A Concise History of the Church;

From the Apostolic Era to the Establishment of the Reformation.
By Alfred E. Knight.
London: G. Morrish, 20, Paternoster Square, & 114, Camberwell Road, S.E.

"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." — Eph. 5:22.
"He is the head of the body, the church." — Col. 1:18.

Contents.

A.D. 1094-1100.
New expedient of Rome to Promote her temporal Interests — The Crusades — Urban II. and Peter the Hermit preach the first Crusade — Exploits and Defeats of Peter's Army — The first Crusade — Difficulties by the way — Preliminary Engagements — Dissipation of the Army — Capture of Antioch by the Crusaders — Kerboga comes to the Relief of the Mahometans — The Crusaders saved by Superstition — They continue their March — First sight of Jerusalem — Extremities of the Army — The Army again Saved by Superstition — Capture of Jerusalem — Terrible Slaughter of the Mahometans — Godfrey de Bouillon created Defender and Baron of the Holy Sepulchre — Return of the Army

Zwingli — Death of Oecolampadius — Grief of Luther — Account of his closing days — His Domestic Life — His last moments and Death at Eisleben — His Funeral — The Council of Trent — Condition of affairs in Germany at his Death — Epitome of events to the Death of the German Emperor

Measures — Incompetent Bishops — The Reformed Doctrines in the Universities — Fall of the Protector — The New Government — Death of the King — Accession of Mary — Her Hatred for Cranmer — Her Promise of Toleration — Romanism Restored and its Consequences — Examination and Martyrdom of John Rogers — Of Sanders, Hooper, Taylor, and Farrar — "Our Lady's Matins" — "The Psalter of our Lady" — Martyrdom of Ridley and Latimer — Cranmer Recants — His Sorrow, Restoration, Confession, and Martyrdom — Statistics of the Persecution during Mary's reign — Death of Mary, November 17th, 1558 — Death of Cardinal Pole — Accession of Elizabeth — Characters of Mary and Elizabeth — Establishment of the English Reformation

Chapter 30.

The Reformation in Scotland and Ireland.

A.D. 1494-1558.

Condition of Scotland at the close of the 15th Century — Patrick Hamilton pays a Visit to the Continent — Is Decoyed to St. Andrews on his Return — Is Arrested and Burned — Specimen of the Doctrines which he Taught — Tyndal's New Testament in Scotland — Archbishop Beaton — Cardinal Beaton — His Cruelties — His Campaign in Angus and Mearns — George Wishart —

A Priest named Wigton hired to assassinate him — Wishart Saves the Life of his would-be Murderer — He visits East Lothian, and meets John Knox — Is Arrested by Treachery — His Martyrdom at St. Andrews — Death of Cardinal Beaton — Knox in the French Galley — He Visits England — Offered the Bishopric of Rochester — Retires to Geneva and becomes acquainted with Calvin — Returns to his Native Land — Again retires to the Continent — Martyrdom of Walter Mill — Knox again returns to Scotland — Unsettled state of the Country — The activity of the Papists increase — Progress and Establishment of the Reformation — Reformation in Ireland —George Brown, Archbishop of Dublin — Dr. Coles and his Commission — Establishment of the Reformation — Concluding Remarks

"The Church's one foundation,
Is Jesus Christ her Lord;
She is His new creation,
By water and the word:
From heaven He came and sought her,
To be His holy Bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.

"Though with a scornful wonder,

Men see her sore opprest;
By schisms rent asunder,
By heresies distrest;
Yet saints their watch are keeping,
Their cry goes up, 'How long?'
And soon the night of weeping
Shall be the morn of song.

"'Mid toil and tribulation,
And tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace for evermore;
Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious,
Shall be the Church at rest."

Preface.

The Author's chief desire in giving to the Public this short History, has been to meet what he believes to be a real want among *general* readers; not to make a *student's* book, for we have already many able works of this kind, but a popular handbook, such as might be read with profit by those who have no time or inclination for a more exhaustive study. In short, he has endeavoured to gather together, in a single volume, all that is interesting and essential, and to so write his history that the mind of the reader may not be wearied even while the dullest facts are passing before it. These are high aims, and only those who have attempted a similar task can understand the difficulties by which the Author has been surrounded.

An outline knowledge of Church History is not only useful to the class of readers referred to, but *necessary* to all who would tread firmly in the present day, when rationalism on the one hand, and superstition on the other, are luring the unwary into by-paths of worldliness and unrest. In the open page of history we may see the infidelity of the one, and the idolatry of the other; and, admonished by the miserable consequences of each, may be prepared against their insidious approaches in the future. We have not yet seen the end of mystic Babylon, or the beast that carries her.

The Author has been sparing of quotations, save from such writers as were contemporaneous with the events described; but he has not scrupled to avail himself of the thoughts of others, when they have commended themselves to his judgment,

because of their peculiar fitness and importance. He would cover this liberty by the reflection, that truth is the property of all seekers.

The authors to whom he is chiefly indebted, and whose works he has had in constant reference, are: — Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and St. Augustine, among old writers; Waddington, James White, Haweis, Timpson, Barth, and Andrew Miller, for complete epitomes; Cave, Milman, Milner, and Edward Burton, for histories of the early church; and for the period of the Middle Ages, Fleury, Hallam, Monastier, Dr. Gilly, Dr. Muston (Hazlitt's translation), Keightley, and Jane Willyams; as well as the author of a valuable little work, "The Church in the Middle Ages." For the period of the Reformation, Fox, the Martyrologist, Burnet, Robertson, McCrie, Scott, D'AubignÃ©, Ludwig Hausser, Ranke, Green, etc.; and the works of the English reformers published by the Parker Society. Southey (for his "Book of the Church"), and the French historians Sismondi and Michela, have also been frequently consulted, together with the authors of sundry biographies, outline histories, etc., whose names it is needless to enumerate.

From this it will be seen that the Author makes no pretensions to originality, in the strict sense of the word, although he would claim for his book that it is more than a mere compilation. It is, in fact, the result of the earnest labour of several months; and while he has gone much to other books, it has been with the purpose of reference and not of plunder. Others have laboured, and he has entered into their labours.

In conclusion, he would commend these fruits of his labour to the blessing of God, without which they can only prove a failure but, crowned with this, they may succeed beyond his hopes, and in spite of every defect.

***October,* 1888.**

Chapter 1.
The First Century of the Christian Era.

The history of the church of God in all ages is a history of divine grace in the midst of human failure. This has often been said, and any one who examines that history with ordinary attention must be convinced that it is so. We know from the epistles that even in the apostles' time failure had set in, and that envy, wrath, strife, backbiting and tumult, with numerous other evils, had crushed the love in the hearts of many true believers. They had left their first works, and their first love; and not a few who had begun in the Spirit were vainly seeking to be made perfect in the flesh. But this was far from all. Not only were there true Christians living irregularly, and speaking perverse things in order to draw away disciples, but men who were no Christians at all, who had

neither part nor lot in the matter, were creeping in unawares and sowing discord among the brethren. This, indeed, was the state of things alluded to in the opening verses of the second chapter of the Revelation, and embraces that period of the christian era which has been fitly described as *the Ephesian stage of the church's history*.

But a time of persecution from without was coming upon the church, which the Lord in grace permitted, that those who were approved (the faithful, though feeble ones among them) might be made manifest. This persecution commenced in the reign and at the instigation of the pagan emperor Nero, and was the first of ten general persecutions, which continued, with but few interruptions, for nearly three centuries.

The question has been often asked, Why does God allow the people on whom He has set His love to suffer in this way? and the answer is simple. It is *because* He loves them. There may be, there are, other reasons, but this is the chief. Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and if the heart wander chastening is necessary. The wise man tells us, "By sorrow the heart is made better," and experience teaches us the truth of this. How readily will evil attach itself to the best of us! but in the furnace of affliction the dross is separated from the purer metal, and consumed. Moreover, when we endure chastening, God deals with us as with sons; and every trial which visits us, were we but patient under it, would be fruitful in blessing to our souls. True, the experience of passing through the trial is not pleasant; it would be no trial if it were; but a morning of joy succeeds the night of sorrow, and in the quiet after-time we say with David, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted."

But God sometimes allows the persecuting wickedness of man to rise to a head, in order to expose him and to shew what is in his heart; and it is therefore no matter for surprise that Christians, who know not this fact, begin to question in their minds, complaining that the path is so rough, and the hand of the oppressor so heavy upon him. Yet we are not left in this scene to complain of difficulties, or to shrink and turn back because of the wrath of man. We have a Master to serve, and a foe to resist; and it is only when we are strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, that the service can be rendered, or the resistance effectually made. How nobly this has been done in former days, these pages are intended to illustrate; but it must ever be borne in mind, if we would rightly understand God's dealings with His people, that christian warfare is unlike all other warfare, and that part of its resistance is to suffer. Our weapons, too, are not carnal, but spiritual; for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places (Eph. 6). A Christian using carnal weapons is

an anomaly, a contradiction, and cannot know what manner of spirit he is of. He can never have traced, with true spiritual intelligence, the wondrous pathway of his Lord, or have understood the meaning of those words, "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight." The church militant is the church suffering, and directly carnal weapons are taken up she has really ceased to fight.

We have the prototype of the true warrior in the brave and holy Stephen. He was the first christian martyr; and what a victory did he gain for the cause, when he died praying for his murderers! David, centuries before, had said, "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance. He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked;" but Stephen, who belonged to another order of things, prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." This was true christian warfare.

The first wave of general persecution which broke over the church, shewed itself in the year 64, when Nero had ruled the Roman empire, with tolerable humanity, for about nine years. The murder of his own mother, and his brutal indifference after the perpetration of that unnatural crime, shewed but too plainly his native disposition, and prepared the people for what they might expect at his hands. Alas! their gloomiest apprehensions were more than realised.

One night during the month of July, in the year above named, the inhabitants of Rome were roused from their sleep by the cry of "Fire!" The direful word arose simultaneously from several quarters of the city, and in a few hours the great capital was wrapped in flames. The spacious circus, which lay between the Palatine and Aventine hills, and which was capable of holding at least 150,000 persons, was soon a burning mass; together with most of the public buildings, monuments, and private villas. The conflagration lasted nine days; and Nero, by whose orders the disgraceful act had been committed, watched the scene from the tower of Maecenas, where he expressed his delight with the beauty of the flames, and, dressed as an actor, sang to his lyre of the burning of ancient Troy!

The severe odium which was cast upon him in consequence of this act, aroused his shame and fear; and in the activity of an uneasy conscience, he presently discovered a way of escape. The rapid growth of Christianity had already raised against it many enemies — many persons in Rome were interested in its suppression — so what could be more opportune and at the same time more simple than to lay the onus of guilt upon the unoffending Christians? Tacitus, a pagan historian and no favourer of Christianity, thus speaks of Nero's conduct: Neither his exertions, nor his largesses to the people, nor his offerings to the gods, did away the infamous imputation under which Nero lay, of having ordered the city to be set on fire. To put an end, therefore, to

this report, he laid the guilt, and inflicted the most cruel punishments, upon a set of people . . . . called by the vulgar, Christians." He then continues, "The founder of that name was Christ, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius, under his procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, thus checked for awhile, broke out again, and spread not only over Judea, where the evil began, but through Rome also, whither everything bad upon the earth finds its way and is practised. Some who confessed their sect, were first seized; and afterwards, by their information, a vast multitude were apprehended, who were convicted, not so much of the crime of burning Rome as of hatred to mankind." It is almost needless to explain, that the Christians entertained no hatred for mankind, but rather for the horrible idolatry which prevailed throughout the empire; and for this reason only were they regarded as the enemies of the race.

How many suffered on this occasion is not known, but certainly a great number, and all the tortures which an ingenious and cruel mind could devise were practised upon them to gratify the emperor's ghastly and unnatural pleasure. "Some were disguised in the skins of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs; some were crucified; and others were wrapped in pitched shirts, and set on fire when the day closed, that they might serve as light to illuminate the night. Nero lent his own gardens for these executions, and exhibited at the same time a mock Circensian entertainment; being a spectator of the whole in the dress of a charioteer; sometimes mingling with the crowd on foot, and sometimes viewing the spectacle from his car."

Hegesippus,* a writer of the second century, makes some interesting references to the apostle James who finished his course during this period, and gives a detailed account of his martyrdom which may be fitly inserted here. He tells us the apostle was called Oblias — signifying justice and protection on account of his great piety and his devotion to the people; and he also refers to his ascetic habits, which doubtless went a good way to enhance his reputation. He drank neither wine nor fermented liquors, and abstained from animal food. A razor never came upon his head, he never anointed with oil, and never used a bath. He alone was allowed to enter the sanctuary. He never wore woollen, but linen garments. He was in the habit of entering the temple alone, and was often found upon his bended knees, and interceding for the forgiveness of the people; so that his knees became as hard as a camel's, in consequence of his habitual supplication and kneeling before God."

{*Quoted by Eusebius, bk. ii. chap. 23.}

The account of his martyrdom as given by the same writer, is not less interesting. A dispute had arisen between the believing and unbelieving Jews concerning the Messiahship of Jesus, and the question was referred to the apostle. "The scribes and

pharisees," says Hegesippus, placed James on a wing of the temple, and cried out to him, 'O thou just man, whom we ought all to believe, since the people are led astray after Jesus that was crucified, declare to us what is the door to Jesus that was crucified.' And he answered with a loud voice, 'Why do ye ask me respecting Jesus the Son of man? He is now sitting in the heavens, on the right hand of great power, and is about to come on the clouds of heaven.' And as many were confirmed, and gloried in the testimony of James, and said, Hosanna to the Son of David, these same priests and Pharisees said to one another, 'We have done badly in affording such testimony to Jesus, but let us go up and cast him down, that they may dread to believe in him.' And they cried out, 'Oh, oh, Justus himself is deceived,' and they fulfilled that which is written in Isaiah, Let us take away the just, because he is offensive to us; wherefore they shall eat the fruit of their doings' (Isa. 3). Going up therefore they cast down the just man, saying to one another, 'Let us stone James the Just.' And they began to stone him as he did not immediately die when cast to the ground but turning round, he knelt down saying, 'I entreat thee, O Lord God and Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Thus they were stoning him, when one of the priests, of the sons of Rechad, a son of the Rechabites, spoken of by Jeremiah the prophet, cried out saying, 'Cease, what are you doing? Justus is praying for you.' And one of them, a fuller, beat out the brains of Justus with the club that he used to beat out clothes. Thus he suffered martyrdom, and they buried him on the spot, where his tombstone is still remaining, by the temple."

The death of James can scarcely be ascribed to the persecuting edicts of Nero, however, it was an unpremeditated act for which the Jewish nation was alone responsible. Yet that does not clear the emperor of the guilt of shedding an apostle's blood; for it is generally allowed that both Peter and Paul suffered during the persecution which he had authorised. The following reference to these devoted servants of Christ, by Clement, a fellow-labourer with the latter (see Phil. 4:3) is replete with interest.* "Let us take," says he, the examples of our age. Through zeal and envy, the most faithful and righteous pillars of the church have been persecuted even to the most grievous deaths.. Let us set before our eyes the holy apostles. Peter, by unjust envy, underwent not one or two, but many sufferings; till at last, being martyred, he went to the place of glory that was due to him. For the same cause did Paul in like manner receive the reward of his patience.. Seven times he was in bonds; he was whipped, he was stoned, he preached both in the east and in the west, leaving behind him the glorious report of his faith; and so, having taught the whole world righteousness, and for that end travelled even unto the utmost bounds of the west, he at last suffered martyrdom by the command of the governors, and departed out of the

world, and went unto his holy place, being become a most eminent pattern of patience unto all ages." It is said that the mode of Peter's execution was crucifixion, and that he was fastened to the cross with his head downwards; choosing that position because he felt his unworthiness to suffer in the same position as his Master. Paul, who suffered on the same day and at the same place (Rome) was spared so painful and lingering a death. He was beheaded.

{*We must bear in mind that the writings of this good man, as of all christian writers since the apostle's time, are not the word of God. We may treasure and value them. and it is meet in some cases that we should; but scripture. stands alone, and to place any other book beside or even near it is folly and presumption. The church of Rome has done this, to its everlasting ruin.}

"To these holy apostles," says Clement, "were joined a very great number of others, who, having through envy undergone, in like manner, many pains and torments, have left a glorious example to us. For this, not only men, but women have been persecuted; and having suffered very grievous and cruel punishments, have finished the course of their faith with firmness."

A prey to remorse and fear, the wretched Nero died by his own hand in the year 68; and after this the church had rest for nearly thirty years. During that period, however, Domitian (who might have disputed the palm with Nero by reason of his intolerance and cruelty) ascended the throne; and when he had reigned fourteen years, the second general persecution broke out.

A rumour having reached his ears that one of David's line was living in Judea, of whom it had been said, He shall rule all nations with a rod of iron," the emperor caused inquiry to be made, and two grandsons of Jude, the Lord's brother, were seized and brought before him. When, however, he looked upon their hands, hardened and rough with labour, and found that they were poor people, who waited for a heavenly and not an earthly kingdom, he dismissed them with contempt. We are told that they were bold and faithful in witnessing for the truth before him, and that when they returned to their native village they were received with affection and honour by the brethren.

With reference to this persecution, little is known; though that little is undoubtedly interesting. Among the numerous martyrs who suffered were John, the beloved disciple, and Timothy, whom. Paul had written to with such affectionate solicitude. The former is said to have been cast, by the tyrant's command, into a cauldron of boiling oil, but a miracle was wrought in his behalf, and he came out unscathed. Unable to hurt the body, the emperor banished him to Patmos, where he was forced to

labour in the mines. Here he wrote the book of the Revelation; and would doubtless have ended his course, but for the unexpected death of the emperor; who was assassinated by the comptroller of his own household on the eighteenth of September, A.D. 96. Being now set at liberty, the apostle returned to Ephesus, where he wrote his gospel history, and the three epistles which bear his name. *Love*, as ever, seems to have been the ruling motive of his life here; and when he died, at the advanced age of one hundred years, he left as an enduring legacy this simple charge, "Little children, love one another." A simple word, and uttered many years ago, but which of us has learnt it even now?

Timothy stood manfully for the truth in the same city till the year 97, when he was killed by the rabble at an idolatrous festival. The people, armed with sticks, and with masked faces, were on their way to their temples to sacrifice to the gods, when they were met by this servant of the Lord. The love of his heart went out towards them, and, reminded perhaps of the example of the apostle Paul, who had faced the idolaters of Athens in a similar way not many years before, he declared unto them the living and true God. But they set at nought his counsel, and grew angry at his reproof, and falling upon him with their clubs, beat him so mercilessly that he expired in a few days.

And now, looking back for a moment upon the history of these primitive persecutions, there is surely much to encourage and stir the heart. In the face of such afflictions one cannot but admire the fortitude of the saints, and be thankful to God for that grace, by which they were enabled, with uncomplaining patience, to endure so much. Neither cross, nor sword, nor wild beasts, nor torture could prevail against the faithful followers of Jesus. Who could separate them from *His* love? Could tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay! In all these things they were *more* than conquerors through Him that loved them. Had He not told them to expect as much? Had He not said to His disciples while he was yet with them, "In this world ye *shall* have tribulation?" and did not the bright hope of coming glory, which He had held out to them, more than compensate for the sufferings of the "little while"? When a few more years had rolled away, persecutors and persecuted would alike have left the scene, and have passed into eternity: and then — how great the change! For the former, the blackness of darkness for ever; for the latter, that "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." What a contrast!

In bringing this chapter to a close, we may remark how impossible it will be — considering the limited space at our disposal to enumerate all the heresies and dissensions which have torn and distracted the church of God from earliest times; and we purpose, therefore, only to glance at those which have a special interest, either

because of their peculiar subtilty, or the widespread nature of their influence. Gnosticism was one of these, and perhaps it was the earliest heresy of any wide or general growth after the apostles' day. It was an amalgamation of errors which had their source in the Jewish cabala, a mysterious science among the Rabbins, in the philosophy of Plato, and in oriental mysticism. A Jewish teacher of philosophy at Alexandria, named Cerinthus, introduced part of the gospel into this heterogeneous mass of "science falsely so called," and under its new form many true believers were ensnared, and a great deal of bitterness and dissension was engendered.

But this error has long since had its day, with countless others that followed after; and the word of God, which alone contained the imperishable doctrines of the church, had already foretold that evil men and seducers should wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. (2 Tim. 3:13.) The apostle Paul had already exhorted his "son Timothy" to "shun profane and vain babblings" which would only "increase unto more ungodliness" (2 Tim. 2:16); and had referred, in language indited by the Holy Ghost, to the "perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of truth." 1 Tim. 6:5.) "But thou, O man of God," he cried, "flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." (1 Tim. 2:12.) The beloved apostle had already fought the good fight, and finished his course, and had kept the faith, and in the happy consciousness of what was before him, had uttered words which were to be the encouragement of the church of God in future ages. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:7-8.)

Chapter 2.
The Second Century of the Christian Era.

Domitian had not been dead more than eighteen months when the church, which had enjoyed immunity from persecution during the brief reign of his successor, Cocceius Nerva, was again called upon to suffer. Nerva, a man of mild and generous disposition, had treated the Christians well; and with praiseworthy humanity had recalled all who had been banished under the persecution of Domitian; but after a reign of sixteen months he had been seized with a fever, from which he never recovered. Trajan succeeded him, and for awhile left the Christians unmolested, but having been induced to look upon them with suspicion, he determined to renew the persecution, and, if possible, to exterminate by decisive and severe measures, the new religion. In his haughty view Christianity was an offence an insult to human nature, and its

teaching (as was indeed the case) entirely opposed to the philosophy of his times; a philosophy which exalted men into gods, and made the humility and gentleness which marked the former, effeminate and contemptible. But Trajan had neither the cruelty nor malignity of Nero and Domitian; and one may notice a wavering and indecision in his conduct on this occasion, which contrasts significantly with that inflexibility of purpose which usually marked his actions. That he had no pleasure in the torture or execution of his subjects we may learn by his letter to Pliny, the governor of Bithynia and Pontus, in which he says distinctly, "These people must not sought after;" and again, "if any one renounce Christianity, and evidence his sincerity by supplicating our gods, however suspected he may be of the past, let him on his repentance obtain pardon." In short, it was the *religion,* and not the *professors* of it, which Trajan hated.

Full of interest is that letter of Pliny to the emperor, which brought the reply from which the above has been extracted. In one place the governor writes, "The whole of the crime or error of the Christians lay in this they were accustomed on a certain day to meet before daylight, and to sing among themselves a hymn to Christ, as a god; and to bind themselves by an oath not to commit any wickedness; not to be guilty of theft or robbery, or adultery; never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them when called upon to return it. When these things were performed, it was their custom to separate, and then to come together to a harmless meal, of which they partook in common without any disorder; but this last practice they have ceased to attend to, since the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I prohibited assemblies. After this account I judged it the more necessary to examine, and that by torture, two females, who were said to be deaconesses, but I have discovered nothing except a bad and excessive superstition." So much for Pliny. A stranger to the grace of God, it is not surprising that he saw in the religion of the despised and lowly Jesus, only a bad and excessive superstition. It is no matter for wonder that the polite and learned governor, whose importance filled the world, should write with careless disdain of a people whose views were so unlike his own. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Ignatius, who is said to have been acquainted with the apostles Peter and Paul, and to have been ordained bishop of Antioch by the apostle John, was martyred during this period. The zeal with which he courted martyrdom has exposed him to the censures of some historians, and not without sufficient reason. It is related that when Trajan visited Antioch, he boldly sought admission to the emperor's presence, and having explained at some length the leading doctrines of the christian religion, and represented the harmless character of its professors, entreated that justice might be

done. The emperor, however, treated his appeal with contempt; and after censuring him for what he was pleased to call his incurable superstition, commanded that he should be taken to Rome, and thrown to the wild beasts.

On his way through Syria, Ignatius wrote several letters to the churches, exhorting them to faithfulness and patience, and earnestly warning them against the errors that were being taught. In one of these epistles he writes, "From Syria to Rome. I am contending with wild beasts by land and sea, by night and day, being tied to ten leopards, the number of the military band, who, even when treated with kindness, only behave with greater ferocity. But in the midst of these iniquities I am learning. . . . . Nothing, whether of things visible or invisible, excites my ambition, so long as I can gain Christ. Whether fire, or the cross, the assault of wild beasts, the tearing asunder of my bones, the breaking of my limbs, the bruising of my whole body, let the tortures of the devil all assail me, if I do but gain Christ Jesus."

On his arrival at Rome, he was brought into the arena, and in the presence of a crowded theatre calmly awaited his death. When the keeper of the lions came to loose them from their cages, the people grew wild with brutal joy, and clapped and shouted; but the aged martyr stood firm. I am as Christ's threshed wheat," he said, "which the teeth of wild beasts must grind before it become bread." Into the details of the few following moments we need not enter. The awful spectacle was soon over, and before the people had reached their homes, Ignatius had won the crown he coveted, and was at home with the Lord.

In the year 117 Trajan died, and was succeeded by Hadrian, who continued the persecutions and it was not till the year 138, when Antoninus Pius ascended the throne, that the pressure was in any measure removed. With his mild and gentle reign a period of calm commenced, which lasted nearly thirty years; and for a time the word of the Lord had free course and was glorified. True, there were isolated cases of oppression, but the *general* persecution had subsided; and the gospel quickly spread through every quarter of the Roman dominions. Westward to the extremities of Gaul, and eastward to Armenia and Assyria the glorious message was conveyed; and thousands who had been vainly seeking rest of heart in the mythologies of Rome and Egypt, drank in the words of life, and declared themselves the willing followers of Christ.

The accession of Marcus Aurelius, however, was the signal for another reaction; and in the second year of his reign the clouds again began to gather.

Troubles of various kinds, which followed upon each other with startling rapidity, and which seemed at one time to disturb the foundations of the empire, afforded a ready pretext for the renewal of the persecution; and presently the long-cherished hatred for the Christians began once more to be expressed in words. The old cry, so fearfully familiar to the ears of many, was revived, and passed like the breath of a pestilence through the eastern empire; "The Christians to the lions! The Christians to the lions!" Thus the fourth general persecution commenced.

The full force of the coming storm was felt in Asia Minor, from whence the new edicts were issued; and the name of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, stands brightly out on the martyr scroll of this period. Unlike Ignatius, who exposed himself unnecessarily to the blinded will of the populace, Polycarp refused not to listen to the warnings and entreaties of his friends; and when he found himself the marked man in Smyrna, retired to a neighbouring village, and there resumed his labours. On being pursued thither, he retired to another village, exhorting the people as he went; and in this itinerant way his life was spent, till his place of hiding was discovered. Then the aged bishop (warned, as it is said, in a dream that he must glorify God by a martyr's death) resigned himself peacefully to the will of God, and gave his body into the hands of the officers who were charged with his arrest. Before he left the house he ordered food to be placed before these men; and then, in seeming anticipation of what awaited him, arose, and commended himself to God. It is recorded that the fervency of his prayer so affected the officers that they repented they had ever been the instruments of his capture. He was then seated upon an ass, and brought back to Smyrna, where a vast concourse of people had gathered to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread.

In consideration for his age and learning, Nicites, a man of considerable influence, and his son Herod, the irenarch of the city, went forth to meet him; and taking him into their chariot, urged him to consult his safety by ascribing divine honours to Caesar, and consenting to sacrifice. This he refused to do, and was thereupon thrust from the chariot with such violence that he sprained his thigh in falling. But the aged servant of God went patiently forward, unruffled by the rudeness of the irenarch, and unmoved by the shouts of the multitude, who buffeted him from side to side in their anger: and so the stadium was reached.

This was the place of exhibition for sacred games and shows; and we are told that, as he entered the arena, a voice, as though from heaven, exclaimed, "Be strong, Polycarp, and contend manfully." Be that as it may, a power that was not human sustained the man of God, and when the proconsul, touched by his venerable appearance, entreated him to swear by the genius of Caesar, and to say, "Away with

the godless!" the aged martyr, pointing to the crowded benches, repeated sorrowfully, "Away with the godless!" "Swear," said the merciful governor, "and I will dismiss you. Revile Christ." But Polycarp meekly answered, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never did me wrong: how can I now blaspheme my King and Saviour?" "Swear by the genius of Caesar," said the governor, still inclining to mercy. Polycarp replied, If you think that I should swear by the genius of Caesar, as you say, pretending not to know who I am, hear my free confession. I am a Christian. But if you wish to learn what the doctrine of Christianity is, grant me a day and listen to me." "Persuade the people," said the proconsul, noting with some uneasiness the impatient clamour of the multitude; but Polycarp refused. He had been taught to shew honour to the higher powers, and to be subject to them, because they were ordained of God, but to the people, especially in their present turbulent state, he would offer no defence. "I have wild beasts at hand," said the governor, "and will cast you to them unless you change your mind." "Call them," said Polycarp quietly. The aged pilgrim rejoiced at the prospect of speedy deliverance from a godless and persecuting world; and the calm fearlessness which he displayed exasperated the proconsul, who thereupon threatened him with burning. Polycarp answered, "You threaten fire that burns for a moment, and is soon extinguished, but you know nothing of the judgment to come, and the fire of eternal punishment reserved for the wicked." The governor's patience was exhausted, and a herald was sent to proclaim in the middle of the stadium, "Polycarp is a Christian." This proclamation, according to custom, was repeated three times, and the rage of the populace was at its height. They saw in the aged prisoner a man who had set at nought their gods and emptied their temples by his teaching; and the cry became general, "Polycarp to the lions!"

But the hour for the exhibition of the chase was over, and the asiarch who had control of the public shows, refused to give the people their desire. If they were still bent on his destruction they must find some other way; so the cry was quickly taken up, that Polycarp should be burnt. The wood and straw were near at hand, and the victim, relieved of his robes, was hurried to the stake. They would have nailed him to it, but he requested that he might be simply bound, and his request was granted. Having then commended his soul to God, he gave the signal to the executioner, and the pile was lighted. But the wonders of the day were not yet over. From some unaccountable cause the flames refused to touch his body, and the people, baffled and wondering, looked curiously at each other. Anger, however, overcame their superstition, and a demand was made that the executioner should dispatch his victim with the sword. This was done. The fatal blow was immediately struck, and in that moment of

unconscious pain, the faithful martyr yielded up his spirit, and passed for ever beyond the reach of his tormentors.

Many others, not inferior in faith and fortitude to Polycarp, though not all so distinguished for their abilities, suffered during this persecution, and it would have been interesting to speak of some of these had space permitted. It would have been interesting to tell of Germanicus, a young Christian whose constancy and courage witnessed so brightly to the reality of his faith, even in the solemn hour of death, that many were converted; or of Justin of Neapolis, who, having investigated all the philosophic systems of his time, and taken a high place among professors of learning, found it his joy and gain to become a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus; to tell how he afterwards sealed the testimony which he had borne, with his blood; and gained for himself a name far nobler than that of Justin the Philosopher, the name of Justin Martyr; a name by which he is known in the churches to this day, and by which he will yet be known in a future day, when the martyrs' crowns are awarded.

At Lyons and Vienne, also, the faith of believers was sorely tried, for the enemy of souls was very active. Every species of torture that human ingenuity could devise, was inflicted upon the Christians of these parts; but their numbers only increased; and every effort to exterminate the new religion, became but the means of its wider and more speedy diffusion. Here Blandina, a female slave of tender and delicate frame, after enduring with exemplary patience the most exquisite tortures, during the infliction of which the persecutors themselves became weary, gained the martyr's crown, and died, giving glory to God. Here Sanctus, a deacon in the church, and Maturus a new convert to Christianity, suffered nobly for the truth; with Attalus of Pergamus, and Pothinus, bishop of Lyons, and many more.

And thus, like precious metal which is passed through the furnace of the refiner, the church of God was passed through the furnace of affliction, and much of the rubbish attaching to it was separated and consumed; while the sparks from the furnace, carried hither and thither by the winds of persecution, kindled in the breasts of many a desire to solve this strange matter; to understand the nature of this new metal, which could sustain the fiery test so well.

Up to this time the church seems to have retained that simplicity of conduct and worship, of which we get some beautiful examples in the Acts of the Apostles and elsewhere. Justin Martyr has given us an account of its practices in his day, which cannot fail to be interesting. "We meet on the Lord's day," he says, "for worship, in towns and villages; read as much of the prophets and the memoirs of the apostles as time permits: the reading finished, the president or bishop, in a speech or sermon,

exhorts the faithful to follow these excellent examples; then all rise and pour forth united prayer. Then bread, wine, and water are brought forth, the president utters prayers and thanksgiving according to his ability, and all the people say 'Amen.' Distribution is then made of the things blessed to each one present, and to those absent is sent by the deacons. Those who are prosperous and willing, give what they choose, each according to his own pleasure; and what is collected is deposited with the president, and he carefully relieves the orphans and widows, and those who, from sickness and other causes, are needy, and also those in prison, and the strangers who are residing with us, and in short, all those who are in need of help."

Beautiful simplicity of life and worship! Surely this is an instance of that steady continuance "in the apostle's doctrine and in breaking of bread and in prayers" which is commended in the Acts, and which forms a distinguishing mark of primitive Christianity. But where is that simplicity now?

Chapter 3.
The Fifth and Sixth General Persecutions of the Roman Pagan Empire.
A.D. 200-238.

The extraordinary fortitude which we have seen in Polycarp, Ignatius, and others was not peculiar to those men. The power of endurance was not merely displayed in the Christian of long experience, or the man of natural strength and courage; it was seen in the timid and delicate; in women as well as men; in the child of tender years, as well as in the man of hardy age. The strength by which they conquered was not their own, but God's; by whose power, and whose alone, they were kept through faith. (1 Peter 1:5.) There were some, it is true, who sought to face the enemy in their own strength, and such was Quintus a Phrygian, who went about persuading others to invite persecution, but who, in the first moment of actual danger, drew back and denied his Master. Of the reality of his zeal we need not doubt, but he acted without faith. He trusted in his own strength, instead of looking to another; and remembered not that God had said, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." He dropped the shield of faith, whereby he might have quenched the fiery darts of the wicked, and adopted the shield of self-confidence, which, as might be expected, was pierced by the first arrow of the enemy.

Not so Perpetua, the martyr of Carthage, who suffered during the persecution of which we are to speak, and whose name will ever find a foremost place in the annals of martyrology.

It was in the beginning of the third century, and the Emperor Severus occupied the throne of the Caesars. An African by birth, he was a man of great sagacity and learning, but was loathed for his perfidy and cruelty. The persecution which commenced in his reign was unsurpassed for barbarity by any that had gone before, and certainly was not exceeded by any that came after. At one time he appears to have been not unfavourably disposed to the Christians; and it is even said that he ascribed his recovery from a severe illness to the prayers of a Christian named Proculus. But his moderation did not last, and in the year 202 the persecution broke out in Africa with unwonted violence. Neither the eloquent appeals of Tertullian to the humanity of the people, nor the solemn warnings which he addressed to the prefect of Africa, availed to stem the flood of popular fury which now rolled in upon the Christians. One after another they were haled to torture and execution, till the words of the great apologist were verily fulfilled, "Your cruelty will be our glory. Thousands of both sexes, and of every rank will crowd to martyrdom, exhaust your fires, and weary your swords. Carthage will be decimated; the principal persons in the city, even perhaps your own most intimate friends and kindred, must be sacrificed. Vainly will you war against God!"

The noble army of martyrs did indeed get many reinforcements from the far-famed capital of Roman Africa; and Vivia Perpetua, a catechumen or new convert to the faith, was one of these.

She was a married woman, of good family and education, and though only twenty-two years of age, the mother of one child, then an infant at the breast. Her father was a Pagan, and loved her dearly; and when she was apprehended and thrown into prison, he sought by every means to win her back to Paganism. On one occasion when he had been unusually earnest in his endeavours, she pointed to a pitcher that stood near them, and said, "My father, you see that vessel; can you call it by any other name than what it is?" He told her "No," "Neither can I," said Perpetua, "call myself by any other name than that of Christian." At this her father turned upon her angrily and beat her, and departed; and for several days she saw him no more.

During his absence she was baptised, together with four other youthful converts, one of them her brother; and with that the hand of persecution began to press more heavily upon her, for she was cast with her companions into the common dungeon. Here all light was excluded, and she was almost suffocated by reason of the heat and overcrowding. "O miserable day!" she writes, "from the dreadful heat of the prisoners crowded together, and the insults of the soldiers. But I was wrung with solicitude for my infant. Two of our deacons, however, by the payment of money obtained our

removal for some hours in the day to a more open part of the prison. Each of the captives then pursued his usual occupation; but I sat and suckled my infant, who was wasting away on my account. And for many days I suffered this anxiety, and accustomed my child to remain in the prison with me; and I immediately recovered my strength, and was relieved from my toil and trouble for my infant; and the prison became to me like a palace; and I was happier there than I should have been anywhere else."

After a few days there was a rumour that the prisoners were to be heard, and her father, wasted with anxiety, came from the city with increased desire to save her. His manner of approaching her was changed, and threats and violence gave place to supplication and entreaty. He begged her to take pity on his grey hairs, and to think of the honour of his name; to remember all his former kindness, and how he had loved her the best of all his children. He urged her to look in pity upon her mother and brothers, and upon her dear babe who could not live without her. "Do not destroy us all!" he cried. And then he flung himself at her feet, weeping bitterly, and kissed her hands in his fondness, and clinging like a suppliant to her dress, said he would no longer call her daughter, but "mistress," because she was the mistress of all their fates. But Perpetua, mightily sustained by God, endured the agony of the moment with unshaken fortitude, only saying, "In this trial, what God wills, will take place. Know that we are not in our own power, but in that of God."

In due time the hour of her trial came round, and she was placed at the bar with the other prisoners. When it came to her turn to be examined, the poor old man, her father, appeared with the child, and holding it before her eyes, again implored her to have compassion. Alive to the occasion, Hilarianus, the procurator, ceased his stern interrogations, and said in his softest manner, "Spare the grey hairs of your parent; spare your infant; offer sacrifice for the welfare of the emperor." But she answered, "I will not sacrifice." He then demanded, "Art thou a Christian?" and she answered, "I am a Christian." Upon this her father broke into loud and frantic cries, insomuch that the procurator ordered him to be thrust down, and beaten with rods: all which she endured with calmness and fortitude. Sentence of death was then passed upon her, and she was taken back to prison with the rest.

Once again, when the day of the games approached, the old man visited her, and with wilder entreaties begged her to pity him in his affliction, and to consent to sacrifice; but though her grief was very great she faltered not in her steadfastness, and would not deny the faith. These, indeed, were the hardest trials she had to encounter, but they were over at last, and her end was very near.

On the day of execution she was brought forth with her own brother, and a female martyr, by name Felicitas, and the two women were tied in nets and thrown to an enraged cow. But the injuries which Perpetua sustained were not fatal, and the people, glutted though not satiated with the sight of blood, called upon the executioner to administer the death-stroke. Rousing as from a pleasant dream, Perpetua drew her torn robe more closely about her person, and gathered up her fallen hair; and when she had addressed a few faint words of encouragement to her brother, she guided the gladiator's sword to a vital part, and so expired. Brave Perpetua! the heart beats quick as we read thy wondrous history: but we shall yet, through God's grace, see thee crowned and happy in thy Master's presence.

In the same year (A.D. 202) died Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, a sincere lover of souls, and a zealous defender of the truth. He withstood the then bishop of Rome,* a man of great arrogance and little piety, in whom the foul spirit of the Papacy was, alas! but too manifest, and wrote him a synodical epistle in the name of the Gallic churches. The following extract from another letter which Irenaeus addressed to one Florinus, a schismatic of Rome, will doubtless be read with interest. "I saw thee," he says, "when I was yet a boy in the lower Asia with Polycarp, moving in great splendour at court, and endeavouring by all means to gain his esteem. I remember the events of those times much better than those of more recent occurrence. As the studies of our youth, growing with our minds, unite with them so firmly that I can tell also the very place where the blessed Polycarp was accustomed to sit and discourse; and also his entrances, his walks, his manner of life, the form of his body, his conversations with the people, and his familiar intercourse with John, as he was accustomed to tell, as also his familiarity with those that had seen the Lord. How also he used to relate their discourses, and what things he had heard from them concerning the Lord. Also concerning his miracles, his doctrine, all these were told by Polycarp, in consistency with the holy scriptures, as he had received them from the eyewitnesses of the doctrine of salvation."

{*By name Victor. Yet this man afterwards died a martyr's death rather than purchase his liberty by a denial of the faith.}

Irenaeus had many conflicts with the false teachers of his time, who, alas! were increasing but too rapidly; and his zeal presently drew upon him the resentment of the emperor. He was led out to the summit of a hill in company with some other Christians, and on refusing the usual test, to sacrifice to idols, was beheaded.

So also, at Alexandria, died Leonidas, a man of rank and learning, and the father of Origen of whom we shall have more to say hereafter. Likewise two Christians by name

Serenus, with Heraclides, Heron and Plutarch, the latter a pupil of Origen. We might swell the list with many more, but space forbids; and there is a blessed satisfaction in the thought, that a day is coming when we shall not only know their names, but see them crowned, and doubtless hold sweet communion together.

The sixth general persecution commenced with the accession of Maximin, a Thracian, A.D. 235, and lasted three years. The immediate cause of the persecution was peculiar. Maximin entertained a savage hatred towards his predecessor, Alexander, and in order to shew his malice, reversed as much as possible the policy of Alexander's reign. That humane and excellent ruler had dealt kindly with the Christians, and hence the burly Thracian could do no other than treat them with corresponding severity. His first edict commanded that only the chief men of the churches should be slain, but the cruelty of his nature was stimulated by this sanguinary act, and the edict was quickly followed by another of a more sweeping character. During his reign the Christians were haled away to execution without trial, and often were buried in heaps like dogs. The magistrates could offer them no protection from the savagery of the mob, or the tyranny of individual oppressors; and thus their property became the general booty, and their lives the sport of every passing whim of the populace. But men and women were still found everywhere, who were faithful to the cause; and the more the emperor sent abroad his edicts, the brighter shone the lights which he was vainly endeavouring to put out.

Two hundred years had now rolled away since the death of Christ; two hundred years of odium and suffering for His beloved church, but still its numbers were increasing. Again and again the powers of hell had been loosed against it, but all to no effect. "This was an anvil which had worn out many a hammer," and when the Thracian savage ascended the imperial throne he found that he had the same difficulties to overcome, the same mysterious power to subdue, which had baffled the wiliest and most indefatigable of his predecessors. In truth, the church throve in persecution, and the seeds of the gospel, scattered over an ever widening area, and watered by the blood of martyrs, bore fruit a hundredfold, though the efforts to tread them down were terrible and relentless. The power of man in all its varied forms had been arrayed against the unresisting community, but neither imperial edicts, nor angry mobs, nor discontented augurs, nor gibing philosophers could check its steady growth, much less accomplish its destruction. Fixed on its Rock foundation it stood there — the work of God and the wonder of men; with that eternal promise its strong confidence, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Chapter 4.
The Seventh and Eighth General Persecutions of the Roman Pagan Empire.
A.D. 238-274.

In contemplating the decline of the Roman empire, there is much to remind one of the contemporary history of the church of God. Rome had now passed the zenith of its glory; and alas! so far as its testimony down here was concerned, the church had done the same. The fanatic and impious projects of Elagabalus to fuse and recast into one great system the religions of the world, of which he himself was to be the sun and centre, tended not a little to disturb the foundations of the empire; and the pitiful and unworthy efforts of misguided Christians to reconcile the faulty philosophies and speculative mysticism of unregenerate men with the sublime truths of Christianity, though they could not disturb the foundations, yet produced incalculable mischief in the church, and led to many schisms.

The mild reign of Alexander Severus had been the occasion of more injury to the christian cause, than all the persecutions put together. In his time the church, through failing zeal, had begun to grow weary of its place of holy separation from the world; and christian bishops, elated by their growing power and importance, had accepted places at court and begun to amass considerable wealth. Temples for the more ostentatious display of the new religion had already appeared in different parts of the empire, and the words of the Holy Ghost that "The most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands," seemed in danger of being forgotten. The beautiful simplicity of the early church was rapidly becoming a thing of the past, and the meddling hand of man had already effected many ruinous changes in the management of its, affairs. Paul, as a wise master-builder, had laid the foundation, but others had been building rubbish upon it; and now the gold, silver, and precious stones of vital Christianity were getting sadly mixed with the wood, hay, and stubble of a lifeless profession. (1 Cor. 3)

It was then that Christians began coquetting with the philosophies of Greece and Rome, and found stimulants for their declining faith in the daring mysticism of Egypt and Arabia; and it is therefore no matter for surprise that, when a fresh persecution broke out, many true believers lost heart, and expressed uneasy thoughts that God was dealing with them for their sins.

Swayed by this fear, and forgetting the sufficiency that was to be found in Christ, some of them denied the faith, or were guilty of dissimulation, and thus evaded further persecution. Yet they became marked men by their more faithful brethren, and when they applied, as many of them did, for re-admission to church-fellowship, a warm controversy arose, and great differences of opinion prevailed. Some were for re-

admitting the erring brother on the confession of his fault; others wanted more rigid discipline, and urged that re-admission should not be immediately granted; while some again, and these not a few, declared that the act was inexpiable, and refused to receive the backslider on any terms. The severer opinion was called the heresy of Novatian, after its author; and where its promoters were successful in gaining the ascendancy, the most painful results ensued: insomuch that many a true child of God, unable to obtain restoration to fellowship, was swallowed up with overmuch sorrow, and died of remorse.

Decius was now upon the throne, and the implacability with which he persecuted the Christians gives him an unenviable place beside the great prototype of imperial cruelty, Nero. He observed with jealousy the growing power, and determined to check it. He saw the churches crowded with proselytes, while the heathen temples were deserted; and this, in his judgment, was an insult to the national religion which could not be passed over. He therefore sent abroad his edicts, and revived once more the smouldering fires of persecution.

Fabianus, bishop of Rome, was the first object of his resentment, and such was the virulence of the persecution, that upon his decease none had courage to come forward and undertake the sacred office. Origen in the east and Cyprian in the west did much, by their example and teaching, to strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees; but they only had the oversight of limited districts, and other bishops and pastors were not so faithful. The latter, who was bishop of Carthage, thus refers to the persecution, "Our gracious Lord has so ordered it, that all which has occurred seems more like a *trial* than a persecution. Forgetting what believers did in the times of the apostles, and what they should always be doing, Christians laboured with insatiable desire to increase their earthly possessions. Many of the bishops, who, by precept and example, should have guided others, neglected their divine calling to engage in the management of worldly concerns." No wonder then, if the shepherds grew lax and worldly, that the sheep grew timid, and shrunk from the brutal attacks which the emperor so freely encouraged.

Edict after edict was issued by the emperor, appointing certain days for the Christians to appear before the magistrates, when those who refused to renounce their religion were thrust into prison, and subjected to the most excruciating tortures in order to enforce compliance. Some submitted at once, others persevered up to a point and then gave way, and others, of whom the laborious Origen was one, were faithful to the end. Many fled into voluntary banishment, where they continued to hold their meetings in woods and caves of the earth, feeling safer and happier in the company of

wild beasts than in the society of their more brutal fellow men. Yet this did not always ensure safety; and we read of seven Roman soldiers who were starved to death in the cave in which they had taken refuge, the emperor having ordered the entrance to be closed.

Yet all were not so weak, and the intrepidity of some, while under examination, forms a striking contrast to that timidity of which we have spoken. "I am astonished," said one who had been commanded to sacrifice to Venus, that you should ask me to worship an infamous woman whose debaucheries even your own historians record, and whose life consisted of such actions as your own laws would punish." The rebuke was just, but truth in that form is seldom palatable, and the speaker being condemned for his boldness, was broken on the wheel and beheaded. "I did it not, it was you that did it," was the exclamation of a woman who had been made to offer incense by one who held her hand; and for this she was condemned to exile. Another, a prisoner at Rome, wrote to Cyprian, "What more glorious and blessed lot can by God's grace fall to man than, amidst tortures and the fear of death itself, to confess God the Lord — than, with lacerated bodies and a spirit departing but yet free, to confess Christ the Son of God — than to become fellow-sufferers with Christ in the name of Christ? If we have not shed our blood, we are ready to shed it. Pray then, beloved Cyprian, that the Lord would daily confirm and strengthen each one of us, more and more, with the power of His might; and that He, as the best of leaders, would finally conduct His soldiers, whom He has disciplined and proved in the dangerous camp, to the field of battle which is before us, armed with those divine weapons which never can be conquered."

The Lord, indeed, had not forgotten His beloved people, and the period of their affliction had been graciously determined by Him. Perhaps He saw their weakness and shortened the time. It would even appear so, for after a short reign of two years and six months, Decius was killed in battle with the Goths; and the seventh general persecution of the empire came to a close.

Gallus, who succeeded Decius, only reigned two years; and after Gallus came Valerian who commenced a fresh persecution. At first, he was favourably disposed to the Christians, and is said to have examined (with the most hopeful results) the influence of Christianity on the public morals: but his fondness for Oriental magic exposed his mind to the insidious teachings of an Egyptian magician, named Macrionus, who was an active and bitter opponent of the truth; and to his designing influence we may attribute the eighth general persecution of the empire.

On the first rumours of the persecution, Cyprian became a marked man. A glance at his previous history will not be out of place here. He was born in the year 200, of noble family, and received an education suited to his station. In later years he publicly taught rhetoric with great success at Carthage, where he lived in princely style. It is said he dressed gorgeously, and maintained a stately retinue, and that whenever he went abroad he was besieged by a crowd of clients and followers. Converted from Paganism at the age of forty-five, he immediately sold his estate and gave the chief part of the produce to the poor. He now made wonderful progress in the truth, and after three years, during which he applied himself closely to the scriptures, was made bishop of Carthage. In the reign of Decius an order was issued for his arrest, but Cyprian withdrew to some secure retreat till the storm was over, where he spent his leisure in writing consolatory epistles to the suffering Christians. It was not fear, however, which led him to take this step, as his conduct on a later occasion sufficiently proved. He was back again at Carthage at the commencement of Valerian's reign, when a plague broke out in that city; and was enabled to render valuable assistance to the sufferers. He exhorted the Christians to forget their injuries and to manifest the graces of the gospel by ministering not only to their own brethren, but to their plague-stricken enemies. The appeal was heartily responded to, and the Christians went about their new work with cheerful alacrity.

When the persecution under Valerian broke out, Cyprian did not again withdraw. He was thereupon arrested by order of the pro-consul and banished; but only to be recalled on the appointment of a new pro-consul. This, however, was merely that he might undergo a further trial; and heedless of the earnest entreaties of his brethren, who urged him to conceal himself till the persecution was over, he allowed himself to be retaken. The day following his apprehension the trial came on, and under a strong guard, the former senator of Carthage was conveyed to the pro-consul's palace. It was a remarkable sight, and the whole city had turned out to witness it. The examination was short, and the words on both sides few and decisive. "Art thou Thascius Cyprian, the bishop of so many impious men?" "I am." "The most sacred emperor commands thee to sacrifice." "I do not sacrifice." "Consider well," said the proconsul. "Execute your orders, the case admits of no consideration," answered Cyprian. The pro-consul then delivered his sentence, concluding with the words, "Thou must expiate thy crime with thy blood." Cyprian exclaimed, "God be thanked!" And in this contented frame of mind he was shortly afterwards removed to a neighbouring field and beheaded.

Even children were not exempt from this persecution, and many, through grace, witnessed a good confession. Cyril of Alexandria, a lad of tender years, was one of these; the reality of whose faith was such that neither threats nor blows were able to

shake it, nor even the prospect of a slow and painful death. Children of his own age harassed him with their petty taunts and provocations, and his father even drove him from home because he would not renounce his faith or acknowledge the emperor as God. His behaviour in the presence of the Roman magistrate was equally interesting and conscientious. "Child," said the merciful pagan, I am ready to pardon you, and to let your father take you home again, and you may by-and-by inherit his property, if you will only be wise and concerned for your own interest." The child steadily refused. "I am willing to suffer," he said, "and God will take me up. I am not troubled at being turned out of doors, I shall have a better home. I am not afraid to die; it will only send me to a better life."

As the ruler could not persuade him to retract, he told the officers to take him to the stake and shew him the straw and faggots; hoping that that would intimidate him; but the child withstood the test and betrayed no symptoms of terror. The good Shepherd kept very near His tried lamb, and allowed no fear to enter his heart: and the people could only weep and marvel. When he was taken back to the ruler, and the ruler asked him, "Are you ready now to change your mind?" he answered bravely, "Your fire and sword cannot hurt me; I am going to a better home: burn me quickly, that I may get to it the sooner:" and seeing many of the people in tears he said, "you ought to be glad; and so you would be if you knew of the city to which I am going." After this he was brought again to the stake, and bound there; and the sticks and straw were piled around his tender limbs, and lighted. But the child's sufferings were soon over, and before the smoke of the fire had rolled away, he had passed beyond the reach of pain and trial and had entered the "better home" he talked about.

Laurentius, a deacon of the church at Rome, was another martyr of this persecution. Being called upon to render an account to the emperor of the church treasures, he gathered together a number of the aged and helpless poor, and presented them to the magistrate, saying, "These are the treasures of the church." Provoked and disappointed, the magistrate consigned him to the torturers, by whom he was first beaten with iron rods, then had his limbs dislocated, and afterwards was stretched upon a gridiron and slowly roasted.

Valerian, however, was taken prisoner by Sapor, king of the Persians, when he had administered the affairs of the empire about four years, and this put an end to the persecution. The church rested then for nearly fifteen years; by which time the restless hatred of man for the gospel, again found public expression, and the ninth general persecution broke out.

Chapter 5.
The Ninth and Tenth General Persecutions of the Roman Pagan Empire.
A.D. 274 - 306.

The persecution which began and ended in the reign of Aurelian lasted only a few months; for the sanguinary edicts which he issued had scarcely reached the limits of his dominion, when he was removed by the hand of the assassin. The storm indeed gathered rapidly, and the horizon for awhile looked dark. and ominous, but after a few premonitory thunderings the clouds rolled by without discharging, and the Christians were enabled to breathe again in a freer air.

But if there is little to say about the persecution, the records of the church during this period are fraught with painful interest. It was during the reign of Aurelian that Christians first invited the arbitration of a civil power in the affairs of the church; and this, moreover, in an important matter of discipline. In the apostles' day they had sought the aid of magistrates in the settlement of private questions, and Paul had rebuked them sternly for it (1 Cor. 6); but what would he now have said, when the civil power was appealed to, to decide upon a question which affected, in a most solemn manner, the foundation truths of the christian religion?

Paul of Samosata, a vain and impious pagan, who by some unaccountable means had obtained the title and position of bishop of Antioch, propagated an abominable heresy respecting the Person of the Lord. His teaching presently excited the attention of Christians throughout the eastern portion of the empire, and a council was convened to inquire into it. Pastors and bishops thronged to Antioch from all parts, and after a patient investigation they decided by almost unanimous consent to put away the wicked person from amongst them. Happy had it been for the church if the matter had ended here, but it did not. Paul refused to bow to the authority of the church, and the council appealed to the emperor to ratify their decision. The emperor, with considerable shrewdness of natural wisdom, referred the question to the bishops of Italy and Rome; and as they confirmed the judgment of their brethren, nothing remained but for the haughty bishop to retire in silence, under the ignominy of a double censure.

It was not till after this affair that Aurelian changed his attitude towards the Christians; and the cause of his altered policy has not been ascertained with certainty. Eusebius, in a vague manner, ascribes the change to the influence of "certain advisers;" but who they were, and how they succeeded in winning the emperor to their side he does not explain. "But whilst (Aurelian) was already on the point, and so to say, on the very act of subscribing the decrees, the divine vengeance overtook him . . . . illustriously

proving to all, that there can be no privilege granted the rulers of the world against the churches of Christ, unless by the sovereign hand of God; the decree of heaven permitting it to be done for our correction and amendment, and in those times and seasons that He may approve." (Euseb. bk. vii. ch. 30.)

After a rest of some twenty-eight years the puny hand of man was again stretched forth in persecution, and the imperial head of Rome made one last and frenzied effort to exterminate the hated religion. Historically, this was the decisive and closing conflict between Paganism and Christianity. It lasted ten years, and was, without doubt, the most desolating of all the persecutions.

The undisturbed security of the church since the death of Aurelian had produced an enervating effect upon the Christians, and their condition had justly roused a feeling of shame in the hearts of many, not unmixed with a fear that the Lord's displeasure was hanging over them. Owing to its unfaithfulness the church had been steadily decreasing in spiritual power, but increasing in pride and worldly ambition; and the primitive simplicity of its worship had been almost obscured by the distracting and fleshly ritual of Judaism.

Nor was this all. Many were using their gifts for display instead of for edification; and those whose privilege it had been to feed the flock of God, were neglecting their sacred charge, and busied in the accumulation of riches. The bishops whose true office was to minister to the people, and labour in person among the sick and poor, had become a great sacerdotal order, acting as "lords over God's heritage," and employing officers under them. They were no longer "given to hospitality," which Paul has said was the necessary qualification of a bishop, but received a salary, and thus became dependent on the earnings of others.* Not a century later a pagan prefect of Rome was heard to say, "Make me bishop of Rome and I also will be a Christian." Indeed, it was out of this system of spiritual tyranny and ambition that the distinction between clergy and laity arose; from whence, in turn, proceeded those frightful abuses of the Middle Ages, which were afterwards condemned in part (though for political reasons) by the arrogant and daring Hildebrand on his elevation to the papal chair.

{*Had these bishops of the church adopted no higher standard than the early Fathers, they ought to have known better than to act thus. Had not Origen said, that "he who is called to the office of a bishop, is called not to command but *serve* the church; and that he ought to perform this service with such modesty and humility as to make himself both useful to him who performs and to him who receives it; for the

government of the Christians ought to be entirely different from that of infidels, which is full of severity, insolence, and vanity"?}

Furthermore, the internal peace of the assemblies was continually disturbed by feuds. Disputes were constantly arising between the bishops and presbyters, because of the haughty pretensions of the former, who claimed a pre-eminence in the church which the latter would in no wise concede. In the early days of Christianity the titles had been considered synonymous; and it was not until towards the close of the second century that the custom had obtained, to rank one above the other. The controversy was long and bitter; and whilst the shepherds were thus striving among themselves, the sheep were starving, and evil wolves were creeping in among them not sparing the flock.

In the midst of this sorrowful condition of things the persecution under Diocletian began. The savage and wanton tyrant had already occupied the throne for nineteen years, and during that period had associated three others with him in the government; Maximian, Galerius, and Constantius Chlorus, the father of Constantine the Great.

Galerius, who hated the Christians, was the emperor's son-in-law, and exercised a fatal influence over him. He persuaded him that Christianity was opposed to the best interests of the people, and that the way to revive the former glories of the empire was to strike at the roots of the obnoxious religion and to destroy it utterly. The better to attain his end he procured the assistance of the heathen priests and teachers of philosophy, who by their word and influence (though, indeed, it wanted no such earnest pressure) quickly converted the emperor to their views.

Four edicts in all were issued; the first requiring the destruction of all the churches and of the sacred writings — the latter, a new feature, and doubtless suggested by the philosophers; the second, that those belonging to the clerical order should be apprehended and imprisoned; the third, that none should be liberated unless they consented to sacrifice; and the fourth, that Christians of every condition, in all quarters of the empire, should either sacrifice and return to the worship of the gods, or die.

The first edict had no sooner appeared in Nicomedia (the new capital of the empire) than it was torn down by an indignant Christian. He left in its place the contemptuous inscription, "Such are the victories of the emperors over the Goths and Sarmatians;" an act of zeal for which he had to pay dearly, though he bore the tortures inflicted upon him with christian fortitude. He was roasted alive over a slow fire. A conflagration breaking out in the emperor's palace shortly after, the Christians were charged with

the act, and the violence of the persecution increased. Within fourteen days the palace was again in flames,*' and the wrath of Diocletian, who was now thoroughly alarmed, grew hot and terrible. "The officers of the household, the inmates of the palace, were exposed to the most cruel tortures, by the order, it is said, in the presence of Diocletian . . . . Prisca and Valeria (the emperor's wife and daughter) were constrained to pollute themselves with sacrifice; the powerful eunuchs, Dorothius and Gorgonius and Andrias suffered death; Anthinus, the bishop of Nicomedia was beheaded. Many were executed, many burnt alive, many laid bound with stones round their necks, in boats, rowed into the midst of the lake, and thrown into the water."

{*It is pretty generally believed that Galerius was the incendiary in both cases.

East and west from Nicomedia the persecution waxed hot and furious, and Gaul alone of all the Roman provinces escaped the fiery storm. Here resided Constantius, the only ruler who sheltered the Christians; the rest were active, remorseless, implacable. But Diocletian at last grew weary of the awful work, and in the following year resigned the reins of the empire. His colleague, Maximian, immediately followed his example; but Galerius reigned on, sole master of the East, till his nephew, a monster like himself, obtained the jurisdiction over Syria and Egypt under the title of Maximin II.

It would be impossible to speak of more than a few of the martyrs whose names are associated with this persecution, for the ranks must have been swelled by thousands during those ten miserable years; indeed, the Christians of Egypt suffered by multitudes, sometimes as many as sixty or eighty in a day, Romanus, a deacon of Antioch, when threatened with torture exclaimed, "Thy sentence, O emperor, I joyfully embrace; I refuse not to be sacrificed for my brethren, and that by as cruel a means as thou canst invent." When the executioner hesitated in his awful work because his victim was of noble parentage, Romanus said, "Not the blood of my progenitors, but christian profession makes me noble;" and when he had received many wounds in his face he exclaimed, "I thank thee, O captain, that thou hast opened unto me many mouths with which I may preach my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Another, when under examination was asked, "Why do you keep the scriptures forbidden by the emperor?" and returned this answer, "Because I am a Christian: life eternal is in them: he that gives them up loses life eternal."

A maiden of thirteen, the daughter of a nobleman of Emerita, praised God in the midst of the torture, saying, "Behold, O Lord, I will not forget Thee: what a pleasant thing it is for those, O Christ, that remember Thy triumphs and attain to these high dignities!" Another, as the flames were wrapping round her, exclaimed, "Grow weary, my sisters, of your lives led in darkness, and be in love with Christ — my God, my Redeemer, my

comforter, who is the true light of the world. May the Spirit of God persuade you that there is a world to come in which the worshippers of idols and devils shall be tormented perpetually, and the servants of the most high God shall be eternally crowned." This was the faithful testimony of a lady of wealth, by name Julietta.

Contrast with such triumphant scenes the miserable ends of the great persecutors of Christianity. Nero, Diocletian and Maximian committed suicide. Domitian, Commodus, Maximin and Aurelian were assassinated, Hadrian died in agony, crying out, "How miserable it is to seek death and not to find it!" Decius, cut off from retreat during an ambuscade, perished miserably, and his flesh became the prey of vultures and wild beasts. Valerian, after being taken prisoner by Sapor, king of Persia, was used as a stool by that monarch to assist him in mounting his horse; and after seven years of this and other insult, his eyes were put out and he was flayed alive. The body of Maximin II. was slowly consumed by an internal fire: and, last of all, Galerius, that prince of persecutors, was smitten with a loathsome disease which kept him in continual torment a whole year. Physicians were consulted in vain, and like his prototypes Antiochus Epiphanes and Herod he was eaten of worms!

But the *Smyrna period of the church's history* had reached its close. That mystic intimation of the Church's Head, "Ye shall have tribulation ten days," had been fulfilled; and the ten persecutions of the Roman pagan empire had passed into history. The tenth had lasted ten years, but even that had had its day.; and the *Pergamos period,* when the lion became the serpent, and adversaries from without gave place to seducers from within — this solemn epoch in the church's history had begun.

Meanwhile Constantius had died at York, and Constantine his son — the Constantine the Great of history — had ascended the throne.

Chapter 6.
The Fourth Century of the Christian Era.
A.D. 306-375.

As the accession of Constantine the Great marks a new era in the church's history, it would be well to take a hurried glance at the public career of the man himself. He was born in Britain, and his mother is said to have been a British princess. On the death of his father, who was beloved for his justice and moderation, the Roman legions stationed at York saluted him as Cesar, and invested him with the imperial purple. Much as Galerius resented this nomination, he was not prepared to risk a civil war by opposing it; he therefore ratified the title which the army had conferred upon their general, and assigned him the fourth rank among the rulers of the empire. During the

six following years Constantine administered the prefecture of Gaul with marked ability, and at the close of that period — Maximin and Galerius having been meanwhile removed by death — the whole Roman empire was placed within his grasp. There now remained but one competitor for the throne, Maxentius, a stedfast assertor of paganism; and when Constantine had obtained an accurate knowledge of his resources, he marched against him with a large army.

The question whether Constantine was really a Christian has ever been a vexed point with ecclesiastical writers, and many and very different motives have been advanced as accounting for his adoption of the Christian religion.* But if converted at all, we may safely affirm that it was not till after his march against Maxentius, during which he is said to have witnessed a strange phenomenon in the heavens, and to have been favoured with a remarkable vision; up to that time he was still undecided between paganism and Christianity.

{*For his own sake we would hope that Constantine was a Christian, but for the honour of Christianity we would hope otherwise. History describes him as a pitiless and jealous ruler, the murderer of his father-in-law, his brothers-in-law, his sister, wife, son and nephew! (Sismondi's Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. i. p. 78.)}

The particulars of these (supposed) occurrences are thus given. The emperor, at the head of his Gallic legions, was on his way to Rome; where Maxentius had proclaimed himself emperor and was ruling in undisturbed authority. Suddenly, about three o'clock in the afternoon, there appeared in the clear heavens a glittering cross, inscribed with the words, "In hoc signo vinces" (In this sign overcome). Unable to account for the phenomenon which, according to some accounts, was seen by the whole army — Constantine retired to his tent, restless and dejected. When night came on, his troubled mind found temporary relief in sleep; and as he slept, he dreamed. He dreamed that One stood beside him, that One none other than the divine Author of Christianity — and instructed him to make a banner in the form of a cross, which was to be borne before the army in place of the Roman standard. By this means victory would be assured, and his claims to the imperial throne would be established. "At day dawn," writes the church historian Socrates, a century later, "Constantine called together the priests of Christ, and questioned them on the subject of the christian faith. Then having put forward the sacred books of the scripture, they explained the things that relate to Christ; and the sovereign, astonished at the prophecies on the subject of the Saviour, commanded ingenious men to fabricate, to the figure of the cross, set with gold and precious stones, a standard, what is called among the Romans, Labarum," this being the device which had been made known to him in his

dream. The result surpassed his expectations. The sight of the banner animated his soldiers, and inspired them with that reckless courage which usually accompanies a superstitious zeal. The armies met — a bloody engagement ensued — and Constantine was victorious. Maxentius was drowned in the Tiber while attempting his escape.

Reflecting upon these events we are constrained to say, that the peaceful character of Christianity forbids a belief in the supernatural origin of the phenomenon and dream. The former may have been the hallucination of an excited brain; the latter, a vivid dream, but nothing more. Still, Constantine seems to have had faith in God, the faith perhaps of a Cyrus or Nebuchadnezzar, and God honoured it.

Strange times had now fallen upon the people of God. "From the depths of the catacombs uprose the adoration of the martyrs. On those sites where the gods of Olympus had been worshipped — on the very columns that had supported their temples, were shrines erected to the memory of those who had rejected their divinity, and died for refusing to yield them worship. The religion of Christ, coming forth from the desert and the dungeon, took possession of the world. We sometimes feel astonished that precisely a secular building of the heathen, the basilica, should have been converted to the purposes of christian worship: but in this fact there is a remarkable significance, the apsis of the basilica contained an Augusteum, the assembled statues of such emperors as had received divine worship. They were replaced by the images of Christ and his apostles, as they are seen in many basilicas to the present day. The rulers of the world, themselves considered as deities, gave place to the Son of God arrayed in the nature of man. The local deities passed away, and were seen no more. In every highway, on the steep summits of the hills, in the deep ravines and remote valleys, on the roofs of houses, and in the mosaic of the floors was seen the cross: the victory was complete and decisive. As, on the coins of Constantine, the labarum, with the monogram of Christ, is seen to rise above the conquered dragon, so did the worship and name of Jesus exalt itself over the vanquished gods of heathenism."* An entirely new order of things had, in fact, arisen, and the Roman emperor had become the moving power in the church.

Some of the first acts of Constantine's reign were in keeping with his twofold position. He made munificent grants to many of the churches; handed over the heathen temples with their ample revenues to the Christians; and even exercised the authority of the law in the propagation of the christian religion. To the administration of state and civil affairs was added the control and management of the church; and the strange sight might now be witnessed of a Roman emperor presiding at its councils,

and taking part in its debates. Nor was this intrusion resented by Christians generally; they looked upon it as an auspicious and happy omen; and instead of rebuking the emperor for his meddling, they welcomed him as the bishop of bishops. Like Israel of old when they chose a king, the people of God had embraced the protection of a semi-heathen state; and Christianity had suffered its greatest possible degradation in the patronage of a worldly potentate.

{*Ranke's History of the Popes, vol. i. p. 6.}

The pernicious effect of this first union of church and state was presently felt. Controversies arose, and the emperor was called upon by the contending parties to act as arbitrator. His judgment was no sooner given than it was scornfully set aside by the party whose plea had been disallowed. The same thing was again and again repeated, till the emperor became indignant, and resorted to violent measures in order to enforce his domination. Thus was demonstrated, at the very outset, the uselessness and mischief of that patronage to which the Christians had so willingly but blindly submitted.

Hitherto the councils of the church had been composed of the bishops and presbyters of a province; but during the reign of Constantine *general* assemblies were convened, the calling together and dismissal of which were left entirely to the emperor. These were called oecumenical or general councils, and their object was the discussion of the more important questions of the church. The first of such assemblies was held at Nicea in Bithynia, for the examination of one Arius, who had been teaching that our Lord had been created by God like all other beings, liable to sin and error, and that consequently he was not co-eternal with the Father. This is what Constantine, on being informed of the heresy, had called a trifle: the council, with but few dissentients, pronounced it a horrible blasphemy. The bishops so felt the indignity put upon the blessed Lord, that they stopped their ears whilst Arius was engaged in explaining his doctrines, and declared that he who held such doctrines was worthy only of anathema. As a check upon the growth of the heresy the famous confession of faith known as the Nicene Creed was drawn up, in which the scriptural doctrine of the Lord's divinity was clearly and fully enunciated. Arius and his followers at the same time received sentence of banishment, and the possession and circulation of his writings was constituted a capital offence.

The subsequent conduct of the emperor shewed that his ruling on this occasion was the result of no deep or settled conviction. At the solicitation of his sister Constantia, whose sympathies were strong with the Arian party, he recalled the great heresiarch from banishment, and revoked the interdiction which had been placed upon his

writings. Arius was then fully restored to the emperor's favour, and treated with every mark of distinction at court.

But his triumph was not unmingled. He was now to find a powerful and indefatigable opponent in the person of Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, an adversary who had already discomfited him not a little during the sittings of the council at Nicea; and who, though only a deacon at the time, had taken a prominent part in the discussion, and ever since had continued a staunch defender of the truth and an active exponent of the wicked devices of the Arians.

An imperial mandate from Constantine to restore the excommunicated heretics to the fellowship of the church, was now received with deliberate and steady disregard by the bishop; who would submit to no authority which sought to set aside the Godhead of his Lord and Saviour. His enemies were resolved to carry out their purpose, however; and what they could not gain by fair means, they determined to accomplish by foul. A charge of the most horrible kind was prepared against the bishop, and he was accused of causing the death of a Miletian bishop, named Arsinius; whose hand, they said, he had used for purposes of enchantment. He was accordingly cited before a council at Caesarea, to answer to the twofold charge of magic and murder; but Athanasius refused to appear, because the tribunal was composed of enemies. Another council was then convened at Tyre, and at this the bishop attended. The hand (which held, as we may say, the convicting evidence) was produced in court; but, alas for his accusers! the murdered bishop was produced also, alive and unmutilated.

Yet this farcical exposure did not inflict that silence on his adversaries which shame should have dictated, and they hastened to prepare a new accusation. They affirmed that Athanasius had threatened to check the exportation of corn from Alexandria to Constantinople, an act which would have brought famine to that city; rightly judging that the bare imputation of such misconduct, would surely rouse the jealousy and resentment of the emperor, whose deepest interests were centred there. Their plans succeeded. On this petty charge — for the truth of it was never proved — the sentence of banishment was obtained, and Athanasius was sent to Treves, on the Rhine, where he remained two years and four months.

But the banishment of the faithful bishop did not secure those results for which the Arian party had been contending. The Christians of Alexandria had been instructed too well in the truths of the scriptures, and held them too dearly, to sell them now their teacher was gone. They would agree to no compromise, and even when Arius subscribed an orthodox faith, their new bishop, an aged servant of God named Alexander, questioned his sincerity and refused to accept his retractation. Upon this

Constantine again interfered, and sending for the bishop, insisted that Arius should be received into communion on the following day. This was felt by many to be a crisis in the affairs of the church, and the Christians of Alexandria anxiously awaited the issue. Alexander felt his weakness, and a host of uneasy thoughts oppressed his mind: he entered the church, and spread his case before the Lord. Prayer was his last resource, but it was not a vain or barren one.

The Arians were already loud in their exultations, and while the bishop was on his knees at the altar, they bore their leader in triumph through the streets. Suddenly the ovation ceased. Arius had entered a private house, none seeming to know exactly why. The people waited and wondered, but they waited in vain; the man for whose return they looked had retired from public gaze — never to appear again. The fate of Judas had overtaken him, and the great heresiarch was dead. Athanasius afterwards observed that the death of Arius was a sufficient refutation of his heresy.

Constantine did not long survive this event. He died A.D. 337, in the thirty-first year of his reign, and at the age of sixty-four. His general legislation, says a modern writer, "bears evidence of the silent underworkings of christian principles; and the effect of these humane laws would be felt far beyond the immediate circle of the christian community. He enacted laws for the better observance of Sunday; against the sale of infants for slaves; and also against child-stealing for the purpose of selling them; with many other laws both of a social and moral character. . . . But the one grand, all-influential event of his eventful reign, was the casting down of the idols and the lifting up of Christ." Second to this in importance, from a christian standpoint, was the conversion of the Ethiopians and Iberians, who are said to have received the Gospel during the same period.

The empire was now divided amongst the three sons of Constantine the Great, Constantine securing Gaul, Spain and Britain; Constantius, the Asiatic provinces; and Constans, Italy and Africa. Constantine favoured the Catholic or orthodox party and recalled Athanasius, but was killed in the year 340 while invading Italy. Constans, who took possession of his dominions, also espoused the catholic cause and befriended Athanasius; but Constantius and all his court, declared themselves for the Arians. A religious war between the brothers now commenced, which, like the generality of religious wars, was characterised by cruelty and injustice on both sides, and reflected strangely on the presumably peaceful nature of the christian religion.

In the meantime Athanasius was again degraded, through the exertions of Constantius and the Arian bishops; and a man of violent character, Gregory of Cappadocia, was forcibly installed in his place. Scenes of further disorder and violence resulted from

this iniquitous proceeding, and the attendance of the military was required in order to maintain the intruding bishop in his position. Councils in perplexing number were afterwards convened, and five different creeds were drawn up in as many years, but apparently with little result. In all of these the orthodoxy of Athanasius was again and again confirmed; but no justice was done to the aged bishop till the death of Gregory. He was then once more recalled and reinstated in his office, to the joy of all who loved the truth and held fast the form of sound doctrine.

Constans, who had proved himself from the first a true friend to Athanasius, died in the year 350; and the Arians, protected by the patronage of Constantius, renewed their machinations. Being now, for a third time, driven from his post, Athanasius retired into voluntary exile; and found a refuge for some time in the deserts of Egypt, where he prepared himself by meditation and prayer for further conflict. Meanwhile, those who held his doctrines were persecuted with rigour by the Arian ascendancy; so that the saying went abroad, that the days of Nero and Diocletian had returned.

Constantius died in the year 361, and was succeeded by Julian, who recalled the bishops who had been banished by Constantius; but evidently through no sympathy with their doctrines, for he soon after lapsed into heathenism, and so distinguished himself by his efforts to restore idolatry that he gained for himself the name of Julian the Apostate. He affirmed that the judgments of God on the Jews as foretold in the gospels and elsewhere were a fable, and made an impious attempt to prove this assertion by sending an expedition to Palestine to rebuild the temple. But his plans were frustrated in a miraculous manner. Balls of fire, it is said, issued from the ground with a dreadful noise, and drove the workmen in terror from the spot. The work was therefore abandoned, and the impious designs of Julian were brought to nought.

During the reign of this emperor, a Christian named Basil made himself notorious by his fearless denunciations of Arianism and idolatry. The Arian bishop of Constantinople commanded him to desist from preaching, but Basil preached on in spite of the command. He urged that he held his commission from the Lord and not from man. The bishop then denounced him as a disturber of the public peace; but the emperor (for whose ears the charge was intended) was preparing at the time for an expedition to Persia, and no attention was paid to the accusation. Later on, however, the zeal of this devoted man against Paganism drew upon him the indignation of the heathen, and he was brought before Saturninus, governor of Ancyra, who sent him to the rack. His constancy and patience under the torture excited the wonder of all who saw him, and the emperor was presently acquainted with the facts. His interest was not less excited than the wonder of his subjects, and he gave command for the

prisoner to be brought into his presence. The occasion was gladly welcomed by Basil, and, zealous for the emperor's good, he proclaimed the gospel in his presence, and warned him of the danger he incurred, by his despisal of the Son of God. The rebuke, so faithfully administered, was unhappily without effect: Julian received it contemptuously, and shewed the depth of his hatred for the christian religion by his treatment of its minister. He commanded that Basil should be taken back to his dungeon, and his flesh torn from his bones day by day, till his body was completely mangled. The inhuman sentence was carried out, and the brave martyr expired under the torture, on the 28th of June, A.D. 362.

Julian did not long survive him. In the same month (almost on the same day of the month*) of the following year, he was mortally wounded in a skirmish with the Asiatics: and as he lay, weak and helpless, on the ground, was seen to stretch his hand towards heaven, and uttered these words, "Galilean, thou hast conquered!" He then expired.

{*26th of June.}

Julian wrote some books against the Christians which were much applauded by Libanius, but they have fortunately been lost. Not that there was much to fear in them, however, for they seemed to have been characterised more by sophistry than sound reasoning, and were calculated only to deceive those who were willing to be deceived. Gregory of Nazianzus, one of the fathers contemporary with Julian, thus describes the man himself: "It seemed to me that no good was portended by a neck seldom steady, the frequent shrugging of shoulders, an eye scowling and always in motion, together with a phrenzied aspect; a gait irregular and tottering, a nose breathing only contempt and insult, with ridiculous contortions of countenance expressive of the same thing; immoderate and very loud laughter, nods as it were of assent, and drawings back of the head as if in denial, without any visible cause; speech with hesitancy and interrupted by his breathing; disorderly and senseless questions, with answers of a corresponding character, all jumbled together without the least consistency or method." Not a flattering picture this, but the public actions of the emperor accord with it in almost every particular.

Jovian, who succeeded him, was perhaps the first really Christian ruler of the Roman empire; but his reign was short. He desired Athanasius, who had returned to Alexandria on the death of Julian, to act as his instructor and adviser; and he was soon so settled in the truth that neither pagan priest nor Arian heretic had any influence with him. But toleration was extended to all, and though the emperor adhered to the truth, those who opposed it were always to be seen about his person. Indeed, if

Socrates can be trusted, who quotes for his authority Themistius, the philosopher, the followers of the great heresiarch were governed by expediency rather than conscience, and regulated their opinions by the opinions of the reigning power. To quote Themistius, "Experience has made it evident that such persons worship the purple and not the deity; and resemble the changeful Euripus,* which sometimes rolls its waves in one direction, and at others the very opposite way." After a happy reign of only eight months Jovian died by suffocation, February 17th, A.D. 364.

{*The Straits of Negropont.}

His successors, Valentinian and Valens, promised well to follow in their father's steps; but the latter was presently won over to Arianism by his wife, and submitted to baptism from an Arian bishop. He then renewed the attacks on Athanasius and his followers, and the aged bishop, after remaining concealed some four months in his father's sepulchre, again fled from Alexandria. Popular opinion, however, would not suffer him to languish in exile, and he was almost immediately recalled. His long and agitated career came to a peaceful close not long after, in the year 373; his death being looked upon as a public calamity by all who watched with solicitude the interests of their divine Master.

The doctrine of the Trinity, as held by Athanasius, may be thus given in his own words: "The Father cannot be the Son, nor the Son the Father; and the Holy Ghost is never called by the name of the Son, but is called the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. The holy Trinity is but one divine nature, and one God, with which nothing created can be joined. This is sufficient for the faithful; human knowledge goes no farther; the cherubims veil the rest with their wings." And it was in contending for these grand truths that the venerable bishop was thrice driven into exile, and branded as a heretic by the false priests of Arius.

Chapter 7.
Development of the Pergamos State.
A.D. 375-500.

In the year 375 Gratian succeeded Valentinian, as emperor in the West; and was only sixteen years of age when he came to the throne. He was a true child of God, and in spite of his youth, was distinguished by an earnestness and piety which would have done credit to much older heads. One of the first acts of his reign was to write a letter to Ambrose, bishop of Milan, in which he requested the bishop to visit him. "Come," he writes, "that you may teach the doctrines of salvation to one who truly believes; not that we may study for contention, but that the revelation of God may dwell more

intimately in my heart." His reign was generally popular, and it is doubtful whether the charges of indolence and luxury, brought against him by some historians, have any foundation save in the malice of his enemies.

After the death of his uncle, the emperor Valens (a fierce Arian and implacable persecutor of the catholic party), Gratian became sole ruler of the empire; but feeling unequal to the pressure and anxiety attending this additional responsibility he determined to invest with the imperial purple, Theodosius, a Spaniard of honourable birth. He was the son of Theodosius, a general who had rendered good service in Britain during the reign of Valentinian, by quelling the incursions of the Picts and Scots; and Gratian had every confidence in his energy and ability. Nor was the emperor much at fault in his choice, for Theodosius was a man of decided piety and great parts, and his reign of nearly sixteen years was marked by a display of wisdom and moderation which well befitted a christian ruler. But, like David of old, his character was not without its blemishes, and the records of his life contain some dark and even bloody pages. The following facts must speak for themselves.

There had been a tumult at Thessalonica, owing to the imprisonment of a favourite charioteer, and during the tumult the Roman general Botheric and several officers lost their lives. Theodosius, roused to indignation by this outrage, determined to avenge it; and accordingly issued secret instructions for an indiscriminate slaughter of the inhabitants. Under the pretence that an exhibition of public games was to take place, a vast crowd was collected in the circus of the city, and a fearful scene of slaughter ensued, in which fifteen thousand of the people lost their lives. Ambrose, who had received a promise from the emperor that the offence should be overlooked, was filled with anguish and astonishment when the news reached him, and, retiring to a neighbouring desert, wrote a stern letter of remonstrance to the emperor. The bishop was a man of mild and loving disposition, to whom the poorest of his flock might always find access; but he could be firm when occasion demanded, and he felt that an occasion had come. Whatever might be his private feelings towards the emperor, nothing should be permitted to stand in the way of his duty to God. In His presence all mere sentiment and human distinctions must disappear. The claims of His glory were in question, and they must be vindicated at whatever cost. Ambrose felt his position keenly; yet his grief was not more real than the grief of Theodosius. The emperor's conscience was thoroughly aroused, and his heart found a double burden in the bishop's rebuke and his own blood-guiltiness. To repair to the church was naturally his first thought, but Ambrose heard of his intention and hastened back to Milan to intercept him. The two men encountered each other at the porch, and a remarkable scene was witnessed. As the emperor moved forward to enter the church, the bishop

caught his robe, and solemnly adjured him to withdraw. The emperor expostulated, but Ambrose was resolute. Private expressions of grief were unavailing, the calamity was a public one, and the bishop would have nothing but a public confession. In vain the emperor pleaded — Ambrose was firm. An analogous case in David's history afforded no justification for his offence: if he had imitated David in his crime, he should also imitate him in his repentance. "Emperor," said the unyielding bishop, "you know not, it appears to me, the enormity of the murder perpetrated by you; nor, after the cessation of your rage, has reason come to know the crime committed. Verily it does not behove you, decoyed by the splendour of the purple, to be ignorant of the feebleness of the body covered by it. Emperor, you rule over creatures of like nature with yourself, and moreover fellow slaves: for God is the one Master, and Sovereign of all without exception. Now, how shall you receive in such polluted hands the supremely holy body of the Lord? and how, having shed so much blood unjustly, shall you approach the honoured blood to that mouth? Away with you then, and attempt not to swell former transgression by subsequent misdeeds."

Theodosius accepted the rebuke and withdrew. Eight months elapsed, and during that time he shut himself away in the privacy of his palace, where he devoted himself to humiliation and prayer. Meanwhile the Christmas season came round, and on Christmas day he again presented himself at the porch. "I weep," said he, "that the temple of God and consequently heaven, is shut from me which is open to slaves and beggars." But the bishop required proofs of the sincerity of his repentance. "What change of mind," said he, "have you exhibited after so great a transgression? and with what kind of medicines have you healed your wounds?" The emperor answered, "For you is the duty to point out the medicines, but mine is to receive your prescriptions." "Then commit it to writing, as law," said Ambrose, "that they who sub-ministrate the imperial commands, put off for thirty days the punishment of those that have been condemned to death, so that time in the interim may soften the imperial wrath, and that there be space given for mercy and well-regulated change of mind." Theodosius yielded, and commanded that such an order-at-law should be immediately written out. Ambrose now made way for the emperor and he entered the church. Immediately divesting himself of his imperial robes, Theodosius fell on his face, and prayed aloud in the words of Psalm 119, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken thou me according to thy word." The scene was heart-rending, and the people, uniting in the emperor's prayer, mingled their tears with his.

Reflecting upon this remarkable occurrence we can fully endorse the following opinion, for which we are indebted to a modern writer "Stripped of the superstition and formalities peculiar to the times, we have a case before us of the most genuine

and salutary discipline.... The behaviour of Theodosius was not the result of weakness or pusillanimity; but of a true fear of God; a real feeling of his guilt; a tender conscience; an acknowledgment of the claims of God, to whom all worldly greatness is subject."

We may reasonably expect that a man who could act thus would be a stern disciplinarian when he detected error or crime in others. This he was; and an instance of his severity may be found in the zeal with which he persecuted the Arians, whose numbers increased alarmingly during his reign. This zeal was still further inflamed by the indirect rebuke of an aged bishop, who had offended him by some trivial act of disrespect to one of his sons. "If you are angry," said the bishop, "because a slight has been put upon your son, even so will the heavenly Father be angry with those who refuse to His Son the honours which they pay to Himself." The emperor was struck by this remark, and resolved that henceforth he would use the power which God had given him in the suppression of Arianism and the banishment of all who embraced its evil doctrines. The resolution made, he was not slow in carrying it out. An imperial mandate was issued, and the Arians were driven into banishment. Large numbers of them took refuge among the Goths and Vandals and other barbarous hordes of northern Prussia; where they were in some cases kindly received: so that by this misguided act the evil doctrines were diffused more widely than ever.

But there were other heresies besides that of Arius which the faithful had to do battle with; and some of them of older date. Such for example, was that grotesque confusion of truth and error, of light and darkness, which has come down to us under the name of Manicheism. Its founder was a Persian magician named Mani, who became notorious towards the close of the third century. For some time he professed Christianity, but afterwards gave out that he was the Paraclete, and asserted that he had been favoured with a revelation from God. His Ertang, or marvellous book, was a wild and foolish medley of various philosophies and creeds, in which, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Orientalism found a conspicuous place. It is strange that such an impostor should have found followers; hut the heart of man is open to anything but the gospel, and before a century had passed away the Manicheans had become a numerous and powerful sect. The end of their leader was terrible and admonitory: he was flayed alive by order of the Persian king.

But a heresy of a more subtle and dangerous character than this of Mani was shortly to he spread abroad; a heresy which might rank beside that of Arius, so deadly and pernicious was it. Towards the close of the fourth century a monk named Pelagius arose, who denied the total corruption of the race through the first man's

transgression, and taught that we are born in innocence. "The sin of Adam," he said, "hurt himself alone, and not mankind." Logically followed out, this doctrine disallowed the necessity of divine grace, and raised man's conscience and the law to a level with the gospel: indeed, according to Pelagius, a man could be "saved by law as well as by the gospel; and the fall of man and his need of a new birth were dismissed as pious imaginations." The virtues of philosophers and patriarchs were the fruits of their own intrinsic excellence, and proved "how great was the goodness of nature."

But God, who sees the end from the beginning, had already prepared Himself a man to go forth against this new enemy. This man was Augustine, bishop of Hippo, one of the brightest lights that ever dawned upon the church.

He sprang from a noble family, and was born at Thegaste, a little village in Numidia, A.D. 354. His father was a pagan, but his mother was a woman of much piety, whose faithful and loving counsel Augustine was never weary of recalling in after life. Ambrose knew her well, and once said to her, "Be of good courage, a child of so many prayers and tears can never be lost." Augustine received a good education, and quickly came to the front as the first pupil in the school of rhetoric; but even in youth he was noted for his depraved ways. By his own account he would deceive "his tutor, masters, and parents with innumerable lies," and was so enslaved by greediness that he would "commit thefts from his parents' cellar and table." His very conscience was stifled. "I was grown deaf," he says in his Confessions, "by the clankings of the chain of my mortality, the punishment of the pride of my soul; and I strayed further from Thee, and Thou lettest me alone, and I was tossed about, and wasted and dissipated; and I boiled over in my fornications, and Thou heldest Thy peace, O Thou my tardy joy!" The father of Augustine died while he was yet young; but not before Monica's prayers for her husband had been answered, and he had found peace for his soul in Monica's Saviour. Thus encouraged, the pious woman went on praying for her son; feeling confident that her faith would be rewarded, though the answer might seem to linger. From his nineteenth to his twenty-eighth year, Augustine was a teacher of rhetoric; and, removing to Carthage during that period, he immediately took his place as the foremost rhetorician of that city. Yet his evil ways continued; and he acknowledges that the "hunt after the emptiness of popular praise, down even to theatrical applauses, and poetic prizes, and strifes for grassy garlands, and follies of shows," was the ruling passion of his life there. Nor was this all. To his thirst for popularity was added "a seduced and seducing lust," which kept him in bonds of wretchedness many years. A copy of Cicero's "Hortensius"came into his hands about this time, and gave him some serious thoughts about himself; but human philosophy proved inadequate for his deeper needs, and the book did him no permanent good. After this it was his

misfortune to fall in with some books of Manichean philosophy, which drew him still further from the truth; and it was not till A.D. 384, when he visited Milan, that he was able to disengage himself from the wildering meshes of that network of lies. Here, under the advice of Ambrose, he began to study the scriptures for himself, and with the happiest results. He was thoroughly aroused; and saw for the first time his moral deformity in the mirror of divine truth. He was amazed at his wickedness, and became from that time an earnest, though hopeless seeker after God. Hearing on one occasion of the conversion of some Roman nobles, he exclaimed, "These people take the kingdom of heaven by force, while we with our learning are wallowing in sin." But hope dawned at last, and after a wholesome though painful discipline of some months, he was converted through the instrumentality of Ambrose. His mother — her last earthly wish gratified died the following year; exclaiming, in the language of the aged Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

After his conversion, Augustine remained three years in retirement, during which time he studied the scriptures with profit. On his re-appearance in public he was ordained presbyter, and became a celebrated preacher at Hippo Regius, where he was elected bishop some years later. Throughout the remainder of his life he continued a faithful minister of the truth, and specially distinguished himself by the ability and vigour with which he exposed the doctrines of Mani and Pelagius. It is asserted by many that the zeal of Augustine against Pelagius, led him into the opposite extreme of Fatalism, and perhaps the charge is just. Yet the saying of Jeremy Taylor, that "when Pelagius had puddled the stream, Augustine was so angry, that he stamped and disturbed it more," is more witty than truthful. The free grace of God was ever his favourite theme, for, like Paul, he had learnt from what he had been delivered, and could glory in the apostle's words, "By grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God."

The schism of the Donatists also engaged the attention, and excited the opposition, of this devoted man, and drew from him the sternest denunciations. The Donatists took their name from their leader Donatus, who was a schismatic of the most extreme kind, though sound in doctrine and of unimpeachable morality. So far back as the year 311, he had opposed the election of one Caecilian to the bishopric of Carthage, on the plea that a bishop named Felix, who had taken a prominent part in the consecration, was a Traditor; that is, a person who had delivered up copies of the sacred books during the persecution under Diocletian: but other motives seem to have been at the root of the matter. The clergy and people of Carthage had elected their bishop, and proceeded to his consecration without consulting the bishops of Numidia, a contiguous and

subordinate province, and the troubles which followed were really due to the jealousies of the latter, and nothing else.

At first the opposing parties had been content to carry their differences to the emperor (Constantine); but when the synods of inquiry which he had instituted at Rome and Arles had decided in favour of Caecilian and his party, and Constantine himself had placed his seal to their decision, the Donatists (who had been the first to invite his interference) had revolted against his authority, and compelled him to more rigorous measures.

At this point they had been joined by a number of lawless men, of no faith or religion, who became the soldiers of their party, and quickly made themselves notorious by their excesses. These were the Circumcellions.* Armed with clubs and other weapons they overran the surrounding country, and spread terror and desolation in all directions. They expelled the catholic people, violated the women, murdered the children, threw the sacramental elements to the dogs, burnt the altars, melted down the chalices, and committed other lawless acts too numerous for mention. As a necessary consequence the Donatist faction lost prestige from that time forward.

{*The word means "around the cottages." The name was given them by the orthodox, because of their habit of going from cottage to cottage, enforcing their demands.}

But long before Augustine took up his pen in defence of the truth, the armies of Constans had purged the country of these dangerous outlaws; and when the bishop began to write, it was against the old schism of the Donatists and not the excesses of the Circumcellions. His zeal was not thrown away. So vigorously did he expose 'this dangerous and seditious spirit,' — alike in his writings, his public discourses, and his private conversation, that he all but ruined the Donatist cause in Africa, and destroyed the sympathy which their sufferings had awakened in other parts of Christendom. The faithful bishop died at Hippo, in the year 430, just as the Vandals were besieging the place.

Meanwhile Arcadius and Honorius had succeeded their father, Theodosius, on the throne, and Rome's darkest days had set in. The empire, indeed, had long been on the decline; and was seen to be approaching its dissolution even when Theodosius was raised to a share in the government. During his reign the eastern and western empires had been re-united for the last time; and no sooner had his death become known than hordes of barbarians poured in from all parts. The Goths were the first to make an incursion; and having succeeded in their attempt to pass the Danube, nation after nation followed their example, till the mighty deluge of human life had swept through

Europe, and even cast its waves upon the coast of Africa. In the year 400, Alaric, king of the Visigoths, invaded Italy, and was no sooner repulsed than a new host of barbarians, under their leader Radagaisus, crowded in from the shores of the Baltic. They overran Germany and Gaul, and penetrated even to Spain; but eventually were hemmed in by the Roman army among the Apennines, where vast multitudes were taken prisoners and thousands perished by exposure. But Rome, sunk in sloth and luxury, had neither energy nor strength to follow up her advantage. Three times in the reign of Honorius, who had taken up his residence at Ravenna, was the ancient city at the mercy of the barbarians. On the first occasion, (A.D. 408,) Alaric, king of the Goths, led his troops in triumph to the very gates of the city, when the citizens purchased his withdrawal by the sacrifice of their wealth; on the second occasion, (A.D. 451,) Attila, king of the Huns, called Godegisel or God's scourge, having laid waste the country as he went along, was only persuaded to leave the city after infinite difficulty: and on the third occasion, (A.D. 455,) Genseric, king of the Vandals, brought his army up to the walls, when they swarmed over the city like locusts, leaving only ruin and desolation in their wake. Such was the awful end of ancient Rome and so did God sweep away her corruptions, and visit upon her the blood of His martyred people.

In A.D. 476, the western empire was finally broken up; and Odoacer, king of the Heruli, assumed the title of king of Italy. He reigned fourteen years, and then resigned his kingdom to Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, a man of wisdom and prudence, in whose reign the country settled down after its long struggle, and began to enjoy once more the comforts of peace.

For many years before the fall of Rome, there had been a goodly number from among her enemies who had embraced Christianity; but as it was in most cases that spurious form of it which the Arians had disseminated after their expulsion by Theodosius, we need not wonder that the orthodox Christians were much persecuted when the barbarians became masters of the empire. Yet it is worthy of note that during the three invasions of Italy, from A.D. 408 to 455, when the soldiers of Alaric, Attila, and Genseric, were going hither and thither pillaging the country, the costly churches of the Christians were scarcely touched; and deference was everywhere paid to the bishops. Indeed, the retreat of Attila from the walls of Rome was owing in no small measure to the promptness of Leo I., bishop of Rome, who confronted him in his camp and so wrought upon him by his remonstrances, that the fiery Hun wheeled about with his army, and left the city by precipitate marches.

But though the Lord had thus delivered His people from many dangers, Christians had been preparing troubles for themselves by their own follies. The lives of the clergy

(with some bright exceptions) had become notoriously bad; and in Rome the condition of the church was so abandoned that the bishopric became, at one time, an object of competition; and two candidates, Laurentius and Symmachus, in their scramble for the office, did not scruple to bring the gravest criminal charges against each other. The daring effrontery of the clergy is strikingly illustrated by the fact, that Martin, bishop of Tours (in many respects a faithful and devoted Christian), suffered himself to be waited upon at table by the wife of the Emperor Maximus, dressed in the habit of a servant!*

{*There is another story of this bishop to the same point. He was dining with the emperor on a similar occasion, when the latter handed him his goblet, requesting him to drink first. Martin ostentatiously complied; but before returning the goblet to the emperor, he passed it to his own chaplain, remarking that princes and potentates were below the dignity of priests and bishops.}

An ambition for distinction in the church was also consuming the energies of many less gifted Christians, and to meet this a host of new functionaries had been introduced; so that we begin to hear of sub-deacons, readers, attendants, acolyths, exorcists, and doorkeepers. But beyond all this, the worship of images and invocation of saints had become common; and the persecution of one Nestorius for objecting to the term "Mother of God" as applied to the Virgin Mary, told, but too plainly, whither the church was drifting.

It was out of this confusion and manifest declension on all sides that Monachism arose. Antony, a native of Coma, in Upper Egypt, has the doubtful honour of being the first monk. Hermits had existed before him, but he was the first to adopt the life of the cloister, and to retire absolutely from the world. It is said that he was led to this step when quite a youth, by hearing those words of the Saviour, "Sell all thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." He shortly after disposed of his property, and retired to a tomb, in which he remained immured ten years. Here he became famous for his piety and asceticism, and many from all classes resorted to him. Afterwards he retired to a ruined castle near the Red Sea, where he remained other twenty years. An early historian informs us, that "his sustenance was bread only, and salt but his drink was water; and his meal-time the setting sun. Yet he oftentimes staid fasting two days and more. But he kept ever watchful (following the Saviour's words, 'What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch'), whole nights as one might say, and was intent upon prayer until day. But if haply he even tasted of sleep, he slept a little instant upon a mat, but generally on the ground, making the same bare ground his pillow; moreover he was particularly gentle, and most humane, and

discreet, and courageous; agreeable to those that met and talked with him, and inoffensive to those with whom he disputed." There is little doubt that Antony was a true Christian, and when the persecution under Maximus broke out he proved his devotion to the Lord by coming from his retirement and sharing in the dangers of his brethren: but the storm had no sooner subsided than he disappeared, and found a new seclusion in the cave of some lofty mountain. His last appearance was in the year 352, when the spread of Arianism once more called him from his retirement. He was then a hundred years old, and the rumour of his re-appearance attracted thousands to Alexandria. His influence was immense, Arianism received a severe check, and many conversions resulted from his visit to the city. He died in the year 356, at the advanced age of one hundred and five years.

Monachism spread with the reputation of St. Antony, and before the close of the century all the waste places of the christian world were dotted over with monasteries. Pachomius drew together a little colony of monks on the island of Tabenne, where they were distinguished from the rest by their linen tunics and black frocks: Ammon drew together another and larger colony in the hilly desert of Nitria; Macarius another, in the vast solitude of Scetis. Hilarion established several colonies in Syria; Sabas, the celebrated monastery of Mar Seba, in Palestine; and Basil, of Cappadocia, introduced the ascetic profession into Asia Minor. The contentious Jerome, while secretary to the bishop of Rome, established several monasteries in the western empire, and St. Martin, abbot-bishop of Tours, furthered his labours by founding similar retreats in Gaul.

Until the close of the fifth century, all these widely-scattered institutions were under the control of the bishops; and the monks, in spite of their great reputation and growing wealth, were only recognised as laymen by the churches. Leo I. expressly forbade them to engage in any priestly offices, or to become the religious instructors of the people; although, on the other hand, the monasteries were looked upon as schools and nurseries for the ministry. This apparent inconsistency may be accounted for by the fact, that monks who had been ordained, "immediately quitted the cloister and engaged in the duties of the secular clergy." At the close of the fifth century, however, they appealed to the Pope of Rome, and requested permission to place themselves under his protection, a request which he was ready enough to grant, being well acquainted with their wealth and influence. Thus it was that monasteries, abbeys, priories and nunneries became subject to the See of Rome.

The establishment of convents of nuns during the fourth century was owing greatly to the activity of the monk Pachomius, of whom we have already spoken; and before his death there were no fewer than 27,000 such recluses in Egypt alone.

But even the rigid mortifications and ascetic habits of a monastic life were not sufficient in all cases; and the absurd lengths to which some deluded victims of Satan were encouraged to go, almost exceeds belief. Thus Simeon, a monk of Syria, passing from one step of fanaticism to another, erected a pillar six cubits high (each cubit being eighteen inches), and dwelt on it four years. On a second of twelve cubits high (eighteen feet) he lived three years; on a third of twenty-two cubits (thirty-three feet), ten years; and on a fourth of forty cubits, or sixty feet high, which the people built for him, he spent the last twenty years of his life.

And even this insanity had imitators, for after Simeon's death, a sect of men arose, who made similar erections for themselves, and gloried in the name of "Pillar-men."

Chapter 8.
The Dawn of the Thyatira Period.
A.D. 500-600.

With the sixth century begins *the Thyatira period of the church's history;* in other words, the popery of the dark ages. It carries us on to the time of the Reformation, although, of course, Romanism itself goes on to the end. It is a time of growing darkness around, but of growing devotedness among real saints — on the whole, an intensely solemn epoch in the history of Christendom. In glancing for a moment at the beginning of this new period, it is necessary that we retrace our steps.

In the year 313, the first edict in favour of Christianity was published. Constantine had entered into a secret alliance with Licinius, to accomplish the overthrow of the usurper Maximus; and he used the occasion to induce Licinius to revoke the persecuting edicts of Diocletian, and to unite with him in framing a new edict in favour of Christianity. Licinius consented, and when the two emperors met at Milan, they drew up the famous Edict of Milan, sometimes called the Magna Charta of Christendom. It was a proclamation of universal toleration, and contained, among other things, the following important sentences: "We have thus granted the Christians a free and absolute liberty of exercising their religion. And not only is this liberty absolutely granted to them, but all others who wish for it have also the privilege allowed them of following their own religious profession." "Also, that as to any of the places of worship where the Christians were accustomed formerly to convene, if they shall have been purchased by any person, either from our exchequer, or from any one

else, they shall restore the same to the said Christians without fee or demand of the price paid for them, and without impediment or evasion." The church welcomed with extravagant joy this sudden turn in her affairs, and, in the blindness of excessive gratitude, withdrew the confidence which belonged to her Head in heaven, and nestled comfortably down under the wing of the Roman eagle. Yet there could never be a complete amalgamation of the two parties. One or the other must assume the pre-eminence, and for awhile the church was content to take the lower place. The gold had but just emerged from the furnace, and could afford to remain awhile amongst the ashes, whatever might be the future that awaited it.

With the death of Constantine, however, the strife for supremacy commenced; and the bishops of Rome, as a preliminary step, boldly put forth their claims to universal government in the church, as the successors of St. Peter. It seems, indeed, to have been a growing belief among Christians, that St. Peter was the founder of the Roman see; and when Leo I. asserted, that "the apostle was called *Petra,* the rock, by which he is constituted the foundation," and admonished the brethren "to acknowledge that he is the primate of all bishops, and that Christ, who denieth His gifts to none, yet giveth unto none except through him," he found thousands who were ready to receive the statement, and to listen submissively to the admonition.

These pretensions would certainly have surprised the early bishops of Rome, for the idea of supremacy and apostolic succession never entered their heads. Indeed, it is a significant fact that, though their names are known in history, the order in which they succeeded each other is not known, and their histories — if ever they were written — have been lost in the mist of ages. True they had a certain pre-eminence, but this was only because of the political importance of the city; and the same pre-eminence was given to the bishops of Antioch and Alexandria. Indeed, these three cities were respectively the capitals of the European, the Asiatic, and the African divisions of the empire, and it was for this sufficient reason that their bishops took precedence of the rest. Nearly a century and a half later, Gregory the Great (the pope whose history we are about to consider) acknowledged an equality of rank in the three bishops; a fact which shews how far the roots of the papacy were removed from the primitive sources of Christianity. In the course of an epistle to the bishop of Alexandria he says, "And thus, though the apostles may be many, yet the see of the chief of the apostles (which belongs to me though it is in three places) prevailed in authority solely by virtue of his (Peter's) chiefship. For it is he which exalted the see (Rome) on which he condescended to take his rest and finish the present life. It is he who adorned the see (Alexandria), to which he sent the evangelist, his disciple. It is he who established the see (Antioch) in which he sat for seven years, though he was to leave it." In another

letter to the same bishop, who had addressed him as "Universal Pope," he says, "I pray your most sweet holiness to address me no more with the proud appellation of 'Universal Pope,' since that which is given to another beyond what reason requires is subtracted from yourself. If you style me 'Universal Pope,' you deny that you are at all that which you own me to be universally. Away with words which puff up vanity and wound charity." These quotations, however carry us somewhat in advance of our subject, which is rather to prove the progress of the apostasy, than the feeble efforts of pious popes to avert it.

The sixth century was extremely favourable to the growth of the papal power, for, with the exception of Justinian, the emperors had neither the ability nor energy, even if they had the inclination, to oppose its pretensions. As for Justinian, though he loved to dabble in ecclesiastical affairs, his attention was concentrated in the East, and he found enough to occupy his mind in the endless and stormy controversies of his bishops. He was orthodox to the last degree, and tried by every means to suppress heresy; often neglecting the affairs of state to prosecute this hopeless end. By his command the schools of philosophy, which had flourished for centuries at Athens, were closed, and Pagans were everywhere prohibited from holding public offices: yet the wisdom of the prohibition is more than doubtful, as it led to the greatest hypocrisy, and many adopted the christian profession for purposes of worldly advancement. Moreover, this act of the emperor, combined with the discouragement given to profane learning at a later period by Gregory the Great, led to that decay of learning which produced such lamentable results in the Dark Ages.

Gregory was the only pope of any note during this century; and his character may be taken as typical of most of the pious prelates of his time. It presents a strange mixture of meekness and assumption; of simple piety and extravagant superstition; of self-denial and priestly-ambition; of mildness and intolerance; of personal purity and ecclesiastical corruptness. Looked at as Gregory the *man,* there is much — very much — to inspire respect and affection; looked at as Gregory the *pope,* he is the haughty, intolerant, deluded ecclesiastic which every occupier of the papal chair must be.

Yet it is gratifying to add, that Gregory's elevation to the see of Rome was not a distinction of his own seeking. The position was forced upon him by the clamorous desire of the people, who loved and respected him for his fervent piety and self-denying attentions to the poor. His previous history conclusively shews, that he shrank from worldly recognition and applause.

On the death of his father, who was a senator of Rome and the grandson of pope Felix, he succeeded to an ample fortune. But Gregory was not the man to settle down in

selfish ease and enjoyment. He received his riches as the steward of God, and six monasteries presently arose in Sicily as the witnesses of his faithful stewardship. He also devoted his own mansion at Rome to similar purposes, and from that moment entered upon the monastic life himself. From the lowest order of monks, whose most menial duties he considered not beneath his dignity, he gradually rose to the position of abbot in his own monastery; where he spent his time in prayerful study of the scriptures and the most self-denying exercises. It must have been about this time that that pleasing incident occurred, the circumstances of which are so familiar to English readers. We refer to Gregory's visit to the slave market, when his attention was arrested by the beautiful faces of two English boys, who were offered there for sale. Being informed from whence the children came, and that the inhabitants of our island were all heathen, he exclaimed, "Alas! that the prince of darkness should possess forms of such loveliness! That such beauty of countenance should want that better beauty of soul!" and when he heard that they were called Angles, he added, "call them angels rather, for they have angelic faces, and it is a thousand pities that they are not partakers of the glory that shall be revealed before the angels of God." He then inquired, "to what province do they belong," and being told Deira, "Surely," said he, they must be rescued *de ira*" — from the wrath of God "and called to the mercy of Christ." The missionary zeal of Gregory was roused by this trifling incident, and he obtained the pope's permission to proceed to England: but he was not three days on his journey before he was summoned to return. The affection of the people had proved stronger than their self-denial, and they had 'risen in pious mutiny' to demand his recall.

After this Gregory was not permitted to return to his monastery, and when the pope Pelagius died, in the year 590, he was elected, though much against his wish, to fill the vacant chair. Yet in the multiplicity of cares attending his new office, Gregory did not forget the claims of England; and one of the first acts of his pontificate was to equip a band of missionary monks, under Augustine, and despatch them thither. They landed at Thanet a few months later, but found on their arrival that the gospel had been already planted in the country, and that many of the people were converted. The queen of Ethelbert (a daughter of Clotaire I., king of France) was one of these; and owing to her powerful influence the monks were kindly received, and a great gospel work began.

When and under what circumstances the gospel was first introduced to the country is not certainly known; but it is probable that even in the apostles' day the light had penetrated; and there are reasons for believing that the "Claudia," of Paul's second epistle to Timothy, was the daughter of a British king. Be that as it may, it is beyond

question, that the gospel had been preached in all the British Islands long before Augustine and his monks arrived. The following facts will prove this.

As regards England — in addition to the testimony of christian writers of the second century that there were professors of Christianity in every country known to the Romans — we have the information, that several bishops from England were present at the general council of the fourth century; though the withdrawal of the Roman troops about this time almost neutralised their former influence and importance. Indeed, as is well known, the departure of these forces opened the north of England to the Picts and Scots, who invaded the country year after year, spreading desolation in all directions. It was then, too, that the British chiefs, perplexed and harassed by the repeated incursions of these invincible freebooters, appealed to the Saxons for assistance. The Saxons responded to the call, but having fulfilled the purpose for which they had been invited, displayed no willingness to return. On the contrary, they invited reinforcements from the North, who poured in upon the Island in overwhelming numbers; so that the Britons began to find, that in escaping from one danger they had fallen into a worse. These Saxon and Angle invaders were Pagans, merciless and cruel in warfare, and their hatred to Christianity was evidenced by the zeal with which they sought to exterminate it. Some Christians, however, contrived to escape with their lives, and took refuge among the mountains and rocky fastnesses of Wales and Cornwall, where they were permitted to remain without much molestation till the arrival of Augustine with his monks.

Ireland and Scotland were likewise favoured with the gospel long before the preaching of Gregory's mission; the former by the labours of Patrick, a Scotchman, who had been captured by pirates and sold as a slave in the sister country; the latter by the labours of an Irishman named Columba, some century and a half later. Thus the apostle of Ireland was a Scotchman, and the apostle of Scotland was an Irishman. Both these missionaries seem to have been exceptionally pious and enlightened men, a fact which is the more noteworthy when we consider the times in which they lived. We can only briefly refer to them in these pages.

St. Patrick was converted during the six years of his captivity, through calling to remembrance some passage from the Scriptures, which he had learnt at his mother's knee, in his home on the Clyde. He thus alludes to the event: "I was sixteen years old, and knew not the true God; but in that strange land the Lord opened my unbelieving eyes, and, although late, I called my sins to mind, and was converted with my whole heart to the Lord my God, who regarded my low estate, had pity on my youth and ignorance, and consoled me as a father consoles his children." St. Patrick's real name

was Succat, but when he started on his missionary journey to Ireland it was changed to Patrick, to signify his patrician descent: in addition to this he was ordained bishop of the Irish before setting out, by his uncle, the famous Martin of Tours. His labours in the gospel were amazing, and Ireland presently became the most enlightened country of Western Christendom; nor did she acknowledge the supremacy of Rome till the middle of the twelfth century.*

{*Scotland was also independent of the Roman see till about this time.}

Columba, who left the island with a band of twelve monks in the year 565, reached the Hebrides and landed at Mull, a barren rock to the south of the basaltic caverns of Staffa. The island of Iona was adopted as their home, and from thence, a few years later, the gospel penetrated to the mainland. For centuries after, the humble monastery of Iona was the most famous for learning and piety among all the monasteries of the western world. South of the Grampians, Palladius and Niman appear to have laboured with success; the former was sent by pope Celestine, in the year 431, to the Christians of Scotland — some say, to refute the errors of Pelagius. Of Niman little or nothing is now known.*

{*The monks of Scotland were called Culdees, and three explanations are given for the origin of the name. 1. That it is an abbreviation of *Cultores Dei,* worshippers of God. 2. That it is derived from the Gaelic expression *Celi-de,* servants of God. 3. That it is derived from the Gaelic *Cuil* or *Ceal,* a sheltered place or retreat.}

Judging by the number of converts, the mission of Gregory was a success; for it is said that no fewer than ten thousand heathens were baptised on Christmas Day of the year 597. More missionaries followed as the result of this success, and with them a host of Romish toys and ornaments; including the pallium which was to invest Augustine as Archbishop of Canterbury. The haughty spirit of the monk-missionary was fearlessly displayed on his elevation to this new dignity; and when a conference of British and Roman clergy was held by the river Severn a few weeks later, he boldly required of the former an acknowledgment of the universal supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, and conformity to the ritual of the Latin church. But the British clergy, who traced their reception of Christianity from the east and not from Rome, steadily refused the demand. Augustine argued, but he argued in vain. The people were firm, though peaceable; and their quiet demeanour irritated the monk. At last he wrathfully exclaimed, If you will not receive brethren who bring you peace, you shall receive enemies who bring you war. If you will not unite with us in shewing the Saxons the way of life, you shall receive from them the stroke of death." The prediction had its fulfilment shortly after his death; when 1250 monks of Bangor were slaughtered in

cold blood by the army of Edelfrid. Some say that Augustine connived at the bloody deed, and was actually preparing for it during the closing days of his life; but the affair is shrouded in mystery, and we will gladly hope otherwise.

This rapid glance at the missionary labours of the past three centuries would not be complete without the mention of two other famous evangelists, Columbanus and St. Gall. They sailed together from Ireland, about the year 590, with a colony of monks, and landed in Gaul. Refusing the invitation of Gontran, king of Burgundy, to settle in his dominions, they obtained permission to encamp among the barren mountains of the Vosges, where for many months they were content to subsist on the coarsest food — the berries, barks of trees, and wild honey which the forest afforded — and to live in logwood cabins and mud huts. But their work was owned of God, and through their instrumentality the gospel spread through Lorraine, Switzerland, and Northern Italy: while many souls were converted, and monasteries sprung up in all directions. St. Gall is now honoured as the apostle of Switzerland.

Yet, say what we will of the missionary zeal of this period, things were growing darker on all sides, and the corrupting power of Rome was alarmingly on the increase. The simplicity of Christian worship was continually suffering by fresh innovations, and more than one new doctrine of a questionable character had crept into the church. It was in the time of Gregory that the abominable notion of purgatory was first mooted. He himself spoke of "purification by a fiery probation as a settled fact;" little thinking that this heathenish figment would be made the ground, in future years, for the sale of indulgences. Yet his thoughts on the subject were only vague: almost as vague indeed, as the speculations of Augustine, who was the first to suggest the doctrine of a middle state. Even to this day there is much uncertainty on the subject with Romish writers; and the visions of purgatory, with which monks and priests have been favoured from time to time, are strangely contradictory. Perhaps the most popular idea is that supplied by Drithelm, who pretends to have made a journey to purgatory on purpose to collect information. He was accompanied by an angelic guide, who conducted him, by way of the rising sun, to a huge valley enclosed on the one side by great furnaces, and on the other by hills of snow and ice. The valley was tenanted by human souls, which a strong wind buffeted from side to side in angry sport; now driving them into the roasting furnaces, and now on to the freezing hills. Here the miserable captives were to remain till the last day, when they would be translated to heaven, unless by means of alms or masses they were released beforehand. It was not however till the superstitious Middle Ages that, these absurd stories were circulated among the credulous.

Most of the religion that was now abroad appealed more to the carnal senses than the spiritual perceptions of men; and in some cases it might have been even described (using the apostle's words) as 'worldly, sensual and devilish.' Those who wished to indulge their love of pleasure under the cloak of religion, could find abundant opportunity on the feast days of the Latin church, which were arranged after the manner of the Lupercalia and other heathen festivals; while the superstitious mind could find every encouragement for its fatal credulity among the wonder-working bones of the saints, or the glittering crucifixes and consecrated candles which adorned the altars. The simplicity of christian worship was buried under the pomp of ritual; and those who went to adore the Lord came away, confessing they had only been dazzled by the priests; indeed, it became a complaint with some, that the celebration of divine service in the churches, was more burdensome than even the Jewish ceremonial could have been. When a presbyter named Vigilantius, a native of Commence, in Aquitaine, had had the boldness to protest against these innovations, though at a much earlier period, he had incurred the hot displeasure of Jerome, and had been glad to purchase peace by lapsing into silence.

It was, indeed, a sorry day for the poor church; for Jezebel was carrying on her seductions, and none seemed able or willing to withstand her.

Chapter 9.
The Nestorians and Paulicians; with Some Account of the Rise and Spread of Mahometanism.
A.D. 600-700.

The darkness which was gathering over Christendom grew darker as the years rolled on, and towards the beginning of the seventh century the ignorance of the clergy and the superstition of the people had become amazing. The decree of Gregory the Great, discouraging the pursuit and acquisition of profane knowledge, had produced this deplorable result, the extent of which may be imagined by the fact, that many of the clergy were unable to write their own names. The Greek language was almost forgotten; even the Bible was but little read; and the bishops, unable to compose their own discourses, made up for their lack of learning by shameless filchings from the homilies of the fathers. Yet even this was not an unmixed evil; for their lives, in most instances, were so dissolute and bad, that a sermon of their own (granting the ability to write one) must have been either a piece of insincere verbiage, or an impeachment of the moral law and a denial of the gospel. Almost the only literature circulated among the people consisted in the wildest legends of the martyrs (such as would often raise a smile were the subjects trifled with less solemn), and fictitious lives of

the saints. Yet these were read with avidity, and people could be found everywhere who were superstitious and ignorant enough to believe them. The pride and avarice of the clergy, which had hitherto been peculiar to their order, had now found its way into the monasteries those institutions which really owed their existence to the efforts of pious men to escape from these very evils and it is no exaggeration to say, that many of these places were literally honeycombed with vice. There were frequent squabbles, too, between the monks and clergy, owing to the encroachments of the latter upon the wide and fertile districts belonging to the monasteries. These districts were unquestionably the property of the monks; it was their industry which had changed them from barren wildernesses into fruitful plantations; and how the clergy contrived to support a claim it is difficult to imagine. The disputes, however, were never settled, for the priests were as insatiable in their avarice as Ahab, and the monks shewed no disposition to suffer joyfully the spoiling of their goods.

Yet this deplorable declension on all sides is not surprising, when we consider the examples of the popes, whose arrogance and impiety seemed daily to increase. Their ambition was unbounded and insatiable, and no means were too base to attain their ends. During the first half of the seventh century, they obtained a great accession of power by means of the usurper Phocas, who had murdered the emperor Maurice and established himself on the throne. For several years prior to this, a strife for supremacy had been raging between the rival bishops of Rome and Constantinople, and Phocas to conciliate the Italians, who of course supported their own bishop, declared in favour of the former. Thus the title of "Universal Bishop" became theirs by imperial authority; and the foundation, upon which all their after pretensions were built, was firmly laid. This had taken place in the previous century, during the pontificate of the first Gregory and the one great blot upon his character in unquestionably this, that he sanctioned the murderous act of Phocas, and openly rejoiced in the tidings of his success.

Her ecclesiastical supremacy thus established, the future popes of Rome began to turn their attention to the *temporal* advancement of the Papal see and political intriguing began to be a familiar element in the councils of the Vatican. At present the pope of Rome, though Universal Bishop and therefore supreme dictator in the church, was still in subjection to the civil power, and his movements were necessarily much hampered by the arbitrary will of the emperors. He was liable, in common with the meanest citizen, to be arraigned before the civil courts of Rome an event which actually took place in the year 653, when Pope St. Martin was not only brought up before a tribunal of justice, but imprisoned for his offence, and afterwards doomed to perpetual exile.

Those who advocated the temporal claims of Rome were not wanting in arguments, and in later years, when the object of the Papacy was in measure attained, Pope Adrian's reasoning took somewhat this form. If the pope is Christ's vicar on earth, then whatever comes under the dominion of Christ comes under the dominion of the pope: but Christ's kingdom extends over all, therefore the whole world is under the jurisdiction of the pope. It would be interesting to know what Adrian would have made of those words of the divine Founder of Christianity, "My kingdom is not of this world."

However, the occasion for asserting the jurisdiction of Rome in this way was not yet ripe, and she well knew that her first business must be the extension, and, at the same time, the consolidation of her spiritual empire. But this could only be accomplished by the missionary labours of her sons, and hence every facility was offered to evangelising monks and others in the prosecution of their arduous labours. It was of little consequence to Rome whether the gospel was being preached or perverted, whether souls were being born again for eternity or were being led blindfold into hell: all she looked for was converts to her cause, who would acknowledge her supremacy, and yield unquestioning obedience to her wishes. At a later period, when her temporal power also would he established, and the gospel, perhaps, would prove an awkward element in her system, she might take steps to purge it out — but not now. Missionaries, so long as they advocated her claims, might preach anything else they pleased; all she wanted was proselytes for the extension of her spiritual power. Hence it is no matter for surprise that the gospel seed was widely sown in some places even during this period of growing darkness, or that Rome herself sanctioned the labours of her missionary sons.

St. Kilian, a Scotchman, was one of these. He settled at Wurzburg, in the year 685, and carried on his labours under much encouragement. His preaching was widely blessed among the eastern Franks, and the Duke of Thuringia, Gozbert by name, was one of the first to submit to the ordinance of baptism at his hands. But a martyr's death awaited him. He was sacrificed, together with all his monks, to the treachery of Geilana, the sister-in-law of Gozbert, who had been living with the duke as his paramour. The duke had undertaken to dissolve the guilty connection, but during his absence from home the jealous woman ordered the missionary band to be arrested, and having shut them up in a stable, they were beheaded in her presence.

Willibrord, a Northumbrian, was another of those who went out to the heathen under the auspices of Rome. He left England in the year 690, with a band of twelve, and made Friesland the scene of his mission labours. There is a story told of the king of the Frieslanders, Radbod by name, which may have a passing though painful interest for

some readers. He had been prevailed upon, after much opposition, to receive baptism; but before going down into the water, he put this question to Willibrord, "What think you, teacher, of my forefathers? Do you suppose the greater number of them to be in paradise, or in the nether world?" On receiving the hesitating answer, "I fear that most of them are in the nether world," he turned abruptly from the water, saying, "Then I think it better that I should go where the greater number of them reside." In the year 696 Willibrord forwarded a report of his successes to Rome, and was consecrated archbishop of Utrecht as a reward for his services.

Of Winifred, the apostle of Germany (canonised under the title of St. Boniface), we must speak in another chapter, as he belongs more strictly to the eighth century, in the history of which he plays an important part.

Yet though St. Kilian, Willibrord and Winifred were the chief preachers sent out by Rome during the seventh century, the missionary records of that period are far from complete with the mention of these men. It is a remarkable fact, that the gospel was preached in its greatest purity by men *outside* the pale of the Romish church; by men who were stigmatised and anathematised as heretics by the successive occupants of the papal chair. Such were the Nestorians and Paulicians, to whom we now turn with a feeling of pleasure and relief; although the little we know of them is principally derived from their enemies.

In the year 636, the Nestorians* penetrated as far as China, and preached the gospel with great success. An interesting marble monument, sixty feet long and five feet broad, containing a record of their labours, was discovered near Singapore by some Jesuits, in the seventeenth century. The characters inscribed upon it are partly in Syriac and partly in Chinese, and are arranged in twenty-eight parallel columns, each of sixty-two words. In addition to the names of some Nestorian missionaries, the monument contains an account of the introduction of Christianity into the country, and a confession of faith, such as few Christians could object to. The Nestorians laboured on in China till towards the close of the eighth century; when the government grew jealous of their influence, and it is presumed that they were either exterminated or expelled the territory. Others of their missionaries worked their way as far as Persia, Syria, and the Malabar coast, but they do not appear to have penetrated far into the interior of India.

{*The followers of Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, mentioned in chapter 7, who maintained the co-existence, but not the union, of the two natures in the person of Christ. It was Nestorius who objected to the term "Mother of God," as applied to the Virgin Mary.}

The origin of the body of Christians called Paulicians is remarkable, and leads us to the first mention of the Mahometans, the founder of whose religion began to formulate his extraordinary doctrines in this century. A certain deacon having been taken prisoner by the Mahometans, contrived to make his escape, and was hospitably received by one Constantine, a Gnostic or Manichean (it is uncertain which) of Samosata. On taking leave of his kind host, the deacon presented him with a manuscript, containing the four Gospels and fourteen epistles of St. Paul; a prayerful perusal of which soon dispelled from his mind whatever Gnostic or Manichean views he might have held, and gave him an earnest desire to see the church restored to that state of simplicity which distinguished it in the apostle's day. Inflamed by this desire, he went abroad preaching the gospel and inveighing against the corrupt and superstitious practices of Rome. He soon drew together a band of devoted followers, the chief of whom he named after the disciples mentioned in Paul's epistles, Timotheus, Titus, Tychicus, and so on. He took for his own name, Sylvanus, and when writing to the Christians of Cibossa, in Armenia, styles them Macedonians a beautiful and harmless allegory surely, but which kindled the jealousy of the catholic party, and was made the excuse for a persecuting edict against them. Constantine and several of his followers were taken prisoners, and the officer charged with the execution of the decree, commanded the latter to stone their pastor to death. But they dropped the stones which had been given them for that purpose: and only one of their number was found base enough to obey the order. This was a youth named Justus, an adopted son of Constantine, who threw his stone with such fatal precision that the martyr fell dead on the spot. The officer, Simeon, was afterwards converted, and actually became the successor of Sylvanus under the name of Titus; thus reminding one of Saul of Tarsus, who was present at the stoning of Stephen, and afterwards preached the truth for which that blessed martyr died. After this event the doctrines which Constantine had been instrumental in reviving spread rapidly, and by the commencement of the next century the Paulicians numbered several thousands. Some of them are believed to have taken refuge in the secluded valleys of the Pays de Vaud; where, shut off by the Alps from the oppression and false worship and superstitions of Rome, they became a bright and happy community; and formed the nucleus of a church from which arose in after years the Waldenses of martyr fame.

What a contrast between this little body of simple worshippers, and that great system of idolatry and corruption which had its centre in Papal Rome! How was the gold become dim! how was the most fine gold changed! (Lam. 4:1.) But an ordination of judgment had gone out against the guilty church; and a mighty scourge was preparing,

with which God was shortly to afflict the millions of Christendom, and to display before the nations His righteous anger.

In the year 612, Mahomet, the false prophet of Arabia, appeared upon the stage of the world's history. He was born in Mecca, a city of Arabia, in the year 569 of the Christian era, and belonged to the noble family of Koreish. Owing to the death of his father when Mahomet was quite a child, the responsibility of his training devolved upon his uncle, Abu Taleb, a merchant of Mecca, with whom he went on various expeditions to Damascus and other parts. During the evening halts of the caravan, Mahomet would listen with rapt attention to the wonder-tales of his companions, who delighted to recount those marvellous legends which had been preserved by the people through years of solitary travel, among silent and deserted valleys: and thus his mind, at an early period, became stored with a host of legendary fancies, which he afterwards turned to practical account in the composition of the Koran. He was of a contemplative turn of mind, and as he grew older began to view, with scornful interest, the conflicting varieties of sects by which he was surrounded, and the prevalence of idolatry and polytheism. A desire now possessed him to found a new sect, which should be distinguished by an absence of idolatry, and which should acknowledge only the one supreme God.

Full of this thought Mahomet retired to a cave near Mecca, where he had for his companions a Persian Jew, well versed in the history and laws of his persuasion, and two professing Christians; and here he commenced the compilation of that incoherent medley of truth and fable, called the Koran or 'Book.' Issuing from his retirement a few months later, he announced his new work to the world, and circulated a report among his friends that he had received it by instalments from the angel Gabriel. At forty years of age he publicly stood forth as the apostle of God, and began to teach the new doctrines; but followers gathered slowly, and he was much persecuted for a time by his kinsmen and brethren. By the end of three years, however, his following had considerably increased; and this turn in the tide of his affairs encouraged him to change his peaceful tactics, and to introduce the sword. But the moment was not ripe for the change, and he was compelled to flee from Mecca in order to save his life. The Mahometan era dates from this event, which is called the Hegira, or Flight. The story is, that being surrounded in his house, he blinded his Koreishite pursuers by scattering a handful of dust in their midst, meanwhile escaping in the confusion. The faithful still point to a passage in the Koran — "We have thrown blindness upon them that they shall not see," — in support of this fable; but it is safer to adopt the opinion of a modern writer,* who says, The most probable account is that he clambered over the wall in the rear of the house by the help of a servant, who bent his back for him to step

upon it." Yet from that time the religion spread rapidly, and when Mahomet returned to Mecca some ten years later he was attended by 150,000 followers; and entered the city with regal pomp and magnificence. Having made himself virtually master of Arabia, he retired to Medina, and died A.D. 632, at the age of sixty-three.

{*Washington Irving, in his Life of Mahomet.'}

The fundamental doctrine of Mahometanism is embodied in the well-known dogma of its author, "There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet." "We follow," says the Koran, "the religion of Abraham, the orthodox, who was no idolater. We believe in God, and that which hath been sent down to us, and unto Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, and the tribes." The worship of saints, and the use of paintings and images, were declared to be idolatrous, and are expressly forbidden in the Koran; while fastings, prayers, pilgrimages, frequent washings, and almsgiving are insisted upon. The following is the Mussalmans' creed, as taught in their schools at the present day. "I believe in the books which have been delivered from heaven and the prophets. In this manner was the Koran given to Mahomet, the Pentateuch to Moses, the Psalter to David, and the Gospel to Jesus. I believe in the prophets, and the miracles they have performed. Adam was the first prophet, and Mahomet was the last. I believe that for the space of fifty thousand years the righteous shall repose under the shade of the terrestrial paradise, and the wicked shall be exposed naked to the burning rays of the sun. I believe in the bridge Sirat, which passes over the bottomless pit of hell. It is as fine as a hair, and as sharp as a sabre. All must pass over it, and the wicked shall be thrown off. I believe in the water-pools of paradise. Each of the prophets has in paradise a basin for his own use; the water is whiter than milk, and sweeter than honey. On the ridges of the pools are vessels to drink out of, and they are bordered with stars. I believe in heaven and in hell. The inhabitants of the former know no want, and the houris* who attend them are never afflicted with sickness. The floor of paradise is musk, the stones are silver, and the cement gold. The damned are, on the contrary, tormented with fire, and by voracious and poisonous animals."

{*A houri, among the Mahometans, is a nymph of Paradise.}

All this pitiful nonsense had, perhaps, been better passed over in silence; but the crying sin of the great impostor remains to be spoken of. Mahomet denied the divinity of Christ. Whatever else he had to say of Him can be of little moment to the Christian — Mahomet's deepest, blackest crime was this he denied the divinity of Christ. By this he has wrecked the eternal hopes of millions of the human race; and for this he will be judged hereafter.

One of his last acts was to place his banner in the hands of a youthful general, named Osama, a son of Zeid, who had been one of the prophet's most devoted adherents; charging him to fight valiantly, till all who denied the unity of God had been swept from the earth. How far this charge was carried out may be gathered from the fact, that by the close of the seventh century his disciples had obtained military possession of Persia, Syria, the greater part of central and western Asia, of Egypt, the northern coast of Africa, and Spain. Their further history, in so far as it affects the history of Christianity, belongs to future chapters; though before we return to them, we must cast our eyes in a different quarter, and trace the onward course of another giant evil.

Chapter 10.
Romish Idolatry and the Growth of the Papal Power.
A.D. 700-800.

While the Saracens or Arabs were carrying their conquests through Asia and northern Africa, and planting the standard of Mahomet where the cross had hitherto been seen, the servants of the gospel and of Rome were not idle in the west. St. Winifred, an Englishman of noble birth, belonging to the Benedictine order of monks, a superstitious but christian man, laboured indefatigably in Hesse and Thuringia, and was afterwards consecrated bishop Boniface (or Bonifacius, a doer of good) by the pope. The barbarians of Thuringia had hitherto worshipped the Germanic gods, Thor, Wodin, Friga, Seator, Tuisco and others, besides those which were peculiar to their immediate province. They expressed the greatest faith in their religion, and their priests (who resembled the Druids in our own country) were treated

with every reverence. These ministers of idolatry laid claim to all kinds of miraculous power, and inspired the awe of the people by the skilfulness of their impostures. An instance of this may be seen in the construction of the god Pusterich, a hollow brazen image three feet in height, which, after being plugged at the mouth, was secretly filled with water; a fire was then kindled beneath it, and the water, expanding as it boiled, drove out the plugs, and spurted a scalding shower over the awe-stricken worshippers.

With dauntless courage Winifred went about amongst the people, exposing the impostures of the priests and the hollowness of their religion; nor did he scruple to lay his axe at the roots of the sacred oak in which the supreme deity was supposed to dwell, although the priests vehemently protested, and the deluded multitude expected he would be struck dead for his impiety. When the giant tree had fallen to the earth, and Winifred quietly proceeded to saw it into planks for building purposes, the

minds of many were convinced, and in an incredibly short space of time the whole of Thuringia and Hesse had become professedly christian.

Yet the light of the gospel in these parts was sadly clouded by the errors and superstitions of popery; and it is but too probable that the zeal of Boniface was more the result of devotion to Rome than of devotion to Christ. The churches that were built by his sanction and direction were more noticeable for their images than their evangelists and teachers; and the sign of the cross was more familiar to the eye, than the preaching of the cross to the ear. The relics of the saints were more freely distributed than copies of the Scriptures; and it would not be going too far to affirm that, in many instances, the so-called converts from heathenism had only changed the form of their idolatry. Doubtless there were cases of true conversion, but it is certain that many of the professing Christians were Christians only by compulsion; and Alcuin, the Saxon historian, tells us that "the ancient Saxons, and all the Frieslanders, being urged to it by King Charles (Charles Martel, grandfather of Charlemagne), who plied some of them with rewards and others with threats, were converted to the christian faith."

But the idolatry of which we have been speaking, was not peculiar to Hesse and Thuringia. It had increased to an alarming extent throughout Christendom, where the wildest excesses of superstition were indulged in. Lighted candles were placed before the images in many of the churches; they were kissed by the people; they were worshipped on bended knee. The priests burned incense to them, and encouraged the popular delusion that they could work miracles. Indeed, so far did this mania possess some, that they dressed the female figures in robes and made them stand godmothers to their children. During the pontificate of the first Gregory, Serenus, a bishop of Marseilles, had had the courage to prohibit these abominable practices, and had destroyed a number of images, but Gregory had only reproved him for his faithfulness. "We have been apprised," he wrote, "that animated by an inconsiderate zeal, you have broken in pieces the images of the saints, on the plea that they ought not to be adored. In truth, we should have entirely approved of your conduct, had you forbidden their being adored, but we blame you for having broken them in pieces For it is one thing to adore a painting, and another to learn by its history the proper object of adoration." In this insidious way had the leaven been allowed to work, and we may be sure that the nice distinctions drawn by Gregory in this letter, would not long be observed by his less scrupulous successors: while, on the other hand, the countenance which he had given to the detestable practice would be loudly insisted upon, and the extent of it much exaggerated.

In the year 726, Leo III., emperor of the East, alarmed by the progress of the Mahometans — whose avowed object was to exterminate idolatry and assert the unity of God — began in his own interest a spirited crusade against image-worship: and the zeal which he displayed in this novel work, presently earned for him the name of Iconoclastes, or image-breaker.

The reception of his first edict shewed how totally the people were opposed to his work of reformation, and civil war was the result. On the appearance of a second and more sweeping edict, an officer who had been commissioned bv Leo to destroy a noted statue of the Saviour, called the Antiphonetes, or Surety, was surrounded by a crowd of women, who begged him to spare the image. The officer, however, mounted the ladder, and was proceeding in the work of destruction, when he was dragged from his elevation and torn in pieces. Nothing daunted by this event, Leo promptly punished the authors of the crime; and, sending more officers to the spot, the image was taken down and demolished.

The rebellion which followed was speedily suppressed in the eastern empire, by the expeditious but bloody measures of the emperor, who authorised a persecution, but the Italians were not so easily subdued. They looked upon the act with horror and indignation; and when orders were issued to put the same edict in force in their country, they rose in a body, and declared that their oath of allegiance to the emperor was no longer binding. Thus was brought about the final separation between the Latin and Greek churches. The papal power had long been waiting for it; and Gregory II. saw his opportunity, and took every advantage of the popular excitement. His reply to the edict, which is full of menace and blasphemy, abounds with the most absurd statements, and shews an ignorance of the scriptures which would bring disgrace upon a child. By a strange confusion of names, he confounds the godless Uzziah with the godly Hezekiah, observing that "the impious Uzziah sacrilegiously removed the brazen serpent, which Moses had set up, and broke it in pieces!"* His letter, however, is interesting, as shewing the seditious and defiant spirit in which the bishop of Rome could meet his imperial master, as well as the consciousness of growing political power which swelled the breast of the haughty ecclesiastic. "During ten pure and fortunate years," thus the epistle begins, "we have tasted the annual comforts of your royal letters, subscribed in purple ink with your own hand, the sacred pledges of your attachment to the orthodox creed of your fathers. How deplorable is the change! How tremendous the scandal! You now accuse the catholics of idolatry; and by the accusation, you betray your own impiety and ignorance. To this ignorance we are compelled to adopt the grossness of our style and arguments: the first elements of holy letters are sufficient for your confusion; and were you to enter a grammar school,

and avow yourself the enemy of our worship, the simple and pious children would cast their tablets at your head.... You demand a council: — revoke your edicts; cease to destroy images; a council will not be needed. You assault us, O tyrant, with a carnal and military band; unarmed and naked, we can only implore the Christ, the Prince of the heavenly host, that He will send unto you a devil, for the destruction of your body and the salvation of your soul." Alluding then to the successful efforts of Boniface, the apostle of Germany, who had brought the barbarous hordes of that country within the pale of Rome, he says: "Incapable as you are of defending your Roman subjects, the maritime situation of the city may perhaps expose it to your depredations; but we have only to retire to the first fortress of the Lombards, and then you may as well pursue the winds. Are you ignorant that the popes are the bonds of union, the mediators of peace between the east and west? The eyes of the nations are fixed on our humility; and they revere as a god upon earth, the apostle St. Peter, whose image you threaten to destroy .... The remote and interior kingdom of the west present their homage to Christ and His vicegerent; and we now prepare to visit one of their most powerful monarchs, who desires to receive from our hands the sacrament of baptism. The barbarians have submitted to the yoke of the gospel, while you alone are deaf to the voice of the Shepherd. These pious barbarians are kindled into rage; they thirst to avenge the persecutions of the east. Abandon your rash and fatal enterprise; reflect, tremble and repent. If you persist, we are innocent of the blood that will be spilt in the contest; may it fall on your head." The pope then ventures the lying assertion, that the emperor's conduct in abolishing image-worship is "in direct contradiction to the unanimous testimony of the fathers and doctors of the church, and, in particular, repugnant to the authority of the six general councils;" an assertion which has drawn from a Roman Catholic historian this remark: "In none of the general councils does a word about images or image-worship occur, and the statement as to the unanimous testimony of the fathers is equally at fault."

{*A century later, Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, who knew his Bible better than Gregory II., adduced very different arguments from the king's act. "If Hezekiah," says he, "a godly and religious king, brake the brazen serpent, made by God's express command, because the mistaken multitude began to worship it as an idol for which his piety was very much commended; much more religiously may and ought the images of the saints (they themselves approving it) be broken and ground to powder; which were never set up by God's command, but are absolutely human inventions."}

The charge of absurdity which we have brought against this letter is fully borne out by the pope's further statement, that no sooner had the disciples cast their eyes on Christ "than they hastened to make portraits of Him, and carried them about,

exhibiting them to the whole world, that, at the sight of them, men might be converted from the worship of Satan to the service of Christ:" and furthermore, that "pictures and images had been taken of James, the Lord's brother, of Stephen, and all other saints of note. And so having done, he dispersed them over every part of the earth, to the manifest increase of the gospel cause."

Gregory died soon after, but he was succeeded by another Gregory; a man of equal zeal and wickedness, who summoned a council of bishops, at which the arrogant pretensions of his predecessor were confirmed. Ninety-three bishops and all the clergy of the city were present on this occasion and signed a decree, that, "If any person should hereafter, in contempt of the ancient and faithful customs of all Christians, and of the apostolic church in particular, stand forth as a destroyer, defamer, or blasphemer of the sacred images of our God and Lord Jesus Christ, and of His mother, the immaculate ever-Virgin Mary, of the blessed apostles, and all other saints, he be excluded from the body and blood of the Lord, and from the communion of the universal church."

Roused by the insolence of this pope, Leo fitted out a fleet, and dispatched it to the coast of Italy, but it was disabled during a storm in the Adriatic and had to put back to port. Both pope and emperor died soon after in the year 741, and it might have been expected that the matter would now rest. But no. The iconoclastic views of Leo, as well as his crown, descended to his son,* and the crusade against image-worship was continued with unabated vigour during his long reign of thirty-four years. The emperor who succeeded him in the year 775 was also guided by the same principles and policy, but his reign was of short duration, and, in the year 780, the reins of empire fell into the hands of his wife, the empress Irene, who held them in the name of their son*** a child of ten. This was the signal for a change of policy; and the empress uniting with the pope, immediately took measures for the restoration of image-worship; a step which was warmly welcomed both by priests and people. A council was summoned at Nice (the seventh and last general council according to the Greek church), and it was resolved, that "with the venerable and life-giving cross shall be set up the venerable and holy images. . . . . The images, that is to say, of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ; of the immaculate mother of God; of the honoured angels; of all saints and holy men — these images shall be treated as holy memorials, worshipped, kissed, only without that peculiar adoration which is reserved for the Invisible, Incomprehensible God. All who shall violate this, as is asserted, immemorial tradition of the church, and endeavour, forcibly or by craft, to remove any image, if ecclesiastics, are to be deposed and excommunicated; if monks or laymen, to be excommunicated." A curse was afterwards pronounced on all who refused obedience**

to this blasphemous decree, and the assembled clergy exclaimed with one voice, "Anathema on all who call images idols! Anathema on all who communicate with them who do not worship images. Everlasting glory to the orthodox Romans, to John of Damascus! to Gregory of Rome everlasting glory! Everlasting glory to all the preachers of truth!" "This seventh and last council," says Dean Waddington, "established idolatry as the law of the christian church: and thus was completed the structure of oriental orthodoxy. It rose from the most solid and substantial foundation; it advanced, by the labours of a busy and unwise generation, through the mid-air and mist of metaphysics, and terminated in a still blinder age, in clear and manifest superstition."

{*Constantine Copronymus (Constantine v.).

{** Leo iv.: who was murdered by his wife, the empress Irene.

***Constantine vi.: afterwards murdered by his mother, the empress Irene.}

But the activity of the Iconoclasts was not the only matter which agitated the Romish church during this century. There were enemies of another kind, and nearer the walls of Rome, which caused her much annoyance and anxiety; although these very circumstances became, in due time, the means whereby her worldly and ambitious projects — the cherished dreams of many years — were effectually carried out. These enemies were the Lombards, who had taken advantage of the late troubles to seize on the exarchate of Ravenna, and were now threatening Rome itself.

In this dilemma the pope appealed to Pepin, king of the Franks, a man who was under no slight obligations to the Papal see. He had formerly held the office of mayor of the palace to Childeric III., surnamed the Stupid, the last monarch of the Merovingian line, and had virtually ruled the kingdom in his stead. Finding, however, that the responsibilities of government, without the compensating title of king were thankless and wearisome, and yet afraid to usurp the throne without the sanction of a higher authority, he had appealed to the pope. Zachary then occupied the papal chair, and the onerous and delicate task of negociating between the two parties, had devolved upon Boniface, who was then staying at the Frankish court. He was anxious to serve the powerful Pepin, and not less anxious to serve the pope, whose temporal interests, he well knew, would be greatly advanced were he to sanction the guilty act. Zachary, therefore previously apprised by Boniface of what would be expected from him — had been waited upon in due course by ambassadors from Pepin's court, who had proposed to him the following inquiry "Whether the divine law did not permit a valiant and warlike people to dethrone a pusillanimous and indolent monarch, who was incapable of discharging any of the functions of royalty, and to substitute in his place

one more worthy of rule, and who had already rendered most important services to the state?" To this naively worded inquiry, Zachary (unwilling to commit himself too readily) had returned the following ambiguous yet sufficient answer, "He who lawfully possesses the royal power may also lawfully assume the royal title." This was all that Pepin had waited for, and his course was clear. Childeric was shut up in a monastery, and the usurper having been anointed king by Boniface, was crowned with great honour at Soissons, in the year 752.

This had proved a stroke of true diplomacy on the part of the pope; for now that Rome was being threatened by the barbarians, under Astolph, king of the Lombards, his successor Stephen II. had a powerful ally to fall back upon in the person of the Frankish monarch. His first appeal for assistance was promptly responded to by Pepin, who marched his army across the Alps, defeated the Lombards, and handed over to the pope the exarchate which he had recovered from their grasp. This belonged in right to the throne of Constantinople, but Pepin declared that he "had not gone to battle for the sake of any man, but for the sake of St. Peter alone, and to obtain the forgiveness of his sins."

The donation thus made formed the nucleus of the temporal dominions of the pope, and was the foundation of the temporal power.

Yet it soon became evident that the donation of Pepin needed confirmation; for he had scarcely returned to France when the barbarians again poured in upon the territory, and wrested it from its new owners. Flushed with success, and meeting with little or no opposition they again approached the city, exulting and confident. Meanwhile, two pleading letters, which the pope had hurriedly addressed to Pepin, had been disregarded, and matters began to look alarming. What was to be done? Resting all his hopes on a final effort, Stephen wrote a third letter, and worded it as from the apostle Peter himself. We transcribe it for the reader without comment; the letter must speak for itself.

"I, Peter the apostle, protest, admonish and conjure you, the most christian kings, Pepin, Charles and Carloman, with all the hierarchy, bishops, abbots, priests and all monks; all judges, dukes, counts, and the whole people of the Franks. The mother of God likewise adjures you, and admonishes and commands you, she as well as the thrones and dominions, and all the host of heaven, to save the beloved city of Rome from the detested Lombards. If ye hearken, I, Peter the apostle, promise you my protection in this life and in the next, will prepare you for the most glorious mansions in heaven, and will bestow on you the everlasting joys of paradise. Make common cause with my people of Rome, and I will grant whatever ye may pray for. I conjure you

not to yield up this city to be lacerated and tormented by the Lombards, lest your own souls be lacerated and tormented in hell, with the devil and his pestilential angels. Of all nations under heaven the Franks are highest in the esteem of St. Peter; to me you owe all your victories. Obey, and obey speedily; and by my suffrage, our Lord Jesus Christ will give you in this life length of days, security, victory; in the life to come, will multiply His blessings upon you, among His saints and angels."

This letter may recall to some another letter — the epistle to the Thessalonians wherein the apostle speaks of a falling away, and a man of sin to be revealed, the son of perdition, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God"! (2 Thess. 2:3-4.)

Responding to this third letter, Pepin set out with his army, and speedily succeeded in driving the barbarians back to their own country. He died soon after, in the year 768, and Charlemagne, his son, succeeded him. The Lombards now began a third invasion of the papal territory; and the pope, finding his throne again in danger, sent out another appeal to the Frankish court. Charlemagne willingly responded, and on Easter Eve he entered Rome with his army. Here a grand reception was accorded him. The streets were thronged with applauding multitudes the clergy were there with crosses and banners; the children of the schools went before him with palm and olive branches. As he approached the church of St. Peter, hymns of welcome broke upon his ear, and dismounting from his horse, he finished the journey on foot. On being introduced into the presence of the pope, he slowly mounted the papal throne, kissing each step as he proceeded. After that he kissed the pope also, and the ceremony of the reception was over, During his stay in the city, he confirmed the donation of Pepin, and increased it; the further grant embracing the dukedoms of Spoleto and Benevento, Venetia, Istria, and other territory to the north of Italy, together with the island of Corsica. Charlemagne remained in Rome through the Easter festivities, and then rejoined his army. It is almost needless to add, that success attended his arms wherever he went, and that it was not long before he had hopelessly crippled the forces of the barbarians, and placed the papal throne beyond the fear of their incursions. At the close of the campaign he proclaimed himself king of Italy, and returned to his dominions with great honour.

We have spoken of Charlemagne's submission to the church of Rome, but it was not a blind submission. He could exercise an independent judgment at times even in ecclesiastical affairs, and on some occasions shewed himself more protestant than catholic in his opinions. This may be seen in his opposition to the second general

council of Nice, which had decided in favour of image-worship; although he was doubtless not a little influenced by the godly counsels of Alcuin, a deacon of York, to whom he had sent a copy of the decree.

It is not clear what were the steps taken by the English church in this matter, but it is probable that Alcuin was their mouthpiece at the council of Frankfort; which was convened for the discussion of this important question, in the year 794. At the recommendation of Charlemagne, who had called together the council, special deference was paid to the judgment of the English deacon, "as one erudite in ecclesiastical matters;" and certainly he did not abuse the honour conferred upon him. Their decision, which was doubtless drawn up by Alcuin, was entirely against image-worship, and their reasons were emphatically stated and most convincing. Neither man nor angel was in the least to be adored, and "the insolent use of images"was declared to be "not only without scripture, but also directly contrary to the writings of the Old and New Testament." This emphatic declaration, with its reference to the word of God, might well have fallen from the lips of Alcuin, for he was a man who studied his Bible with a fearless heart, and looked to it as his only canon and rule of life.

"The reading of holy scripture," he somewhere says, "is the knowledge of everlasting blessedness. In the holy Scriptures man may contemplate himself as in some mirror, what sort of person he is. The reading of holy Scripture cleanseth the reader's soul; it bringeth into his mind the fear of hell-torments, and it raiseth his heart to the joys above. The man who desires to be ever with God, should often pray to Him and study His holy word. For when we pray, we speak to God, and when we read the holy books, God speaks to us. It is a twofold joy which the reading of the holy books bringeth to the readers; it so instructs their understanding as to render them sharper; and it also leads them from the world's vanities to the love of God; as the body is fed with fleshly meats, so the higher man, the soul, is fed with divine conferences, as the Psalmist says, 'How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!'"

Another ecclesiastic who distinguished himself at the council of Frankfort was Paulinus, bishop of Aquileia. He boldly denied the value of any intercession or mediation apart from that of Christ, and wrote thus: "The Son of God, Almighty, one Almighty Lord, because He redeemed us with the price of His blood, is justly called the true Redeemer by the confession of all who are redeemed." "The Advocate is He, who, being also the Redeemer exhibits to God the Father, the human nature in the unity of the Person of God and man. John intercedes not, but declares that the Mediator is the propitiation for our sins." The testimonies of such men as these afford

the bright evidences of remaining life in that wilderness of error and superstition in which the church was found at this time; but, alas! how few and far between such testimonies are.

The clergy, for the most part, were living in a state of spiritual lethargy and vicious indulgence, the bishops not excepted; indeed it was in the supreme bishop, the pope of Rome, that iniquity found a head. From the fourth century onwards the successors to the chair of St. Peter, had offered in their own persons increasing evidence of the church's decline; and their lives, even as recorded by their own historians, shew in lurid light, the downward steps towards the great apostasy. In the year 358, pope Liberius was proved guilty of prevarication and heresy by Hilary, bishop of Poictiers, and eight years later, Damasus, another pope, incurred the charge of murder by forcing his way to the papal chair over the dead bodies of 160 of his opponents. In 385, pope Siricius imposed celibacy on the priests, and established by a decree this wretched dogma; which became one of the chief causes of the immorality of the Middle Ages. Later still, the pontificate of Zosimus became notorious because of his great pride and assumption; and it is thus reflected upon by the bishops of Africa in the course of a letter to his successor Boniface:"We hope that since it has pleased God to raise you to the throne of the Roman church, we shall no longer feel the effects of that worldly pride and arrogance which ought never to be found in the church of Christ." The election of Boniface himself was the occasion of such disorder, that the civil power had to step in to keep the peace; and his after conduct is a sufficient proof that the letter of the pious bishops was soon forgotten or entirely disregarded. Thrice in the space of half a century did the chair of St. Peter become the subject of double elections, in the third of which votes were freely offered for sale; bribery was practised on both sides, estates were mortgaged to defray expenses, and even the vessels of the church were pawned to obtain money. Later still, a pope, named Silverius, who had purchased the dignity from king Theodatus, was dethroned by the famous general Belisarius on the charge of treasonable correspondence with the barbarians, and Vigilius, archdeacon to a former pope, purchased the office from Belisarius for two hundred pounds of gold. This man afterwards became involved in troubles with the emperor and the Eastern church; and after the most pitiable vacillation, was frightened into a confession of error, in which he acknowledged that his past differences of opinion were the suggestions of the devil.

But to enumerate a fiftieth part of the irregularities and enormities proceeding from the papal throne would be impossible. We might fill pages, with descriptions of men who were thrust into the chair without election; of deacons who were elevated to that dignity above the heads of pious presbyters: of a pope who was distinguished for his

avarice, and for his zeal in grinding the faces of the poor; of a layman, who aspired to the high office and was made deacon, priest, and bishop in a few hours, to enable him to gratify his ambition, though he was afterwards thrust from his place by a Lombard monk, who, in his turn, was speedily supplanted by a stronger rival.

The bishops in many cases were no better than the popes, and instead of being overseers of the flock of God, were noted for their avarice, which often led them into the wildest excesses of cruelty and extortion. The priests, too, were woefully guilty in this respect, and Gregory the Great accuses them of seizing the propety for others, and of ridiculing those who walked humbly and chastely. "All things which were predicted," says he, "are taking place. The king of pride is at hand; and, what is unlawful to utter, an army of priests is prepared for him." Even where any religious zeal did exist among them, it was usually wasted in a worthless cause; and idle questions of tweedledum and tweedledee were frequently agitated, till the controversial spirit was roused to an angry pitch. Thus the question of the clerical tonsure was long a sore point in some quarters; and the Celtic and Italian missionaries were especially divided upon it. The one party, following the churches of the East, shaved the fore part of their heads in the form of a crescent; the other, the Italian, shaved the crown in circular fashion. The latter party eventually won the day; and at the beginning of the eighth century the monks of Iona consented to receive the Latin tonsure, and by this surrender, made themselves the voluntary slaves of Rome.

Gloomy indeed was the state of things which we have been describing, but it was to grow yet more gloomy; and we have but reached the outskirts of the Dark Ages. "Behold," writes the Cardinal Baronius, "the nine hundredth year of the Redeemer begins, in which a new age commences, which by reason of its asperity and barrenness of good has been called the *iron* age; by the deformity of its exuberant evil, the *leaden* age; and by the poverty of writers, the *dark* age." "With what filth was it her fate to be besprinkled who was without spot or wrinkle; with what stench to be infected, with what impurities to be defiled, and by these things to be blackened with perpetual infamy."

Chapter 11.
The Darkest Period of the Dark Ages.
A.D. 800-1000.

It is cheering to the heart, depressed by the contemplation of the church during the period which we have been considering, to be able to record that, in spite of increasing darkness on all hands, the gospel was not entirely hid. It is an irrefragable principle, which may be traced throughout all the dispensations of God, that He never

leaves Himself without a witness. We see it in Noah and his family preserved from the flood; we see it in the 7000 who had not bowed the knee to Baal; we see it in the solitary four who refused to touch the king's meat or worship the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar; and, blessed be God, we see it even in these degenerate times when the professing church was steeped in vice, and 'honeycombed and gangrened with falsehood.'

In the West, where the darkness was deepest (though not in the vicinity of Rome), a true work for Christ was going on, owing not a little to the christian zeal of Charlemagne's successor, his son Louis the Meek. Lewis was a true Christian; but too gentle for his soldiers, and too pious for his priests: and the reforms which he contemplated were opposed both by the military and ecclesiastical powers. His position, for manifold reasons, was not a happy one. All attempts to purify the court were frustrated by the evil examples and rebellious conduct of his sons: the soldiers, who subsisted by plunder and violence, liked not the checks which he put upon their thieving and lecherous habits: the bishops, proud of their swords and spurs, resented his action in depriving them of these warlike appendages: while the personal piety of the good king made him the common butt of all classes. When his sons, Pepin, Louis, and Lothaire, rose in open rebellion against him, a pope (Gregory IV.) was not lacking to countenance the wicked and unfilial act; and the clergy, whose true office would have been to counsel and console him, united with the rest in the effort to dethrone him. False charges of the gravest nature were lodged against him, and having been summoned to appear before an assembly at Compiegne, he was there subjected to the most painful insults and humiliation. A paper containing the list of his pretended crimes was placed in his hands, and some sort of a confession having been extorted from him, he was made to do penance in the following manner: A coarse mat was placed before the altar, on which he was commanded to kneel, and divest himself in turn of his bald-rick, sword, and royal vestments, assuming in their place the sackcloth covering of a penitent. A form of psalm-singing and laying on of priestly hands was then gone through in order to give an odour of sanctity to the crime, and the degraded monarch was conducted to the cell in which it had been ordained that he should end his days. But the nobles and people, disgusted with this act of priestly assumption, demanded his restoration; and the popular clamour at length became so loud, that the king was removed from the cloister, and re-instated on the throne. In the year 840 death put an end to his gentle but unhappy reign; and the jaded spirit of the pious king found rest in a country more peaceful than that which it had been his misfortune to rule over.

Yet the christian efforts of Louis, though barren of good results in his own kingdom, bore fruit in other parts; and the introduction of the gospel into Denmark and Sweden, which was brought about in the following manner, was undoubtedly due to him. In a dispute for the throne of Denmark, between Heriold, the rightful king, and Godfrid, the former had to take refuge at the court of Louis, and where the kindliness of his reception encouraged him to solicit the help of his royal host. But Louis would only consent to this on condition that Heriold embraced Christianity, and agreed to allow the preaching of the gospel in his dominions. The king consented to this, and was accordingly baptised at Mentz, together with his queen and many of the court, in the year 826. On his return to Denmark he took with him two missionary monks, Ansgarius and Aubert, the latter of whom died within a few months of his arrival, but not before he had seen some results from his preaching. Ansgarius laboured on for awhile, and then crossed to Sweden, where the word was much blessed and many were converted. He was afterwards made archbishop of Hamburg and all the North by Gregory IV., and entered into his rest, full of honours, in the year 865. The sphere of his labours embraced the territories of the Danes, the Cimbrians and the Swedes; but we are sorry to add, that the work which he commenced, already hampered by much that was superstitious and unscriptural, was almost buried beneath the rubbish of Romanism during the next century.

The gospel was also carried, with more or less success, to the Russians, Poles, and Hungarians; owing in no small degree to the conversions of their respective princes, which seem in some cases to have been real, and accompanied with a saving faith. It is very interesting to notice the various means which were used of God, in opening the territories of the barbarians to the gospel message: sometimes it was by the instrumentality of a zealous monk — as Ansgarius or Aubert; sometimes by the union of a heathen prince with a christian princess as Vladimir, prince of the Russians, with Anna, the sister of the Greek Emperor; sometimes by a plague or famine — the means which were instrumental in opening up the way to Bulgaria.

Great Britain also, being so far removed from Rome, had few hindrances to the preaching of the gospel, though the pure light was much clouded by monkishness and superstition. The story of king Alfred's glorious reign is too well-known to be repeated here. The piety of this truly christian king was as conspicuous as his prowess, and amid the cares of state, and anxieties caused by the incursions of the Danes, his pen was not idle in a better cause. In addition to the composition of some poems of a moral and religious character, he translated the gospels into the Saxon tongue, and this may be justly spoken of as his great work. The subjoined passage from his translation may not be unacceptable, as it forms an interesting example of the

language spoken in this country during the period in question. The reader will recognise it as the Lord's prayer. "Faeder ure thu the earth on heafenum, si thin nama gehalgod, to become thin rice, gewurthe thin willa on earthen swa swa on heafenum, urne ge dgwanlican hlaf syle us to doeg; and forgyf us ure gyltas, swa swa we forgivath urum gyltendum, and ne geladde thu us on consenung ac alyse us of yfle (si it swa)."

In Scotland the people were much indebted, through the goodness of God, to the faithful ministry of a monk named Clement, who preached a gospel remarkable for its clearness and purity; but his faithfulness drew down upon him the enmity of Boniface, the archbishop of the German churches; and at his instigation Clement was summoned or enticed to Rome, *where he suddenly disappeared*.

Ireland boasts the honour of giving birth to Duns Scotus Erigena, a christian philosopher of this period, who is regarded by Hallam* as one of the two remarkable men of the Dark Ages. He says, however, that the extracts from his writings which he has met with contain "unintelligible rhapsodies of mysticism;" though whether he would include in this condemnation the following extract, we are not in a position to say. It is quoted by D'AubignÃ© and runs thus: O Lord Jesus, I ask no happiness of Thee, but to understand, unmixed with deceitful theories, the word that Thou hast inspired by Thy Holy Spirit! Shew Thyself to those who seek for Thee alone." If this is mysticism, would that there were more of it, even in the church to-day!

{*Literature of Europe in the 15th and 16th Centuries." (Chap. i. 11.)}

Arnulph, bishop of Orleans, seems to have been a man of some piety, but very little is known of him. One of his discourses throws a ghastly light on the condition of Rome in his day. "O deplorable Rome!"he exclaims, "who, in the days of our forefathers, didst produce so many burning and shining lights, thou hast brought forth in our times only dismal darkness, worthy of the detestation of posterity!" Of the pope he says, "what think you, reverend fathers, of this man, placed on a lofty throne, shining in purple and gold? Whom do you account him? If destitute of love, and puffed up with the pride of knowledge only, he is antichrist, sitting in the temple of God."

But, perhaps, the most remarkable man of this period is Claude, the bishop or metropolitan of Turin; who was advanced to that dignity ('the burden of a bishopric' he called it) by Louis the Meek, about the year 816. He has been described as "the protestant of the ninth century," and deserves the title. He differed from the church of Rome on many points, and there is no mincing matters in the way he speaks his mind. On his elevation to the bishopric he says that he "found all the churches at Turin stuffed full of vile and accursed images," and forthwith began to destroy "what all were

sottishly worshipping. Therefore it was that all opened their mouths to revile me; and forsooth, had not the Lord helped me, they would have swallowed me up quick." He speaks in scathing language of the adoration of the cross, which God commanded men to bear and not to worship, and complains that some, who would bear it neither corporeally nor spiritually, were bent on worshipping it. "If," argued the bishop, "we ought to adore the cross because Christ was fastened to it why not adore mangers and old clouts, because He was laid in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes? Why not adore fishing boats and asses, because he slept in the one and rode on the other?" But this was answering the fool according to his folly, and the bishop continues, "all these things are ridiculous; rather to be lamented than set forth in writing: but we are forced to set them down." Those who had departed from the truth had fallen in love with vanity, and he follows them with an earnest cry of warning. "Why do you crucify again the Son of God, and expose Him to open shame; and by this means make souls by troops to become the companions of devils, estranging them from their Creator by the horrible sacrilege of your images and likenesses, and precipitating them into everlasting damnation?" Going from this to the subject of pilgrimages to Rome, which many were teaching was equivalent to repentance, he shrewdly inquires how they could keep so many poor souls to serve them in the monasteries instead of sending them to Rome to get forgiveness of their sins. What had they to say against that sentence, "Whosoever shall lay a stone of stumbling before any of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hung about his neck, and be cast into the bottom of the sea?" He then proceeds to explain, that these pilgrimages to Rome were utterly worthless, and shewed a spiritual destitution on the part of those who undertook them, which could only belong to the very ignorant. Some also were putting their confidence in the merits or the intercession of saints, but it only shewed that they were walking in darkness, for if the saints on whom they called were as holy and righteous as Noah, Daniel, or Job, there would still be no hope or deliverance from such a quarter. Even the pope was but a fallible man, and in spite of his title of apostolic lord, was only apostolic in so far as he shewed himself the keeper and guardian of the apostle's doctrine. The mere fact of his being seated in the apostle's chair proved nothing: the scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses' chair.

But it must not be inferred from this that Claude was merely a controversialist. He was naturally more inclined to learn than to teach or correct others, and his writings breathe a true spirit of humility and christian love. Witness his beautiful description of truth, which we extract from his address to a friend, inserted at the close of one of his commentaries: "For this beauty of the eternal truth and wisdom (God grant I may always have a constant will to enjoy her, for the love of whom we have also undertaken

this work) doth not exclude those that come unto her, because of the great number of hearers she hath; she grows not old by length of time; she minds not high places; she does not suffer herself to be overtaken by night; she does not shut up herself in shadows, and doth not expose herself to our bodily senses; she is near unto all those that turn themselves to her from all parts of the world; and who love her indeed; she is eternal to all; she is not limited by any places, she is everywhere; she advertises abroad, she instructs within, she changes and converts those who behold her; she does not suffer herself to be violated by any person; no man can judge of her, nobody can judge well without her."

The influence of Claude, however, was only felt over a very limited area; and, in the midst of so much darkness, it is hardly to be expected that his followers would become numerous. Yet they were sufficiently numerous to attract the attention and to draw down upon their heads the anathemas of the pope. He incited the lay princes against them; and so we find that they were hunted from the open country and compelled to take refuge among the neighbouring mountains, where they were shut off from papal influences, and there throve as they had never done.

Happy condition this for the little remnant, when all around was so dark and spiritless! Happy to be thus shut in with God among the mountains, whose snowy peaks were always pointing heavenwards, at a time when the plains were so swaddled up in earthly mists and vapours! These were the Christians of Piedmont, another accession to the Vaudois church, to which we have already made a passing reference: we shall meet with them again later on.

But how dark was all around! It was a darkness that might be felt: but who was there to feel it? The condition was natural to most of them; and they loved it more than the light, because their deeds were evil. How evil we may learn by contemporary records and the decisions of their own councils.

At the council of Pavia, in the year 850, it was necessary to enjoin sobriety on the bishops, and to prohibit them from keeping "hounds and hawks for hunting, and having gaudy dresses for vain show." At two separate councils the complaint was raised, that "the inferior clergy kept women in their houses, to the great scandal of the ministry;" and it was said of the presbyters that they "turn bailiffs, frequent taverns, practise usury . . . . and do not blush to indulge in revelry and drunkenness." Lacrius, a Carthusian, speaks of the period as "the worst of times;" lamenting that charity had grown cold, iniquity abounded, and "truth was rendered scarce by the sons of men." Waltrun, bishop of Naumburg, after giving a graphic and deplorable picture both of the internal and external condition of the Romish church, civil war at that moment raging

between the pope and the emperor, quotes the prophet Hosea to this effect, "There is no truth and there is no pity, and there is no knowledge of God upon the earth. Cursing and lying and murder and theft and adultery have inundated it, and blood toucheth blood." Hervey, archbishop of Rheims, another contemporary, laments that every one is given up to his passions, the human and divine laws are alike despised, and that the plunder of ecclesiastical possessions is universal. "The bishops," he says, "are bishops only in name; neglecting preaching, falling into sin, abandoning God, and binding heavy burdens on the people which they will not touch with the ends of their fingers." Another, himself a bishop, affirms that "one could scarce find a man fit to be ordained a bishop, or a bishop fit to ordain others." Of the popes (passing over the story of pope Joan, a woman who is said to have occupied the papal chair for two years) it is sufficient to say: that one (Stephen VII.) was strangled, his death occasioning the remark that, "he had entered the fold like a thief, and it was fit that he should die by the halter;" that another (Sergius III.) — we have it on the testimony of a cardinal — was "the slave of every vice and the most wicked of men;" that another (John X.) was raised to the throne by the interest of the prostitute Theodora, and was afterwards murdered through the influence of the woman's daughter; and lastly, that a youth of eighteen, having forced his way to the papal chair, and taken the title of John XII. "turned the Lateran into a brothel, carried on amours with various women; was given to hunting; put out the eyes of his godfather; drank to the health of the devil; swore by the heathen gods while playing dice," and was killed in a midnight brawl in the year 964.

Another feature of the period was the lying wonders of various kinds, which were exhibited in many of the churches. Thus we hear of a feather from the wing of the angel Gabriel;' a piece of Noah's ark; the 'chemise of the blessed Virgin;' some of the coals that roasted St. Laurence; a little soot from the furnace of the three young men; the mark of the breath of Joseph on a glove that belonged to Nicodemus; and the parings of St. Antony's toes.* The period is also remarkable for the perpetration of a monstrous fraud; which, while it increased the power of Rome, added to the growing darkness. A collection of forged decretals was issued, called the "Decretals of Isidore," which purported to be the decrees of the Roman bishops on important ecclesiastical questions from Clemens downwards. "In this collection the contemporaries of Tacitus and Quintilian, are made to speak the barbarous Latin of the ninth century. The customs and institutions of the Franks are gravely attributed to the Romans at the time of the emperors. Popes are therein made to quote the Bible in the words of the Latin translation written by St. Jerome, who lived one, two or three centuries after them; and Victor, the bishop of Rome in the year 192, is found writing to Theophilus,

who was archbishop of Alexandria in 385." For a long time these decretals were generally believed in, and did not a little mischief in the church, in spite of the clumsiness of the forgeries and the many internal proofs of their spuriousness. The pope, of course, adopted them, and did not scruple to assure the hesitating bishops of France that they had lain for years in the Roman archives. So true is it that a lying spirit is in the mouth of popery.

{*Eleven of the convents in England exhibited girdles belonging to the Virgin one exhibited the ear of Malchus! another, the one-winged image of an angel which had flown to England with the spear-head that pierced our Saviour while the teeth of St. Apollonia (said to be an infallible cure for the tooth-ache) were so numerous that they weighed more than a ton!}

But the credulity of the people was imposed upon in other ways by the clergy; and to this period belongs the institution of the rosary and crown of the Virgin Mary. The rosary (from rosarium, a bed of roses) consists of a string of beads on which the possessor counts the prayers which he repeats. Fifteen repetitions of the Lord's Prayer and a hundred and fifty salutations of the blessed Virgin complete the rosary; and the crown consists, as a rule, of seven repetitions of the same prayer and seventy salutations. Moreover, an absurd belief that the archangel Michael celebrated mass in the court of heaven every Monday, was very general; and the clergy were not slow to profit by the ignorance of the people, who crowded the churches dedicated to St. Michael, in order to obtain his intercession.

Another of the inventions of the period was the doctrine of transubstantiation. It originated with a monk, named Paschasius Radbert; but it was not placed among the settled doctrines of Rome till nearly three centuries later. Paschasius asserted that the bread and wine of the Eucharist are actually converted into the body and blood of Christ, and built his novel doctrine on a strictly literal interpretation of the Lord's words, "Take eat, this is my body," and similar scriptures. Yet to take the words in that sense is a manifest absurdity, and involves one in a labyrinth of absurdities. A recent writer has forcibly remarked: Christ could say, "'This is my body which is broken,' when it was not broken at all, and while He held the bread in His own hand alive; 'This is the Lord's passover,' when God was no longer passing over at all; 'I am the true vine,' and so of a thousand others. It enters into all language. I say of a picture: 'That is my mother.' Nobody is misled by it, but those who choose to be misled 'We are buried with Christ by baptism unto death,' yet we are not buried and we do not die; that is certain. Hence we find in scripture, in a general way, the use of language as to the Lord's Supper."* In Rome, however, there are, and ever were, many who *choose* to be misled,

and it is therefore simple to understand that the dogma of transubstantiation was presently received as a leading and essential doctrine.

{*Lady Jane Grey, in her cross-examination by Fecknam, reasoned in much the same way, When Fecknam put the question: "Doth not Christ speak these words? Doth He not say it is His body?"the lovely martyr replied: "I grant He doth, and so He saith, 'I am the vine,' 'I am the door;' but He is never the more the door nor the vine," etc.

But we must hasten on. It might be asked, Could it be possible that things would grow darker and more dismal that the minds of men choked by the weeds of sloth, and blinded by the web of superstition, would sink to even lower depths of morbidness and misery? Alas! it was but too possible. As the thousandth year of the church's history drew near, *terror* was added to superstition; and a panic, such as has doubtless never been known before or since, seized upon the people. Had not the Lord said, that after the thousand years Satan should be loosed out of his prison, and should go out to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth?* Surely then the end of the world was at hand!

{*Revelation 20}

Taking this for his text a hermit of Thuringia, named Bernhard, had gone forth in the year 960, preaching the coming doom. There was a show of reason in the doctrine, and the superstitious of every rank were wrought upon by the delusion. Monks and hermits took up the cry, and long before the year commenced it had rung its dreadful knell through all Europe. People crowded to Palestine, leaving lands and houses behind them, or bequeathing them, by way of expiation for their sins, to churches and monasteries; nobles sold their estates, and even princes and bishops joined the pilgrim train, and prepared themselves for the appearing of the Lamb on Mount Zion. An eclipse of the sun and other phenomena in the heavens contributed to the general terror and misery, and thousands fled from the cities to take refuge in the dens and caves of the earth. Truly there were ghastly reasons for the act; for it was expected that a convulsion of nature would usher in the awful moment, and many felt it would be better to be destroyed by the falling mountains than by the wrath of Him that sitteth upon the throne. The awful premonitions that were to usher in the day of judgment, seemed actually to be fulfilled; there were "signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which (were) coming upon the earth." (Luke 21:25-26.) That year the houses of rich and poor were left unrepaired, the lands untilled, the vineyards uncultivated. No harvests were gathered in because no seed had been sown; no new churches or monasteries

were erected, because in a few months there would be no human beings to frequent them.

At length the final day of the terrible year began. When night closed in, few were in a condition to seek their beds: the vestibules and porches of the churches were thronged with anxious, fearful watchers. It was a sleepless night for all Europe. But day dawned. The sun rose in the heavens as of yore, and shone down upon an unconsumed though famine-stricken world; there were no portentous signs in the skies above — no tremors in the earth below — all things continued as they were. A sigh of relief arose from all hearts. The deluded multitudes returned to their several homes, and resumed their accustomed avocations. The Year of Terror had passed away, and the eleventh century of the church's history had begun.

Chapter 12.
From the Year of Terror to the Death of Hildebrand.
A.D. 1000-1100.

The re-action which succeeded the Year of Terror produced a church building mania, which instantly infected all classes of people. The immense wealth which the terrorising preaching of the monks had extorted from the people was in many cases devoted to this end; and it is questionable whether the churches of this period have ever been surpassed for size or architectural beauty.

Relieved from the horrors of the dreadful nightmare which marked the closing days of the last century, a slight revival of learning was also perceptible; and the efforts of Sylvester II., a pope who had studied in the schools of Arabia, then the great emporium of learning, did much in this direction. Yet, when he published a treatise on geometry, his favourite science, the curves and angles so scared the superstitious monks that they accused him of dabbling in the forbidden sciences, and avoided him as a necromancer. Had his zeal in the cause of religion been as real as it was in the cause of science, Christendom might have been purified from many of its pollutions, but it was not; and at the close of his pontificate darkness still brooded over the unhappy church. The great increase of importance which everywhere attached to the ecclesiastical power for which also the munificence of the nobles during the Year of Terror accounted not a little may be inferred from the fact, that "baronial and even ducal rights were held in Germany by the bishops and abbots of the empire, not within their own possessions only, but even beyond them;" and that "ecclesiastical estates were no longer described as situated in certain counties, but these counties were described as situated in the bishoprics." Progress in mission work among the heathen seems to have been almost at a stand; though the work in Russia, Sweden, and

Denmark was continued, and Poland, Prussia, and Hungary were partially opened to the gospel. Some praise, however, must be accorded to the Nestorian Christians, who carried the gospel to Tartary and Mongolia, and were specially successful in the provinces of Turkestan, Cosgar, Genda and Tangut. Doubtless the lack of blessing among the Western missionaries may be traced to the lack of vital godliness, and the host of errors by which the gospel had been overlaid. Turning over the records of this century we look in vain for lingering traces gospel taught in its purity, or of an assembly of believers gathered on truly scriptural grounds. Even instances of personal piety are rare; and when we have recorded the names of Queen Margaret of Scotland and Berengar, we have almost exhausted the list of notable Christians, whose learning was accompanied by any striking proofs of godliness. Even the Christianity of Margaret was of an intensely Romish cast, and one turns from the perusal of her history with strangely mingled feelings. It is with more of pity than pleasure that we think of the wearying monotony of her religious life; nor can we close our eyes to the fact, that there was much ostentation in her acts of benevolence, and much parade in her humility. Still she was a true Christian, and in those dark days one has to be thankful for even a feeble glimmer of light. Berengar is deserving of mention as having revived the controversy respecting the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. He was archdeacon of Angers, and zealously taught that the bread and wine were simply the emblems of the Lord's death; not being converted into the body and blood of Christ as stated. For this he was cited to appear at Rome, and, under threats of torture and death, was induced to sign a recantation; but after much sorrow of heart for his unfaithfulness he returned to his former opinions, and came to a peaceful end in the year 1088.

But the palm for christian devotedness must be bestowed on believers outside the pale of Rome. During this century the Paulicians worked their way through Western Europe to France, where they were subjected to much persecution by the catholic party; but their labours were owned of God. Eventually, to be rid of them, they were accused of the Manichean heresy, and burnt at the stake. There is much evil spoken of these evidently devoted men, but as it is chiefly recorded by their enemies, specimens of whose honesty and veracity have already been laid before the reader, we shall do well to take it in a directly opposite sense, or to discard it altogether. It is thought by some, that the seed of the Vaudois church was planted by Paulician missionaries.

But Rome, at this time, had a more important work than to busy herself with the obstinacy of a few harmless heretics: the woman, Jezebel, had not yet been invested with the full authority to which she aspired, a spiritual universal monarchy, and the sovereigns of Europe were still independent of her sway. Her darling ambition to raise

herself to the high dignity of autocratrice of all the world, though long indulged in secret, was now to be openly announced, and the pontificate of Hildebrand was the fitting occasion for the framing and partial accomplishment of this daring scheme. This was the pope of whom the poet says:
"There was a carpenter of Tuscany,
"Whose son, from a cowled monk, made himself pontiff"*

{*R.H. Horne's *Gregory VII.*}

He was born at Soana, a city of Etruscan origin, situated in the low marsh lands of La Maremma. His father is said to have been a carpenter (as the lines above quoted indicate), but descended from a noble family, and enjoyed the patronage, if not the friendship of the Counts of Tusculum.

The youthful Hildebrand was educated, contrary to his wishes, at the monastery of Calvello, near his native city, and afterwards at the monastery of St. Mark, on the Aventine Mount; where his application and love of learning attracted the notice of his uncle, the abbot of the monastery. He attached himself at an early age to the Benedictine order of monks; and in his sixteenth year, dissatisfied with the laxity of St. Mark's, was draughted to the famous monastery of Clugny, where greater austerity of discipline was observed. Here, moreover, there were greater facilities for the acquisition of that secular knowledge, always so necessary a factor in the machinations of the church of Rome. Even at this early period of his history, he seems to have given evidence of considerable penetration of intellect and much calculating prudence, allied with a craftiness and ambition, which were to make him the spiritual despot of his age.

It would appear that Hildebrand had obtained considerable influence at the Vatican before his twenty-fifth year; for we find him busily intriguing with Benedict IX., a dethroned pope of Rome, and arranging with him for a transfer of his claim to one Gratian, for 1500 pounds of gold. But he does not seem to have visited Rome in person till the election of Bruno, bishop of Toul, to the papal see, by the nomination of Henry III. of Germany. The bishop was staying at Clugny at the time of his election, and Hildebrand having gained possession of his ear persuaded him that the nomination of the pontiff by a worldly potentate was a disgrace to the church. There should be no subjection, he argued, of the ecclesiastical to the secular power; and advised him to make his journey to Rome in the garb of a pilgrim, refusing the dignity till it had been conferred upon him by the will of the people and the act of the cardinals. Bruno discerned the wisdom and foresight of this counsel, and proposed that Hildebrand should accompany him on his journey; a proposition in which the monk readily

acquiesced. This scheme succeeded beyond expectation, and the people received the pilgrim-candidate for the papal throne with acclamation. Hildebrand was loaded with honours, made sub-deacon of St. Paul's, cardinal, abbot, and canon of the holy Roman church, and custodian of the altar of St. Peter.

The influence which this single act had acquired for him was incalculable. He now became the moving spirit in the Lateran palace, administering the affairs of the papacy, and virtually ruling the pope himself. Indeed, his Holiness was a mere puppet in his hands, as was proved when he presently procured his deposition by means of bribery and intrigue. After that, Hildebrand remained for twenty years behind the scenes, deposing and electing popes, almost at his pleasure. His friend Damianus once sent him some Latin verses in which he satirically remarked, "I worship the pope ceremoniously, but I adore thee submissively. Thou makest this man lord; he makes thee God:" and the lines truly indicated the remarkable influence of the cardinal. While the popes were content with present ease and enjoyment, Hildebrand, who cared for none of these things, was busy with his schemes. He "fomented or originated quarrel, usurpation, and conquest everywhere;" unsettling all, "that in the re-settlement his schemes might have a place." That he made no secret of his strength is evident from his treatment of Alexander II., a pope who gave offence to him by offering to suspend the exercise of his functions till he had been duly appointed by the temporal power. Hildebrand mounted the papal throne, and with clenched fist, struck the pontiff in the face, in the presence of a conclave of cardinals, ambassadors, and others. On another occasion, at a full council of bishops, he accused the whole assembly of being disciples of Simon Magus, and deposed one who dared to contravene the charge.

All this time his ambitious schemes were ripening slowly, though not more slowly than surely; and step by step, with a caution that was half the secret of his power, he mounted the glittering ladder. At last (it was the month of March in the year 1073) he reached the summit, and was unanimously elected pope by the council of cardinals. He took the title of Gregory VIII.

But even this was only a means to an end. The course which Hildebrand had been pursuing during the past twenty years was not to end here; this was not the supreme object for which he had been striving. His schemes were wider, and, in a certain sense, less selfish; and nothing less than the institution of a permanent hierarchy, with unbounded authority over all peoples and kingdoms on the face of the earth, would satisfy his ambition. Yes; he would organise a vast ecclesiastical state, which should preside over the destinies of men — a mighty theocracy or spiritual oligarchy,

with power to instruct the people in its infallible dogmas, to over-ride their consciences and to enforce their obedience; a state whose ruler should be supreme over all the rulers of the earth, creating and deposing kings at his pleasure interdicting whole provinces and kingdoms, and none daring to oppose — the vicegerent of God upon earth, in whom could exist no error, from whom could be no appeal!

But before these ambitious schemes could be realised, some important reforms were necessary. The sale of ecclesiastical benefices — or the sin of Simony — must be instantly suppressed. That it prevailed throughout Christendom was no hidden thing, and we have already given proofs of its prevalence at Rome. There were many Simon Maguses abroad, who thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money. But there was something even more hateful to Gregory's mind than simony, and that was the marriage of the clergy. He could see that, as long as that was permitted, all his efforts would be futile. Marriage was the one connecting link between the priests and the people, and until this was broken there could be no true unity as he desired it. The clergy must be an entirely and separate body, bound by no ties of kindred, having but one object the maintenance and glory of the church. They must recognise no sonship save sonship to the church — no fatherhood save that of spiritual parentage: all interests and ambitions, all feelings and desires, apart from this were traitorous and unworthy. These were Gregory's views, and his dictates were framed accordingly.

His mandate with regard to the latter of these two grievances produced the most appalling results. "It dissolved the most honourable marriages, rent asunder what God had joined together, scattered husbands, wives and children, and gave rise to the most lamentable contentions, and spread everywhere the direst calamities; wives especially were driven to despair, and exposed to the bitterest grief and shame." But the more vehement the opposition, the more loud the anathemas against any delay in the plenary execution of the pontiff's commands. The disobedient were delivered over to the civil magistrates, to be persecuted, deprived of their properties, and subjected to indignities and sufferings of various kinds. Part of one of his letters says on this point: "He whom flesh and blood moveth to doubt or delay is carnal; he is condemned already; he hath no share in the work of the Lord; he is a rotten branch, a dumb dog, a cankered limb, a faithless servant, a time-server, and a hypocrite."

Another of Gregory's decrees was directed against lay investitures, and this involved him in a quarrel with Henry IV. of Germany. The inauguration of bishops and abbots by ring and crosier, had been the custom with kings and emperors long before the time of Charlemagne; and Henry was in no mood to surrender the time-honoured privilege at

the command of a Romish priest. His refusal incensed the pope, and led him to connive at Henry's destruction.

Nor was this their only cause of difference. When the dictates of Gregory respecting the sin of simony, had been communicated to Henry, though the emperor had received the papal legate graciously, and had spoken approvingly of the proposed reforms, he had taken no steps in the matter; and this had further incensed the pope. He wanted deeds, not words; the carrying out of his decrees, not the evasive compliments of the emperor; and he became more particular in his demands. He required that a council should be convened in Germany, and that the many charges of simony which had been brought against Henry's bishops, should be immediately investigated: but to this the emperor would not consent; and was, of course, supported in his refusal by the bishops, many of whom were doubtless guilty. But Gregory was not to be thwarted in his purposes, or discomfited by opposition. Unable to gain his end one way, he resorted to another; and having summoned a council at Rome, the charges were gone into there. As a result, several of Henry's favourites, some of them the highest ecclesiastics in the land, were deposed; and, as though to add insult to injury, the emperor himself received a peremptory summons to appear at Rome, to answer to similar charges; while a threat of excommunication was held out against him if he refused to attend. He did refuse; and indignant at the wanton insult which had thus been offered to his person, called a council of his own bishops and deposed the pope.

The gauntlet had been thrown down, and Gregory at once retaliated by issuing the threatened bull. In a full assembly of bishops, numbering 110, he pronounced the excommunication of the emperor; and declared at the same time, his kingdom forfeited, and his subjects absolved from their oaths of fealty. The language of Gregory on this occasion was sufficiently blasphemous, "Now, therefore, brethren," he cried, "it behoves us to draw the sword of vengeance; now must we smite the foe of God and of His church; now shall his bruised head, which lifts itself in its haughtiness against the foundations of the faith, and of all the churches, fall to the earth, there according to the sentence pronounced against his pride, to go upon his belly, and eat the dust. Fear not, little flock, saith the Lord, for it is the will of your Father to grant you the kingdom. Long enough have ye borne with him; often enough have ye admonished him: let his seared conscience be made to feel!"

Gregory knew the disordered state of the German empire, and had chosen his time well. The superstitious fears of the people were roused by the papal ban, copies of which were extensively circulated; and the cupidity of the Saxon nobles was excited, by the licence which it gave them to throw off their allegiance to the emperor; and thus

the threats which the bull contained were rapidly effective. Some from terror, some from personal feelings against the emperor, and some from hope of reward, were led to take up arms against their prince; till Henry found himself absolutely deserted by his own subjects. And as he lost ground, the influence and authority of the pope increased. "Great swelling words of most awful import were his weapons. The 'name of God; the peace of God; the commands of God; the salvation of God; the keys of the blessed Peter; closing the gates of heaven; opening the gates of hell; eternal perdition;' were words which struck terror into every human mind, and the manacles with which he bound his slaves," It was an unequal contest, for the pope had all the power on his side, and Henry was almost alone. He was a high-minded prince, and the greatest monarch of Europe, but resistance against such odds as this was hopeless: crushed at last, he determined to obey the pope's summons and set out for Italy. Yes, he would beg the pope's forgiveness, confess his sins, and get the ban removed. Perhaps a message from the pope to one of the rebel lords encouraged him to take this step. "Deal gently with Henry," were Gregory's words, "and extend to him that charity which covereth a multitude of sins." Henry had an opportunity of experiencing the pope's charity later on.

It was the depth of winter when he set out. He was accompanied by his wife and child, and a few attendants; and their path lay across mountains which were capped with snow, and overlaid by sheets of ice. After a dangerous and fatiguing journey of several weeks the party arrived before the castle of Canossa, in Apulia, where Gregory was staying with the Countess Matilda. The pope had been advised of his approach, and as the penitential emperor came in sight of the fortress the outer gates were opened to him. The second entrance was also thrown open, but when he would have essayed to enter the castle itself, he found that the innermost gates were barred against him. He waited; but he waited in vain. A cold January frost had set in, and he began to grow faint with fatigue and hunger; but night found him still standing in the court of the castle, unable to gain admittance. Henry was experiencing the 'charity' of the pope. The following morning, when he again presented himself for admittance, this treatment was renewed: the pope was inexorable, and the mercy which the degraded emperor craved was not to be had. For three dreary days was he thus kept waiting in the cold; till all save the iron-hearted pope were melted to tears. At last the combined entreaties of the Abbot of Clugny and the Countess Matilda, whose hearts had been deeply moved by the passionate appeals of the afflicted emperor, were successful; and Gregory, with an ill-grace, consented to admit him to his presence.

But he had gone too far. The high-minded prince had been too deeply insulted ever to forgive or forget the injuries which he had sustained at his hand, and though, while he

continued in the power of the pope, he had to submit to much degradation and further insult, it only made the recoil greater when he was at last set free. Revenge was all he could think about; and no sooner was the outward act of reconciliation over, and the ban removed, than he formed a scheme for the invasion of Italy. Many sympathisers had meanwhile gathered round him, so that he found no difficulty in raising an army; and when all was in readiness he placed himself at its head and set out for Rome. A prophecy which the pope had impiously uttered, that Henry would be dead or deposed within a year, presently shewed that he was a lying prophet as well as a lying priest, for at the end of three years the emperor was alive and well, and — what was more to the pope's mortification in possession of the papal city. He deposed Gregory, who had meanwhile shut himself away in the fastness of St. Angelo, and placed the pope elect, Guibert, archbishop of Ravenna, on the papal throne as Clement III. But the approach of Robert Guiscard, a Norman warrior, with a large army, compelled the emperor to withdraw, and Gregory now obtained his release. An awful doom, however, awaited the ancient city. The soldiers, whom Gregory had invited, were for the most part infidel Saracens, and scarcely had Robert received the pontifical blessing, than he let loose this half barbarian army upon the city. For three days Rome was given over to pillage and confusion, until such time as the soldiers were utterly fatigued by their rioting and stupefied with drink. Then the defenceless inhabitants of the city could repress their indignation no longer, and rushing out upon the lawless freebooters, they fell upon them with the energy of desperation. Guiscard, finding that the tide had turned against him, gave orders to fire the houses, and this inhuman act again turned the scale in his favour. The inhabitants forgot their enemies in their eagerness to save their wives and children from the flames, and while they were thus engaged, they were massacred in hundreds by the ruthless Saracens.

In the midst of this conflict and confusion Gregory retired from the city, and hastened to Salerno; where, as if untaught by the terrible scenes which he had just witnessed, and of which he had been the author, he proceeded to thunder out fresh anathemas against Henry. But an arresting hand was soon to be placed upon him, whose grasp he could not evade; a hand which no pope had ever been able to resist — the hand of death. The solemn ordination had gone out against him, and on the 25th of May, in the year 1085, he was called into the presence of God. A great storm was raging at the time, and he died miserably, with these words upon his lips, "I have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore I die in exile."

And this, reader, is the man who is lauded to the skies by the partisans of Rome, and whose name has been inscribed upon her catalogue of saints! Alas! of what avail are all these barren and posthumous honours, if his name is not found written in the Book

of Life? What are the empty adulations of men, if the great churchman is now wailing with the damned in hell?

Chapter 13.
The First Crusade.
A.D. 1094-1100.

The papacy gained little by Gregory's struggle with the emperor; and before the century was out, the reigning pope found it expedient to resort to a new device in order to promote the temporal interests of the papacy. From time to time complaints had been brought from the Holy Land, of insults and outrages which had been suffered by pilgrims to the holy sepulchre; and Urban II., who then occupied the chair of St. Peter, formed the idea of promoting a great religious war. He saw that if he could engage all Europe in this fever scheme, and drain the various countries of their best soldiers, he would be able to push his temporal pretensions in a way that no preceding pope had done, since the turbulent barons and powerful princes would be out of the way, and there would be none to oppose him. He therefore lent a willing ear to the complaints of one of the chief fomentors in this novel agitation, a hermit of Amiens, named Peter; and gave him every encouragement in preaching a crusade. This remarkable man had visited Jerusalem in the year 1093, and viewed with indignation the manner in which his fellow-pilgrims were treated by the Seljuk Turks, who were in possession of the city, and while there, had made a solemn vow to rouse the nations of Europe against the infidels — a vow which he now proceeded to perform. Mounted upon a mule, and clad in a long robe, tightened at the waist by a hempen girdle, he passed from town to town, calling upon the people to arm in defence of the holy sepulchre. His wandering rhapsodies and impassioned appeals aroused by turns the awe and indignation of his hearers, and quickly produced the results for which he aspired. "Why," he cried, "should the unbelievers be allowed any longer to retain the custody of such christian territories as the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane? Why should the unbaptised followers of Mahomet, the children of perdition, pollute with hostile feet the sacred ground which had been the witness of so many miracles, and still furnished so many relics which manifested superhuman power? Bones of martyrs, garments of saints, nails of the cross, thorns of the crown, were all lying ready to be gathered up by the faithful priesthood who would lead the expedition. Let the floors of Zion be purified with the blood of slaughtered infidels." Such was the character of the monk's preaching; and when he had succeeded in working the people to a pitch of frenzy, and they were in readiness to receive whatever orders were imposed upon them, Urban himself came forward to add his approving word. His speech was delivered in the market-place, and was frequently interrupted by cries of "God wills it — God wills it!"

for he was careful to appeal to the passions of the people, and did not neglect to offer absolution for the blackest sins to all who joined the holy army. As the result of these appeals an immense rabble, numbering 60,000 men, set off for Palestine in the spring of the year 1096, with Peter at their head. They seem to have been chiefly of the peasant class; and so ignorant, that they are said to have inquired at every town as they passed along, "Is this Jerusalem?" little thinking that they were destined never to reach the holy city. After numberless reverses they reached Constantinople, and crossed the Bosphorus; but, having proceeded as far as the Turkish capital, they were met by an army under Solyman, the Sultan of Iconium, and miserably defeated. Out of the 60,000 who set out, only a third returned to tell the tale.

The year following another army was raised, and 600,000 crusaders, of all ranks and conditions, began their march, attended by numerous women, "jugglers, servants, and workmen of all kinds." This immense army separated into four parties for the sake of sustenance, and proceeded by different roads to Constantinople. Here they re-united and pursued their onward course together, thousands perishing on the journey by reason of the great heat and the scarcity of water. Other difficulties had to be encountered in the loss of all the horses, as well as in the jealousies and frequent quarrels of the soldiers: but in spite of these hindrances, the army dragged on its course, and slowly-advanced towards Antioch. A few engagements took place before this city was reached; notably, the battle of Dorylium, in which the crusaders were victorious, and the siege of Edessa, which resulted in the capture of that city, after no very great resistance from the Mahometans; Antioch, however, was not so easily reduced. The fruitfulness of the luxurious country round the city proved as dangerous to the cause of the crusaders as the scorching and sterile plains of Phrygia had proved some months before; and the besiegers no sooner found themselves on the fertile banks of the Orontes, and among the groves of Daphne, than they abandoned themselves to the wildest excesses. The approach of winter found them quite unprepared; their camp was flooded; their tents were wrecked by the wind; and the horrors of another famine became inevitable. In the extremities of their hunger they devoured the dead bodies of their enemies; and so managed to sustain life, till the treachery of one of the besieged placed them in sudden and unexpected possession of the place. Under cover of the night, and at a moment when a fierce storm was raging, the crusaders scaled the rugged walls, and with their stirring battle cry,"God wills it!" entered the city.

But the possession of Antioch by the crusaders, did not long remain undisputed. The former garrison was not entirely subdued, and their warlike spirit revived when the fact became known that an army of 200,000 Turks, under Kerboga, Prince of Mosul,

was marching to their relief. As the prospects of the Mahometans grew brighter, the prospects of the crusaders grew more hopeless; and once more they were threatened with destruction. But superstition came to their aid, and the sudden discovery of the spear which pierced the Saviour's side, the burial place of which had been revealed to a crafty monk named Bartholomaeus, produced a wonderful reaction in the hearts of the crusaders. We may remark that it was the monk who found the spear. He had been told in his dream that it was lying under the great altar of the church of St. Peter; and it was not till others had searched to a depth of twelve feet, that he volunteered his aid. The hour of his search was well chosen — the dusk of evening; the garment in which he made his descent was doubtless as well chosen a capacious cloak. There was room for many spear-heads beneath it. Bartholomaeus was successful; and a lance-head was brought up from the hole, and exhibited in triumph to the desponding army. The effect was electrical. With the animating cry,"Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered!" the gates of the city were flung open, and the army rushed out upon the unsuspecting foes. Victory was assured; and the Saracens were driven from the field like chaff before the wind. The result was decisive, and the immense spoils of the enemy fell into the hands of the crusaders. with every demonstration of joy they returned to the city; and having proclaimed one of their leaders, by name Bohemond, prince of Antioch, they gave themselves up to ten months of luxury and idleness; evidently quite unadmonished by their severe experiences in the past.

It was May of the following year before the army again moved on, and as they approached Jerusalem their fanaticism exceeded all bounds. Tyre and Sidon, Caesarea and Lydda, Emmaus and Bethlehem, were all passed in turn; and at last a height was reached from which the Holy City could be plainly seen, stretching out like a map before them. Then it was their excitement reached its height, and a great cry burst forth, "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! God wills it! God wills it!" and the crusaders fell prostrate upon their faces, and embraced the consecrated ground.

But much was yet to be done. Jerusalem was theirs in anticipation, but not in fact. An offer from the Saracen Governor to admit the crusaders in the character of pilgrims was indignantly rejected; the Christians would come to no terms — would agree to no compromise. Their mission was to deliver the Holy City from the tyranny and oppression of unbelievers, and nothing short of this would give them rest. The siege lasted forty days, and during that time the besiegers were again reduced to the greatest extremities. A scorching sun, which made their thirst the more intolerable, had dried up all the water in the brook Kedron; their cisterns had been poisoned or destroyed by the enemy: and in the despair produced by these untoward circumstances, they prepared for the final assault.

But superstition was once more ready to their aid. Strange rumours got afloat that their brave leader, Godfrey de Bouillon, had been favoured with a vision, and was prosecuting the siege under angelic directions. He had seen a bright form in heavenly armour, hovering over Mount Olivet, and waving his drawn sword in signal for this last attack. That was enough. The old cry,"God wills it!" was caught up by 40,000 desperate warriors, and ere long the whole army was swarming up the steep walls which surrounded Jerusalem. The struggle was long and bloody, but victory declared for the besiegers, and Godfrey himself was the first to gain a firm and undisputed footing on the walls. A moment later, and he had leapt into the devoted city, followed by thousands of his soldiers, who poured down upon the enemy with the restless fury of an avalanche. The carnage that followed was indescribable. Neither age nor sex was spared, and the butchery of 70,000 Mahometans was considered creditable christian work by the crusaders. For three days the city was deluged with blood, and credible historians relate that in the temple and Solomon's porch the crimson tide was up to the saddle-girths of the horses. But the lull came; and on the eighth day after the attack, the victorious leaders assembled, and offered the kingdom of Jerusalem to Godfrey de Bouillon. He was unquestionably the hero of the day, but with a modesty equal to his heroism he declined the royal dignity, and accepted the humbler title of Defender and Baron of the Holy Sepulchre. A further victory at Askelon, not long after, secured the position of the crusaders; and now that the wrongs of their pilgrim brethren had been avenged, they felt that their mission was done, and many of them prepared to return to their native lands.

The Mahometans had held the city since the conquest of Omar in the year 637, a period of 462 years: the exact date of its recapture was the 15th of July, A.D. 1099. The day was a Friday; and it was just three o'clock in the afternoon when Godfrey stood victorious on the walls of the city. Is it merely a coincidence that this was the day and hour of our Saviour's passion?

Chapter 14.
The Church in the Twelfth Century; with an Account of the Second, Third and Fourth Crusades.
A.D. 1100-1200.

The records of the century to which we are now brought, are singularly cheerless; with but few gleams of light to relieve the prevailing gloom. True there were some attempts of a missionary character in the still pagan parts of Europe, but the results were only partial and uncertain. Otho, bishop of Bamberg, carried the gospel into Pomerania; that country having been conquered by the Duke of Poland; and when the people

found that his objects were peaceable, and that he came to offer them salvation and not to plunder or oppress them, they listened to his words, and many were baptised. The islanders of Ruegen also, who had received Christianity in the previous century, but had relapsed into image-worship, and were even offering human sacrifices to the image of St. Vitus, a martyr, were reclaimed in some measure through the ministry of Absolom, archdeacon of Lunden. But it would seem that carnal weapons were employed more freely in the work than the sword of the Spirit, and we may, therefore, reasonably doubt the sincerity of many of the conversions. Lastly, with the mention of Vicelin, bishop of Oldenberg, who seems to have done some sterling gospel work among the Slavonian nations, the brief record of the missionary labours of this period closes.

But the century is notable for the existence of testimony of another kind — testimony which seemed a preparation for something that was *future,* rather than a repetition of the peculiar testimony of the *past*. The need of the heathen had produced the latter testimony, but the need of the *church* itself was producing the former. The one was the proclamation of the gospel to the poor and ignorant; the other was a protest against the corruptions of a wealthy hierarchy, which professed to be all-knowing. The professing church had now become thoroughly corrupt, and it is therefore not surprising that some bold speakers should have arisen to declaim against it.

One of the first of these was Peter de Bruys, a native of the South of France, and described as a man of dauntless spirit. He was originally a presbyter; but the pointed and personal tone of his preaching having roused the animosity of the clergy, he became an itinerant and a fugitive to escape persecution. The points on which he differed from the then professing church, were many and important; and he did not fail to make them widely known. He protested against the innovations of Rome; against infant baptism; against the erection of costly churches; against the worship of crucifixes; against the doctrine of transubstantiation; against the celebration of the mass; and against the efficacy of alms and prayers for the dead. The fervour of his eloquence gained him many hearers, and not a few followers; but his mission seems to have been one of destruction rather than of reformation; insomuch that Dupin, an historian of the seventeenth century, relates that "In Provence there was nothing to be seen but Christians re-baptised, churches profaned, altars pulled down, and crosses burnt." After labouring amid much persecution, for upwards of twenty years he was burned alive at St. Gilles, in the year 1130.

The influence of his teaching, however, could not be destroyed; and his work was carried on by an Italian named Henry, who, by his extraordinary zeal, and convincing

eloquence, carried all before him. He went about the country barefoot, even in winter; and his clothing was scanty and of the poorest kind. The cottages of the peasants were his frequent resting places; but, like his divine Master, he often had not where to lay his head. Many a weary hour was spent under porticos, or on the dark hillsides, exposed to the pelting rain and the piercing night winds: but his courage was not daunted by suffering, and the threats of his adversaries caused him no alarm. Like Peter de Bruys, he taught that it was a fallacy to build costly churches, since the church of Christ consisted not in a mass of coherent stones, but in the unity of the congregated faithful; like him, he taught that the cross of the Lord was not to be honoured and adored: that transubstantiation was a doctrine of hell; that prayers for the dead were vain and useless; and that the baptising of infants was attended with no saving results.

A "heretic"so daring could not be permitted to roam at large, and Henry was at length seized and imprisoned at Rheims. He was afterwards removed to Toulouse, where he was put to death by order of Alberic, the papal legate, A.D. 1147.

Several other, so-called, heretics — doubtless followers of Henry and Peter de Bruys — suffered martyrdom at Cologne in the same year; and Evervinus, Praepositus of Steinfeld, near that city, gives an account of their martyrdom in the course of a letter to Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux. After speaking of their firmness and resolution while under examination, he continues, "And (what is more wonderful) they entered to the stake, and bare the torment of the fire, not only with patience, but with joy and gladness. In this case, O holy father, were I present with you, I should be glad to have your answer how these members of the devil could with such courage and constancy persist in their heresy, as is scarcely to be found in the most religious in the faith of Christ." It would indeed be interesting to know how the worthy abbot of Clairvaux, or any other holy father, would explain the secret of this courage and constancy. The abbot made an *attempt* to do so by ascribing it to the power of the devil, "which," said he, "is so great not only over the bodies, but even over the hearts of men:" but modern fairness will rate the abbot's opinion at its proper value. This same Bernard, who could approve of the zeal which persecuted these faithful Christians even to the death, could also say of them, "If you interrogate them respecting their faith, nothing can be more christian: if you inquire into their conversation, nothing can be more irreprehensible; and, what they say, they affirm by their deeds. As for what regards life and manners, they attack no one, they circumvent no one, they defraud no one. Their faces are pale with fasting: they eat not the bread of idleness; but they labour with their own hands for the support of life." Such is the blinding power of popery, even over the mind of one who was undoubtedly a true child of God.

It is a matter for rejoicing, however, that in spite of persecution, the number of these seceders from Rome increased. The abbot above referred to, describes them as "the multitude of heretics;" and another writer, Eckbert, affirms, that "they increased to multitudes in all countries;" while William of Newbury testifies, that "they seemed to be multiplied beyond the sand of the sea." Eckbert further informs us, that the "heretics" went by different names according to the countries in which they were found. In Germany they were called *Cathari,* in Flanders, *Piphles,* and in France, *Tisserands,* from the art of weaving which was their common occupation. In England they were called *Publicans*. It is related that during a persecution at Cologne in the year 1163, when four men and a little girl, belonging to the Tisserands, were delivered over to the secular power to be burned, the people, taking pity on the child, held her back in the hope that she would recant. But the child, watching her opportunity, suddenly broke from their control, and cast herself into the flames.

But, perhaps, the brightest light of this century was Peter Waldo,* the pious merchant of Lyons. Roused to serious thought by the sudden death of a friend, he became an attentive reader of the scriptures; and having distributed his property among the poor, devoted the remainder of his life to acts of piety. A fuller acquaintance with the Scriptures taught him the corruptness of the dominant religious system, and led him in time to renounce it entirely as anti-christian. Meanwhile he became anxious for the deliverance of others from the state of darkness in which he had so lately been, and adopting an itinerant life, he went forth to preach through the world the unsearchable riches of Christ. One of his adversaries, Stephanus de Borbonne, informs us that having applied himself to the study of the fathers, and given his utmost attention to the reading of the Bible, he became so familiar with them that they were "engraven in his memory," and he determined to seek after that evangelical perfection which had distinguished the apostles. Stephanus further informs us how that, having sold all his goods in contempt of the world,* and distributed the money he had gained to the poor, the pious merchant went about, "preaching the gospel, and the things he had committed to memory, in the streets and public places." Amongst his other sins, as recorded by this useful exponent of the practices of the heretics, we learn that he collected men and women of all trades (even the meanest) around him, and having confirmed them in the knowledge of the gospel sent them into the surrounding countries to preach. But the steps which Waldo took for the translation of the gospels into the vulgar tongue will ever be considered his great work. Without this he could never have sent out his disciples as he did, freighted with the words of life; for they were ignorant and illiterate, and the Scriptures were only to be obtained in the Latin tongue. His faithfulness, however, was not long to go unchallenged; and the tidings of

his last great act, at once awoke the thunders of the Vatican. So long as Waldo contented himself with the lesser task of reforming the lives of the clergy, he was tolerably secure from molestation; but when he drew from its sheath that dreaded weapon, the word of God, and placed it in the hands of the common people, he at once declared himself the enemy of Rome. To place an open Bible in the possession of the laity, was nothing less than to disturb the very foundations of the Papacy; for the word of God was Rome's greatest adversary. The action of the pope was therefore prompt and decisive; and a ban of excommunication was issued against the honest merchant. Yet in spite of Alexander's bull, Waldo remained in Lyons three years longer, busily employed in preaching, and circulating the Scriptures; by which time, finding former measures ineffectual, the pope extended his threats to all who held communications with the heretic. Then, for his friends' sake, Waldo quitted the town; and during the remaining four years of his life, was a wanderer on the face of the earth; although, in the providence of God, he never fell a victim to the persecuting vigilance of Rome. He died a natural death in the year 1179.

{*Variously called Waldus, Valdo, Valdus, Valdius, Valdensis, etc. etc.

****Stephanus de Borbonne adds, "and dared to usurp the office of the apostles."}**

The dispersion of his followers ("the Poor Men of Lyons") after his death, contributed greatly to the spread of the gospel; and numbers of them wended their way to the Cottian Alps, among which the Vaudois valleys are situated. Here, to their joy, they found a growing colony of Christians, professing views in many respects similar to their own, and affording by their life and conversation, a most pleasing example both of christian fellowship and domestic felicity. By these simple believers they were received with open arms, and even permitted to attach themselves to the colony; and in this way they became partners in its fortunes, and, ere long, partakers in its sufferings. There we must leave them for the present, while we take a glance at others of a professedly orthodox persuasion, and within the pale of the Romish church, whose names have any prominence in the ecclesiastical records of the century.

Of these we may name four — Bernard of Clairvaux, Abelard, Arnold of Brescia, and Thomas a Becket; though they were not all so orthodox as the more staunch adherents of Rome might have wished. Bernard of Clairvaux we have already mentioned, and in no favourable terms; but in spite of his zeal against the followers of Henry and Peter de Bruys, he seems to have been a man of some godliness, and lashed fearlessly at the abuses and sins of the clergy. The luxurious living of the bishops; their drunkenness and gluttony; their gorgeous equipages; their costly cups and dishes; their gilded spurs — all fall beneath the censure of his pen: nor does he scruple to speak of the

priests as servants of Antichrist; and of the abbots as lords of castles, rather than fathers of monasteries, as princes of provinces rather than directors of souls. His influence, indeed, was enormous, and, perhaps, second to none.

Abelard was a Frenchman, and is noticeable as being the first public teacher of theology who was not an ordained priest. The romantic side of his history, upon which we do not propose to touch, must be familiar to most readers: yet is there much in it to move our sympathy, as well as to excite an admiration for the man, though poets have had more good things to say of him than theologians. As the learned scholastic, however, we *may* consider him, and in that character he takes the palm of all his contemporaries. People came from immense distances to hear him lecture; crossing seas and mountains, and submitting to almost any inconvenience to obtain that privilege. But human reason had far too wide a field in his preaching, and led him sadly astray, even with regard to some of the fundamentals of Christianity. At last his great popularity aroused the animosity of Rome, and Bernard was tempted from his cloister to oppose him. The occasion was remarkable, and when the disputants met at Sens, in France, the scene in the council-chamber was worthy [of] the occasion. The king was there, attended by his court; bishops, also, and other ecclesiastics; abbots and learned doctors. But if the occasion which brought them together was remarkable, the circumstances of the debate were yet more so. Bernard having stated that he was not there to accuse Abelard, since his own writings would testify against him, the reading of the incriminated passages commenced. The recital was still proceeding when Abelard abruptly rose to his feet, and turning to his judges said, "I refuse to hear more, or to answer any questions: I appeal to Rome." All were taken by astonishment, and Bernard asked him, did he fear for his person, assuring him at the same time that he was perfectly safe, and would have a patient hearing. Abelard simply replied, "I have appealed to the court of Rome;" and left the assembly. The great schoolman afterwards retired to the monastery of Clugny, where he was kindly received by the abbot; and having taken the cowl, died there in the year 1142.

Arnold of Brescia is said to have been a disciple of Abelard, hut evidently was not tainted with the errors of that brilliant but unhappy man. Though he never seems to have thrown off his allegiance to the pope, he openly defied his power; and in the destructive and revolutionary character of his preaching he reminds one of his contemporary, Peter de Bruys. Using for his text the Saviour's words, "My kingdom is not of this world," he commenced a series of attacks on the lives of the clergy, in the very hotbed of their iniquity, Rome. "If poverty was of Christ," was his cry, "if poverty was of his apostles, if the only real living likenesses of the apostles and of Christ were the fasting, toiling, barely clad monks, with their cheeks sunk with the famine, their

eyes on the ground, how far from the apostles, how far from Christ, were those princely bishops, those lordly abbots, with their furred mantles of scarlet and purple, who ride forth on their curveting palfreys, with their golden bits, their silver spurs, and holding their heads like kings." Stung by his reproaches, the hierarchy of Rome clamoured for his removal, and accordingly he was banished by the Lateran council in the year 1139. But he was back again in the year 1154, and recommenced his powerful and passionate declamations; till the people became riotous, and, on several occasions embroiled themselves with the priests. In one of these scuffles a cardinal was wounded, and Adrian placed the city under an interdict, refusing to remove the inhibition till Arnold was expelled the city. The threats had the desired effect, and, for awhile, the movements of the reformer seem to have been restless and unsettled. Hunted from place to place, he at length found an asylum at Zurich, where he was received with kindness by the diocesan bishop. Bernard, however, would not let him rest. He had watched his movements with angry impatience, and now urged the pope to take further action with regard to him. Yet no extreme measures were resorted to till the pontificate of Adrian IV. (an Englishman, whose real name was Nicholas Breakspere) into whose hands the bold preacher was committed by the emperor Barbarossa. The pope, fearing lest the mob should attempt a rescue, hurriedly condemned him at a secret council; and before day-break Arnold had ceased to breathe, and his ashes were lying with the ooze and slime in the bed of the Tiber.

We come now to Thomas a Becket. Of the birth and parentage of this extraordinary man nothing is known, though some affirm that he was the son of a London merchant. He commenced his studies at Oxford, and finished them at Bologna; after which he entered the service of the church, and rose by rapid gradations to the dignity of archdeacon of Canterbury.

At this time, the reigning king, Henry II., was but twenty-five years of age, but he had already begun to manifest a spirit of independence, and promised, like his father, to prove no slight check upon the papal power in this country; and this had aroused some grave misgivings in the mind of Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury. It made him anxious to place near the king's person a man of energy and ability, devoted to the church, who would be able to check such opposition, and, in case of need, to override the king's will. Such a man he saw in Becket; and when the chancellorship of the kingdom fell vacant, he recommended the archdeacon as a fitting man for the post. His recommendation was favourably received, and Beckett soon became a favourite with the king. He ingratiated himself in every way with his sovereign, entering into all his schemes, and even (for this was part of his deep-seated policy) siding with him in his efforts to check the encroachments of the papal power in England. He was noted

at this time for his worldliness, and the princely style in which he lived. At the chase, the banquet and the tournament, his presence was always in request; and whenever he went abroad, he was conspicuous above his fellow nobles for the magnificence of his apparel, and the splendour of his retinue, which usually consisted of some six to seven hundred knights. Henry seemed always happiest in the company of his favourite; and so long as it suited Becket's purpose the friendship was reciprocal; but no sooner had the unsuspecting monarch raised him to the archbishopric of Canterbury (made vacant by the death of Theobald) than he completely changed his tactics, and shewed himself in his true colours as the inflexible vassal of Rome. His demands at once became arrogant and pressing: and soon enough the king was bitterly regretting that he had placed such honour on his favourite.

For some time past the clergy of England had been seeking to obtain for themselves immunity from the civil law; and, indeed, to all intents and purposes, they had gained their object; as facts abundantly illustrate. Between the years 1154 and 1163 no less than one hundred murders and numberless debaucheries had been committed by men of the priestly order, and not one of the criminals had been called upon to answer for his crime. This alone is conclusive. Becket now espoused their cause, and offered to Murder and Incest the shelter of his archiepiscopal robes. His practical co-operation was seen anon, when he took under his protection a priest, who had been guilty of seduction, and afterwards had murdered the father of the unhappy victim of his lust. The king demanded that the criminal should be given up, but his demand was disregarded: the haughty prelate replied that his degradation was a sufficient punishment, and to this answer he resolutely adhered.

To remedy these abuses, as well as to define more clearly his prerogative, the king called together his barons, and consulted with them as to what should be done; and as they shared their sovereign's views, and recognised the necessity of adopting resolute measures for the protection of his subjects from the aggressions of the clergy, they proceeded to draw up the famous code of laws known as the Constitutions of Clarendon. Therein it was decided, among other things, that, "If any controversy shall arise between clerks and laymen, concerning advowsons or benefices, it shall be heard and decided in the king's court (and not at Rome): that churches belonging to the fee of our lord the king, cannot be appropriated without his grant: that, archbishops, bishops, or parsons, etc., may not leave the kingdom without the consent of the king: that no person who is the king's tenant *in capite,* nor any of his officers, shall be excommunicated, or their lands placed under an interdict, until the king hath been applied to for justice: that no appeal can be made beyond the court of the archbishop without the consent of the king, that is, no appeal to the pope at Rome

and that if a suit shall arise between a clerk or clergyman, and a laic, it shall be decided by twelve lawful men in the presence of the king's chief justice."

Becket reluctantly subscribed his name to these Constitutions, but immediately violated his bond by appealing to Rome; and then, under promise of the pope's indulgence, refused to recognise them at all. True, he had set his name to the new laws, but he declared that he had not engaged to confirm them by affixing his seal; and by this miserable subterfuge he evaded the consequences of his act.

The church and the crown had now entered the lists against each other; and it was evident that the conflict between king and priest, which Hildebrand had begun a century before, was presently to be re-enacted on English soil. Becket's first act shewed how well he understood the spirit of the age. He delivered up the seals of his office: dismissed his numerous retinue; exchanged his costly robes for a hair-cloth shirt and a monk's frock; and gave himself up to all the austerities of a monastic life. His pretended sanctity was his weapon; and the sympathies of a superstitious people were speedily enlisted in his behalf. Henry, however, though rendered uneasy by the conduct of his archbishop, was not to be so easily subdued: and after some vain attempts to bring the refractory priest to submission, he issued orders to proceed against him as a traitor. Becket had meanwhile requested permission to leave the kingdom; but knowing the temper of Henry and fearing for his life, he no sooner obtained information of the king's intentions than he consulted his safety by flight. He "left Northampton privily in the night, and eluding pursuit by a circuitous course," effected his escape to the Continent. Here he was received with marks of honour and affection by the French king; and, with the advice of the pope, retired to the abbey of Pontigny, where he assumed the habit of a Cistercian monk, and restlessly awaited the issue of events.

He was now declared a traitor by proclamation, and his relatives and friends were banished from the kingdom: but Becket angrily retaliated by excommunicating all his opponents. The ceremony of excommunication took place at the church of Vizelay, and the occasion seems to have been made exceptionally awful and imposing. Amid the tolling of bells and the mournful intoning of attendant priests, the impious form was read: and some score or more of persons, whose only crime was obedience to their sovereign's commands, were consigned by the anathema of the archbishop, to a life of unmitigated sufferings on earth, and the quenchless flames of hell hereafter. The crosses on the altar were then inverted; the torches were extinguished; the bells ceased tolling; priests and people retired slowly from the ghostly edifice; and the church was left in silence, solitude, and darkness.

The strife between Henry and Becket lasted seven weary years, and would doubtless have continued much longer, had not the combined intercessions of Louis VII. and the pope procured his restoration. When he returned to his country, he shewed himself as haughty and unyielding as when he left it: though into the history of his subsequent quarrels with the king, and his offensive conduct towards him, we cannot enter. The record might be interesting, but falls not within the limits of our history. His pride and insolence, however, at length became unbearable; and the incautious remark of one of Henry's bishops that, "there would be no peace for him or his kingdom while Becket was alive," kindled into flame his smouldering resentment, and forced from him the well-known exclamation, "Will no one rid me of this turbulent priest?" Four knights, who heard these words, hastened to Canterbury; and having failed in extorting from the haughty prelate a promise of allegiance to their sovereign, murdered him at the altar of the cathedral.

The death of Becket was an unfortunate release for Henry; and the people, groaning under the Norman yoke, made good use of it for the ventilation of their grievances. Nearly all the nobles of the land were Normans, and even most of the abbots and bishops had the hated blood in their veins; but Becket was an Englishman. "To honour à-Becket was to protest against the conquest; and when the crowning glory came, and the crimes of Henry against themselves attained their full consummation in the murder of the prelate at the altar the patriot in his resistance to oppression — the enthusiasm of the country knew no bounds. The penitential pilgrimage which the proudest of the Plantagenets made to the tomb of his victim, was but small compensation for so enormous a wickedness, and for ages the name of à-Becket was a household word at the hearths of the English peasantry, as their great representative and deliverer — only completing the care he took of their temporal interests while on earth, by the superintendence he bestowed on their spiritual benefit now that he was a saint in heaven."

Our references to the twelfth century would be incomplete did we omit to speak of the crusades. The year 1147 is memorable as the year of the second of these "Holy Wars" against the Mahometans. For several years past the power of the crusaders in Syria and Palestine had been growing weaker and weaker, and the soldiers of the cross had settled down to a life of luxury and idleness temptations so peculiar to the countries of the East. The Mahometans, taking advantage of their condition had collected their forces, and after harassing the Christians and considerably weakening their forces by numberless petty wars, had succeeded in recapturing Edessa, and were now centring their attention on Antioch. The crusaders, conscious of their own helplessness, grew seriously alarmed, and sent imploring messages to Rome for help; and this was the

origin of the Second Crusade. Pope Eugene III. responded to the appeal, and wisely entrusted the preaching of the crusade to Bernard of Clairvaux. Apart from the great eloquence of the learned abbot, there was a moral weight attaching to all he said, which was sure to bring success to any cause he advocated; and the confidence which the pope had reposed in him was not disappointed. The king of France and the emperor of Germany both responded to the call; and when 900,000 men had rallied round the banner of the cross, this great army, dividing into two companies, set out for Palestine. But misfortune dogged their steps, and the crusade was a miserable and humiliating failure. Only a small portion of the French king's army reached the Holy Land, and the leaders of this remnant could effect nothing owing to the dissensions and jealousies among the soldiers. In the year 1149, the shattered remains of the army returned to Europe, nearly a million having perished in the enterprise.

The third and fourth crusades also belong to this century, and were scarcely more successful. Richard I. of England, who headed the latter, gained some brilliant victories, but not without tremendous loss of life; and his exploits only ended in a truce with Saladin, the Saracen emir; after which Richard returned to England. It is said that 120,000 Christians perished during the siege of Acre; at which the king was present; and if we add to this number the 180,000 Mahometans who perished on the same occasion, we get a total of 300,000 warriors, the price of one solitary engagement; in which nothing was gained but a little empty honour and renown! And who was responsible for all this waste of human life? We can only answer, The head of papal Rome, the pope himself. "It was perfectly evident that by these long expeditions to Palestine, the blood of Europe must be drained, its strength exhausted, and its treasure wasted. There was no thought of seeking to convert the unbelieving to the faith of Christ — the true mission of Christianity — but of weakening the power of the temporal monarchs, that the pontiffs might reign over them. The papacy is essentially infidel.... 'Preach the gospel to every creature,' is the Saviour's commission to all who own Him as Saviour and Lord. No, says the pope, slaughter the unbelievers without mercy. This is the work which God requires at your hands. Let the tares be torn up by the roots, and cast into the fire that they may be burned up."

The three orders of military monks, the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, the Knights Templars, and the Teutonic Knights, may be considered as offshoots of the crusades; but their character is more political than religious, and we dismiss them with the mention. The Knights Templars grew to be the most powerful, and receptions into their order were conducted with the greatest mystery. In later years, when they had settled on the island of Malta, and their wealth had increased, a jealous feeling was roused against them, and the most frightful stories were circulated with regard to their secret

rites and strange ceremonies. Eventually their pride, and cold, unsympathetic attitude to all classes proved their downfall, and in the year 1314 the order was abolished by command of the pope.

Chapter 15.
The Church in the Thirteenth Century; with an Account of the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Crusades.
A.D. 1200-1300.

The thirteenth century, though in many respects a period of great importance, has little to shew in the way of missionary achievements.

The Nestorians continued to gain converts in Tartary, India, Persia and China; and the Danes made some feeble attempts of a similar kind in the last-named country. In Spain also, some efforts were made to Christianise the Arab population of the country, but without success. Pope Clement IV. thereupon advised their expulsion from the kingdom; and his advice having been listened to, much cruelty and bloodshed resulted. An attempt was also made to carry the gospel into the pagan parts of Prussia on the point of the sword, and Conrad, Duke of Massora, engaged the Teutonic knights in this barbarous enterprise. Such compulsory measures were at first resented by the inhabitants, but force of arms at length compelled them to submission, and they reluctantly bowed their necks to the papal yoke. Encouraged by this success the knights afterwards extended their mission to Lithuania; where, by robbery, murder, and incendiarism, they speedily reduced the people to a similar state of servitude, and forced them to be baptised.

These acts of injustice and oppression, committed within the bounds of Christendom, need not occasion much surprise, when we consider the condition of the professing church at this period. Ecclesiastics of every grade, from the Pope downwards, were engaged in a scramble for wealth and power, and the schoolmen and other theologians were exhausting their learning and eloquence in idle controversies, and profitless speculations on questions beyond the ken of finite minds. "Never," says Roger Bacon, the most learned Englishman of the age, "never was there so great an appearance of wisdom, and so great ardour in study, in so many faculties and so many countries, as during the last forty years — for doctors are scattered in every city, in every castle, in every borough, and yet never was so great ignorance and misapprehension. The mass of students doze like asses over bad translations of Aristotle, and waste together the time, labour, and expense they lay out upon them. Appearances are all which engross their attention, and they care not what it is they know, but only to appear very learned before the senseless multitude."

The "multitude" were, indeed, as ignorant as they could be, and almost entirely destitute of spirituality. Despising learning, they were thus at the mercy of the priests, who saw the value of it, and sought in every way to limit the boundaries of their knowledge. It was the policy of the clergy to encroach as much as possible upon the civil courts of law; so that in time almost every case of perjury, blasphemy, usury, bigamy, incest, fornication, etc. etc., was tried in the ecclesiastical courts. Yet they craftily managed that the enforcement of their decisions, and the execution of their sentences should be left to the temporal power; thus absolving themselves, as they thought, from the responsibilities incurred by any miscarriage of justice. There is no doubt, indeed, that Europe in the thirteenth century was *ruled* by the priests, who had both wealth and learning to support them. The monasteries had become palaces, in which the lordly abbots could give their sumptuous entertainments, and carry on their guilty amours, protected by the strong arm of Rome. The bishops were princes, who, in many instances, owned the lands over which they had been appointed spiritual overseers. The friars had their substantial dwellings in the suburbs of every important town, and wandered daily through the streets, in their sombre frocks, to receive the reverent salutations of the people. The cottages of the poor, and the castles of the rich, were always open to their visits; and whether welcome or unwelcome, a reception must be accorded them. Hermits and other recluses still wandered moodily among the tombs and mountain paths, and by their ascetic severities did much to strengthen the hands of the pope. Many a true Christian, disgusted with the licentious conduct of the priests, would doubtless have left the fold, had it not been for these hermits, who, by their supposed sanctity, overawed the superstitious, and disarmed the objections of the discontented. We can imagine what that power must have been, which could compel a man, for some venial offence, extorted from him at the confessional, to fast, or to go about with bare feet, or to leave off wearing linen, or to go on pilgrimages, or even, where the removal of the offender was thought desirable, to take the cowl and enter a monastery! Yet this was the power invested in the priests; and we may be sure they were not slow to use it, where there was anything to be gained by so doing.

But if the priests ruled the people, the pope ruled the priests. All were subject to him; and the more so, as, during this century, the dogma of the pope's infallibility was brought prominently to the front. Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican, assuming the truth of the writings of one Gratian, a Benedictine of the previous century, added thereto a mass of spurious and traditional matter which was still floating about, and from this patchwork of error and superstition evolved the dangerous doctrine, that "Christ is fully and completely with every pope in sacrament and authority." His work, the

"Summa Theologiae," contains various other canon or ecclesiastical laws, and is still a theological text book of the Romish church.

Of the popes of this century, Innocent III., who rose to that dignity in the year 1198, was perhaps the greatest; certainly he was unexcelled for his wickedness. His real name was Lothario de' Conti; he was named Innocent by his cardinals in testimony to his blameless life!

One of the first acts of Innocent on his elevation to the papal chair, was to ruin the domestic happiness of the French king. Philip Augustus, attracted by the fame of the Danish princess Isamburga's beauty, had given his hand to that lady, and a marriage had been hastily concluded between them. But the monarch had not known his own mind, and from the first had shewn an unaccountable aversion to his young queen. Refusing to live with her as his wife he shut himself up in a convent and transferred his attentions to the young and beautiful Agnes, daughter of the duke of Meran; a lady for whom his love was deep and real, and to whom he was shortly afterwards united. The pope, however, espoused the cause of the repudiated princess, and threatened to place the whole kingdom under an interdict unless the king put away the duke's daughter, and received the princess Isamburga with conjugal affection. This was no light or empty threat, and the consequences of such an interdict would have fallen heavily on the unoffending subjects of the French king. To suspend the public exercise of religion was a terrible matter in their eyes, for almost all their worship was through the priests, and, speaking generally, they had no resource in private prayer.

But Philip refused to give way. He pleaded that his divorce from the Danish princess was a lawful one, and had been ratified by a former pope (Celestine III.): moreover, he had been legally married to the lady Agnes, who had already borne him two children. The pope, however, would allow of no exonerating plea; and when Philip continued obstinate, he gave the necessary authority to his legate, then at Dijon, to proclaim the interdict. At midnight, amid the tolling of bells, the execrable ceremony took place. The consecrated bread was burned, the images were draped in black, and the relics replaced in the tombs. Then the clergy came forth from the church in solemn procession, headed by the cardinal in his mourning stole of violet; and when he had pronounced the ban, the priests extinguished their torches; the church doors were locked; and all religious services, and all prayers, were indefinitely suspended. Only the sacraments of baptism, confession, and extreme unction were now permitted by the church; and meanwhile the people went about unshaven, the use of meats was prohibited, and the dead, without place of sepulture, were left to the dogs which infested the cities, and to the wandering birds of prey.

It was in vain for Philip to protest against these extreme proceedings; the pope was inexorable, and his mandate must be obeyed. Agnes must be put away, and Isamburga reinstated in her rights; until this was done, the interdict could not be removed. But Philip's affections were centred in his beautiful wife, and he could not bring himself to submit to the harsh demand. Agnes herself had no ambition for queenly honours, but the thought of separation from her husband was more than she could bear: she only wanted to remain, what pope and parliament alike had made her, his lawful wife. Driven to madness by his wife's grief, and his own impotence to assuage it, the king at last exclaimed, "I will turn Mahometan! Happy Saladin, he has no pope above him." But to all this the pitiless demand was repeated, Obey the pope, dismiss Agnes, receive back lsamburga."

At last the king consented. Innocent had gained the day, and now removed the interdict. The churches were again thrown open to the people, the images were undraped, the relics were again exhibited, and the sacraments were administered as before. The princess Isamburga returned to the French court, and was outwardly acknowledged as Philip's queen, but his aversion to her was only deepened by all that had occurred, and he still refused to live with her as his wife. The lovely and loving Agnes, torn from her husband, died soon after of a broken heart.

But France was not the only country which experienced the horrors of an interdict during the pontificate of Innocent III. John of England, by his undignified menaces to the pope in the year 1207, brought a similar visitation on our own country. The circumstances will be familiar to all readers, and we need not dwell upon them. Even the interdict, however, had no effect upon John, and when he was excommunicated in the following year, he treated the pope's bull with contempt. The bull was followed, in the year 1211, by an act of deposition, and John was declared to have forfeited the crown. His subjects meanwhile were absolved from their oath of allegiance, and liberty was given them to transfer their allegiance "to a person worthier to fill the vacant throne."

Lastly, Philip Augustus of France was invited to take up arms against the contumacious king, and the territories of the English crown were promised as an appendage to his own kingdom. This final measure brought the craven-hearted John to his knees, and his former haughtiness and independence suddenly gave place to a meanness and servility which is almost without parallel in history.

At the house of the Templars, near Dover, the degrading ceremony took place. On bended knees, the king of England laid his crown at the feet of Pandulph, the papal legate; "resigned England and Ireland into the hands of the pope, swore homage to

him as his liege lord, and took an oath of fealty to his successors." The following is a copy of the king's oath: "I, John, by the grace of God, king of England and lord of Ireland, in order to expiate my sins, from my own free will, and the advice of my barons, give to the church of Rome, to pope Innocent and his successors the kingdom of England, and all other prerogatives of my crown. I will hereafter hold them as the pope's vassal. I will be faithful to God, to the church of Rome, to the pope, my master, and his successors legitimately elected. I promise to pay him a thousand marks yearly; to wit, seven hundred for the kingdom of England and three hundred for the kingdom of Ireland." Such were the shameful and humiliating terms dictated by the simulated shepherd of Christ's flock, and submitted to by an English king! Philip Augustus, who had meanwhile gone to enormous expense in raising an army, was now coolly informed that he must desist from hostilities, and that any attempt "to annoy the king of England would be highly offensive to the holy see."

But the triumph of the pope was changed to wrathful alarm, when, two years later, the barons of England, headed by archbishop Langton, met at Runnymede, and forced the tyrannical John to renew and ratify the charter of their liberties, which had been granted to them by Henry I. "What!' exclaimed Innocent, "do the barons of England transfer to others the patrimony of the church of Rome? By St. Peter we cannot leave such a crime unpunished." But the barons were made of other metal than their sovereign; and when the pope annulled the great charter, and threatened those who defended it, they received his communication in contemptuous silence.

The pontificate of Innocent acquires a further importance from the fact, that it was he who established by decree the fatal dogma of transubstantiation; thus settling, as he fondly deemed, a question which had long been fermenting in the minds of many. At the fourth Lateran Council (A.D. 1215), it was canonically affirmed that when the officiating priest utters the words of consecration, the sacramental elements of bread and wine are converted into the substance of the body and blood of Christ.* Divine honours were now decreed to them, and the consecrated elements became the objects of worship and adoration. Costly caskets, exquisitely chased, were made for their reception: and thus, according to this doctrine of hell, the living God was confined in a casket, and might be carried about from place to place!

{*The same body which was born of the Virgin. It was reserved for pope Pius IV., in the year 1563, to decree that "the body and blood of Christ, together with His soul and divinity, are truly and really and substantially in the Eucharist, and that there is a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into His body, and of the whole substance of the wine into His blood, which conversion the Catholic church calls

transubstantiation." It is worth noting that this dreadful doctrine finds no place whatever in the writings of the Fathers, on which the Romish church professes to build so largely.}

But the activity of the papacy was shewn in yet another way during this century. The decay of the crusading spirit, which had filled the coffers of the church, while it impoverished the whole of Europe, made it necessary for the pope to look about him for a fresh source of revenue; and the suggestion of an ingenious catholic, that the place of pilgrimage for Christians should be transferred from Jerusalem to that city, most happily met the case. Streams of wealth now flowed in to the treasuries of the Vatican, and when, at the close of the century, pope Boniface VIII. instituted what is called the Jubilee, the success was complete. Every hundred years was to be the grand occasion for a general pilgrimage to Rome; and so fruitful did this institution prove, that the task of waiting one hundred years for the next influx of wealth proved too great a tax on the patience of the popes, and the interval was changed to fifty years. Eventually even this term was found too lengthy, and twenty-five years became, in due time, the prescribed and settled period. Of the pope who instituted the Jubilee we shall have more to say hereafter.

We have already intimated that the crusading spirit was on the decline, but history has to record the banding, on different occasions, of no less than five other armies in that hopeless cause. The first of these, which forms the Fifth Crusade, was proclaimed by Innocent III., and met with but a feeble response. A few French nobles, aided by the Venetian Republic, succeeded in mustering a small army; and having sailed to Constantinople, took the city by storm. They re-instated Isaac Angelus on the throne, as emperor of the Greeks, and were preparing to return, when the newly appointed emperor was murdered, and the city was suddenly thrown into a state of tumult and insurrection. After order was again restored, the crusaders elected a new emperor, Baldwin, Count of Flanders, and then returned home. Their victory, so far as it went, was complete; and during fifty-seven succeeding years the Greek empire was ruled by this Frankish dynasty.

Between this crusade and the sixth, the feverish spirit of the times produced one of mere children. Ninety thousand boys, varying from ten to twelve years of age, placed themselves under the leadership of a shepherd lad, named Stephen, who professed to be acting by divine guidance, and marched forth, singing as they went. They carried banners and crosses in their hands, and cried as they went along, "O Lord, help us to recover Thy true and holy cross!" Without weapons, they thought to overcome the infidels by their prayers and innocence; and it is deplorable to think that no one came

forward to restrain these poor children, or even to warn them from their foolish enterprise. How many reached the coast is not recorded, but thousands must have perished by hunger and fatigue, and many were doubtless sold into slavery. None, of course, reached the Holy Land.

The Sixth Crusade was proclaimed by Honorius III., and the warriors were chiefly Germans and Italians. They marched into Egypt, and captured Damietta; but not before 70,000 of the inhabitants had perished in the siege. It was a shocking waste of human life, as the sequel proved, for the city was recaptured by the Saracens in the course of the next few years.

The Seventh and Eighth Crusades may be said to have resulted from a vow, made by Louis IX. of France, on a sick bed. He saw in his recovery, the expression of the will of heaven that he should deliver the holy sepulchre from the power of the infidel, and neither returning health, nor long delays could dissipate the conviction. The first expedition was undertaken in the year 1249, and resulted in the recapture of Damietta, but in the following year the king and nearly his whole army were taken prisoners. After four years his liberty was purchased for a large sum, and a truce was concluded with the Saracens for ten years. Having made a few pilgrimages to the sacred places, he then returned to France.

But his vow was not forgotten, and sixteen years later he engaged upon his second crusade. With a worn-out body, but a spirit as vigorous and hopeful as ever, he set out with his army on the 14th of March, A.D. 1270. Before a year had passed, the miserable remnant of that army was on its way back to Europe, having left the king behind in Palestine. His vow unfulfilled, his hopes unrealised, he had been carried off by the pestilence, during the month of August, leaving the conquest of the Holy Land as distant an achievement as ever.

Thus terminated the Eighth Crusade, the last for many years which any pope proclaimed, and, with one or two exceptions, the last in which any sovereign of Europe took part. Kings and emperors had seen the evils which these "Holy Wars" engendered, and the popes had grown too busy with crusades of another kind, and nearer home, to waste their thoughts on such visionary enterprises.

Yet the popes had been the chief gainers by the crusades, and the increase to their temporal power was considerable during those 180 years of strife and bloodshed. Indeed, the clergy generally had not failed to profit by the occasion; and whilst the nobility of Europe were throwing away their lives in Palestine, bishops and abbots had

been encroaching upon their estates, and filling the coffers of the church with plundered treasure.

Chapter 16.
The Home Crusades, and the Establishment of the Inquisition.
A.D. 1200-1300.

The crusades of *"another kind,"* to which we made allusion at the close of the preceding chapter, were those undertaken against the Waldensian Christians, by command of Innocent III. At the time of his accession, the work of Peter de Bruys, of Henry, and of Peter Waldo had borne wonderful fruit, insomuch that their followers might be found in almost every country of Europe. In Germany and Italy men and women of all classes had embraced the revived doctrines, from the noble to the peasant, from the mitred abbot to the cowled monk; while in Lombardy they existed in such numbers that one of them declared he could travel from Cologne to Milan, and be hospitably received every night on the road by members of the fraternity." They were to be found in England and Austria, in Bohemia and Bulgaria, and even among the hardy Slavonians as far as the Oural mountains. But nowhere were they to be found in greater numbers than in the fruitful plains of Southern France, and the fertile valleys of Piedmont; and it was against these two favoured spots of God's earth that the edicts of extermination were most directed. Shut in by their native mountains, the Christians of the valleys escaped for nearly two more centuries the horrors of a general persecution, but the Christians of the plains, the Albigenses as they were called, were marked out for instant execution.

Innocent opened the persecution by calling upon Raymond VI., Count of Toulouse, and other princes of Southern France, to adopt immediate measures for the suppression of the heretics; but his appeal did not meet with that hearty response which he had calculated upon. Raymond and his brother nobles could not bring themselves to agree to the merciless demand. Many of them had relatives among the proscribed heretics, and to drive them from their homes, or to slaughter them in cold blood, was more than could be expected from even the most dutiful son of Rome. Besides, what harm had these persecuted Albigenses done? They had always shewn themselves to be peaceable, law-abiding, and contented subjects; and, owing to their industry, the province of Languedoc had become the wealthiest in the kingdom. Their feudal lords, therefore, who owed so much to their labours could scarcely be expected to respond to a barbarous edict, which commanded their wanton destruction.

The presence of the pope's legate, Peter of Castelnau, at the court of Raymond only made matters worse. He was an insolent monk of the Cistercian order, and

endeavoured to carry things with a high hand in the presence of the count; and when the pope, by repeated threats of temporal chastisements and eternal flames, did at length prevail upon the count to sign an edict of extermination, the officious legate was so zealous in pressing for its execution that he overreached himself, and produced results which effected his own ruin, as well as prevented the carrying out of the edict. Raymond was irritated beyond endurance by his arrogant behaviour; and, unfortunately, gave expression to some ill-advised and hasty threats, which were overheard by one of his attendants. On the following day this man picked a quarrel with the legate, and, after some angry words on both sides, drew his poignard, and inflicted a fatal wound.

The news of this event was joyfully received at Rome, as it gave the pope a plausible excuse for excommunicating Raymond, and for appealing to the king of France and his nobles for assistance. "Up, soldiers of Christ! up, most Christian king," was the language of this shepherd of the Lord's people, this vicar of Christ. "Hear the cry of blood; aid us in wreaking vengeance on these malefactors. Up, ye nobles, knights of France; the rich and sunny lands of the South will be the reward of your valour!"

It is easy to see the great moral difference between the crusade which Innocent was now proclaiming, and those which had been proclaimed by other popes in the past. In the former there was some show of righteousness; and the crusaders, with small hope of earthly reward, were called to a life of hardship and self-denial. The nobler part of man's nature was then appealed to, and the deliverance of the holy sepulchre from the hands of the infidel was the one engrossing, all-sufficient motive for the soldiers of the cross hut now, how different!

Where was the covetous man? There was another kind of mission for him; Rome had a gospel to preach to him to which the world as yet were strangers. Did he covet the waving cornfields and the gadding vines of fruitful Languedoc? then on to battle with the heretics, for "the rich and sunny lands" would soon be his. Where was the ambitious man? Rome had her gospel, too, for him. Did he long to stand a conqueror on yonder lofty battlements, and live the lord while others cringed before them? — then forth to the war, for yonder castle of the heretic count would soon be his. Where was the man that loved cruelty — the man of blood? Rome had much good news for him. Dominic, the Spaniard, would soon be busy with his *Inquisition,* and there would be plenty of work for cruel and bloody monsters then. And the voluptuous man — where was he? Let him come on to the battle he need not think himself forgotten. Were there not women, dark eyed and beautiful, in yonder smiling villages? With husbands, do you say? Yes — but what of that? And there are bright eyed girls, too ah! you drop

your eyes — you need not look ashamed — they are all yours indulge your lust upon them as you will — you have joined the Holy Crusade — your sins are forgiven you — and never ending bliss is yours.

It was the year of grace 1209 when 300,000 soldiers, all decorated with the holy cross, and under the supreme command of Simon de Montfort, were on their way to Languedoc. The trumpet call of Innocent had been but too clearly heard and understood, and this immense army of eager adventurers, with its archbishops, bishops, and mitred abbots, had been collected in the space of a few days.

At the head of the forces was seen Dominic, with the symbol of Christianity in his hand, and the hatred of the devil in his heart; and over his long white robe was thrown a black mantle — dismal emblem of coming woe. By his side rode Almaric, the papal legate; his sunken eyes twinkling with a horrid joy, as he looked from time to time in the direction of the fruitful plains of Languedoc, and then round upon the army in his rear.

Ere long the work had commenced, and the soldiers were busily engaged, burning, plundering, slaying in all directions: though the conflict did not properly commence, till the army arrived before Beziers. The garrison here was under the command of Raymond-Roger, nephew to Raymond of Toulouse, and this was one of his strongest cities. The bishop of the place, acting by the orders of Almaric, advised the people to surrender, but catholics and heretics alike refused. Almaric muttered a fearful threat against the whole city, and the attack commenced. The odds were overwhelming, and presently the gates yielded to the battering-ram of the besiegers. But a difficulty arose. There were catholics within the walls, and how were they to be distinguished? This was no difficulty to Alrnaric. Kill them all," he cried; "kill man, woman, and child — the Lord knoweth them that are His!" Yes, Almaric, the Lord will yet shew thee who were His, when the throne is set in heaven, and He sits there making requisition for blood.

From twenty to one hundred thousand persons, according to various reports, are said to have been massacred on this occasion — the whole of the inhabitants of the city. Other cities followed. But the withdrawal of several leading nobles at a later period with their retainers, necessitated an appeal for more soldiers; and Dominic and his monks were soon busily employed preaching a new crusade. A forty days' campaign, *said they,* will atone for the blackest crime, and purge the heart of the blackest stain. To be a soldier in the holy army covered a multitude of sins. The appeal was again successful, and in the beginning of the following year De Montfort was ready with a fresh army.

To speak of all the pope's treatment of Raymond of Toulouse, does not come within the province of this history. His sin of being the ruler of so many heretical subjects, seems to have been inexpiable. It was not enough to express his sorrow and to clear himself of the murder of the Cistercian monk; Raymond must give a proof of his sincerity by surrendering seven of his strongest castles; he must do public penance for his offences, with a halter suspended round his neck while his back was being scourged; and then he must join the ranks of the crusaders, and bear arms against his own subjects, even against his own kith and kin; and after that, his holiness the pope might perchance shew his great leniency by giving him the kiss of peace.

This was precisely what transpired; but when the poor count was congratulating himself that all his danger and humiliation was at last over, there came a letter from the pope to his eminence the legate, in this strain: "We counsel you with the Apostle Paul, to employ guile with regard to this count; for in this case it ought to be called prudence. We must attack, separately, those who are separated from unity. Leave for a time this Count of Toulouse, employing towards him a course of dissimulation, that the other heretics may be the more easily defeated, and that afterwards we may crush him when he shall be left alone." So Raymond had not been forgiven after all? By no means. The charges of heresy and murder had not yet been cleared to the pope's satisfaction; at least, so he was presently informed by the pope's legate. This was too much for the poor count; and he burst into tears. The sight might have melted a heart of stone: but the hearts of Jezebel's children are made of adamant, and the papal legate ironically observed, "Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him." With that the ban of excommunication was pronounced against him afresh.

Raymond now began to see that the tragedy of Naboth the Jezreelite was in danger of being acted over again on his own territory. He represented Naboth, the pope was Jezebel, De Montfort, Ahab, and the vineyard was the vine-clad plains of Languedoc. The war now changed its character; and Raymond, supported by the Count of Foix and other nobles, began to take desperate measures for his protection. His people, who were much attached to him, flew to arms on the first summons, and De Montfort found that he had now to grapple with a foe made desperate by persecution and maddened by the sense of accumulated wrongs. His own cruel nature was stimulated by this unexpected opposition, and the most unheard of barbarities were committed by his sanction. Men and children were mutilated and tortured, women were ravished, crops and vineyards were destroyed, villages were burned, and towns and cities were given over to pillage and the sword. On the occasion of the capture of La Minerbe, about 140 persons, of both sexes, among whom were the wife, sister, and daughter of the

governor of the place, were burnt alive on one enormous pile. We are told they went to death willingly, and sang hymns to God in the flames, nor ceased their praises till they were suffocated by the smoke. At the capitulation of the castle of Brau, De Montfort put out the eyes and cut off the noses of one hundred of its brave defenders, leaving one of them one eye, that he might guide the rest to Cabrieres, to terrify the garrison there. At another place, an old man was fastened to a bench, and suffered unheard of agonies by means of a horned beetle, which was confined to his body by a small inverted vessel, and there left to gnaw its way to his vitals. Pagan Rome, with all its lingering tortures, could not offer an instance of such refinement of cruelty as this, committed by these "holy pilgrims," as the pope had gratefully christened them. At the capture of Foix, when the city was given over to the horrors of a sack, and the inhabitants of every age and both sexes were alike massacred, the voices of the bishops and legates were heard above the shrieks of women and the curses of their murderers, repeating the solemn chant, "Come, Holy Ghost." On this occasion, eighty nobles were to be hanged on one gibbet, by order of De Montfort, but the ghastly machine had not been well planted in the earth, and it broke down with its first victim. To save time, the rest were handed over to the soldiers, who cut them to pieces amid the approving cheers of the monks. The lady Geralda, of whom it had been said, "no poor man ever left her door without being fed," was also one of the prisoners. She was thrown into a pit, and dispatched with huge stones. Raymond was a catholic, but when he saw the treatment to which his faithful people were being subjected, he is said to have observed, "I know that I shall lose my lands on account of these good people; but I am ready not only to be driven from my domain, but to lay down my life for their sakes."

After many vicissitudes the city of Toulouse, the most important stronghold of the persecuted count fell into the hands of the crusaders; and the inhabitants were treated with the usual barbarities by the "pilgrims." The papist bishop, Fouquet, a man with the blood of ten thousand of his flock already on his conscience, took possession of the ancestral palace of his lawful lord, and forced the poor count into an ignoble obscurity. Simon de Montfort was meanwhile invested by the king of France with the count-ships of Beziers, Carcassonne, and Toulouse; and might be seen daily riding through the streets, while the people applauded, and the clergy cried exultingly, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

But Rome, ever jealous even of her best supporters, began to look with furtive glances on the ambitious and powerful De Montfort. Perhaps there was some excuse for this, as he was no sooner established in his new territories than he commenced to quarrel with the pope's legate. The latter, as archbishop of Narbonne, laid claim to the

temporal sovereignty of that province; but De Montfort, who had taken the title of Duke of Narbonne, refused to recognise the claim, and on the continued persistence of the archbishop, branded him as a heretic, and proceeded to seize upon the city by force. The pope thereupon issued an edict prohibiting the further preaching of the crusades, and granted permission to Raymond and his heirs, "to recover their lands and lordships from all who held them unjustly."

The son of the fallen count gained courage by this new edict, and succeeded in raising an army for the recovery of his father's dominions. He marched upon Toulouse, and was received there with enthusiasm by the oppressed and downtrodden citizens, whilst the perfidious Fouquet was driven ignominiously from the city. After many fruitless endeavours to recapture the place, De Montfort succeeded in raising a fresh army of 100,000 men, and, confident of success, bore down upon the city in the spring of the year 1218. The assault was conducted with great energy, but he was again repulsed; and this fresh defeat threw him into a state of gloom, from which he was with difficulty roused by the pope's legate. "Fear nothing, my lord," said the lying prophet, "make another vigorous attack. Let us by any means recover the city and destroy the inhabitants; and those of our men who are slain in the fight, I will assure you shall immediately pass into paradise." This was a pleasant assurance, but the remark of an officer who overheard it, was, perhaps, nearer the truth. "Monsieur Cardinal," said he, "you talk with great assurance; and if the earl believes you, he will, as before, pay dearly for his confidence."

While the earl was engaged hearing high mass, he was suddenly informed that the enemy had made a sally from the walls; and so soon as the mass was ended, he sprang into his saddle, and hastened to the scene of conflict. But he had scarcely reached the spot, when his horse, a fiery animal, received a painful wound, and starting off at full gallop, bore him right under the ramparts of the city. Archers placed aloft were not slow to perceive their opportunity, and one of their arrows, piercing the greaves of his harness, entered his thigh. A moment later, and a huge fragment of rock, flung by a woman's hand, struck him on the head, and he fell lifeless to the ground.

Within five years from this event, almost all the chief actors in these terrible persecutions had passed from the scene. Innocent was dead and had been succeeded by Honorius III., a man of smaller mind but equal cruelty, who continued the persecutions. De Montfort had been succeeded by his son, and crossed his sword with the younger Raymond, whose own father had also died. The king of France, Philip Augustus, had made way, by his death, for his son Louis, who had entered heartily into the struggle, but on the side of Rome. The perfidious Fouquet, however, was still alive,

and when, in the year 1228, Toulouse again fell into the hands of the crusaders, it was mainly owing to his wicked and remorseless counsels. The crusaders had almost given up the siege in despair, when he suggested that they might starve the besieged into a surrender, by burning the cornfields and vineyards, and turning the surrounding country into a desert. The suggestion was immediately adopted, and the promised results ensued. After holding out for three months longer, the inhabitants opened their gates to the besiegers, and submitted to the most humiliating terms. Raymond was treated much as his father had been treated before him, though instead of being compelled to deliver up seven of his castles to the pope, he was compelled to surrender seven of his *provinces* to the French king. In this way Rome really defeated her own ends, by increasing the power of a monarch who might at any moment prove a troublesome and formidable foe.

In reflecting upon the calamities of Languedoc, a recent writer has said: "To every thoughtful mind, to every man of faith, especially to those who study history from a scriptural point of view, the wars in Languedoc are most suggestive. They are the first of the kind on record. It was reserved for Innocent III. to inaugurate this new character of warfare. There had been many instances of individuals being sacrificed to the prejudice of the priesthood, such as Arnold of Brescia: but this was the first experiment on a great scale, which the church made to retain her supremacy by force of arms. It was not, observe, *the army of the church* going forth in holy zeal against the pagan, the Mahometan, the denier of Christ, but the *professing church itself in arms* against the true followers of Christ— against those who acknowledged His deity, and the authority of the word of God And what then, it may be asked, was the crime of the Albigenses? The head and front of their offence was simply this — they denied the supremacy of the pope, the authority of the priesthood, and the seven sacraments as taught by the church of Rome; and, in her eyes, greater criminals there could not be on the face of the whole earth: therefore utter extermination was the one unchangeable decree." It remains for us to state that, during the first fifty years of this century, not less than a million of Albigenses are believed to have lost their lives.

At the beginning of these wars, the Inquisition, that most awful of earthly tribunals, was opened, through the influence of Dominic, in a castle near Narbonne. This was its first appearance, but before many months, similar provisionary tribunals had been opened in all the chief towns and districts of Languedoc. At first its work was done secretly, but in the year 1229, its extreme usefulness in the detection of heretics was publicly acknowledged, and the council of Toulouse made it a permanent institution. It was now commanded that lay inquisitors should be appointed in every parish for the

detection of heretics; with full power to enter and search all houses and buildings, and to subject the suspected to whatever examination was thought necessary.

It is difficult to realise all the frightful consequences which the exercise of such a power involved. We do not attempt to go into it; but as truth about the ways of Rome is important, we will endeavour to give the reader, in a few words, some idea of the doings of this awful tribunal. Let him picture to himself a man, the father of a numerous family, who is being watched by the spies of the Inquisition. He has just returned from his day's toil, and his children are playing about his chair. His cheerful and devoted wife is spreading the evening meal, and humming over a simple air which she has learnt from the wandering troubadours. A knock is heard; and the wife turns towards her husband with a look of startled inquiry. Even the children pause in their play, and gaze into their father's face half wondering. His wife goes to the door, and opens it with shaking hand. Three or four men now enter the house unbidden — one of them a Dominican friar. In a few moments they are gone again, but during those few moments a change has taken place in the home circle. The woman is wringing her hands, the children are sobbing piteously around her — and her husband is no longer near to comfort them. It is his absence they are all lamenting, for he has just left the house with the friar, a trembling and unwilling prisoner. When the door has closed upon them, and their footseps have died away in the streets, you ask the woman whither they are taking him, but she cannot tell you; you ask her as to the nature of his crime, but she can throw no light upon your question. The man himself is as dark on this point as his wife; but he is hurried away, and after being robbed of his money, is thrust into a foul dungeon, where he is confined in irons for several days. The gaoler (himself a most useful tool of the Inquisition), having meanwhile insinuated himself with the prisoner, recommends him to "petition for an audit," and the advice is adopted. He is accordingly summoned before the consistory, and the inquiry is put, "What is your request?" The prisoner replies that all he desires is a hearing; and thereupon he is told, "Your hearing is this — confess the truth, conceal nothing, and rely on our mercy."

But he has nothing to confess. He is not conscious of having committed any offence against the pope, or against his most holy religion; but, on the contrary, has always been a good catholic. Yet this very declaration of his innocence is a crime; for the Holy Inquisition cannot err, and the mere fact of his appearing before the court is a proof of his guilt. He is forthwith taken to the torture-room, a dismal chamber lighted by two candles, the walls of which have been padded in order to stifle the groans of the tortured. He is then stripped by command of the presiding inquisitor, and stretched upon the rack. A surgeon is ready to bathe his temples when necessary, and to set the

dislocated bones, as well as to advise as to the amount of pain which the patient is capable of sustaining. The rack is then applied, and every word which the prisoner utters while under this torture is scrupulously noted down in a book. At a fitting time it will be used as evidence against him.

Two months later, having somewhat recovered from the shock which his system has sustained, he is brought forth again, and a new species of torture is applied. He is stripped as before, and his naked feet having been smeared with lard, are placed against a brasier of live coals. The torture is exquisite; and the prisoner having lost his reason for awhile in consequence of the extreme pain, is again remanded to his cell.

Other two months elapse, and then he is brought forth once more, to endure a third and final application of the torture. We need not describe it; it is more excruciating, if possible, than the two former, and he is carried back to his dungeon insensible, and almost dead.

His wife presently gets tidings of him for the first time. An *Auto da Fe is shortly to be held in the public square of the town, and her husband's name is on the list of those who are to suffer. It has been decided by the officers of the Holy Inquisition, that he is an incorrigible heretic, and he is therefore to be burned alive.**

{*"The words mean "act of faith."}

The day at length arrives: it is the Lord's day. The stakes are planted in the earth, the green furze and dry faggots are piled in heaps beside them, and all is ready. The approach of the procession is announced by a blare of trumpets, and the tumultuous shouts of the assembled multitude. The priests lead the way, carrying crosses; and after them come the heretics, guarded by a file of soldiers. They are dressed in long tunics, on which are painted the flames of hell, with demons fanning them to keep them brisk — a fantastic allusion to the future torments of the heretics. The ceremony of exhorting them to return to the bosom of the church being over, they are chained to the stake and the several piles are lighted. The fierce roar of the multitude almost drowns the voices of the martyrs, but now and again you may catch some note of praise — the one bright feature in the awful tragedy — and thus may learn that He in whose name they suffer, does not forsake His people in their hour of need, but gives them the comfort of His presence even amid the flames.

This is a faithul picture of the Inquisition — Reader, what do you think of it?

Chapter 17.
Fresh Instances of Papal Assumption, and Their Influence upon the Reformation. A.D. 1300-1400.

In spite of the great authority which Rome had acquired for herself, by means of the Inquisition, and other much older institutions, there were not wanting indications during this century of a steady opposition to her pretensions, which neither fire nor sword could subdue.

When Gregory IX., an old man eighty-one years of age, mounted the pontifical throne in the year 1227, he fancied he was going to wield the sceptre of another Hildebrand, but he was soon to be miserably undeceived. The first important effort of the pontiff was to promote a revival of the crusades against the Mahometans; but his letters to the courts of Europe at first met with no response. The aged canonist then appealed to Frederick of Germany; and the emperor, though busied in some political complications, religiously agreed to raise the necessary forces, and to proceed with them to Palestine.

The army was raised, and Frederick set out; but being overtaken by the plague, the troops were dispersed, and, for a time, the expedition was abandoned. The mortification of the pope, on hearing of this failure and delay, was great. His eyes had been covetously fixed, for a long while past, on the emperor's dominions, and he had hoped by creating disaffection among Frederick's subjects, to encroach upon his territory during his absence, and thus to make some important additions to the papal states: but the return of the emperor had disturbed his calculations, if it had not utterly dissipated his pleasant dreams. He refused to believe in the reality of Frederick's illness treated it as an empty pretence, and excommunicated him.

But the consequences of these severe measures were not what he expected. Instead of being daunted by the unjustifiable harshness of the pope, Frederick wrote a vigorous and indignant reply; and set about composing several letters and papers in his own defence. Writing to Henry III. of England he said, "The Roman Church so burns with avarice that, as the ecclesiastical revenues do not content it, it is not ashamed to despoil sovereign princes and make them tributary. You have a very touching example in your father, King John: you have that also of the Count of Toulouse, and so many other princes whose kingdoms it holds under interdict until it has reduced them to similar servitude. I speak not of the simonies, the unheard of exactions, which it exercises over the clergy, the manifest or cloaked usuries with which it inflicts the whole world. In the meantime these insatiable leeches use honeyed discourses, saying that the court of Rome is the church, our mother and nurse, while it is our stepmother and the source of every evil. It is known by its fruits. It sends on every side legates with power to punish, to suspend, to excommunicate; not to diffuse the word of God, but to amass money and reap that which they have not sown." To the pope

himself he wrote, "Your predecessors have never ceased to encroach upon the rights of kings and princes; they have disposed of their lands and territories, and distributed them among the minions and favourites of their court; they have dared to absolve subjects from their oaths of allegiance; they have even introduced confusion into the administration of justice, by binding and loosing, and persisting, without regard to the laws of the land. Religion was the pretext for all those trespasses upon the civil government; but the real motive was a desire to subjugate governors and subjects alike to an intolerable tyranny — to extort money, and, so long as that was to be got, to care little if the whole structure of society were shaken to its foundations."

But in spite of this bold and forcible language, Frederick was a true son of the church; and in obedience to the wishes of the pontiff, though without "obtaining any repeal of the anathema, under which he lay" (which, indeed, was renewed before he set out), he resumed his preparations for an expedition to Palestine. In the spring of the following year he set sail. For this he was excommunicated afresh; and thus for a third time the vials of Gregory's wrath were poured out upon him.

All who were observing with any thoughtfulness the movements of the pope, began now to see through his shallow artifices, and to discover the hollowness of his zeal for the deliverance of the Holy Land. His personal dignity stood far before the honour that was due to the name and birthplace of Christ; and hence he no sooner got tidings of Frederick's arrival, than he sent instructions by his minorite friars to the patriarch of Jerusalem and the military orders, that no assistance should be given to the emperor, hoping that by that means he would be overpowered by the enemy, and either perish on the field of battle or find a prison in one of the dungeons of the Saracens. He even connived at a plot for the surprise of Frederick as he was going to bathe in the Jordan; but the Templars, to whom the execution of the plot had been entrusted, failed in their attempt; and thus the malevolent old man was again disappointed.

But he had not done scheming. Unable to strike at the emperor in his own person, he raised a large army, and having pronounced a fourth ban of excommunication against him, and absolved his subjects from their allegiance, he invaded his dominions. Frederick immediately concluded a hasty but honourable treaty with the Saracens, and hurried back with all speed to Europe. The news of his return spread dismay through the invading army, and in a little while the pope was forced to undergo the discomfiture of another and more signal disappointment. He soothed his fretted spirit, however, by launching a fresh ban of excommunication at the emperor; the crime in this instance being the abandonment of the crusades. This was the fifth occasion on which the pope had anathematized the emperor in the course of a few

years; and it is amusing to reflect what must have been the perplexity of Frederick, did he take any serious heed to these anathemas. He had been "excommunicated for not taking the cross; excommunicated for not setting out to the Holy Land; excommunicated for setting out; excommunicated in the Holy Land," and lastly, "excommunicated for returning, after having made an advantageous peace with the Mahometans."

But Frederick was wise enough to treat the fiery bans with unconcern, and only smiled at the pontiff's anger. A sort of hollow truce was afterwards concluded between them, but it did not last; for Gregory was unable to let his rival rest. The contentious old man dragged on his miserable existence a few more years, and then died at the age of ninety-nine from exhaustion brought on by a fit of anger.

The struggle between the temporal power and the papacy for we must look upon it as more than a mere struggle between man and man — was continued with varying zeal by succeeding popes; nor did the death of Frederick, in the year 1250, put an end to the strife. The news of his decease, however, was received with undisguised satisfaction at Rome, and the then pope, Innocent IV., grew eloquent in his joy. "Let the heavens rejoice," he cried, "and let the earth be in festivity; for the thunder and the tempest with which a powerful God has so long threatened you, are changed by the death of this man into refreshing breezes and fertilizing dews." But it was not until the pontificate of Boniface VIII. that thoughtful minds began to discern in these continual efforts of Rome to push her temporal pretensions, symptoms of a slow but unmistakeable decline of her supremacy.

In all parts of Europe princes were rising up in defence of their temporal rights, and declining to hold their kingdoms as fiefs of the papal see. Even in England, spite of the cowardly example of John, a monarch was found bold and powerful enough to resist the demands of the pope; so that when Boniface put forth an impudent claim to the kingdom of Scotland, it was quietly repudiated by Edward I. A similar claim to the crown of Hungary was warmly opposed by the nobles of that country, who set up a prince of their own choosing; though the pope solemnly declared that the "first christian king of Hungary offered and gave that kingdom to the Roman Church." That Boniface had in no way abated the extravagant pretensions of previous popes may be gathered from his epistle to his legate in Hungary, on the occasion above mentioned; it commenced as follows: "The Roman pontiff, established by God over kings and their kingdoms, sovereign chief of the hierarchy in the church militant, and holding the first rank above all mortals, sitteth in tranquility in the throne of judgment, and scattereth away all evil with his eyes." Such foolish bombast may have pleased the pride of

Boniface; but he little thought how soon the hollowness of it would be exposed, how soon the glory in which he boasted would be taken from him.

At the time of which we write the throne of France was occupied by Philip the Handsome; one of the most unprincipled of men, and as obstinate as he was unprincipled. Having already made himself sufficiently odious to his subjects by plundering the nobles, oppressing the common people, and maltreating the Jews, he proceeded to levy contributions on the clergy, and thus awoke at once the thunders of the Vatican. Philip, however, was in no wise daunted by the threats of excommunication with which he was now assailed, and retaliated by forbidding the transmission of money, jewels and other articles to the court of Rome; a proceeding which deprived the pope of his revenues from France. Thus the hostilities commenced. The subsequent action of the French king in imprisoning the bishop of Pamiers, on a charge of sedition, still further aggravated the quarrel; and in the year 1302 the pope issued an insulting Bull, in which he proudly affirmed that God had set him "over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant, in his name and by his doctrine." The manifesto continues, "Let no one persuade you that you have no superior, or that you are not subject to the chief of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. He that holds that opinion is senseless; and he that obstinately maintains it is an infidel, separate from the flock of the good Shepherd."

Philip, however, would not be humbled. He was more surprised at the audacity of the pope than troubled by his threats; and one of his first acts after receiving the bull was to have it publicly burned at Paris, amid the blare of trumpets. Moreover, these daring proceedings met with the full approval of the French parliament; and the clergy, filled with apprehension at the threatening condition of affairs, strongly urged the pope to adopt a milder course. But Boniface was obstinate and unbending, and pride had blinded his eyes to the grave importance of the contest. To think of coming to terms with his adversary was beneath the dignity of a pope; he therefore summoned a council of cardinals, and proceeded to draw up another bull. In this decretal he went to some pains to define his authority; but as, in his mind, that authority was simply unlimited, there is no occasion to examine in detail the various clauses of it. Having asserted his pretensions to universal supremacy, he concluded with these words, "Wherefore we declare, define, and pronounce, that it is absolutely essential to the salvation of every human being, that he be subject to the Roman pontiff."

Along with this bull appeared another, excommunicating all who should either "prevent or impede those who might desire to present themselves before the Roman

see." This was evidently directed against the French king, who had issued orders forbidding the attendance of the clergy at Rome, a step which had been highly displeasing to the pontiff. Philip received these new communications with remarkable urbanity, indeed, the moderation of his reply gave rise to no little astonishment. He expressed his willingness to check the abuses with which he had been charged, and, in fact, promised to do all in his power to promote a reconciliation with the Roman church. This was a golden opportunity for Boniface, but he missed it. Unconscious of the crisis through which the papacy was passing, he professed himself dissatisfied with Philip's answer, and in that act, closed for ever the possibilities of an agreement between them.

It now remained for Philip to choose a shorter method with the pope; and he found a willing helpmate in William of Nogaret, the French chancellor. For a bribe of 10,000 florins, this man bought over the services of a Roman noble, named Colonna, who had access to the pope's presence, and attended by 300 armed horsemen they hastened to Anagni, where the bewildered old man had taken up his abode.

The cardinals had gathered round him, his attendants were standing at a distance eyeing him furtively, when a clatter of horses' hoofs was heard, followed by the tumultuous shout, "Death to the pope! Long live the king of France!" In a moment cardinals and attendants had disappeared, and the pope was left alone. More distressed by the desertion of his friends than the dangers that awaited him, the unhappy old man gave way to the first feelings of his nature, and burst into tears. But the weakness was quickly conquered, and to sustain the dignity of his office became his all-engrossing thought. "Since I am betrayed," he cried, "as Jesus Christ was betrayed, I will at least die like a pope." Investing himself with his official robes, he placed the tiara upon his head, and taking in his hands the keys and cross, mounted the pontifical chair. Colonna and Nogaret were the first to enter his apartment; but the dignified presence of the old man disarmed their courage, and they stood still. Meanwhile the others spread through the apartments in search of plunder; and while they were thus busied, the people of Anagni recovered from their panic, and hastened to the rescue of their pope. The attempt was successful, and those of the king's party who were not killed in the sally, escaped from the palace with all the booty they could carry.

But though the pope was saved for that time, his days were numbered. He was now eighty-six years of age, and the shock which his system had sustained had partially unhinged his mind. He shut himself in his room and refused to eat: and continued in this condition for three whole days. Then he seemed unable to bear the solitude, and

hastened to Rome, feverish and excited, and thirsting for revenge. He presented himself in the market-place in disordered attire, his white hair dishevelled and hanging about his face, and addressed the crowd. "Good people," he said, "you have seen how our enemies have spoiled me of my goods. Behold me as poor as Job. I tell you truly I have nothing to eat or drink. If there is any good woman who will charitably bestow on me a little bread and wine, or even a little water, I will give her God's blessing and mine." Then he hid himself away in his room again; and feeling that his end was near, dismissed his attendants. None must see him die — God was the alone witness. When his domestics next saw him, the foam was oozing from his mouth; his white hair was dabbled in blood; the staff which his hand had but lately grasped was dented by his teeth — Boniface was dead.

To enter upon the history of the popes who succeeded him, or even to enumerate their acts of wickedness and assumption, would be a long and dreary task, and we shall not attempt it. We might fill pages with descriptions of their quarrels with the cardinals, their cruelties, their extortions, their insolence to princes, their hypocrisies: we might shew how one was a miser, another a perjurer, another a murderer, another an adulterer, and so exhaust the reader with the narrative of their crimes, but we have already written enough on this subject. It must now be sufficiently clear to all that a reformation of some kind was a necessity, as society could not much longer hold together as it was. This was the fact; and we shall presently see that a reformation did take place, though a work so tremendous was not to be accomplished in a moment. The dark night of the Middle Ages was indeed to give place to day; but there must be the gradual coming on of dawn first, during which the light would be but partially seen, and the beams would have to struggle through reluctant vapours: and there must be the *morning star* to herald the approach of the day's great ruler, and to cheer the anxious watcher with its ray.

So it happened. And when the confusion was greatest, and the darkness deepest, day began to dawn; and John Wickliffe, the Morning Star of the Reformation, appeared above the spiritual horizon.

Chapter 18.
The Dawn of the Reformation.
A.D. 1324-1450.

It is believed that Wickliffe was born in the neighbourhood of Richmond in Yorkshire, about the year 1324. The poverty of his parents, who seemed to have belonged to the peasant class, did not hinder him, at a proper age, from entering the University of Oxford; where he neglected no opportunity of obtaining knowledge, and soon won

golden opinions from his tutor, the pious and learned Thomas Bradwardine. As a student of Merton College,* he acquired not only a perfect knowledge of the civil, the canon, and the municipal law, but of the ruin of man's nature as taught in scripture, of the worthlessness of human merit in the matter of salvation, and of the freeness of divine grace, by which a man could be justified apart from the works of the law. He is said to have studied the works of Grostete, by the advice of his tutor, and derived therefrom the idea that the pope is Antichrist.

{*Some very recent writers give *Balliol* College, and state that the John Wyklif of Merton College was another person, who was nominated to the vicarage of Mayfield in the year 1361. This is probably correct, for in that year Wickliffe, the reformer, was master of Balliol, and the Bursar's Rolls, of Queen's College, prove his residence there.}

His attacks upon the mendicant orders, who enticed away the students of the university to their monasteries, first brought him into notice at Oxford; and he wrote some spirited papers on the subject, entitled "Against able beggary," "Against idle beggary," and on "The poverty of Christ." He was now a professor at the University, but this did not cripple him in his service to the Lord; and on Sundays he laid aside the professor's gown, and preached the simple gospel to the people in their own language.

The fame of his preaching soon spread Rome-wards, and the Mendicants, whose influence was being steadily undermined by his teaching, were not slow to acquaint the pope with their grievances. This they managed in a most effectual way, by extracting from Wickliffe's writings nineteen articles of a questionable character, which they forwarded with their letters; and as most of these articles combated, in very plain language, the temporal pretensions of the pope, the result may be anticipated. Nine of the obnoxious extracts were quickly condemned as heresies, and the rest were declared erroneous; and bulls were at once dispatched to England, commanding that the daring heresiarch should be brought to trial for his opinions. This was the beginning of the conflict: but Rome, as usual, had over-reached herself.

In attacking the reformer she had not attacked a man without friends, for Wickliffe was a favourite with all classes. The common people liked him, because he took an interest in their state, and explained the scriptures to them in a language they could understand; the nobles favoured him, because he supported them in their resistance to the clergy; and at Oxford he was not less beloved for his piety than he was venerated for his learning.

In the month of February, and in the year 1377, the Convocation commenced its sittings in St. Paul's Cathedral; and thither Wickliffe proceeded, attended by his friends, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Lord Percy, Marshal of England. They feared that Wicklife would not be heard with impartiality if he went alone, perhaps would be made the victim of foul play; and when the trial commenced, the conduct of Courtenay,* bishop of London, shewed that there was some ground for their fears.

{*A son of the Earl of Devon.}

The press of people inside the cathedral was very great, and the marshal had to use his authority in order to make a way to the presence of the judges. This greatly incensed the bishop, and a stormy scene ensued. "If I had known, my lord," said he, "that you claimed to be master in this church, I would have taken measures to prevent your entrance." The Duke of Lancaster, who at this time was regent of the kingdom for the young king Richard II., approved of the marshal's act, and observed that it was "necessary to maintain order in spite of the bishops." Courtenay with difficulty concealed his vexation, but when the marshal presently demanded a chair for Wickliffe, he angrily exclaimed, "He must not sit down; criminals stand before their judges." High words again ensued on both sides, Wickliffe alone remaining silent: the people meanwhile caught the spirit of their leaders, and began to express their own opinions in acts of open violence. To prolong the sitting under such circumstances was impossible; the court was therefore dismissed, and the reformer withdrew from the cathedral under the powerful escort of the Duke of Lancaster.

For a time he was allowed to rest, and Rome became engaged in a more alarming controversy nearer home, which demanded all her attention. The cause of this controversy was the election of a rival pope at Findi, in Naples. The Roman pontiff, Urban VI., had so disgusted his cardinals by his coarseness and severity, that they had found it expedient to transfer their allegiance to another, and had invested with the dignity Robert, Count of Geneva. This man, after being duly elected at Findi, had taken up his residence at Avignon, in France, under the title of Clement VII.; and here he was acknowledged as pope by Scotland, Spain, France, Sicily, and Cyprus. The rest of Europe still looked up to Urban as the legitimate successor of St. Peter.

As might be expected, this remarkable schism still further inflamed the zeal of Wickliffe against the papacy, and gave him new motives for attacking it. "Trust we in the help of Christ," he exclaimed, "for He hath begun already to help us graciously, in that He hath cloven the head of Antichrist, and made the two parts fight against each other." He had already declared, "The pope is Antichrist, the proud worldly priest of Rome, and the most cursed of clippers and purse-carvers;" and now he did not scruple

to affirm that a fit moment had arrived for "extinguishing the evil entirely." But in this he was anticipating the future by nearly two centuries; and on being cited a second time to appear before his accusers, he found that many of his friends had deserted him on account of his extreme views, and among them the powerful Duke of Lancaster. *But God had not deserted him;* and the falling off of his earthly friends gave him but little concern. Perhaps, in his former trial he had unwittingly been "making flesh his arm;" but it was not so now, and he went to the council unattended. Yet many of the people, thinking he would surely be devoured in such a den of lions, made their way into the chapel, intending to rescue him should there be any symptoms of treachery.

The prelates had gone to the council with confident and proud looks, fully expecting an easy victory; but, observing these popular manifestations they became uneasy; and when, at the commencement of the proceedings they received a message from the young king's mother forbidding them to proceed to "any definite sentence respecting the doctrine and conduct of Wickliffe," their discomfiture was complete. Walsingham, the papal advocate on that occasion, thus refers to the event: "The bishops who had professed themselves determined to do their duty in spite of threats and promises, and even at the hazard of their lives, were as reeds shaken by the wind, and became so intimidated during the examination of the apostate that their speeches were as soft as oil, to the public loss of their dignity, and the damage of the whole church. And when Clifford pompously delivered his message, they were so overcome with fear, that you would have thought them to be as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs."

Thus, through God's mercy, Wickliffe again escaped from the toils of his persecutors, and was enabled, shortly after, to engage upon his great work, the translation of the Bible into the vernacular. He had long ago expressed a wish that his countrymen might "rede in Englysche the gospel of Crist's lyf;" and there was now every probability that his wish would be gratified. Probability gave place to certainty before many months had passed away, and, as the work drew near its close, the brave reformer began to feel that his mission on earth was almost done. The year 1383 saw his task completed; and although the bishops tried hard to get the version suppressed by Act of Parliament, their efforts failed; and it was soon widely circulated throughout the kingdom. But Wickliffe did not live to see the opposition of the bishops. On the 31st of December, 1384, after an agitated career of sixty years, he entered into his eternal rest: and though his enemies had hoped, and his friends, had expected, that he would perish by the hand of man, God had ordained otherwise, and he died peacefully in his bed at Lutterworth. Yet though the agents of Rome were thus cheated of their

expected prey, his body was afterwards exhumed and burnt, and the ashes thrown into a neighbouring brook. "The brook," says Fuller, "did convey his ashes into Avon; Avon into Severn; Severn into the narrow seas; they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wickliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all the world over."

At the time of Wickliffe's death his followers had become very numerous, and might be found among all classes of the community. At Oxford they seem to have been in the majority, and when the chancellor of the university, Dr. Rigge, was commanded to silence all who favoured the reformer, he replied that he "durst not do it for fear of death." All who publicly adopted Wickliffe's views were called Lollards, but it is certain that Christians of that name existed in considerable numbers, even before Wickliffe appeared upon the scene. The origin of the name is uncertain, but some have traced it to the German word *lollen,* to sing; the question however is of small importance. Their doctrines and opinions were in every way similar to those of the reformer, and they seem to have been as indefatigable in disseminating them. Like Wickliffe, they taught that "the gospel of Jesus Christ is the only source of true religion, that there is nothing in the gospel to shew that Christ established the mass; that the substances of bread and wine remain after consecration; that those who enter monasteries only render themselves so much the more incapable of observing God's commands; and that penance, confession, and extreme unction are not needful, and have little foundation in scripture."

To think that Rome could allow such incorrigible heretics to exist unmolested, would be to suppose her capable of tolerance and mercy; qualities which she had never exhibited, and which she is doubtless incapable of possessing. This was not her way; and though the Lollards were not immediately visited with her anger, it was only because she lacked the means to make it sufficiently effective. The accession of Henry IV., however, afforded the opportunity for which she waited. The priests and friars had been busily engaged meanwhile, circulating lying reports of the revolutionary practices of the Lollards, and had so successfully worked upon the fears of the nation, that when, in the year 1400, the new king issued a royal edict for the burning of the heretics, Parliament was ready to sanction it. The decree ordained that, "on a high place, in public, before the face of the people, the incorrigible heretic is to be burnt alive;" and by this decree, burning for heresy became a statute law in England.

To speak of all the martyrdoms which belong to this persecution would be to write a martyrology, and that would be travelling far beyond our limitations. William Sautree

has the honour of being the first victim under the new law. After him came John Badby, an artisan of Worcester, whose martyrdom was witnessed by the young Prince of Wales — afterwards Henry V. It is recorded of this martyr, that when the pile had been lighted he was heard to cry for mercy, and Henry ordered him to be extricated from the flames. On being brought before him the prince asked, "Will you forsake heresy, and conform to the faith of holy mother church? If you will, you shall have a yearly maintenance out of the king's treasury." But John Badby had been appealing to the mercy of God and not of man; and his steadfastness remained unshaken by this new test. He was accordingly consigned a second time to the flames.

The Lollards continuing to increase, archbishop Arundel called together a synod in the year 1413, in order to arrange further measures for their suppression; and among those marked out for condemnation was Sir John Oldcastle, by marriage Lord Cobham, who had long been a diligent student of Wickliffe's works. He was described as "a principal favourer, receiver, and maintainer of the people called Lollards," and among the crimes that were laid against him were those of "setting up preachers whom the bishops had not licensed; and of holding and teaching opinions of the sacraments, images, pilgrimages, etc., repugnant to the determinations of the church of Rome." Of course he was looked upon as a dangerous heretic one who was not safe to roam at large; and as soon as arrangements could be conveniently made, he was arrested by the king's command, and committed to the Tower.

On being brought before the Consistory, in the chapter house of St. Paul's, archbishop Arundel tried to win him back to "holy mother church" by many blandishments and fair speeches; but the knight was not to be moved from his convictions by the soft words of the prelate. The archbishop then changed his manner, and said sternly, "Sir John, beware what you do. For if you answer not clearly to these things (especially at the time appointed you only for that purpose) the law of the holy church is, That compelled once by a judge, we may openly proclaim you a heretic." "Do as ye think best," returned Sir John, stoutly, "for I am at a point!" As the archbishop could get no retractation from him on that day, he was remanded to the Tower till the following Monday, when a large assembly was present to witness his condemnation. We do not say *trial,* as that would suppose the impartiality of the judges who came to the council with the sentence written. The examination on this occasion was held at the Dominican Convent, in the ward of Ludgate, and in place of the two or three bishops who had attended at the former examination, there was an imposing concourse of canonists and friars, prelates and doctors, with the archbishop at their head.

Arundel opened the proceedings by making a conditional offer of absolution and mercy to the prisoner, which he promptly declined. "Nay, forsooth," were his words, "for I never yet trespassed against you." The stout old soldier then fell upon his knees in the sight of all, and exclaimed with tears, "I shrive me here unto Thee, my eternal, living God, that in my youth I offended Thee, O Lord, most grievously in pride, wrath and gluttony, in covetousness and lechery! Many men have I hurt in mine anger, and done many other horrible sins! Good Lord, I ask Thy mercy!" With that he rose to his feet, and addressed the spectators in a loud voice. "Lo! good people," said he, "for the breaking of God's law and His commandments they never yet cursed me. But for their own laws and traditions, most cruelly do they handle both me and other men. And, therefore, both they and their laws, by the promise of God, shall utterly be destroyed."

To attempt to subdue the spirit of the bold speaker was clearly a vain task; and the subsequent speeches of the knight, far from offering any hopes of retractation, were full of the most indignant denunciations of the whole system of popery. "Ye are no part of Christ's holy church," he exclaimed, addressing the whole body of ecclesiastics, "as your open deeds do show: but ye are very Antichrists, openly set against His holy law and will. The laws ye have made are nothing to His glory, but only for your vain glory and abominable covetousness." The prior of the Carmelites attempted to take him to task for his language, and said, "Rash judgment and right judgment are all one with you. So swift judges always are the learned scholars of Wickliffe." But the knight answered readily, "It is well sophistered of you, forsooth! Preposterous are your judgments evermore. And as for that virtuous man Wickliffe, I shall say here, both before God and man, that before I knew that despised doctrine of his, I never abstained from sin. But since I learned therein to fear my Lord God, it hath otherwise, I trust, been with me. So much grace could I never find in all your glorious instructions!" The prior was weak enough to attempt another sally, and satirically observed, that it had not been well in his own case, had he possessed no grace to amend his life, till he heard the devil preach. The knight retorted by reminding the Carmelite that the Pharisees, of old, ascribed the miracles of Christ to Beelzebub and His doctrines to the devil. Then, turning to his judges, he demanded by what authority they were thus sitting in judgment on a Christian man. "No ground have ye in all the scriptures," said he, "so lordly to take it upon you, but in Annas and Caiaphas, which sat thus upon Christ, and upon His apostles after His ascension." Hereupon a lawyer remarked that Christ judged Judas; but Sir John corrected him by saying that "Judas judged himself." "Indeed," he continued, "Christ said, 'Woe unto him' for that covetous act of his, as He doth yet unto many of you; for since that venom was shed into the church, ye never followed Christ." When asked by the archbishop what he meant by *that venom,* he

replied, "Your possessions and lordships; for then cried an angel in the air, as your own chronicles mention, 'Woe! woe! woe! this day is venom shed in the church of God!' Since that time, one pope hath put down another, one hath poisoned another, one hath cursed another, and one hath slain another, and done much more mischief, as all the chronicles tell. Let all men consider well this, that Christ was meek and merciful; the pope is proud and a tyrant; Christ was poor and forgave; the pope is rich, and a malicious manslayer, as his daily acts do prove him. Rome is the very nest of Antichrist, and out of that nest cometh all his disciples, of whom prelates, priests and monks are the body, and these piled friars are the tail!"

In this way the examination proceeded, the prisoner having apparently changed places with his judges, till the archbishop thought proper to close the discussion by reading the form of condemnation. In this the knight was described as a "most pernicious and detestable heretic," worthy only of death, and a sentence in accordance with these views was forthwith pronounced upon him. In addition to this he was excommunicated and accursed, and a prohibition was read forbidding any one to supply the atrocious malefactor with food or shelter, or to offer him any kind of assistance whatsoever. This being settled to the satisfaction of the court, the knight firmly declared his determination to stand to his convictions to the last, and expressed his willingness to suffer in so good a cause: then, turning to the people, he exclaimed, "Good Christian people, for God's love be well aware of these men, for they will else beguile you, and lead you blindling into hell with themselves. For Christ saith plainly unto you, 'If one blind man leadeth another, they are like both to fall into the ditch!'" After that he fell upon his knees, and offered up this prayer, "Lord God eternal! I beseech Thee of Thy great mercy's sake, to forgive my pursuers, if it be Thy blessed will!" He was then remanded a second time to the Tower.

Of his escape from prison, and his four years of hiding in Wales, we cannot here speak, nor of the trumped-up charge of conspiracy against the Lollards, of which he was pointed out as the leader. His martyrdom was only postponed by his escape, and when, in the year 1418, he again fell into the hands of his enemies, the sentence was carried out with unexampled cruelties. He was taken through London to St. Giles's with his hands pinioned, and then, after being suspended in chains, was roasted over a slow fire.

From this time forth, for nearly a century, the flames of persecution were kept burning in England, and the search for heretics was conducted with the usual rigour: but God had decreed that the work of His servants should go on, and who could stay His hand? The wretched creatures of Rome might thin the little band of Christians, by their fires,

and tortures, and imprisonments (and tribulation was the expected portion of the faithful disciple), but they could not destroy the work which God had begun. His word — that incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth for ever — was in the hands of the people, and so long as this power was among them, the arm of Rome was impotent, and souls would be born again for glory.

Chapter 19.
The Reformers Before the Reformation.
A.D. 1400-1500.

Whilst the Lollards were being persecuted in England, a revival work was springing up in another part of Europe, to which we would now draw the reader's attention. This was in Bohemia; and the chief leader in the movement was the martyr-reformer, John Huss.

There is little doubt that the writings of Wickliffe kindled the first sparks of this revival; and the circumstances which led to it, on which, however, we can only linger for a moment, are thus given. The queen of Richard II. of England was a Bohemian princess, the sister of Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia. She was a woman of piety, and a student of the Scriptures; facts which may be learnt from the persecuting archbishop Arundel, who affirms that, "although she was a stranger, yet she constantly studied the four gospels in English, with the expositions of the doctors; and in the study of these, and the perusal of godly books, she was more diligent than the prelates themselves, although their office and calling required it." On the death of her husband she returned to Bohemia, taking with her the reformer's works.

After this, a learned Bohemian of Prague, named Jerome, visited England, and became acquainted with several of the Lollards, whose teachings he imbibed. He afterwards returned to his own city, and taught the new doctrines with earnestness and success.

At a still later period (A.D. 1404), two Englishmen of Canterbury visited Prague, and uttered antipapal sentiments. "They took up their abode in the suburbs of the Bohemian capital, in the house of one Luke Welensky, and, by his consent, painted on the walls of their room two pictures; one, the history of Christ's passion, the other, the pomp of the papal court. The meaning of the pictorial antithesis was plain enough: people ran to see the rude drawings, and Huss (at that time a preacher at the Bethlehem chapel, and withal dean of the Philosophical faculty) referred to them in his sermons."

From an early period Huss had shewn his sympathy with the Wickliffe movement. He was a man of profound learning, a clear thinker, and a skilful dialectician: in

appearance the student rather than the priest, his figure being tall and spare, his cheeks pale, and his eyes grey and thoughtful. In manner he was dignified and grave; in morals austere and irreproachable. Like Wickliffe he always preached to the people in their native tongue, and like him was stern and emphatic in his exposure of prevailing abuses; but being a favourite at court, he was not at first molested. He cherished and revered the memory of the English reformer; and in his chapel of Bethlehem was frequently heard to pray that his soul might be with Wickliffe's after its departure.

The great schism in papal Christendom was still the topic of discussion when Huss was the preacher at Bethlehem Chapel and the popular rector of the University; and it was not likely he would let it pass without some words of censure. Yet his zeal on this subject did him but little harm, as the prohibitory decrees which were issued against him were disregarded by those who should have seen them carried out. It was circumstances of another kind, which made him a heretic in the sight of Rome, and one of too deep a dye for hope or pardon.

In the year 1411 the pope of Rome, John XXIII., a man of dissolute life and military habits, proclaimed a crusade against Ladislaus, King of Naples, and offered the usual indulgences to all who joined the papal army. Huss was justly indignant that the cross of Christ should be degraded to such unchristian ends, and preached against the crusade. The people, inflamed by his eloquence, refused to listen to the papal missionaries, and interrupted their harangues by angry exclamations. This was a treatment to which they had not been accustomed, and to which they were not likely to submit in silence. To strike at the leader of the movement, however, would have been too perilous and precipitate a measure, nor would it have been wise, in the then agitated state of the people, to have taken public steps for their own protection. They therefore procured the *secret* arrest of three of the ringleaders, who, having been thrown into prison by order of the Senate, were hurriedly and privately executed. But the blood of the murdered men was seen oozing through the prison grating, and their fate was thus made known to their friends. This was the signal for a general rising, and the people rushed in a body to the town-house, which they took by storm. Breaking open the prison, they possessed themselves of the headless trunks of the victims, and bore them to a place of sepulture with martyr honours. Huss, meanwhile foreseeing the consequences to himself of this rash and lawless act, wisely withdrew from the city, and continued his preaching in places where he was more safe. A summons from the pope to answer for his conduct before the tribunal of the Vatican was disregarded, and for this was he excommunicated; but he went on preaching just the same, and the numbers of his converts and sympathisers increased daily.

Meanwhile, a council of prelates and others had been convened at Constance, an imperial city on the German side of the Alps, with the twofold purpose of healing the great schism, and of suppressing the heresies of Wickliffe; and in due course Huss received a summons to appear before it. We might fill several pages with accounts of the secret abominations and outspoken blasphemies of the members of this council, but the details are too revolting: we shall only refer to them because of their connection with John Huss, and their perfidious treatment of that truly noble man.

When the Bohemian reformer had received his citation to appear at Constance, he did not hesitate to obey. He had declined to appear at Rome because he knew the faithlessness of the pope; but with the assembly at Constance the case was different. The prelates, in his idea, were the august representatives of that true church to which he belonged, and he knew that one of the purposes for which the council had been convened was identical with that which was often nearest his own heart when preaching. Yet though he had some confidence in placing himself in its power, he felt that a safe-conduct from the German emperor* might be a useful protection, and he procured one. To those unacquainted with the nature of a safe-conduct we may remark, that it was a passport granted by some person in authority, empowering the holder to go to and from a certain place without molestation. The wording of the Emperor Sigismund's safe-conduct was as follows: "You shall let John Huss pass, stop, stay, and return freely without any hindrance whatever:" and with this in his possession the reformer started on his journey.

{*Sigismund.}

And now mark the perfidy of Rome. No sooner had the reformer put his foot in Constance than he was seized and thrown into prison on a charge of heresy. That he held a safe-conduct from the emperor was well known to the council; but this was a difficulty easily removed, and they passed a decree that no faith should be kept with heretics. The people were amazed when they heard of the reformer's arrest, and their indignant clamours reached the emperor from Bohemia. He had not yet arrived in Constance, and at first seemed disposed to side with the people in condemning the treachery of the council — he even talked of breaking open the prison in which the reformer was confined: but when he reached the city, the specious arguments of the priests overcame his sounder judgment, and he suffered them to do their will with the prisoner.

The dungeon in which Huss had been confined was damp and fetid, and his food was stinted and unwholesome: by this treatment they thought to reduce his strength, and

make him pliant in their hands. Their efforts were so far successful that the reformer became dangerously ill.

Early in June (A.D. 1415), and before he was thoroughly recovered, his public trial commenced; but though he was still so weak, he was forbidden to employ counsel, because, said his enemies, a heretic could not be defended. There were two charges preferred against him; the first, that of imbibing the doctrines of Wickliffe; the second, that of being "infected with the leprosy of the Vaudois." When called upon for his answer to the first charge he appealed to the authority of scripture, but his voice was immediately drowned in a tumult of scorn and derision. To attempt a defence under such circumstances was impossible; and when the next question was put he remained silent. Yet even this was made to militate against him, and his silence was received as a tacit acknowledgment of his guilt. When he again spoke his voice was again lost in the general uproar. At last the excitement became so great that it was found impossible to proceed with the trial; and the assembly was adjourned.

On the second day the emperor appeared in person to preserve order; and on this occasion there seems to have been a greater show of decency, though the prelates failed to preserve their composure to the end. When, during the course of examination, Huss admitted that he had said that "Wickliffe was a true believer, that his soul was now in heaven, and that he could not wish his own soul more safe than Wickliffe's," the holy fathers expressed their merriment in a burst of laughter. On the third day the trial was concluded, and Huss was remanded to prison pending the delivery of his sentence.

Throughout the trial there seems to have been one friend who clung to him, and that with an energy which belongs only to a very deep affection: this friend was a Bohemian knight, John of Chlum. He was with him on each occasion in court, and he attended him throughout his painful and tedious imprisonment; though not without considerable risk to his own person. "My dear master," he said when the third day of the trial was over, "I am unlettered, and consequently unfit to counsel one so enlightened as you. Nevertheless, if you are secretly conscious of any of those errors which have been publicly imputed to you, I do entreat you not to feel any shame in retracting it; but if on the contrary, you are convinced of your innocence, I am so far from advising you to say anything against your conscience, that I rather exhort you to endure every form of torture than to renounce anything which you hold to be true." Huss was deeply moved by the earnest and loving counsel of his friend, and told him with tears that God knew how willingly he would retract on oath any statement which he had made contrary to the holy scriptures. A month elapsed, and during that time

the faithful knight seems to have been constantly with him proving himself a faithful disciple and true friend to the last. "Oh, what a comfort to me," said Huss, "to see that this nobleman did not disdain to stretch out his arm to a poor heretic in irons, whom all the world, as it were, had forsaken."

On the 6th of July 1415, he stood before the council for the last time; and received his sentence. The sitting was held in the cathedral, and Huss was detained in the porch while mass was celebrated, as a heretic could not be permitted in the church during the ceremony. The bishop of Lodi preached the sermon, and chose for his text, "That the body of sin might be destroyed." His remarks were a fierce tirade against the heresies of Huss, who, he said, was "as bad as Arius and worse than Sabellius." The articles of accusation were then read, and sentence was pronounced. During the reading of the articles, Huss made several attempts to speak, but was prevented: and when he afterwards offered up a prayer for his enemies, and asked that God would forgive their injustice, his words were treated with derision. The martyr, strong in his integrity, then lifted up his hands and exclaimed, "Behold, most gracious Saviour, how the council condemns as an error what Thou hast prescribed and practised, when, overborne by enemies, Thou committedst Thy cause to God Thy Father, leaving us this example, that when we are oppressed we may have recourse to the judgment of God." The fervour of his eloquence had compelled attention, and during his few following remarks his enemies preserved an uneasy silence. Sigismund alone seemed undisturbed, but his discomfiture was only delayed. Suddenly lifting his eyes from the assembled prelates, Huss fixed them steadily on the emperor. "I came to this council," said he, in a firm, clear voice, "under the public faith of the emperor." Then a deep blush was seen to pass over the emperor's face: and Huss had finished speaking.

He was now stripped of his priestly garments, and his head crowned with a paper mitre, on which were painted three devils. The sacramental cup, which had been meanwhile placed in his hands, was then taken from him with these words, "Accursed Judas, who, having forsaken the counsel of peace, art entered into that of the Jews, we take this holy cup from thee in which is the blood of Jesus Christ." "Nay," said Huss in a loud voice, "I trust, in the mercy of God, I shall drink of it this day in His kingdom." The bishops retorted, "We devote thy soul to the infernal demons." "And I," said Huss, "commit my spirit into Thy hands, O Lord Jesus Christ; unto Thee, I commend my soul which Thou hast redeemed."

Having been thus degraded from the priestly office, he was handed over to the emperor, as representing the secular power. "It is thy glorious office," said the bishop of Lodi, "to destroy heresies and schisms, especially this obstinate heretic;" and the

emperor proceeded to his "glorious office" without delay. The place of martyrdom was not far distant, and thither Huss was immediately taken, under the escort of the elector Palatine and eight hundred horse. As he walked along his face shone with joy, and the people who lined the way were astonished at his pious ejaculations. "What this man has done," they said, "we know not; but we hear him offering up most excellent prayers to God." On arriving at the place of execution he was not allowed to address the people, but his prayer as he was being chained to the stake could not escape their ears. "Lord Jesus," he exclaimed, "I humbly suffer this cruel death for Thy sake, and I pray Thee to forgive all my enemies." At the last moment an attempt was made to induce him to sign a recantation, but in vain. "What I have written and taught," he said, "was in order to rescue souls from the power of the devil, and to deliver them from the tyranny of sin; and I do gladly seal what I have written and taught with my blood." The elector, who had exerted this last endeavour, now rode away from the spot, and the pile was lighted. But the martyr's sufferings were speedily terminated; and while he was yet calling upon God, his head sank upon his breast, and he was suffocated in a rising cloud of smoke. Thus John Huss, having witnessed the good confession, obtained the martyr's crown, and departed "to be with Christ, which is far better."

His friend and fellow-labourer, Jerome of Prague, followed him in a little while. He was a man of greater learning, but not of greater endurance. Indeed, the tortures to which he was subjected during a barbarous imprisonment of nearly a year, so crushed his spirit that he was induced to sign a recantation. But the victory of his enemies did not last, and the Lord having graciously restored his soul, he quickly recanted his recantation. It is worthy of notice, that in spite of all the sufferings through which he passed at this time, his memory remained clear, and his intellect unimpaired, so that at his final trial (though he had been without books and paper, in a loathsome dungeon, for upwards of 340 days) his references to authorities, and frequent quotations were always prompt and correct; and his eloquence was such as to excite the admiration even of his enemies. "It was amazing," wrote the pope's secretary Poggius, "to hear with what force of expression, fluency of language, and excellent reasoning, he answered his adversaries; nor was I less struck with the gracefulness of his manner, the dignity of his action, and the firmness and constancy of his whole behaviour. It grieved me to think so great a man was labouring under so atrocious an accusation. Whether this accusation be just or not, God knows: I make no inquiry into the merits of the case; I submit to those who know more of it than I do."

It was in the May of the year 1416 that Jerome was brought up for his final audience. He did not forget to reproach his adversaries with the fact, that he had been confined for

over eleven months in prison, where he had been cramped with irons, poisoned with dirt and stench, and pinched with the want of necessaries. "And during this time," said he, "ye gave my enemies at all times a favourable hearing, but refused to hear me for a single hour." He then referred with shame to his retractation; and his sorrowful confession was in itself a testimony. "I confess and tremble when I think of it," he said, "that through fear of punishment by fire, I basely consented, against my conscience, to condemn the doctrine of Wickliffe and Huss. This sinful retractation I now fully retract, and am resolved to maintain the tenets of these men to death, believing them to be the true and pure doctrines of the gospel, even as their lives were blameless and holy."

The Assembly behaved no better to their new victim than they had behaved to Huss; and their conduct is described by one of their own number as "unruly and indecent." Yet Jerome never lost his presence of mind, or suffered himself to be discomfited by their clamour and ridicule. He reminded them that his case was not an isolated one; that others, worthier than he, had been borne down by false witnesses and unjustly condemned. Joseph and Isaiah, Daniel and John the Baptist, yea, even his Divine Master, had been arraigned before councils, and suffered wrongfully at the hands of wicked men. "Ye have determined to condemn me unjustly," he cried, "but after my death I shall leave a sting in your consciences, and a worm that will never die. I appeal to the Sovereign Judge of all the earth, in whose presence ye must appear to answer me."

Language like this was more than sufficient to procure his speedy condemnation; but death had lost all terror for him now. When the trying moment drew near, his willingness to suffer was shewn by his cheerful countenance; and he went to the place of his martyrdom singing hymns of joy. In this he was like his friend and forerunner; and the simile did not escape the notice of a Roman Catholic historian (Aeneas Sylvius) who afterwards became pope.* "They went to the stake," says this writer, "as to a banquet: not a word fell from them which discovered the least timidity; they sung hymns in the flames, to the last gasp, without ceasing."

{*As Pius II.}

It is worthy of notice that John XXIII., the pope who summoned the council which condemned these noble martyrs, was afterwards deposed for his wickedness by the same council. This was the one worthy act they preformed, although, indeed, little credit is due to them, as the step was taken from interested motives.

The martyrdom of Huss and Jerome, by which they hoped to purge Europe of the heresies of Wickliffe, not only left upon their consciences the awful reproach of a double murder, but, looked at from the side of Rome's interests, was a fatal mistake. Instead of crushing by that means what they were pleased to call a seductive and scandalous heresy, they inflamed the minds of the Bohemian people, and produced a civil war. Even before the death of Jerome, several noblemen and other eminent persons in Bohemia had sent an indignant protest to the Council of Constance, in which they accused them of unrighteousness and cruelty, and expressed their determination to sacrifice their lives for the defence of the gospel of Christ, and of His faithful preachers. Their letter, however, had been contemptuously burnt by the assembled prelates; and the indifference of these holy fathers had been afterwards more insultingly shewn by the ruthless murder of their second victim. Their subsequent edicts of persecution did not help to soothe the popular mind, and when, in the year 1419, a Hussite minister was seized, and burnt, under circumstances of great cruelty,* the exasperated people flew to arms; and, headed by the king's chamberlain, a one-eyed nobleman named Zisca, carried all before them.

{*His hands were bored through with a sword, and the holes were then threaded with a piece of rope, by which he was confined to the stake at which he suffered.}

A large and well-trained army was brought against them by the emperor Sigismund, but it was scattered like chaff before the threshing-flails of the Bohemian peasants, who, in truth, had scarcely any other weapons with which to fight their battles. The pope's legate, Cardinal Julian, was present at several of these encounters, and was amazed when he saw the flower of the emperor's army — princes renowned for their bravery, and veterans of European fame — retreating in disorder before the uncouth weapons of a handful of peasants — nay — sometimes even flying when no man pursued, possessed by some unaccountable panic. On one of these occasions he burst into tears, and exclaimed, "Alas! it is not the enemy, but our sins which put us to flight!" Several popish writers have confessed their inability to account for the wonderful success of these Christian warriors, and one of them affirms, that the "Bohemians proved themselves a brave people; for though the emperor Sigismund led nearly half Europe in arms against them, he was not able to reduce them." Melanchthon, a reformer of the next century, ascribed their victories to miraculous agency, and believed that the angels of God accompanied them on their expeditions, and discomfited their enemies.

On the death of Zisca in the year 1424, efforts were made to bring the war to a conclusion, and the Bohemians were invited to lay their ultimatum before a

convocation at Basle. But the Hussites were not all so favourable to the proposed treaty; and as there had already been some grave differences of opinion among them, they separated into two parties. The one, demanding only that the cup should be restored to the laity, was easily cajoled into returning to the bosom of the church; and the pope promised to yield to the dissentients the point insisted upon: though, as soon as it was safe to do so, he violated his pledge. These were called the Calixtines, from the Greek *kalyx,* a cup. The other party, holding the doctrines of Huss in their entirety, refused to sign the compact, and were now exposed to persecution from their old friends in addition to that of Rome. They were known by the appellation of "Taborites," because they met for worship on a certain hill, which they called Mount Tabor. Meanwhile, an increased acquaintance with the word of God had taught the Taborites that their appeal to carnal weapons was contrary to the expressed mind and will of God; and when the persecution was revived, instead of returning to their threshing-flails and hoes, they appealed to no other weapon than "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

At length the severity of their sufferings excited the pity of the archbishop of Prague, who had formerly been a prominent Calixtine; and by his influence they were removed to the lordship of Lititz, on the confines of Moravia and Silesia; where for a time they were free from persecution, and were enabled to found a colony. Some of their brethren from the Calixtines now rejoined them, together with several citizens of Prague and not a few of the nobility: and to commemorate the re-union they took the name of *Unitas Fratrum* or the "United Brethren." This was in the year 1451.

Scarcely, however, had they been settled in their new quarters a twelvemonth, when they were again harassed by the merciless agents of Rome. A baseless charge of sedition was made the ground of this new persecution, and all the patience and all the faith of the Moravian Brethren was now called into practice. The cruelty of the inquisitors was worthy of their office; and hundreds of the guiltless and unresisting Moravians were seized by their orders and thrust into prison. Some were starved to death, others were racked, others mutilated, others burnt at the stake; while those who managed to escape, were forced to take up their abode in caverns and forests, where their food was the game they procured by hunting, and the wild berries which the bushes afforded. When they left their hidings they went in single file, each treading in the steps of the other, and the last carrying a branch with which to obliterate the marks of their feet; and thus they secured themselves against detection. When night came on they kindled their fires, which they dared not do in the day-time lest the rising smoke should betray them, and by the flickering glare of these midnight fires they held their pious meetings, and read their Bibles together. In the year 1470 they completed a

translation of the Bible in the Bohemian language; and as printing from metal blocks had now come into general use on the Continent, through the efforts of the celebrated John Guttenberg, it was not long before the translation had gone through several editions. Thus one thing was helping on another, and, in spite of the efforts of Rome to mar and hinder, the way was being prepared for the approaching Reformation.

Of the three remaining links, which connect the chain of testimony with the period above referred to, we cannot speak at any length. The first of these was Jerome Savonarola, a Dominican monk, and the son of a physician at Ferrara. In early life he believed himself to be the subject of heavenly visions; by which he was led to enter the convent of Bologna, where his fastings and mortifications attracted the notice of his superiors. He was afterwards removed to St. Mark's convent at Florence; and here he rose to the dignity of prior; in which capacity he endeavoured to restore, as nearly as possible, the primitive simplicity of the monastic life. But it was his fame as a preacher of reform *outside* his convent, which made him a marked man at Rome his unsparing denunciations of the pope; his attacks on the vices of the clergy; his passionate laments over the spiritual deadness of the times. "The church," he said, "had once her golden priests and wooden chalices; but now the chalices are gold and the priests wooden; for the outward splendour of religion has been hurtful to spirituality." The pope tried to silence the great preacher by the offer of a cardinal's hat, but a cardinal's hat had no attractions for Savonarola. He received the offer with indignation, and declared that the only red hat which he coveted was one that should be dyed with the blood of martyrdom.

At length he was seized and thrown into prison. Here he improved his time by reflection and prayer, and wrote a spiritual meditation on Psalm 31, in which he described the inward wrestlings of the converted man. After being cruelly tortured by order of the Inquisition, the order for his condemnation was signed by the same pope who would have made him a cardinal, and he was burnt at the stake in the year 1499.

The second of the three connecting links was John of Wesalia, a famous doctor of divinity of Erfurt. This devoted man was much harassed in his old age by the popish inquisitors, who confined his weak limbs in iron fetters, and subjected him to many indignities. He taught that salvation was by grace alone, that pilgrimages, fasts, extreme unction, etc., were of no profit to the soul, and that the word of God is the only authority, in all matters of faith. Some of his opinions he was at length induced to withdraw; but the retractation had no effect in curbing the resentment of his enemies, and after languishing in prison a few months longer, he was mercifully released by death (A.D. 1479).

The third link was John Wesselus or Wessel, a friend of John of Wesalia, and sometimes mistaken for his friend. He was born at Groningen in Holland, about the year 1419, and obtained a European celebrity. Though he was unquestionably the greatest theologian of his age, he was never ordained, and hence was never associated with any ecclesiastical body. It was not an uncommon practice in his day to adopt the clerical character in order to evade persecution; and this explains a remark he once made, that "he was not afraid of the gallows and therefore had no need of the tonsure." When his friend Rovere, general of the Franciscans, was raised to the papal throne, the newly-elected pope asked him, was there any request he would like to make of him. "Yes," said Wessel, "I beg you to give me out of the Vatican library a Greek and Hebrew Bible." "You shall have those," was the reply, "but, foolish man, why do you not ask for a bishopric or something of that sort?" "For the best of reasons," said Wessel, "because I do not want such things."

Such was the spirit of the man who was to carry on the line of testimony — that "silver line of grace" as another has called it — which we have traced from the era of the apostles, and to connect it with the line of testimony which runs through the period of the Reformation. He does not seem to have been much persecuted in his life-time, although the whole tenor of his teaching was opposed to the ways and maxims of Rome. Luther, in the next century, expressed his surprise that the writings of Wessel should be so little known, adding that "the reason might be that he lived without blood and contention," for that was the only point of difference between them. He spoke of him as "a man of admirable genius and uncommonly large mind," who was evidently taught of God, and "did not receive his doctrines from men." "If I had read his works before," said Luther, "my enemies might have supposed that I learnt everything from Wesselus, such a perfect coincidence there is in our opinions. . . . . It is now impossible for me to doubt whether I am right in the points which I have inculcated, when I see so entire an agreement in sentiment, and almost the same words used by this eminent person, who lived in a different age, in a distant country, and in circumstances very unlike my own."

Wesselus died full of honours in his seventieth year, acknowledging with his latest breath the intense satisfaction of his soul in the fact, that "all he knew was Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

This was in the year 1489. Luther was then a lad six years of age. Thus the line of testimony was connected with the period of the great Reformation, and the chain of witnesses, thus far, had been preserved without a break.

Chapter 20.
Martin Luther and the German Reformation..
A.D. 1483-1522.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the doctrine of justification by faith had been almost lost sight of in the church; and this was the one great fact which made the Reformation a necessity. No sooner had the power of this truth been weakened in the souls of the faithful, than a doctrine of salvation by works had been introduced, and penances and outward mortifications had been substituted for that repentance toward God and inward sanctification which are the signs of true conversion. These works of penance, which began as early as the time of Tertullian were multiplied as years rolled on; until at length the superstition of the people could carry them no farther, and the darkness of the Middle Ages gave birth to the Flagellants.

These were a sect of fanatics which arose in the thirteenth century, and spread over a large part of Europe. They went about the streets in a half-naked condition, and flogged each other twice a day with scourges. The severity of their chastisements (which were supposed to atone not only for their own sins, but also for the sins of others) though at first exciting persecution, presently aroused the sympathies of the people, who began to turn away from the licentious priests, and to carry their sins and sorrows to the groaning flagellants. How to retain the influence of their usurped dominion was now the question with the priests, and "therefore," says D'AubignÃ©, "they invented the novel system of exchange, distinguished by the name of indulgences." For the payment of twenty, ten, or three sous, according to the rank and condition of the applicant, the benefit of a fast of seven weeks was granted, with proportionate amounts for longer terms: and so the disgraceful traffic began.

The pope was not slow to perceive the advantages that might be derived from so lucrative a system of exchange; and in due time Clement VII. advanced the startling dogma, that a belief in indulgences was a necessary article of faith. He asserted that one drop of Christ's blood had been sufficient to reconcile man to God; the rest was shed to ensure a sinking fund for the treasury of the church. Moreover, there was a balance of good works to the account of the saints, works which "they had finished over and above what was requisite for their own salvation," and these also became a marketable commodity. Nor were the indulgences of Rome confined to the living: they were carried beyond the grave, and the wailing souls in purgatory were supposed to be delivered by their means.

Then there were the indulgences belonging to the year of Jubilee, of which we have spoken in an earlier chapter,* indulgences which were granted to all who made

pilgrimages to Rome during the specified time. According to the bull of Boniface VIII., this Jubilee was to be celebrated once every hundred years; but the success of the first celebration had so excited the avarice of the popes that they had changed the interval to fifty years. This also, however, was found a weary while to wait, and an interval of thirty-three years was decided upon. But even thirty-three years was a long period the third of a century — and, before long, the figure was definitely fixed at twenty-five. Once every twenty-five years then, the plenary indulgence was granted; and at the same time the conditions of the indulgence were also modified, to suit the circumstances of all classes. A journey to Rome was declared no longer necessary, and the benefits might be procured of the intending pilgrim's own priest in his native town or village.

{*See Chapter 15.}

The sale of indulgences was of necessity a great encouragement to sin; and indeed, the more ignorant of the people could see nothing in the doctrine but a positive permission to do evil; while the priests, who profited so much the more by this distorted view of their doctrine, were in no haste to set the people right.

By *by whom* were these indulgences granted? It is interesting to note this. Who were the approved instruments in this strange work? Who were these valuers of sin — these disposers of indulgences? Surely men of approved morality and keen spiritual perception — alas! the delusion. We will sketch for the reader a picture which might be often seen during the period of which we write; and the answer will be found there.

Yonder is the market-place of a medival town, A man is crossing the open space on his way to the cathedral; and as he passes yonder group, the voices of the speakers sink lower, and they smile significantly at each other. The man seems half ashamed and returns their respectful salutations with an embarrassed air. Presently his form is lost among the gothic arches of the cathedral and the voices of the speakers grow loud again. Their conversation is drawing to a close, and one of them repeats with a laugh a familiar proverb, often quoted in those days, "Ah well, the priest will do what the devil would be ashamed to think of." But who is the man whose retreating figure we have watched as far as the cathedral porch? He is the most notorious debauchee of the town; a daring blasphemer and a reckless gambler; his concubines and children are supported out of the revenues of the church. But why this reverence towards him? Is he nothing more than we describe? Oh yes; he is a priest of Rome, and a notorious trafficker in indulgences.

This picture is not overdrawn, nor was the evil which it describes peculiar only to an isolated few; it was as widespread as the doctrines of Rome, by which, indeed, the corruption had been bred. Robert Bellarmine, a learned controversialist of this century, and withal, a Romish cardinal, acknowledges as much when he says, "For some years before the Lutheran and Calvinistic heresies were published, there was not any severity in ecclesiastical judicatories, any discipline with regard to morals, any knowledge of sacred literature, any reverence for divine things; there was scarcely any religion remaining."

Such then was the condition of the church at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Corrupt in doctrine — corrupt in practice — it was impossible that things should continue much longer as they were.

Nevertheless, Rome was boastful and self-confident, for she had few open enemies to trouble her. The Hussites had either been scattered by persecution, or gathered back into the fold of the church; and the testimony of the Vaudois Christians had been almost suppressed. But there was still a feeling of disaffection in the hearts of men of all classes, which the smoke of Rome's burnings could not stifle, or its deceitful promises allay. Kings and nobles, citizens and peasants, theologians and men of letters, politicians and soldiers, all had their ground of complaint, and were morally prepared for the work of the Reformation. Europe had roused from the long nightmare of the Middle Ages, and was now peering, though with dreamy eyes, through the haze of a lingering superstition in quest of light. An important change a re-action nay, a revolution was inevitable; and a *leader* only was wanted. Men's minds were ripe for such a revolution, and all that was needed was a *master*-mind — a mind to sustain the burden of the strife — to lead, to counsel, to control.

God had seen the want, and gave to the church and Europe, Martin Luther.

Leaders for individual sections and parties were not wanting, but Luther was to be the leader of leaders. Princes and nobles, long disgusted with the encroachments of successive popes on their dominions, found a true-hearted though timid representative in the elector Frederick of Hanover: politicians and men of letters, bound by the restraint of the canon laws, found a mouth-piece for their grievances in the person of Ulrich von Hutten: but all classes and conditions of men, from kings downwards, found the charter of their liberties in the life work of the great Augustine, Martin Luther.

The reformer was born of humble parents, at Eisleben, in the province of Mansfeld, on November the l0th, 1483. "I am a peasant's son," we find him saying in after life, "my

father, grandfather, and all my forefathers were simple peasants." It was from his parents that he inherited that sturdy simplicity, and frank, joyous temperament which is peculiar to the Thuringian peasant. His home education was strait and strict, and the treatment he received at school was harsh in the extreme: yet all this was necessary to prepare the future reformer for his great and perilous work.

When fourteen years of age he was sent to the Franciscan school at Magdeburg, where his youthful sufferings were much increased. He tells us he was half starved, and frequently went singing through the adjacent towns and villages in order to get bread. "Do not despise the boys who go singing through the streets, begging a little bread for the love of God," was his pathetic appeal many years later; "I also have done the same." He was afterwards removed to Eisenach, where he had relatives, but they afforded him little or no relief. He still had to wander, hungry and miserable, through the pitiless streets, singing hymns, and to say *'panem propter Deum'* at the doors of strangers, thankful even for the crumbs which were sometimes thrown to him. But relief came at last. What relatives had denied him, strangers supplied: and one evening, having begged at many doors without success, he came to one from which he was not repulsed. Christians will always remember with affection and gratitude the name of Ursula Cotta; for she it was who opened her house to the hungry lad, and gave him not only the food he needed, but a home and a mother's love. Luther had an opportunity later on of requiting her kindness, when he received her son into his own house at Wittenberg.

At the age of eighteen his father removed him to the University of Erfurt, to study law; and here his mind received a serious bent, by the sudden death of his fellow-collegian and intimate friend, Alexis. This occurred during a short vacation, while they were out walking together. Passing through the Thueringenwald, they were overtaken by a great storm, and a flash of lightning stretched the light-hearted Alexis a corpse at Luther's feet. Falling upon his knees on the impulse of the moment, Luther vowed that if God would spare him, he would henceforth consecrate his life to His service.

From that hour he became a changed person. It was long before his inclination for study returned to him, and day after day he might be seen wandering moodily about the library and hall of the university, like one unable to find rest. At length a Latin Bible fell into his hands, and, having a thorough knowledge of the language, he began to read it. This was the first time he had looked into the sacred volume, and his surprise was great. Here were depths of wisdom which he had never expected to find, precious pearls of truth which none of the missals or breviaries could shew; and he bent over his new treasure with tremulous in fatuation. As he read on he became more and more

persuaded of the divine authority of the sacred volume, and a deep conviction of his own sinfulness was borne in upon him. As yet a sense of mystery surrounded the inspired words, and he was like a blind man groping his way in the broad sunlight. He felt that the darkness was in himself; and not in what he read; and the more the external light was perceived, the more was the inward darkness realised. Perplexed and trembling, he closed the volume, and remained in meditation for some minutes. Then, one after another, the long catalogue of his sins rose up before his mind, and filled him with a vague alarm. He had never seriously thought upon his sins till now, he had never seen them in so foul a light. Such a black catalogue as that had surely shut the gates of heaven against him for ever; there could not possibly be hope for one so vile as he. Then Luther suddenly remembered his vow, and he rose to his feet with a new purpose before his heart. Yes there was *one* hope yet remaining he would quit the university and become a monk.

When we next look at him it is in the monastery of the Augustines, at Erfurt; and how changed is everything now! When we left him he was the great law student, a Master of Arts, and the idol of the university; now he is a monk, and the lowest in the grade of monks. The one who before had delivered lectures and engaged in learned discussions, has become the menial of his order, and must cleanse the cells, and wind the clock, and sweep out the chapel of the monastery! Yet Luther submitted to his task, and performed all the painful drudgeries which belonged to his new position without complaint; while the conflict of mind through which he was passing made him almost forget the degradation. Often, when the deep needs of his soul were pressing upon him, he would steal away from his work to the monastery chapel, where the chained Bible was kept, and there would seek that spiritual food for which he was hungering. At present this was his only opportunity for studying the word of God.

Eventually, however, new facilities were afforded him, and he was appointed to the vacant chair of theology and philosophy at Wittenberg. The appointment was made by Staupitz, the vicar-general of the Augustine order of Saxony, who acted under the advice of Frederick the Wise, elector of Hanover. The elector had heard of Luther's proficiency in the scriptures, and his great scholarly attainments, and had grown interested in the neglected monk. Luther was now, in a certain sense, master of his own time, and could devote long hours to the study of the Bible. The seclusion of his cell was very convenient for that purpose, and he applied himself to the study with unusual zeal. He began to make extraordinary efforts to reform his life, and by prayers and mortifications to atone for the past; and many were the vows he offered up to abstain from sin: but his efforts never gave him satisfaction, and his vows were always broken. "It is in vain," said Luther sadly to Staupitz, "that I make many promises to

God; the sin is always the strongest." Staupitz reasoned gently with him, and told him of the love that was in the heart of God, who was not angry with him, as Luther thought: but the monk was still unsatisfied. "How dare I believe in the favour of God," he said, "if so be that there is not in me a real and thorough conversion? I must needs change to be accepted by Him."

His agony became deeper than ever, and his efforts to propitiate the divine Justice were continued with untiring zeal. "I was indeed a pious monk," we find him writing in after years, "and followed the rules of my order more strictly than I can express. If ever monk could obtain heaven by his monkish works, I should certainly have been entitled to it. Of this, all the friars who have known me can testify. If I had continued much longer, I should have carried my mortifications even to death, by watchings, prayers, readings and other labours." The monk had yet to learn the meaning of those words, "by grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of god: not of works lest any man should boast."

Further conversation with Staupitz brought a measure of hope, and at times a thrill of inexplicable joy would pass through him, and his heart would gain confidence to say, "This is Jesus Christ, yes, it is Jesus Christ Himself, who consoles me thus admirably with His mild and saving words." But the memory of his sins would return upon him, and his distracted soul would shrink in horror at the thought of the judgment with which they must be visited. "Oh my sins! my sins! my sins!" he exclaimed one day, in the presence of the vicar-general; and when Staupitz pointed him to the Fountain opened up for sin and uncleanness, the words seemed like a sealed mystery to the poor monk.

At last his health broke down by reason of his repeated watchings and mortifications, and he was brought to the very door of death. And now the dread of approaching dissolution was added to his other fears, and the anticipation of the coming judgment plunged him in deeper depths than before. What if he should die unsaved? What if he should be buried in his sins? As yet he had no satisfying assurances of the divine mercy; those sins had not yet been put away, and he feared to go down to his grave with their burden still upon him.

While in this condition, he was visited in his cell one day, by an old monk, who spoke some words of consolation to the despairing invalid. Luther was won by the kindness of his words, and, little expecting what the act would bring about, opened his heart to him. The aged father was unable to follow him through all the mazes of his doubts, but repeated in his ear a sentence from the Apostles' Creed; which had often given rest and comfort to himself, *"I believe in the forgiveness of sins."* This was the message of

God to Luther's soul, and he caught at the words with all the energy which his need awakened. "believe," he quickly repeated to himself, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." Hearing him repeat the words the monk reminded him that the belief must be a *personal* and not a *general* belief; that it was not sufficient to believe merely in the forgiveness of David's sins or of Peter's sins, but that there must be the appropriating faith which says, "my sins." All this was heaven's music in the ear of the trembling listener; and when the worthy old man added, "Hear what St. Bernard says, The testimony which the Holy Spirit produces in your heart is this, Thy sins are forgiven thee," the light broke in upon the troubled heart, and Luther thanked God that those words were true of him.

But though truly converted to God, Luther was still a slave of Rome; and it was not till he paid a visit to the papal city, that he began to detect her corruptions, and to be shaken in his allegiance towards her. A visit of this kind became necessary in an official capacity, in consequence of a dispute which had arisen between the vicar-general and seven of the convents; and in due course Luther set out upon his journey. When he got within sight of Rome he threw himself on the ground, and exclaimed with pious enthusiasm, "Holy Rome, I pay you homage." He looked upon it as the labour-field of St. Peter and St. Paul; and was not yet familiar with the proverb of its citizens, "If there be a hell, Rome is built over it: it is an abyss out of which every sin issues forth."

But when he got within the city his eyes were opened. Then he began to realise what a sink of corruption the metropolis of catholicism really was, and for a time he was stunned. Wherever he went the evil was the same, and among the inhabitants of the city, none were more loud in their blasphemies, or more conspicuous for their infidelity than the priests themselves. He attended mass at one of the churches, and heard seven masses read at the neighbouring altar while he was reading one. A priest would even have hurried him in the same manner."Quick, quick," he said, "and send our Lady back her Son!" — making an impious illusion to the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. Then he heard stories from the monks' own lips which filled him with horror and bewilderment. They related, amid shouts of laughter, how that when repeating mass, instead of pronouncing the sacramental words over the bread and wine, which were supposed to transform them into the body and blood of Christ, they frequently repeated the words, *"Panis es et panis manebis, vinum es et vinum manebis"* — "bread thou art and bread shalt thou remain, wine thou art and wine shalt thou remain."

These are only instances of the shocking profanity which Luther met with during his brief sojourn at Rome; we might mention many more. His friend, Ulrich von Hutten, has left a speaking picture of the city during this period of its history, which we cannot withhold. "There are three things," says this writer, "which a traveller commonly brings away from Rome, a guilty conscience, a disordered stomach, and an empty purse. There are three things which are not believed in at Rome, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the dead, and hell. There are three things which are traded in at Rome: The grace of Christ, ecclesiastical dignities, and women." With these appalling facts before his soul, Luther left the city and turned his steps once more towards his native land.

On his return he was made a doctor of divinity; and began to attract great attention by his sermons in the Augustine church at Wittenberg, where immense crowds flocked to hear him. His fluency of thought, his eloquence, his wonderful memory, and above all, the evident intensity of his convictions, captivated all who heard him; and Dr. Martin Luther became the topic of conversation in no small or unenlightened circle. But what brought him into general notice more than anything else, was his dispute with John Tetzel, the Dominican and mountebank monk of Leipsic. Tetzel had come, peddling his indulgences, to the very place where Luther was fulfilling his duties as confessor to the good people of Wittenberg. A collision was inevitable.

Mounting the pulpit, near which was placed a large red cross, surmounted by the papal arms, Tetzel began his discourse. His speech was loud and animated, and his descriptions of purgatory were marked by a hideous picturesqueness, which fascinated his hearers, while it roused in them the liveliest solicitude after their departed friends. He touched upon the immense advantages of his commodity even to themselves; for there was no sin which they had committed, which an indulgence could not wipe away. Nay, not only were these indulgences efficacious with regard to past sins, but sins of the future, sins which his hearers had a desire to commit, might be covered by his letters of absolution,"I would not exchange my privilege," said the loquacious monk, "for those of St. Peter in heaven, because I have saved more souls by my indulgences than the apostle by his discourses."

These remarks were listened to with rapt attention, but his appeals for the departed produced the more stirring and profitable results."Priest, noble, merchant, wife, youth, maiden," he cried, "listen to your parents and other friends who are dead, and who cry to you from the bottom of the deep abyss 'We are suffer ing a horrible martyrdom! A small pittance by way of alms will deliver us; you are able to give it, and yet you do not wish to do so!' at the very moment when the piece of money tinkles at

the bottom of the chest, the soul takes its departure from purgatory, and directs its free flight towards heaven.... Deaf and heedless man! with twelve drachms you can release your father from purgatory, and yet you are so ungrateful as not to purchase his deliverance! I shall be justified in the day of judgment; but as for you, you shall be punished so much the more severely for having neglected so great salvation."*

{*Several rate-tables of indulgences were drawn up, in one of which the price of a general letter of absolution was thus apportioned. To princes and bishops, twenty-five ducats; to abbots, counts, and barons, ten ducats; to other classes of the nobility and rectors, six ducats; to the poor and middle-classes from one to half-a-ducat, according to the purchaser's means. Another table valued sacrilege and perjury at nine ducats; murder at eight; adultery at six; and magic at two.}

The discourse concluded, the faithful hurried up the aisles to the counter where the deputy indulgence-monger was seated, and made their purchases. Most of them, doubtless, were well satisfied with their bargains: and when they went to the confessional next day it was with no thought of turning from their sins. Did not they hold in their possession a document signed by brother John Tetzel, in the name of Peter, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,* which re-established them in the innocence and purity in which they were at the hour of their baptism, as well as declared their immunity from the consequences of future sins, right up to the day of their decease? But father-confessor Martin Luther had nothing to do with brother Tetzel and his documents. It was his duty to tell the people that the holy God was a hater of sin; that perdition and not paradise was the destined abode of the wicked, and that unless there was true repentance towards God, they would be for ever lost."If you do not turn away from your sins," he said,"you shall all likewise perish." It was in vain for Tetzel to storm, and the people to object to these sweeping declarations; Luther was firm."Take heed to yourselves," was their pastor's warning word,"and do not listen to the clamours made by these vendors of indulgences. You have better things to mind than the purchase of such licences as they sell to you at the most villainous prices." In the pulpit he was not less emphatic. In plain words he counselled the people to discontinue the iniquitous traffic."I have already said, and now repeat it, my advice is, that no person should purchase these letters.... And should some individuals assert that I am a heretic (for the truths which I preach are very hurtful to the interests of their strong box) I am little affected by their abuse. Such persons are affected with sickly and cloudy brains, men who have never felt the spirit of the Bible, who have never studied the doctrine of Christianity, never understood their own teachers, and who are rotting, enveloped in the torn rags of their vain opinions May God grant unto them and us a right judgment! . . . . Amen."

{*The concluding words of one form of absolution ran thus:"In the name of Peter, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Brother John Tetzel, commissioner, has signed this letter with his own hand."}

This sermon left his hearers in astonishment. It became the subject of general discussion at Wittenberg; and before the sensation which it caused had passed away, the famous Theses appeared. None of Luther's friends, even the most intimate, knew that he had written them; and the good people of Wittenberg were electrified one morning, to see them posted on the church doors. The deceitful nature of the horrid traffic was therein plainly exposed; and men presently began to feel that a voice had spoken, such as had not been heard in Europe for many a day. A copy of the Theses fell into Tetzel's hands, and the mountebank Dominican became frantic with rage. He even had recourse to oaths. To write some theses of his own, and then to burn those of his antagonist was merely to prepare additional gall for his own cup; for the students of Wittenberg gathered round their professor, and replied by burning eight hundred copies of Tetzel's brochure.

Meanwhile the Theses passed from hand to hand, and the news of Luther's bold act spread rapidly. The pope heard of it in due course, and summoned the indomitable monk to Rome: but through the counsel of the elector of Hanover — Luther's true friend from first to last — the summons was evaded. The elector remembered the fate of John Huss, and was naturally suspicious of Leo's intentions.

Luther was now declared a heretic, and the pope forthwith issued a bull fulminating anathemas against him. But during all this commotion the doctor had been steadily advancing in the truth, and when the form of excommunication reached him, he had so far shaken off the fetters of Rome, as to make his next great stand as a reformer. God's time for the announcement having come, Luther publicly declared that the pope was Antichrist! Beyond doubt this was a bold declaration, but it was followed by an act equally bold. In the public square, surrounded by the professors and students of the university and several members of the municipality, Luther burned the pope's bull!

Rome heard of it in due time, and waking to a confused sense of her danger, declared that the monk should die. Charles V., a youthful prince of great promise, was now upon the throne of Germany. He was a Roman Catholic, but by no means unconditionally submissive to the authority of the church. Notwithstanding, the nuncio Aleander, then the papal legate to Germany, induced him to take some steps with regard to Luther. Rome had now exhausted her weapons, and unless the temporal power could be won over to her side, all would be lost. A Diet that was to be held at Worms to welcome the young emperor to the throne and to arrange the details of the election contract, must

be made the opportunity for speaking the decisive word, and crushing the troublesome heretic. This was the general thought, and the pope endorsed it, and expressed a desire that Aleander should be present at the Diet, in order to demand the carrying out of his bull.

It was a moment for action. The danger was spreading, and the sovereign pontiff of Christendom had begun to realise the strength and courage of his adversary. The mind of Europe was awake, and there was no possibility of rocking it to sleep again, unless the audacious monk was silenced. To withdraw from the struggle was simply useless, for the voice from Wittenberg had already rolled its thunders through Europe, and all were eagerly waiting for the next word. The exclusive service of three printing presses had not been able to supply his writings quickly enough to the people; the lecture hall of the university and the church of the Augustines, had failed to contain the crowds which flocked to hear him. Princes and peasants, poets and statesmen, learned professors and theological students, were alike aroused; and the anxious attention of every class and of every nation was directed towards him. A solitary monk of Wittenberg had sounded the trump of defiance, and all Europe was waiting with breathless interest the issues of the coming struggle.

For Luther it was a time of peril, but his confidence in God was strong. He determined to go to Worms, and there answer to the charges which had been brought against him, be the dangers what they might: and when his purpose was known, he again found a true friend in the elector of Hanover. This christian prince obtained for him safe-conducts from the emperor and all the German princes through whose states he would have to travel; and thus protected, Luther was ready to set out. But his friends were fearful and apprehensive, and the well-known tenet of the Romish church that "no faith should be kept with heretics," was urged by them to induce him to abandon the journey. Huss, said they, had gone to Constance with a safe-conduct not a century before, and who did not know the result? But Luther's confidence was in something more than his safe-conducts, and the appeals of his friends were disregarded. "If Jesus Christ do but aid me," he said, "I am determined never to fly from the field, nor desert the word of God."

On his way to Worms his coach was frequently surrounded, and many an earnest prayer and warning word fell on his ear. "Ah," said one, "there are at Worms so many cardinals and bishops, and they will burn you as they burnt John Huss." Luther answered, "Though they kindle a fire which shall reach from Worms to Wittenberg, and blaze as high as heaven, I will walk through it in the name of the Lord; I will appear before them, I will enter the mouth of this Behemoth, I will break his teeth, and I will

confess the Lord Christ." Arrived at Frankfort he wrote to his friend Spalatin, who was then staying at Worms, to prepare him lodgings, and his letter contains the following characteristic passage: "I hear that Charles has published an edict with a view to terrify me. But Christ lives, and we shall enter Worms, though all the gates of hell or all the powers of darkness oppose us." Spalatin, troubled in mind, still endeavoured to dissuade Luther from entering the city, and sent an envoy with the warning message, "Do not enter Worms;" but Luther, strong in God, sent back answer, "Tell your master that though there were as many devils in Worms, as there are tiles upon the house-tops, I would go!"

His entrance into that city, on the 16th of April 1521, was like a public ovation; and many a pious word of encouragement, and many a blessing fell upon his ear as he was borne along the streets to his lodgings. On the day following, the marshal of the empire appeared, to conduct him to the Diet; and as the monk pressed his way through the throng of people to the council chamber, he was greeted with friendly words of encouragement by several of the knights and nobles there present. One old veteran, General George of Freundsberg, pressed up to him and said,"Pluck up thy spirit, little monk; some of us here have seen warm work in our time; but neither I nor any knight in this company ever needed a stout heart more than thou needest it now. If thy cause is just, and thou hast confidence therein, advance in the name of God, and fear nothing." "Yes, in the name of God," said Luther, taking up his words, "in the name of God — forward!"

Upon entering the council-room, the reformer was at first somewhat disconcerted by the unusual sight which met his gaze. Immediately before him, robed in purple and ermine, sat Charles V., king of Spain and emperor of Germany; and beside the throne sat his brother, the arch-duke Ferdinand. At suitable distances from these were ranged, six electors of the empire, twenty-four dukes, eight margraves, thirty archbishops, bishops or prelates, seven ambassadors, besides deputies, princes, counts, sovereign barons and others. Such a spectacle might well have troubled the spirit of the lonely monk, whose days, for the most part, had been spent in the seclusion of the peasant's cottage, or the monastery cell: but One was standing by his side who was more than sufficient for these things, One who had said to Ezekiel of old, Be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions; be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks." In that One was Luther's trust.

The business of the day was opened by the Chancellor of Treves, a friend of Aleander. In the midst of an impressive silence, he rose in his place, and addressed himself to

Luther in the following questions: "In the first place, do you acknowledge that these books" — pointing to a pile of Luther's works on the table before him — "are composed by you? Secondly, are you willing to retract from these books and their contents, or do you persist in the opinions which you have advanced?" After a few words had passed between Luther and his counsel, he gave an affirmative answer to the first question, but requested time to consider his answer to the second. His request was acceded to, and it was arranged that he should have till the following day to think over it.

The interval, save for the few moments that were devoted to his friends, was spent by Luther in earnest wrestlings with God; and it was during this anxious period that he offered up the following prayer, without doubt one of the most precious documents of the Reformation: —

"Almighty and everlasting God, how terrible is the world before me; behold it openeth its mouth to swallow me up, and I have so little trust in. Thee. . . . How weak is the flesh, and Satan how strong. If it be in what the world counts powerful I must put my trust, I am undone. . . . . The steeple has fallen down, and judgment is pronounced O God! O God! . . . . O my God! . . . help me against all the wisdom of this world! Do this; Thou must do it — Thou alone — for it is not my work, but Thine. I have nothing to do here; I have nothing to contend for with these great ones of the earth. For me, truly I would wish but happy and peaceful days. But the cause is Thine . . . . and it is just and eternal! O Lord, help me, Faithful God, unchangeable God! I put no confidence in man. That were vain. All that comes from man changes: all that comes from man fails. O God! O God! Dost Thou not hear? . . . . Thou hidest Thyself! Thou hast chosen me for this work I know . . . . Ah! well, then do Thou work, O God! . . . . Be Thou at my right hand, for the sake of Thy well-beloved Son Jesus Christ, who is my defence, my shield, and my buckler."

There was a pause; the listener at his door thought he had done speaking, but presently his voice broke forth again. "Lord where dost Thou dwell? O my God! Where art Thou? . . . . Come! come! I am ready. . . . . I am ready to yield up my life for Thy truth . . . . patient as a lamb; for the cause is just, and it is Thine own . . . . I will not detach myself from Thee, neither now, nor throughout eternity . . . . And although the world should be filled with demons, although my body, which is still the work of Thy hands, should be made to bite the dust, and to be extended on the ground, cut in pieces . . . . and reduced to ashes . . . . my soul is Thine. . . . Yes, Thy word is my assurance of it . . . . my soul belongs to Thee, it shall eternally dwell with Thee . . . . Amen Help me, O God! . . . . Amen!"

In the power of the Spirit which dictated this marvellous utterance, Luther went forth to stand a second time before the tribunal of man. Can we wonder at the result? No longer timorous and shrinking; when the question was again put to him by the chancellor he spoke with ease and eloquence; and his reply drew forth admiring exclamations from his friends and confounded his enemies. His denunciations of the whole system of popery were scathing and unanswerable. The following may serve as an example: "Is it not evident," he exclaimed, "that the human laws and doctrines of the pope perplex, torment, and martyrize the consciences of the faithful, whilst the crying and perpetual extortions of Rome swallow up the property and the riches of Christendom, and more particularly of this very illustrious nation? . . . . Were I to revoke all that I have written on this subject, what should I do but fortify this fearful tyranny, and open wide, for so much and so gross impiety, a door of yet larger dimensions. Overflowing, then, with more fury than ever, we should see them, these proud men, to increase, to rise in their passions, and to storm continually the more. And not only would the yoke which now presses on the Christian people be rendered more irksome on account of my retractation, but it would become, so to speak, more legitimate, because it would receive, by means of this very retractation, the confirmation of your serene Majesty, and of all the States of the holy empire. Great God! I would thus be converted into a vile cloak, destined to conceal and encourage every description of malice and tyranny!"

Luther closed his address with a vigorous word of warning to the emperor Charles, and a solemn appeal to him for that protection which the malice of his enemies rendered necessary. Being pressed for a more explicit answer to the chancellor's question, he promptly replied: "Since your most serene Majesty and you exalted powers require from me a simple answer, clear and precise, I will give it you, and this it is — I cannot submit my faith, neither to the pope nor to councils, because it is clear as the day, that they have often fallen into error, and even into the most palpable contradictions with themselves. If, therefore, I am not convinced by the testimony of the scriptures or by manifest reason, if I am not persuaded by the very passages which I have quoted, and if thus my captive conscience be not delivered from the word of God, *I neither can nor will retract,* for it is not safe for a Christian to speak against his conscience." "Then," says D'AubignÃ©, "looking round on that assembly, in the midst of which he stood upright, and which held in its hand the power of death, he said 'Here I take my stand. I cannot do otherwise — God help me! Amen.'"

The fears of Luther's friends that Rome would act treacherously in the matter of his safe-conducts, were now shewn to be well founded; and had the emperor Charles been another Sigismund, all would have been over with the reformer. But the

treacherous efforts of the papists to procure the violation of his safe-conduct were lost upon Charles, and each new suggestion of their treachery was met with the unflinching answer, "Though good faith were banished from the whole earth, it should still find a refuge in the courts of kings." The emperor, notwithstanding, consented to an edict of banishment; but this so little satisfied the rapacious demands of Rome, that they fell back upon their last and most desperate resource — assassination. Plans were laid to murder the reformer on his return to Saxony; but his good friend, the Elector, got timely warning of the plot, and was able to frustrate it. As Luther was returning home, he was suddenly surrounded by a party of horse, with masked faces, who after dismissing his attendants, conveyed him at dead of night to the ancient castle of Wartburg, near Eisenach, and there left him.

This was the Elector's ruse for getting Luther to a place of safety; and during the interval of rest afforded by his incarceration in Wartburg castle, and in calm defiance of imperial decrees and papal bulls, the reformer produced some of his most powerful controversial works, and commenced his favourite — perhaps his greatest work, the translation of the Bible.

Chapter 21.
Ulric Zwingli and the Swiss Reformation.
A.D. 1484-1522.

Leaving Luther at Wartburg, we will turn our eyes, and note what God had been doing for His people, though by other instruments, in another part of His earth.

It is peculiarly worthy of remark that simultaneously with the dawn of the Reformation in Germany, the papal throne was still further shaken by a great religious upheaval in Switzerland; and the instrument which God had chosen for the accomplishment of this work was Ulric Zwingli,* a priest of Rome. If Luther was only a miner's son, the Swiss Reformer could scarcely boast a higher parentage, for his father was a shepherd, who tended his flocks at Wildhaus, in the valley of Tockenburg.

{*Sometimes written in its Latinised form Zwinglius.}

But for the fact that his father intended him for the church, Zwingli might have died a "village Hampden," and his name have never come down to us. But all was wisely ordered of God, who had a peculiar and important work for the shepherd's son to do, and the discipline of his young life was regulated accordingly. Before he was ten years of age he was sent to his uncle, the dean of Wiesen, for instruction, and there gave such proof of his abilities, that his relative undertook the further responsibilities of his education, and sent him to study successively at Basle, Berne, Vienna, and then again

at Basle. On his return to this city he was happy in being placed under the tuition of the celebrated Thomas Wittembach, a man who saw clearly the errors of Rome, and, at the same time, was no stranger to the important doctrine of justification by faith. The professor did not conceal either his knowledge or his opinions from his pupil; and it was here that Zwingli learnt for the first time, and not without a feeling of astonishment, that "the death of Christ was the only ransom for his soul."

Leaving Basle at the conclusion of his theological course, though not before he had taken the degree of Master of Arts, he was chosen pastor of the community of Glaris, where he remained ten years. Whilst there, a deeper study of the scriptures, and an attentive examination of the doctrines and practices of the early church, as contained in the writings of the fathers, convinced him still further of the corrupt state of the professing thing, and he began to express his views on church matters with considerable plainness.

The year 1516 found him at Einsidlen, in the canton of Schweitz, the reformer having received an invitation from the governor of the Benedictine monastery, to the pastorate of the church of "Our Lady of the Hermitage," then, as now, a hotbed of Romish idolatry and superstition. What Luther saw at Rome, Zwingli saw at Einsidlen; and his ardour in the work of Reformation was stimulated by the deplorable discoveries which he made. His labours at the Hermitage were greatly blessed, and Geroldseck the administrator, and several of the monks were converted.

After three years' faithful ministry at Einsidlen, the provost and canons of the cathedral church at Zurich, invited him to become their pastor and preacher, and the invitation was accepted. Some, mistrustful of the reformed doctrines, objected to his appointment, but his reputation was so great, and his manner so engaging, that the majority were in his favour, and he was duly elected. Zurich now became a central sphere of his labours; and it was here he made the acquaintance of Oswald Myconius, who afterwards wrote his life.

Whenever he preached at the cathedral thousands flocked to hear him; his message was new to his hearers, and he delivered it in a language that all could understand. The earnestness and novelty of his style are said to have produced impressions which were indescribable; and the full and clear gospel which he preached had everlasting results with many, while it called forth expressions of astonishment from all who heard him. His faith in the converting power of the word, apart altogether from man's efforts to explain it, was great. He refused to restrict himself to the passages allotted to the different festivals of the year, which needlessly limited the people's knowledge of the sacred volume, and declared his intention of going completely through the

gospel of St. Matthew, chapter by chapter, without human commentary. "In the pulpit," says Myconius, "he spared no one. Neither pope, prelates, emperor, kings, dukes, princes, lords, nor even the confederates themselves. Never had they heard a man speak with such authority. All the strength and all the delight of his heart was in God; and accordingly he exhorted all the city of Zurich to trust solely in Him." "This way of preaching is an innovation," cried some, "one innovation will lead to another; and where shall we stop" "It is not a new manner," was Zwingli's mild and courteous answer, "it is the old custom. Call to mind the homilies of Chrysostom on St. Matthew, and of Augustine on St. John." By quiet answers such as these he often disarmed his adversaries, or even won them over to his side. In this respect he presents a striking contrast to the rude and stormy Luther.

When Zwingli had been settled about a year in Zurich the plague visited Switzerland, and the reformer was infected by the pest. He prayed earnestly for his recovery, and his prayer was answered, and the mercy of God in sparing him became an incentive to deeper devotion. His preaching was with increased power, a season of Pentecostal blessing ensued, hundreds were converted, and the priests became wrathful and anxious. Zwingli challenged them on more than one occasion to a public disputation, but they were afraid of the challenge, and at last, to silence the reformer, appealed to the State. This appeal was their ruin, for the State ruled that "since Master Ulric Zwingli had publicly and repeatedly challenged the adversaries of his doctrine to confute them by scriptural arguments, and since, notwithstanding, no one had undertaken to do so, he should continue to announce and preach the word of God, just as heretofore. Likewise, that all ministers of religion, whether resident in the city or country, should abstain from teaching any tenet which they could not prove from scripture: that they should refrain, too, from making charges of heresy and other scandalous allegations, on pain of severe punishment." Thus was Rome taken in her own toils, and again defeated; while the decree became a powerful impulse to the Reformation.

Meanwhile, the pope (Hadrian VI.), who had been thundering his anathemas in Saxony, received alarming news of the movement in Switzerland; and fearing the effects of a second reformation, tried a new device with Zwingli. Knowing that the Swiss reformer was a man of more polish and refinement than his German brother, he sent him a flattering letter, assuring him of his "special favour" and calling him his "beloved son:" nor was the honeyed epistle unaccompanied by more substantial proofs of his regard. When Myconius inquired of the bearer of the papal brief what the pope had commissioned him to offer Zwingli, he received this reply, "Everything, except the chair of St. Peter." But Zwingli was not a stranger to the wiles of Rome, and preferred

the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free, to the bondage of superstition, and a cardinal's hat.

After this event the Reformation rapidly gained ground, and the reformer received repeated encouragements in the work, and the most gratifying proofs that God was with him. In January 1524, a decree was passed for the demolition of images: on the 11th of April 1525, the mass was abolished, and it was agreed that henceforward, by the will of God, the Eucharist should be celebrated according to the institution of Christ, and the apostolic practice. Later still, the news arrived of the conversion of the nuns belonging to the wealthy convent of Koenigsfeldt, where the writings of Zwingli had penetrated; and the reformer's heart was made glad by the receipt of a letter which had been addressed to him by one of these converts. This was a terrible blow for Rome. The effect of a clear gospel upon the nuns was to shew them the uselessness of a life of celibacy and isolation, and they petitioned government for permission to leave the convent. The council, misinterpreting their motive and alarmed at their request, promised that the discipline of the convent should be relaxed, and their allowance increased. "It is not the liberty of the flesh that we require," was their answer, "it is the liberty of the Spirit." Their petition was eventually granted, for the council itself became enlightened; and not only were the nuns of Koenigsfeldt liberated, but the gates of all the convents in the Canton were thrown open, and the offer of freedom was extended to all.

At Berne the power of the truth was shewn in another, and not less interesting way. The magistrates, rejoicing in the good work, released several of their prisoners, and granted free pardons to two unhappy men who were awaiting execution. "A great cry," writes Bullinger, a disciple of Zwingli, "resounded far and wide. In one day Rome had fallen throughout the country, without treachery, violence, or seduction, by the strength of truth alone." The happy citizens, roused by the power of the truth, expressed the feeling of their hearts in the most generous sentiments. "If a king or emperor," said they, "in alliance with us, were to enter our city, would we not remit offences, and shew favour to the poor? And now the King of kings, the Prince of peace, the Son of God, the Saviour of mankind, has visited us, and brings with Him the pardon of our sins, who only deserve eternal banishment from His presence. And can we better celebrate His advent to our city than by forgiving those who have trespassed against us?"

At Basle, one of the most powerful cantons of Switzerland, the doctrines of the Reformation, spread with inconceivable rapidity, and produced the most gratifying results. The zealous burghers swept the country of its images, and when the meek and

pious Oecolampadius (the Melanchthon of the Swiss Reformation) had fulfilled a faithful ministry of six years in the canton, the reformed worship was adopted by all the churches, and firmly established by a decree of the senate.

The heart glows in describing this glorious work of God, and we are loth to pause in the prosecution of so grateful a task: but space is limited. We will now return to Germany, and Martin Luther.

Chapter 22.
Luther's Zeal in the Reformation.
A.D. 1521-1529.

While Luther was busy with his translation in the solitudes of Wartburg castle, there was no person fully capable of carrying on his work in Germany; and the thought of this — for he was kept well informed of what was taking place outside the castle — made him anxious and fretful, and at length led him to return to Wittenberg. Melanchthon was almost his equal in scholarly attainments, and doubtless was not less steady in his devotion to the cause, but he was too mild and peaceful for the rough work which Luther had begun, and seemed scarcely fitted to bear the rule in such turbulent times. Then there was Andrew Carlstadt, a doctor of Wittenberg, well versed in the scriptures, but unsound in much of his theology, and far too fanatical to be depended upon as a leader. His actions were so little tempered by prudence, that when a body of men arose in Zwickau, with the avowed object of summarily abolishing everything not expressly enjoined in the Bible, he applauded the act, and placed himself at their head. Saints, crucifixes, masses, priestly vestments, confession, the host, fasts, ceremonies, church decorations all were to be immediately swept away by the besom of destruction; and the whole of Christendom was to be revolutionised in a moment, by the combined influences of the gospel and the sword.

Luther heard of the commotion in due course, and wrote to the rioters from Wartburg, telling them that he could not approve of their work, and would not stand by them in it. "It has been undertaken," said he, "in a harum-scarum fashion, with great rashness and violence. . . . Believe me, I know the devil well enough; it is he alone that has set about it to bring disgrace on the word." His admonitions were vain, however: the measures which he proposed were too mild and moderate for the Wittenberg iconoclasts, and they went on with their innovations.

The disturbance increasing, Luther closed his eyes to his own danger, and emerging from his concealment, set out for Wittenberg. It was in vain for the elector to expatiate on the peril of this step, or to point out to him the enemy he had in Duke George,

through whose territory he would have to pass. "One thing I can say for myself," wrote Luther, "if things at Leipsic were as they are at Wittenberg, I would still go there, even if it rained Duke Georges for nine days, and every one of them were nine times as fierce as he. Therefore be it written to your elector highness, though your elector highness knows it very well, that I go to Wittenberg under much higher protection than that of the elector."

On arriving at Wittenberg in the month of March, 1522, Luther commenced a course of sermons (eight in all) on the fanatics of Zwickau, in which he handled the different subjects with uncommon tact. These sermons are treasures in themselves, and were admirably adapted to the occasion which called them forth. In his vigorous and pointed style he shewed the deplorable ends to which such excess of zeal would surely lead the people; told them that they lacked charity, without which their faith was little worth; that they knew better how to *talk* about the doctrines preached to them than to put them into practice; and that they were without patience, and far too ready to assert their own rights. "In this life," said he, "every one must not do what he has a right to do, but must forego his rights and consider what is useful and advantageous to his brother. Do not make a 'must be' out of a 'may be' as you have now been doing, that you may not have to answer for those whom you have misled by your uncharitable liberty." The effect of these sermons was all that could be desired. The agitation ceased, and calm and tranquility succeeded. The students returned peaceably to their studies, the people to their homes: and the Elector could not but acknowledge that Luther had done wisely in leaving Wartburg.

He now resumed his translation of the Bible, and was greatly assisted in his arduous task by the critical revisions of Melanchthon. Before many months the New Testament was ready, and in September, 1522, it was given to the world. It was received by his countrymen with enthusiasm, and a second edition was called for within two months: ten years later no less than fifty-three editions had been issued in Germany alone! Then the Old Testament was added. The German people had now a complete Bible in their own language, and this fact did more to the consolidation and spread of the reformed doctrines, than all Luther's other writings put together. The Reformation was now put on its right basis, namely the word of God. Hitherto Luther had spoken — now God Himself was to speak to the hearts and consciences of men. His word was now accessible to all, and papal Rome had received a shock from which she would never thoroughly recover. Not many years later, a council of Roman Catholic bishops addressed a memorial to the pope on this very question. "The best suggestion," said they that we can offer to your holiness is, that every effort should be made to prevent the reading of the gospel in the vulgar tongue . . . . The New Testament is the book

which has proved the occasion of more disturbances than all others, and these disturbances have well-nigh ruined our church. Indeed, if any one gives sedulous attention to the scriptures, then to what he commonly meets with in our churches, he finds that there is a wide difference between the one and the other; that the doctrine of the reformer is totally distinct from our own, and is in many respects, diametrically opposed to it." Thus is Rome judged out of her own mouth; and the power of the word acknowledged by those who practically deny its authority.

Meanwhile the Reformation continued to gain ground, and the interest which Luther's first great act had awakened did not diminish as time went on. People everywhere heard the word with gladness, often weeping for joy at the good news. At Zwickau and Annaberg eager crowds surrounded the pulpits of the reformers, and listened by the day together; and on the occasion of Luther's first address at Leipsic, the vast multitude fell upon their knees and blessed God for the word which His servant had been privileged to speak. Pamphlets and sermons of the reformer's were carried from town to town by vehicles of all kinds; pedlars and hucksters conveyed them to the remotest villages; and vessels took them from port to port and introduced them to all countries where men were civilised enough to receive them. Three years after the commencement of the Reformation, a traveller purchased some of Luther's works at Jerusalem.

Rome, we may be sure, was not idle through all this, and hurled abroad her anathemas in futile anger. "Heresy! Heresy!" was everywhere her cry; while excommunications were multiplied and royal edicts issued forth in ever-increasing number. Preachers were arrested tortured burned; but it was of no avail. Better to stand upon the ocean beach, and bid the rolling waves advance no farther, than try to stem this swelling torrent. The Bible was in the hands of the people, and resistance was useless. Simple women sat at their spinning-wheels with their Bibles on their laps, and confounded the monks who came to reason with them. A new order of things had arisen, and the power which produced it was not of man. It was a power which had hitherto seemed weakness in the eyes of Rome, but which she was now to find was a power which she could not crush, and one which was mighty to the pulling down of strongholds.

The Reformation was still in its infancy when it received a terrible check by the outbreak of the Peasants' War. Its leader was a fanatic named Thomas Munzer, a man who had taken a prominent part in the rising at Wittenberg, during Luther's seclusion at Wartburg castle. He afterwards settled at Muhlhausen, and set about his great work (for so he called it) of overthrowing the "heathen kingdom" by which he meant the *temporal* — and the extermination of the godless.

The oppressed peasants heard him gladly, and flew to arms. Luther at first met them with the word of God and sober reason, saying, that "people's minds must be allowed to crack themselves against one another;" but when they broke into open insurrection, he wrote severely against them, and called them "the rapacious and murderous peasants." The provinces of Upper Germany were now plunged in anarchy and confusion. The mob, stimulated by a temporary success, and frantic with the remembrance of past injustice and oppression, rushed hither and thither, burning and wrecking palaces, churches and convents; till at length they were brought to bay at Frankenhausen by the Landgrave of Hesse, and utterly routed. Their wild and rebellious act had done them no good, and when they returned to their homes, they found that they had only added to the burden of their woes. To condemn indiscriminately all who had the remotest connection with the movement, was now the policy of the papal party; and hence all the evils of the Peasants' War were unjustly attributed to the influence of Luther's work. The Reformation suffered not a little by reason of this ill-founded charge.

Nor did the troubles of the reformers end with the suppression of the Peasants' War; for the restless spirit of the times found fresh expression in the absurd and revolutionary doctrines of the Anabaptists.* The leaders in the new movement, laying claim to divine inspiration, asserted that they were the true reformers, and spoke lightly of the work of Luther. Among other fallacies they taught that the kingdom of Christ was at hand; that the Christian was subject to no human laws; and that, as it was their privilege to have all things in common, they were not called upon to pay tithes and tribute. Luther was much distressed by the spread of this sect, and spoke of it in his usual forcible manner. "Satan rages," he wrote; "the new sectarians called Anabaptists increase in number, and display great external appearances of strictness of life, as also great boldness in death, whether they suffer by fire or by water." The sect continued to increase, in spite of persecution, till the capture and execution of their principal leaders, after which little is heard of them.

{*So called because they held the doctrine, that baptism should be by immersion, and that those baptized in infancy should be baptized again.}

About this time, the three most powerful princes of Europe, Henry VIII., Charles V., and Francis I., the sovereigns of England, Germany, and France respectively, united, in association with the pope, for the suppression of the disturbers of the catholic religion, and the avenging of the outrages which had been offered to the holy See. To this end a Diet was held at Spires in the year 1526, at which the emperor's brother, Ferdinand, presided; and an imperial message, urging that the edict of Worms against

Luther should be promptly carried out, was read to the assembled princes. But it did not produce those results which the friends of the papacy had fondly counted upon; and instead of delivering up the reformer to the tender mercies of Rome, the council submitted to the emperor the following resolution: "That they would use their utmost exertions to advance the glory of God, and to maintain a doctrine in conformity with His word, rendering thanks to Him for having revived in their time the true doctrine of justification by faith, which had long been buried under a mass of superstition; and that they would not permit the extinction of the truth, which God had so lately revealed to them."

Confident, in spite of defeat, the emperor, three years later, assembled a second Diet in the same city. His tone was angry and despotic; but the nobles who favoured the Reformation were calm and resolute. It was a time when such qualities were gravely needed. Their unyieldingness had not been anticipated, and the presence of such a spirit amongst them was a new element in the German Diet: hitherto the emperor had been credited with absolute power. But a crisis in the history of the Reformation had been reached, and that for which the nobles contended had no place in human politics. This the emperor did not understand.

Ferdinand again presided at the Diet, and feeling that a crisis was at hand, he resorted to desperate measures. Under cover of that authority of which he was the representative, he imperiously demanded the submission of the German princes to the edict of Worms. His conduct was characterised more by boldness than wisdom, and it only aggravated the party feeling which was already at work. Eventually, to bring the matter to an issue, a decree was drawn up embodying the emperor's demands, and this was subscribed to by the catholic nobles. The moment which had now arrived was an anxious one for Luther and the Reformation; but the reforming party in the Diet were equal to the occasion. Undaunted by the imperiousness of Ferdinand, and unmoved by the menaces of the spiritual nobles, they now united in a body, and on the following day recorded their *protest* against the decision of the assembly. This was the beginning of *Protestantism,* and the Sardis Period of Church History.

Chapter 23.
The Sardis Period Commences.
A.D. 1529-1530.

In reflecting upon the important period to which we have now arrived, we have to be cautious that we do not mix the work of the Reformation with the cold formalism which grew up along with it.

For no sooner had the emancipating power of the reformed doctrines been fairly tested than those who had embraced them, forgetting the sufficiency of their Head in heaven, and dreading the future assaults of Rome, placed themselves under the protection of the civil magistrates. Satisfied with their security, they presently settled down to the enjoyment of their new privileges, and ere long had sunk into a deplorable state of spiritual inertia and deadness. "I know thy works," are the Spirit's words to the church at Sardis, "that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent." (Rev. 3:1-3.)

All historians are agreed that the second Diet of Spires marks the commencement of Protestantism, but all, perhaps, would not go the lengths of the opinion here quoted, which nevertheless is well worthy our consideration. "At the Reformation," says W. Kelly, "in escaping from popery, Christians fell into the error of putting church power into the hands of the civil magistrate, or else made the church itself a depository of that power; whereas Christ, by the Holy Ghost, should still maintain the Lordship. . . . Protestantism was always wrong, ecclesiastically, from the very beginning, because it looked up to the civil ruler as the one in whose hand ecclesiastical authority was vested; so that if the church had been (under popery) the ruler of the world, the world now became (in Protestantism) the ruler of the church."The statement is at first startling, but we are persuaded that prayerful reflection will lead every unbiassed mind to a similar conclusion.

The German Reformation did not commence with the lower classes, as was the case in Switzerland. The princes took the lead, by supporting the cause and adopting the opinions of the reformers; and when the necessity of an ecclesiastical constitution for the churches began to be seriously felt by the Lutherans, instead of going simply to the word to be instructed, they adopted for their model a system of laws and principles completed by the Landgrave of Hesse. Thus the reformed churches, from their very beginning, were purely human and political in their constitution.

The good Elector of Hanover, Frederick the Wise, died in the year 1525, and his successor, John, a stout Lutheran, pushed on vigorously with the work of reform. As a means of checking the authority of the pope, he assumed the entire jurisdiction in religious matters, displacing incompetent men, and filling their places with pious and approved Lutherans. Other princes followed suit, their systems of church government being merely human organisations; and thus the first Lutheran and reformed churches were planted.

Not without dissension however. Precipitate measures on matters of importance always excite opposition. Hitherto, the moderation of the Elector Frederick had kept the catholic and Lutheran parties tolerably united, but the vigorous and extreme measures of his successor alarmed the catholic princes; and they formed an alliance among themselves to check the progress of the reformed doctrines in their respective territories. The breach became irreparable. A great part of Saxony, the ancient Frisian district, and the eastern colonies of Germany were now Protestant; while Austria, Bavaria, and South German bishoprics adhered to the old religion. At one time civil war seemed inevitable. But the details of these disputes belong more to political than ecclesiastical history, and we need not speak of them at any length.

As for the emperor, he had long been weighing over in his mind the expediency of assembling a Diet for the purpose of ascertaining for himself, from the lips of the Protestant princes, their reasons for separating from the ancient church. The pope, with the proceedings of the Diets of Worms and Spires still in his recollection, objected to such a course, and advised more summary measures. "Large congregations," said he, "serve only to introduce popular opinions. It is not with the decrees of councils, but with the edge of the sword, that we should decide controversies." Charles promised to reflect upon this counsel, but after halting for some time between the two opinions, decided in favour of his own, and summoned a Diet at Augsburg.*

{*The emperor shrank from shedding blood. When the aged Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach was commanded to conform to the old religion, he threw himself on his knees before the emperor and exclaimed, "I would sooner lose my head than God's word." The emperor, deeply moved, replied,"Dear prince, no heads off."}

No sooner were the emperor's reasons for the convocation of the Diet known than the Protestants prepared, for submission to the Diet, a formula of confession. It was drawn up by Luther and Melanchthon, and contained a clear enunciation of the chief doctrines of the reformers, the materials being furnished for the most part by Luther; while the work of revision was left to the milder pen of Melanchthon. "I am born." said Luther, "to be a rough controversialist; I clear the ground, pull up the weeds, fill up ditches, and smooth the roads. But to build, to plant, to sow, to water, to adorn the country, belongs, by the grace of God, to Philip Melanchthon." The document, drawn up by these great men, was the celebrated "Confession of Augsburg."

On the 15th of June, 1530, the emperor entered Augsburg with an imposing retinue. The protestant princes, dismounting from their horses, went forward to meet him; and Charles, with a graciousness equal to their loyalty, also dismounted, and extended his

hand cordially to each in turn. Meanwhile, the papal legate, Cardinal Campeggio, had remained immovable on his mule (with which animal, indeed, there seemed to be some affinity), but finding that he had made a mistake, he sought to remedy matters by pronouncing a benediction on the assembled princes. As he raised his hands for this purpose, the emperor and his train fell on their knees, but the protestant princes remained standing. This emergency had not been provided for, and the emulations of the papal party were somewhat hindered by the incident.

Later on, mass was to be celebrated in the chapel of Augsburg to solemnise the opening of the Diet, and the Protestants gained another victory by refusing to attend. But the wily legate would not be beaten. The Elector of Saxony, in his office as Grand-Marshal of the empire, was bound to go before the emperor on such occasions, bearing the sword; and the cardinal suggested that Charles should order him "to perform his duty at the mass of the Holy Ghost, which was to open the sittings." The Elector agreed to attend, but gave the emperor to understand that it was only in discharge of a civil office. The legate was doomed to experience a second disappointment. At the elevation of the Host, when the congregation fell upon their knees in worship, the Elector remained standing.

The Diet was opened on the 10th of June, and the emperor presided in person. It was thought that the question of religion would take precedence of all other matters, but little was achieved on the first day; and the reading of"The Apology" another name for the Confession was fixed for the 24th. It was the cherished hope of the Catholics that the Protestants would have no public opportunity of stating their case, and when the 24th arrived, they did all in their power — by dragging on the other business of the day — to delay the reading of the Confession, till it was too late. It was surprising how much time the cardinal required to present his credentials, and to deliver the pope's message — how solicitous, too, was the emperor for details of the ravages of the Turks in. Austria, and of the capture of Rhodes. The precious moments were thus frittered away, till it was almost time to close the sitting. Then the objection was raised — surely a very plausible one! — that it had grown too late for the reading of "The Apology." "Deliver your Confession to the appointed officers," said Charles, "and rest assured that it shall be duly considered and answered."

But here some opposition arose. It had never occurred to Charles that his rule did not extend over the consciences of his subjects, or that he was exceeding his prerogative by his evasions and deceit. The answer which he received was one for which he had not been prepared. "Our honour is at stake," said the princes, "our souls are endangered; we are publicly accused, and we ought publicly to answer." What was to

be done? The princes were respectful, but they were firm and unyielding also. "To-morrow," said the emperor, "I will hear your summary not in this hall, but in the chapel of the Palatine Palace."

The following day the protestant chiefs appeared before the emperor a memorable day in the history of Christianity. There were two copies of the Confession produced in court, one in Latin and one in German. Charles desired that the Latin copy should be read, but the Elector reminded him that they were in Germany, not Rome, and should therefore be permitted to speak in German. His plea was admitted, and the Chancellor Bayer, rising in his place, read the Confession in a slow, distinct voice, which was heard a considerable distance off. The reading occupied about two hours, and Pontanus, a prominent reformer, then handed both copies of the Confession to the emperor's secretary, with these words: "With the grace of God, who will defend His own cause, this Confession will triumph over the gates of hell."

The effect produced upon the people by the public reading of the Apology was encouraging beyond measure. The extreme moderation of the Protestants was a wonder-theme to many; and, says Seckendorf, "many eminently wise and prudent persons pronounced a favourable judgment of what they heard, and declared that they would not have missed hearing it for a great sum." "All that the Lutherans have said is true," observed the bishop of Augsburg, "we cannot deny it:" and testimonies of this kind were numerous. The Duke of Bavaria inquired of Doctor Eck, the foremost champion of Rome in Germany, "Well, doctor, you have given me a very different idea of this doctrine and of this affair; but, after all, can you refute by sound reasons the Confession made by the Elector and his friends?" "No," replied Eck, "by the writings of the apostles we cannot; but by the writings of the fathers and the canons of councils we can." "I understand then," returned the duke reproachfully, "that the Lutherans have their doctrine out of scripture, and we have our doctrine without scripture."

The reformer himself wrote, "I thrill with joy that my life is cast in an epoch in which Christ is publicly exalted by such illustrious confessors, and in so glorious an assembly. Our adversaries thought they had succeeded to admiration, when the preachers were silenced by imperial prohibition; but they do not perceive that more is done by our public confession, than perhaps ten preachers could have accomplished. Truly Christ is not silent in the Diet. The word of God is not bound. No; if it is prohibited in the pulpits, it shall be heard in the palaces of kings."

Chapter 24.
Development of the Sardis State.
A.D. 1529-1558.

Luther's position as leader of the Reformation was one of extreme danger to himself. By the multitude he was looked upon as little less than a pope, and it cannot be denied that on some occasions his actions gave a warrant for the name. He sustained his position by a rough dogmatism, and seems to have entertained a fear of lowering himself in the estimation of mankind by any avowal of error. When arguments failed he would maintain his position by sophistry and clamour; and, on one occasion at least, even sacrificed the interests of the gospel to party claims and the maintenance of his authority.

This may seem a hard word, but it is abundantly supported by facts, and history must be candid. The proceedings at the conference at Marburg are a sufficient proof of this. This conference was brought about by Philip, the landgrave of Hesse, and had for its object the settlement of the great sacramentarian controversy, which had long been raging between the German and Swiss reformers.

Luther had never been able to shake himself entirely free from the trammels of popery; and the doctrine of the *real presence* of Christ in the Eucharist was a dogma which he held to the last. True, he exchanged the word *transubstantiation* for that of *consubstantiation,* and sought to modify the hurtful and blasphemous doctrine; but his modification was a poor shift, and the error was not removed. Rome held — one's pen is slow to write it — that "the hands of the priest are raised to an eminence granted to none of the angels, of creating God, the Creator of all things, and of offering Him up for the salvation of the whole world." In other words, that the bread and wine were actually converted into the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist; a doctrine which they made the corner-stone of their fabric of errors, condemning as infidels all who rejected it. Luther held the more absurd, and quite as erroneous notion, that the elements after consecration remained just what they were before it — true bread and wine, "but that there was also with the bread and wine the material substance of Christ's human body." "As soon as the words of consecration are pronounced over the bread, the body is there, however wicked be the priest who pronounces them!" These are the reformer's own words.

Now Zwingli, and the body of the Swiss reformers recoiled in horror from both these doctrines. They had revived the teaching of scripture as to these precious memorials; and had widely distributed their views, though in a private way, among the learned of Europe. Luther's friend, Dr. Carlstadt, was one of the first to reject the Lutheran notion, and to embrace the revived doctrine; but dissatisfied with Zwingli's mild and silent measures for disseminating the truth, he published in the year 1525, a spirited pamphlet against the doctrines of his former chief; and thus the controversy began.*

{*Carlstadt's teaching with regard to the institution of the Lord's Supper was not identical with that of Zwingli. He held that when Christ said, "This is my body," He pointed to His real body and not to the bread.}

Luther's reply, which appeared in the same year, was characterised by much arrogance and bitterness, and he did not hesitate to attribute the godly efforts of Zwingli to Satan. This was throwing down the gauntlet indeed; and Zwingli had no alternative but to enter the lists against him. Yet throughout the controversy, which lasted upwards of four years, the language of the Swiss reformer was moderate in the extreme. Fully convinced of the righteousness of his cause, he bore the angry clamour of his opponents without resenting it, and pierced the mailed armour of their stubbornness with many a shaft of truth. The result was what might have been expected. Many of the more thoughtful Lutherans, observing with sorrow how their leader resisted all peaceful investigation of the question, began to lose confidence in his guidance, and went over to the side of the Swiss. This disturbed Luther the more, and in the vehemence of his resentment he seemed to labour for words. The followers of Zwingli became his "Absaloms, sacrament conjurors, in comparison with whose madness the papists are mild opponents — the Satanic instruments of my temptation." Meanwhile, the papists watched with undisguised satisfaction the progress of the controversy; and the remark of Erasmus, that the Lutherans are eagerly returning to the bosom of the church," became a proverb in everybody's mouth.

The conference, which was largely attended, but in which only Luther, Zwingli, Melanchthon, and Oecolampadius took part, was not very fruitful in good. Luther went to it with his mind made up, and protested at the beginning that he should always differ from his opponents regarding the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Taking up a piece of chalk he wrote in large letters on the velvet cover of the table, *"Hoc est corpus meum"* (This is my body). "These are Christ's words," said he, "and from this rock no adversary shall dislodge me." Harping upon the same words, he added a few moments later, "Let them shew me that a body is not a body. I reject reason, common sense, carnal arguments, and mathematical proofs. God is above mathematics. We have the word of God — we must adore and perform it."

As the discussion proceeded, the close reasoning of Zwingli told with great effect, but Luther remained obstinate and inflexible. The arguments of the Swiss, drawn from the scriptures and other sources, evidently troubled his spirit; but he had gone too far — it was too late to recede. At length Zwingli introduced an argument, which Oecolampadius had started in the morning, as to the meaning of the term "the flesh

profiteth nothing." Luther now observed, "When Christ says the flesh profiteth nothing, He speaks not of His own flesh, but of ours."

Zwingli **"The soul is fed with the Spirit, and not with the flesh."**

Luther **"It is with the mouth that we eat the body; the soul does not eat it; we eat it spiritually with the soul."**

Zwingli **"Christ's body is therefore a corporal nourishment, and not a spiritual."**

Luther **"You are captious."**

Zwingli **"Not so; but you utter contradictory things."**

Luther **"If God should present me wild apples, I should eat them spiritually. In the Eucharist, the mouth receives the body of Christ, and the soul believes His words."**

Luther was now talking nonsense, and Zwingli wisely proceeded to take up another line of argument, establishing his own views rather than combating his opponent's. But Luther would own no defeat. "This is my body," was his untiring cry, and he made it his sure refuge in every difficulty. "The devil shall not drive me from that," he said; "to seek to understand it is to fall away from the faith."

Later in the day Oecolampadius, quoting 2 Corinthians 5:16 said, "We know not Jesus Christ after the flesh."

Luther **"After the flesh means in the passage, after our carnal affections."**

Zwingli **"Then answer me this, Doctor Luther. Christ ascended into heaven; and if He is in heaven as regards His body, how can He be in the bread? The word of God teaches us that He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He therefore cannot be at the same instant on every one of the thousand altars at which the Eucharist is being celebrated."**

Luther **"Were I desirous of reasoning thus, I would undertake to prove that Jesus Christ had a wife; that He had black eyes, and lived in our good country of Germany. I care little about mathematics,"**

Zwingli: **"There is no question of mathematics here, but of St. Paul, who wrote to the Philippians that Christ took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."**

Finding himself driven into a corner, Luther again took refuge in his four words. "Most dear Sirs," he exclaimed, "since my Lord Jesus says, *Hoc est corpus meum,* I believe that His body is really there."

For a moment even the patience of Zwingli seemed to give way. Approaching Luther in a nervous manner, and striking the table with his hand, he said, "You maintain then, doctor, that Christ's body is locally in the Eucharist; for you say, 'Christ's body is there — there — there.' *There* is an adverb of place. Christ's body is then of such a nature as to exist in a place. If it is in a place, it is in heaven, whence it follows that it is not in the bread."

The argument, however, was thrown away.

"I repeat," said Luther warmly, "that I have nothing to do with mathematical proofs. As soon as the words of consecration are pronounced over the bread, the body is there, however wicked be the priest who pronounces them."

In the presence of such obduracy (for we cannot use a milder word) it is surprising that the reformers came to any amicable arrangements among themselves; especially when, at the close of the discussion, Luther refused to give his hand to his Swiss brethren. We do not recall the scene. We are glad that the scope of this history does not admit of its inclusion. It is sufficient to say that the efforts of the Landgrave of Hesse to effect a reconciliation were at last, in measure, successful. A "Formula of Concord," consisting of fourteen articles, was drawn up by Luther, which was subscribed to by both parties on the 4th of October, 1529. The Swiss reformers nobly yielded to Luther whenever they could do so without violating their own consciences; but their very yielding made their victory more complete.

Commenting upon the conduct of the great Reformer at the conference at Marburg, Dean Waddington says, "Upon the whole, he lost both influence and reputation by that controversy. By his imperious tone, and elaborate sophistry, he weakened the affections and respect of a large body of intelligent admirers. Many now began to entertain a less exalted opinion of his talents, as well as of his candour. Instead of the self-devotion and magnanimity which had thrown such a lustre over his earlier struggles, a vainglorious arrogance seemed to be master of his spirit; and but for the indulgence of this ignoble passion, the mantle, which might have wrapped Germany and Switzerland in one continuous fold was rent asunder. He was no longer the genius of the Reformation. Descending from this magnificent position, whence he had given light to the whole evangelical community, he was now become little more than the head of a party, then, indeed, the more conspicuous and powerful section of the reformers, but destined in after times to undergo reverses and defections, which have conferred the appellation of Lutheran on an inconsiderable proportion of the Protestant world."

Little did the German reformer think, when he refused the hand of his Swiss brother in the castle of Marburg, that within a year the opportunity for taking it would have gone by for ever. Yet so it was. Zwingli died on the battle-field, having accompanied the Protestant army in his capacity as chaplain. We do not attempt to justify the conduct of the Swiss Protestants in taking arms against their enemies; though they were only contending for their rights. Scripture teaches that "the servant of the Lord must not strive," and we may be sure that no good was ever done by the employment of carnal weapons in the spiritual conflicts of the church. At the battle of Cappel, in which Zwingli lost his life, *twenty-five* christian ministers were left dead upon the field! The great reformer was struck down at the very commencement of the action, while he was stooping over a dying man to breathe some word of comfort in his ear. The wound was not immediately fatal; and as he lay exhausted on the ground, he was heard to say: "Alas, what a calamity is this! Well, they have indeed killed the body, but they cannot touch the soul." For long hours he lay stretched upon the field, and when night had far advanced, a party of papists, with lighted torches, who were engaged in rifling the dead, came upon his body. He still breathed, but they did not recognise his face. One of the party asked him would he have a confessor, but the reformer shook his head. "If you cannot speak," said they, "invoke the mother of God, and the other saints for their intercession." The reformer again shook his head, and kept his eyes steadily fixed on heaven. "Die, then, obstinate heretic," said the officer of the party, and as he spoke he struck Zwingli on the throat with his sword. Later on they held a mock council on the lifeless body, and having condemned it for treason and heresy, the head was struck off, the body quartered, and the mutilated remains reduced to ashes.

The grief of Oecolampadius was great on hearing of the death of his friend, and he did not long survive him. The following year he was removed by the plague; and thus, within the space of a few months, the two chief agents in the Swiss Reformation were called away. Luther's resentment could not follow them to the grave, and writing to Henry Bullinger, he said, "Their death has filled me with such intense sorrow that I was near dying myself."

But Luther's time was not yet. The Lord had other work for His beloved servant; and for fifteen other years did the doctor of Wittenberg pursue his labours, furthering the work which it had been his privilege to begin, by his fervent prayers, his wise counsels, his generous sympathies, his burning eloquence, and his ready pen. His last days were spent in tranquility and peace; and his domestic life was not the least of his many joys. He was blessed with a true wife, his solace and helpmeet in many a trial and difficulty, and his children were the pride of his heart. An anecdote has come down to us which sheds a pleasant light on Luther in the home circle. A friend entering his room

somewhat suddenly on one occasion, found his little boy sitting astride his leg, and laughing immoderately as his father tossed him up and down. Luther refrained from rising, and said apologetically, "My little boy is riding to Rome with a message from his father to the pope, and I could not interrupt his journey." How beautiful is all this, when we think of it as coming from the man who had shaken thrones and set the world thinking!

The death of his little daughter Magdalene supplies us with another, though sadder glimpse of his home life. He was constantly beside her in her last illness, and their hearts were knit together by the tenderest chords of love. "Magdalene, my dear little daughter," he once said to her, "you would be glad to stay with your father here, or you would be glad to go to your Father in heaven?" "Yes, dearest father, as God pleases," said the child. And when the wrench did come, he did not murmur. "Dear Kate," he said to his wife, "think where she is. It is well with her; but flesh will have its way. The spirit lives and is willing. Children do not dispute; they believe what is said to them. With children everything is simple; they die without pain and fear, as if they fell asleep."

Presently his own turn came. A dispute between the Counts of Mansfeld, in which he had been asked to arbitrate, necessitated his appearance at his native town. "I was born and baptised at Eisleben," said Luther to a friend who accompanied him, "what if I should remain and die here!" So it came to pass. Towards evening he complained of an oppression in the chest, and though relieved for a time by hot fomentations, it returned at a later hour. At nine o'clock he lay down on a couch, and slept till ten. On waking he retired to his room, and after bidding good night to those around him, added, "Pray for the cause of God." His pains continuing to increase he left his bed between one and two in the morning, and removed into his study without assistance. He knew his end was approaching, and frequently repeated the words, "O my God! into Thy hands I commend my spirit." Meanwhile his condition had been made known beyond the house, and there were now standing around his couch, his three sons, several of his friends, the Count and Countess Albert, and two physicians. At length he fell into a perspiration, and their hopes began to brighten: but he said, "It is a cold sweat, the forerunner of death: I shall yield up my spirit." He then broke into prayer, and concluded by thrice repeating the words, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit: Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth!" Presently Justus Jonas inquired of him, "Beloved father, dost thou confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, our Saviour and Redeemer?" and Luther made reply, audibly and distinctly, "I do." These were his last words, and between two and three o'clock in the morning, he passed away.

The body was removed to Wittenberg on the 22nd of February; and the vast multitudes which assembled on the following day to witness the procession, were addressed by Pomeranus. Melanchthon afterwards delivered a funeral oration. But it has been remarked, as creditable to both orators, "that their feelings were more conspicuous than their powers of oratory, and that their pious attempts to console the sorrows of others were little more than a hearty demonstration of their own."

Charles had long been waiting for the death of Luther. He had many times lamented that he had suffered him to leave Worms, after his confession before the Diet. He had even said, "Though I spared him solely on the ground of the safe-conduct I had sent him, I confess, nevertheless, that I did wrong in this, because I was not bound to keep my promise to that heretic . . . but in consequence of my not having taken away his life, heresy continued to make progress; whereas his death, I am persuaded, would have stifled it in its birth."

It had been the wish of the emperor, ever since the Diet of Augsburg, that the pope should summon a general council, in order to inquire into the abuses of the ancient church, and thus make a way for the return of the dissentients to the allegiance of the pope. By this means he hoped to destroy the work of Luther, and restore peace and unity to the empire. But one thing and another had come in to thwart his wishes, and the successive popes to whom he had appealed, had all seemed curiously diffident in the matter. The threats which he had held out to the Protestants at the close of the Diet had only put them more on the alert, and they had immediately entered into a league for their mutual defence. This league they had been endeavouring to strengthen ever since, and thus, in spite of the warnings of Luther, the Protestants had become a thoroughly political body. This, in few words, represents the condition of affairs in Germany up to the period which we have now reached.

The death of Luther gave new hopes to the catholic party: the emperor found that a fitting opportunity for the gratification of his wish had come, and the long talked of council might be summoned with impunity. Into the proceedings of this council, which was held at Trent, a city in the Tyrol, we cannot enter. The Protestants refused to acknowledge it, and the emperor made their refusal a pretext for declaring war against them. The history of this war; of the capture of the elector; of the surrender of Philip, Landgrave of Hesse; of the shameful indignities heaped upon them by the emperor; of the persecution of the Protestants; of the temporary revival of popery; of the appointment of Maurice, Duke of Saxony, to the command of the forces; of the consummate duplicity of the duke; his secret league with the Protestant princes; his sudden declaration of war against the emperor; his march upon Innspruck and the

miserable retreat of the emperor from that city — all this, together with the Peace of Passau, the concession of absolute freedom to the Protestant faith, the abdication of the emperor in favour of his brother Ferdinand, his retirement to a monastery, and, finally, his death — belong not to the compass of this outline, but to histories of greater bulk and more pretension. We must also leave to other historians the account of the further progress of the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland, and the efforts of Rome to hinder it. Our references must now cease. We have seen it firmly established in those countries; and while noting its mighty influence for good, have not omitted to notice also the failures which were incidental to it. God permitted these, in order to check vain-gloryings, and to hide pride from man.

We will conclude our remarks on this important and interesting period, by taking a rapid glance at the progress of the Reformation in other countries.

Chapter 25.
The Reformation in France and French Switzerland.
A.D. 1520-1592.

The establishment of the Reformation in France and French Switzerland, in its relation to the German and German-Swiss Reformation, must be looked upon as a somewhat late work. Its record is a record of blood, beginning with the martyrdom of the eloquent but imprudent John Leclerc, and ending with the massacre of the Huguenots, in which about 70,000 of the reformed faith were slaughtered in a few days.

William Farel, a native of Dauphiny, may be regarded as the apostle of the Reformation in French Switzerland. He learnt the reformed doctrines from a pious and learned doctor of Etaples, named James Lefevre, and first taught them in Paris, where he enjoyed the friendship and patronage of the bishop of Meaux, William Briconnet, who himself taught the new doctrines.

Persecution, however, at length became so violent that he was obliged to take refuge in Switzerland, where he made the acquaintance of Oecolampadius, Bucer, and other reformers. At Basle, Montbeliard, Aigle, Vallengin, St. Blaise, and Neuchatel, all in French Switzerland, he laboured with varying success; and such was the power of his preaching in the last-named place that the people declared they would live and die in the Protestant faith, and refused to rest satisfied till the Reformation was legally established in the Canton. At Geneva, which he visited twice, his work was difficult and perilous, and many attempts were made both by monks and priests to murder him. Several times he was stoned and beaten; twice he narrowly escaped a death by drowning in the Rhone; and once he was mercifully preserved from a more painful

death by poison. But the blessing of the Lord was upon his labours, and ere long the Mass was officially suspended by a decree of the Council of Two Hundred, and an edict appeared ordaining that, "the services of God were thenceforward to be performed according to the statutes of the gospel; and that all acts of papal idolatry were to cease altogether." Coins were struck in commemoration of the event, and the citizens chose for themselves this new motto, "After darkness, light." The same happy results attended the labours of the stout-hearted reformer at Lausanne, though his first visit to the place was unsuccessful. The important matter was settled at a public disputation which lasted eight days, and ended in a signal triumph for the Protestants.

While at Geneva in the year 1536, Farel made the acquaintance of Calvin, then a young man in his twenty-eighth year. He had already made himself famous by the publication of his "Christian Institutes," and Farel felt that if he could persuade his young friend to remain in Geneva, to overlook the work, he would be doing much to help on the interests of the Reformation. He proposed the matter to him, but Calvin shrank from taking up the burden of such an undertaking, and refused. He pleaded that he was not mentally prepared for the task, that his education was as yet unfinished, and that, for the present at least, he could only render assistance by his pen. But Farel felt that he had the mind of God in asking him to remain, and met his shrinking refusal with the authoritative reply, "I declare to you on the part of God, that if you refuse to labour here along with us in the Lord's work, His curse will be upon you; since under the pretence of your studies, it is yourself that you are seeking, rather than Him."

The words had the desired effect upon the young theologian. Calvin abandoned his intention of proceeding to Strasbourg to continue his studies, and settled at Geneva. He was at once appointed a professor of theology, and commenced an arduous ministry of twenty-eight years, as pastor of one of the most prominent churches of the city: and from this place his influence presently extended to all the countries of Europe. "His relation to the ancient church," says Ludwig Hausser, "was peculiar. He was more bitterly opposed to it than any one else. Passionate and cutting things had indeed been said of Rome, but nothing so crushing had been urged against the Curia in the whole range of polemics as the attempt to prove that the church of Rome, in its origin and growth, was utterly opposed to the true church of Christ. Never had the hierarchical principle of the mediaeval Romish church been the subject of a fiercer attack than by Calvin's unimpassioned and cool-blooded assertion, that it was utterly opposed to the original idea of the constitution of the church, and he was therefore regarded by Rome as a more dangerous and implacable enemy than Luther."

But the people of Geneva could not at once fall in with the measures of reform which Calvin introduced. The whole city was sunk in vice and popery, and its "nine hundred priests" governed the consciences of the people. They did not like the restrictions which he put upon their singing, and dancing, and other worldly amusements; nor could they tolerate his stern rebukes of those less open sins to which they were no strangers: and when at last he prohibited them from coming to the altar, and sent them back with the rebuke, "You are not worthy to partake of the Lord's body; you are just what you were before; your sentiments, your morals, and your conduct are unchanged" when his faithfulness had brought him to this point, the people rose in a body and drove him from the city.

But in a little while they wished him back again. The city became filled with disorder, owing to the angry factions of the papists, the libertines, and the Anabaptists; and his presence was much needed. The very people who had driven him away began to clamour loudly for his return. "Let us recall the man," said they, "who wished to renovate our faith, our morals, and our liberties." And so, in the year 1540, it was resolved by the Council of Two Hundred, "in order that the honour and glory of God may be promoted, to seek all possible means to have Master Calvin back as preacher."

Calvin was loth at first to return, and declared that there was no place under heaven which he more dreaded than Geneva, yet added that he would decline nothing that might be for the welfare of that church. At last, in response to his official invitations and the earnest appeals of his friends, and feeling that he was guided by the will of God, he accepted the recall. To Farel he wrote, "Since I remember that I am not my own, nor at my own disposal, I give myself up, tied, bound, as a sacrifice to God." The welcome which he received atoned in some measure for his past ill-treatment, and from henceforth he was little hindered in his labours for the good of the people.

History does not favour us by drawing back the curtain which hides the inner and domestic life of Calvin from our view, and so the contemplation of his life is not so fraught with interest as that of Luther. He died on May I7th, 1564, literally worn out by the excessive mental fatigue which he had gone through. Farel, who was a feeble old man in his seventy-fifth year, when the news of the great reformer's illness reached him, wrote to say he must come and see him, but Calvin thoughtfully begged him to spare himself that fatigue. His brief letter was full of affection. "Farewell, my best and most faithful brother," he wrote, "and since it is God's pleasure that you should survive me in this world, live in the constant remembrance of our union, which, in so far as it was useful to the church of God, will still bear for us abiding fruit in heaven. Do not expose yourself to fatigue for my sake. I respire with difficulty, and continually expect

my breath to fail me; but it is enough for me that I live and die in Christ, who to His people in life and death is *gain*. Once more, farewell to thee, and to all the brethren, thy colleagues." Calvin lingered on some three weeks after writing this letter, and spent the greater portion of that time in prayer. He died repeating the apostle's words, "The sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be —" here he stopped, for at that moment the glory dawned upon his view.

In the narrative by Beza, a fellow reformer, we get this reference to Calvin: "He lived fifty-four years, ten months, and seventeen days; half of which time he spent in the sacred ministry. His stature was of a middle size, his complexion dark and pale, his eyes brilliant even unto death, expressing the acuteness of his understanding. He lived nearly without sleep. His power of memory was almost incredible; and his judgment so sound, that his decisions often seemed oracular. In his words he was sparing, and he despised an artificial eloquence; yet was he an accomplished writer, and, by the accuracy of his mind, and his practice in dictating to an amanuensis, he attained to speak little differently from what he would have written. . . . Having given with good faith the history of his life and of his death, after sixteen years' observation of him, I feel myself warranted to declare, that in him was proposed to all men an illustrious example of the life and death of the Christian, so that it will be found as difficult to emulate as it is easy to calumniate him."

So much for Calvin and the Reformation in French Switzerland: we may now turn our attention to France, and watch the progress and difficulties of the work there. We have already alluded to the work of Farel and Lefevre in Paris, and of the encouragement which they received from Briconnet, the bishop of Meaux; but it was in the diocese of Briçonnet that the reformed doctrines were first publicly proclaimed.

Meaux at that time was a busy little city filled with wool-carders, fullers, and cloth-workers, and these simple people listened with deep interest to the new doctrines of their bishop, many being converted. The work grew, and the monks and begging friars who infested the neighbourhood became alarmed. "What new heresy is this?" they cried; "our authority is being questioned, our means of livelihood are being cut off — we must take instant measures to suppress these strange doctrines." They accordingly proceeded to Paris and laid their complaints before the Sorbonne and the Parliament, averring that "the city of Meaux, and all the neighbourhood, was infected with heresy, and its polluted waters flowed from the episcopal palace."

At that time the kingdom was administered, in the absence of its rightful monarch Francis I., by his mother, a bigoted catholic; and the reforming party knew that they could expect no kindness at her hands. Nor was the conduct of their bishop, when he

was presently summoned before the Parliament, at all likely to encourage and sustain them; for he displayed the greatest timidity during his examination, and eventually yielded to the terms of the Sorbonne. The worship of the virgin and the saints was now resumed throughout his diocese; a prohibition was placed on the sale and possession of Luther's works; and Lefevre, Farel and the other reformers were forbidden to preach in the pulpits of Meaux, or even to remain in the neighbourhood.

This was not a hopeful beginning. The foremost reformer at Meaux had given up the work through fear, and the rest had been driven from the field. What was to be done? Was the work to be abandoned, and the cause of God to suffer irretrievably because of the wrath of man? No. For a while the work went on in secret, and though the public means of grace were denied, private study of the word and prayer were not neglected. Then a prominent member of their party, a wool-comber, named John Leclerc, drew up a proclamation, in which he spoke in no measured terms of the pope, and asserted that the kingdom of Antichrist was about to be destroyed by the breath of the Lord. This proclamation he posted on one of the doors of the cathedral, where all might read it; and waited the result.

As might be expected the monks and priests were filled with rage and confusion; and Leclerc was arrested on suspicion. When brought up for trial he made no attempt to conceal his act, and after a trial of a few days was condemned to be whipped through the city, and to have his forehead branded with a hot iron. While the latter part of his sentence was being carried out, a woman pressed through the crowd, her face pale with grief and emotion, and cried out, "Jesus Christ, and His marks for ever!" It was Leclerc's mother.

The wool-comber scarcely suffered his wounds to heal, before he was at work again: but the scene of his labours was changed. Having been banished from Meaux we next hear of him at Metz, and in the character of an image-breaker. Seated one day before the images in the Chapel of the Virgin, an edifice of great celebrity near that city, those words came into his mind, "Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works; but thou shalt overthrow them, and quite break down their images" (Ex. 23:24), and receiving this as a divine injunction, he immediately arose, and demolished the images with which the chapel was crowded. This done, he quietly re-entered the city.

The agitation produced among the catholics by this act was indescribable, and the branded heretic was immediately arrested. As in the case of his previous trial, he readily confessed his crime — gloried in it in fact and exhorted the people to renounce idolatry, and return to the worship of the one true God. Sentence of death having been

passed upon him, he was hurried to the scene of his martyrdom. Here a frightful death awaited him, though he was wonderfully sustained to the last. First, his right hand, which did the mischief, was cut off; then his flesh was torn with red-hot pincers; then his chest was cruelly burned. But while this torture was going on he recited, in a clear unwavering voice, the Psalmist's words, "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throats. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the Lord; he is their help and their shield." Then his body was consumed over a slow fire; and thus the first martyr of the French Reformation entered heaven.

In due time came the martyrdom of a converted priest, named Chatelain, whose patient testimony at the stake, convinced many of the truth of the cause in which he died, and filled them with a desire to know more of that gospel in which he had found so great a solace. Then came the pious and very learned Louis Berquin, a peer of France, who Beza said would have made a second Luther if he had found in Francis a second Frederick of Hanover. Thrice was he imprisoned for preaching the reformed doctrines to the people, and thrice was he delivered from his prison through the instrumentality of the king's sister, the eminently pious Margaret, afterwards Queen of Navarre. Meanwhile his friends, timorous and lukewarm by reason of the dangers by which they were surrounded, urged him to desist from preaching, and to tempt no longer the malice of his enemies; but Berquin could see no reason to fly the field, and fearlessly went on with the work."Leave these hornets alone," wrote his timid friend Erasmus, "above all, do not mix me up in these things; my burden is already heavy enough." "You know Beza and his familiars," he wrote again, "a thousand-headed hydra is shooting out its venom on all sides. The name of your enemies is Legion. Were your cause better than that of Jesus Christ, they will not let you go until they have brought you to a cruel end. Do not trust in the protection of the king. But in any case do not commit me with the faculty of Theology." But while Erasmus and his other timid friends called loudly for Berquin to stop, the voice of God in his own soul and through the pages of His word, bade him go on; and Berquin went on, and France has need to bless God for it.

In the month of April, 1529, he was arrested for the fourth time, and brought before the Sorbonne. After a hurried and mock trial he was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, and to have his tongue bored through with a hot iron, but Berquin appealed against the decision of the council, and the judges feared to insist upon their

sentence in the face of his appeal. Then they decided that he should be strangled and burnt, and this sentence was carried out. On the 22nd of April, 1529, he was taken in a cart to the Place de Grève, under an escort of six hundred soldiers, and met his death with great firmness.

Martyrdoms now grew frequent, but they were the beacon fires of the Reformation, inviting the people everywhere to rise in defence of the truth; and for every life thus taken, twenty champions arose to fill the gap. But the opposition was very great, and the number of the reformers in comparison with the enemies of the Reformation was a mere cipher. At length an expedient was hit upon, which it was hoped would accelerate the work; and an elaborate protest was prepared,* in which the abuses of Rome were exposed in vivid colours. Copies of this protest were circulated throughout France, and it was privately arranged that it should be published simultaneously in every town, upon a night that should be named. The 18th (some say, the 24th) of October, 1534, was the date fixed upon; and the eventful work of that one night has given to the whole year the name of the "Year of the Placards."

{*The author of the protest is not known: some think that Farel had the chief hand in it.}

The night at length arrived — an anxious one for the Lutherans, and the daring task of posting the placards was accomplished quietly, and without disturbance. In Paris, copies were affixed to the wall of the university, and all the public buildings, and the doors of the cathedral were covered with them. Even the parliament house, and the door of the king's sleeping apartment were not excepted; though it is probable that an enemy was responsible for the presence of the placard there. Morning came; and the effects of the discovery throughout the kingdom cannot be described. The excitement was unparalleled: a wrathful cry of "Death to the heretics!" arose throughout the land and a storm of terrible persecution began. The king grew pale with agitation when he saw the placard, and wrathfully exclaimed, "Let all be seized, and let Lutheranism be totally exterminated."

Numerous arrests were at once made, and the executions followed one another with terrible rapidity. Bartholomew Milon, a cripple, was the first martyr. He had to be lifted out of the cart on the day of his execution, as he could not walk; but the judges had taken no pity on his affliction, and he was burnt to death over a slow fire. Others followed. On the 21st of January, 1535, a "peace offering" procession, to atone for the indignities which had been offered to the ancient church, "marched through the most public streets of Paris in gloomy majesty," and the solemnities of the day were closed by the martyrdom of six Lutherans. The king was present, and made a violent speech

against the new doctrines. "If my arm were infected with this pestilence," he said, I would cut it off. If one of my children were so wretched as to favour this new reform, and to wish to make a profession of it, I would sacrifice him myself to the justice of God, and to my own justice." Notable zeal this; but how the language of the wretched king began to change, when the hour of his own departure drew near! What would he have given then to have washed the guilt of so much blood from his conscience, and to have relieved his soul of the consequences which he knew were hanging over him!

And what a history of crime and blood his reign presents to us! — of so many crimes, and so much blood! It was he who consented to the persecution of the Vaudois Christians, who inhabited the fruitful country of Merindole and Cabrieres. They held doctrines similar to the doctrines of the French reformers; and this was their only crime. "They are irreproachable in morals," said a catholic writer of that day, "laborious, sober, benevolent, and of unshaken loyalty." Yet an edict of persecution was published against them, and upwards of twenty-two towns and villages were plundered and burned, and the inhabitants murdered under circumstances of shocking barbarity. And Francis was in measure responsible for this. What a burden for his distracted soul as the hour of his dissolution drew near! It is then we hear him moaning, as the terrors of an accusing conscience take form before his eyes, "I am not to blame — my orders were exceeded." Courtier-prelates might have lulled that conscience to sleep while the king was in the vigour of life; but of what avail were their words when the hand of death was upon him, and eternity stared him in the face?

In the year 1547 Francis died, and was succeeded by his second son Henry, whose elder brother had been poisoned by the wicked Catherine de' Medici, the new king's wife. During his reign of twelve years the persecution was continued with increasing violence, and the priests did not lose any opportunity of prejudicing the king's mind with regard to the Reformation. They described it as seditious and revolutionary, and declared that the Huguenots* — for this was the new name by which the French Lutherans were known — were plotting against him, and that their doctrines were subversive of all ecclesiastical and regal power. The king took alarm at these representations, but it was not till towards the close of his reign, (when the Reformation had taken such a hold of the people that a sixth of the population were Huguenots), that he resorted to the extreme measure of summoning a parliament with a view to their suppression. This memorable sitting is known in history as the "Bed of Justice."

{*So named from one Hugues, a Genevese Calvinist.}

Meanwhile, thanks to the untiring labours of Calvin, the ecclesiastical foundations of the Reformation had been laid, and churches had been formed on his model in Paris, Poictiers, Angers, Bourges and elsewhere; so that when the king convoked his parliament in the year 1559, there were over a thousand such congregations in existence in France.

The only important incident which occurred during the deliberations of the parliament, seems to have been the arrest of one of its senators, John Du Bourg, whose bold speech in favour of the Huguenots, excited the king's anger, and led him to exclaim that he would watch Du Bourg's martyrdom with his own eyes. This, indeed, was his serious intention, but the Lord had willed otherwise, and fourteen days after the senator's arrest, Henry was killed in a tilting match with Count Montgomery, the captain of the guards. Strange to say, this was the very man who had effected the arrest of Du Bourg.

The accession of Francis II. brought no brighter prospects for the Huguenots; and after their bold champion, Du Bourg, had been immured for six months in the frightful dungeon of the Bastille, during which he had been denied the common necessaries of life, and had suffered grievous tortures by means of an iron cage, he was burnt alive.

The new king was a mere boy when he ascended the throne, and his weak body and still weaker mind rendered him eminently unfit to rule. It was during his reign that the work of Reformation in France assumed a political complexion, and the wars of religion began. French Protestantism could now number among its adherents several of the highest nobles in the land, men like Coligny and Sully, and the Huguenots had become a body which could no longer be despised. There were two parties then in the State in violent opposition; the one, with Catherine de' Medici at its head, representing the old nobility of France — the Bourbons, Montmorencys, etc.; the other, headed by the brothers Francis and Charles Guise, representing an entirely new faction, which had grown out of the intrigues of these men. Francis Guise, in rank a duke, had control of the army, and aspired to the throne; Charles held the rank of a cardinal, and had control of the finances and foreign affairs. How to check the power of the two brothers, who virtually ruled the kingdom between them, became a problem with Catherine's party, and they sought to solve it by drawing to their side the Huguenot opposition. Many members of the discontented aristocracy even adopted Calvinistic sentiments for purely political motives; and when one of these nobles, La Renaudie by name, who held a grudge against the Guises for the murder of his brother, had been detected in a plot against their lives, the Huguenots were implicated in the conspiracy. But the death of Francis II., in the year 1560, effected the overthrow of the Guise party,

and Catherine de' Medici having undertaken, in her own interests, the guardianship of the new king, Charles IX., then in his tenth year, the reins of government were practically transferred to her hands. Though possessed of no strong religious convictions, she was a catholic in name, and hated Protestantism be cause of its supposed democratic tendencies: yet, in order to consolidate her power, and to destroy more effectually the power of the Guises, she professed toleration, and released the Huguenots who had been imprisoned during the reign of Francis II. At the same time she avoided mortally offending the Guises, and permitted them, and all their adherents, to remain in their offices and posts of honour.

But no sooner was her position firmly established than she proceeded to mature her plans for the extermination of heresy and the ruin of the Huguenots. Her schemes were as deeply laid as her heart was cruel and wicked, and aided by the counsels of Pope Pius V., and Philip II. of Spain, her plot was ripe for execution in the autumn of the year 1572. That plot had for its object the wholesale massacre of the French Protestants.

At the head of the Huguenots was the illustrious Admiral Coligny, an old man, alike venerated for his piety and renowned for his bravery. It had been necessary that his confidence should be gained, or, at least, that he should be thrown off his guard, before a scheme so vast as that which Catherine and her accomplices had formed, could be carried out: and this had been effected in the following manner. Charles IX., then in his 22nd year. had been instigated by his mother, to profess "an earnest desire for the establishment of a lasting peace" between the two religious factions, and to that end a marriage had been proposed between his own sister, Margaret of Valois, a Roman Catholic, and the protestant king of Navarre, afterwards Henry IV. At first there had been some opposition to this, from the mother of Henry, the spiritual and accomplished Jeanne d'Albret, but she had been secretly removed by poison at an early stage of the proceedings; and the marriage had been duly arranged. Coligny guileless and open-hearted himself, could suspect no treachery in others, and made no attempts to sift the hidden sources of the king's action, or to question his motives. Nothing disturbed his own peace, and he began to look forward with joyful hope to the approaching union.

The marriage was fixed for the 18th of August, 1572, and nobles from all parts of the kingdom; — Protestants as well as Catholics — were invited to the ceremony. Almost all responded to the invitation, and by the 18th, Paris was crowded with the chiefs of the two religious parties. The marriage was duly solemnised, and for some days the French metropolis was given up to feasting and gaiety; the Protestants mingling with

the Catholics without suspicion. But this was all a part of the great scheme, and by it the Huguenots were lulled to sleep. St. Bartholomew's eve was drawing near, but still the festivities continued and still the same amicable relationships were preserved among all classes. True, at times there was something in the looks and gestures of certain of the Romanists, which those who perceived it could scarcely understand: yet the feeling of wonder passed away, and the fatal sense of security remained. Now and then a Protestant would come upon a whispering group of papists, lurking in some dark corner of a street, and a feeling of uneasiness would steal over him — but why? Were they not his frends? — Alas! Alas!

Charles became deeply agitated as the fatal hour drew near. His face grew deathly pale; his frame shook; a fearful feeling of remorse oppressed his heart. In his irresolution he would have countermanded his orders, but for the persuasions of his mother. He did dispatch a message to the Duke of Guise urging him not to act in haste; but the message came too late. Catherine had anticipated him, by commanding that the tragedy should commence an hour before the stated time; and while the messenger was yet on his way the signal bell rang out. Immediately it was answered from every steeple in Paris, and the massacre began. A voice was heard at the door of Coligny's sleeping apartment, "My lord, God calls us to His presence!" He had been wakened by the clanging of the bells, and was at that moment engaged in prayer. The aged nobleman rose to his feet, and turning towards his attendants, said, "I have been long prepared to die; as for you, save yourselves if you can; you cannot save my life." The Duke of Guise was waiting in the street without, while the assassins did their work, and presently his voice was heard, calling to his servant, "Behem, hast thou done it?" The ominous answer immediately came back, "It is done, my lord." "But we must see it to believe it;" said the Duke, "throw him out of the window." Behem took up the still breathing form, and did with it as he was commanded. As the body fell on to the pavement below, the Duke spurned it with his foot, saying, "I know him, it is he: courage, comrades; we have begun well — now for the rest."

In all the streets was now heard the firing of musketry, mingled with the brutal curses of the papists, and the groans of the dying. The Huguenots, taken by surprise, could offer no resistance; and when morning dawned their corpses were seen lying in heaps on every hand. The streets ran with blood, and the Seine was purpled with the dark stream. Morning brought no cessation in the awful work, and by that time Charles had recovered from his indecision, and came out on a balcony, with his mother, to feast his eyes on the scene of slaughter. He even joined in the work himself, and, seizing upon an arquebuse, fired upon the Huguenots who were seeking to escape by swimming across the river. For four days the massacre continued, and then the murderers left off

through sheer weariness. By that time some five hundred of the Protestant nobility and gentry had been slaughtered, and from five to ten thousand Huguenots of lesser station.

Nor did the carnage end there. It extended to the provinces, and orders were dispatched to the various governors and magistrates to exterminate the heretics without mercy. Some yielded a ready obedience, but not all. To his eternal honour be it told, one catholic bishop, John Hennuyer, bishop of Lisieux, refused to incur the guilt of so foul an act, and when the royal messenger presented him with the order, he said, "No, no, sir; I oppose, and will always oppose the execution of such an order. I am the pastor of Lisieux, and these people whom you command me to slaughter are my flock. Although they have at present strayed, having quitted the pasture which Jesus Christ, the sovereign Shepherd, has confided to my care, they may still come back. I do not see in the gospel that the shepherd can permit the blood of his sheep to be shed; on the contrary, I find there, that he is bound to give his blood and his life for them." Noble testimony! It is with joy that we record it here, though differing so widely from the brave John Hennuyer as regards the doctrines which he taught. The governor of Bayonne was another who refused to obey the murderous command. "The king has many brave soldiers in his garrison," he said, "but not a single executioner."

During six weeks the massacre in the provinces continued, and the number of victims is variously estimated at fifty, seventy, and one hundred thousand. The latter number, if we take into account those who afterwards perished from hunger and grief, is probably the most correct. The grave-diggers of the cemetery of the Innocents, at Paris, interred over a thousand bodies which had been cast up the Seine alone, a fact to which the account-books of that city bear witness to this day; and in Meaux, where the French Reformation may be said to have begun, the number of victims was so great that the labour of killing them with the sword was too slow, and they were dispatched with iron hammers.

Rome was loud in her joy when the first news of the massacre reached her. The messenger who brought it was rewarded with a thousand crowns by the Cardinal of Lorraine; artillery was fired; and when night came on, the city was gay with its illuminations. A solemn Te Deum was celebrated in St. Mark's Church, and thanks were offered to God for so signal a blessing conferred on the Roman See; while at Paris a medal was struck with this inscription, *Pietas armavit justitiam,* "Piety has armed Justice." "If ever the depths and wiles of Satan were seen in human wickedness," says Andrew Miller, "it is here. The premeditation, the solemn oaths of the king — which drew the Calvinists to Paris the royal marriage, and the dagger put into the hands of

the mob by the chiefs of the State, at a time of universal peace, represent a plot which has no parallel in history. And then, from the pope downwards, the Catholic community lifting up their hands to heaven, and thanking God for the glorious triumph!"

But a solemn retribution awaited the authors of this terrible crime. All but one came to violent ends. Charles died, some two years after, in dreadful agonies of soul and body; and was heard to exclaim, not long before his death, "What blood — what murder! How evil are the counsels that I have followed! Oh my God, pardon and pity me! I know not where I am, so grievous is my agony and perplexity. What will be the end of it? What will become of me? I am lost for ever." The Duke of Guise was assassinated; his brother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, died raving mad; and the wretched Catherine de' Medici, though she lived to an unhonoured old age, was imprisoned by her favourite son, and her name became synonymous throughout the world with perfidy and cruelty.

And the "heresy" of the Huguenots was not exterminated, though one hundred thousand of their number fell. He who had planted the incorruptible seed of the gospel in their hearts, could quickly plant it in the hearts of one hundred thousand more: and so it came to pass. A long series of petty wars between the Huguenots and the Catholics, distinguished the reign of Charles's successor, Henry III.; and when he was assassinated in the year 1589, a Protestant prince, Henry of Navarre, succeeded him on the throne.

Chapter 26.
The Reformation in Italy, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands.

There is a special interest attaching to the history of the Reformation in Italy, as being the centre and hot-bed of Roman Catholicism. The Italians, as a body, had long looked upon the papacy with feelings akin to contempt; for they had been constant witnesses of the uncloaked wickedness of their metropolis, and could not but see that in the Vatican that wickedness found a centre. They had long been wearied with the licentiousness and greed, the ambition and deceit for which their chief city was notorious, and many an earnest heart was sighing for a change, long before the work of reformation actually began. Hence, no sooner had the fame of Luther's collision with Tetzel reached Italy than there was an eager demand for his writings. A few months later we find his printer, at Basle, writing to him in these terms: "Blasius Salmonius, a bookseller at Leipsic, presented me, at the last Frankfort fair, with certain treatises composed by you, which being approved of by learned men, I immediately put to press, and sent six hundred copies to France and Spain. My friends assure me that

they are sold at Paris, and read and approved of, even by the Sorbonists. Calvus, a bookseller of Pavia, himself a scholar, and addicted to the Muses, has carried a great part of the impression into Italy. . . . In spite of the terror of pontifical bulls, and the activity of those who watched over their execution, the writings of Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli, and Bucer, continued to be circulated and read with avidity and delight in various parts of Italy. Some of them were translated into the Italian language, and, to elude the vigilance of the inquisitors, were published under fictitious names." This thirst for the literature of the reformers was encouraging, to say the least; and it proceeded from no idle curiosity. "Purchase Bullinger's work, *De Origine Erroris,*" said a monk to Zanchius, "and if you have no money to buy it, pluck out your right eye, and read the purchased book with your left."

For upwards of twenty years this good work was allowed to go on, with little opposition; but in the year 1542, its weakening effect upon the papacy began to be more clearly realised at Rome; and the pope is found writing: "It is with sincere regret we hear, from good authority, that many of our clergy, both secular and regular, in several provinces of Italy, have become so infected with the Lutheran heresy, that they corrupt the minds of the people, even by public preaching, to the no small scandal of all faithful Christians." The Inquisition was now put in force against the Protestants, and the prisons were quickly crowded with victims.

Aonio Paleario, author of a little book entitled, "The Benefit of Christ's Death," was one of the most notable pioneers of the Italian Reformation, but his career of usefulness was cut short by martyrdom. "In my opinion," said he, "no Christian ought to think of dying in his bed, in these times. To be accused, imprisoned, scourged, hung up, sewed up in a sack, and thrown to wild beasts is not enough. Let them roast me at the fire, if only the truth can be better brought to light by such a death." When questioned by his accusers as to the first means of salvation which had been given to man, he answered,"Christ." "And the second?" said they. "Christ." "And the third?" "Christ." Paleario was imprisoned in the dungeon of the Inquisition for three years, and was then burned alive.

Several Englishmen, at that time resident in Italy, suffered severely at the hands of the Inquisition; among whom were John Craig, a Scotch reformer, who afterwards assisted in drawing up the National Covenant; Dr. Thomas Wilson, who became secretary to Queen Elizabeth, and Dr. Thomas Reynolds, Craig and Wilson escaped from their prison at Rome, during a tumult, in which the doors were broken open; but Reynolds was not so fortunate. He was severely tortured by order of the inquisitors, and at last

expired under the torture. Another Englishman was burned to death, in the same city, in the year 1595.

In every corner of Italy the inquisitors were now at work, and the country swarmed with spies. These were, for the most part in the pay of the Vatican, and their business was to gain the confidence of private persons suspected of heresy, in order to facilitate the arrests. They were found among all classes of the people, from the highest to the lowest, and by means of their shameless perfidy and deceit the prisons were quickly filled with victims. Some of these were condemned to penance, others were sent to the galleys, others were shockingly tortured and mutilated, others were cramped with heavy irons and starved in damp unwholesome dungeons; and others were burned alive. Many fled for refuge to other countries, where they were in most cases kindly received, and not a few found a home and a welcome on our own shores. Some idea of the extent of the work in Italy may be gathered from the fact, that during a search that was made for heretical books, upwards of forty thousand copies of Paleario's little work "The Benefit of Christ's Death," were discovered.

Of the Reformation in Spain we cannot, unfortunately, offer so hopeful an account, for the persecutions which followed the introduction of the reformed doctrines into that country, drove thousands into exile; and those who remained, remained only for the stake, the torture-room, or the galleys. But Protestant England could still find room for her exiled brethren, and, as bishop Jewell touchingly wrote,"The Queen, of her gracious pity, granted them harbour." It would appear that the number of the Spanish exiles was between three and four thousand, for the bishop adds, "But what was the number of such who came unto us? Three or four thousand. Thanks be to God; this realm is able to receive them if the number were greater." The chief agents in the Spanish Reformation were two brothers, Juan and Alfonso de Valdes.

From Spain we are naturally led to the Low Countries, or Netherlands, as they formed part of the dominions of the Spanish King. Here, in spite of persecution, the revived doctrines spread with rapidity; and the martyrdom of three monks, of the order of Augustine, who had been convicted of reading Luther's works, awoke a spirit of inquiry in the minds of the people, which no threats or tortures could subdue. Erasmus says that, "the city of Brussels where they were executed, had been perfectly free from heresy till this event: but many of the inhabitants immediately after began to favour Lutheranism."

In the year 1566 a deputation waited upon the king, with a petition of toleration signed by one hundred thousand Protestants; but instead of yielding to their appeal, he directed the Governess of the Netherlands, his half-sister Margaret of Parma, to raise

an army of 3000 horse, and 10,000 foot soldiers, for the enforcement of his decrees. But armies and royal decrees were of little moment, when God had decided that the work should go on. The Protestants daily increased in number, in spite of the efforts of armed forces to thin and scatter them; and the cold-hearted bigoted Philip found that he must resort to more desperate measures than he had yet employed, if he would exterminate the hated religion. Dissatisfied with the clemency of Margaret, he now vested his authority in the person of the Duke of Alva; who shortly after arrived in the country with an army of 15,000 Spaniards and Italians; and a series of atrocities, almost without parallel in the annals of persecution, commenced.

The Inquisition was at once put to work; and before long its victims could be numbered by thousands. Most of the Protestant churches and meeting houses were destroyed, and the beams were made into gallows on which to hang the Lutherans. The cities were depopulated — for the people fled from them as from a plague — and the commerce of the country was at a standstill. Merchants, manufacturers, artisans, men of all classes, hastened out of the country, and considered themselves fortunate in being able to escape with their lives. For those who remained it was almost certain death.

"About the same time, 1561, Walter Kapell, a man of property and benevolence, and greatly beloved of the poor people, was burned at the stake for heretical opinions. A most touching scene occurred after Titelmann's officers had bound him to the stake: a poor idiot, who had been often fed by his kindness, called out, 'Ye are bloody murderers; that man has done no wrong, but has given me bread to eat.' With these words he cast himself headlong into the flames to perish with his beloved benefactor, and was with difficulty rescued by the officers. A day or two afterwards he visited the scene of the execution, where the half-burned skeleton of Walter Kapell still remained; the poor idiot laid it upon his shoulders, and carried it to the place where the magistrates were sitting in session. Forcing his way into their presence, he laid his burden at their feet, crying, 'There, murderers! ye have eaten his flesh, now eat his bones.'"

One, Robert Ogier, of Ryssel in Flanders, suffered martyrdom in the following year, in company with his eldest son. The latter, who was quite a youth, exclaimed in the flames, "O God, eternal Father, accept the sacrifice of our lives in the name of Thy beloved Son." A monk who was standing by retorted angrily, "Thou liest, scoundrel! God is not your father ye are the devil's children." A moment or two later the boy exclaimed, "Look, my father, all heaven is opening, and I see an hundred thousand angels rejoicing over us! Let us be glad, for we are dying for the truth." "Thou liest —

thou liest!" shrieked the priest, "all hell is opening, and ye see ten thousand devils thrusting you into eternal fire." Robert Ogier's wife and remaining son suffered in a similar way a few days later, and the family was thus reunited in heaven.

The very worst times for the Netherlands had now set in. "The executions by fire, water, and sword, and the confiscation of property, were recklessly continued. The victims numbered many thousands. The number of emigrants increased in the same proportion, and the product of confiscation reached by degrees the sum of thirty million dollars. The ancient privileges of the country were already annihilated; the population was fearfully diminished; agricultural prosperity was threatened with ruin; commerce was at an end; the harbours were empty; the shops and warehouses lying waste; numbers of industrious hands were idle; the great businesses were at a standstill; the wealthy trading cities were impoverished; in short, everything that had contributed to commercial and industrial prosperity began to decay."

But Alva cared for none of these things. The reckless slave of a cruel master, no thoughts of political economy ever troubled his mind; this fearful retrogression was nothing to him. Nay, in so far as the wanton sacrifice of human life was concerned, he had no thought of pausing yet — his thirst for blood was not yet satiated! The slaughter of a few thousand Protestants was not enough to satisfy the rapacious cruelty of such a man; the scythe must take a wider sweep in short, *the whole nation of heretics* must come beneath the murderer's arm! In the year 1568, when the "Council of Blood" held its second sitting, it was decreed that *all the inhabitants of the Netherlands* should suffer death as heretics; and from this universal doom none were excepted, save a few persons specially named. "This," says Motley, "is probably the most concise death-warrant that was ever framed. Three millions of people — men, women, and children — were sentenced to the scaffold in three lines."

The effects of this ghastly edict were frightful. Many of the people went mad; and others, who contrived to escape to the *West-woods* of Flanders, were driven wild by solitude and despair. In the towns and villages the tolling of the death-bell might be heard at all hours; and verily, had a plague visited the country, the condition of things could not have been more terrible. Every house was a house of mourning, and the charred and mangled corpses of the victims of the awful decree were exposed by hundreds on the door-posts and fences.

Then, at last, the people found that they could endure the oppression no longer; and, rising with the energy of despair, they came forth from their desolated homes, and their places of hiding in the woods, and found a common rallying-point around the banner of William of Nassau, Prince of Orange. Into the details of the Civil War that

followed we cannot enter; and the reader will doubtless be familiar with the facts. The Protestant army, at first unsuccessful, was aided by Elizabeth of England, the French king, and the German Protestants; and in the year 1580 the people were enabled to throw off the Spanish yoke, and assert their independence. Thus a new Protestant State was constituted in Europe; and the Netherlands were known henceforth as *The Seven United Provinces*.*

{*The original name, however, still survives.}

In Sweden the Reformation was established, after some opposition, by the renowned Gustavus Vasa, who was assisted by the brothers Olaus and Laurentius Petri. In spite of the hindrance of the spiritual lords, headed by the archbishop of Upsal, the truth prevailed; and the king had soon so powerful a party to support him, that he was able to compel the restoration of the various estates and castles which those prelates had obtained from his subjects by improper means. A check was also put upon the power of the bishops: the distribution of the revenues of the church was taken out of their hands, and they were forbidden to take any further part in the affairs of the State. Gustavus Vasa was evidently the right man in the right place, and it is pleasant to be able to add, that the work which he began was accomplished with the greatest rapidity, and without tumult or bloodshed.

In Denmark, a king — Christian II. — was again at the head of the Reformation, and, though the opposition of the ecclesiastical party was at first a serious clog upon his movements, and the bishops even succeeded in procuring his deposition, he continued the good work while in exile, and employed his secretary to translate the New Testament into the Danish language.

The Danes were much indebted to the ministry of the intrepid John Taussen, a monk of Antvorscov, who, having been imprisoned for preaching justification by faith, continued to expound the doctrine from his prison window. The new king, Frederick I., hearing of the dauntless monk, sent an order for his release; and shortly afterwards appointed him one of his own chaplains.

At the conference of Odense, held in 1527, the king openly declared himself for the Reformation; and, in spite of much opposition from the bishops, decreed that henceforth the Protestants should enjoy the same immunities as the Catholics. On the death of Frederick, the bishops made another desperate effort to restore popery, and succeeded in procuring the banishment of Taussen; but their triumph did not last. The new king was as favourable to the Reformation as his predecessor; and, in the year 1536, a Diet was held at Copenhagen, and the Protestant religion was finally

established. The bishops, convicted of intriguing and other treasonable practices, were deprived of their offices and emoluments; and the last, lingering traces of popery were effaced from the land.

Chapter 27.
The Reformation under Henry VIII.
A.D. 1510-1531.

The work of the Reformation in England, in so far as the State was concerned, did not begin, strictly speaking, till the latter half of the sixteenth century. As Ludwig Hausser justly observes, "What was attempted by Henry VIII. was not in anywise a reformation, but a wanton experiment of autocratic absolutism." He shook off the allegiance of the pope in the year 1514; suppressed the mendicant orders in the year following; and followed up this act by plundering the monasteries, the revenues of which he appropriated to his own use. The motive power with Henry in this specious kind of reformation was anger, arising from the pope's refusal to grant him a divorce from Catherine of Arragon. A reformation thus begun could scarcely be expected to stand.

Yet a real work of God was going on, a work indeed which had never ceased since the days of Wickliffe, and every year new light was coming into the country from the Continent. Of this we will now speak more particularly.

In the very year of the king's accession, the popish bishop of London, Richard Fitzjames, began a persecution in his diocese, a fact which shews that the truth was already making itself felt in some quarters; and between the years 1510 and 1527 some forty Christians of both sexes suffered in various ways for their faith. The charges against them were various, and, for the most part, extremely petty. One would not reverence the crucifix, or acknowledge that the pope had power to give pardons; another spoke against pilgrimages and praying to saints; a third denied the carnal and corporal presence of the Lord's body and blood in the sacrament of the altar. Others were found guilty of reading certain forbidden books, as, for example, the Four Gospels, Wickliffe's Wicket, the Ten Commandments of Almighty God, and sundry of the Epistles; and others were convicted of the supreme sin of speaking against the pope's holiness, and against his blessed martyr Thomas à Becket.

One of the martyrs of this period was John Brown, the nature of whose offence is thus given. Seated upon a Gravesend barge one day, he fell into conversation with a certain priest, who, becoming heated in their talk, delivered himself in this fashion: "Dost thou know who I am? thou sittest too near me, thou sittest on my clothes." "No, sir," said John Brown; "I know not who you are." "I tell thee I am a priest." "What, sir, are you

a parson, or vicar, or a lady's chaplain?" "No," quoth the priest, "I am a soul-priest; I sing for a soul." "Do you so, sir?" said Master Brown, "that is well done: I pray you, sir, where find you the soul when you go to mass?" "I cannot tell thee," said the priest. "I pray you, sir," said Master Brown, "where do you leave it when the mass is done?" The priest returned the same answer. "Then," said Brown, "you can neither tell me where you find it when you go to mass, nor where you leave it when the mass is done, how can you then save the soul?" "Go thy ways," quoth the priest, "thou art a heretic, and I will be even with thee." Three days after, the bold speaker was arrested in his own home, and brought fast-bound to Canterbury. During his confinement here, efforts were made to induce him to recant; and to this end his feet were horribly tortured over a fire, until the bones were laid bare. But John Brown was not to be moved; and when the priests found that he was firm in his confession, they sent him to the stake.

In the neighbourhood of Lincoln, also, there was not a little persecution, and the bishop of the diocese, protected by a letter from the king, instituted a rigorous search for heretics, with whom he dealt with characteristic cruelty when they were brought before him. Those who were found guilty of a first offence, and abjured their opinions, were, for the most part, incarcerated in the monasteries, where they were retained for life; but relapsed heretics were handed over to the secular arm, to be burnt alive. In the case of John Scrivener, his own children were compelled to light the faggots at his burning; and in like manner, the daughter of William Tilsworth was made to fire the wood at her father's martyrdom.

But while Wolsey's creature, bishop Longland, was busy in his diocese of Lincoln, other Englishmen, with objects of a nobler and purer kind, were not less busy in other parts. In the year 1520, William Tyndal left the university of Cambridge, and commenced his eventful career.

We hear of him first at Gloucester, where he was tutor in the family of a knight named Welsh, in whose mansion he frequently reasoned and disputed with the abbots, deans, archdeacons, and other beneficed men who met around his patron's board. Being thus engaged on one occasion, he was informed by his opponent, who had lost his temper in the heat of controversy, that "It were better to be without God's laws than the pope's." Tyndal, swelling with indignation, exclaimed, "I defy the pope and all his laws!" and to this he added, "that if God spared his life, ere many years he would cause a boy that drives a plough to know more of the scriptures than he did." On the whole the Cambridge scholar does not seem to have been at all popular in the Gloucestershire knight's household; indeed, his place was much preferred to his

company, and the priests of those parts discovered him to be an heretic in sophistry, an heretic in logic, and an heretic in divinity."

Proceeding afterwards to London, he waited upon the then bishop, Cuthbert Tonstall, and endeavoured to obtain a place in his household, but his efforts were unsuccessful. To nestle down under the sheltering wing of patronage was not to be the lot of Master Tyndal. He was to be a servant of the Lord in perilous times, and for that it was necessary that he should pass through a severer school than was to be found in any bishop's household. For awhile, however, he was comfortably lodged in the house of one Humphrey Monmouth, a worthy citizen of London, who had a sincere respect for his guest, and was himself interested not a little in the new teaching. But as the opinions of Tyndal became known (and he was not one to hide his light under a bushel) the dangers of his situation increased, and his friends advised him to retire to the Continent.

Besides, a new work was now occupying his attention — the translation of the Bible — and for this he needed all the quiet that could possibly be had. London was not likely to afford him much of that. The call for such a work he had often insisted on, but he also felt the need of it for his own soul. "I hunger for the word of God," he said, "and will translate it, whatever they may say or do. God will never suffer me to perish. He never made a mouth but he made food for it, nor a body but He made raiment also." With such a hunger oppressing him, no wonder that Tyndal thought lightly of his bodily needs, and, content with his meagre fare of boiled meat and small beer, refused the delicacies of Humphrey Monmouth's table.

But persecution was waxing hot, and while those around him were being condemned merely for reading portions of the word of God, it was not likely that he would long escape who was translating the whole Bible. "Alas," he sighed, "is there no place where I can translate the Bible? It is not the bishop's house alone that is closed against me, but all England." The complaint was but too just, and within a few days of quitting Humphrey Monmouth's sheltering roof, Tyndal was on his way to Germany.*

{*Humphrey Monmouth was afterwards imprisoned in the Tower for sheltering the reformer, and only escaped the forfeiture of his goods and other heavy penalties, by some dexterous excuses and a degrading abjuration.}

On arriving in that country he called upon several of the reformers, and then passed into Saxony, where he had a conference with Luther; and having continued in those parts a certain season he proceeded to the Netherlands, and finally took up his abode in Antwerp. Others have traced his progress first to Hamburg, and thence to Cologne,

to which city he was followed by his busy enemy Cochlaeus, who is said to have made the printers drunk, in order to get from them the secret of his work. Finding himself in danger here, he moved on to Worms, and there completed the first portion of his work, the translation of the New Testament. In the spring of 1526, copies of the translation had reached England, and were being circulated far and wide. The Romish priests in England were now in somewhat evil case, and began to ask each other what was to be done. The foundations of the Papacy were being sapped, and the whole fabric seemed in danger of a collapse. To condemn the book was easy enough, and this was presently done, but to purge the country of the new doctrines which it so clearly taught, and to prevent the influx of further copies, was quite another matter. It was useless for Henry to storm, and for Tonstall to preach it down; the Book had got a hold of people's hearts and consciences, as well as of their minds, and neither the king's clamour nor the bishop's sermons could destroy its influence. Copies of the translation were publicly burnt at Oxford, Cambridge, and London; and in some instances not only the books, but the readers of them were committed to the flames: yet the work went on just the same, for God was in it.

Meanwhile, Tyndal was busy upon the Old Testament, and by the year 1528 had finished the Pentateuch; but while on his way to Hamburg to get it printed he suffered shipwreck, and the MS. was lost. He continued his journey directly he was able, however, and on reaching Hamburg recommenced his arduous task, being now assisted by his brother reformer, Miles Coverdale, whose own translation of the scriptures was published a few years later.

But a period was soon to be put to the labours of the brave reformer, and a martyr's crown had been decreed to him. While at Antwerp, and lodging in the house of an Englishman named Pointz, he was betrayed into the hands of the papists by one who had shared his confidence, and after languishing in prison eighteen months (during which time he was instrumental in the conversion of the gaoler, and others of the gaoler's household) he was condemned to the stake. It was his lot to be strangled before being burned; and the sentence was carried out in the town of Vilvorden A.D. 1536. His last words, uttered with a loud voice, were a prayer for his benighted country — "Lord! open the eyes of the King of England."

But Tyndal was not the only Englishman of exceptional learning and ability, who laboured for the public good during these troublous times. What he was doing in a silent way as a translator of the scriptures, Dr. Latimer of Cambridge was doing in a more public manner by his sermons. Indeed the two men, taken together, may be said to represent the Luther of the English Reformation.

Hugh Latimer was the son of a farmer, and was born at Thurcaston, in the county of Leicester, in the year 1491. His remarkable precocity, added to a sharp and ready wit, induced his father to send him to the University, and he was received at Cambridge in the same year that Luther entered the Augustine convent. Some four years later, his mind received a serious bent, and the gay and witty student became an intensely devoted and superstitious disciple of the Romish Church. About the same time he was made a fellow of Clare Hall, and applied himself to the study of the classics with considerable diligence. Later on, he began the study of divinity, and wasted many precious hours poring over the works of Duns Scotus, Aquinas, and other learned doctors of the Middle Ages; whose Summa Theologiae, Commentaries on Aristotle, and such like metaphysical abstractions, he was wise enough to put aside in after years as useless and lumbersome. He had meanwhile taken his Master's degree, and was now, to use his own words, "as obstinate a papist as any in England." His zeal against the new doctrines which were being publicly taught in one of the Halls by Master Stafford, expressed itself in witty sarcasms and biting orations, and so delighted the clergy that they conferred upon him the dignity of cross-bearer to the University. In truth, as the fame of his preaching continued to spread, the prelates and friars began to rub their hands, and to stimulate one another with the thought that, even Luther had found his match at last.

But they were giving expression to their thoughts too soon. In the University with Master Latimer was one of quite another way of thinking, a scholar, named Thomas Bilney, who watched with not less interest, though with motives altogether different, the movements of the witty and zealous preacher. "Ah!" sighed Bilney, "if I could only win this eloquent priest to our side, that would indeed be a triumph for the cause! If I could only lead him to the Saviour's feet, a revival of true religion would certainly follow!" This was a consummation devoutly to be wished, but how was it to be brought about? Humanly speaking, the task was impossible; but Bilney was a man of faith, and he felt that this was a time when faith should be in exercise.

One day Master Latimer, in his character of priestly confessor, was waited upon in his room by a penitent upon whom he gazed in no little astonishment. It was Master Bilney."What is this?" thought the priest, "Bilney here! The heretic confessing to the catholic — this is strange. But maybe my Latin sermon against Melanchthon has convinced him of his error, and he has come to seek restoration to the communion of the Church!" While he was thus reasoning, Bilney began to pour into the confessor's ears the artless story of his own conversion to God; and the words, applied by the Holy Ghost, went home to the heart and conscience of the unsuspecting priest. Then and there he surrendered himself to God; and, abandoning from that time the specious

divinity of the schools, he became not only an earnest student of the *true* divinity, but a teacher of the reformed doctrines. In the words of Foxe, "He was not satisfied with his own conversion only, but, like a true disciple of the blessed Samaritan, pitied the misery of others, and therefore became both a public preacher, and also a private instructor to the rest of his brethren within the University, for the space of three years, spending his time partly in the Latin tongue among the learned, and partly amongst the simple people in the English language."

But his plain preaching and ruthless exposures of the Romish fallacies were not likely to be relished by the proud doctors of the University, or the self-righteous priests and friars; and ere long their wrath began to shew itself in covert threats and passionate invectives. Yet Latimer was not the man to be cowed by threats or disconcerted by clamour, and he went on preaching with all boldness. His caustic wit, lively sallies, and, above all, the deep earnestness of his manner, overcame all opposition, while his heart was continually cheered by the most signal proofs of the divine blessing. Long after he had left the University, there was a saying current in those parts:
"When Master Stafford read,
And Master Latimer preached,
Then was Cambridge blessed."

After awhile, the ordinary of Cambridge (the Bishop of Ely) tried softer measures with the intrepid preacher, but with no greater success. He complimented him on his wonderful gifts, declared himself ready to kiss his feet, and then advised him, as a sure way to put down heresy, to preach against Luther. Latimer, who had too much common sense to be deceived by such evident flattery, returned, "If Luther preaches the word of God, I cannot oppose him. But if he teaches the contrary, I am ready to attack him." "Well, well, Master Latimer," said the bishop, "I perceive that you smell somewhat of the pan. One day or another you will repent of that merchandise."

Abuses, threats, and honeyed speeches having failed, the bishop now turned from words to deeds, and closed the pulpits of the University against the preacher. But Latimer had not long to wait before another door was opened to him, and Robert Barnes, the prior of the Augustinian friars at Cambridge, whose heart the Lord had touched, invited him to preach in the church belonging to that order. Later still, he was cited to appear before Wolsey, to answer to a charge of heresy; but the hand of an overruling Providence was again seen, and the event only turned out for the furtherance of the Gospel. Contrary to all expectations, Latimer was acquitted; and the inhibition of the bishop of Ely was overruled.

About the Christmas of 1529 he delivered his famous Sermons on the Card, which roused much discussion, and were used to the enlightening of many souls. "I promise you," he said, in the course of his second sermon on this subject, "if you build a hundred churches, give as much as you can make to gilding of saints, and honouring of the church; and if thou go as many pilgrimages as thy body can well suffer, and offer as great candles as oaks; if thou leave the works of mercy and the commandments undone, these works shall nothing avail thee." Referring to the Magdalene in the Pharisee's house, and the Lord's reply to Simon's bickerings, he said, "So this proud Pharisee had an answer to delay his pride: and think you not but that there be amongst us a great number of these proud Pharisees, which think themselves worthy to bid Christ to dinner; which will perk, and presume to sit by Christ in the church, and have a disdain for this poor woman Magdalene, their poor neighbour, with a high, disdainous, and solemn countenance? And being always desirous of climbing highest in the church, reckoning themselves more worthy to sit there than another, I fear me poor Magdalene under the board, and in the belfrey, hath more forgiven of Christ than they have; for it is like that those Pharisees do less know themselves and their offences, whereby they less love God, and so they be less forgiven."

The controversy which these sermons revived was stopped by a letter from the king's almoner, in which the contending parties were bound over to silence until the king's pleasure should be known. But the king's pleasure was that Latimer should go on preaching. He had been meanwhile informed that the eloquent gospeller had favoured his cause in the question of the divorce from Catherine of Aragon, and that was a sure way to the royal favour. In the following year, we find him preaching before the court at Windsor, when the king was so pleased with his earnest, fearless eloquence, that he made him his chaplain. In the year 1531 a further mark of the royal favour was conferred upon him, and he was presented to the rectory of West Kington, in Wiltshire.

But the papists would not let him rest, and on being summoned before the bishop of London on a further charge of heresy, he was excommunicated, and thrown into prison. He makes some allusion to his examination before the bishop, in a sermon preached at Stamford in the year 1550, from which we may gather some curious facts concerning the honesty of his judges. "I was once," he says, "in examination before five or six bishops, where I had much vexation: every week I came thrice to examinations, and many snares and traps were laid to entangle me. Now God knoweth that I was ignorant of the laws, but that God gave me answer and wisdom what I should speak; it was God indeed, for else I had never escaped them. At the last I was brought forth to be examined into a chamber hung with arras, where I was wont to be examined: but now at this time the chamber was somewhat altered. For whereas before there was

wont ever to be a fire in the chimney, now the fire was taken away, and an arras hanged over the chimney, and the table stood near the chimney's end. There was amongst the bishops that examined me one with whom I had been very familiar, and took him for my great friend, an aged man, and he sat next the end of the table. Then, amongst all other questions, he put forth one, a very subtle and crafty one, such, indeed, as I could not think so great danger in. And when I should have made answer, 'I pray you, Master Latimer,' said one, 'speak out; I am very thick of hearing, and here be many that sit far off.' I marvelled at this, that I was bidden speak out, and began to suspect, and gave an ear to the chimney, and there I heard a pen writing in the chimney behind the cloth. They had appointed one there to write all mine answers; for they made sure that I should not start from them: there was no starting from them. God was my good Lord, and gave me answer, I could never else have escaped it."

So much for the rector of West Kington and his experience in the bishop of London's court. We will now leave him in his prison, while we take up with other matters.

Chapter 28.
Helps and Hindrances to the English Reformation.
A.D. 1529-1547.

In the year 1529, Wolsey having fallen into disgrace with Henry over the matter of the king's divorce from Catherine of Aragon, a way was made for Thomas Cranmer to the royal favour. Cranmer was a man of learning and godliness, but timid and vacillating — facts which even the most friendly of his contemporaries have allowed. "We desire nothing more for him," wrote bishop Hooper, "than a firm and manly spirit . . . . he is too fearful about what will happen to him." Though superior to Latimer in point of learning, he was behind him in loyalty to Christ; and it was a long time before he had resolution to extricate himself from the meshes of popery.

The cause of his rapid advancement was briefly this. In the course of conversation with Dr. Foxe, the king's almoner, he expressed an opinion that the best way to settle the vexed question of the divorce, was to try it out by the authority of the word of God; and this being repeated to Henry, he was highly pleased thereat, and sent for Dr. Cranmer. "Marry," said he, "I will surely speak with him, for I perceive that this man hath the sow by the right ear." So Cranmer being sent for, the king had conference with him upon the matter, and desired him to place his views in writing; which Cranmer did. After reading his book, the king demanded whether Cranmer would abide by what he had written before the bishop of Rome. "That will I do, by God's grace, if your majesty do but send me there," was the doctor's answer. "Marry," said the king, "I will send you to him in a sure embassage." The ability and tact which Cranmer displayed in the

discharge of this difficult office delighted the king, and shortly after his return to England, he was promoted to the See of Canterbury.

It might have been expected that the progress of the Reformation would have been greatly accelerated by this event, but it was not. The facilities which Cranmer had for helping on the work, do not seem to have been at all commensurate with his high position; and the persecuting bishop of Winchester, Stephen Gardiner, had more influence with the king in all matters which affected the interests of the church, than the new primate. But it was evident that Cranmer was in love with many of the reformed doctrines; and we find him using his authority for the release of Latimer, whom he restored to his rectory. This, at least, was a seasonable act.

The burning and torture of heretics, however, went on as before; and two months after Cranmer's promotion, John Fryth,* an intimate friend of Tyndal, suffered at the stake, together with a tailor's apprentice, named Hewett, who had denied the corporal presence in the sacrament. It must not be supposed, however, that Cranmer was in any way a party to these brutal transactions; they were entirely due to the savage bigotry of Winchester, a man for whom the archbishop had a decided antipathy.

{*Note the miserable hypocrisy of his judges on this occasion. When his examination was concluded, they delivered him over to the secular authorities, "most earnestly requiring them, in the bowels of our Lord Jesus, that the execution and punishment worthily to be done on him, may be so moderate that the rigour thereof be not extreme, nor yet the gentleness too much mitigated:" in other words, that he might be roasted to death with all gentleness and moderation!}

There were numerous other victims to Gardiner's zeal, but we cannot refer to them individually: their records are in heaven, and none of them will be forgotten by God. The learned and gentle-hearted Bilney had already suffered, as also a monk of Edmundsbury, named Richard Byfield, who had been converted from Romanism through the preaching of Robert Barnes. But darker times were drawing near, and Gardiner had only begun his episcopal labours!

In the year 1540 appeared the famous Six Articles, which gave a new stimulus to the persecution. The ostensible cause of this wicked Act was to promote the unity of Henry's subjects on matters of religion, but in reality it was a subtle artifice on the part of the bishop of Winchester, to place the Protestants in opposition to the law; hence the breach was only widened. In these articles the blasphemous doctrine of transubstantiation was again insisted upon; the celibacy of the priests was

commanded as a law of God; private masses were to be continued and admitted in the church; and auricular confession was declared to be expedient and necessary.

Of the multitude of persons who were persecuted on account of the Six Articles we cannot here speak particularly. The charges, in many cases, were paltry and ridiculous, recalling those of the Fitzjames persecution, twelve or thirteen years before. One was presented for denying his wife the use of beads in saying her prayers; another, for eating fish on a Friday before Lent; a third, for burying his wife without a dirge. An apprentice, named John Smith, was charged with saying, "that he would rather hear the crying of dogs than priests singing matins or evensong;" a citizen, named William Clinch, with speaking disrespectfully of the bishop of Winchester. Some were presented for walking in the time of consecrating mass with their caps on; some for turning their heads away; some for sitting at their doors when sermons were in the church; and some for despising our Lady and not praying to saints.

But of all those dealt with by the law, for nonconformity to the Six Articles, none, perhaps, is so deserving of notice as the martyr of God, Anne Kyme — better known as Anne Askew. She was the second daughter of Sir William Askew, of Kelsey in Lincolnshire, and the wife of one Kyme, a bigoted papist. It was not till after she had been some time married that the Lord opened her eyes, and shewed her by the light of His word the errors of popery: but, once enlightened, she shewed her sense of the favour conferred upon her, by the stedfastness and courage with which she proceeded to stand to her convictions.

The first persecution which she had to endure was from her own husband, whose hatred for the gospel at length so overcame all natural affection, that he drove her from his house. She now became attached to the court of queen Catherine Parr, who was herself a devoted Christian; and here her beauty, piety, and learning, attracted the notice, and afterwards aroused the hatred of Gardiner and his party. A watch was put upon her movements; but nothing whatever could be found on which to ground an accusation. Her manner of life was apparently without reproach. Strype informs us that, "A great papist of Wickham College, called Wadloe, a cursitor of the chancery, hot in his religion, and thinking not well of her life, got himself lodged at the next house to her. For what purpose need not be opened. But the conclusion was, that instead of speaking evil of her, he gave her praise to Sir Leonil Throgmorton, for the devoutest and godliest woman that ever he knew. For, said he, 'at midnight she beginneth to pray, and ceaseth not for many hours after, when I, and others are at sleep or at work.'"

But in the year 1545, a charge of heresy, grounded on the Six Articles, was brought against her, and she was thrown into prison. Her first examination before the

inquisitors, of which she has left an interesting account, took place in the month of March of the same year, and occupied three sittings. First she was brought before the Quest (the inquisitors appointed to enforce the Six Articles) at Saddlers' hall; then before the Lord Mayor in his own court; and then before the bishop of London in the bishop's chamber. When asked if she did not believe that the sacrament over the altar was the very body of Christ, she said she would not "assoil * that vain question;" and when they tried to entrap her by asking how she understood Acts 7:48 and 17:24-25, she replied that she would not throw pearls before swine, for acorns were good enough." The Lord Mayor, thinking that he, also, would take a turn with her, approached her thus: —

{*Absolve that is, *answer.*}

"Thou foolish woman, sayest thou that the priests cannot make the body of Christ?"

Anne Askew. **"I say so, my lord; for I have read that God made man; but that man can make God I never yet read, nor ever shall read it, as I suppose."**

Lord Mayor. **"No! thou foolish woman, after the words of consecration, is it not the Lord's body?"**

Anne Askew. **"No; it is but consecrated bread, or sacramental bread."**

Lord Mayor. **"What if a mouse eat it after the consecration? What shall become of the mouse? What sayest thou, foolish woman?"**

Anne Askew. **"What shall become of her? What think you, my lord?"**

Lord Mayor. **"I say that mouse is damned."**

Anne Askew. **"Alack, poor mouse!"**

The lords by this time had had quite enough of the Lord Mayor's divinity, and, "perceiving," says Strype, "that some could not keep in their laughter, they proceeded to the butchery and slaughter they intended before they came thither."

Her first examination over, she was removed to her cell in Newgate, where she remained for nearly a year. Her next examination was before the king's council at Greenwich, where she received her meed of scorn and insult from the bishop of Winchester and his creatures, and was again sent back to Newgate. "After that," writes the martyr herself, "they willed me to have a priest, and then I smiled. Then they asked me if it were not good. I said I would confess my faults unto God, for I was sure that He would hear me with favour, and so we were condemned without a quest."

A day or two later she was removed to the Tower, where efforts were made by Lord Chancellor Wriothesley to induce her to implicate others of the court who were suspected of sharing her opinions; and because she would not do this, the wretched monster ordered her to be placed upon the rack. "And because I lay still," says the poor, patient sufferer, "and did not cry, my Lord Chancellor and Master Rich took pains to rack me with their own hands till I was nigh dead.... But my Lord God, I thank His everlasting goodness, gave me grace to persevere, and will do, I hope, to the very end." After that, she was conveyed to a house, and laid on a couch, "with as weary and painful bones as ever had patient Job;" and while so lying, the Chancellor sent her word that if she would leave her opinions she would be well-cared for; but if not, she should be sent back to Newgate, and so be burned. But she sent him word again that she would rather die than break her faith; and in that answer her fate was sealed. Her own account of these proceedings concludes with these pathetic words: "The Lord open the eyes of their blind hearts, that the truth may take place. Farewell, dear friend, and pray, pray, pray."

Some time in the same year, the exact date not being given, the tragedy of Anne Askew was completed, and she was taken from her prison to be burned. Being too weak to walk, she was carried to Smithfield in a chair; and when brought to the stake was unable even to stand upon her feet. They therefore fastened her round the middle with a chain. An offer of the king's pardon was then held out to her if she would recant; but she answered that she had not come thither to deny her Lord and Master. A light was then placed to the faggots, and, the wood taking fire instantly, her sufferings were quickly terminated, and her spirit ascended to heaven in a chariot of flame. Three others suffered with her, whose names and callings are thus given: Nicholas Belenian, a priest; John Lascelles, a gentleman of the king's household; and John Adams, a tailor.

Unhappy times! Well might the cry go up, "How long, O Lord, how long?" and well might the anxious thought arise in many hearts, will the poor afflicted church in England never see a brighter day? Alas! that day seemed far distant, for darkness was still covering the land, and gross darkness the people. "Accept, my dear master," wrote bishop Hooper to Henry Bullinger, in the same year, "accept in few words the news from England. As far as true religion is concerned, idolatry is nowhere in greater vigour. Our king has destroyed the pope, but not popery; he has expelled all the monks and nuns, and pulled down their monasteries; he has caused all their possessions to be transferred into his exchequer; and yet they are bound, even the frail female sex, by the king's command, to perpetual chastity. England has at this time at least ten thousand nuns, not one of whom is allowed to marry. The impious Mass, the most

shameful celibacy of the clergy, the invocation of saints, auricular confession, superstitious abstinence from meats, and purgatory, were never before held by the people in greater esteem than at the present time."* Tyndal, Bilney, Fryth, Barnes and others had delivered their testimony, and were gone. That testimony had been rejected, and the mouths of the witnesses had been stopped. "How were they entreated?" asks the devout Thomas Becon, Cranmer's secretary, "How were their painful labours regarded? They themselves were condemned and brent [That is, *burnt*.] as heretics, and their books condemned and brent as heretical. O most unworthy act! 'The time shall come,' saith Christ, 'that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God high good service.' Whether anything since that time hath chanced unto this realm worthy the name of a plague, let the godly-wise judge. If God hath deferred His punishment, or forgiven us these our wicked deeds, as I trust He hath, let us not therefore be proud and high-minded, but most humbly thank Him for His tender mercies, and beware of the like ungodly enterprises hereafter."**

***{*Zurich Letters,* 1st series, Parker Society.**

****Becon's Works. The Flower of Godly Prayers,* p. 11. Parker Society.}**

Needful admonition! But, alas! it was only to be listened to for a moment, and then forgotten. A godly Josiah, in the person of Edward VI., was now to ascend the throne, but a Mary had yet to follow.

Chapter 29.
The Reformation under Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth..
A.D. 1547-1558.

Edward was now upon the throne. Though only nine years of age at the time of his accession, his life had already borne evidence of much true piety; and he was looked upon as a prince of great promise by all who favoured the protestant religion. He had, indeed, "the noble ambition to make his country the vanguard of the Reformation, and to offer a refuge to the fugitive professors of the new creed in his free island." Owing to his extreme youth, his uncle, the Duke of Somerset, a man of protestant principles, was appointed protector of the kingdom; and the news of his appointment revived the hopes and quickened the flagging energies of the Christians in England. A protestant king, and a protestant protector what more could the friends of the English Reformation desire than this?

The first use that Somerset made of his authority was towards abolishing the obnoxious Six Articles — that "six-headed hydra," as Fox quaintly calls it, which had already devoured so many men. When these had been taken away, he directed his

attention to other needed reforms: the sacrifice of the Mass was forbidden; all prohibitions which had been placed upon the reading of the scriptures were withdrawn, and such persons as had been expelled the country in Henry's reign on account of their religion were granted full permission to return. Many of the bishops, too, were ejected from their Sees, in order to make way for more competent men; a change that was greatly needed, owing to the indolence and pride of too many of Henry's prelates. As for Bonner, the persecuting bishop of London, he was not only deprived of his bishopric, but, being found guilty of contempt and misdemeanour, was cast into prison. This was also the lot of the bishops of Winchester and Durham, Gardiner and Tonstall.

In the universities the influence of the protector's government was also felt; and while Oxford was profiting by the wise and godly instructions of Peter Martyr (an Italian reformer who had been invited over by the University), Cambridge was privileged in the possession of two such men as Martin Bucer and Paul Phagius, also foreigners.

Furthermore, commissioners were appointed by the King's council to visit all the dioceses throughout the country, for the purpose of redressing abuses, and of reporting upon the state of each bishopric. These were divided into parties, each party being provided with two preachers, who explained the doctrines of the Reformation to the people, and preached the gospel to them in a language they could readily understand.

In the midst of these salutary changes and reforms, a cloud appeared above the spiritual horizon, and alarming rumours began to be circulated relative to the young king's health. To increase the uneasiness of the Protestants, the protector himself (who, if we except Cranmer, was the moving spirit during this period of the Reformation), was overthrown by the political faction of the Duke of Northumberland, and sent to the scaffold. The Seymours, however, upon whom the responsibilities of government now devolved, were equally in favour of the Reformation, and the protestant bishops received every encouragement from the State in the prosecution of their arduous labours. Yet the cloud still hovered about the throne: the evil rumours about the king's health were still kept afloat; and the protestants daily grew more anxious. Before the new government had been in power a twelvemonth, these rumours were more than verified; and a new epoch in the history of the English Reformation had been reached. Edward had passed away, and Mary had ascended the throne of England.

The outlook at this point was far from pleasant. Mary was a bigoted catholic; and that was not a very promising fact for the protestants: moreover, she was a daughter of

Catherine of Aragon, of whose divorce from Henry, Cranmer had approved, and that was no very cheering thought for the ecclesiastical head of Protestantism in this country. Mary had no kindly feelings towards the doctrines which Cranmer had been so assiduously promulgating during the reign of her brother and still less had she any kindly feelings towards the primate himself, whom, indeed, she looked upon as her arch-enemy. During the young king's reign she had requested permission to hear Mass in her own house, but Edward had refused; and now, on Cranmer's devoted head, the consequences of this refusal were to fall. True, he had counselled the king to grant the request, but Mary either ignored this fact, or was ignorant of it; and nothing would now appease her indignation but Cranmer's blood. As a *queen,* she hated him because of his reforming measures; as a *catholic,* because of the restraints of a religious kind which he was supposed to have put upon her in the previous reign; and, above all, as a *woman,* because of his decision in the great divorce question, by which she had been pronounced illegitimate.

For the first few months of her reign, however, the queen dissembled her true feelings; and in order to establish her position on the throne, promised toleration. The Protestants were not to be molested either in the profession or practice of their religion, nor was any compulsion to be used in matters of faith: the catholic was to refrain from the offensive term "heretic" when speaking of a Protestant, and the Protestant was to eschew the use of the word "papist" when speaking of his catholic neighbours. But Cardinal Pole was at the queen's elbow, and Gardiner and Bonner were waiting by to drop their poison into the queen's ear, and it was scarcely possible under such circumstances that this state of neutrality should continue.

The people, too, had not yet sufficiently understood the benefits which a thorough Reformation would bring to them; for the partial work in Henry's reign had been deprived of the popular sympathy by the king's changeful and autocratic measures, and the work in Edward's reign had had no time to take root. Hence when parliament assembled, one of its first and principal acts was to abolish the religious innovations which Cranmer and Somerset had been foremost in introducing, and to restore public worship on the old basis. As an immediate consequence thousands of married clergymen were driven from their offices, and, with their wives and children, were reduced to beggary.

The persecutions were not long in following. John Rogers, prebend of St. Paul's, was the first martyr. He was imprisoned for a time in his own house, but afterwards in Newgate, where he had to herd with common criminals — murderers, thieves, and the like until his trial came on. The conduct of his judges at his first examination was

unseemly and turbulent, indeed, the judges at Huss's trial could scarcely have behaved worse. Their remarks were characterised by coarseness and levity; and more than once they gave way to fits of laughter; while the lord Chancellor, bishop Gardiner, did not consider it beneath his dignity to indulge in flouts and jeers. After three examinations in the chancellor's court, where he bore himself with great modesty and patience, Rogers was declared contumacious, and handed over to the secular power to be burnt. Before leaving the court he turned towards the Chancellor, and begged leave to make a last request. On being told to name the request, he said:

"That my poor wife, being a stranger, may come and speak with me as long as I live, for she hath ten children that are hers and mine, and I would somewhat counsel her, what were best for her to do."

The Chancellor refused. "She is not thy wife," he added.

"Yes, my lord," said Rogers, "and has been these eighteen years."

"Should I grant her to be thy wife?" asked the bishop.

"Choose you," answered Rogers; "whether you will or not, she shall be so, nevertheless."

"She shall not come at thee," said Gardiner emphatically.

"Then I have tried out all your charity," returned the martyr; "you make yourself highly displeased with the matrimony of priests, but you maintain open concubinage."

Gardiner was confounded, and could say nothing: and with this they separated.

A few days later, Rogers was taken to bishop Bonner to be degraded, and a similar incident occurred. Rogers craved that he might speak a few words to his wife before he was burned: but the request was denied! "Then," said he, "you declare what your charity is." The faithful martyr was burned at Smithfield, and met his death with christian fortitude.

The martyrdoms now grew frequent, and Gardiner and Bonner had soon as much work of this kind as they could do. Sanders, Hooper, Taylor, Farrar, all suffered in turn, with others of less note in man's eyes, though not less precious in the sight of God. A youth, named William Hunter, was one of these. Bonner offered to make him a free man and to present him with forty pounds, if he would abjure his opinions; nay, he even promised him a stewardship in his own household if he would agree to these conditions, but Hunter refused.

"I thank you for your great offers," said the youth, "notwithstanding, my lord, if you cannot persuade my conscience by scripture, I cannot find in my heart to turn from God for the love of the world, for I count all worldly things but loss and dung, in respect of the love of Christ." Hunter was burned at Smithfield, and was not behind the other martyrs in faith and constancy.

In 1555 appeared a popish primer, called "Our Lady's Matins," which was introduced into the schools, in the hope that by implanting the doctrines of Rome in the mind at an early age, they might take root more deeply, and thus impede effectually the growth of the new doctrines. A glance through the book is sufficient to shew the foolishness and blasphemy of its contents. The first lesson commences:
"Holy Mary; mother most pure of virgins all;
Mother and daughter of the King celestial,
So comfort us in our desolation,
That by thy prayers and special mediation,
We enjoy the reward of thy heavenly reign."

In another lesson Thomas a Becket is thus alluded to:
"By the blood of Thomas, which he for Thee did spend,
Make us, Christ, to climb, whither Thomas did ascend."

In other lessons prayers are offered up in the name of John the Baptist, the apostles, St. Lawrence, and Mary Magdalene; while the reference to St. Nicholas runs thus: "O God, which hast glorified blessed Nicholas, Thy holy bishop, with innumerable miracles, grant, we beseech thee, that by his merits and prayers we may be delivered from the fire of hell!" What refinement of wickedness thus to poison the minds of children, by teaching as the truth of God these blasphemous versicles and prayers!

Adult catholics were permitted to read, "The Psalter of our Lady," compiled by the "seraphical doctor St. Bonaventura," bishop of Albano and cardinal of Rome. This Psalter was nothing more than a parody on the Psalms of David from which the name of the Lord had been eliminated, and the name of the Virgin printed in its place. Thus in the seventh Psalm we read "O my Lady, in thee will I put my trust; deliver me from mine enemies, O Lady:" in the forty-fifth, "My heart is inditing a good matter, O Lady," etc. The fifty-first commences: "Have mercy upon me, O Lady, which art called the Mother of Mercy, and in the bowels of thy great compassion cleanse me from mine iniquities." The hundred and tenth psalm is even more dreadful: "The Lord said unto our Lady, 'Sit here, my Mother, on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool'!"

Seeing that blasphemy so daring was countenanced and encouraged by the Romish priests in England, the reader will scarcely be surprised to hear of any other wickedness from the same quarter. The burning or persecution of a few hundred Protestants for holding contrary views is only a natural result. In the same year that the popish primer was published, the venerable Latimer suffered martyrdom, being then in his sixty-fourth year. Truly, of him it could be said, that he had fought a good fight and had kept the faith, for none had been more true to his convictions, or more fearless in stating them, than he had been. His fellow-martyr, Ridley, was a younger man, but he had already become celebrated as one of the ablest champions of the Reformation; and, perhaps, in learning and solidity of judgment he was superior to Latimer. These two faithful servants of Christ were chained together, at the same stake; and as the fire burned around them, encouraged each other in the Lord. Ridley suffered the most, as the faggots which were used for his fire were green; and he had every need of the encouragement of his brother-martyr. "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley," said Latimer, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." For some time after Latimer had ceased to speak, Ridley was heard crying in his agony, "I cannot burn — Let the fire come unto me — I cannot burn!" But at last the flames reached some gunpowder which had been fastened about his neck, and he was mercifully delivered from his sufferings.

Then came Cranmer's turn, but not with the attendant glories of the other martyrdoms. Though a Christian, and, in the end, a martyr, he was timid and unstable almost to the last; and in a moment of strong temptation, his courage deserted him, and he fell. He was an old man, and, in the ordinary course of nature, could scarcely have lived more than a few years, yet he seemed to cling to life. It was when his examination was over and sentence had been pronounced, that he began to waver; and at this point, being borne down by the flattering persuasions of his enemies and the fears of torture in the flames, he put forth his hand to sign a recantation. This recantation, says Foxe, "was no sooner written, than the doctors and prelates without delay carried it to be printed, and sent abroad in all men's hands. The queen, having now got a time to revenge her old grief, received his recantation very gladly; but of her purpose to put him to death she would not relent."

The state of the poor archbishop at this point may be imagined. His shameful and utter denial of the faith had destroyed his peace of mind, and at the same time had brought no mitigation of his sentence. He was indeed most miserable. But Cranmer was still an object of God's love, and there was restoring grace to be had. He was one of Christ's sheep, and though he had wandered, he was still a member of the flock, loved with a

love that even failure could not dim. Presently the gracious motions of the Spirit began once more to be felt in his heart, leading him to confess the failure to God; and with that his peace of mind returned to him, and a strength that was not his own took possession of his soul. The desire for life passed away; and he began to wait with resignation and chastened joy, the moment when God should call him to Himself.

On the 21st of March 1556 he was brought from prison to St. Mary's Church, Oxford, in order to be present at his funeral sermon, which was to be preached by Dr. Cole, a zealous papist. The church was densely crowded, as it was expected that the archbishop would be called upon to read his recantation, and the moment was one of solemn interest. The papists were there to witness the triumph of their religion; the protestants, to assure their sad hearts of the truth of the disastrous news about their archbishop. As Dr. Cole proceeded with his sermon Cranmer was seen frequently to shed tears, and once or twice he turned and lifted his hands to heaven as if in prayer. Many of the people were also melted to tears, and expressed the liveliest pity and commiseration.

The sermon finished, the congregation was about to disperse, when Dr. Cole requested all present to wait a little longer. "Brethren," he said, "lest any man should doubt of this man's earnest conversion and repentance, you shall hear him speak before you; and therefore I pray you, Master Cranmer, that you will now perform what you promised not long ago; namely, that you would openly express the true and undoubted profession of your faith, that you may take away all suspicion from men, and that all men may understand you are a catholic indeed."

"I will do it, and that with a good will," said the archbishop, uncovering his head as he spoke; and then, after waiting a moment or two, he rose to his feet, and began to address the people. The first part of his discourse, which was broken by a most pathetic prayer, was a solemn word upon the vanity of human life, and the deceitfulness of riches: the confession was left for the close. As the address proceeded papists and protestants grew still and attentive, and no interruptions were offered. At last the confession was reached, and an intense, hushed feeling of excitement seemed to fall upon the assembled multitude. "And now," said Cranmer, "I come to the great thing, which so much troubleth my conscience, more than anything that ever I did or said in my whole life, and that is the setting abroad of a writing contrary to the truth; which now here I renounce and refuse, as things written with my hand, contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart, and written for fear of death, and to save my life if it might be, and that is, all such bills and papers which I have written or signed with my hand since my degradation; wherein I have written many

things untrue. And forasmuch as my hand offended, writing contrary to my heart, my hand shall first be punished for it: for when I come to the fire it shall be first burned.

"And as for the pope, I refuse him, as Christ's enemy and Antichrist, with all his false doctrine.

"And as for the sacrament, I believe, as I have taught in my book against the bishop of Winchester, which book teacheth so true a doctrine of the sacrament, that it will stand at the last day before the judgment of God, when the papistical doctrine shall be ashamed to shew her face."

A scene of indescribable confusion ensued. The Protestants wept tears of thankfulness and joy, and the papists could only gnash their teeth. As for Dr. Cole, he had heard quite enough of the confession, and when the archbishop presently began to develop his remarks on the papacy and the sacrament, he exclaimed, "Stop the heretic's mouth and take him away." Grace had triumphed, and the discomfiture of the catholics was complete.

On being brought to the place of his martyrdom, Cranmer divested himself of his outer garments, and suffered himself to be bound to the stake by an iron chain. The pile was then lighted, and, as the fire burst forth around him, he thrust his right hand into the flames (the hand which had signed the recantation) and was heard to say repeatedly, "This unworthy right hand — this unworthy right hand." Then he repeated several times the cry of Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" and so expired.

Two hundred and twenty-eight persons* in all, were sacrificed on the altar of their faith in this country during Mary's reign, five of whom were bishops, twenty-one clergymen, eight gentlemen, eighty-four tradesmen, a hundred husbandmen, labourers and servants, fifty-four women, and four children. In addition to these were many who suffered in other ways, by torture and imprisonment: and the reformer, Miles Coverdale, who retired to the Continent during the persecution, informs us that, "Some were thrown into dungeons, ugsome holes, dark, loathsome, and stinking corners. Others lay in fetters and chains, and loaded with so many irons they could scarcely stir. Some were tied in the stocks with their heels upwards, others had their legs in the stocks, and their necks chained to the wall with iron bands, having neither stone nor stool to sit upon to ease their wearied bodies. Some stood in Skevington's gyves, which were most painful engines of iron, with their bodies bent double; others were whipped and scourged, beaten with rods and buffetted with fists. Some had their hands burned with a candle, and others were miserably famished and starved."

{*Some have swelled the number to 400.}

Mary died on the 17th of November, 1558, within a few moments of her cousin and chief adviser, Cardinal Pole, and her sister Elizabeth succeeded her on the throne. No two women could have borne less resemblance to each other; and few, perhaps, have been so completely misunderstood. Protestants have talked much of Elizabeth, and have never wearied of branding with contumely the memory of Mary; so that the expressions, "Good Queen Bess" and "Bloody Mary" have become proverbial amongst us. But say what we will, Mary was the nobler woman of the two. Whatever charges of blood-guiltiness she may have incurred, she acted with a conscience — and this is more than can be said of her sister. True, she was cruel, but her very cruelty was the result of strong religious convictions. She persecuted the Protestants, but only because she thought she was doing God service. With Saul of Tarsus she might have said, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Elizabeth, however, had no such thoughts. History has shewn her to us as a woman without a heart: and as for her character what was it? She was void of modesty and reserve; cold and calculating in all her dealings, and full of dissimulation. Self-confidence was the secret of her courage, and her intellectual attainments were marred by excessive vanity. She could be everything to everybody as occasion required; and her heart was in nothing. Though she mixed in all the pleasures of a gay court, and was luxurious in matters of dress, her purpose seemed merely to dazzle those who came to court her favour; for her manner of life in private was simple and frugal in the extreme. Cool, dispassionate, and stoical hating none, and loving none she was, as we have said, a queen without a heart, and almost without a conscience.

And yet, it cannot be denied that her accession to the throne of England was the signal for the restoration of Protestantism; and though, by reason of her vanity, she was dangerously partial to much of the ritual of the Romish Church, and consented to the persecution of the Puritans, the Reformation was undoubtedly established in England during her reign, and upon a firmer and broader basis than it had ever been.

Chapter 30.
The Reformation in Scotland and Ireland.
A.D. 1494-1558.

The Reformation in Scotland began somewhat early, but not before there was a need for it. The wealth of the ecclesiastical orders had become enormous; and their greed and licentiousness were equalled only by their wealth. The lives of the people were rendered burdensome by the exactions of the priests, who, not content with making their demands upon the living, even besieged the beds of the dying, and there pursued

their extortions with impunity. The kingdom swarmed with monks of every order, Carmelites, Carthusians, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jacobins with nuns of St. Clare, of St. Austin, and of St. Scholasticus; while indolent friars, white, black, and grey, wandered through the country, leaving traces of their debaucheries wherever they set foot. The Scotch, with their shrewdness, industry, and love of plain living, were necessarily in a favourable condition to be roused by these enormities, and this will account for the early growth of the Reformation in this country.

So far back as the year 1494 there was a movement in the right direction, and the Lollards, who were found in the country in some numbers, began to state their views on the subject of image-worship, the Mass, and the licentious lives of the prelates with considerable freedom. This of course soon awoke a persecution, and thirty persons of both sexes, who held the doctrines of Wickliffe, were arrested and brought up for examination, the king himself presiding at their trial. James, however, was so much amused by the humour and tact with which one of their number, Adam Reid, of Barskimming, answered the questions of his examiners, that he merely dismissed them with an admonition: nor were there any further prosecutions for heresy during his reign.

For the next thirty years nothing very memorable occurred in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland, but at the end of that period the attention of the prelates was drawn towards a youth of royal lineage, a kinsman of James V., who had been speaking in bold and severe terms of the worldliness and immorality of the priestly order. This interesting youth was Patrick Hamilton, whose name now heads the roll of Scotland's martyrs, and whose memory will always be revered by the friends of the Reformation. His interest having been awakened by what he had heard of the reform work in other countries, he determined to visit the chief centres of the Reformation, and to that end, set out for the Continent in the year 1526. He visited Luther and Melanchthon, and received a hearty welcome from both, profiting much by their godly and wise counsels. Afterwards he proceeded to the university of Marburg, and placed himself under the tuition of the celebrated Benedictine, Francis Lambert; but the desire to communicate to his countrymen the truths which he had been drinking in at the feet of the great reformers, tended to shorten his stay, and he returned to his native land in the year 1528.

The rumour of his return overjoyed the people, and filled the minds of the priests with the gloomiest apprehensions. He was beloved by the one party for the very reasons that he was hated by the other. His noble birth, his learning, his youthful appearance, and above all his earnest piety, while it won the people, repelled the priests, and set

them plotting his destruction. Having decoyed him to St. Andrews, under the pretence of holding a free conference, they employed a prior of the Black Friars to draw from him, in private, a statement of his views; and when this had been done, he was arrested. The next day he was brought before a full council of prelates and doctors, and having been convicted of "maintaining and propagating heretical opinions," was hurriedly condemned to the stake. And this was the sequel to a Romish free conference!

When the brave youth was brought to the scene of his martyrdom, he divested himself of his cloak, and handed it to a faithful servant who stood by, saying, "This stuff will not help me in the fire, and will profit thee. After this you can receive from me no more good, but the example of my death, which, I pray you, keep in mind. For albeit it be bitter to the flesh, and fearful in man's judgment, yet it is the entrance into eternal life, which none shall possess that denies Christ Jesus before this wicked generation." When the treacherous prior, whose pretended sympathy had led the noble martyr to open his heart to him, drew near the stake, and exhorted him to recant, Hamilton reproved him for his deceit, and reminded him of the judgment-seat of Christ, to which he now appealed, and before which they would both assuredly have to stand hereafter. His last words were, "How long, O Lord, shall darkness cover this realm? How long wilt Thou suffer this tyranny of man? Lord Jesus receive my spirit!"

Perchance the reader would like to learn somewhat further concerning those heretical doctrines for which Patrick Hamilton was condemned. Here, then, is a fragment from his "Treatise on the Law and the Gospel," a work which was much circulated after his death. "The law sheweth us our sin; the gospel sheweth us a remedy for it. The law sheweth us our condemnation; the gospel sheweth us our redemption. The law is the word of wrath; the gospel is the word of grace. The law is the word of despair; the gospel is the word of comfort. The law is the word of unrest; the gospel is the word of peace. The law saith, Pay thy debt; the gospel saith, Christ hath paid it. The law saith, Thou art a sinner, despair, and thou shalt be damned; the gospel saith, Thy sins are forgiven thee, be of good comfort, thou shalt be saved. The law saith, The Father of heaven is angry with thee; the gospel saith, Christ has pacified Him with His blood. The law saith, Where is thy righteousness, goodness, and satisfaction? The gospel saith, Christ is thy righteousness, thy goodness, and satisfaction. The law saith, Thou art bound and obliged to me, to the devil, and to hell; the gospel saith, Christ has delivered thee from them all." If this be heresy, would that there were more of it in the church and in the world to-day!

The death of Patrick Hamilton was a triumph for the Reformation, for it set people thinking, and led numbers, who might otherwise have remained in darkness, to renounce popery. Even many of the Friars began preaching the reformed doctrines; and when matters presently assumed a more serious aspect, and the Archbishop of St. Andrews, James Beaton, thought it advisable to threaten the burning of a few more of the heretics, some one was heard to remark, "My lord, let him be burned in a hollow; for the reek (smoke) of Patrick Hamilton's fire hath infected as many as it blew upon."

By degrees several works of the continental reformers found their way to Scotland, and not a few copies of Tyndal's translation of the New Testament, "one copy of which usually supplied several families. At the dead hour of night, while others were asleep, they assembled in one house. The sacred volume was brought from its concealment, and while one read, the rest listened with mute attention. In this way the knowledge of the scriptures was diffused, at a period when it does not appear that there were many public preachers of the truth in Scotland."

Owing to the persecuting zeal of Archbishop Beaton, there were several martyrdoms between the years 1534 and 1539; but it was not till after the death of the Archbishop, that the animosity of the clerical party was seen at its worst. He was succeeded in office by his nephew, the Cardinal Beaton of evil fame, and his cruelty and bigotry soon gained for him a high place among the champions of papal Rome. No measures were too bloody, no schemes too diabolical for this man; he hesitated at nothing that offered any prospect of the overthrow of the Scotch Reformation. In the year 1543 five men and a woman were brought before him, charged with holding the reformed doctrines. The woman, who was wife to one of the men, had but recently been delivered of a child, and the only evidence against her was that she had refused to supplicate the Virgin during the pangs of travail. Yet the Cardinal condemned her to death with the rest, and then refused her pathetic appeal to die with her husband. To consummate the tragedy he was hanged before her eyes. Her unweaned babe was then torn from her bosom, and the poor woman was hurried by her executioners to a pool of water, where she was drowned.

The Cardinal then proceeded on his circuit, leaving the bloody traces of his progress throughout Angus and Mearns; in which latter district he was to stain his soul with the blood of a more distinguished victim. This was George Wishart, brother to the laird of Pitterow in Mearns, a man of eminently Christlike character. He is described as gentle, patient, and full of affection; and yet a man of fearless speech and unconquerable zeal. His preaching was with power, and so wrought upon his hearers, that they are said to have wept at his appeals, and trembled while he warned them of the wrath to

come. The fame of his preaching soon reached the ears of the Cardinal, who, afraid at first to proceed in the usual public manner with his intended victim, hired a priest named Wigton to assassinate him. As Wishart was descending a flight of steps, his mild but searching eyes fell on the face of the priest, and, suspecting his design, he was able to grasp his hand and gain possession of the dagger before the blow was struck. The movement was unexpected, and the priest, filled with fear and remorse, threw himself at the reformer's feet and acknowledged his guilt. Meanwhile, the people crowded round with indignant exclamations, and were on the point of rushing upon the assassin, when Wishart, perceiving the man's danger, placed his arms around him, and said, "Whosoever troubles him, troubles me; for he has hurt me in nothing," and so saved his life.

This incident occurred in Dundee: afterwards Wishart went to Leith, and from thence to East Lothian, where he remained some time, preaching in the different towns and villages. Here, too, he made the acquaintance of John Knox, the future reformer of Scotland, who was then living as tutor in the family of the Douglas's of Longniddry. Knox at once publicly associated himself with the cause, and became sword-bearer to Wishart that is to say, stood at the head of the armed retainers, who guarded the person of the popular evangelist while he was travelling or preaching. Knox little thought how soon his new friend would be taken from him: but it was while Wishart was still in East Lothian that Cardinal Beaton, who watched his progress with the eyes of a fox, and the pertinacity of a blood-hound, at length by treachery got possession of his person. He was shortly afterwards arraigned before a council of prelates, and condemned to the flames.

The death of Wishart was like his life — Christlike and beautiful. The scene of his martyrdom was just outside the castle-gates of St. Andrews, a spot which had been chosen by the Cardinal himself, as he wished to feast his eyes on the dying agonies of the faithful evangelist. All things being in readiness, Wishart was brought to the place of execution, where he fell upon his knees, and prayed aloud, "O Thou Saviour of the world, have mercy on me! Father of heaven, I commend my spirit into Thy holy hands." This he repeated three times, and then, rising to his feet, addressed the people, exhorting them, in the most affecting manner, to give heed to the word of God. Even the stern executioner was overcome by this appeal, and falling at his feet, expressed his sorrow for the painful task that was committed to him. and requested to be forgiven. Wishart bade him draw near, and then kissed him on the cheek, saying, "Lo, here is a token that I forgive thee; my heart, do thine office." The peal of a trumpet presently announced that the moment of execution had arrived, and a light was placed to the faggots. With that the captain, who had charge of the execution, rode

forward to the pile, and exhorted Wishart to be of good cheer; to which the martyr replied "This fire torments my body, but no way abates my spirit." Then, observing the Cardinal at one of the windows of the fore-tower of the castle, which overlooked the scene of torture, he exclaimed: "He who in such state from that high place feedeth his eyes with my torments, within few days shall be hanged out at the same window, to be seen with as much ignominy as he now leaneth there in his pride." He then expired.

These words proved to be prophetic; and within three months from the death of the brave evangelist, the Cardinal was surprised in his castle by a party of indignant nobles and gentlemen, one of whom, James Melville, stabbed him twice with his sword. The wretched man expired without any signs of repentance, exclaiming with his last breath, "I am a priest I am a priest! fie fie all is gone!" His dead body was then suspended from the same window at which he had watched the martyrdom of George Wishart.

Now that Wishart was gone, the eyes of the Scotch Protestants turned instinctively to Knox: but before the influence of the Reformer could be widely felt in the country, he was taken prisoner by the papists, and imprisoned in a French galley, where he suffered many hardships and indignities. On one occasion a beautifully painted figure of the Virgin was brought to him, and he was bidden to give it the kiss of adoration, but refused, declaring that all images were accursed. An attempt was then made to compel him to kiss it, by forcing the image to his lips; but Knox snatched it from the officer's hand and threw it into the water, saying, "Let our Lady now save herself; she is light enough, let her learn to swim." He was never afterwards troubled in this way.

The Reformer laboured for some time at the galleys, and then was liberated on the application of the English ambassadors, when he crossed to England, and resided nearly five years in this country. An offer of the bishopric of Rochester, which was made to him during this period, was declined, because he disapproved of the English liturgy, but he accepted the post of an itinerant evangelist, and his labours were greatly blessed in the northern counties. On the outbreak of the Marian persecution he retired to Geneva, where he made the acquaintance of Calvin; and a warm friendship sprang up between the two Reformers. Calvin was his senior by many years; indeed, had almost finished his course when Knox was beginning to preach; and his influence upon the mind of the Scotch preacher was great and lasting.

In the year 1555 Knox returned to his native land, and was gratified to find that the work had grown during his absence. Several of the nobility had embraced the reformed doctrines, among whom were Lord Lorne, Lord Erskine, Lord James Stewart, the Earl of Marischall, the Earl of Glencairn, John Erskine of Dun, and William Maitland

of Lithington; and these nobles rallied round him, and much encouraged him by their private friendships, as well as by their public witness for the truth. After labouring during the winter of 1555-6 in Kyle, Cunningham, Angus-shire, and elsewhere, the continued and increasing animosity of the clergy, who were zealously plotting his destruction, rendered it expedient for him to withdraw from the country, and in June or July of the latter year, he retired a second time to Geneva, where he remained till the January of 1559.

During his absence the fires of persecution were kept burning, and an aged priest, named Walter Mill, who had embraced the reformed doctrines, was one of the victims of the papal malice. As no one could be found heartless enough to execute the sentence upon this martyr, the Archbishop of St. Andrews commanded one of his own domestics to perform the task, and the brutal sentence was carried out on the 28th of April, 1558. The venerable old man was faithful to the last, and delivered this testimony from amid the flames: "As for me, I am fourscore and two years old, and cannot live long by course of nature; but a hundred better shall rise out of the ashes of my bones. I trust in God, I shall be the last that shall suffer death in Scotland for this cause."

On May 2nd, 1559, Knox again returned to Scotland, brought back by the earnest solicitations of his friends. His presence was needed, as the people were in a ferment, and the country was threatened with civil war. Not that the preaching of the great reformer was at all likely to soothe the popular mind: indeed, it would seem that Knox both approved of the agitation, and advocated the destruction of the monasteries, since it was from him they learnt the party-cry, "Pull down the nests, and the rooks will flee away."

And yet, in spite of appearances, the reformer was no friend to lawlessness or disaffection. Writing from Dieppe at an earlier period to the Protestant lords of Scotland, he refers to rumours which had reached his ears, that 'contradiction and rebellion' were made to the authority by some in Scotland. "In which point," he adds, "my conscience will not suffer me to keep back from you my counsel, yea, my judgment and commandment, which I communicate with you in God's fear, and by the assurance of his truth; which is, that none of you that seek to promote the glory of Christ, do suddenly disobey, or displease the established authority in things lawful; neither yet, that ye assist or fortify such as, for their own particular cause and worldly promotion, would trouble the same." He who would write thus does not deserve the name, which some have endeavoured to fix upon him, of "lawless and seditious priest."

The activity of the papists increased with the news of the reformer's return, for they felt that a decisive moment was at hand, and that it would need all their scheming and ingenuity to secure a victory over so powerful a leader. The infamous Queen-regent, Mary of Guise, bent on the destruction of the Protestants, had directed all her attention to Perth, where the tumult was at its height; and, confident in her resources, could think of no defeat. It was a moment of peril for the Scotch Reformation. On the other hand, the presence of Knox revived the flagging energies of the Protestants, and his fiery eloquence did much to swell their ranks. They were also aided by troops and money from England, sent by order of Elizabeth, who sided with them partly from religious, but *chiefly* from political motives; for the Pope had declared her illegitimate, and had named Mary of Scotland to supplant her on the throne. The struggle lasted for about a year, but without any serious loss on either side, and victory then declared for the Protestants. Meanwhile the queen-dowager had been removed by death, and the nation — prepared by the preaching of Knox — was both in a condition and position to welcome the establishment of the Reformation. In the month of August, 1560, the parliament subscribed to a confession of faith drawn up by the reformer; "abolished the papal jurisdiction; prohibited, under certain penalties, the celebration of mass; and rescinded all the laws formerly made in support of the Roman Catholic Church, and against the reformed faith."

Even dark, popish Ireland was not unvisited by the light during the period which we have been considering; and in the reign of Henry VIII. a Protestant clergyman, named George Brown, who had formerly been an Augustine monk, was made Archbishop of Dublin, and received instructions from the King to suppress the Roman hierarchy in the Island. The efforts of the Archbishop to carry out the royal command were received with much opposition, and his life was frequently endangered by the malicious plottings of the Catholics; but in the year 1536, the Irish parliament assembled at Dublin, and agreed to the reception of the reformed doctrines.

The work, however, does not seem to have made much progress, and it excited so little anxiety among the papists during Mary's reign, that no measures were taken to suppress it, until shortly before her death. A commission was then drawn up, and intrusted to a Dr. Coles, who set out for Dublin the following day. Stopping at Chester on his journey, the innkeeper's wife heard him boast to the mayor of the town, that he had that in his valise "which would lash the heretics of Ireland," referring, of course, to his commission. The woman happened to be a Protestant, and moreover, had a brother in Dublin who had embraced the reformed doctrines, so, watching her opportunity, she quietly removed the commission from the bag, and left in its place a pack of cards, with the knave of clubs uppermost. When he got to Ireland, and opened

his bag in the presence of the Council, which had assembled to listen to the commission, his proud vauntings gave place to astonishment and shame. But a Romish priest who was by, made light of the loss, and recommended the doctor to send to England for a fresh commission, adding, "and meanwhile let us shuffle the cards." The new decree was obtained, but before it reached the Irish metropolis, the queen was dead.

The reign of Elizabeth saw the policy of her sister's reign reversed, and shortly after her accession Protestantism became, by proclamation, the national religion.

*****

We have now completed the task which we proposed to ourselves in setting out, having written, according to our ability, a short history of the Christian Church, from the Apostolic Era to the Establishment of the Reformation: we must therefore leave it with the reader to discover, in the subsequent history of the Church, those developments which answer to the prophetic descriptions of the churches in Philadelphia and Laodicea. But we may add that, if our interpretations with regard to those which we have treated of (namely, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, and Sardis) be correct, the period of the Church's history must be very near its close. This thought is shared by many, and is supported by other scriptures than those which we have touched upon. Already there has been a mystic awakening throughout Christendom, and the hope of the Lord's return has been revived in many hearts. The cry has gone forth, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!" and who will say that this awakening is not of God? The question only follows, What should be the attitude of soul of every child of God at such a moment? The question is a solemn one, and can only be answered by those who have been duly affected by its solemnity.

The End.