constantinople by forbidding them to be painted at all.[2]

Of the cases of corporal chastisement inflicted on ecclesiastics for pertinacity in the cause of image-worship, the most famous and genuine is the punishment of the two Palestinian brothers, Theodore and Theophanes,[3] who had already endured persecution under Leo V. On Leo's death they returned to Constantinople and did their utmost in the cause of pictures, Theodore by his books and Theophanes by his hymns. But Michael II. treated them like other leaders of the cause; he did not permit them to remain in the city.[4] Under Theophilus they were imprisoned and scourged, then exiled to Aphusia, one of the

[1] The contemporary chronicler George gives no facts, but indulges in vapid abuse. Simeon relates the treatment of the brothers Theodore and Theophanes, but otherwise only says that Theophilus pulled down pictures, and banished and tormented monks (*Add. Georg.* 791). Genesios (74-75) is amazingly brief: the Emperor disturbed the sea of piety; (1) he imprisoned Michael, synkellos of Jerusalem, with many monks; (2) branded Theodore and Theophanes; (3) was assisted by John the Patriarch. The lurid description of the persecution, which has generally been adopted, is supplied by the biographer of Theophilus, *Cont. Th.* c. 10 *sqq.*, who begins by stating that Th. sought to outdo his predecessors as a persecutor. The whole account is too rhetorical to be taken for sober history, and it is in marked contrast with that of Genesios, who was not disposed to spare the iconoclasts. (We can, indeed, prove the writer's inaccuracy in his account of the affair of Theodore and Theophanes, for which we have a first-hand source in Theodore's own letter. Simeon made use of this source honestly; in *Cont. Th.* there are marked discrepancies.) Various tortures and cruelties are ascribed in general terms to Th. in *Acta* 42 *Mart. Amor.* (1st 24, a document written not very long after his death).

[2] This seems to be a genuine tradition, preserved in *Cont. Th.* (*Vit. Theoph.*) cc. 10 and 13. See below.

[3] For the following account the source is the *Vita Theodori Grapti* (see Bibliography). See also *Vit. Mich. Sync.*, and Vailhé, *Saint Michel le Syncelle.*

[4] *Op. cit.* 201, where it is said that John (afterwards Patriarch) shut them up in prison, and having argued with them unsuccessfully, exiled them. This is probably untrue. They lived in the monastery of Sosthenes (which survives in the name Stenia), on the European bank of the Bosphorus.

Proconnesian islands.[1] Theophilus was anxious to win them over; the severe treatment which he dealt out to them proves the influence they exerted; they had, in fact, succeeded Theodore of Studion as the principal champions of icons. The Emperor hoped that after the experience of a protracted exile and imprisonment they would yield to his threats; their opposition seemed to him perhaps the chief obstacle to the unity of the Church. So they were brought to Constantinople and the story of their maltreatment may be told in their own words.[2]

The Imperial officer arrived at the isle of Aphusia and hurried us away to the City, affirming that he knew not the purpose of the command, only that he had been sent to execute it very urgently. We arrived in the City on the 8th of July. Our conductor reported our arrival to the Emperor, and was ordered to shut us up in the Praetorian prison. Six days later (on the 14th) we were summoned to the Imperial presence. Conducted by the Prefect of the City, we reached the door of the Chrysotriklinos, and saw the Emperor with a terribly stern countenance and a number of people standing round. It was the tenth hour.[3] The Prefect retired and left us in the presence of the Emperor, who, when we had made obeisance, roughly ordered us to approach. He asked us "Where were ye born?" We replied, "In the land of Moab." "Why came ye here?" We did not answer, and he ordered our faces to be beaten. After many sore blows, we became dizzy and fell, and if I had not grasped the tunic of the man who smote me, I should have fallen on the Emperor's footstool. Holding by his dress I stood unmoved till the Emperor said "Enough" and repeated his former question. When we still said nothing he addressed the Prefect [who appears to have returned] in great wrath, "Take them and engrave on their faces these verses, and then hand them over to two Saracens to conduct them to their own country." One stood near—his name was Christodulos—who held in his hand the iambic verses which he had composed. The Emperor bade him read them aloud, adding, "If they are not good, never mind." He said this because he knew how they would be ridiculed by us, since we are experts in poetical matters. The man who read them said, "Sir, these fellows are not worthy that the verses should be better."

They were then taken back to the Praetorium, and then once more to the Palace,[4] where they received a flogging in the

[1] See above, p. 41.

[2] In their letter to John of Cyzicus, quoted in *op. cit.* 204 *sqq.*

[3] Three o'clock in the afternoon.

[4] Before they were admitted to the presence they were kept in the Thermastra. The writers on the Palace (Labarte, Bieliaev, Ebersolt, etc.) are, I believe, wrong in their conception of the Thermastra. The evidence points, as I have tried to show, to its being north of the Lausiakos and forming the ground floor of the Eidikon. The scene of the scourging is represented in a miniature in the Madrid MS. of

Imperial presence. But another chance was granted to them. Four days later they were informed by the Prefect that if they would communicate once with the iconoclasts it would be sufficient to save them from punishment; "I," he said, "will accompany you to the Church." When they refused, they were laid upon benches, and their faces were tattooed—it was a long process—with the vituperative verses. Some admiration is due to the dexterity and delicacy of touch of the tormentor who succeeded in branding twelve iambic lines on a human face. The other part of the sentence was not carried out. The brethren were not reconducted to their own country; they were imprisoned at Apamea in Bithynia, where Theodore died.[1] Theophanes, the hymn writer, survived till the next reign and became bishop of Nicaea.

Of the acts of persecution ascribed to Theophilus, this is the most authentic. Now there is a circumstance about it which may help to explain the Emperor's exceptional severity, the fact that the two monks who had so vehemently agitated against his policy were strangers from Palestine. We can easily understand that the Emperor's resentment would have been especially aroused against interlopers who had come from abroad to make trouble in his dominion. And there are two other facts which are probably not unconnected. The oriental Patriarchs (of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem) had addressed to Theophilus a "synodic letter" in favour of the worship of images,[2] a manifesto which must have been highly displeasing to him and to the Patriarch John. Further, it is recorded, and there is no reason to doubt, that Theophilus

Skylitzes, reproduced in Beylié, *L'Habitation byzantine*, p. 122. The place of the punishment was the mid-garden, *μεσοκήπιον*, of the Lausiakos, doubtless the same as the *μεσοκήπιον* near the east end of the Justinianos, mentioned in Constantine, *Cer.* 585.

[1] Dec. 27, 841. *Vit. Theodori*, 210; cp. Simeon, *Add. Georg.* 808; *Menolog. Basil.* Migne, 117, 229. An anecdote in *Cont. Th.* (160), makes him survive Theophilus (so *Vit. Mich. Sync.* 252; *Narr. de Theoph. absol.* 32), and in the same passage Theophanes is falsely described as bishop of Smyrna.

[2] The *Epistola synodica Orientalium ad Theophilum imp.* (see Bibliography) was supposed by Combefis to be a joint composition of the three eastern Patriarchs. This is very unlikely, but the author may have belonged to one of the eastern dioceses (cp. c. 30), though it would be rash to argue (with Schwarzlose, 111), from a certain tone of authority, that he was a Patriarch. He sketches the history of the controversy on images from the beginning to the death of Michael II. (committing some chronological blunders pointed out by Schwarzlose), and exhorts Theophilus to follow the example of pious Emperors like Constantine, Theodosius, Marcian, and not that of the godless iconoclasts.

imprisoned Michael, the synkellos of the Patriarch of Jerusalem,[1] who had formerly been persecuted by Leo V. We may fairly suspect that the offence of the Palestinian brethren was seriously aggravated in his eyes by the fact that they were Palestinian. This suspicion is borne out by the tenor of the bad verses which were inscribed on their faces.[2]

There was another case of cruelty which seems to be well attested. Euthymios, bishop of Sardis, who had been prominent among the orthodox opponents of Leo V., died in consequence of a severe scourging.[3] But the greater number of image-worshippers, whose sufferings are specially recorded, suffered no more than banishment, and the Proconnesian island Aphusia is said to have been selected as the place of confinement for many notable champions of pictures.[4]

The very different treatment which Theophilus accorded to Methodius is significant. In order to bend him to his will, he tried harsh measures, whipped him and shut him up

[1] Gen. 74; *Vit. Mich. Sync.* 238, where he and his companion Job are said to have been imprisoned in a cell in the Praetorium in A.D. 834. Cp. Vailhé, *Saint Michel le Syncelle*, 618.

[2] The sense of the verses (which are preserved in *Vit. Theod. Gr.* 206; *Add. Georg.* 807; *Cont. Th.* 105; Pseudo-Simeon, 641; *Acta Davidis*, 239; *Vit. Mich. Sync.* 243; Zonaras, iii. 366, etc.—material for a critical text) may be rendered thus:

> In that fair town whose sacred streets were trod
> Once by the pure feet of the Word of God—
> The city all men's hearts desire to see—
> These evil vessels of perversity
> And superstition, working foul deeds there,
> Were driven forth to this our City, where
> Persisting in their wicked lawless ways
> They are condemned and, branded on the face
> As scoundrels, hunted to their native place.

[3] There is a difficulty about Euthymios. In the *Acta Davidis*, 237, his death is connected with the persecution in the reign of Theophilus. In *Cont. Th.* 48 it is placed in the reign of Michael II., who is made responsible, while the execution is ascribed to Theophilus. This notice is derived from Genesios (or from a common source), who says, at the end of Michael II.'s reign Εὐθύμιον . . Θεόφιλος βουνεύροις χαλεπῶς ἐθανάτωσεν. Here the act is ascribed entirely to Theophilus, so that we might assume a misdating. It seems quite inconsistent with the policy of Michael. The author of the *Acta Davidis*, *ib.*, expressly states that the punishment of Methodius was the only hardship inflicted by Michael. If he had permitted the scourging of Euthymios, would it have been passed over by George the Monk? Pargoire, *Saint Euthyme*, in *Échos d'Orient*, v. 157 *sqq.* (1901-2), however, thinks the date of the death of Euthymios was Dec. 26, 824.

[4] Simeon the Stylite of Lesbos (see above, p. 75), who in the reign of Michael II. lived in the suburb of Pêgae, on the north side of the Golden Horn, was banished to Aphusia (*Acta Davidis*, 239), whither Theodore and Theophanes had at first been sent. Other exiles to this island were Makarios, abbot of Pelekêtê (who was first flogged and imprisoned, according to *Vit. Macarii*, 158); Hilarion, abbot of the convent of Dalmatos (*A.S.*, June 6, t. i. 759, where he is said to have received 117 stripes); and John, abbot of the Katharoi (*A.S.*, April 27, t. iii. 496). All these men had suffered persecution under Leo V.; see above, Chap. II. § 3 *ad fin.*

in a subterranean prison.[1] But he presently released him, and Methodius, who, though an inflexible image-worshipper, was no fanatic, lived in the Palace on good terms with the Emperor, who esteemed his learning, and showed him high honour.[2]

Of the measures adopted by Theophilus for the suppression of icon-worship by cutting off the supply of pictures we know nothing on authority that can be accepted as good. It is stated[3] that he forbade religious pictures to be painted, and that he cruelly tortured Lazarus, the most eminent painter of the time.[4] There is probably some truth behind both statements, and the persecution of monks, with which he is charged, may be explained by his endeavours to suppress the painting of pictures. Theophilus did not penalise monks on account of their profession; for we know from other facts that he was not opposed to monasticism. But they were the religious artists of the age, and we may conjecture that many of those who incurred his displeasure were painters.

If we review the ecclesiastical policy of Theophilus in the light of the few facts which are certain and compare it with other persecutions to which Christians have at various times resorted to force their opinions upon differing souls, it is obviously absurd to describe it as extraordinarily severe. The list of cases of cruel maltreatment is short. That many obscure monks besides underwent distress and privation we cannot doubt; but such distress seems to have been due to a severer enforcement of the same rule which Michael II. had applied to Theodore of Studion and his friends. Those

[1] *Vit. Meth.* 1, § 8. The subterranean prison (with two robbers, in the island of Antigoni: Pseudo-Simeon, 642), may be a reduplication of the confinement in the island of S. Andreas under Michael II. Cp. Pargoire, *Saint Méthode*, in *Échos d'Orient*, vi. 183 *sqq.* (1903).

[2] Gen. 76; *Cont. Th.* 116. Genesios says that Theophilus was very curious about occult lore (τὰ ἀπόκρυφά), in which Methodius was an adept.

[3] See above p. 136, n. 2.

[4] *Cont. Th.* 102: Lazarus was at first cajoled, then tortured by scourging; continuing to paint, his palms were burnt with red-hot iron nails (πέταλα σιδηρᾶ ἀπανθρακωθέντα), and he was imprisoned. Released by the intercession of Theodora, he retired to the cloister of Phoberon, where he painted a picture of John the Baptist (to whom the cloister was dedicated), extant in the tenth century. After the death of Theophilus he painted a Christ for the palace-gate of Chalkê. It seems incredible that he could have continued to work after the operation on his hands. Lazarus is mentioned in *Lib. Pont.* ii. 147, 150, as bearer of a present which Michael III. sent to St. Peter's at Rome, and is described as *genere Chazarus*. The visit to Rome is mentioned in *Synaxar. Cpl.* 233, where he is said to have been sent a second time and to have died on the way.

who would not acquiesce in the synod of Leo V. and actively defied it were compelled to leave the city. The monastery of Phoberon, at the north end of the Bosphorus, seems to have been one of the chief refuges for the exiles.[1] This brings us to the second characteristic of the persecution of Theophilus, its geographical limitation. Following in his father's traces, he insisted upon the suppression of pictures only in Constantinople itself and its immediate neighbourhood. Iconoclasm was the doctrine of the Emperor and the Patriarch, but they did not insist upon its consequences beyond the precincts of the capital. So far as we can see, throughout the second period of iconoclasm, in Greece and the islands and on the coasts of Asia Minor, image-worship flourished without let or hindrance, and the bishops and monks were unaffected by the decrees of Leo V. This salient fact has not been realised by historians, but it sets the persecution of Theophilus in a different light. He would not allow pictures in the churches of the capital; and he drove out all active picture-worshippers and painters, to indulge themselves in their heresy elsewhere. It was probably only in a few exceptional cases that he resorted to severe punishment.

The females of the Emperor's household were devoted to images, and the secret opinion of Theodora must have been well known to Theophilus. The situation occasioned anecdotes turning on the motive that the Empress and her mother Theodora kept a supply of icons, but kept them well out of sight. The Emperor had a misshapen fool and jester, named Denderis, whose appearance reminded the courtiers of the Homeric Thersites.[2] Licensed to roam at large through the Palace, he burst one day into Theodora's bedchamber and found her kissing sacred images.[3] When he curiously asked

[1] *εὐκτήριον Προδρόμου* (St. John Baptist) *τὸ οὕτω καλούμενον τοῦ Φοβεροῦ κατὰ τὸν Εὔξεινον πόντον* (*Cont. Th.* 101). The monks of the Abraamite monastery (which possessed a famous image of Christ impressed on a cloth, and a picture of the Virgin ascribed to St. Luke) were expelled to Phoberon, and said to have been beaten to death (*ib.*). The monastery of St. Abraamios was outside the city, near the Golden Gate (Leo Diaconus, 47-48). It was called the *Acheiropoiêtos*, from the miraculous image. Legend ascribed its foundation to Constantine (cp. Ducange, *Const. Chr.* iv. 80), but it was probably not older than the sixth century. Cp. Pargoire, "Les débuts de monachisme à Constantinople" (*Revue des questions historiques*, lxv., 1899) 93 *sqq.*

[2] *Cont. Th.* 91.

[3] The scene is represented in the Madrid Skylitzes, and reproduced by Beylié, *L'Habitation byzantine*, 120.

what they were, she said, "They are my pretty dolls, and I love them dearly." He then went to the Emperor, who was sitting at dinner. Theophilus asked him where he had been. "With nurse,"[1] said Denderis (so he used to call Theodora), "and I saw her taking such pretty dolls out of a cushion." The Emperor comprehended. In high wrath he rose at once from table, sought Theodora, and overwhelmed her with reproaches as an idolatress. But the lady met him with a ready lie. "It is not as you suppose," she said; "I and some of my maids were looking in the mirror, and Denderis took the reflexions for dolls and told you a foolish story." Theophilus, if not satisfied, had to accept the explanation, and Theodora carefully warned Denderis not to mention the dolls again. When Theophilus asked him one day whether nurse had again kissed the pretty dolls, Denderis, placing one hand on his lips and the other on his posterior parts, said, "Hush, Emperor, don't mention the dolls."

Another similar anecdote is told of the Emperor's mother-in-law, Theoktiste, who lived in a house of her own,[2] where she was often visited by her youthful granddaughters. She sought to imbue them with a veneration for pictures and to counteract the noxious influence of their father's heresy. She would produce the sacred forms from the box in which she kept them, and press them to the faces and lips of the young

[1] *παρὰ τὴν μάναν.*

[2] *Cont. Th.* 90. The house was known as Gastria. She had bought it from Nicetas, and afterwards converted it into a monastery. It was in the quarter of Psamathia, in the south-west of the city. Paspates (*Βυζ. μελ.* 354-357) has identified it with the ruinous building Sanjakdar Mesjedi (of which he gives a drawing), which lies a little to the north of the Armenian Church of St. George (where St. Mary Peribleptos used to stand). *Gastria* is interpreted as flower-pots in the story told in the *Πάτρια Κπλ.* 215, where the foundation of the cloister is ascribed to St. Helena, who is said to have brought back from Jerusalem the flowers which grew over the place where she had discovered the cross, and planted them in pots (*γάστρας*) on this spot. Paspates points out that the abundance of water in the grounds below the Sanjakdar mosque favours the tradition that there was a flower-garden there, and this would explain the motive of the Helena legend. Mr. van Millingen is disposed to think that the identification of Paspates may be right, but he suggests that the extant building was originally a library, not a church. The good Abbé Marin, who accepts without question all the monastic foundations of Constantinian date, thinks there was a monastic foundation at Gastria before Theoktiste. The evidence for Constantinian monasteries has been drastically dealt with by Pargoire, "Les Débuts de monachisme à Constantinople," in the *Revue des questions historiques*, lxv. 67 *sqq.* (1899).

girls.[1] Their father, suspecting that they were being tainted with the idolatrous superstition, asked them one day, when they returned from a visit to their grandmother, what presents she had given them and how they had been amused. The older girls saw the trap and evaded his questions, but Pulcheria, who was a small child, truthfully described how her grandmother had taken a number of dolls from a box and pressed them upon the faces of herself and her sisters. Theophilus was furious, but it would have been odious to take any severe measure against the Empress's mother, who was highly respected for her piety. All he could do was to prevent his daughters from visiting her as frequently as before.

§ 4. *Death of Theophilus and Restoration of Icon Worship*

Theophilus died of dysentery on January 20, A.D. 842.[2] His last illness was disturbed by the fear that his death would be followed by a revolution against the throne of his infant son. The man who seemed to be the likely leader of a movement to overthrow his dynasty was Theophobos, a somewhat mysterious general, who was said to be of Persian descent and had commanded the Persian troops in the Imperial service.[3] Theophobos was an "orthodox" Christian,[4] but he was one of the Emperor's right-hand men in the eastern wars, and had been honoured with the hand of his sister or sister-in-law.[5] He had been implicated some years before in a revolt, but had been restored to favour and lived in the Palace.[6] It is said that he was popular in Constantinople, and the Emperor may have had good reasons for thinking that he might aspire with success to the supreme power. From his deathbed he ordered Theophobos to be cast into a dungeon of the Bucoleon Palace, where he was secretly decapitated at night.[7]

[1] Theoktiste is represented giving an icon to Pulcheria, the other daughters standing behind, in a miniature in the Madrid Skylitzes (see reproduction in Beylié, *op. cit.* 56).

[2] *Cont. Th.* 139.

[3] See below, p. 252 *sq.*

[4] Simeon, *Add. Georg.* 803 (cp. Gen. 61$_{10}$).

[5] *Ib.* 793. See below, p. 253.

[6] Gen. 59.

[7] Gen. 60, and *Add. Georg.* 810, where Petronas, with the logothete (*i.e.* Theoktistos), is said to have performed the decapitation. The alternative account given by Gen. 60-61 has no value, as Hirsch pointed out, p. 142, but it is to be noticed that Ooryphas is there stated to have been drungarios of the watch. We meet a

Exercising a constitutional right of his sovran authority, usually employed in such circumstances,[1] the Emperor had appointed two regents to act as his son's guardians and assist the Empress, namely, her uncle Manuel, the chief Magister, and Theoktistos, the Logothete of the Course, who had proved himself a devoted servant of the Amorian house. It is possible that Theodora's brother Bardas was a third regent, but this cannot be regarded as probable.[2] The position of Theodora closely resembled that of Irene during the minority of Constantine. The government was carried on in the joint names of the mother and the son, but the actual exercise of Imperial authority devolved upon the mother provisionally. Yet there was a difference in the two cases. Leo IV., so far as we know, had not appointed any regents or guardians of his son to act with Irene, so that legally she had the supreme power entirely in her hands; whereas Theodora was as unable to act without the concurrence of Manuel and Theoktistos as they were unable to act without her.

It has been commonly thought that Theophilus had hardly closed his eyes before his wife and her advisers made such pious haste to repair his ecclesiastical errors that a council was held and the worship of images restored, almost as a matter of course, a few weeks after his death. The

person or persons of this name holding different offices under the Amorians: (1) Ooryphas, in command of a fleet, under Michael II. (see below, Chap. IX. p. 290); (2) Ooryphas, one of the commanders in an Egyptian expedition in A.D. 853 (see below, Chap. IX. p. 292); (3) Ooryphas, Prefect of the City in A.D. 860 (see below, Chap. XIII. p. 419); (4) Ooryphas, "strategos" of the fleet at the time of the death of Michael III.; see Vat. MS. of *Cont. Georg.* in Muralt, p. 752 = Pseudo-Simeon, 687. The fourth of these is undoubtedly Nicetas Ooryphas whom we meet in Basil's reign as drungarios of the Imperial fleet. He may probably be the same as the second, but is not likely (from considerations of age) to be the same as the first. In regard to (3), it is to be noted that according to Nicetas, *Vit. Ign.* 232, Nicetas Ooryphas, drungarios of the Imperial fleet, oppressed Ignatius in A.D. 860. Such business would have devolved on the Prefect, not on the admiral, and I conclude that Nicetas Ooryphas was prefect in A.D. 860, and drungarios in A.D. 867 (such changes of office were common in Byzantium), and that the author of *Vit. Ign.* knowing him by the later office, in which he was most distinguished, described him erroneously. Ooryphas the drungarios of the watch may be identical with (1); but I suspect there is a confusion with Petronas, who seems to have held that office at one time in the reign of Theophilus (see above, p. 122).

[1] In the same way the Emperor Alexander appointed seven guardians (ἐπίτροποι) for his nephew Constantine, A.D. 913. The boy's mother Zoe was not included. *Cont. Th.* 380.

[2] It is safest to follow Gen. 77. Bardas was probably added by *Cont. Th.* (148) *sue Marte*, on account of his prominent position a few years later. So Uspenski, *Ocherki*, 25.

truth is that more than a year elapsed before the triumph of orthodoxy was secured.[1] The first and most pressing care of the regency was not to compose the ecclesiastical schism, but to secure the stability of the Amorian throne; and the question whether iconoclasm should be abandoned depended on the view adopted by the regents as to the effect of a change in religious policy on the fortunes of the dynasty.

For the change was not a simple matter, nor one that could be lightly undertaken. Theodora, notwithstanding her personal convictions, hesitated to take the decisive step. It is a mistake to suppose that she initiated the measures which led to the restoration of pictures.[2] She had a profound belief in her husband's political sagacity; she shrank from altering the system which he had successfully maintained;[3] and there was the further consideration that, if iconoclasm were condemned by the Church as a heresy, her husband's name would be anathematized. Her scruples were overcome by the arguments of the regents, who persuaded her that the restoration of images would be the surest means to establish the safety of the throne.[4] But when she yielded to these reasons, to the pressure of other members of her own family, and probably to the representations of Methodius, she made it a condition of her consent, that the council which she would

[1] The old date was in itself impossible: the change could not have been accomplished in the time. The right date is furnished by Sabas, *Vit. Joannic.* 320, where the event is definitely placed a year after the accession of Michael. This is confirmed by the date of the death of Methodius, who was Patriarch for four years and died June 14, 847 (*Vit. Joannic.* by Simeon Met. 92; the same date can be inferred from Theophanes, *De ex. S. Niceph.* 164). All this was shown for the first time by de Boor, *Angriff der Rhos*, 450-453; the proofs have been restated by Vasil'ev, *Viz. i Arab., Pril.* iii.; and the fact is now universally accepted by savants, though many writers still ignorantly repeat the old date.

[2] Her hesitation comes out clearly in the tradition and must be accepted as fact.

Gen. 80 *ὁ ἐμὸς ἀνὴρ γε καὶ βασιλεὺς μακαρίτης σοφίας ἀρκούντως ἐξείχετο καὶ οὐδὲν τῶν δεόντων αὐτῷ ἐλελήθει· καὶ πῶς τῶν ἐκείνου διαταγμάτων ἀμνημονήσαντες εἰς ἑτέραν διαγωγὴν ἐκτραπείημεν;*

[4] The chief mover was, I have no doubt, Theoktistos. His name alone is mentioned by the contemporary George Mon. 811 (cp. *Vita Theodorae*, 14). In Gen. he shares the credit with Manuel (78), and in *Cont. Th.* (148-150) Manuel appears alone as Theodora's adviser. But the part played by Manuel is mixed up with a hagiographical tradition, redounding to the credit of the monks of Studion, whose prayers were said to have saved him from certain death by sickness, on condition of his promising to restore image-worship when he recovered. (For the connexion of Manuel with the Studites, cp. also *Vita Nicolai*, 916, where Nicolaus is said to have healed Helena, Manuel's wife.)

have to summon should not brand the memory of Theophilus with the anathema of the Church.[1]

Our ignorance of the comparative strength of the two parties in the capital and in the army renders it impossible for us to understand the political calculations which determined the Empress and her advisers to act in accordance with her religious convictions. But the sudden assassination of Theophobos by the command of the dying Emperor is a significant indication[2] that a real danger menaced the throne, and that the image-worshippers, led by some ambitious insurgent, would have been ready and perhaps able to overthrow the dynasty.[3] The event seems to corroborate the justice of their fears. For when they re-established the cult of pictures, iconoclasm died peacefully without any convulsions or rebellions. The case of Theoktistos may be adduced to illustrate the fact that many of those who held high office were not fanatical partisans. He had been perfectly contented with the iconoclastic policy, and was probably a professed iconoclast,[4] but placed in a situation where iconoclasm appeared to be a peril to the throne, he was ready to throw it over for the sake of political expediency.

Our brief, vague, and contradictory records supply little certain information as to the manner in which the government conducted the preparations for the defeat of iconoclasm.[5] It is evident that astute management was required; and a considerable time was demanded for the negotiations and intrigues needful to facilitate a smooth settlement. We may

[1] This is an inevitable inference from the traditions.

[2] Cp. Uspenski, *ib.* 59.

[3] The story of Genesios (77-78) that Manuel addressed the assembled people in the Hippodrome, and demanded a declaration of loyalty to the government, and that the people—expecting that he would himself usurp the throne—were surprised and disappointed when he cried, "Long life to Michael and Theodora," seems to be also significant.

[4] The interest of the Studites in Manuel (see above, p. 145, n. 4) argues that he was at heart an image-worshipper, as the other relatives of Theodora seem to have been. Gen. (78) says of him that he wavered (*διὰ μέσου τινὸς παρεμπεσόντος διώκλασεν*), but this seems to imply that he at first shared the hesitation of the Empress.

[5] We must assume that Theodora, before a final decision was taken, held a silention at which both the Senate and ecclesiastics were present. Such a meeting is recorded in Theophanes, *De ex. S. Niceph.* 164, and in Skylitzes (Cedrenus), ii. 142. The assembly declared in favour of restoring images, and ordered that passages should be selected from the writings of the Fathers to support the doctrine. The former source also asserts that Theodora addressed a manifesto to the people.

take it for granted that Theodora and her advisers had at once destined Methodius (who had lived for many years in the Palace on intimate terms with the late Emperor, and who, we may guess, had secretly acted as a spiritual adviser to the Imperial ladies) as successor to the Patriarchal chair. To him naturally fell[1] the task of presiding at a commission, which met in the official apartments of Theoktistos[2] and prepared the material for the coming Council.[3]

Before the Council met, early in March (A.D. 843), the Patriarch John must have been officially informed by the Empress of her intention to convoke it, and summoned to attend. He was not untrue to the iconoclastic doctrine which he had actively defended for thirty years, and he declined to alter his convictions in order to remain in the Patriarchal chair. He was deposed by the Council,[4] Methodius was elected

[1] Cp. Uspenski, *op. cit.* 33. That Methodius took the leading part in the preparations, and that the success of the Council was chiefly due to his influence and activity is a conclusion which all the circumstances suggest; without the co-operation of such an ecclesiastic, the government could not have carried out their purpose. But a hagiographical tradition confirms the conclusion. It was said that hermits of Mount Olympus, Joannikios, who had the gift of prophecy, and Arsakios, along with one Esaias of Nicomedia, were inspired to urge Methodius to restore images, and that at their instigation he incited the Empress (*Narr. de Theophili absol.* 25). This story assumes that Methodius played an important part. According to *Vit. Mich. Sync.* A 249, the Empress and Senate sent a message to Joannikios, who recommended Methodius. The same writer says (*ib.*) that Michael the synkellos was designated by popular opinion as John's successor. But the hagiographers are unscrupulous in making statements which exalt their heroes (see below, p. 148, n. 1). He seems to have been made abbot of the Chora convent (*ib.* 250); he died January 4, 846 (cp. Vailhé, *Saint Michel*, 314).

[2] Gen. 80.

[3] The preparation of the reports for the Council of A.D. 815 had occupied nearly a year (see above, p. 60). The Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council supplied the Commission with its material.

[4] In the sources there is some variation in the order of events. Theophanes, *De ex. S. Niceph.*, represents the deposition of John (with the measures taken against him) as an act of the Council which restored orthodoxy. George Mon. (also a contemporary) agrees (802), and the account of Genesios is quite consistent, for he relates the measures taken against John *after* the Council (81). According to *Cont. Th.* John received an ultimatum from the Empress before the Council met (150-151), but this version cannot be preferred to that of Genesios. After the act of deposition by the Council, Constantine, the Drungary of the Watch, was sent with some of his officers, to remove John from the Patriarcheion. He made excuses and would not stir, and when Bardas went to inquire why he refused, he displayed his stomach pricked all over with sharp instruments, and alleged that the wounds were inflicted by the cruelty of Constantine (an Armenian) and his officers, whom he stigmatized as pagans (this insult excites the wrath of Genesios who was a descendant of Constantine). But Bardas saw through the trick. Genesios does not expressly say that the wounds were self-inflicted, but his vague words suggest this inference to the reader (cp. Hirsch, 153). In *Cont. Th.* the story is elaborated, and the manner in which John wounded

in his stead, and the decrees of the Seventh Ecumenical Council were confirmed. The list of heretics who had been anathematized at that Council was augmented by the names of the prominent iconoclastic leaders who had since troubled the Church, but the name of the Emperor Theophilus was omitted. We can easily divine that to spare his memory was the most delicate and difficult part of the whole business. Methodius himself was in temper a man of the same cast as the Patriarchs Tarasius and Nicephorus; he understood the necessities of compromise, he appreciated the value of "economy," and he was ready to fall in with the wishes of Theodora. We may suspect that it was largely through his management that the members of the Council agreed, apparently without dissent, to exclude the late Emperor from the black list; and it is evident that their promises to acquiesce in this course must have been secured before the Council met. According to a story which has little claim to credit, Theodora addressed the assembly and pleaded for her husband on the ground that he had repented of his errors on his death-bed, and that she herself had held an icon to his lips before he breathed his last.[1] But it is not improbable that the suggestion of a death-bed repentance was circulated unofficially for the purpose of influencing the monks who execrated the memory of the

himself is described. See also *Acta Davidis*, 248 (where the instrument is a knife used for paring nails). In the contemporary *De ex. S. Niceph.* of Theophanes, another motive is alleged: the revolution threw John into such despondency that he *almost* laid violent hands on himself. It is impossible to extract the truth from these statements; but Schlosser and Finlay may be right in supposing that John was really wounded by soldiers, and that his enemies invented the fiction of self-inflicted wounds. In any case, so far as I can read through the tradition, there is no good ground for Uspenski's conclusion (*op. cit.* 39) that "the process against John was prior to the Council." This view (based on *Cont. Th.*), also held by Hergenröther (i. 294) and Finlay (ii. 163), is opposed to the other older sources (besides those cited above): *Vita Meth.* (1253) and *Vita Ignatii* (221); cp. Hirsch, 211.

[1] *Cont. Th.* 152-153. One way of mitigating the guilt of Theophilus was to shift the responsibility to the evil counsels of the Patriarch John; see *e.g.* Nicetas, *Vit. Ign.* 222 and 216. According to the *Acta Davidis* Theodora had a private interview with Methodius, Simeon the Stylite saint of Lesbos, and his brother George, and intimated that some money (εὐλογία, a douceur) had been left to them by the Emperor, if they would receive him as orthodox. Simeon cried, "To perdition with him and his money," but finally yielded (244-246). This work characteristically represents Simeon as playing a prominent rôle in the whole business, as disputing with John in the presence of Theodora and Michael, and as influential in the election of Methodius. It is also stated that he was appointed Synkellos of the Patriarch (πνεύματι τῆς Ἀγχούστης, 250). On the other hand the biographer of Michael, synkellos of Jerusalem, claims that *he* was made Synkellos (*Vit. Mich. Sync.* 250).

last imperial iconoclast. It seems significant that the monks of Studion took no prominent part in the orthodox reform, though they afterwards sought to gain credit for having indirectly promoted it by instigating Manuel the Magister.[1] We shall hardly do them wrong if we venture to read between the lines, and assume that, while they refrained from open opposition, they disapproved of the methods by which the welcome change was manœuvred.

But the flagrant fact that the guilty iconoclast, who had destroyed icons and persecuted their votaries, was excepted from condemnation by the synod which abolished his heresy, stimulated the mythopoeic fancy of monks, who invented divers vain tales to account for this inexplicable leniency.[2] The story of Theodora's personal assurances to the synod belongs to this class of invention. It was also related that she dreamed that her husband was led in chains before a great man who sat on a throne in front of an icon of Christ, and that this judge, when she fell weeping and praying at his feet, ordered Theophilus to be unbound by the angels who guarded him, for the sake of her faith.[3] According to another myth, the divine pardon of the culprit was confirmed by a miracle. Methodius wrote down the names of all the Imperial heretics, including Theophilus, in a book which he deposited on an altar. Waking up from a dream in which an angel announced to him that pardon had been granted, he took the book from the holy table, and discovered that where the name of Theophilus had stood, there was a blank space.[4]

Of one thing we may be certain: the Emperor did not repent. The suggestion of a death-bed repentance[5] was a falsification of fact, probably circulated deliberately in order to save his memory, and readily believed because it was edifying. It helped to smooth the way in a difficult situation, by justifying in popular opinion the course of expediency or "economy," which the Church adopted at the dictation of Theodora.

After the Council had completed its work, the triumph of

[1] See above, p. 145, n. 4.
[2] Cp. Uspenski, *op. cit.* 47 *sqq.*
[3] *Narr. de Theophili absol.* 32 *sq.*
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] A death-bed repentance is one of those suspicious phenomena which, even when there is no strong interest for alleging it, cannot be accepted without exceptionally good evidence at first hand.

orthodoxy was celebrated by a solemn festival service in St. Sophia, on the first Sunday in Lent (March 11, A.D. 843). The monks from all the surrounding monasteries, and perhaps even hermits from the cells of Athos, flocked into the city,[1] and we may be sure that sacred icons were hastily hung in the places from which others had been torn in all the churches of the capital.[2] A nocturnal thanksgiving was held in the church of the Virgin in Blachernae, and on Sunday morning the Empress, with the child Emperor, the Patriarch and clergy, and all the ministers and senators, bearing crosses and icons and candles in their hands, devoutly proceeded to St. Sophia.[3]

[1] Gen. 82 mentions Olympus, Ida, Athos, and even τὸ κατὰ Κυμινᾶν συμπλήρωμα, monks from Mt. Kyminas in Mysia. This passage is important as a chronological indication for the beginnings of the religious settlements on Mount Athos, which are described in K. Lake's *The Early Days of Monasticism on Mount Athos*, 1909. He seems to have overlooked this passage. As he points out, there were three stages in the development (1) the hermit period; (2) the loose organizations of the hermits in lauras; (3) the strict organization in monasteries. In A.D. 843 we are in the first period, and the first hermit of whom we know is Peter, whose *Life* by a younger contemporary, Nicolaus, has been printed by Lake. Peter had been a soldier in the Scholae, and was carried captive to *Samarra* (therefore after A.D. 836, see below, p. 238) by the Saracens, possibly in Mutasim's expedition of A.D. 838; having escaped, he went to Rome to be tonsured, and then to Athos, where he lived fifty years as a hermit. The first laura of which we know seems to have been founded at the very end of the reign of Michael III. (see Lake, p. 44), by Euthymius of Thessalonica, whose *Life* has been edited from an Athos MS. by L. Petit (*Vie et office de Saint-Euthyme le Jeune*, 1904). The earliest monastery in the vicinity was the Kolobu, founded by John Kolobos in the reign of Basil I.; it was not on Mount Athos, but to the north, probably near Erissos (Lake, 60 *sqq.*), and there were no monasteries on the mountain itself till the coming of Athanasius, the friend of the Emperor Nicephorus II.—There was a Mount Kyminas close to Akhyraos (George Acrop. i. 27-28. ed. Heisenberg) which corresponds to Balikesri in Mysia, according to Ramsay, *Asia Minor*, 154, and Tomaschek, *Zur historischen Topographie von Kleinasien im Mittelalter*, 96. But the evidence of the *Vita Michaelis Malcini* (ed. Petit, 1903) and the *Vita Mariae iun.* (cited by Petit, p. 61) seem to make it probable that Mount Kyminas of the monks was in eastern Bithynia near Prusias ad Hypion (Uskub; cp. Anderson, *Map*), and Petit identifies it with the Dikmen Dagh.

[2] New icons soon adorned the halls of the Palace. The icon of Christ above the throne in the Chrysotriklinos was restored. Facing this, above the entrance, the Virgin was represented, and on either side of her Michael III. and Methodius; around apostles, martyrs, etc. See *Anthol. Pal.* i. 106 (cp. 107), ll. 14, 15:

ὅθεν καλοῦμεν χριστοτρίκλινον νέον
τὸν πρὶν λαχόντα κλῆσεως χρυσωνύμου.

πρόεδρος, l. 10, is the Patriarch as Ebersolt has seen (*Le Grand Palais*, 82). Coins of Michael and Theodora were issued, with the head of Christ on the reverse. This had been introduced by Justinian II., and did not reappear till now. The type is evidently copied from coins of Justinian. Wroth, xliv.

[3] *Narr. de Theoph. absol.* 38. An official description of the ceremony, evidently drawn up in the course of Michael's reign (with later additions at the end), is preserved in Constantine, *Cer.* i. 28. The Patriarch and the clergy kept vigil in the church at Blachernae, and proceeded in the morning to St. Sophia, διὰ τοῦ δημοσίου ἐμβόλου (from the church of the

It was enacted that henceforward the restoration of icons should be commemorated on the same day, and the first Sunday of Lent is still the feast of Orthodoxy in the Greek Church.

All our evidence for this ecclesiastical revolution comes from the records of those who rejoiced in it; we are not informed of the tactics of the iconoclastic party, nor is it hinted that they made any serious effort to fight for a doomed cause. We can hardly believe that the Patriarch John was quiescent during the year preceding the Council, and silently awaited the event. But the only tradition of any counter-movement is the anecdote of a scandalous attempt to discredit Methodius after his elevation to the Patriarchate. The iconoclasts, it was said, bribed a young woman to allege publicly that the Patriarch had seduced her. An official inquiry was held, and Methodius proved his innocence, to the satisfaction of a curious and crowded assembly, by a cynical ocular demonstration that he was physically incapable of the offence with which he was charged. He explained that many years ago, during his sojourn at Rome, he had been tormented by the stings of carnal desire, and that in answer to his prayer St. Peter's miraculous touch had withered his body and freed him for ever from the assaults of passion.[1] The woman was compelled to confess that she had been suborned, and the heretics who had invented the lie received the mild punishment of being compelled every year, at the feast of orthodoxy, to join the procession from Blachernae to St. Sophia with torches in their hands, and hear with their own ears anathema pronounced upon them.[1] There was some

Apostles to the Augusteon, the street had porticoes; we know nothing about the road from Blachernae to the Apostles). The Emperor went to St. Sophia from the Palace.

[1] The story is told by Gen. 83-85, and repeated, with the usual elaboration, in *Cont. Th.* 158-160. It was unknown to the author of the *Vita Methodii*, and his silence is a strong external argument for rejecting it entirely. But that there was a *motif* behind, which we are not in a position to discover, is proved, as Hirsch has pointed out (154), by the fact that Genesios identifies the woman as mother of Metrophanes, afterwards bishop of Smyrna, who was prominent in the struggle between Photius and Ignatius. There must have been some link of connexion between her and Methodius. A second *motif* probably was the impotence of the Patriarch. The story had the merit of insulting the repentant iconoclastic clergy, who, as a condition of retaining their posts, were obliged to take part in the anniversary procession. We cannot put much more faith in the anecdote that the ex-Patriarch John, who was compelled to retire to a monastery at Kleidion on the Bos-

kernel of truth in this edifying fiction, but it is impossible to disentangle it.

It would seem that the great majority of the iconoclastic bishops and clergy professed repentance of their error and were allowed to retain their ecclesiastical dignities. Here Methodius, who was a man of moderation and compromise, followed the precedent set by Tarasius at the time of the first restoration of image-worship.[1] But the iconoclastic heresy was by no means immediately extinguished, though it never again caused more than administrative trouble. Some of those who repented lapsed into error, and new names were added, twenty-five years later,[2] to the list of the heretics who were held up to public ignominy on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, and stigmatized as Jews or pagans.[3]

The final installation of icons among the sanctities of the Christian faith, the authoritative addition of icon-worship to the superstitions of the Church, was a triumph for the religious spirit of the Greeks over the doctrine of Eastern heretics whose Christianity had a more Semitic flavour. The struggle had lasted for about a hundred and twenty years, and in its latest stage had been virtually confined to Constantinople. Here the populace seems to have oscillated between the two extreme views,[4] and many of the educated inhabitants probably belonged to that moderate party which approved of images in Churches, but was opposed to their worship. Of the influence of the iconoclastic movement on Byzantine art something will be said in another chapter, but it must be noticed here that in one point it won an abiding victory. In the doctrine laid down by the Council no distinction was drawn between sculptured and painted representations; all *icons* were legitimized. But whereas, before the controversy began, religious art had expressed itself in both forms, after the Council of

phorus (Simeon, *Cont. Georg.* 811), ordered a servant to poke out the eyes of an icon in the church of that cloister, and for this offence received 200 stripes by the command of the Empress (Gen. 82). *Cont. Th.* 151 says that he was banished to his suburban house called τὰ Ψιχά (there was another place of this name near the Forum of Constantine, *Cont. Th.* 420). Probably Psicha was at Kleidion, which is the modern Defterdan Burnu, a little north of Ortakeui, on the European side of the Bosphorus.

[1] For the policy of Methodius and the disapproval which it aroused, see below, p. 182.

[2] Condemned by the Council of A.D. 869 (Mansi, xvi. 389).

[3] ἑαυτοὺς τῇ τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ Ἑλλήνων μερίδι καθυποβαλλομένους, Uspenski, *op. cit.* 98. Ἕλλην is here used for pagan.

[4] Cp. Bréhier, 40.

A.D. 843, sculpture was entirely discarded, and icons came to mean pictures and pictures only. This was a silent surrender, never explicitly avowed by the orthodox Church, to the damnable teaching of the iconoclasts; so that these heretics can claim to have so far influenced public opinion as to induce their victorious adversaries to abandon the cult of graven images. After all, the victory was a compromise.

CHAPTER V

MICHAEL III

A.D. 842-867

§ 1. *The Regency*

MICHAEL III. reigned for a quarter of a century, but he never governed. During the greater part of his life he was too young; when he reached a riper age he had neither the capacity nor the desire. His reign falls into two portions. In his minority, the Empress Theodora held the reins, guided by the advice of Theoktistos, the Logothete of the Course, who proved as devoted to her as he had been to her husband. During the later years, when Michael nominally exercised the sovranty himself, the real power and the task of conducting the administration devolved upon her brother Bardas. In the first period, the government seems to have been competent, though we have not sufficient information to estimate it with much confidence; in the second period it was eminently efficient.

The Empress Theodora[1] occupied the same constitutional position which the Empress Irene had occupied in the years following her husband's death. She was not officially the Autocrat, any more than her daughter Thecla, who was associated with her brother and mother in the Imperial dignity;[2] she only acted provisionally as such on behalf of

[1] At the beginning of the reign coins were issued with the head of Theodora (*despoina*) on one side, on the other the child-Emperor and his eldest sister Thecla robed as Augusta. A few years later Michael and Theodora appear together on the obverse; on the reverse is the head of the Saviour, cp. above, p. 150, n. 2.

[2] *Acta* 42 *Mart. Am.* 52 (A.D. 845) *βασιλεύοντος τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἀρχῆς* Μιχαὴλ *καὶ Θεοδώρας καὶ Θέκλης.* Cp. Wroth, 431 (Pl. xlix. 19) Μιχαὴλ Θεοδώρα *καὶ* Θέκλα *ἐκ θ(εοῦ) βασιλεῖς* Ῥωμαίων on reverse of silver coins.

her son. The administration was conducted in their joint names; but she possessed no sovran authority in her own right or independently of him. Her actual authority was formally limited (unlike Irene's) by the two guardians or co-regents whom Theophilus had appointed. To find two men who would work in harmony and could be trusted not to seek power for themselves to the detriment of his son was difficult, and Theophilus seems to have made a judicious choice. But it was almost inevitable that one of the two should win the effective control of affairs and the chief place in the Empress's confidence. It may well be that superior talent and greater political experience rendered Theoktistos a more capable adviser than Manuel, her uncle, who had probably more knowledge of warfare than of administration. Theoktistos presently became the virtual prime minister,[1] and Manuel found it convenient to withdraw from his rooms in the Palace and live in his house near the Cistern of Aspar, though he did not formally retire from his duties and regularly attended in the Palace for the transaction of business.[2]

Her uncle's practical abdication of his right to a voice in the management of the Empire corresponds to the policy which Theodora pursued, under the influence of the Logothete, towards the other members of her own family. Her brother Petronas, who was a competent general and had done useful work for her husband, seems to have been entrusted with no important post and allowed no opportunity of winning distinction under her government; he proved his military capacity after her fall from power. Her more famous and brilliant brother Bardas was forced to be contented with an inactive life in his suburban house. Theodora had also three sisters, of whom one, Sophia, had married Constantine Babutzikos. Another, Calomaria, was the wife of Arsaber,

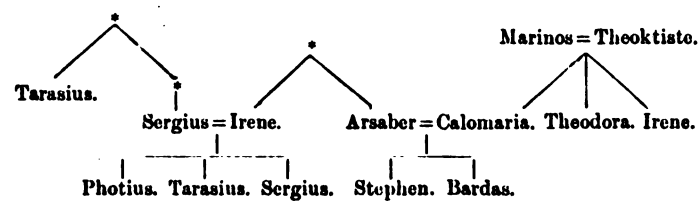
[1] παραδυναστεύων, Simeon (*Cont. Georg.*), 815.

[2] Gen. 86, where it is explained that Theoktistos schemed to get rid of Manuel by a charge of treason, but Manuel anticipated the trouble by a voluntary semi-retirement. Simeon, *ib.* 816, mentions that Theoktistos built himself a house with baths and garden, within the Palace. Manuel converted his house into a monastery, the church of which is now the Kefelé mosque, a little to the west of the Chukur Bostan or Cistern of Aspar. See Paspates, Βυζ. μελ. 304; Millingen, *Walls*, 23; Strzygovski, *Die byz. Wasserbehälter von Kpel* (1893), 158.

a patrician, who was elevated to the higher rank of magister.[1] On his death Calomaria lived in the Palace with her sister, and is said to have worn mean raiment and performed the charitable duty of paying monthly visits to the prisons[2] and distributing blessings and alms to the prisoners.

Michael was in his seventeenth year when his mother decided to marry him. The customary bride-show was announced throughout the provinces by a proclamation inviting beautiful candidates for the throne to assemble on a certain day in the Imperial Palace.[3] The choice of the Empress fell on Eudocia, the daughter of Dekapolites (A.D. 855). We know nothing of this lady or her family; she seems to have been a cipher, and her nullity may have recommended her to Theodora. But in any case the haste of the Empress and Theoktistos to provide Michael with a consort at such an early age was prompted by their desire to prevent his union with another lady. For Michael already had a love affair with Eudocia Ingerina, whom Theodora and her minister regarded as an unsuitable spouse. A chronicler tells us that

[1] The text of the passage in *Cont. Th.* 175 seems perfectly right as it stands, but has been misunderstood both by the later historian Skylitzes (see Cedrenus, ii. 161) and by modern critics. The text is ἡ δὲ Καλομαρία Ἀρσαβὲρ τῷ . . μαγίστρῳ, τῷ Εἰρήνης τῆς μητρὸς τοῦ μετὰ ταῦτα τὸν πατριαρχικὸν θρόνον ἀντιλαβομένου Φωτίου ἀδελφῷ. The translation is: "Calomaria married Arsaber, the brother of Irene, who was the mother of Photius, afterwards Patriarch." There is no difficulty about this. But because Theodora had three sisters, it was assumed that all three were married, and that the husbands of all three are mentioned. Irene was the name of the third sister, and Skylitzes says that she (Εἰρήνη δὲ) married Sergius, the brother of Photius. Hirsch criticizes the passage on the same assumption (215). The relationship of Photius to Theodora and the text of *Cont. Th.* will be made clear by a diagram.



[2] The Chalke and the Numera in the Palace, and the Praetorium in the town. She was accompanied by the Count of the Walls, the Domestic of the Numeri, or the Prefect of the City. *Cont. Th. ib.*

[3] The evidence for this bride-show is in the *Vit. Irenes*, 603-604. Irene, a Cappadocian lady, was one of the competitors. Her sister—apparently also a candidate—afterwards married Bardas.

they disliked her intensely "on account of her impudence"; [1] which means that she was a woman of some spirit, and they feared her as a rival influence. The young sovran was obliged to yield and marry the wife who was not of his own choice, but if he was separated from the woman he loved, it was only for a short time. Eudocia Ingerina did not disdain to be his mistress, and his attachment to her seems to have lasted till his death.

But the power of Theodora and her favourite minister was doomed, and the blow was struck by a member of her own family (A.D. 856, January to March).[2] Michael had reached an age when he began to chafe under the authority of his mother, whose discipline had probably been strict; and his uncle Bardas, who was ambitious and conscious of his own talents for government, divined that it would now be possible to undermine her position and win his nephew's confidence. The most difficult part of his enterprise was to remove Theoktistos, but he had friends among the ministers who were in close attendance on the Emperor. The Parakoemômenos or chief chamberlain, Damianos (a man of Slavonic race), persuaded Michael to summon his uncle to the Palace, and their wily tongues convinced the boy that his mother intended to depose him, with the assistance of Theoktistos, or at all events—and this was no more than the truth—that he would have no power so long as Theodora and Theoktistos co-operated.[3] Michael was brought to acquiesce in the view that it was necessary to suppress the too powerful minister, and violence was the only method. Theophanes, the chief of the private wardrobe, joined the conspiracy, and Bardas also won over his sister Calomaria.[4] Some generals, who had

[1] Simeon (*Cont. Georg.*), 816, the source for Michael's marriage. The probable date, A.D. 855, is inferred from the fact that the marriage preceded the death of Theoktistos, combined with Michael's age. The bridal ceremony of an Emperor was performed in the church of St. Stephen in the Palace of Daphne. The chronicler (*ib.*) notes that the bridal chamber (τὸ ταστόν) was in the palace of Magnaura, and the marriage feast, at which the senators were present, was held in the hall of the Nineteen Couches. This was the regular habit, as we learn from the official description in Constantine, *Cer.* 213.

[2] For date see Appendix VII.

[3] So Simeon (*Cont. Georg.*), 821. According to Gen. 87, Bardas suggested to Michael that Theodora intended to marry herself, or to find a husband for one of her daughters, and depose Michael, with the aid of Theoktistos.

[4] The part played by Calomaria is recorded by Genesios, whose information was doubtless derived from his ancestor Constantine the Armenian, who was an eye-witness of the murder. For Theophanes of Farghana see p. 238.

been deposed from their commands and owed a grudge to Theoktistos,[1] were engaged to lend active assistance. It was arranged that Bardas should station himself in the Lausiakos, and there attack the Logothete, whose duties frequently obliged him to pass through that hall in order to reach the apartments of the Empress.[2] Calomaria concealed herself in an upper room, where, through a hole, perhaps constructed on purpose,[3] she commanded a view of the Lausiakos, and could, by signalling from a window, inform the Emperor as soon as Bardas sprang upon his victim.

Theoktistos had obtained at the secretarial office[4] the reports which he had to submit to the Empress, and as he passed through the Lausiakos he observed with displeasure Bardas seated at his ease, as if he had a full right to be there. Muttering that he would persuade Theodora to expel him from the Palace, he proceeded on his way, but in the Horologion, at the entrance of the Chrysotriklinos, he was stopped by the Emperor and Damianos. Michael, asserting his authority perhaps for the first time, angrily ordered him to read the reports to himself and not to his mother. As the Logothete was retracing his steps in a downcast mood, Bardas sprang forward and smote him. The ex-generals hastened to assist, and Theoktistos drew his sword.[5] The Emperor, on receiving a signal from his aunt, hurried to the scene,[6] and by his orders

[1] A grudge: this is a fair inference from the fact that they were selected for the purpose.

[2] The apartments of Theodora seem to have been in the Chrysotriklinos. The eastern door of the Lausiakos faced the Horologion which was the portal of the Chrysotriklinos.

[3] Gen. 87 *ἐξ ὑπερτέρου τετρημένου οἰκίσκου διόπτειραν καταστήσαντες*. We may imagine this room to have been in the Eidikon, to which stairs led up from the Lausiakos. The Eidikon, which was over the Thermastra, adjoined the Lausiakos on the north side.

[4] *τὰ δεηκρητεῖα*, Simeon, *ib.* 821. The accounts of the murder in this chronicle and in Genesios are independent and supplement each other. Simeon gives more details *before* the assault of Bardas, Genesios a fuller description of the murder and the part played by his own grandfather.

[5] Gen. 88, Bardas threw Theoktistos down (*κατατρηχίξας*), *καὶ εὐθέως ἐπιδίδοται σὺν κουλεῷ σπάθη ἐπώμιος, ἣν πρὸς ἀποτροπὴν ἐναντίων ἐγύμνωσεν*. Simeon, *ib.* 822, says that Bardas began to strike him on the cheek and pull his hair; and Maniakes, the Drungary of the Watch, cried, "Do not strike the Logothete." Maniakes was therefore the surname of Constantine the Armenian.

[6] Gen. 88 *κατασημαίνεται βασιλεὺς πρὸς ἐξέλευσιν τὴν διὰ χαλκηλάτων πυλῶν Τιβερίου τοῦ ἀνακτος, καὶ στὰς ἐκεῖσε κτλ.* This gate, not mentioned elsewhere so far as I know, was probably a door of the Chrysotriklinos palace, which, we know, Tiberius II. improved. If Calomaria was, as I suppose, in the Eidikon building, she could have signalled from a window on its eastern side to the Chrysotriklinos.

for revenge if she did not hope to regain power, entered into a plot against her brother's life. The Imperial Protostrator was the chief of the conspirators, who planned to kill Bardas as he was returning to the Palace from his suburban house on the Golden Horn. But the design was discovered, and the conspirators were beheaded in the Hippodrome.[1]

§ 2. *Bardas and Basil the Macedonian.*

Bardas was soon raised to the high dignity of *Curopalates*,[2] which was only occasionally conferred on a near relative of the Emperor and gave its recipient, in case the sovran died childless, a certain claim to the succession. His position was at the same time strengthened by the appointments of his two sons to important military posts. The Domesticate of the Schools, which he vacated, was given to Antigonus who was only a boy,[3] while an elder son was invested with the command of several western Themes which were exceptionally united.[4] But for Bardas the office of Curopalates was only a step to the higher dignity of Caesar, which designated him more clearly as the future colleague or successor of his nephew, whose marriage had been fruitless. He was created Caesar on the Sunday after Easter in April A.D. 862.[5]

The government of the Empire was in the hands of Bardas for ten years, and the reluctant admissions of hostile chroniclers[6] show that he was eminently fitted to occupy the throne. A

[1] The source is Simeon, *ib.*, and we can hardly hesitate to accept his statement as to the implication of Theodora, to whom he was well disposed. He speaks of her part in an apologetic tone, as if she were not responsible for her acts: *ἀθυμίᾳ μετεωρισθεῖσα τὸν νοῦν καὶ ὑπὸ ἐκπλήξεως ἀφαιρεθεῖσα καὶ τὸ φρονεῖν, ἀνάξια ἑαυτῆς κατασκευάζει βουλὴν κατὰ Βάρδα βουλευομένη.*

[2] It appears from *Cont. Th.* 176, that he was already Curopalates when he took part in the expedition against Samosata, the date of which we otherwise know to be 859 (see below, p. 279).

[3] Simeon (*Cont. Georg.*) 828. According to *Cont. Th.* 180, Petronas succeeded him in 863 as Domestic; but if this is true, he was restored to the command almost immediately, as Petronas died shortly after. Vogt (*Basile Ier*) is wrong in supposing that Petronas succeeded Bardas in this post.

[4] Simeon, *ib.* The wife of this son was her father-in-law's mistress. For other examples of such extended commands see pp. 10, 222.

[5] The year is given by Gen. 97, the day by Simeon, *ib.*, 824. No known facts are incompatible with this date (which Hirsch accepts), and we must decisively reject the hypotheses of Aristarchos (A.D. 860), Vogt (A.D. 865 or 866), and others.

[6] The concession of Nicetas (*Vit. Ign.* 224) is, among others, especially significant: *σπουδαῖον καὶ δραστήριον περὶ τὴν τῶν πολιτικῶν πραγμάτων μεταχείρισιν.*

brilliant success won (A.D. 863) against the Saracens, and the conversion of Bulgaria, enhanced the prestige of the Empire abroad; he committed the care of the Church to the most brilliant Patriarch who ever occupied the ecclesiastical throne of Constantinople; he followed the example of Theophilus in his personal attention to the administration of justice;[1] and he devoted himself especially to the improvement of education and the advancement of learning. The military and diplomatic transactions of this fortunate decade, its importance for the ecclesiastical independence of the Eastern Empire, and its significance in the history of culture, are dealt with in other chapters.

Michael himself was content to leave the management of the state in his uncle's capable hands. He occasionally took part in military expeditions, more for the sake of occupation, we may suspect, than from a sense of duty. He was a man of pleasure, he only cared for amusement, he had neither the brains nor the taste for administration. His passion for horse-races reminds us of Nero and Commodus; he used himself to drive a chariot in the private hippodrome of the Palace of St. Mamas.[2] His frivolity and extravagance, his impiety and scurrility, are held up to derision and execration by an imperial writer who was probably his own grandson but was bitterly hostile to his memory.

Little confidence can be placed in the anecdotes related by the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogennetos and his literary satellites, but there is no doubt that they exhibit, in however exaggerated a shape, the character and reputation of Michael. We may not be prepared, for instance, to believe that the fire-signals of Asia Minor were discontinued, because on one occasion he was interrupted in the hippodrome by an inopportune message;[3] but the motive of the story reflects his genuine impatience of public business. The most famous or infamous performance of Michael was his travesty of the mysteries and ministers of the Church. One of his coarse boon-companions, a buffoon known as the "Pig," was arrayed

[1] Cp. *Cont. Th.* 193.

[2] Gen. 112, *Cont. Th.* 197. It does not appear that he ever drove in the Great Hippodrome himself. At St. Mamas the spectacle would be private—confined to invited members of the Court. High officials took part in these amateur performances (*Cont. Th.* 198).

[3] *Cont. Th.* 197.

as Patriarch, while the Emperor and eleven others dressed themselves in episcopal garments, as twelve prominent bishops. With citherns, which they hid in the folds of their robes and secretly sounded, they intoned the liturgy. They enacted the solemn offices of consecrating and deposing bishops, and it was even rumoured that they were not ashamed to profane the Eucharist, using mustard and vinegar instead of the holy elements.[1] A story was current that one day the mock Patriarch riding on an ass, with his execrable cortège, came face to face with the true Patriarch Ignatius, who was conducting a religious procession to a suburban church. The profane satyrs raised their hoods, loudly struck their instruments, and with lewd songs disturbed the solemn hymns of the pious procession. But this was only a sensational anecdote, for we have reason to believe that Michael did not begin to practise these mummeries till after the deposition of Ignatius.[2] Mocking at the ecclesiastical schism, he is said to have jested "Theophilus (the Pig) is my Patriarch, Photius is the Patriarch of the Caesar, Ignatius of the Christians."[3] How far mummeries of this kind shocked public opinion in Constantinople it is difficult to conjecture.

[1] These mummeries are described by Constantine Porph. (*Cont. Th.* 244 *sqq.*). They are not referred to by Simeon, but are mentioned in general terms by Nicetas (*Vit. Ignatii*, 246, where the proper name of *Gryllos*= the Pig is given as Theophilus), and are attested by the 16th Canon of the Council of 869-870, which describes and condemns them (Mansi, xvi. 169). In this canon Michael himself is not said to have participated in the parodies, which are attributed to "laymen of senatorial rank under the late Emperor." These men, arranging their hair so as to imitate the tonsure, and arrayed in sacerdotal robes, with episcopal cloaks, used to travesty the ceremonies of electing, consecrating, and deposing bishops; one of them used to play the Patriarch. The canon obviously insinuates that Photius had not done his duty in allowing such profanities to go on. But it does not speak of the profanation of the Eucharist, nor is this mentioned in *Vit. Ign.* I therefore think this must be regarded as an invention—an almost inevitable addition to the scandal. In this connexion, I may refer to the curious (thirteenth or fourteenth century) composition called the Mass of the Sjanos (*i.e.* Beardless), a parody of the rites of the Church, and doubtless connected with Satanic worship. See Krumbacher, *G.B.L.* 809 *sqq.*; A. Heisenberg, in *B.Z.* xii. 361.

[2] The anecdote is told in *Cont. Th.* 244 (*Vita Bas.*), but not in *Vit. Ign.* where (*loc. cit.*) the profanities are recorded as happening after the fall of Ignatius, and Photius is blamed for not protesting and putting a stop to them. The author also reports (p. 247) that Simeon, a Cretan bishop (who had left the island on account of the Saracen invasion), remonstrated with Michael, and begged him to discontinue his sacrilegious conduct. The Emperor knocked his teeth out and had him severely beaten for his temerity. In the Madrid Skylitzes there is a representation of the Patriarch and the Synkellos standing in the portico of a church, outside which are Gryllos and the mummers with musical instruments (Beylié, *op. cit.* 91).

[3] *Vit. Ign.* 246.

The Imperial pleasures were costly, and Michael's criminal generosity to his worthless companions dissipated large treasures. He made it a practice to stand sponsor at the baptisms of children of his jockeys, and on such occasions he would bestow upon the father a present varying from £1296 to £2160, occasionally even as much as £4320—sums which then represented a considerably higher value than to-day.[1] Not only was no saving effected during the eleven years in which he was master of the Empire, but he wasted the funds which had been saved by his father and by his mother, and towards the end of his reign he was in such straits for ready money that he laid hands upon some of the famous works of art with which Theophilus had adorned the Palace. The golden plane-tree, in which the mechanical birds twittered, the two golden lions, the two griffins hammered out of solid gold, and the organ of solid gold, all weighing not less than 200 pounds, were melted down; but before they were minted, Michael perished.[2] It seems probable that it was in the last year or two of his reign that his extravagance became excessive and ruinous. For there is no sign that the Empire was in financial difficulties during the government of Bardas, who seems to have been able to restrain his nephew within certain bounds.

The weak point of the position of the Caesar lay in the circumstance that he had to share his influence over the Emperor with boon companions; for there was always the danger that a wily schemer, concealing ambition under the mask of frivolity, might successfully use the opportunities of intimate intercourse to discredit him and undermine his power. The fact that he retained for ten years the unshaken, almost childish confidence of his nephew is a striking proof of his

[1] The sums mentioned are 30, 40, 50, 100 litrai, *Cont. Th.* 172. See further, Chapter VII. p. 220.

[2] There is an inconsistency here between the *Vita Basilii* and the *Vita Michaelis* in *Cont. Th.*, but it is not so serious as Hirsch thinks (244). According to the former source (257) Michael melted down the plane-tree, lions, etc., and the gold on the Imperial and senatorial state-robes; according to the latter (173) the plane-tree, etc., were melted, but the robes were found still untouched on Michael's death (ταύτας refers to στολάς). Hirsch did not observe this distinction, and thought that the contradiction was complete. Basil rescued the robes, but coined the melted gold, and called the nomisma of this coinage a *senzaton*. The name, I suppose, was given because the lions, plane-tree, etc., were ἐν τῷ σέντζῳ (Constantine, *Cer.* 569). The *Vita Bas.* was a source of the *Vita Mich.*; here the author of the latter seems to correct an inaccuracy of Constantine VII., the author of the former.

talent and tact; and when at last he was overthrown, his supplanter was one of the two ablest men who arose in the Eastern Empire during the ninth century.

Basil the Macedonian, who now comes on the stage, is the typical adventurer who rises from the lowliest circumstances to the highest fortune. His career, wonderful in itself, was made still more wonderful by mythopoeic fancy, which converted the able and unscrupulous upstart into a hero guided by Heaven. He was born about A.D. 812,[1] of poor Armenian parents, whose family had settled in the neighbourhood of Hadrianople. His Armenian descent is established beyond doubt,[2] and the legend that he was a Slav has no better a foundation than the fiction which claimed Slavonic parentage for the Emperor Justinian.[3] But his family was obscure; and the illustrious lineage which his descendants claimed, connecting him through his grandfather with the Arsacids and by his grandmother with Constantine the Great and Alexander, was an audacious and ingenious invention of the Patriarch Photius.[4] In his babyhood he was carried into captivity, along with his parents, by the Bulgarian Krum, and he spent his youth in the region beyond the Danube which was known as "Macedonia."[5]

[1] In the reign of Michael I. (811-813), *Cont. Georg.* 817. Pankalo was his mother's name (Constantine, *Cer.* 648).

[2] It is now generally admitted: the most decisive evidence is a passage in the *Vita Euthymii*, ed. de Boor, p. 2. The whole question has recently been discussed fully by Vasil'ev (*Proiskhozhdenie*, etc., see Bibliography).

[3] The sole foundation of the Slavonic theory is the fact that Arabic writers designate him as a Slav. But this is explained by the Arabic view that Macedonia was Slavonic; "Slav" is simply the equivalent of "Macedonian" (cp. Vasil'ev, *op. cit.* 15).

[4] *Vita Ignatii*, 283. This case of a fictitious genealogy is interesting. Photius after his deposition cast about for ways of ingratiating himself with Basil, and conceived the idea of providing this son of nobody with an illustrious lineage. He invented a line of descendants from Tiridates, king of Armenia, stopping at Basil's father. He wrote this out in uncial characters (γράμμασιν Ἀλεξανδρίνοις) on parchment, and added a prophecy that Basil's father would beget a son named Beklas, whose description unmistakably pointed to Basil, and who would have a long and happy reign. Photius gave this document to a confederate, one of the palace clergy, who deposited it in the palace library and then seized an opportunity of showing it to the Emperor as an ancient book full of secret lore, which no one but Photius could interpret. Photius was summoned. His explanation easily imposed on the Emperor's simplicity and vanity. How could Basil resist the interpretation of *Beklas* as a mysterious acrostich containing the initial letters of the name of himself, his wife, and his four sons (B-asil, E-udocia, K-onstantine, L-eo, A-lexander, S-tephen)? The genealogy was accepted by Basil's house; it is recorded in Gen. and *Cont. Th.*

[5] See below, p. 370. When Simeon speaks of Hadrianople as in Macedonia, it is only to explain Basil's designation as the Macedonian. It is in passages where Basil is in question that the geographical term Macedonia was extended to include Thrace.

We may conjecture that he derived his designation as Basil the Macedonian from his long sojourn in this district, for "Macedonian" can hardly refer to his birthplace, which was in Thrace. He was twenty-five years old when the captives succeeded (as is related in another Chapter [1]) in escaping from the power of the Bulgarians and returning to their homes. Basil obtained some small post in the service of a stratêgos,[2] but seeing no hope of rising in the provinces he decided to seek his fortune in Constantinople. His arrival in the city has been wrought by the storyteller into the typical form of romance. On a Sunday, near the hour of sunset, he reached the Golden Gate, a poor unknown adventurer, with staff and scrip, and he lay down to sleep in the vestibule of the adjacent church of St. Diomede.[3] During the night, Nicolas, who was in charge of the church, was awakened by a mysterious voice, saying, "Arise and bring the Basileus into the sanctuary." He got up and looking out saw nothing but a poor man asleep. He lay down again, and the same thing was repeated. The third time, he was poked in the side by a sword and the voice said, "Go out and bring in the man you see lying outside the gate." He obeyed, and on the morrow he took Basil to the bath, gave him a change of garments, and adopted him as a brother.[4]

So much is probable that Basil found shelter in St. Diomede, and that through Nicolas he was enabled to place his foot on the first rung of the ladder of fortune. The monk had a brother who was a physician in the service of Theophilus Paideuomenos, or, as he was usually called, Theophilitzes, a rich courtier and a relative of the Empress Theodora. The physician, who saw Basil at St. Diomede, and admired his enormous physical strength, recommended him to

[1] See p. 371.

[2] Tzantzes, Strat. of the Theme of Macedonia, Simeon, *ib.* 819.

[3] A parochial church situated between the Golden Gate and the sea, at Yedikulè. Some remains have been found which are supposed to mark its site. See van Millingen, *Walls*, 265: "The excavations made in laying out the public garden beside the city walls west of the Gas Works at Yedi Koulè, brought to light substructures of an ancient edifice, in the construction of which bricks stamped with the monogram of Basil I. and with a portion of the name of Diomed were employed." Simeon rightly designates Nicolas as caretaker, *πρωσμονάριος* (= *παραμονάριος*, sexton), and carefully explains that the church was then parochial (*καθολική*). Genesios miscalls him *καθηγούμενος*. St. Diomede was converted into a monastery, almost certainly by Basil, but as in many other cases the foundation was attributed to Constantine (cp. Pargoire, *Rev. des questions historiques*, lxv. 73 *sqq.*).

[4] *ἐποίησεν ἀδελφοποίησιν*, Simeon, *ib.* 820. Simeon tells the whole story more dramatically than Genesios.

But the triumph of Bardas was to turn to his hurt. Basil was appointed to fill the confidential post of High Chamberlain[1] (with the rank of patrician), though it was usually confined to eunuchs, and Basil the Armenian was to prove a more formidable adversary than Damianos the Slav.[2]

The confidential intimacy which existed between Michael and his Chamberlain was shown by the curious matrimonial arrangement which the Emperor brought to pass. Basil was already married, but Michael caused him to divorce his wife,[3] and married him to his own early love, Eudocia Ingerina. But this was only an official arrangement; Eudocia remained the Emperor's mistress. A mistress, however, was also provided for Basil, of distinguished rank though not of tender years. It appears that Theodora and her daughters had been permitted to leave their monastery and return to secular life,[4] and Thecla, who seems to have been ill-qualified for the vows of a nun, consented to become the paramour of her brother's favourite. Thus three ladies, Eudocia Ingerina, Eudocia the Augusta, and Thecla the Augusta, fulfilled between them the four posts of wives and mistresses to the Emperor and his Chamberlain. Before Michael's death, Eudocia Ingerina bore two sons, and though Basil was obliged to acknowledge them, it was suspected or taken for granted that Michael was their father.[5] The second son afterwards succeeded Basil on the Imperial throne, as Leo VI.; and if Eudocia was faithful to Michael, the dynasty known as the Macedonian was really descended from the Amorians. The Macedonian Emperors took pains to conceal this blot or ambiguity in their origin; their

[1] Parakoimômenos.

[2] The date is not recorded, but it seems probable that it was not very long before the fall of Bardas.

[3] Maria; she was sent back to "Macedonia" (*i.e.* probably Thrace) well provided for.

[4] For the evidence, see Hirsch, 66, and below, p. 177. Thecla became the mistress of John Neatokomêtês after Basil's accession. When Basil learned this, he ordered the latter to be beaten and tonsured; Thecla was also beaten, and her property confiscated. Simeon, *ib.* 842. She died bedridden (κλινοπετής) in her house at Blachernae, *Cont. Th.* 147. If she became Basil's mistress in 865-866, she might have been then about 43 years old.

[5] Simeon (*Cont. Georg.* 835, and 844) states that Michael was the father, as if it were a well-known fact, and without reserve. In the case of such an arrangement *à trois*, it is, of course, impossible for us, knowing so little as we do, to accept as proven such statements about paternity. Eudocia may have deceived her lover with her husband; and as Basil seems to have been fond of Constantine and to have had little affection for Leo (whom he imprisoned shortly before the end of his reign), we might be led to suspect that the eldest born of Eudocia was his own son, and Leo Michael's.

animosity to the Amorian sovrans whose blood was perhaps in their veins, and their excessive cult of the memory of Basil, were alike due to the suspicion of the sinister accident in their lineage.

Such proofs of affection could not fail to arouse the suspicion and jealousy of Bardas, if he had, till then, never considered Basil as a possible rival. But he probably underestimated the craft of the man who had mounted so high chiefly by his physical qualities. Basil attempted to persuade the Emperor that Bardas was planning to depose him from the throne. But such insinuations had no effect. Michael, notwithstanding his frivolity, was not without common sense. He knew that the Empire must be governed, and believed that no one could govern it so well as his uncle, in whom he reposed entire confidence. Basil was the companion of his pleasures, and he declined to listen to his suggestions touching matters of state. Basil then resorted to a cunning device. He cultivated a close friendship with Symbatios—an Armenian like himself—the Logothete of the Course and son-in-law of Bardas. He excited this ambitious minister's hope of becoming Caesar in place of his father-in-law, and they concocted the story of a plot[1] which Symbatios revealed to Michael. Such a disclosure coming from a minister, himself closely related to Bardas, was very different from the irresponsible gossip of the Chamberlain, and Michael, seriously alarmed, entered into a plan for destroying his uncle.

At this time — it was the spring of A.D. 866 — preparations were being made for an expedition against the Saracens of Crete, in which both the Emperor and the Caesar were to take part.[2] Bardas was wide-awake. He was warned

[1] I follow mainly Simeon (*ib.* 828), which is obviously the most impartial source. Nicetas, *Vit. Ign.* 255, describes the plot as only a pretext.

[2] The *official* account was that Bardas prepared the expedition, in order to find an opportunity of killing Michael (Simeon, *ib.* 832). Simeon represents Michael and Basil planning the expedition for the purpose of killing Bardas (as it would have been difficult to dispatch him in the city). Genesios is evidently right in the simple statement (103) that Michael and Bardas organized an expedition. Originally, it had been arranged without any *arrière pensée* on either side; then the conspirators decided to avail themselves of the opportunity which it might furnish. Bardas, warned that a design was afoot against him, and that Basil was the arch plotter, drew back, and it was necessary to reassure him. The chroniclers tell stories of various prophecies and signs warning him of his fate. His friend Leo the Philosopher is said to have tried to dissuade him from going. His sister Theodora sent him a dress too short for him, with a partridge worked

by friends or perhaps by a change in the Emperor's manner, and he declined to accompany the expedition. He must have openly expressed his fears to his nephew, and declared his suspicion of Basil's intentions; for they took a solemn oath in order to reassure him. On Lady Day (March 25) the festival of the Annunciation was celebrated by a Court procession to the church of the Virgin in Chalkoprateia; after the ceremonies, the Emperor, the Patriarch, the Caesar, and the High Chamberlain entered the Katechumena of the church; Photius held the blood of Jesus in his hands, and Michael and Basil subscribed with crosses, in this sacred ink, a declaration that the Caesar might accompany them without fear.

The expedition started after Easter,[1] and troops from the various provinces assembled at a place called the Gardens (Kêpoi) in the Thrakesian Theme, on the banks of the Maeander. Here Basil and Symbatios, who had won others to their plot,[2] determined to strike the blow. A plan was devised for drawing away Antigonus, the Domestic of the Schools, to witness a horse-race at a sufficient distance from the Imperial tent, so that he should not be at hand to come to his father's rescue.[3] On the evening before the day which was fixed by the conspirators, John Neatokomêtês visited the Caesar's tent at sunset, and warned Procopius, the Keeper of his Wardrobe, "Your lord, the Caesar, will be cut in pieces to-morrow." Bardas pretended to laugh at the warning. "Tell Neatokomêtês," he said, "that he is raving. He wants to be made a patrician—a rank for which he is much too young; that is why he goes about sowing these tares." But he did not sleep. In the morning twilight he told his friends what he had heard. His friend Philotheos, the General

in gold on it. He was told, when he asked the meaning of this, that the shortness signified the curtailment of his life, and the guileful bird expressed the vengeful feelings which the sender entertained on account of the murder of Theoktistos (Gen. 104).

[1] Easter fell on April 7.

[2] Simeon (*ib.* 830) gives the names of five, of whom one John Chaldos Tziphinarites is also mentioned by Genesios (106). This writer thought that the plan was first conceived at Kêpoi, and that its immediate occasion was the circumstance that Bardas pitched his tent on a higher eminence than that of the Emperor's.

[3] Gen. (*ib.*). He also records (105) that Bardas had ordered Antigonus to lead his troops to Constantinople, and that Antigonus delayed to do so. He ascribes this order to the fear which the gift of Theodora (see above, p. 170) aroused in Bardas, and inconsistently states that the gift reached him at Kêpoi. It is obvious that Antigonus and his troops were a difficulty to the conspirators; cp. *Cont. Th.* 236.

Logothete, said, "Put on your gold peach-coloured cloak and appear to your foes, — they will flee before you." Bardas mounted his horse (April 21) and rode with a brilliant company to the Emperor's pavilion. Basil, in his capacity of High Chamberlain, came out, did obeisance to the Caesar, and led him by the hand to the Emperor's presence. Bardas, sitting down beside the Emperor, suggested that, as the troops were assembled and all was ready, they should immediately embark. Suddenly looking round, he saw Basil making threatening signs with his hand. Basil then lunged at him with his sword, and the other conspirators rushed in and hewed him in pieces. Their violent onrush frightened and endangered the Emperor, who mutely watched, but Constantine the Armenian protected him from injury.[1]

The rôle of Constantine, who still held the post of Drungary of the Watch, is that of a preventer of mischief, when he appears on the stage at critical moments only to pass again into obscurity. He attempted to save Theoktistos from his murderers; and now after the second tragedy, it is through his efforts that the camp is not disordered by a sanguinary struggle between the partisans of Bardas and the homicides.[2]

The Emperor immediately wrote a letter to the Patriarch Photius informing him that the Caesar had been convicted of high treason and done to death. We possess the Patriarch's reply.[3] It is couched in the conventional style of adulation repulsive to our taste but then rigorously required by Court etiquette. Having congratulated the Emperor on his escape from the plots of the ambitious man who dared to raise his hand against his benefactor, Photius deplores that he

[1] This incident comes, of course, from Genesios. In the rest I have followed the account of Simeon. Genesios entirely suppresses the part played by Basil (just hinting, 107$_{11}$, that his interests were involved). According to him, when Bardas was sitting with Michael, Symbatios came in and read the reports (which the Logothete regularly presented). As he went out he made the sign of the cross as a signal to the conspirators who were in hiding. Gen. adds that the corpse was barbarously mutilated (*τὰ τούτου αἰδοῖα κοντῷ διαρτήσαντες ἐθριάμβευον*). Constantine Porphyrogennetos has yet another version, perhaps devised by himself. He is more subtle. Instead of cutting the knot, like Genesios, he assigns a part in the murder to his grandfather, but so as to minimise his responsibility. According to this account, Michael is the organizer of the plot; he gives a sign to Symbatios to introduce the assassins; they hesitate, and Michael, fearing for his own safety, orders Basil to instigate them (*Vita Bas.* c. 17).

[2] Gen. 107.

[3] *Ep.* 221.

was sent without time for repentance to the tribunal in another world. The Patriarch owed his position to Bardas, and if he knew his weaknesses, must have appreciated his merits. We can detect in the phraseology of his epistle, and especially in one ambiguous sentence, the mixture of his feelings. "The virtue and clemency of your Majesty forbid me to suspect that the letter was fabricated or that the circumstances of the fall of Bardas were otherwise than it alleges—circumstances by which he (Bardas) is crowned and others will suffer."[1] These words intimate suspicion as clearly as it could decently be intimated in such a case. It was impossible not to accept the sovran's assurance of the Caesar's guilt, if it were indeed his own assurance, yet Photius allows it to be seen that he suspects that the Imperial letter was dictated by Basil and that there was foul play. But perhaps the most interesting passage in this composition of Photius—in which we can feel his deep agitation under the rhetorical figures of his style—is his brief characterization of the Caesar as one who was "to many a terror, to many a warning, to many a cause of pity, but to more a riddle."[2]

Photius concluded his letter with an urgent prayer that the Emperor should instantly return to the capital, professing that this was the unanimous desire of the Senate and the citizens; and shortly afterwards he dispatched another brief but importunate request to the same effect.[3] It is absurd to suppose that this solicitude was unreal, or dictated by motives of vulgar flattery. We cannot doubt the genuine concern of the Patriarch; but in our ignorance of the details of the situation we can only conjecture that he and his friends entertained the fear that Michael might share the fate of his uncle. The intrigues of Basil were, of course, known well to all who were initiated in Court affairs; and modern partisan writers of the Roman Church, who detest Photius and all his works,[4] do not pause to consider, when they scornfully animadvert upon these "time-serving" letters, that to have

[1] δι' ὧν ἐκεῖνος μὲν στέφεται ἄλλοι δὲ κόψονται. The paraphrase of the Abbé Jager (*Hist. de Photius*, 116) entirely omits this.

[2] Mistranslated by Jager, *ib.* 117.

[3] *Ep.* 222.

[4] Jager, *ib.* 115. Hergenröther, i. 589. Valettas, in his apology for Photius (note to *Ep.* 221, p. 536), says that Ph. calls Basil ἐν πόλει ληστήν, etc., in *Ep.* 190; but Basil, Prefect of the City, to whom this letter is addressed, is a different person.

addressed to Michael holy words of condemnation or reproof would have been to fling away every chance of rescuing him from the influence of his High Chamberlain. We know not whether the Emperor was influenced by the pressing messages of the Patriarch, but at all events the Cretan expedition was abandoned, and he returned with Basil to Constantinople.

§ 3. *The Elevation of Basil and the Murder of Michael*

The High Chamberlain promptly reaped the due reward of his craft and audacity. He was adopted as a son by the childless Emperor, and invested with the order of Magister.[1] A few weeks later, Michael suddenly decided to elevate him to the throne. We can easily understand that this step seemed the easiest way out of his perplexities to the Emperor, who felt himself utterly lost when Bardas was removed from the helm. Basil, firm and self-confident, was a tower of strength, and at this moment he could exert unlimited influence over the weak mind of his master. The Court and the city were kept in the dark till the last moment. On the eve of Pentecost, the Chief of the Private Wardrobe waited on the Patriarch and informed him that on the morrow he would be required to take part in the inauguration of Basil as Basileus and Augustus.

On Whitsunday (May 26), it was observed with surprise that two Imperial seats were placed side by side in St. Sophia. In the procession from the Palace, Basil walked behind the Emperor, in the usual guise of the High Chamberlain; but Michael on entering the church did not remove the crown from his head as was usual. He ascended the ambo[2] wearing the diadem, Basil stood on a lower step, and below him Leo Kastor, a secretary, with a document in his hand, while the Praepositus, the demarchs, and the demes stood around. Leo then read out an Imperial declaration: "The Caesar Bardas plotted against me to slay me, and for this reason induced me to leave the city. If I had not been informed of the plot by Symbatios and Basil, I should not have been alive now. The Caesar died through his own guilt. It is my will

[1] *Cont. Th.* 238.

[2] There were two flights of steps up to the ambo, described by Paul Silent., *Descr. Ambonis*, 60 *sqq.* (ed. Bonn, p. 51).

that Basil, the High Chamberlain, since he is faithful to me and protects my sovranty and delivered me from my enemy and has much affection for me, should be the guardian and manager of my Empire and should be proclaimed by all as Emperor." Then Michael gave his crown to the Patriarch, who placed it on the holy table and recited a prayer over it. Basil was arrayed by the eunuchs in the Imperial dress (the divêtêsion and the red boots), and knelt before the Emperor. The Patriarch then crowned Michael, and Michael crowned Basil.[1]

On the following day (Whitmonday) Symbatios, the Logothete of the Course, deeply incensed at the trick that Basil had played on him and disappointed in his hopes of promotion to the rank of Caesar, requested Michael to confer upon him the post of a stratêgos. He was made Stratêgos of the Thrakesian Theme, and his friend George Pêganês was appointed Count of the Opsikian Theme.[2] These two conspired and marched through the provinces, ravaging the crops, declaring their allegiance to Michael and disowning Basil. The Emperors ordered the other stratêgoi to suppress them, and Nicephorus Maleinos, by distributing a flysheet, induced their soldiers to abandon them. When Pêganês was caught, his eyes were put out and he was placed at the Milestone in the Augusteon, with a plate in his hand, into which the passers-by might fling alms—a form of public degradation which gave rise to the fable that the great general Belisarius

[1] The description of the coronation is given by Simeon (*Cont. Georg.* 832-833). This text (cp. also ed. Muralt, 744) is in error when it is said that Photius "took the crown from the Emperor's head and placed it on Basil's"; the writer meant to say, "gave it to the Emperor," and τῷ Βασιλείῳ is obviously an error for τῷ βασιλεῖ. The same mistake is found in the *vers. Slav.* 108, but Leo Gr. 246 ἐπέδωκεν αὐτὸ τῷ βασιλεῖ, and Theod. Mel. 172 ἀπέδωκεν αὐτῷ βασιλεῖ are closer here to the original text. The ceremony is described in Constantine, *Cer.* 194 πρῶτον μὲν στέφει ὁ πατρ. τὸν μέγαν βασιλέα, εἶτα ἐπιδίδωσι τῷ μεγ. βασιλεῖ τὸ στέμμα καὶ στέφει ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν νεοχειροτόνητον βασιλέα. The senior Emperor always crowned the colleague whom he created, unless he were unable to be present; then he assigned the office to the Patriarch. See Bury, *Constitution of the later Roman Empire*, p. 16. To the official description in *Cer.* the text of Simeon adds the fact that the σκῆπτρα were lowered just before the act of crowning (σκ. πεσόντων, ὡς ἔθος). The skêptra, skeuê, and banda were arrayed on both sides of the ambo, and the demes did obeisance to them (*Cer. ib.*). The coronation of Eudocia Ingerina as Augusta must have soon followed that of Basil, as a matter of course.

[2] Simeon, *ib.* 833, *Cont. Th.* 238, 240. Hirsch (238) observes an apparent contradiction between these sources: *Cont. Th.* assigns the Thrak. Theme to Symbatios, the Opsikian to Pêganês, "whereas according to the other account Symbatios receives the latter province." But κἀκεῖνος κόμης τοῦ Ὀψ. in Simeon refers to Pêganês more naturally than to Symbatios.

ended his days as a beggar. A month later Symbatios, who had fled across Asia Minor, was caught in an inn in Keltzênê.[1] His right hand was cut off and he was blinded of one eye,[2] and placed outside the palace of Lausos in Middle Street, to beg like his comrade. At the end of three days, the two offenders were restored to their abodes, where they were kept under arrest.

The joint reign of Michael and Basil lasted for less than a year and a half. Michael continued to pursue his amusements, but we may suspect that in this latest period of his life his frivolous character underwent a change. He became more reckless in his extravagance, more immoderate in his cups,[3] and cruel in his acts. The horror of his uncle's murder may have cast its shadow, and Basil, for whom he had not the same respect, was unable to exert the same kind of ascendency as Bardas. We cannot suppose that all the essential facts of the situation are disclosed to us in the meagre reports of our chronicles. The following incident can only have marked the beginning of the final stage of intensely strained relations.[4]

Michael held a horse-race in the Palace of St Mamas. He drove himself as a Blue charioteer, Constantine the Armenian drove as a White, other courtiers as Green and Red. The Emperor won the race, and in the evening he dined with Basil and Eudocia Ingerina, and was complimented by the patrician Basiliskianos[5] on his admirable driving. Michael, delighted by his flattery, ordered him to stand up, to take the

[1] Simeon, *ib.* 834. Keltzênê is the classical Akilisênê, called Ekelesênê by Procopius (*B.P.* i. 17); Ἐκελεζήνη, Mansi, xi. 613; Κελιτζηνή, *Nova Tactica*, ed. Gelzer, 78. It lies on the left bank of the Euphrates, north of Sophene, east of Dardanalis; its chief town was Erez, now Erzinjan, north-east of Ani (Theodosiopolis). For a geographical description see Adonts, *Armeniia v epokhu Iustiniana*, 48, 52 *sqq.* According to *Cont. Th.* 240, Symbatios occupied the fort τῆς πλατείας τέτρας; we do not know where this was. Simeon, *ib.*, states that when Symbatios arrived in the capital, Pêganês was brought to meet him, holding a clay censer in his hand with sulphur to fumigate him,—a mysterious performance.

[2] According to *Cont. Th.* 241, of both eyes, and according to this source the nose of Pêganês was slit.

[3] In late writers, the Emperor is designated as Michael the Drunkard (μεθυστής), *e.g.* Glycas, ed. Bonn, 541, 546. Cp. Gen. 113 οἰνοφλυγίας, and *Cont. Th.* 251-252.

[4] Our only useful source here is Simeon. Gen. and *Cont. Th.* slur over the murder of Michael, and exonerate Basil. According to Gen. 113, Basil's friends advised him to slay Michael, but he declined, and they did the deed themselves.

[5] In *Cont. Th.* 250, he is called Basilikinos, where we learn that he was a brother of Constantine Kapnogenes who was afterwards Prefect of the City, and that he was one of Michael's fellows in his religious mummeries. According to this source (Constantine Porph.), Michael arrayed him in full Imperial dress and introduced him to the Senate with [illegible] doggrel verses.

red boots from his own feet and put them on. Basiliskianos hesitated and looked at Basil, who signed to him not to obey. The Emperor furiously commanded him to do as he was bidden, and turning on Basil cried with an oath, "The boots become him better than you. I made you Emperor, and have I not the power to create another Emperor if I will?" Eudocia in tears, remonstrated: "The Imperial dignity is great, and we, unworthy as we are, have been honoured with it. It is not right that it should be brought into contempt." Michael replied, "Do not fear; I am perfectly serious; I am ready to make Basiliskianos Emperor." This incident seriously alarmed Basil. Some time later when Michael was hunting, a monk met him and gave him a paper which purposed to reveal a plot of Basil against his life. He then began to harbour designs against his colleague.[1] He had small chance against such an antagonist.

Basil struck the blow on Sept. 24, A.D. 867.[2] Michael had bidden him and Eudocia to dinner in the Palace of St. Mamas. When Michael had drunk deeply, Basil made an excuse to leave the room, and entering the Imperial bed-chamber tampered with the bolts of the door so that it could not be locked. He then returned to the table, and when the Emperor became drunk as usual, he conducted him to his bed and kissing his hand went out. The Keeper of the Private Wardrobe, who was accustomed to sleep in the Emperor's room, was absent on a commission,[3] and Basiliskianos had been commanded to take his place. Michael sank on his bed in

[1] *Cont. Th.* 249 (cp. 209) asserts an actual attempt on Basil's life in the hunting-field.

[2] *Ib.* 210.

[3] The Empress Theodora (who was now at liberty, see above, p. 169) had invited her son to dinner in the house of Anthemios, and Michael had ordered Rentakios, Keeper of the Wardrobe, to kill some game to send to his mother. Hirsch (66) has misapprehended this, for he says, "Theodora giebt ja im Palaste des Anthemios jenes Gastmahl, nach welchem Michael ermordet wird." It is clear that Theodora's dinner was to be held on a subsequent day; it is mentioned by Simeon only to account for the absence of the Protovestiarios. Michael was murdered in the Palace of St. Mamas. That Theodora had been restored to liberty, though not to power, by A.D. 866, is illustrated by the letter which Pope Nicolas addressed to her (Nov. 866). But we can fix the resumption of her honours as Augusta to an earlier date, A.D. 863, for in triumphal *δκτα* in Constantine, *Cer.* 332, which belong as I have shown to that year, "the honourable Augustae" are celebrated; see below, p. 284, n. 4. The house of Anthemios (*τὰ Ἀνθεμίου*) means perhaps not a "palace," but (as Pargoire thinks, *Boradion*, 474) the monastery founded by her son-in-law Alexios in the suburban quarter of Anthemios (see above, p. 127).

the deep sleep of intoxication, and the chamberlain on duty, discovering that the door could not be bolted, divined the danger, but could not waken the Emperor.

Basil had engaged the help of eight friends, some of whom had taken part in his first crime, the murder of Bardas.[1] Accompanied by these, Basil opened the door of the bed-chamber, and was confronted by the chamberlain, who opposed his entrance. One of the conspirators diving under Basil's arm rushed to the bed, but the chamberlain sprang after him and gripped him. Another then wounded Basiliskianos and hurled him on the floor, while a third, John Chaldos (who had been prominent among the slayers of Bardas), hewed at the sleeping Emperor with his sword, and cut off both his hands. Basil seems to have stood at the door, while the other accomplices kept guard outside. John Chaldos thought that he had done enough; he left the room, and the conspirators consulted whether their victim should be despatched outright. One of them[2] took it upon himself to return to the bed where Michael was moaning out piteous imprecations against Basil, and ripped up his body.

Through the darkness of a stormy night the assassins rowed across the Golden Horn, landing near the house of a Persian named Eulogios, who joined them. By breaking through an enclosure[3] they reached a gate of the Great Palace. Eulogios called out to his fellow-countryman Artavasdos, the Hetaeriarch, in the Persian tongue, "Open to the Emperor, for Michael has perished by the sword." Artavasdos rushed to the Papias, took the keys from him by force, and opened the gate.

In the morning, Eudocia Ingerina was conducted in state from St. Mamas to the Great Palace, to take, as reigning

[1] Those who shared in both crimes were John Chaldos, Peter the Bulgarian, Asylaion, Maurianos, Constantine Toxaras, Symbatios, cousin of Asylaion. The other two were Bardas (father of Symbatios) and Jakovitzes, a Persian. Several of them probably belonged to the Hetaireia or foreign guard, the captain of which, Artavasdos, may have been initiated in the plot.

[2] Asylaion.

[3] From the house of Eulogios they reached the palace of Marina. πλὰξ δὲ ἦν περιφράσσουσα τὸ τεῖχος καὶ κρατήσας Βασίλειος δύο τῶν μετ' αὐτοῦ ὄντων καὶ λακτίσας κατέαξε τὴν πλάκα καὶ εἰσῆλθον μέχρι τῆς πύλης τοῦ παλατίου (Simeon, *ib.* 838). τὸ τεῖχος seems to be the wall of the Palace, round which at this point there was a brick enclosure. The palace of Marina was on the sea side of the Great Palace (since it was in the First Region, cp. Ducange, *Const. Chr.* ii. p. 113), but we do not know whether it was north of the Bucoleon, and therefore we have no means of conjecturing at what gate Basil found Artavasdos.

Augusta, the place of the other Eudocia, who was restored to her parents. A chamberlain was sent to provide for the burial of the late Emperor. He found the corpse rolled up in a horsecloth, and the Empress Theodora, with her daughters, weeping over her son. He was buried in a monastery at Chrysopolis, on the Asiatic shore.

Such is the recorded story of the final act which raised Basil the Macedonian to supreme power. It is probably correct in its main details, but it not only leaves out some of the subordinate elements in the situation, such as the attitude of Eudocia—was she in the secret?—but fails to make it clear whether Basil was driven to the assassination of his benefactor by what he conceived to be a political necessity, or was prompted merely by the vulgar motive of ambition. No plea could be set up for the murder of Bardas on the ground of the public good, but the murder of Michael is a different case. The actual government had devolved on Basil, who was equal to the task; but if the follies and caprices of Michael, who was the autocrat, thwarted his subordinate colleague, the situation might have become well-nigh impossible. If we could trust the partial narrative of Basil's Imperial grandson, who is concerned not only to exonerate his ancestor, but to make out a case to justify the revolution, Michael had become an intolerable tyrant.[1] In his fits of drunkenness he issued atrocious orders for the execution and torture of innocent men, —orders which he had forgotten the next day. In order to raise money, he began to make depredations on churches and religious houses, and to confiscate the property of rich people. There was nothing for it but to kill him like a noxious snake. "Therefore the most reputable of the ministers and the wise section of the Senate took counsel together, and caused him to be slain by the Palace guard." Allowing for some exaggeration and bias in this picture of the situation, we may be right in believing that Michael had become unmanageable and mischievous, and that it was to the general advantage to suppress him. The vigorous reign of Basil proves that he was deeply interested in the efficiency of the government. It is not our business either to justify or to condemn the murder of Michael III.; we are only concerned to understand it.

[1] *Cont. Th.* 251-252, 254.

CHAPTER VI

PHOTIUS AND IGNATIUS

UNDER the rule of the iconoclasts, the differences which divided the "orthodox" had been suffered to slumber; but the defeat of the common enemy was the signal for the renewal of a conflict which had disturbed the peace of the Church under Irene and Nicephorus. The two parties, which had suspended their feud, now again stood face to face.

The fundamental principle of the State Church founded by Constantine was the supremacy of the Emperor; the Patriarch and the whole hierarchy were subject to him; he not only protected, he governed the Church. The smooth working of this system demanded from churchmen a spirit of compromise and "economy." It might often be difficult for a Patriarch to decide at what point his religious duty forbade him to comply with the Emperor's will; and it is evident that Patriarchs, like Tarasius and Nicephorus, who had served the State in secular posts, were more likely to work discreetly and harmoniously under the given conditions than men who had been brought up in cloisters. We saw how the monks of Studion organized an opposition to these Patriarchs, whom they denounced for sacrificing canonical rules to expediency. The abbot Theodore desired to subvert the established system. He held that the Emperor was merely the protector of the Church, and that the Church was independent. He affirmed, moreover, the supremacy of the Roman See in terms which no Emperor and few, if any, Patriarchs would have endorsed. But by their theory, which they boldly put into practice, the Studites were undermining Patriarchal and episcopal authority. They asserted the right of monks to pass an independent judgment

on the administration of their bishop, and, in case his actions did not meet with their approval, to refuse to communicate with him. A movement of independence or insubordination, which was likely to generate schisms, was initiated, and the activity and influence of Theodore must have disseminated his views far beyond the limits of his own community.

Thus there arose two antagonistic sections, of which one approved more or less the doctrines of Theodore of Studion, while the other upheld Patriarchal authority and regarded Nicephorus as an ideal Patriarch. One insisted on the strictest observation of ecclesiastical canons and denounced the sudden elevations of Nicephorus and Tarasius from the condition of laymen to the episcopal office; the other condoned such irregularities which special circumstances commended to the Imperial wisdom. One declined to allow any relaxation of canonical rules in favour of the Emperor; the other was prepared to permit him considerable limits of dispensation. There were, in fact, two opposite opinions as to the spirit and method of ecclesiastical administration, corresponding to two different types of ecclesiastic. Both sides included monks; and it would not be true to say that the monks generally rallied to the section of the Studites. There were many abbots and many hermits who disliked the Studite ideal of a rigorous, disciplinary regulation of monastic life, and many who, like Theophanes of Sigriane, were satisfied with the State Church and had no sympathy with the aggressive policy of Theodore and his fellows.

Methodius had always been an ecclesiastic, and the Studites could not reproach him for any irregularity in his consecration as bishop. He had been a martyr in the cause of image-worship, and he had effectively assisted in its triumph. But his promotion to the Patriarchate was not pleasing to the Studite monks. His sympathies were with the other party, and he was prepared to carry on the tradition of Tarasius and Nicephorus. We can well understand that his intimacy with the Emperor Theophilus, with whom he agreed to differ on the iconoclastic question, was far from commending him to the stricter brethren. The Studites were prepared to be critical, and from the very beginning his administration was the subject

of adverse comment or censure.[1] He desired to conciliate them, and the bones of their revered abbot Theodore were brought back for interment at Studion, with great solemnity. But the satisfaction of the monks at this public honour to their abbot was mitigated, if it was not cancelled, by the translation, at the same time, of the remains of Nicephorus to the Church of the Apostles.[2] They recalled his uncanonical consecration, they recalled his condonation of "adultery." But if he could not conciliate them, the Patriarch was determined to crush their rebellious spirit. He called upon them to anathematize all that Theodore had written against Tarasius and Nicephorus, and he urged that Theodore had himself practically revoked his own strong language, had been reconciled with Nicephorus, and in fact changed his opinion. But the Studites obstinately refused, and Methodius asserted his Patriarchal authority. "You are monks," he said, "and you have no right to question the conduct of your bishops; you must submit to them."[3] He pronounced against the rebellious brethren not the simple *anathema*, but the curse, the *katathema*, of the Church. The struggle seems to have ended with concessions on the part of the Patriarch.[4]

The difficulties which troubled the short administration of Methodius[5] possess a significant bearing on the more serious ecclesiastical strife which marked the reign of his successor, and which led, indirectly, to the great schism between the Eastern and the Western Churches. The two opposing parties of Ignatius and Photius represent the same parties which distracted the Patriarchate of Methodius, and the struggle is thus a

[1] Methodius was blamed especially for too indulgent treatment of repentant iconoclasts, and for ordaining new bishops and priests without a sufficient investigation of their qualifications. For the disputes see *Vita Joannicii*, c. 51, 52, 57, and *Vita Methodii*, 257-260. They are discussed by Uspenski, *Ocherki*, 83 *sqq.*; Lebedev, *Istoriia*, 17-19; Hergenröther, i. 352 *sqq.*; but best by Dobschütz, *Meth. u. die Stud.*

[2] See Theophanes, *De exsilio Nicephori*; Methodius, *Ad Studitas*, 1293-98 (and the *Synodica* in Pitra, *Jur. ecc. Gr.* 2, 361); Dobschütz, 42 *sqq.*

[3] *Narratio de Tar. et Niceph.* 1853.

[4] Dobschütz, 47.

[5] His difficulties are illustrated by a despondent letter which he wrote to the Patriarch of Jerusalem (see Bibliography). He expresses his disappointment at the unbecoming and insolent conduct of the repentant iconoclastic clergy. His Patriarchate was also troubled by the heresy of Zêlix, or Lizikos, an Imperial secretary (Gen. 85; *Vita Method.* 282), who considered Jesus Christ to be a creature (κτίσμα), refused the title of Theotokos to the Virgin, and rejected the vivificous cross. These dangerous opinions were suppressed, and Zêlix and his followers reconciled to orthodoxy.

continuation of the same division which had vexed Tarasius and Nicephorus, although the immediate and superficial issues are different.[1] When we apprehend this continuity, we are able to see that the particular question which determined the course of the conflict between Photius and Ignatius only rendered acute an antagonism which had existed for more than half a century.[2]

Methodius seems to have availed himself of the most popular kind of literature, edifying biographies of holy men, for the purpose of his struggle with the Studites. Under his auspices, Ignatius the Deacon composed the Lives of Tarasius and Nicephorus, in which the troubles connected with the opposition of Studion are diligently ignored. The ecclesiastical conflicts of the period are, indeed, reflected, more by hints and reticences than direct statements, in the copious hagiographical productions of the ninth century,[3] to which reference is frequently made in this volume.

On the death of Methodius, the Empress Theodora and her advisers chose his successor from among three monks of illustrious birth, each of whom, if fortune had been kind, might have worn the Imperial crown. Nicetas, a son of the Emperor Michael I., had been tonsured after his father's death, had taken the name of Ignatius, and had founded new monasteries in the Islands of the Princes, over which he presided as abbot.[4] Here he and his family, who had not been despoiled of their wealth, afforded refuge to image-worshippers who were driven from the capital. The sons of

[1] Hergenröther (i. 353) saw that there was a connexion between the quarrels which vexed Methodius and those which troubled his successor. The continuity of the parties has been worked out by Uspenski, *op. cit.* 81 *sqq.*, and more fully by Lebedev, *op. cit.* § 1.

[2] It is noteworthy that Methodius was a Sicilian, and that a Sicilian—Gregory Asbestas—was to play a leading part in the opposition to Ignatius. For at an earlier period we find traces of antagonism between Sicilian monks and the Studites (Michael, *Vita Theod.* 312; cp. Uspenski, *op. cit.* 81-82).

[3] See the illuminating article of v. Dobschütz (referred to in the preceding notes), where the hagiographies relating to the period are fully reviewed from this point of view. For the dating of the Lives by Ignatius to A.D. 843-845, see his remarks p. 54. Ignatius also wrote a Life of Gregory Dekapolites, which exists in MS., but has not been printed.

[4] Nicetas, *Vita Ign.* 217, Plate, Hyatros and Terebinthos. Hyatros (or Iatros) is now called Niandro, a tiny islet south of Prinkipo. Terebinthos is Anderovithos, about two miles to the east of Prinkipo. See Pargoire, *Les Monastères de S. Ignace*, 62 *sqq.* He has shown that the monastery of Satyros, dedicated by Ignatius, on the opposite coast (see above, p. 133), to the Archangel Michael, was not founded till A.D. 873.

the Emperor Leo V., to whom the family of Ignatius owed its downfall, had been cast into a monastery in the island of Prote; they renounced the errors of their father, and won a high reputation for virtue and piety. When the Patriarchal throne became vacant, these monks of Imperial parentage, Basil and Gregory, the sons of Leo, and Ignatius, the son of Michael, were proposed for election.[1] Ignatius was preferred, perhaps because it was felt that notwithstanding their own merits the shadow of their father's heresy rested upon the sons of Leo; and he was consecrated on July 4, A.D. 847.[2]

Ignatius had spent his life in pious devotion and monastic organization. Tonsured at the age of thirteen or fourteen, he had made no progress in secular learning, which he distrusted and disliked. He was not a man of the world like Methodius; he had the rigid notions which were bred in cloistral life and were calculated to lead himself and the Church into difficulties when they were pursued in the Patriarchal palace. It is probable that he was too much engaged in his own work to have taken any part in the disputes which troubled Methodius, and Theodora may have hoped that he would succeed in conciliating the opposing parties.[3] But he was by nature an anti-Methodian, and he showed this on the very day of his consecration.

Gregory Asbestas, the archbishop of Syracuse, happened to be in Constantinople at the time. A Sicilian, he was a friend of the Sicilian Methodius, on whom he composed a panegyric, and he was a man of some learning. There was a charge against him of some ecclesiastical irregularity,[4] and it was probably in connexion with this that he had come to the capital. He had taken his place among the bishops who attended in St. Sophia, bearing tapers, to acclaim the Patriarch, and Ignatius ordered him to withdraw, on the ground that his episcopal status was in abeyance until the charge which lay

[1] Gen. 99.

[2] Methodius died June 14, 847 (*Vita Joannic.* by Simeon Met. 92; *Menol. Bas.*, *sub die*, p. 500, where he is said to have been Patriarch for four years three months).

[3] It is said that Ignatius was recommended to the Empress by the hermit Joannikios (*Vita Ignatii*, 221). As Joannikios had been a strong supporter of Methodius, it is probable that Ignatius had taken no part in the opposition to Methodius.

[4] According to Pseudo-Simeon, 671, he had irregularly consecrated Zacharias—a priest whom Methodius had sent to Rome — bishop (of Tauromenium). This author erroneously states that Gregory was deposed by Methodius.

against him had been decided. This public slight enraged Gregory, who dashed his candle to the ground and loudly declared that not a shepherd but a wolf had intruded into the Church. The new Patriarch certainly displayed neither the wisdom of a serpent nor the harmlessness of a dove, and his own adherents admit that he was generally blamed.[1] He had thus at the very outset taken pains to offend an able and eminent prelate of the party which had supported Methodius, and the action was interpreted as a declaration of war. The result was a schism. Gregory had many sympathizers; some bishops had marked their disapprobation of the action of Ignatius by leaving the church in his company.[2] A schismatic group was formed which refused to acknowledge the new Patriarch—a group which expressed the general tendencies of the Methodian party and avowed an unreserved admiration for Methodius. But it was only a small group. The hierarchy in general supported Ignatius, as it had supported Methodius; for Ignatius was supported by Theodora.[3] Nevertheless the followers of Gregory, though comparatively few, were influential. They alleged against the Patriarch that he was a detractor from the merits and memory of his predecessor, and that he was unduly rigorous and narrow in his application of the canons. Ignatius summoned Gregory to answer the charge which still hung over his head; Gregory declined, and, along with others of his party, was condemned by a synod.[4] He appealed against this judgment to Pope Leo IV., who asked the Patriarch to send him a copy of the Acts. Ignatius did not comply, and Leo's successor, Benedict III., declined to confirm the deposition of Gregory, and contented himself with suspending him until he had inspected the documents.[5]

[1] *Vita Ign.* 232 *οὐ καλῶς μέν, ὥς γε δοκοῦν τοῖς πολλοῖς.*

[2] *Ib.* Especially Peter, bishop of Sardis, and Eulampios, bishop of Apamea.

[3] Lebedev seems, in his exposition of the continuity of the two parties, to have missed the importance of Theodora's attitude. On their own principles, the Methodians were bound to support the new Patriarch, so long as he was orthodox and was upheld by the Emperor. The greater number probably adhered to Ignatius, and we must accept the continuity of the party with this limitation.

[4] Stylianos, *Ep.* 428; Mansi, xiv. 1029-32. The synod was held not later than 854, for Leo IV. died in 855.

[5] Stylianos, *loc. cit.*; Nicolaus, *Ep.* 9. For the fragment of a letter of Leo IV. to Ignatius, complaining that the Patriarch had deposed certain men without his knowledge or consent, see Ewald, "Die Papstbriefe der brittischen Sammlung," in *Neues Archiv*, v. 379 (1879). The persons in question are undoubtedly Gregory and his fellows.

The schism of Gregory might be allowed to rest in the obscurity of ecclesiastical records if it had not won distinction and importance by the adhesion of the most remarkable man of the age. Photius was probably born about the beginning of the ninth century. His father, Sergius,[1] was a brother of the Patriarch Tarasius,[2] and through his mother he was connected with the family of the Empress Theodora.[3] His parents suffered exile for their devotion to image-worship under the iconoclastic sovrans,[4] and it was probably in the first years of Theodora's reign that Photius entered upon his career as a public teacher of philosophy. He had an attractive personality, he was a stimulating teacher, and he soon found a band of disciples who hung upon his words. His encyclopaedic learning, in which he not only excelled all the men of his own time but was unequalled by any Greek of the Middle Ages, will call for notice in another chapter. His family connexions as well as his talents opened a career in the Imperial service; and he was ultimately appointed to the high post of Protoasecretis, or First Secretary, with the rank of a protospathar.[5] It was probably during his tenure of this important post that he was sent as ambassador to the East, perhaps to Baghdad itself, perhaps only to some of the provincial emirs.[6] Whatever his services as an envoy may have been, he established personal relations of friendship with Mohammadan magnates.[7]

Photius had a high respect for Gregory Asbestas, and identified himself closely with the group which opposed

[1] Pseudo-Simeon, 668. His brothers were named Sergius and Tarasius.

[2] Photius, *Ep.* 113 *θεῖον ἡμέτερον*; *Ep.* 2 *τὸν ἡμέτερον πατρόθειον*.

[3] See above, p. 156.

[4] Photius, *Ep.* 113, *Ep.* 234 (ad Tarasium fratrem), *Ep.* 2 (Inthronist. ad episc. orient.), p. 145. Cp. *Acta Conc.* viii. 460 *τούτου καὶ πατὴρ καὶ μήτηρ ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας ἀθλοῦντες ἐνατέθανον*. These passages show that they died in exile. Photius himself was anathematized by the same iconoclastic synod which anathematized his father (*Ep.* 164), and this was probably the synod of A.D. 815. If so we cannot place the birth of Photius much later than 800. See Papadopulos-Kerameus, *ὁ πατριάρχης Φώτιος ὡς πατὴρ ἁγίου τῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, p. 658 in *B.Z.* viii. (1909). Hergenröther's date for his birth is 827 (i. 315-316).

[5] The date is unknown. Hergenröther says "probably under Theoktistus" (i. 340). Hergenröther has the curious idea that *protospatharios* means "captain of the Imperial bodyguard" (*ib.*).

[6] See the Dedication of the *Bibliotheca*, *πρεσβεύειν ἡμᾶς ἐπ' Ἀσσυρίους αἱρεθέντας*.

[7] Cp. Mansi, xvii. 484. Nicolaus Mysticus, *Ep.* 2 (Migne, cxi.), writing to the Emir of Crete, says that Photius was a friend of the Emir's father (p. 7).

Ignatius.[1] There was a natural antipathy between Photius, a man of learning and a man of the world, and Ignatius, who had neither tact nor secular erudition. It is probable that the Patriarch even displayed in some public way his dislike or disdain for profane learning.[2] We can well understand that he was deeply vexed by the opposition of a man whose talents and learning were unreservedly recognized by his contemporaries, and who exerted immense influence in the educated society of the city. The synod, which condemned Gregory, seems to have also condemned Photius, implicitly if not by name; and he was numbered among the schismatics.[3]

In order to embarrass the Patriarch, and to prove that a training in logic and philosophy was indispensable for defending Christian doctrine and refuting false opinions, Photius conceived the idea of propounding a heresy. He promulgated the thesis that there are two souls in man, one liable to err, the other immune from error.[4] Some took this seriously and were convinced by his ingenious arguments, to the everlasting peril of their souls. His friend, Constantine the Philosopher, who was afterwards to become famous as the Apostle of the Slavs, reproached Photius with propounding this dangerous proposition. "I had no idea," said Photius, "that it would do any harm. I only wanted to see how Ignatius would deal with it, without the aid of the philosophy which he rejects."

The Palace revolution which resulted in the fall of Theodora and placed the government in the hands of Bardas changed the ecclesiastical situation. Whatever difficulties beset Ignatius in a post which he was not well qualified to fill, whatever vexation might be caused to him through the active or passive resistance of his opponents, he was secure so long as the Empress was in power. But Bardas was a friend and admirer of Photius, and the Ignatian party must have felt his access to power as a severe blow. Bardas, however, was a sufficiently prudent statesman to have no desire wantonly to disturb the existing state of things, or to stir up

[1] Nicolaus, *Ep*, 11. p. 163; Stylianos, *Ep.* 428; Pseudo-Simeon, 671.

[2] Anastasius, *Praef.* 6 "qui scilicet viros exterioris sapientiae repulisset."

[3] *Libellus Ignatii*, 300; Metrophanes, *Ep.* 415.

[4] Anastasius, *Praef.* 6; cp. Pseudo-Simeon, 673; Mansi, xvi. 456. Cp. Hergenröther, iii. 444-446. The doctrine had such a vogue that the fathers of the Eighth Council thought it expedient to condemn it (canon x., Mansi, *ib.* 404).

a serious ecclesiastical controversy. If Ignatius had behaved with discretion and reconciled himself to a régime which personally he disliked, it is not probable that the sympathies of Bardas with the Photian party would have induced him to take any measure against the Patriarch.

Ignatius found in the private morals of the powerful minister a weak spot for attack. According to the rumour of the town, Bardas was in love with his daughter-in-law, and had for her sake abandoned his wife.[1] Acting on this gossip, the Patriarch admonished Bardas, who declined to take any notice of his rebukes and exhortations.[2] We may suspect that he refused to admit that the accusation was true—it would perhaps have been difficult to prove—and recommended Ignatius to mind his own business. But Ignatius was determined to show that he was the shepherd of his flock, and that he was no respecter of persons. On the feast of Epiphany (Jan. A.D. 858) he refused the communion to the sinner. It is said that Bardas, furious at this public insult, drew his sword; but he managed to control his anger and vowed vengeance on the bold priest.

The ecclesiastical historians speak with warm approbation of this action of the Patriarch. The same prelate, who adopted such a strong measure to punish the vices of Bardas,[3] had no scruples, afterwards, in communicating with the Emperor Basil, who had ascended to power by two successive murders. And the ecclesiastical historians seem to regard the Patriarch's action, in ignoring Basil's crimes and virtually taking advantage of them to reascend the Patriarchal throne, as perfectly irreproachable. The historian who is not an ecclesiastic may be allowed to express his respectful interest in the ethical standards which are implied.

About eight months later the Emperor Michael decided to tonsure his mother and sisters and immure them in the monastery of Karianos. He requested the Patriarch to perform the ceremony of the tonsure, and we have already seen that

[1] Simeon (*Cont. Georg.*) 826; Anastasius, *Pracf.*; Gen. 99; *Vita Ign.* 224.

[2] *Libellus Ignatii*, 296; *Vita Ign.*, *ib.* ὡς ἀνὰ πᾶσαν τὴν πόλιν περιβομβηθῆναι· καὶ οὐκ ἄχρι τῶν πολλῶν μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ μέχρις αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως τὴν πονηρὰν φήμην ἐλθεῖν. Cp. Lebedev, *Istoriia*, 23-24.

[3] The expressions which Hergenröther (369) applies to Bardas "ein wollüstiger Höfling," "der mächtige Wüstling," are extraordinarily infelicitous.

Ignatius refused on the ground that the ladies themselves were unwilling.[1] Bardas persuaded the Emperor that his disobedience, in conjunction with his unconcealed sympathy with the Empress, was a sign of treasonable purposes, and a pretended discovery was made that he was in collusion with an epileptic impostor, named Gebeon, who professed to be the son of the Empress Theodora by a former marriage. Gebeon had come from Dyrrhachium to Constantinople, where he seduced some foolish people; he was arrested and cruelly executed in one of the Prince's Islands.[2] On the same day the Patriarch was seized as an accomplice, and removed, without a trial, to the island of Terebinthos (Nov. 23).

It is evident that there were no proofs against Ignatius, and that the charge of treason was merely a device of the government for the immediate purpose of removing him. For in the subsequent transactions this charge seems to have been silently dropped; and if there had been any plausible grounds, there would have been some sort of formal trial. Moreover, it would appear that before his arrest it was intimated to the Patriarch that he could avoid all trouble by abdication, and he would have been tempted to yield if his bishops had not assured him that they would loyally stand by him.[3] Before his arrest he issued a solemn injunction that no service should be performed in St. Sophia without his consent.[4] A modern ecclesiastical historian, who has no high opinion of Ignatius, cites this action as a proof that he was ready to prefer his own personal interests to the good of the Church.[5]

In the place of his banishment Ignatius was visited repeatedly by bishops and Imperial ministers pressing on him the expediency of voluntary abdication. As he refused to listen to arguments, threats were tried, but with no result.[6] The Emperor and Bardas therefore decided to procure the election of a new Patriarch, though the chair was not *de iure*

[1] *Libellus Ignatii*, 296. Anastasius (*Praef.* 2) and the *Vita Ign.* (224) add that he alleged the oath which he had taken, at his elevation, that he would never engage in a plot against Michael and Theodora (τῆς βασιλείας ὑμῶν). Such an oath was apparently required of every Patriarch (*secundum* Anastas.).

[2] *Vita Ign.*, *ib.* Bardas called Ignatius "Gebobasileutos."

[3] *De Stauropatis*, 441.

[4] Anastasius, *Praef.*, *ib.*

[5] Lebedev, *op. cit.* 25.

[6] *Vita Ign.* 226. Physical violence was not employed at this stage (as the narrative in the *Vita* shows); Hergenröther is wrong here (373-374).

vacant, inasmuch as Ignatius had neither resigned nor been canonically deposed. Such a procedure was not an innovation; there were several precedents.[1] The choice of the government and the ecclesiastical party which was opposed to Ignatius fell upon Photius. He was not only a *grata persona* at Court; but his extraordinary gifts, his eminent reputation, along with his unimpeachable orthodoxy, were calculated to shed prestige on the Patriarchal chair, and to reconcile the public to a policy which seemed open to the reproaches of violence and injustice. Many of the bishops who had vowed to support the cause of Ignatius were won over by Bardas, and Photius accepted the high office, which, according to his enemies, had long been the goal of his ambition, and which, according to his own avowal, he would have been only too glad to decline.[2] He was tonsured on December 20; on the four following days he was successively ordained lector, subdeacon, deacon, and priest, and on Christmas Day consecrated bishop, by his friend Gregory Asbestas.[3] For this rapid and irregular elevation to the highest dignity of the Church, which was one of the principal objections urged against Photius, the recent precedents of his uncle Tarasius and Nicephorus, as well as others, could be alleged. The ambiguous position of Gregory, who had been deposed by a synod and suspended by a Pope, furnished another handle against the new Patriarch. But all the bishops who were present in Constantinople, except five, acknowledged him,[4] and the five dissentients were persuaded to acquiesce when he gave them a written undertaking that he would honour Ignatius as a father and act according to his wishes.[5] But two months later

[1] *E.g.* Arsacius, Atticus, Macedonius II., etc. Cp. Hergenröther, i. 377.

[2] He dwells on his reluctance to accept the post in some of his letters; cp. *Ep.* 159 *ad Bardam*.

[3] *Vita Ign.* 232.

[4] From Metrophanes, *Ep.* 416, it would appear that the formality of election by the bishops was not observed; that, after the consecration of Photius, the bishops met and nominated three candidates, of whom Photius was not one; but that all except five then went over to the Photian side.

[5] *Libellus Ign.* 300; *Vita Ign.* 233. Metrophanes (*loc. cit.*), who was one of the five, says: "When we saw that the mass of the bishops had been seduced we thought it right to acknowledge him in writing (δι' ἰδιοχείρου ὁμολογίας) as a son of our Church and in communion with its High Priest (Ignatius), in order that even here we might not be found in disagreement with his will; for he (Ignatius) had directed us to elect a Patriarch from our Church in Christ. So when Photius signed in our presence a promise that he would hold the Patriarch free from blame and neither speak against him nor permit others to do so, we accepted

he is said to have recovered the document on some pretext and torn it up into small pieces. Then those bishops who were really on the side of Ignatius, and had unwillingly consented to an impossible compromise, held a series of meetings in the church of St. Irene, and deposed and excommunicated Photius with his adherents.[1] Such an irregular assembly could not claim the authority of a synod, but it was a declaration of war. Photius immediately retorted by holding a synod in the Holy Apostles. Ignatius, in his absence, was deposed and anathematized; and the opportunity was probably used to declare Gregory Asbestas absolved from those charges which had led to his condemnation by the ex-Patriarch (spring A.D. 859).[2]

In the meantime Bardas persistently endeavoured to force Ignatius to an act of abdication. He was moved from place to place and treated with cruel rigour.[3] His followers were

unwillingly, on account of the violence of the government." It appears from this that Ignatius, though he refused to abdicate, would have been prepared to do so if another than Photius had been his successor. It is to be observed that while the *Lib. Ign.* and the *Vita Ign.* assert that Ignatius declined throughout to abdicate, Basil, archbishop of Thessalonica, a younger contemporary of Photius, in his *Vita Euthym. jun.* 178 states that he, partly voluntarily, partly under compulsion, executed an act of abdication (*βιβλίον παραιτήσεως τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ παραδίδωσι*). Cp. Papadopulos-Kerameus, *ὁ πατρ. Φώτιος* (cited above), 659-660; P.-K. accepts this statement. The evidence is certainly remarkable, but Basil, though he speaks sympathetically of Ignatius, is an ardent admirer of Photius; cp. *ib.* 179.

[1] Metrophanes, *ib.* The meeting lasted forty days.

[2] The chronology is uncertain, and there is a discrepancy between Metrophanes and *Vita Ign.* According to the latter source Ignatius was removed to Mytilene in August (859), and was there when the synod in the Holy Apostles was held; the other assembly in St. Irene is not mentioned. Metrophanes implies that the two synods were almost contemporary, and that the persecution of Ignatius, prior to his deportation to Mytilene, was subsequent to the synod which deposed him. He evidently places the synods in the spring, for he connects the deposition of Ignatius with the recovery of the signed document of Photius (*ὅτε μετὰ βραχὺ καὶ τὸ ἴδιον ἀφείλετο χειρόγραφον καὶ καθεῖλεν Ἰγνάτιον*). As Metrophanes was himself an actor in these transactions, and was incarcerated with Ignatius in the Numera, he is the better authority. It was, no doubt, hoped to extract an abdication from Ignatius without deposing him, but the assembly of St. Irene forced the hand of Photius. It was, however, no less desirable after the synod to procure an abdication in view of public opinion.

[3] He was removed from Terebinthos to Hieria (where he was kept in a goat-fold), then to the suburb of Promotos (on the Galata side of the Golden Horn; see Pargoire, *Boradion*, 482-483), where he was beaten by Leo Lalakon, the Domestic of the Numeri (who knocked out two of his teeth), and loaded with heavy irons. Then he was shut up in the prison of the Numera, near the Palace, till he was taken to Mytilene, where he remained six months (*c.* August 859 to February 860). He was then permitted to return to Terebinthos, and he is said to have suffered ill-treatment from Nicetas Ooryphas, who was Prefect of the City (see above, Chapter IV. p. 144, note). But a worse thing happened.

barbarously punished. The writers of the Ignatian party accuse Photius of having prompted these acts of tyranny, but letters of Photius himself to Bardas, bitterly protesting against the cruelties, show that he did not approve this policy of violence,[1] which indeed only served to increase his own unpopularity. The populace of the city seems to have been in favour of Ignatius, who had also sympathizers among the Imperial ministers, such as Constantine the Drungarios of the Watch. The monks, from whose rank he had risen, generally supported him; the Studites refused to communicate with the new Patriarch, and their abbot Nicolas left Constantinople.[2] Photius, as is shown by his correspondence, took great pains to win the goodwill of individual monks and others by flattery and delicate attentions.[3]

The announcement of the enthronement of a new Patriarch, which it was the custom to send to the other four Patriarchal Sees—Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem—had been postponed, evidently in the hope that Ignatius would be induced to abdicate. When more than a year had passed and this hope was not fulfilled, the formal announcement could no longer be deferred. An inthronistic letter was addressed to the Eastern Patriarchs,[4] and an embassy was sent to Rome bearing letters to the Pope from Michael and Photius. The chair of St. Peter was now filled by Nicolas I., who stands out among the Pontiffs between Gregory I. and Gregory VII. as having done more than any other to raise the Papal power to the place which it was to hold in the days of Innocent III.[5]

Terebinthos, like the other islands in the neighbourhood of the capital, was exposed to the Russian invasion of this year (see below, p. 419). The enemy despoiled the monastery of Ignatius, seized and slew twenty-two of his household (*Vita Ign.* 233 *sqq.*). Ignatius himself (*Libellus Ign.*, *ad init.*) mentions his sufferings from cold, insufficient clothing, hunger, stripes, chains.

[1] See Photius, *Ep.* 159.

[2] Nicolas of Crete had succeeded Naukratios as abbot in 848. He remained seven years in exile, first at Praenete in Bithynia, then in the Chersonese, whence (865-866) he was brought in chains to Constantinople and incarcerated in his own monastery for two years. He obtained his freedom on the accession of Basil. In the meantime a succession of unwelcome abbots had been imposed on Studion. See *Vita Nicolai Stud.* 909 *sqq.*

[3] See the correspondence of Photius. The material is collected in Hergenröther, i. 396 *sqq.* One abbot at least left his monastery to avoid the conflict. Cp. *Vita Euthym. jun.* 179.

[4] The Patriarchate of Antioch was at this moment vacant, and the communication is addressed to the oekonomos and synkellos (*Ep.* 2, ed. Val.). Its tenor corresponds to the letter to the Pope.

[5] He was elected in April 858. Regino, *Chron.*, *s.a.* 868, says of him: "regibus ac tyrannis imperavit eisque ac si dominus orbis terrarum auctoritate praefuit."

A man of deeds rather than of words, as one of his admirers says, he was inspired with the idea of the universal authority of the Roman See. The internal troubles in the Carolingian realm enabled him to assert successfully the Papal pretensions in the West; the schism at Constantinople gave him a welcome opportunity of pressing his claims upon the East. But in Photius he found an antagonist, not only incomparably more learned than himself, but equally determined, energetic, and resourceful.

The letter of Photius to the Pope was a masterpiece of diplomacy.[1] He enlarged on his reluctance to undertake the burdens of the episcopal office, which was pressed upon him by the Emperor and the clergy with such insistency that he had no alternative but to accept it. He then—in accordance with the usual custom in such inthronistic letters—made a precise statement of the articles of his religion and declared his firm belief in the seven Ecumenical Councils. He concluded by asking the Pope, not for any support or assistance, but simply for his prayers. He abstained from saying anything against his predecessor. But the letter which was sent in the Emperor's name[2] gave a garbled account of the vacation of the Patriarchal throne, and requested the Pope to send legates to attend a synod which should decide some questions relating to the iconoclastic heresy. Neither the Patriarch nor the Emperor invited the Pope even to express an opinion on recent events, but Nicolas resolved to seize the occasion and assert a jurisdiction which, if it had been accepted, would have annulled the independence of the Church of Constantinople. He despatched two bishops, with instructions to investigate the facts in connexion with the deposition of Ignatius, and to make a report.[3] He committed to them letters (dated

[1] *Ep.* 1.

[2] This letter is not preserved, but we know its tenor from the reply of Nicolas. It was said of Ignatius that he had withdrawn from the duties of his office voluntarily and had been deposed by a council, and it was suggested that he had neglected (*spreverit*) his flock and contemned the decrees of Popes Leo and Benedict (Nicol. *Ep.* 2). The letters were presented by an embassy consisting of Arsaber, an Imperial spatharios, and three bishops, who bore gifts from the Emperor: a gold paten with precious stones (*albis, prasinis et hyacinthinis*); a gold chalice from which gems hung by golden threads; a gold shield inlaid with gems; a gold-embroidered robe with trees, roses, and sacred scenes, etc. (*Vita Nicolai Papae*, 147). The envoys reached Rome in summer 860 and were received in audience in S. Maria Maggiore.

[3] The legates were Rodoaldus of Porto and Zacharias of Anagni. The

September 25, 860) to the Emperor and to Photius. These letters have considerable interest as a specimen of Papal diplomacy. The communication to the Emperor opens with the assertion of the primacy of the Roman See and of the principle that no ecclesiastical difficulty should be decided in Christendom[1] without the consent of the Roman Pontiff; it goes on to point out that this principle has been violated by the deposition of Ignatius, and that the office has been aggravated by the election of a layman—an election which "our holy Roman Church" has always prohibited. On these grounds the Pope announces that he cannot give his apostolic consent to the consecration of Photius until his messengers have reported the facts of the case and have examined Ignatius. He then proceeds to reply to that part of the Emperor's letter which concerned the question of image-worship. The document concludes with the suggestion that Michael should show his devotion to the interests of the Church by restoring to the Roman See the vicariate of Thessalonica and the patrimonies of Calabria and Sicily, which had been withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Pope by Leo III. The short letter to Photius censures the temerity of his elevation and declines to acknowledge his consecration, unless the Papal messengers, when they return from Constantinople, report favourably on his actions and devotion to the Church.[2]

The diplomatic intent of these letters could hardly be misapprehended by a novice. The innocent suggestion (put forward as if it had no connexion with the other matters under discussion) that Illyricum and Calabria should be transferred from the See of Constantinople to that of Rome would never have been made if Nicolas had not thought that there was a reasonable chance of securing this accession to the

Pope, in his letter to Michael, expressly reserves the decision to himself ("ac deinde cum nostro praesulatui significatum fuerit, quid de eo agendum sit apostolica sanctione diffinianus"). The legates had only full powers in regard to the question of image-worship.

[1] Nicol. *Ep.* 2, p. 162: "qualiter . . nullius insurgentis deliberationis terminus daretur."

[2] The Pope kept a copy of his letter to the Emperor in the Roman archives. He complains afterwards that in the Greek translation which was read at the Council of 861 it was falsified by interpolations and misrepresentations of the sense. He speaks of such falsifications as characteristically Greek ("apud Graecos . . familiaris est ista temeritas," *Ep.* 9), but inadequate knowledge of the language must have been a cause of many mistakes.

dominion and revenue of his chair. It is plain that he could not hope that the Emperor and the Patriarch would agree to such a large concession unless they received a due consideration; and it is equally obvious that the only consideration which the Pope could offer, was to consent to the consecration of Photius, and crush by the weight of his authority the schism which was so seriously distressing the church of Constantinople. Notwithstanding his severe animadversions on the uncanonical elevation of Photius, he intimated that this was not an insuperable difficulty; if his delegates brought back a satisfactory report, matters might be arranged. It is perfectly clear that Pope Nicolas proposed a bargain, in the interest of what he calls *ecclesiastica utilitas*.[1]

It is impossible to say whether the Imperial government took into serious consideration the Pope's proposal. But there were at all events some, probably among the moderate section of the Photians, who thought that the best solution of the ecclesiastical difficulty would be to agree to the bargain, and Photius was so gravely alarmed that, in a letter to Bardas, he complains bitterly of the desire of persons who are not named to deprive him of half his jurisdiction.[2] It would seem that there was a chance that the diplomacy of Nicolas might have been successful. But if Michael and Bardas entertained any idea of yielding, they were persuaded by Photius to relinquish it.

The two legates of the Pope were won over to the Photian party by cajolements and threats.[3] A council assembled in May (A.D. 861),[4] remarkable for the large number of bishops

[1] It is not, I think, without significance, as indicating the Pope's idea, that this phrase is used in the letter to Michael in reference to the restitution of the provinces ("vestrum imperiale decus quod in omnibus ecclesiasticis utilitatibus vigere audivimus"), and also in the letter to Photius ("ecclesiasticae utilitatis constantiam"), where the suggestion seems to be that Photius can prove his devotion to the interests of the Church by complying with the wishes of the Pope. Lebedev (*op. cit.* 48-49) has apprehended that Nicolas was proposing a "deal."

[2] *Ep.* 157, p. 492 ἀφαιρεῖται ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἀρχῆς and τὸ ἡμισυ ἀφῃρῆμεθα. The meaning was seen by Lebedev, *loc. cit.*

[3] On their arrival at Rhaedestos they had received costly dresses from Photius. They were kept in isolation for three months, so that they should have no converse with the Ignatian party, and only hear the Photian side. Threats of exile and insects ("longa exilia et diuturnas pediculorum comestiones") induced them to transgress their instructions and acknowledge Photius. Nicolaus, *Epp.* 6 and 9. It was the Emperor who threatened and Photius who cajoled. Stylianos, *Ep.* 429.

[4] In the Church of the Apostles. This synod was called the First and

who attended. The Emperor was present, and Ignatius unwillingly appeared. Seventy-two witnesses, including both highly-placed ministers and men of humble rank, came forward to prove that Ignatius had been appointed to the Patriarchate, not by free election, but by the personal act of Theodora.[1] We are in the dark as to the precise circumstances of the elevation of Ignatius. There is no doubt that he was chosen by Theodora, but it is almost incredible that the usual form of election was not observed, and if it was observed, to condemn his elevation was to condemn the elevation of every Patriarch of Constantinople as uncanonical. For virtually every Patriarch was appointed by the Imperial will.[2] In any case at this synod—if we can trust the accounts of the supporters of Ignatius—the government exercised considerable pressure. The assembly, including the representatives of Rome, whether they were convinced or not, confirmed the deposition of Ignatius, and declared him unworthy. The authority of Photius was thus established by the formal act of a large council, subscribed by the legates of the Roman see.[3]

Second (*πρώτη καὶ δευτέρα*), of which perhaps the most probable explanation is that suggested by Hergenröther (i. 438), that it resumed and confirmed the acts of the synod of 859 held in the same church.

[1] We must suppose that he had been condemned on the same ground in A.D. 859 at the local council; but this charge does not seem to have been mentioned in Michael's letter to the Pope, who indeed points this out in his letter of A.D. 862 (*Ep.* 5): "omnibus accusationibus remotis . . unum opponentes tantummodo quod potentia saeculari sedem pervaserit." Seventy-two witnesses (for the number cp. Hergenröther, i. 426, n. 38), including men of all ranks—senators, artisans, fish-merchants—were produced to give sworn evidence that Ignatius had been uncanonically appointed. Cp. *Vit. Ign.* 237. The acts of the Council were burnt at the Council of A.D. 869; and our knowledge of its proceedings is derived chiefly from the *Libellus Ign.* and the *Vit. Ign.* There were 318 bishops, etc., present, the same number as at the Council of Nicaea, as the Photians noted with satisfaction: Lebedev (*op. cit.* 53) thinks that this was a coincidence. Ignatius had been brought back to Constantinople some time before, and was permitted to reside in the Palace of Posis which had belonged to his mother, the Empress Procopia. He unwillingly resigned himself to appear before the synod, where he refused to recognize the authority of the Papal legates.

[2] Pope Nicolas observes this (*loc. cit.*).

[3] Seventeen canons, passed by this Council, remained in force, and are preserved (Mansi, xvi. 535 *sqq.*). Canons 16 and 17, forbidding for the future the consecration of bishops in the circumstances in which Photius had been consecrated, and the sudden elevation of a layman to the episcopate, were calculated to conciliate the canonical scruples of the Pope. Canons 13-15 were aimed against schismatics and intended to strengthen the hands of Photius. Most of the other rules dealt with monastic reform, and by one of them (20-1), prohibiting members from leaving their cloisters at their own caprice, it is thought that Photius hoped to prevent the Ignatians from travelling to Rome. Cp. Lebedev, *op. cit.* 63.

The legates had exceeded their instructions.[1] When they returned to Rome in the autumn, their action was repudiated by the Pope, who asserted that they had only been directed to report on the whole matter to him, and had received no power to judge the question themselves. There is no doubt that they had betrayed the interests of their master and suffered themselves to be guided entirely by the court of Byzantium. An Imperial secretary soon arrived at Rome, bearing a copy of the Acts of the Council with letters from the Emperor and the Patriarch.[2] The letter of Photius could hardly fail to cause deep displeasure to the Roman bishop. It was perfectly smooth, courteous, and conciliatory in tone, but it was the letter of an equal to an equal, and, although the question of Roman jurisdiction was not touched on, it was easy to read between the lines that the writer had the will and the courage to assert the independence of the see of Constantinople. As for the ecclesiastical provinces of Illyricum and Calabria, he hypocritically threw upon the government the entire responsibility for not restoring them to Rome, and implied that he himself would have been willing to sacrifice them.[3]

The Imperial secretary remained in Rome for some months,[4] hoping that Nicolas would be persuaded to sanction all that his legates had done in his name. But the Pope was now resolved to embrace the cause of Ignatius and to denounce Photius. He addressed an encyclical letter to the three Patriarchs of the East, informing them that Ignatius had been illegally deposed, and that a most wicked man (*homo*

[1] This is proved by the Pope's letter which they carried to Michael, and it is useless for Lebedev (*op. cit.* 54) to contest it.

[2] It may be noticed here that according to *Vit. Ign.* 241, some time after the Council, new attempts were made to extort an abdication from Ignatius by ill-treatment. He was beaten, starved for two weeks, with no dress but a shirt, in the Imperial mortuary chapel (Hérôon) of the Holy Apostles, where he was stretched upon the sarcophagus of Constantine V., with heavy stones attached to his ankles. These tortures were inflicted by Theodore Môros, John Gorgonites, and Nikolaos Skutelops. When he was perfectly exhausted, one of them, holding his hand, traced his signature on a paper on which Photius afterwards wrote a declaration of abdication. The other sources which mention this, are derived from *Vit. Ign.*; Hergenröther is wrong in supposing that the account in Gen. 100 is independent; see Hirsch, 159. Photius, however, seems to have made no use of this document. The sufferings recorded and probably exaggerated in the *Vita* may be briefly referred to at the end of the *Libellus Ign.* (*ἐν ἐπτὰ γὰρ οὕτω κολασθέντα ἡμέραις ἄσιτον, ἄυπνον, ἀκάθιστον διαμεῖναι ἐβίασαν*), but nothing is said of the signature.

[3] *Ep.* 3.

[4] Till March 862, the date of the replies of the Pope (*Epp.* 5 and 6).

scelestissimus) had occupied his church; declaring that the Roman see will never consent to this injustice; and ordering them, by his apostolical authority, to work for the expulsion of Photius and the restoration of Ignatius.[1] At the same time he indited epistles to the Emperor and to Photius, asserting with stronger emphasis than before the authority of Rome as head and mistress of the churches,[2] and declining to condemn Ignatius or to recognize Photius.

The ambassadors of the Pope, during their visit to Constantinople, had heard only one side. The authorities had taken care to prevent them from communicating with Ignatius or any of the Ignatian party, and they also attempted to hinder any one from repairing to Rome in the interests of the Ignatian cause. Theognostos, however, who was an ardent partisan of the deposed Patriarch,[3] succeeded in reaching Rome in disguise, and he carried with him a petition setting forth the history of the deposition of Ignatius and the sufferings which he endured, and imploring the Pope, who was humbly addressed as "the Patriarch of all the thrones," to take pity and arise as a powerful champion against injustice.[4]

[1] *Ep.* 4, 168.

[2] The words in which he asserts that the laws and decrees of the Roman see must not be set aside by subject churches, on the plea of different customs, are strong: "Et ideo consequens est ut quod ab huius Sedis rectoribus plena auctoritate sancitur, nullius consuetudinis praepediente occasione, proprias tantum sequendo voluntates, removeatur, sed firmius atque inconcusse teneatur." *Ep.* 6, 174.

[3] He was an archimandrite of the Roman Church, abbot of the monastery of Pêgê, skeuophylax of St. Sophia, and Exarch of the monasteries of Constantinople. See the title of the *Libellus Ign.*

[4] The *Libellus*, stating the case of Ignatius, was written by Theognostos, but in the name of Ignatius, with whom were associated fifteen metropolitan bishops, and an "infinite number" of priests, monks, etc. Perhaps, as Hergenröther suggests (i. 462), it was the knowledge of this despatch to Rome that prompted the government to make another attempt to force Ignatius, this time by reading aloud his sentence in the ambo of St. Sophia. Soldiers surrounded his house on the eve of Whitsunday, May 25, 862; but Ignatius escaped, disguised as a porter, and wandered for some months from island to island in the Propontis, eluding the pursuers who were set on his track. In August and September Constantinople was shaken by terrible earthquakes for forty days, and the calamity was ascribed by superstition to the unjust treatment of Ignatius. To calm the public, the Emperor caused a declaration to be made that Ignatius would be allowed to remain unmolested in his cloister. Ignatius revealed himself to Petronas, the brother of Bardas, who gave him as a safe-conduct an *enkolpion* (probably a jewelled cross) which the Emperor wore on his breast. He then had an interview with Bardas and was dismissed to his monastery. See *Vita Ign.* 241 *sqq.* The earthquake referred to is probably the same as that described in *Cont. Th.* 196-197. It did great damage in the south-western part of the city (Hexakionion). The earthquake in *Vita Ign.* 249 seems to be different.

It was probably the influence of the representations of Theognostos and other Ignatians who had found their way to Rome, that moved Nicolas a year later (April A.D. 863), to hold a Synod in the Lateran.[1] Neither the Emperor nor the Patriarch had vouchsafed any answer to his letter, and as it was evident that they had no intention of yielding to his dictation, he punished the Church of Constantinople by the only means which lay in his power. The synod deprived Photius of his ecclesiastical status, and excommunicated him unless he immediately resigned the see which he had usurped; it pronounced the same penalty upon all ecclesiastics who had been consecrated by Photius; and it restored Ignatius and all those bishops who had been deposed and exiled in his cause.[2] A copy of the proceedings was sent to Constantinople.

It was impossible for Constantinople to ignore the formal condemnation pronounced by the Lateran Synod, and Photius was prepared to assert the independence of his see, by dealing out to the Pope the same measure which the Pope had dealt out to him. In August 865, Nicholas received a letter from the Emperor assuring him that all his efforts in behalf of Ignatius were useless, and requiring him to withdraw his judgment, with a threat that, if he refused, the Emperor would march to Rome and destroy the city. The document, which was evidently drafted under the direction of Photius, must have been couched in sufficiently provocative terms; but the threat was not seriously meant, and the writer did not expect that the Pope would yield. The real point of the letter was the repudiation of the papal claim to supreme jurisdiction, as the real point of the Pope's long reply was the assertion of the privileges of the chair of St. Peter. The Pope indeed makes what may be represented as a concession. He offers to revise his judgment at Rome, and demands that the two rivals shall appear personally before him, or if they cannot come, send plenipotentiaries. The concession was as nugatory as the Emperor's threat, and it assumed, in an aggravated form, the claims of the Papacy as a supreme court of appeal.[3]

[1] Cp. Hergenröther, i. 519.

[2] Nicolaus, *Ep.* 7. The acts are not extant. This synod condemned the faithless legate Zacharias, and must not be confounded with the Lateran synod of Nov. 864, which condemned his fellow, Rodoald.

[3] The tenor of Michael's letter is only known from the reply of Nicolas, *Ep.* 8, who describes it as "tota blas-

The quarrel between Rome and Constantinople was soon augmented by the contest between the two sees for the control of the infant church of Bulgaria,[1] and Photius judged that the time was ripe for a decisive blow. He held a local synod for the condemnation of various heresies which Latin clergy had criminally introduced into Bulgaria.[2] These "servants of Antichrist, worthy of a thousand deaths," permitted the use of milk and cheese in the Lenten fast; they sowed the seed of the Manichaean doctrine by their aversion to priests who are legally married; they had the audacity to pour anew the chrism of confirmation on persons who had already been anointed by priests, as if a priest were not as competent to confirm as to baptize. But above all they were guilty of teaching the blasphemous and atheistic doctrine that the Holy Ghost proceeds not only from the Father, but also from the Son.

The eloquent Patriarch can hardly find words adequate to characterize the enormity of these false doctrines, in the encyclical letter[3] which he addressed to the three Eastern Patriarchs, inviting them to attend a general council at Constantinople, for the purpose of rooting out such abominable errors. Other questions too, Photius intimated, would come before the council. For he had received from Italy an official communication full of grave complaints of the tyranny exercised by the Roman bishop in the west.

The document to which Photius refers seems to have emanated from the archbishops of Köln and Trier, who were at this time leading an anti-papal movement. The occasion of this division in the western Church was the love of king Lothar II. of Lothringia for his mistress Waldrade.[4] To marry her he had repudiated his queen, and his action was approved by a synod at Metz, guided by the influence of the two archbishops. But the Pope embraced the cause of the queen, and in a synod in the Lateran (October 863), annulled

phemiis, tota iniuriis plena." One of Michael's demands was that the Pope should hand over to him the Ignatians who were at Rome.

[1] See Chap. XII.

[2] Photius, *Ep.* 4, § 27, p. 176. Hergenröther assigns the synod to Lent, 867 (i. 648).

[3] *Ep.* 4.

[4] For this affair and its consequences see Hergenröther, i. 540 *sqq.*; Hefele, iv. 240 *sqq.* The documents will be found in Mansi, xv. 611 *sqq.*, 645 *sqq.*, to which must be added the *Vita Nicolai*, and the chronicles of Regino and Hincmar (*Ann. Bert.*).

the acts of Metz, and deposed the archbishops of Köln and Trier. These prelates received at first support from the Emperor Lewis II., but that vacillating monarch soon made peace with the Pope, and the archbishops presumed to organize a general movement of metropolitan bishops against the claims of the Roman see. They distributed to the bishops of the west a circular Protest, denouncing the tyranny, arrogance, and cunning of Nicholas, who would "make himself the Emperor of the whole world."[1] They sent a copy to the Patriarch of Constantinople, imploring him to come to their help and deliverance.[2]

This movement in the western church was well calculated to confirm Photius and the Imperial government in the justice of their own cause, and it led the Patriarch to a far-reaching scheme which it required some time to mature. It is certain that during the years A.D. 865-867, there were secret negotiations between Constantinople and the Emperor Lewis. It is improbable that any formal embassies were interchanged. But by unofficial means—perhaps by communications between Photius and the Empress Engelberta—an understanding was reached that if the Pope were excommunicated by the eastern Patriarchs, Lewis might be induced to drive him from Rome as a heretical usurper, and that the court of Constantinople would officially recognize the Imperial dignity and title of the western Emperor.[3]

Constantinople carried out her portion of the programme. The Council met in A.D. 867 (perhaps the late summer),[4] and the Emperor Michael presided.[5] The Pope was condemned and anathema pronounced against him for the heretical doctrines and practices which were admitted by the Roman Church, and for his illegitimate interference in the affairs of the Church of Constantinople. The acts of the Synod were

[1] "Dominus Nicolaus qui dicitur Papa et qui se Apostolum inter Apostolos adnumerat totiusque mundi imperatorem se facit." The text is given *Ann. Bert.* 68 *sqq.*

[2] Photius, *op. cit.* συνοδικήν τιν' ἐπιστολὴν πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀνατεφοίτηκεν, *ib.* μὴ παριδεῖν αὐτοὺς οὕτως οἰκτρῶς ἀπολλυμένους κτλ.

[3] Previous negotiations, though not mentioned in the sources, are presupposed by the actual acclamation of Lewis and his wife.

[4] The date is inferred from the fact that Zacharias, bishop of Chalcedon, who was deputed to carry the acts of the Council to Italy, was still on his journey in September, after Michael's death, and was recalled (*Vita Ign.* 257), Hergenröther, i. 349.

[5] And probably Basil with him, as Hergenröther *ib.* admits. Metrophanes, *op. cit.* 417.

afterwards burned,[1] and we know of it only from the brief notices of the enemies of Photius. They insinuate that the signature of Michael had been appended when he was drunk; that the signature of his colleague Basil, had been forged; that the subscriptions of almost all those who were present, numbering about a thousand, were fabricated.[2] These allegations are highly improbable, and the writers themselves are inconsistent in what they allege. It is obvious that if the Emperors had disapproved of the purpose of the Council, the Council could never have met; and it is equally clear that if the overwhelming majority of the Council, including the Emperors, had disapproved of the decrees, the decrees could not have been passed. But there seems to have been some chicanery. At the Eighth Ecumenical Council, the metropolitan bishops whose signatures appeared, were asked whether they had subscribed, and they said, "God forbid, we did not subscribe."[3] Are we to suppose that they consented to the acts and afterwards refused to append their names?

The scandal about the legates of the Eastern Patriarchs is hardly less obscure. It is stated that Photius picked up in the streets three evil men whom he foisted upon the synod as the representatives of the Patriarchs.[4] They pretended to be Peter, Basil, and Leontios. But the true Peter, Basil, and Leontios appeared at the Eighth Ecumenical Council, where they asserted that they had not been named as legates by the Patriarchs, that they knew nothing about the Synod, had not attended it, and had not signed its acts.[5] It is impossible to

[1] By the explicit and emphatic instructions of Pope Hadrian.

[2] *Vita Hadriani II.* 811, and Anastasius, *Praef.* Hergenröther, i. 652, admits that there is great exaggeration in these Latin sources. In the *Vita Hadr.*, it is said that the signatures were fabricated by hired persons, who used fine and coarse pens to vary the handwriting. In regard to the signature of Basil, the Pope was officially informed that it was spurious (*ψευδῶς ἐγγραφῆναι*): cap. 4 of his Roman Synod, in Act vii. of the Eighth Council, Mansi, xvi. 380.

[3] Act viii. *οἱ ὑπογεγραμμένοι ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ ἐκείνῳ μητροπολῖται* (which must mean, exclusive of the Photians). Anastasius says (*loc. cit.*), that only twenty-one really signed, but this can hardly be true, and the same writer gives the total number of signatures as "about 1000" which is absurd. No Ecumenical Council had nearly so many members, and why (as Lebedev asks) should Photius have taken the trouble to forge so many?

[4] See the 6th Canon of the Eighth Council, Mansi, xvi. 401 *τοὺς πονηροὺς τινας ἄνδρας ἀπὸ τῶν λεωφόρων ἀγνιῶν.*

[5] See their examination by the Council, Act viii. pp. 384 *sqq.*, also of Leontios, George, and Sergius, Act ix. p. 397. Peter, etc. who are brought before the Council are described as *τοὺς ψευδοποτοπρηγὰς οὓς ὁ Φώτιος προσελάβετο κατὰ τοῦ .. Νικολάου.* But if we are to make any sense of

discover the truth, nor has it much interest except for ecclesiastical historians, who, if they are members of the Latin Church, will readily credit Photius with a wholesale and barefaced scheme of deception, and if they belong to the Greek communion, may be prepared to maintain that at the Eighth Ecumenical Council mendacity was the order of the day.[1] In either case, those who stand outside the Churches may find some entertainment in an edifying ecclesiastical scandal.

That the Emperors were acting in concert with Photius is, if there could be any doubt, definitely proved by the fact that Lewis was solemnly acclaimed as Basileus and Engelberta as Augusta. No Council, no Patriarch, could have dared to do what, done without the Imperial consent, or rather command, would have been an overt act of treason. The Patriarch sent a copy of the Acts of the Council to Engelberta, with a letter in which, comparing her to Pulcheria, he urged her to persuade her husband to drive from Rome a bishop who had been deposed by an Ecumenical Council.[2]

The schism between Rome and Constantinople was now complete for the moment. The Pope had anathematized the Patriarch, and the Patriarch had hurled back his anathema at the Pope. But this rent in the veil of Christendom was thinly patched up in a few months, and the designs of Photius for the ruin of his antagonist came to nought. On the death of Michael, the situation was immediately reversed. When Basil gained the sovran power, one of his first acts was to depose Photius and restore Ignatius. It is probable that his feelings towards Photius, the friend and relative of Bardas, were not over friendly, but his action was doubtless determined not by personal or religious considerations, but by reasons of state. We cannot say whether he was already

the proceedings, this cannot be taken literally. They cannot (unless they lied) have been the men whom Photius suborned; they must be the men whom those men impersonated. This question is not elucidated by modern ecclesiastical historians. Cp. Hergenröther, ii. 110 *sqq.*, 118 *sq.*; Hefele, iv. 394-395.

[1] Lebedev, *op. cit.* 102-103, rejects the evidence of Anastasius, *Vita Hadr.*, *Vita Ign.*, and Metrophanes against Photius. He says, "the enemies of Photius lied, but so immoderately that they damaged not Photius, but themselves." Lebedev entirely ignores here the evidence of the Acts of the Eighth Council.

[2] The messengers were recalled before they reached Italy, see above, p. 201, n. 4.

forming projects which rendered the alienation from Rome undesirable; but his principal and immediate purpose was assuredly to restore ecclesiastical peace and tranquillity in his own realm, and to inaugurate his reign by an act of piety and orthodoxy which would go far in the eyes of the inhabitants of Constantinople to atone for the questionable methods by which he had won the autocratic power.

"Nothing proves more convincingly than Basil's prompt reversal of his predecessor's ecclesiastical policy, that this policy was generally unpopular. Unless he had been sure that the restitution of Ignatius would be welcomed by an important section of his subjects at Constantinople, it is incredible, in view of the circumstances of his accession, that it would have been his first important act. Photius had his band of devoted followers, but they seem to have been a small minority; and there are other indications that public opinion was not in his favour. The severe measures to which the government had resorted against Ignatius and his supporters would hardly have been adopted if the weight of public opinion had leaned decisively on the side of Photius. There was, however, some embarrassment for Basil, who only a few months before had co-operated in the council which excommunicated the Pope, and there was embarrassment for many others who shared the responsibility, in turning about and repudiating their acts. The natural instinct was to throw all the blame upon Photius; Basil's signature was officially declared to be spurious; and most of those, who had taken part willingly or unwillingly in the condemnation of the Pope, were eager to repudiate their consent to that audacious transaction.

The proceedings of the Eighth Council, which procured a temporary triumph for Rome, the second patriarchate of Photius, and his second dethronement, lie outside the limits of this volume. He died in exile,[1] almost a centenarian. Immediately after his death he was recognized as a Father of the Church, and anathema was pronounced on all that Councils or Popes had uttered against him. The rift between

[1] A.D. 897. See Papadopulos-Kerameus ὁ πατρ. Φώτιος, 647 *sqq.* In the *Synax. ecc. Cpl.* p. 448 (date: middle of tenth century, see Bieliaev, in *Viz. Vrem.* 3, 437), Feb. 6 is distinguished by the μνήμη τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ ἀρχιεπ. Κπόλεως Φωτίου.

Rome and Constantinople, which Photius had widened and deepened, was gradually enlarged, and after the final rent (in the middle of the eleventh century), which no subsequent attempts at union could repair, the reputation of Photius became brighter than ever, and his council of 861, which the Pope had stigmatized as a pirate synod, was boldly described by Balsamon as ecumenical. It was recognized that Photius was the first great champion of the independence of the see of Constantinople, and of the national development of the Greek Church, against the interference of Rome. He formulated the points of difference between the two Churches which were to furnish the pretext for the schism; he first brought into the foreground, as an essential point of doctrine, the mystery of the procession of the Holy Ghost.[1]

The members of the Latin and the Greek Churches are compelled, at the risk of incurring the penalties of a damnable heresy, to affirm or to deny that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father. The historian, who is not concerned, even if he were qualified, to examine the mutual relations which exist among the august persons of the Trinity, will yet note with some interest that on this question the Greeks adhered to the official doctrine of the Church so far as it had been expressed by the authority of Ecumenical Councils. The theologians of the Second Council at Constantinople (A.D. 381) had distinctly declared the procession from the Father, and against this pronouncement it could only be argued that they had not denied the procession from the Son. It was not till A.D. 589 that a council in Spain added the words "and the Son" to the creed of Nicaea, and this addition was quickly adopted in Gaul. It corresponded to the private opinions of most western theologians, including Augustine and Pope Leo I. But the Greek Fathers generally held another doctrine, which the layman may find it difficult

[1] His chief work on the subject, "On the Mystagogia of the Holy Spirit," was not written till 885-886. In it he seems to have taken account of the most important contemporary vindication of the Latin doctrine, written (probably after 867) by Bishop Ratramnus of Corbie (*Contra Graecorum opposita*, etc., in Migne, *P.L.* 121, 228 *sqq.*), for which see Dräseke's article, *Ratramnus und Photios*, in *B.Z.* 18, 396 *sqq.* (1909), where it is suggested that though Photius did not read the treatise itself, its points were communicated to him by Greek friends.

to distinguish. They maintained that the Third person proceeded not from, but *through* the Second. In the ninth century, the Popes, though they repudiated the opposite dogma, hesitated to introduce the Spanish interpolation into the Creed, and perhaps it was not adopted till the beginning of the eleventh. The Reformed Churches have accepted the formula of the Creed, as it was revised in Spain, though they acknowledge only the authority of the first four Ecumenical Councils. It can hardly make much difference to the mass of believers; since we may venture to suspect that the majority of those who profess a firm belief in the double procession attach as little significance to the formula which they pronounce as if they declared their faith in a fourth dimension of space.

The beginnings of the antagonism and mutual dislike between the Greeks and Latins, which are so conspicuous at a later stage of history, may be detected in the Ignatian controversy. In the correspondence between Pope and Emperor, we can discern the Latin distrust of the Greeks, the Greek contempt for the Latins. The Emperor, probably prompted by Photius, describes Latin as a "barbarous and Scythian" language.[1] He has quite forgotten that it was the tongue of Constantine and Justinian, and the Pope has to remind him that his own title is "Emperor of the Romans" and that in the ceremonies of his own court Latin words are daily pronounced. But this childish and ignorant attack on the language of Roman law shows how the wind was blowing, and it well illustrates how the Byzantines, in the intense conviction of the superiority of their own civilization—for which indeed they had many excellent reasons—already considered the Latin-speaking peoples as belonging to the barbarian world. It was not to be expected that the Greeks, animated by this spirit, would accept such claims of ecclesiastical supremacy as were put forward by Nicolas, or that the Church of Constantinople would permit or invite a Pope's interference, except as a temporary expedient. Photius aroused into consciousness the Greek feeling of nationality, which throughout the Middle Ages drew strength and nourishment from bitter antagonism to Roman Christianity, and the modern

[1] See Nicol. *Ep.* 8.

Hellenes have reason to regard him, as they do, with veneration as a champion of their nationality.[1]

The Ignatian affair has another aspect as a conspicuous example of the Caesaropapism which was an essential feature in the system of the Byzantine state. Ignatius was removed, because he offended the Emperor, just as any minister might be deprived of his office. It may be said that the Ignatian party represented a feeling in the Church against such an exertion of the secular power; and it is doubtless true that the party included, among its active members, some who inherited the traditions of the opposition to the Patriarchs Tarasius and Nicephorus and considered the influence of the Emperors in ecclesiastical affairs excessive. But we may hesitate to believe that the party as a whole supposed that they were protesting on principle against the authority of the autocrat over the Church. It is more probable that they were guided by personal ties and considerations, by sympathy with Ignatius who seemed to have been most unjustly treated, and by dislike of Photius. It is to be observed that the Emperor made his will prevail, and though the policy of Michael was reversed by Basil, this was simply a change in policy, it was not a change in principle. It was a concession to public opinion and to Rome, it was not a capitulation of the State to the Church. It was a new act of the autocrat as head of the ecclesiastical organization, it was not an abdication of the Caesar-pope.

It is hardly necessary to speak of the canonical irregularities of which so much was made in the indictment of the Pope and the Ignatian synods against Photius. In regard to the one fact which we know fully, the sudden elevation of a layman to the episcopal office, we may observe that the Pope's reply to the case which Photius made out is unsatisfactory and imperfect. The instances of Tarasius and Nicephorus were sufficient for the purpose of vindication. In regard to

[1] The Photian spirit was curiously caricatured in the recent struggle between the two language parties in Greece. The advocates of the literary language (ἡ καθαρεύουσα), who, headed by Professor Mistriotes, carried the day and secured the ultimate doom of the popular language, asserted that foreign influence was behind their opponents, the vindicators of the vulgar tongue (known as οἱ μαλλιαροί), and that the object was to undermine the Hellenic nationality and the Orthodox Church. Foreigners can only gape with wonder.

Tarasius, it is urged by Nicolas that Pope Hadrian protested against his elevation, in a message addressed to the Seventh Ecumenical Council. But the Council had not hesitated to accept Tarasius, and it did not concern the Church of Constantinople, what the Bishop of Rome, apart from the Council, chose to think or say about the matter. In regard to Nicephorus, the Pope said nothing because he had nothing to say. Nicephorus was in communion with Rome; the Popes of his day raised no protest against his elevation. We have seen that if the first overtures of Nicolas to Constantinople had met with a different reception, the canonical molehills would never have been metamorphosed into mountains. The real value of the objections may be measured by the fact that when Photius reascended the patriarchal throne after the death of his rival, he was recognized by Pope John III. The death of Ignatius had indeed removed one obstacle, but nevertheless on the showing of Nicolas he was not a bishop at all. Pope John recognized him simply because it suited the papal policy at the moment.

In the stormy ecclesiastical history of our period the monks had played a conspicuous part, first as champions of the worship of icons and then of the cause of Ignatius, who was himself a typical monk. In the earlier controversies over the mystery of the incarnation, gangs of monks had been the authors of scandal in those turbulent assemblies at Ephesus, of which one is extolled as an Ecumenical Council and the other branded as a synod of brigands; at Constantinople, they led an insurrection which shook the throne of Anastasius. The Emperor Constantine V. recognized that the monks were his most influential and implacable opponents and declared war upon monasticism. But monasticism was an instinct too deeply rooted in Byzantine society to be suppressed or exterminated; the monastic order rested on as firm foundations, secured by public opinion, as the Church itself. The reaction under Irene revived and confirmed the power of the cloister; and at the same time the Studite movement of reform, under the guidance of Plato and Theodore, exerted a certain influence beyond the walls of Studion and tended to augment the prestige of the monastic life, though it was far from being generally accepted. The programme of the abbot Theodore

to render the authority of the Church independent of the autocrat was a revolutionary project which had no body of public opinion behind it and led to no consequences. The iconoclastic Emperors did their will, and the restoration of image-worship, while it was a triumph for the monks, was not a victory of the Church over the State. But within the State-Church monasticism flourished with as little check as it could have done if the Church had been an independent institution, and produced its full crop of economic evils. Hundreds of monasteries, some indeed with but few tenants, existed in Constantinople and its immediate neighbourhood in the ninth century, and the number was being continually increased by new foundations. For it was a cherished ambition of ordinary men of means to found a monastery, and they had only to obtain the licence of a bishop, who consecrated the site by planting a cross,[1] and to furnish the capital for the upkeep of the buildings and the maintenance of three monks. It was a regular custom for high dignitaries, who had spent their lives in the service of the State, to retire in old age to cloisters which they had built themselves.[2] It is too little to say that this was an ideal of respectability; it was also probably for the Byzantine man a realization of happiness in the present, enhanced as it was by the prospect of bliss in the future. But the State paid heavily for the indulgence of its members in the life of the cloister and the cell.

[1] *σταυροπήγιον*.

[2] History furnishes numerous particular instances, but I may notice the significant *τοὺς ἀπὸ μαγίστρων μοναδικούς* in Philotheos, 176_{15}.

CHAPTER VII

FINANCIAL AND MILITARY ADMINISTRATION

§ 1. *Finance*

THE Imperial revenue in the Middle Ages proceeded from the same principal sources as in the earlier ages of the Empire: taxation and the profits on the Imperial estates. The machinery for collecting the revenue had perhaps been little altered, but the central ministries which controlled the machinery had been considerably changed. The various financial and cognate departments which had been subject to the authority of the two great financial ministers and the Praetorian Prefects, under the system introduced by Constantine, are now distributed among eight mutually independent ministries.[1]

The Logothete or Accountant of the General Treasury, or, as he was briefly called, the *General Logothete*, had inherited the most important duties of the Count of the Sacred Largesses. He ordered and controlled the collection of all the taxes. He was the head of the army of surveyors, controllers, and collectors of the land and hearth taxes,[2] and of the host of *commerciarii* or officers of the customs.

The *Military Logothete* administered the treasury which defrayed the pay of the soldiers and other military expenses, which used to be furnished from the chests of the Praetorian Prefects.[3] The *Wardrobe*[4] and the *Special Treasury*[5] were

[1] See Bury, *Imperial Administrative System*, 78 *sqq.*

[2] ἐποπται, διοικηται, πράκτορες (*ib.* 87, 89).

[3] *Ib.* 90.

[4] βεστιάριον (to be distinguished from the Private Wardrobe, οἰκειακὸν βεστ., which was under the Protovestiarios, an eunuch). *Ib.* 95.

[5] τὸ εἰδικόν. Its master was called ὁ ἐπὶ τοῦ εἰδικοῦ. *Ib.* 98.

stores for all kinds of material used for military and naval purposes; on the occasion of a warlike expedition they supplied sails and ropes, hides, tin and lead, and innumerable things required for the equipment. The President of the Special Treasury controlled the public factories, and the Chartulary of the Wardrobe was also master of the mint.

The estates of the Crown, which were situated chiefly in the Asiatic provinces, were controlled by two central offices. The revenues were managed by the *Chartulary of the Sakellion*, the estates were administered by the *Great Curator*.[1] The pastures in western Asia Minor, however, where horses and mules were reared for the military service, were under the stewardship of another minister, the *Logothete of the Herds*, while the military stables of Malagina were directed by an important and independent officer, the *Count of the Stable*.[2] These latter offices had been in earlier times subordinated to the Count of the Private Estate.

The Sakellion was the central treasury of the State. We have no particular information concerning the methods of disbursement and allocation, or the relations between the various bureaux. But we may suppose that the General Logothete, who received the income arising from taxation, paid directly to other departments the various standing expenses which were defrayed from this revenue, and handed over the surplus to the Sakellion. This treasury, which received directly the net income furnished by the rents of the Private Estates, would thus have contained the specie available for the expenses of military expeditions, for buildings and public works, for the extravagances of the Court and all the private expenses of the Emperor. The annual savings, if savings were effected, seem to have passed into the personal custody of the sovran, so that Irene was able to conceal the treasure which she had accumulated.[3]

The Sakellion itself was under the control of the chief financial minister, the *Sakellarios*, who acted as general comptroller. The special financial ministries were not subordinate to him, but he had the right and duty to inquire

[1] *Ib.* 93, 100.
[2] *Ib.* 111, 113.
[3] The inference is borne out by the fact that Theodora personally handed over the accumulated savings of her husband's reign and her own regency. This would not have been necessary if they had lain in the Sakellion.

into their accounts, and was doubtless responsible for all disbursements from the Sakellion.[1]

Bullion, furnished by the State mines, came to the General Logothete, who must have sent it to the Wardrobe to be coined, while other bullion might be deposited before mintage in the Special Treasury. From the Wardrobe the coins would pass to the Sakellion.

The two principal direct taxes, on which the Imperial finance rested, were the land-tax and the hearth-tax. These had always been the two pillars of the treasury, for the hearth-tax was only a modification of the old capitation, being levied, not on the free man and woman, but on the household.[2] The population of cities, including the capital, did not pay the hearth-tax, at least in the eastern provinces. The leaseholders on the Imperial estates were not exempted from the land-tax, which all landed proprietors and tenants paid; and the householders of Constantinople and the other cities were burdened by an analogous charge on sites, which was known as the "urban tribute."[3] The uniform hearth rate was probably combined in the same schedules with the other tax and collected by the same officials.[4] Other sources of income were the toll on receipts (an income-tax of the most odious form, which Irene was praised for abolishing), death duties, judicial fines, and, above all, the duties levied on imports, which must have amounted to a substantial sum.

The unpopular fiscal measures of the Emperor Nicephorus, which are briefly recapitulated by a hostile monk, afford us a vague glimpse into the obscure financial conditions of the Empire. His official experience as General Logothete had enabled him to acquire an expert knowledge of financial details which few sovrans possessed, and he was convinced that the resources of the State were suffering and its strength endangered by the policy of laxity and indulgence which had been adopted by Irene. In the first year of his reign there was a severe taxation, which may have driven many to embrace the cause of the rebel Bardanes.[5] We may

[1] *Ib.* 82.

[2] Zachariä v. L. *Zur Kenntniss des röm. Steuerwesens*, 9-13.

[3] Monnier, *Études de droit byz.* xviii. 485, and xix. 75, 98, has made it probable that the πολιτικοὶ φόροι represent the *capitatio terrena* applied to towns.

[4] Zachariä v. L. *ib.* 12.

[5] See *Cont. Th.* 8 (τότε = July 803).

probably conjecture that his severity consisted in restoring wholly or partly the taxes which his predecessor had recently abolished. We may be disposed to believe that he acquiesced in the disappearance of the tax on receipts, for if he had revived it, his enemies, who complained of all his financial measures, would hardly have failed to include in their indictment the revival of a burden so justly odious. But we may reasonably assume that he restored the custom duties, which were levied at the toll-houses of Abydos and Hieron, to their former figure, and that he imposed anew upon Constantinople the urban tribute, which Irene had inequitably remitted.

But seven years later, in A.D. 809, in view perhaps of the imminent struggle with the Bulgarians, he prepared a formidable array of new measures to replenish the sinking contents of the treasury.[1]

I. In all cases where taxes had been reduced in amount, they were raised again to the original sum. It is possible that this applied to reductions which had been allowed during the preceding twenty years.[2]

II. The kapnikon or hearth-tax, which had replaced the old capitation-tax, was a fixed annual charge of two miliarisia (2s.).[3] But monastic and religious institutions, orphanages, hospitals, homes for the aged, although legally liable, had been exempted from payment for many years with the connivance of the government. We cannot hesitate to ascribe this inequitable favour to the policy of the pious Empress Irene. It was monstrous that the tenants on the monastic lands should be free from the burden which was imposed on all other farms and estates. Religious institutions multiplied rapidly; private persons were constantly founding new monasteries; and there was a prospect that every year the proceeds of the hearth-tax would suffer further diminution. Nicephorus was fully justified in insisting that this exemption, unauthorised by law, should cease,[4] and in forcing the institutions which had not contri-

[1] Theoph. A.M. 6302 = A.D. 809-810. See Finlay, 98; Paparrhegopulos, Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ ἔθνους, ed. 2, iii. 565 *sqq.*; but especially Monnier, *op. cit.* xix. 67 *sqq.*

[2] This was the limit in the case of some other measures; see below. Monnier, *ib.* 69, thinks that the remissions of A.D. 801 were not reversed till now.

[3] See *Cout. Th.* 54.

[4] Both Finlay and Monnier approve the measure. Theophanes specially mentions Imperial monasteries, but it applied a fortiori to others, as Monnier observes.

buted their due share to the maintenance of the State to pay the arrears of the tax since the year of his own accession.

III. The land-tax, which continued to be the most important source of revenue, was the most troublesome to adjust and to control. Nicephorus ordered that a new survey should be made, and that the tax should be raised in amount by the charge of a shilling on the receipt which the tax-collector delivered.[1] In the case of large estates there was no difficulty in collecting the duties; the whole property[2] was liable for a fixed sum, and if some tenants were too poor to pay, it did not matter to the fisc. But great estates (which were to increase in number and extent in the course of the ninth and tenth centuries) seem at this time not to have been numerous; small proprietorship prevailed. The system which the government employed to secure the treasury against loss when a farmer failed or could not make his land yield the necessary margin of profit did not work satisfactorily. The farms of a commune were grouped together for this purpose, and if one farmer was insolvent, the amount for which he was liable was distributed as an extra-charge (*epibolé*) among the other members of the group. For poorer members this imposition was a considerable hardship, and the circumstance that Nicephorus deemed it expedient to modify the system seems to show that there were many cases of small proprietors reduced to penury. So far as we can interpret our brief record of his measure, he sought to devolve the responsibility for the taxes of the poor upon their richer neighbours. The fiscal debt of a defaulting farm no longer fell upon a whole group, but upon some neighbouring proprietor, and this liability was termed *Allélengyon* or Mutual Security.[3]

[1] Theoph. 486 ἐποπτεύεσθαι πάντας (this would be carried out by the ἐποπται of the General Logothete) καὶ ἀναβιβάζεσθαι τὰ τούτων τέλη (which means, as Monnier rightly says, a raising of the amount), παρέχοντας καὶ χαρτιατικῶν ἕνεκα ἀνὰ κερατίων β'. The last clause explains ἀναβιβάζεσθαι; just as (*ib.*) παρέχοντας καὶ κτλ. explains ἐξοπλίζεσθαι. The context shows that the tax was only on the fiscal acquittances, not, as Finlay says, "on public documents." Both he and Monnier think that ἀνὰ κερ. β' means two keratia in the nomisma, that is one-twelfth, but obviously ἀνά means here each taxpayer (cp. *ib.* ἀνὰ νομισμάτων). The charge was simply two keratia (=1 miliarision), whatever the amount of the payment. If we remember that the kapnikon was a uniform charge of only four keratia, we can find no difficulty in the smallness of the new tax.

[2] All the holdings of which the *possessio* consisted were termed for fiscal purposes ὁμόδουλα.

[3] Theoph. *ib.* προσέταξε στρατεύεσθαι τοὺς πτωχοὺς καὶ ἐξοπλίζεσθαι παρὰ τῶν ὁμοχώρων, παρέχοντας καὶ ἀνὰ ὀκτω-

But what was to happen to the indigent defaulter? Nicephorus enrolled him as a soldier, compelling the same more prosperous neighbour to provide for his military equipment by paying the sum of eighteen and a half nomismata (£11 : 2s.).[1] We are not told whether this sum was regarded as a price for the land, which ought to have been transferred to the possession of the neighbour who was held responsible for it, or even whether the proprietor was compelled to sell it.

The growth of monastic property was an economic evil which was justly regarded by Nicephorus with disquietude, and he adopted the heroic measure of incorporating in the Imperial domains the better lands of some rich monasteries. We cannot doubt that the transaction took the form of a compulsory sale, the price being fixed by the treasury; it is impossible to suppose that it was naked confiscation, which would have been alien to the methods of Roman policy.[2] But the taxes which had been paid on the entire property continued to be exacted, according to our informant, from the diminished estates of the monks. We know too little of the conditions and provisions to enable us to pronounce whether this measure was unreasonably oppressive;[3] but it is clear that Nicephorus was prepared to brave the odium which always descended upon the medieval statesman who set the economic interests of the State above those of its monastic parasites.

But if Nicephorus increased his domains at the expense of pious institutions, he also alienated portions of the Imperial estates, and the motives of this policy are obscure. It is

καίδεκα ἡμίσους νομισμάτων τῷ δημοσίῳ καὶ ἀλληλεγγύως τὰ δημόσια. The passage has been elucidated by Monnier (90 *sqq.*). Zachariä v. Lingenthal (*Gr.-röm. Recht*, 235 n. 763) interpreted ὁμόχωροι as "die Besitzer von ὁμόκηνσα," but then why not, as Monnier asks, ὁμοκήνσων? The ὁμόχωροι = *finitimus* need not be ὁμόκηνσοι. Monnier thinks that Nicephorus introduced this new principle in the application of the ἐπιβολή (a principle "which will subsequently be united to the old one of cadastral solidarity and will make the system more lenient"), in order to hit the rich neighbour, whether ὁμόκηνσοι or not; the same policy which two hundred years later was pursued by Basil II. The same writer observes that the new principle tended to break down the distinction between ὁμόκηνσα and ὁμόδουλα as separate fiscal unities, and condemns it as a triumph over "good sense, tradition, and justice" (p. 97). It was certainly a defeat of tradition.

[1] Cp. last note.

[2] If no price had been paid, Theophanes would assuredly have used stronger language.

[3] It is quite possible that this obligation applied only to the first year after the act; or it may have been taken into account in fixing the purchase money.

recorded as a hardship that he sold Imperial lands on the coasts of Asia Minor, at a fixed price, to unwilling purchasers, who, accustomed to sea-faring and trade, knew little or nothing about agriculture. Here again we must remember that the case is presented by an enemy, and that we are ignorant of all the circumstances of the alleged coercion.

IV. In his diligent quest of ways and means, the sudden acquisition of wealth, which we might now classify under the title of unearned increment, did not escape the notice of Nicephorus as a suitable object of taxation. He imposed heavy charges upon those who could be proved to have suddenly risen from poverty to affluence through no work or merit of their own. He treated them as treasure-finders, and thus brought them under the law of Justinian by which treasure-trove was confiscated.[1] The worst of this measure was that it opened a fruitful field to the activity of informers.

V. Death duties were another source of revenue which claimed the Emperor's attention. The tax of 5 per cent on inheritances which had been instituted by the founder of the Empire seems to have been abolished by Justinian;[2] but a duty of the same kind had been reimposed, and was extended to successions in the direct line, which had formerly been exempted. The lax government of Irene had allowed the tax to be evaded, by some at least of those who inherited property from their fathers or grandfathers;[3] and when Nicephorus ordered that it should be exacted from all who had so inherited during the last twenty years, many poor men were in consternation.

VI. It is remarkable that a statesman possessing the financial experience of Nicephorus should have shared the ancient prejudice against usury so far as to forbid the lending of money at interest altogether. The deliverance of society from the evils attendant upon merciless usury was dearly purchased by the injury which was inflicted upon industry and trade. The enterprise of merchants who required capital was paralyzed, and Nicephorus was forced to come to their

[1] Theoph. 487$_9$. The measure was retrospective for twenty years.

[2] *C.I.* 6, 23, 33; Monnier, xix. 83.

[3] Monnier, *ib.*, has pointed out that the stress lies on the words ἐκ πάντων ἢ πατέρων in the passage of Theophanes. The words clearly imply that Nicephorus was only enforcing the payment of an old tax, which had been probably first imposed by the Heraclians or Isaurians.

rescue. He aided them in a way which was highly advantageous to the treasury. He advanced loans of twelve pounds of gold about (£518), exacting the high interest of 16⅔ per cent.[1] The government was not bound by the prohibition of private usury, which it is possible that the successor of Nicephorus prudently abolished.[2]

VII. The custom duties, which were levied at Abydos and had been remitted by Irene in her unscrupulous desire to conciliate the favour of Constantinople, had been immediately re-enacted by her successor. Household slaves of a superior kind were among the most valuable chattels which reached the capital by the route of the Hellespont, and the treasury profited by the cooks and pages and dancers who were sold to minister to the comfort and elegance of the rich families of Byzantium. But there was also a demand for these articles of luxury among the inhabitants of the Aegean coasts and islands, who could purchase them without paying the heavy charges that were exacted in the custom-houses of Abydos.[3] Nicephorus abolished this immunity by imposing a tax of two gold pieces (24 shillings) a head on all such slaves who were sold to the west of the Hellespont.

The chronicler Theophanes, whose hostile pen has recorded these fiscal measures, completes his picture of the Emperor's oppressions by alleging that he used to pry into men's private affairs, employing spies to watch their domestic life and encouraging ill-disposed servants to slander or betray their masters. "His cruelties to the rich, the middle class, and the poor in the Imperial city were beyond description." In the

[1] Modern commentators seem to have missed the point of this measure. Monnier implies that all *ναύκληροι* were forced to borrow the sum of twelve pounds from the treasury whether they wanted it or not. This is incredible. The coercion consisted in compelling them, if they wanted a loan, to borrow a fixed sum from the State and from no other lender; other lenders were excluded by the law forbidding private usury.

[2] So Monnier, xix. 89, conjectures. Usury was again forbidden by Basil, but Leo VI. (*Nov.* 83) permitted it, with the restriction that interest should not exceed 4½ per cent.

[3] Some duty must have been paid to the *kommerkiarioi* in the ports, but it was a small one. Slaves who were used for rough and rural work were probably, as Monnier observes, chiefly imported from the Euxine regions, by the Bosphorus. The duty on them, which would be paid at Hieron, was doubtless trifling. Justinian established the toll-house at Abydos. *παραφύλαξ ἀβυδικός* or simply *ἀβυδικός* (*ἀβυδιτικός*) came to be a general term for *λιμενάρχης*. See M. Goudas in *Βυζαντίς* i. 468 *sqq.* (1909), who cites seals of *κουμερκιάριοι καὶ ἀβυδικοί* of Thessalonica. *ἐξαβυδίζω*, to pass Abydos, was used for sailing into the Aegean; see Simeon, *Cont. Georg.* ed. Mur. 638₈.

last two years of his reign, he excited the murmurs of the inhabitants by a strict enforcement of the market dues on the sales of animals and vegetables, by quartering soldiers in monasteries and episcopal mansions, by selling for the public benefit gold and silver plate which had been dedicated in churches, by confiscating the property of wealthy patricians.[1] He raised the taxes paid by churches and monasteries, and he commanded officials, who had long evaded the taxation to which they were liable as citizens, to discharge the arrears which they had failed to pay during his own reign.[2] This last order, striking the high functionaries of the Court, seemed so dangerous to Theodosius Salibaras, a patrician who had considerable influence with the Emperor, that he ventured to remonstrate. "My lord," he said, "all are crying out at us, and in the hour of temptation all will rejoice at our fall." Nicephorus is said to have made the curious reply: "If God has hardened my heart like Pharaoh's, what good can my subjects look for? Do not expect from Nicephorus save only the things which thou seest."

The laxity and indulgence which had been permitted in the financial administration of the previous reign rendered the severity of Nicephorus particularly unwelcome and unpopular. The most influential classes were hit by his strict insistence on the claims of the treasury. The monks, who suspected him of heterodoxy and received no favours at his hands, cried out against him as an oppressor. Some of his measures may have been unwise or unduly oppressive—we have not the means of criticizing them; but in his general policy he was simply discharging his duty, an unpopular duty, to the State.

Throughout the succeeding reigns we obtain no such glimpse into the details or vicissitudes of Imperial finance. If there was a temporary reaction under Michael I. against the severities of Nicephorus, the following Emperors must have drawn the reins of their financial administration sufficiently tight. After the civil war, indeed, Michael II. rewarded the provinces which had been faithful to his cause by a temporary remission of half the hearth-tax. The facts seem to show that the Amorian rulers were remarkably capable and successful in their

[1] Theoph. 488-489.

[2] In May A.D. 811 (*ib.*).

finance. On one hand, there was always an ample surplus in the treasury, until Michael III. at the very end of his reign deplenished it by wanton wastefulness. On the other, no complaints are made of fiscal oppression during this period, notwithstanding the fact that the chroniclers would have rejoiced if they had had any pretext for bringing such a charge against heretics like Theophilus and his father.

If our knowledge of the ways and means by which the Imperial government raised its revenue is sadly incomplete and in many particulars conjectural, we have no information as to its amount in the ninth century, and the few definite figures which have been recorded by chance are insufficient to enable us to guess either at the income or the expenditure. It is a remarkable freak of fortune that we should possess relatively ample records of the contemporary finance of the Caliphate,[1] and should be left entirely in the dark as to the budget of the Empire.

We have some figures bearing on the revenue in the twelfth century, and they supply a basis for a minimum estimate of the income in the ninth, when the State was stronger and richer. We learn that Constantinople alone furnished the treasury with 7,300,000 nomismata or £4,380,000, including the profits of taxation on commerce and the city markets.[2] It has been supposed that the rest of the Empire contributed five times as much, so that the total revenue would be more than £26,280,000.[3] At this period the greater part of Asia Minor was in the hands of the Seljuk Turks, while, on the other hand, the Empire possessed Bulgaria and Crete. It might therefore be argued that the Emperor Theophilus, who also held Calabria and received a certain yearly sum from Dalmatia, may have enjoyed a revenue of twenty-seven to thirty millions.

But the proportion of 1 to 5, on which this calculation

[1] See below, p. 236.

[2] Benjamin of Tudela, p. 13 (ed. and tr. M. N. Adler, 1907); cp. Paparrhegopulos, *Ἱστορία τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ ἔθνους*, iii. 74.

[3] Cp. Andreades, *Les Finances byz.* 20. In 1205 the Crusaders assured Baldwin the daily income of 30,000 nomismata = £6,570,000 annually. Supposing this represents a quarter of the revenue of the whole Empire before the conquest, we get £26,280,000, a figure which agrees with the other result (but in both cases the proportions are quite problematical). See Paparrhegopulos, *op. cit.* iv. 44 *sqq.*; Diehl, *Études byzantines*, 125; Andreades, *loc. cit.* For the whole question of the finances cp. also Kalligas, *Μελέται* 268 *sqq.*

rests, is such an arbitrary hypothesis that we must seek some other means of forming a rough evaluation. We are told that in the twelfth century the island of Corcyra yielded 1500 pounds of gold or £64,800 to the Imperial treasury.[1] The total area of the Imperial territory in the reign of Theophilus (counting Sicily as lost, and not including Calabria, Dalmatia, Cyprus, or Cherson) was about 546,000 kilometres.[2] The area of Corcyra is 770, so that if its contribution to the treasury was as large in the ninth as in the twelfth century, and was proportional to its size, the amount of the whole revenue would be about £46,000,000. But the population of the islands was undoubtedly denser than in most regions of the mainland, and it is probably an insufficient set-off to have left out of account Calabria and some other outlying Imperial possessions, and to have made no allowance for the vast amount contributed by Constantinople. Yet this line of calculation suggests at least that the Imperial revenue may have exceeded thirty millions and was nearly half as large again as the revenue of the Caliphs.[3]

If we accept £25,000,000 as a minimum figure for the revenue arising from taxation of all kinds, we must add a considerable sum for the profits arising from the Imperial Estates in Asia Minor. Disregarding this source of income, which we have no data for estimating, we must remember that the weight of gold which if sent to the mint to-day would be coined into twenty-five million sovereigns represented at Byzantium a far higher purchasing power. It is now generally assumed that the value of money was five times as great, and this is probably not an exaggeration.[4] On this hypothesis the Imperial revenue from taxation would correspond in real value to £125,000,000.

It is impossible to conjecture how the expenditure was

[1] John of Brompton, *Chronicon*, p. 1219 (Twysden's *Hist. Angl. scriptores X.* vol. i., 1652), states that the island of Cunfu (Corfu) yielded "quintallos auri purissimi quindecim annuatim; et pondus quintalli est pondus centum librarum auri" (A.D. 1290).

[2] I have based this on the figures given by Beloch in his *Bevölkerung der griechisch-römischen Welt* (1886).

[3] See below p. 236. The statement of Nicephorus Gregoras, viii. 6, p. 317 (ed. Bonn), that in A.D. 1321 the revenue was increased by special efforts (of the τελῶναι and φορολόγοι) to the sum of one million nomismata (£600,000), cannot be utilized. The conditions of the time were exceptional. I do not understand why Zachariä v. Lingenthal (*Zur Kenntniss*, 14) refers this statement to the land-tax only.

[4] See Paparrhegopulos, *loc. cit.*; Diehl, *loc. cit.*; Andreades, 7.

apportioned. Probably a sum of more than £1,000,000 was annually spent on the maintenance of the military establishment, not including the cost of campaigns. The navy, the civil service in all its branches, religious foundations, doles to charitable institutions, liberal presents frequently given to foreign potentates for political purposes, represented large claims on the treasury, while the upkeep of a luxurious Court, and the obligatory gifts (*εἰσεβίαι*) on stated occasions to crowds of officials, consumed no small portion of the Emperor's income. Theophilus must have laid out more than a million a year on his buildings.[1] It is only for the army and navy that we possess some figures, but these are too uncertain and partial to enable us to reconstruct a military budget.

Perhaps the most striking evidence of the financial prosperity of the Empire is the international circulation of its gold currency. "In the period of 800 years from Diocletian to Alexius Comnenus the Roman government never found itself compelled to declare bankruptcy or stop payments. Neither the ancient nor the modern world can offer a complete parallel to this phenomenon. This prodigious stability of Roman financial policy therefore secured the "byzant" its universal currency. On account of its full weight it passed with all the neighbouring nations as a valid medium of exchange. By her money Byzantium controlled both the civilised and the barbarian worlds."[2]

§ 2. *Military and Naval Organization*

I. Under the Amorian dynasty considerable administrative changes were made in the organization of the military provinces into which the Empire was divided, in order to meet new conditions. In the Isaurian period there were five great Themes in Asia Minor, governed by stratêgoi, in the following order of dignity and importance: the Anatolic, the Armeniac, the Thrakesian, the Opsikian, and the Bukellarian. This system of "the Five Themes," as they were called, lasted till the reign of Michael II., if not till that of

[1] The cost of St. Sophia is said to have been 300,000 gold litrai = £12,960,000. The buildings of Theophilus, including the Palace of Bryas, cannot have cost less. His reign lasted a little more than twelve years.

[2] Gelzer, *Byz. Kulturgesch.* 78.

Theophilus.[1] But it is probable that before that time the penetration of the Moslems in the frontier regions had rendered it necessary to delimit from the Anatolic and Armeniac provinces districts which were known as kleisurarchies,[2] and were under minor commanders, kleisurarchs, who could take measures for defending the country independently of the stratêgoi. In this way the kleisurarchy of Seleucia, west of Cilicia, was cut off from the Anatolic Theme, and that of Charsianon from the Armeniac.[3] Southern Cappadocia, which was constantly exposed to Saracen invasion through the Cilician gates, was also formed into a frontier province.[4] We have no record of the times at which these changes were made, but we may suspect that they were of older date than the reign of Theophilus.

This energetic Emperor made considerable innovations in the thematic system throughout the Empire, and this side of his administration has not been observed or appreciated. In Asia Minor he created two new Themes, Paphlagonia and Chaldia.[5] Paphlagonia seems to have been cut off from the Bukellarian province; probably it had a separate existence already, as a "katepanate," for the governor of the new Theme, while he was a stratêgos, bore the special title of *katepano*, which looks like the continuation of an older arrangement.[6]

[1] *Cont. Th.* 6 τῶν πέντε θεμάτων τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἀνατολήν, A.D. 803; and Theodore Stud. *Epp.* ii. 64, p. 1284 ἐπὶ γὰρ τῶν π. Θ. τέθειται, A.D. 819 (both these passages record the temporary commission of these Themes to a superior μονοστράτηγος; cp. above, p. 10). As it is tolerably certain that no additional Themes were created in the last year of Leo or during the revolt of Thomas, it follows that A.D. 824 is a higher limit for the creation of the two or three new Themes which existed in A.D. 838. Other considerations make it probable that Theophilus was the innovator.

[2] The *kleisûrai* of Asia Minor were the passes of the Taurus, and, when the Saracens had won positions north of the Eastern Taurus, also of the Anti-taurus.

[3] The existence of the kleisurarchies of Charsianon and Seleucia at the beginning of the reign of Michael III. is proved by Ibn Khurdadhbah, 78. The former appears duly in the *Taktikon Uspenski*, 123; the omission of Seleucia is probably due to corruption.

[4] This also is omitted in our text of *Takt. Usp.*, doubtless a scribe's error. It appears as a kleisurarchy in Ibn Fakih's list: Brooks, *Arabic Lists*, 75 (Koron was the seat of the governor).

[5] *Takt. Usp.* 111-113 enumerates seven Asiatic stratêgoi, including those of Paphlagonia and Chaldia. This agrees with Ibn Fakih, *ib.* 73-76; and is borne out by Euodios (*Acta 42 Mart. Amor.* 65), who, referring to A.D. 838, mentions "the Seven Themes." The author of the *Vita Theodorae imp.* (9) speaks of στρατηγοὶ ὀκτὼ at Amorion in that year. This (whether anachronism or not) cannot be pressed. Cp. Nikitin's note on Euodios (p. 244). He is wrong in supposing (p. 246, n.) that Cappadocia was a Theme at this time, though he might have quoted *Cont. Th.* 120 τῷ στρατ. Καππ., which, in view of the other evidence, must be explained as an anachronism.

[6] Constantine, *De adm. imp.* 178; *Cer.* 788. The simplest explanation

The rise of Paphlagonia in importance may be connected with the active Pontic policy of Theophilus. It is not without significance that Paphlagonian ships played a part in the expedition which he sent to Cherson,[1] and we may conjecture with probability that the creation of the Theme of the Klimata on the north of the Euxine and that of Paphlagonia on the south were not isolated acts, but were part of the same general plan. The institution of the Theme of Chaldia, which was cut off from the Armeniac Theme (probably A.D. 837),[2] may also be considered as part of the general policy of strengthening Imperial control over the Black Sea and its coastlands, here threatened by the imminence of the Moslem power in Armenia. To the south of Chaldia was the duchy of Koloneia, also part of the Armeniac circumscription.[3] In the following reign (before A.D. 863) both Koloneia and Cappadocia were elevated to the rank of Themes.[4]

The Themes of Europe, which formed a class apart from those of Asia, seem at the end of the eighth century to have been four in number—Thrace, Macedonia, Hellas, and Sicily. There were also a number of provinces of inferior rank—Calabria, under its Dux; Dalmatia and Crete, under governors who had the title of *archon*;[5] while Thessalonica with the adjacent region was still subject to the ancient Praetorian

is that Paphlagonia was a katepanate before it acquired the rank of a stratêgia. Michael, *Vita Theod. Stud.* 309, referring to the reign of Michael II., speaks of τὸ θέμα τῶν Παφλαγόνων, but the use of θέμα in such a passage cannot be urged as evidence for the date.

[1] See below, p. 416.

[2] The circumstances are discussed below, p. 261. Chaldia may have also existed already as a separate command of less dignity under a Duke. For *Takt. Usp.*, which mentions the stratêgos, names also in another place (119) ὁ δοὺξ Χαλδίας. I explain this as a survival from an older official list, which the compiler neglected to eliminate. In the same document ἄρχοντες of Chaldia are also mentioned. These were probably local authorities in some of the towns, like the archons of Cherson.

[3] The evidence for a *Dux* of Koloneia under Theophilus is in an account of the Amorian martyrs dating from A.D. 845-847 (*Acta* 27, 29). The Emperor before his death directed that Kallistos Melissenos should be sent to Koloneia καὶ τὴν τοῦ δουκὸς διέπειν ἀρχήν. Kallistos is called a turmarch in Simeon, *Add. Georg.* 805; Koloneia was doubtless a turmarchy in the Armeniac Theme. Koloneia is not mentioned by the Arabic writers who depend on Al-Garmi or in the *Takt. Usp.* I conclude that till after the death of Theophilus it had not been separated from the Armeniac Theme, or, in other words, that Kallistos was the first Dux. Another inference may be that the *Taktikon* represents the official world immediately after the accession of Michael III.

[4] *Cont. Th.* 181. Cp. Brooks, *op. cit.* 70, for Masudi's evidence.

[5] Calabria: Gay, *L'Italie mér.* 7; *Takt. Usp.* 124. Dalmatia: ὁ ἄρχων Δ., *ib.* Crete: *ib.* 119 ὁ ἄρχων Κ. (which I interpret as a case, like that of Chaldia, where an older office is retained in the list).

Prefect of Illyricum, an anomalous survival from the old system of Constantine.[1] It was doubtless the Slavonic revolt in the reign of Nicephorus I. that led to the reorganization of the Helladic province, and the constitution of the Peloponnesus as a distinct Theme,[2] so that Hellas henceforward meant Northern Greece. The Mohammadan descent upon Crete doubtless led to the appointment of a stratêgos instead of an archon of Crete,[3] and the Bulgarian wars to the suppression of the Praetorian prefect by a stratêgos of Thessalonica.[4] The Theme of Kephalonia (with the Ionian Islands) seems to have existed at the beginning of the ninth century;[5] but the Saracen menace to the Hadriatic and the western coasts of Greece may account for the foundation of the Theme of Dyrrhachium, a city which probably enjoyed, like the communities of the Dalmatian coast, a certain degree of local independence.[6] If so, we may compare the policy of Theophilus in instituting the stratêgos of the Klimata with control over the magistrates of Cherson.[7]

It is to be noted that the Theme of Thrace did not include the region in the immediate neighbourhood of Constantinople, cut off by the Long Wall of Anastasius, who had made special provisions for the government of this region. In the ninth century it was still a separate circumscription, probably under the military command of the Count of the Walls,[8] and Arabic writers designate it by the curious name Talaya or Tafla.[9]

A table will exhibit the general result of all these changes:

ASIATIC THEMES

Stratêgiai . { 1. Anatolic. 2. Armeniac. 3. Thrakesian. 4. Opsikian. 5. Bukellarian. 6. Cappadocia. 7. Paphlagonia. 8. Chaldia. 9. Koloneia.

Kleisurarchiai — 10. Charsianon. 11. Seleucia.

[1] Theodore Stud. *Epp.* i. 3, p. 917 (τοῦ ὑπάρχου). This evidence is overlooked by Gelzer, *Themenverfassung*, 38 *sqq.*

[2] First mentioned in Scr. Incert. 336 (A.D. 813).

[3] See below, p. 289.

[4] *Takt. Usp.* 115.

[5] See below, p. 324. *Takt. Usp.* 113.

[6] *Ib.* 115; cp. 124 οἱ ἄρχοντες τοῦ Δυρραχίου.

[7] See below, p. 417.

[8] See Bury, *op. cit.* 67-68.

[9] Talaya seems to be the best attested form (Brooks, *op. cit.* 69, 72). Gelzer, 86 *sqq.*, operates with Tafla and thinks the district was called ἡ τάφρος. The solution has not yet been discov

NAVAL THEMES

1. Kibyrrhaiot. 2. Aigaion Pelagos.

EUROPEAN (AND OTHER) THEMES

Stratêgiai	1. Macedonia. 2. Thrace. 3. Hellas. 4. Peloponnesus. 5. Thessalonica. 6. Dyrrhachium. 7. Kephalonia. 8. Sicily. 9. Klimata.
Ducate	10. Calabria.
Archontates	11. Dalmatia. 12. Cyprus.

II. There were considerable differences in the ranks and salaries of the stratêgoi. In the first place, it is to be noticed that the governors of the Asiatic provinces, the admirals of the naval Themes, and the stratêgoi of Thrace and Macedonia were paid by the treasury, while the governors of the European Themes paid themselves a fixed amount from the custom dues levied in their own provinces.[1] Hence for administrative purposes Thrace and Macedonia are generally included among the Asiatic Themes. The rank of patrician was bestowed as a rule upon the Anatolic, Armeniac, and Thrakesian stratêgoi, and these three received a salary of 40 lbs. of gold (£1728). The pay of the other stratêgoi and kleisurarchs ranged from 36 to 12 lbs,[2] but their stipends were somewhat reduced in the course of the ninth century. We can easily calculate that the total cost of paying the governors of the eastern provinces (including Macedonia and Thrace) did not fall short of £15,000.

[1] Constantine, *Cer.* 697, referring to the reign of Leo VI. There is every reason to suppose that the system was older.

[2] Ibn Khurdadhbah, 85. "The pay of the officers is at the maximum 40 lbs; it descends to 36, 24, 12, 6 and even to 1 lb." The salaries which obtained under Leo VI. (*Cer.*, *ib.*) enable us to apply this information. There we have 5 classes:—(1) 40 lbs.: Anatol., Arm., Thrakes. (2) 30 lbs.: Opsik., Bukell., Maced. (3) 20 lbs.: Capp., Chars., Paphl., Thrace, Kol. (4) 10 lbs.: Kib., Samos, Aig. Pel. (5) 5 lbs.: 4 kleisurarchies. It is clear that in the interval between Theophilus and Leo VI. the salaries, with the exception of the highest, had been lowered (*Cer.*, *ib.*). If we apply the figures given by Ibn Khurdadhbah to the corresponding categories in the table of Themes under Michael III. (36 lbs. = £1555 : 4s.; 24 lbs. = £1036 : 16s.; 12 lbs. = £518 : 8s.; 6 lbs. = £259 : 4s.), we get for the total amount paid to the military commanders £16,558 : 16s. But it must be remembered that the reduction of salaries may have been made under Michael III., or even before the death of Theophilus, and may have been connected with the increase in the number of the Themes. It seems, for instance, probable that when Koloneia became a stratêgia the salary may have been fixed at 20 lbs. But the data are sufficient for a rough estimate.

In these provinces there is reason to suppose that the number of troops, who were chiefly cavalry, was about 80,000.[1] They were largely settled on military lands, and their pay was small. The recruit, who began service at a very early age, received one nomisma (12s.) in his first year, two in his second, and so on, till the maximum of twelve (£7 : 4s.), or in some cases of eighteen (£10 : 16s.), was reached.[2]

The army of the Theme was divided generally into two, sometimes three, turms or brigades; the turm into drungoi or battalions; and the battalion into banda or companies. The corresponding commanders were entitled turmarchs, drungaries, and counts. The number of men in the company, the sizes of the battalion and the brigade, varied widely in the different Themes. The original norm seems to have been a bandon of 200 men and a drungos of 5 banda. It is very doubtful whether this uniform scheme still prevailed in the reign of Theophilus. It is certain that at a somewhat later period the bandon varied in size up to the maximum of 400, and the drungos oscillated between the limits of 1000 and 3000 men. Originally the turm was composed of 5 drungoi (5000 men), but this rule was also changed. The number of drungoi in

[1] Ibn Kudama, 197 *sqq.*, gives the total for the Asiatic provinces as 70,000, but the sum of his items does not correspond. The number of troops in Paphlagonia is omitted, and Gelzer is probably right in supplying 4000 (*op. cit.* 98). He is also right in observing that the figure 4000 assigned to the Armeniacs must be wrong, but I cannot agree with his emendation, 10,000. For the number of the Thrakesians 6000 must also be incorrect; they cannot have been less numerous than the Bukellarians, who were 8000. I would therefore write 8000 for the Thrakesians, and 8000 for the Armeniacs (not too few for this Theme reduced by the separation of Chaldia and Charsianon). With these corrections we get the required sum 70,000. The same author gives 5000 for Thrace, to which we must add another 5000 for Macedonia (but these numbers may be under the mark). Ibn Khurdadhbah (84) asserts that the whole army numbered 120,000 men, and a patrician (*i.e.* a stratégos) commanded 10,000. The actual organization never corresponded to this scheme, and it has no historical value. The figures 120,000 may indeed roughly correspond to the actual total, if we include the Tagmata and all the forces in Hellas and the Western provinces.

[2] Ibn Khurdadhbah makes two contradictory statements about the pay: (1) it varies between 18 and 12 dinars a year (84), and (2) beardless youths are recruited, they receive 1 dinar the first year, 2 the second, and so on till their twelfth year of service, when they earn the full pay of 12 dinars. Perhaps the explanation is that the first passage only takes account of the "full pay." This may have varied in different Themes; or higher pay than 12 dinars may have been that of the Tagmatic troops, or of the dekarchs (corporals). In any case Gelzer is wrong in his estimate of the pay (120). He commits the error of taking the dinar to be equivalent to a franc (or rather 91 pfennige). But the dinar represents the Gre nomisma. The dirham (drach corresponds to a franc.

the turm was reduced to three, so that the brigade which the turmarch commanded ranged from 3000 upwards.

The pay of the officers, according to one account, ranged from 3 lbs. to 1 lb., and perhaps the subalterns in the company (the kentarchs and pentekontarchs) are included; but the turmarchs in the larger themes probably received a higher salary than 3 lbs. If we assume that the average bandon was composed of 300 men and the average drungos of 1500, and further that the pay of the drungary was 3 lbs., that of the count 2 lbs. and that of the kentarch 1 lb., the total sum expended on these officers would have amounted to about £64,000. But these assumptions are highly uncertain. Our data for the pay of the common soldiers form a still vaguer basis for calculation; but we may conjecture, with every reserve, that the salaries of the armies of the Eastern Themes, including generals and officers, amounted to not less than £500,000.[1]

The armies of the Themes formed only one branch of the military establishment. There were four other privileged and differently organized cavalry regiments known as the Tagmata:[2] (1) the Schools, (2) the Excubitors, (3) the Arithmos or Vigla, and (4) the Hikanatoi. The first three were of ancient foundation; the fourth was a new institution of Nicephorus I., who created a child, his grandson Nicetas (afterwards the Patriarch Ignatius), its first commander.[3] The commanders of these troops were entitled Domestics, except that of the Arithmos, who was known as the Drungary of the Vigla or Watch. Some companies of these Tagmatic troops may have been stationed at Constantinople, where the Domestics usually resided, but the greater part of them were quartered in Thrace,

[1] We cannot, I think, use the evidence in the documents concerning the Cretan expeditions of A.D. 902 and 949 (in Constantine, *Cer.* ii. chaps. 44 and 45) for controlling the Arabic statements as to the pay of soldiers and officers. For instance, we find the detachment of 3000 Thrakesians receiving 2 nomismata each (p. 655) in A.D. 902; and men of the Sebastean Theme receiving 4 n. each (p. 656), while the officers of the same Theme are paid—turmarchs 12 n., drungaries 5 n. It seems probable that these sums represent extra pay given for special expeditions oversea, and are outside the regular military budget. See below. We cannot draw conclusions from the sum of 1100 pounds = £475,222 which was sent in A.D. 809 to pay the army on the Strymon, as we do not know the number of the troops or whether the sum included arrears.

[2] See Bury, *Imp. Admin. System*, 47 *sqq.*

[3] Nicet. *Vita Ign.* 213.

Macedonia, and Bithynia. The question of their numbers is perplexing. We are variously told that in the ninth century they were each 6000 or 4000 strong, but in the tenth the numbers seem to have been considerably less, the strength of the principal Tagma, the Scholarians, amounting to no more than 1500 men. If we accept one of the larger figures for the reign of Theophilus, we must suppose that under one of his successors these troops were reduced in number.[1]

The Domestic of the Schools preceded in rank all other military commanders except the stratêgos of the Anatolic Theme, and the importance of the post is shown by the circumstance that it was filled by such men as Manuel and Bardas. In later times it became still more important; in the tenth century, when a military expedition against the Saracens was not led by the Emperor in person, the Domestic of the Schools was *ex officio* the Commander-in-Chief.[2] The Drungary of the Watch and his troops were distinguished from the other Tagmata by the duties they performed as sentinels in campaigns which were led by the Emperor in person. The Drungary was responsible for the safety of the camp, and carried the orders of the Emperor to the generals.

Besides the Thematic and the Tagmatic troops, there were the Numeri, a regiment of infantry commanded by a Domestic;[3] and the forces which were under the charge of the Count or Domestic of the Walls, whose duty seems to have been the defence of the Long Wall of Anastasius.[4] These troops played little part in history. More important was the Imperial Guard or Hetaireia,[5] which, recruited from barbarians, formed the garrison of the Palace, and attended the Emperor on campaigns.

[1] See Constantine, *Cer.* 666. Cp. Bury, *op. cit.* 54, where, however, the reduction of the Excubitors and Hikanatoi is probably exaggerated, as the numbers given in *Cer.* seem to refer to the contingents stationed in Asia, and not to include those in Thrace and Macedonia.

[2] Hence the Domestic of the Schools developed into the Domestic of the East.

[3] They numbered 4000, according to Kudama. Cp. Bury, *op. cit.* 65.

[4] See above, p. 224.

[5] Probably organized in the course of the ninth century, cp. Bury, *op. cit.* 107. They were under the command of Hetaeriarchs, and associated with them were small corps of Khazars and Pharganoi. These guards were so well remunerated that they had to purchase their posts for considerable sums, on which their salaries represented an annuity varying from about $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 per cent (Constantine, *Cer.* 692-693). For example, a Khazar who received £7 : 4s. had paid for enrolment £302 : 8s. This system applied to most of the Palace offices.

The care which was spent on providing for the health and comfort of the soldiers is illustrated by the baths at Dorylaion, the first of the great military stations in Asia Minor. This bathing establishment impressed the imagination of oriental visitors, and it is thus described by an Arabic writer:[1]

> Dorylaion possesses warm springs of fresh water, over which the Emperors have constructed vaulted buildings for bathing. There are seven basins, each of which can accommodate a thousand men. The water reaches the breast of a man of average height, and the overflow is discharged into a small lake.

In military campaigns, careful provision was made for the wounded. There was a special corps of officers called *deputatoi*,[2] whose duty was to rescue wounded soldiers and take them to the rear, to be tended by the medical staff. They carried flasks of water, and had two ladders attached to the saddles of their horses on the left side, so that, having mounted a fallen soldier with the help of one ladder, the deputatos could himself mount instantly by the other and ride off.

It is interesting to observe that not only did the generals and superior officers make speeches to the soldiers, in old Hellenic fashion, before a battle, but there was a band of professional orators, called *cantatores*, whose duty was to stimulate the men by their eloquence during the action. Some of the combatants themselves, if they had the capacity, might be chosen for this purpose. A writer on the art of war suggests the appropriate chords which the cantatores might touch, and if we may infer their actual practice, the leading note was religious. "We are fighting in God's cause; the issue lies with him, and he will not favour the enemy because of their unbelief."

III. Naval necessities imposed an increase of expenditure for the defence of the Empire in the ninth century.[3] The navy, which had been efficiently organized under the Heraclian dynasty and had performed memorable services against the attacks of the Omayyad Caliphs, had been degraded in importance and suffered to decline by the policy of the Isaurian monarchs. We may criticize their neglect of the naval arm,

[1] Ibn Khurdadhbah, 81.

[2] *Deputati*. The word sometimes appears as δεσποτάτοι. This is not a scribe's error but a popular corruption. Leo, *Tact.* 12, § 51, 53.

[3] See Bury, *Naval Policy*.

but we must remember that it was justified by immediate impunity, for it was correlated with the simultaneous decline in the naval power of the Saracens. The Abbasids who transferred the centre of the Caliphate from Syria to Mesopotamia undertook no serious maritime enterprises. The dangers of the future lay in the west and not in the east,—in the ambitions of the Mohammadan rulers of Africa and Spain, whose only way of aggression was by sea. Sicily was in peril throughout the eighth century, and Constantine V. was forced to reorganize her fleet;[1] accidents and internal divisions among the Saracens helped to save her till the reign of Michael II. We shall see in another chapter how the Mohammadans then obtained a permanent footing in the island, the beginning of its complete conquest, and how they occupied Crete. These events necessitated a new maritime policy. To save Sicily, to recover Crete, were not the only problems. The Imperial possessions in South Italy were endangered; Dalmatia, the Ionian islands, and the coasts of Greece were exposed to the African fleets. It was a matter of the first importance to preserve the control of the Hadriatic. The reorganization of the marine establishment was begun by the Amorian dynasty, though its effects were not fully realized till a later period.

The naval forces of the Empire consisted of the Imperial fleet,[2] which was stationed at Constantinople and commanded by the Drungary of the Navy,[3] and the Provincial fleets[4] of the Kibyrrhaeot Theme, the Aegean,[5] Hellas, Peloponnesus, and Kephalonia.[6] The Imperial fleet must now have been increased in strength, and the most prominent admiral of the age, Ooryphas, may have done much to reorganize it. An armament of three hundred warships was sent against Egypt in A.D. 853, and the size of this force may be held to mark the progress which had been made.[7] Not long after the death of Michael III. four hundred vessels were operating off the coast of Apulia.[8]

We have some figures which may give us a general idea

[1] Amari, *Storia*, i. 175 n.

[2] τὸ βασιλικοπλοΐμον.

[3] ὁ δρουγγάριος τοῦ πλοΐμου. For him and his staff, see Bury, *Imp. Adm. System*, 108 *sqq.*

[4] ὁ θεματικὸς στόλος.

[5] The naval Theme of Samos seems to have been of later date than the Amorian period.

[6] Paphlagonia had also a small flotilla.

[7] See below, p. 292.

[8] Bury, *Naval Policy*, 33.