

HISTORY
OF
SACERDOTAL CELIBACY
IN THE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH

BY
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THIRD EDITION, REVISED

Οὐ γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστὶ κτείνειν ἐπὶ τα παρὰ φύσιν

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PREFACE

THE following work was written several years since, simply as an historical study, and with little expectation of its publication. Recent movements in several portions of the great Christian Church seem to indicate, however, that a record of ascetic celibacy, as developed in the past, may not be without interest to those who are watching the tendencies of the present.

So far as I am aware, no work of the kind exists in English literature, and those which have appeared in the Continental languages are almost exclusively of a controversial character. It has been my aim to avoid polemics, and I have therefore sought merely to state facts as I have found them, without regard to their bearing on either side of the questions involved. As those questions have long been the subject of ardent disputation, it has seemed proper to substantiate every statement with a reference to its authority.

The scope of the work is designedly confined to the enforced celibacy of the sacerdotal class. The vast history of monachism has therefore only been touched upon incidentally when it served to throw light upon the rise and progress of religious asceticism. The various celibate communities which have arisen in this country, such as the Dunkers and Shakers, are likewise excluded from the plan of the volume. These limitations occasion me less regret since the appearance of M. de Montalembert's "Monks of the West" and Mr. W. Hepworth Dixon's "New America," in which the student will probably find all that he may require on these subjects.

Besides the controversial importance of the questions connected with Christian asceticism, it has seemed to me that a brief history like the present might perhaps possess interest for the general reader, not only on account of the influence which ecclesiastical celibacy has exerted, directly and indirectly, on the progress of civilisation, but also from the occasional glimpse into the interior life of past ages afforded in reviewing the effect upon society of the policy of the Church as respects the relations of the sexes. The more ambitious historian, in detailing the intrigues of the court and the vicissitudes of the field, must of necessity neglect the minuter incidents which illustrate the habits, the morals, and the modes of thought of bygone generations. From such materials a monograph like this is constructed, and it may not be unworthy the attention of those who deem that the life of nations does not consist exclusively of political revolutions and military achievements.

PHILADELPHIA, *May* 1867.

During the forty years which have elapsed since the appearance of the first edition of this work, and the twenty-three since that of the second, much has been added to our knowledge of the past and many changes have occurred in the present. Not anticipating a demand for a third edition, the author had made no special preparation for recording and incorporating this new material, but he has endeavoured to respond to the call by such revision and alteration as his other engagements have permitted. In the later portions of the book these have been extensive, and he hopes that in its present shape the work may commend itself to the kindly consideration of those who feel an interest in the important questions suggested by the subject.

PHILADELPHIA, *March* 1907.

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SACERDOTAL CELIBACY

THE Latin Church is the great fact which dominates the history of modern civilisation. All other agencies which moulded the destinies of mediæval Europe were comparatively isolated or sporadic in their manifestations. Thus in one place we may trace the beneficent influence of commerce at work, in another the turbulent energy of the rising Third Estate; the mortal contests of the feudal powers with each other and with progress are waged in detached and convulsive struggles; chivalry casts only occasional and evanescent flashes of light amid the darkness of military barbarism; literature seeks to gain support from any power which will condescend to lend transitory aid to the plaything of the moment. Nowhere do we see combined effort, nowhere can we detect a pervading impulse, irrespective of locality or of circumstance, save in the imposing machinery of the Church establishment. This meets us at every point, and in every age, and in every sphere of action. In the dim solitude of the cloister, the monk is training the minds which are to mould the destinies of the period, while his roof is the refuge of the desolate and the home of the stranger. In the tribunal, the priest is wrestling with the baron, and is extending his more humane and equitable code over a jurisdiction subjected to the caprices of feudal or customary law, as applied by a class of ignorant and arbitrary tyrants. In the royal palace, the hand of the ecclesiastic, visible or invisible, is guiding

the helm of state, regulating the policy of nations, and converting the brute force of chivalry into the supple instrument of his will. In Central Europe, lordly prelates, with the temporal power and possessions of the highest princes, joined to the exclusive pretensions of the Church, make war and peace, and are sovereign in all but name, owing no allegiance save to Emperors whom they elect and Popes whose cause they share. Far above all, the successor of St. Peter from his pontifical throne claims the whole of Europe as his empire, and dictates terms to kings. At the other extremity of society, the humble minister of the altar, with his delegated power over heaven and hell, wields in cottage as in castle an authority hardly less potent, and enforces on the populations the behests of his superiors. Even art offers a willing submission to the universal mistress, and seeks the embodiment of its noblest aspirations in the lofty poise of the cathedral spire, the rainbow glories of the painted window, and the stately rhythm of the solemn chant.

This vast fabric of ecclesiastical supremacy presents one of the most curious problems which the world's history affords. Through its perfected organisation the Church wielded its wide and absolute authority, deriving its force from moral power alone, marshalling no legions of its own in battle array, but permeating everything with its influence, walking unarmed through deadly strife, rising with renewed strength from every prostration, triumphing alike over the savage nature of the barbarian and the enervated apathy of the Roman tributary, blending discordant races and jarring nations into one great brotherhood of subjection—such was the Papal hierarchy, a marvel and a mystery. Well is it personified in Gregory VII., a fugitive from Rome, without a rood of ground to call him master, a rival Pope lording it in

the Vatican, a triumphant Emperor vowed to internecine strife, yet issuing his commands as sternly and as proudly to prince and potentate as though he were the unquestioned suzerain of Europe, and listened to as humbly by three-fourths of Christendom. The man wasted away in the struggle; his death was but the accident of time: the Church lived on, and marched to inevitable victory.

The investigations of the curious can hardly be deemed misapplied in analysing the elements of this impalpable but irresistible power, and in examining the causes which have enabled it to preserve such unity of action amid such diversity of environment, presenting everywhere by turns a solid and united front to the opposing influences of barbarism and civilisation. In detaching one of these elements from the group, and tracing out its successive vicissitudes, I may therefore be pardoned for thinking the subject of sufficient interest to warrant a minuteness of detail that would otherwise perhaps appear disproportionate. It was by no means the least of the factors in the conquering career of the Church that it required of all, to whom it granted the supernatural powers conferred in holy orders, that they should surrender themselves to it unreservedly and irrevocably, that they should sunder all human ties, should have no aspirations beyond its service, no family affections to distract their loyalty, no family duties on which to waste its substance, and no ambitions save for the rewards which it alone could bestow.

CHAPTER I

ASCETICISM

THE most striking contrast between the Mosaic Dispensation and the Law of Christ is the materialism of the one, and the pure spirituality of the other. The Hebrew prophet threatens worldly punishments, and promises fleshly rewards: the Son of Man teaches us to condemn the treasures of this life, and directs all our fears and aspirations towards eternity. The exaggeration of these teachings by the zeal of fervent disciples led to the ascetic efforts to subjugate nature, which present so curious a feature in religious history, and of which those concerning the relation of the sexes form the subject of our consideration.

This special phase of asceticism was altogether foreign to the traditions of Israel, averse as they were from all restrictions upon the full physical development of man. Enjoying, apparently, no conception of a future existence, the earlier Hebrews had no incentive to sacrifice the pleasures of the world for those of a Heaven of which they knew nothing; nor was the gross polytheism, which the monotheistic prophets combated, of a nature to lead to ascetic practices. The worship of Ashera—probably identical with the Babylonian Beltis or Mylitta—undoubtedly consecrated the sacrifice of chastity as a religious rite, and those who revered the goddess of fertility as one of the supreme deities were not likely to impose any restrictions on the exercise of her powers.¹ We see,

¹ Amos II. 7.—Deut. XXIII. 18.—Micah I. 7.—Herod. I. 199.—Cf. Kuenen, *Religion of Israel*, I. 92–3, 368.—Rawlinson's *Essay X. on Herod. I.*—Luciani de *Syria Dea* vi.

indeed, in the story of Judah and Tamar, and in the lamentation of the daughter of Jephthah, that virginity was regarded almost as a disgrace, and that child-bearing was considered the noblest function of woman; while the institution of levirate marriage shows an importance attributed to descendants in the male line as marked as among the Hindu Arya. The hereditary character of the priesthood, moreover, both as vested in the original Levites and the later Tsadukim and Baithusin, indicates conclusively that even among the orthodox no special sanctity attached to continence, and that the temporary abstinence from women required of those who handled the hallowed articles of the altar (I. Sam. xxi. 4-5) was simply a distinction drawn between the sacerdotal class and the laity; for in the elaborate instructions as to uncleanness there is no allusion made to sexual indulgence, though the priest who had partaken of wine was forbidden to enter the Tabernacle, and defilement arising from contact with the dead was a disability (Levit. x., xxi., xxii.),¹ while the highest blessing that could be promised as a reward for obedience to God was that "there shall not be male or female barren among you" (Deut. vii. 14). In fact, the only manifestation of asceticism as a religious ordinance, prior to the Second Temple, is seen in the vow of the Nazirites, which consisted merely in allowing the hair to remain unshorn, in the abstinence from wine, and in avoiding the pollution arising from contact with the dead. Slender as were these restrictions, the ordinary term of a Nazirate was only thirty days, though it might be assumed for life, as in the cases of Samson and Samuel; and the vows for long terms were deemed sufficiently pleasing to God to

¹ When the Church assumed that marriage was incompatible with the ministry of the altar, it was somewhat puzzled to reconcile the hereditary character of the high priesthood with the morning and evening sacrifice required of the high priest (Exod. xxx. 7-8). For ingenious special pleading to explain this away, see St. Augustin, *Quæstt. in Pentateuch.* III. lxxxii. and *Retractt.* II. lv. 2.

serve as means of propitiation, as in the case of Hannah, who thus secured her offspring Samuel, and in that of Helena, Queen of Adiabene, who vowed a Nazirate of seven years if her son Izaces should return in safety from a campaign.¹ The few references to the custom in Scripture, however, show that it was little used, and that it exercised no visible influence over social life during the earlier periods.

When the conquests of Cyrus released the Hebrews from captivity, the close relations established with the Persians wrought no change in this aspect of the Jewish faith. Mazdeism, in fact, was a religion so wholesome and practical in its character that asceticism could find little place among its prescribed observances, and the strict maintenance of its priesthood in certain families, who transmitted their sacred lore from father to son, shows that no restrictions were placed upon the ministers of Hormadz, or athravas,² though in the later period of the Achæmenian empire, after the purity of ancient Mazdeism had become corrupted, the priestesses of the Sun were required to observe chastity, without necessarily being virgins.³ With the conquests of Alexander, however, Judaism was exposed to new influences, and was brought into relation at once with Grecian thought and with the subtle mysticism of India, with which intercourse became frequent under the Greek empire. Beyond the Indus the Sankhya philosophy was already venerable, which taught the nothingness of life, and that the supreme good consisted in the absolute victory over all human wants and desires.⁴ Already Buddha had reduced this philo-

¹ Num. vi. 2-21.—Judges XIII.—XVI.—I. Sam. i. 11.—Lament. iv. 7-8.—Amos ii. 11-12.—I. Macc. iii. 49.—Mishna, Tract. Nazir.

² Yasht—Kordah 10.—Bahram Yasht 46.—Sad-der, Porta C.—Philost. de Vit. Sophist. i. 10.

³ Justin. Historiar. x. ii.

⁴ Kapila's Aphorisms I. 1 (Ballantyne's Translation).—Sankhya Karika XLV., LXVI., LXVIII. (Colebrook & Wilson's Translation).—For the intercourse between

sophy into a system of religion, the professors of which were bound to chastity—a rule impossible of observance by the world at large, but which became obligatory upon its innumerable priests and monks, when it spread and established itself as a Church, thus furnishing the prototype which was subsequently imitated by Roman Christianity.¹ Already Brahmanism had invented the classes of Vanaprasthas, Sannyasis, and others—ascetics whose practices of self-mortification anticipated and excelled all that is related of Christian Antonys and Simeons—although the ancestor worship which required every man to provide descendants who should keep alive the Sraddha in honour of the Pitris of his forefathers postponed the entrance into the life of the anchorite until after he should have fulfilled his parental duties:² and we know from the references in the Greek writers to the Hindu gymnosophists how great an impression these customs had made upon those to whom they were a novelty.³ Already the Yoga system had been framed, whereby absorption into the Godhead was to be obtained by religious mendicancy, penances, mortifications, and the severest severance of self from all external surroundings.⁴ All this had been founded on the primæval doctrine of the Vedas with respect to the virtue of *Tapas*, or austere religious abstraction, to which the most extravagant powers were attributed, conferring upon its votaries the authority of

India and the West, see A. Weber, "Die Verbindungen Indiens," etc., in "Indische Skizzen."

¹ Surangama Sutra (Beal's Catena, pp. 348–9).—Davids and Oldenberg's Vinaya Texts, Part I. p. 4.—Hodgson's Essays on the Languages, etc., of Nepal and Tibet, pp. 63, 68–70.—Hardy's Eastern Monachism, pp. 50 sqq.

² Manava Dharma Sastra IV. 257; VI. 1–81. Yet the Sutta Nipata, a Buddhist scripture of unquestioned antiquity, states that of old the Brahmins practised celibacy up to the forty-eighth year. (Sir M. C. Swamy's Translation, p. 81.) Cf. Strabon. Lib. XV., and Clement. Alexand. Stromat. Lib. III.

³ See Bisse's edition of Palladius de Gentibus Indiæ.—Diog. Laert. Proem.—Philost. de Vit. Apollon. Tyan.—Porphy. de Abstinens. IV. 17.

⁴ A. Weber, Hist. Ind. Lit., pp. 163, 237–9.—Wilson's Vishnu Purana, I. 164.—Garrett's Class. Dict. India, p. 753.

gods.¹ With all the absurdities of these beliefs and practices, they yet sprang from a profound conviction of the superiority of the spiritual side of man's nature, and if their theory of the nothingness of mortal existence was exaggerated, yet they tended to elevate the soul, at the expense, it must be confessed, of a regard to the duties which man owes to society.

The influences arising from this system of religious philosophy, so novel to the Semitic races, were tardy in making themselves felt upon the Hebrews, but they became gradually apparent. The doctrine of a future life with rewards and punishments, doubtless derived from Chaldean and Mazdean sources during the Captivity and under the Persian Empire, slowly made its way, and though opposed by the aristocratic conservative party in power—the Tsadukim or Sadducees (descendants of Zadoc, or just men)—it became one of the distinctive dogmas of the Beth Sopherim or House of Scribes, composed of religious teachers, trained in all the learning of the day, sprung from the people, and eager to maintain their nationality against the temporising policy of their rulers.² At the breaking out of the Maccabean revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes we find the nation divided into two factions—the Sadducees, disposed rather to submit to the Hellenising tyranny of Antioch, and the Chassidim (the Assideans of the Vulgate), democratic

¹ Rig Veda, VIII. VIII. 48 (Langlois' Translation).—Muir's Sanskrit Texts, IV. 160 sqq.—Harivansa Lect. xxxii.—Hitopadesa (Lancereau's Translation, pp. 178–9, and note to p. 160). The same follies were common to Buddhism. See Fah-Hian (Beal's Buddhist Pilgrims, pp. 101–2).—Eitel's Handbook of Chinese Buddhism, pp. 33, 76.—Rogers's Buddhaghosa's Parables, p. 59.—How nearly Christian mysticism reached these altitudes may be seen by reference to the Umbilicarii or Quietist monks of Mt. Athos, in the fourteenth century, who became suffused with divine light after prolonged contemplation of their navels (Basnage, in Canisii Thes. Monument. Eccles. IV. 366–7.—Dupin, Bibl. des Auteurs Eccles. XI. 96.—Beal's Catena, p. 151).

² A very good exposition of the Pharisaic revolution will be found in Cohen, *Les Pharisiens*, 2 vols. 8vo, Paris, 1877.

reformers, ready for innovation, and prepared to die in defence of their faith. In the triumph of the Hasmonean revolution they obtained control of the State, and in the development of the Oral Law by the Scribes, supplementing the Torah or Written Law, they engrafted permanently their doctrines upon the ancestral belief. With the tenet of spiritual immortality there followed, as a necessary consequence, the subordination of the present existence to life hereafter, which is the direct incentive to asceticism. The religious exaltation of the stormy period which intervened between the liberation from Antioch and the subjugation to Rome afforded a favourable soil for the growth of this tendency, and rendered the minds of the devout accessible to the influences both of Eastern and of Western speculation. How powerful eventually became the latter upon the Alexandrian Jews may be estimated from the mysticism of Philo.

With their triumph over Antioch, the name of the Chassidim disappears as that of an organised party, and in its place we find those of two factions or sects—the Perushim (Pharisees) or Separatists, who maintained an active warfare, temporal and theological, with the Sadducees, and the Essenes, mystics, who bound themselves by vows, generally including the Nazirate, and withdrew from active life for the benefit of spiritual growth and meditation.

The Essenes cultivated the soil and sometimes even lived in cities, but oftener dwelt as anchorites, using no artificial textures as clothing, and no food save what was spontaneously produced. They mostly practised daily ablutions and admitted neophytes to their society by the rite of baptism after a novitiate of a year, followed by two years of probation. Among those who did not live as hermits, property was held in common, and marriage was abstained from, and it is to this latter

practice doubtless that reference was made by Christ in the text "There be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake." The Essenes enjoyed high consideration among the people; their teachings were listened to with respect, and they were regarded as especially favoured with the gifts of divination and prophecy. There can be no doubt that John the Baptist was an Essene; James of Jerusalem, brother of Jesus, was a Nazirite and probably an Essene, and Christ himself may reasonably be regarded as trained in the principles of the sect. His tendencies all lay in that direction, and it is observable that, while he is unsparing in his denunciations of the Scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees, he never utters a word of condemnation of the Essenes.¹

It is thus easy to understand the refined spirituality of Christ's teachings, and the urgency with which he called the attention of man from the gross temptations of earth to the higher things which should fit him for the inheritance of eternal life. Yet his profound wisdom led him to forbear from enjoining even the asceticism of the Essenes. He allowed a moderate enjoyment of the gifts of the Creator; and when he sternly rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees for imposing, in their development of the Oral Law, burdens upon men not easily to be borne by the weakness of human nature, he was far indeed from seeking to render obligatory, or even to recommend, practices which only the fervour of fanaticism could render endurable. No teacher before him had ventured to form so lofty a conception of the

¹ Josephi Vit. 2.—Ej. Antiq. xv. x. 5; xvii. xiii. 3; xviii. i. 5.—Ej. Bell. Jud. ii. viii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 12.—Euseb. H. E. ii. 23, ex Hegesippo.—Hippol. Refut. Omn. Hæres. ix. xiii.—xxii.—Philastr. Lib. de Hæres. ix.—Matt. xix. 12.—Porphy. de Abstin. iv. 11–13.—Philo probably obtained from the Essenes the ideal which he embodied in his account of the supposititious Therapeutæ (Philon. Lib. de Vit. Contempl. pp. 690–1, Ed. 1613).

marriage-tie. It was an institution of God himself whereby man and wife became one flesh. "What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder;" and though he refrained from condemning abstention from wedlock, he regarded it as possible only to those whose exceptional exaltation of temperament might enable them to overcome the instincts and passions of humanity.¹

When the broad proselyting views and untiring energy of Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, were brought to bear upon the little circle of mourning disciples, it was inevitable that a rupture should take place. No one in the slightest degree familiar with the spirit of Judaism at that day can have difficulty in understanding how those who still regarded themselves as Jews, who looked upon their martyr, not as the Son of God, but, in the words of Peter, as "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you," and who held, as is urged in the Epistle of James, firmly to their Master's injunction to preserve every jot and tittle of the Law, should regard with growing distrust and distaste the activity of the Pharisee Paul, who, like other Pharisees, was ready to encompass land and sea to gain one proselyte, and, more than this, was prepared to throw down the exclusive barriers of the Law, in order to invite all mankind to share in the glad tidings of Salvation.² The division came in time, and as the Gentile Church spread and flourished, it stigmatised as heretics those who adhered to the simple monotheistic reformed Judaism which Christ had taught. These became known as the Ebionim, or Poor Men, Essenes, and others, who followed Christ as a

¹ Matt. XXIII. 3.—Luc. xi. 46.—Matt. xi. 4-10.

² Acts II. 44-6.—James II. 10.—Matt. v. 17-19; XXIII. 15.—Cf. Galat. II. 7.

prophet inspired by God, who accepted all of the apostles save Paul, whom they regarded as a transgressor of the Law, holding their property in common, honouring virginity rather than marriage, but uttering no precept upon the subject, and observing the Written Law with rigid accuracy. They maintained a quiet existence for four centuries, making no progress, but exciting no antagonism save on the part of vituperative heresiologists, whose denunciations, however, contain no rational grounds for regarding them otherwise than as the successors of the original followers of Christ.¹

Meanwhile, Pauline Christianity, launched on the tumultuous existence of the Gentile world, had adapted itself to the passions and ambitions of men, had availed itself both of their strength and of their weakness, and had become a very different creed from that which had been taught around the Sea of Galilee, and had seen its teacher expiate on Calvary his revolt against the Oral Law. In its gradual transformation through the ages, from Essenic and Ebionic simplicity to the magnificent sacerdotalism of the Innocents and Gregories, it has felt itself bound to find or make, in its earliest records, some precedent for every innovation, and accordingly its ardent polemics in modern times have endeavoured to prove that the celibacy of its ministers was, if not absolutely ordained, at least practised from the earliest period. Much unnecessary logic and argument have been spent upon this subject since the demand which arose for clerical marriage at the Reformation forced the champions of the Church to find scriptural

¹ Irenæi contra Hæres. i. xxvi. 2.—Hippol. Refut. Omn. Hæres. vii. xxii.—Tertullii Præscript. xlvii.—Euseb. H. E. iii. xxvii.—Epiphan. Panar. Hæres. xxx.—Hieron. Comment. in Matt. ii. xii. 2.—Origenis de Princip. iv. 22; Ejusd. contra Celsum ii. 1; v. 65.—It is possible that "them which say they are Jews and are not," condemned in Rev. ii. 9; iii. 9, were Ebionites. The Talmud represents the Jewish doctors, after the destruction of Jerusalem, as consorting familiarly and disputing with the Ebionite Christians (Cohen, II. 238-9).

authority for the canon which enjoins celibacy. The fact is that prior to the sixteenth century the fathers of the Church had no scruple in admitting that in primitive times the canon had no existence and the custom was not observed. The reader may therefore well be spared a disquisition upon a matter which may be held to be self-evident, and be contented with a brief reference to some of the authorities of the Church who, prior to the Reformation, admitted that in primitive times marriage was freely permitted to the ministers of Christ.

No doctor of the Church did more than St. Jerome to impose the rule of celibacy on its members, yet even he admits that at the beginning there was no absolute injunction to that effect; and he endeavours to apologise for the admission by arguing that infants must be nourished with milk and not with solid food.¹ In the middle of the eleventh century, during the controversy between Rome and Constantinople, Rome had no scruple in admitting that the celebrated text of St. Paul (I. Cor. ix. 5) meant that the apostles were married, though subsequent commentators have exhausted so much ingenuity in explaining it away.² A century later Gratian, the most learned canonist of his time, in the "Decretum," undertaken at the request of the papal court, which has ever since maintained its position as the foundation of the canon law, felt no hesitation in admitting that, before the adoption of the canon, marriage was everywhere undisturbed among those in orders, as it continued to be in the Greek Church.³ St. Thomas Aquinas admits that Christ could not properly require men to leave their wives, and that he did not enforce it on St. Peter.⁴

¹ Hieron. adv. Jovin. I. 34.

² Gratiani Decret. P. I. Dist. xxxi. c. xi.

³ Gratiani Comment. in Can. 13. Dist. lvi. See also Comment. in Dist. xxxi.

⁴ Summæ II. ii. Quæst. 186 Art. 4 ad 1.

There were in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries few more learned men than Giraldus Cambrensis, whose orthodoxy was unquestioned, and who, as Archdeacon of St. David's, vigorously sought to enforce the rule of continence upon his recalcitrant clergy. Yet in a strenuous exhortation to them to mend the error of their ways in this respect, he admits that clerical celibacy has no spiritual or apostolic warrant.¹ That this was universally admitted at the time is manifested by Alfonso the Wise, of Castile, about the middle of the thirteenth century, asserting the fact in the most positive manner, while forbidding marriage to the priests of his dominions, in the code known as *Las Siete Partidas*.²

Gerson, indeed, who, like most of the ecclesiastics of his time, attributes to the Council of Nicæa the introduction of celibacy, seems inclined to justify the change assumed to have been then made, by alluding to the forged donation of Constantine. That the temporalities of the Church could only be entrusted to men cut off from family ties was an axiom in his day, and though he does not himself draw the conclusion, he clearly regarded the supposed accession to the landed estates of the Church as a satisfactory explanation of the prohibition of marriage to its ministers in the fourth century.³ Shortly afterwards, Pius II., one of the most learned of the popes, had no scruple in admitting that the Primitive Church was administered by a married clergy.⁴ Just before the Reformation, Geoffroi Boussard, dean of the faculty of theology of Paris, published, in

¹ *Gemma Eccles.* II. vi.

² Casar solien todos los clérigos antiguamente en el comienzo de la nuestra ley, segunt lo facien en la ley vieja de los judios: mas despues deso los clérigos de occidente, que obedecieron siempre á la eglesia de Roma, acordaron de vevir en castidat. —*Las Siete Partidas* I. vi. 39.

³ *Dial. Sophiae et Naturæ Act.* 4.

⁴ Non erravit ecclesia primitiva quæ sacerdotibus permisit uxores, nec errat moderna quæ subtrahit. — *Ænei Sylvii Epist.* CXXX. (Ed. 1571, p. 670).

1505, a dissertation on priestly continence, in which he positively assumes, as the basis of his argument, that the use of marriage was universally permitted to those in holy orders, from the time of Christ to that of Siricius and Innocent I.; and this may be assumed to be the opinion of the University of Paris, for Boussard formally submitted his tract to that body, and its approbation is to be found in the fact that he was subsequently elevated to its chancellorship, and was sent as its delegate to the Council of Pisa.¹ The future antagonist of Luther, the learned Dr. John Eck, in 1512, had no hesitation in instancing celibacy as an example of the laws which the Church had altered to suit the changes of the times.²

Even after the Reformation, unexceptionable orthodox authority is found to the same effect. In 1564, Pius IV. admitted it in an epistle to the German princes, and explained it by the necessity of the times.³ Zaccaria, probably the most learned of Catholic polemics on the subject, endeavours to reconcile his belief in the Apostolic origin of clerical celibacy, with the indubitable practice of the primitive Church, by suggesting that while the Apostles commanded the observance of the rule by the clergy in general, yet in special cases they discreetly dispensed with it to avoid greater scandals; and that with the gradual increase of these dispensations the clergy came at length to assume the indulgence as a matter of course without asking for special licenses.⁴ More logical is the argument brought for-

¹ Boussard's tract "*De continentia Sacerdotum sub hac quæstione nova. Utrum papa possit cum sacerdote dispensare ut nubat,*" was several times reprinted. The edition before me is that of Nürnberg, 1510.

² *Disce hic non male facere ecclesiam dum pro temporum opportunitate aliquid in consuetudinibus et legibus suis mutat et variat. Quondam conjugatus poterat sacerdotari, nunc non item.*—Jo. Eckii *Homiliarum* T. I. p. 650 (*s.l.*, 1534).

³ Le Plat, *Concil. Trident. Monument.* VI. 337.

⁴ Zaccaria, *Storia Polemica del Celibato Sacro*, p. 65 (Roma, 1775). It is curious to observe how, in his anxiety to explain the neglect of the Church for these assumed

ward by a priest named Taillard, resisting in 1842 some efforts made to introduce priestly marriage in Prussian Poland. He coolly reasons that if celibacy was not enforced in the primitive Church, it ought to have been —“if the celibacy of the priesthood be not from the beginning of Christianity, it ought to have been there, for, as our holy religion comes from God, it should contain in itself all the means possible to elevate the nations to the highest point of liberty and happiness.”¹

Apostolic commands, Zaccaria proceeds to show that the orders of the Apostles were never received as absolutely binding, as for instance in regard to the prohibition of eating blood and animals dead through strangulation (Ib. p. 116).

¹ Taillard, *Le Célibat des Prêtres*, Gnesen, 1842.

CHAPTER II

THE ANTE-NICENE CHURCH

ALTHOUGH no thought existed in the mind of Paul, and of his co-labourers in founding the Church of the Gentiles, of prohibiting to his disciples the institution of marriage, there was a distinct flavour of asceticism in some of his teachings, which might readily serve as a warrant to those whose zeal was greater than their discretion, to mortify the flesh in this as in other ways. The Apostle, while admitting that the Lord had forbidden the separation of husband and wife, said of the unmarried and widowers: "It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain let them marry, for it is better to marry than to burn."

And though in one passage he seems to indicate a belief that woman could only be saved by maternity from the punishment incurred by the disobedience of Eve, in another he formally declares that "he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better," thus showing a marked preference for the celibate state, in which the devout could give themselves up wholly to the service of the Lord.¹

The Apostle's discussion of these subjects shows that already there had commenced a strong ascetic movement, raising questions which he found hard to answer, without on the one hand repressing the ardour of serviceable disciples, and on the other, imposing burdens on neophytes too grievous to be borne. He

¹ I. Cor. VII. 8-9, 38.—I. Tim. II. 14-15.

foresaw that the former would soon run beyond the bounds of reason, and he condemned in advance the heresies which should forbid marriage;¹ but that the tendency of the faithful lay in that direction was inevitable. In those times, no one would join the infant Church who did not regard the things of earth as vile in comparison with the priceless treasures of heaven, and the more fervent the conviction, the more it was apt to find expression in mortifying the flesh and purchasing salvation by the sacrifice of passions and affections. Such especially would be the tendency of the stronger natures which lead their fellows; and the admiration of the multitude for their superior virtue and fortitude would soon invest them with a reputation for holiness which would render them doubly influential.

There was much, indeed, in the teaching of the Church, and in its relations with the Gentiles, to promote and strengthen this tendency. The world into which Christianity was born was hopelessly corrupt. Licentiousness, probably, has never been more defiant than amid the splendours of the early Empire. The gossip of Suetonius and the denunciations of Juvenal depict a society in which purity was scarce understood, and in which unchastity was no sin and hardly even a reproach. To reclaim such a population needed a new system of morality, and it is observable that in the New Testament particular stress is laid upon the avoidance of fornication, especially after the faith had begun to spread beyond the boundaries of Judea. The early Christians thus were a thoroughly puritan sect, teaching by example as well as by precept, and their lives were a perpetual protest against the license which reigned around them.² It therefore was natural that converts,

¹ I. Tim. iv. 3.

² Quid enim enumeremus infinitam multitudinem eorum qui ab incontinenti intemperataque vita abducti sunt quum hæc ipsa didicissent?—Just. Mart. Apol. II.

after their eyes were opened to the hideous nature of the prevailing vices, should feel a tendency to plunge into the other extreme, and should come to regard even the lawful indulgence of human instincts as a weakness to be repressed. Civilisation, indeed, owes too much to the reform which Christianity rendered possible in the relations of the sexes, for us to condemn too severely even the extravagances into which it was sometimes betrayed.

That it was becoming not uncommon for Christians to follow a celibate life is shown by various passages in the early fathers. St. Ignatius alludes to abstinence from marriage in honour of God as a matter not uncommon, but which was wholly voluntary and to be practised in humility and secrecy, for the virtue of continence would be much more than counterbalanced by the sin of pride.¹ The Apologists, Justin Martyr about the year 150, Athenagoras about 180, and Minucius Felix about 200, all refer to the chastity and sobriety which characterised the sect, the celibacy practised by some members, and the single marriage of others, of which the sole object was the securing of offspring and not the gratification of the passions. Athenagoras, indeed, condemns the exaggerations of asceticism in terms which show that already they had made their appearance among the more ardent disciples, but that they were strongly disapproved by the wiser portion of the Church. Origen seems to regard celibacy as rather springing from a desire to serve God without the interruptions arising from the cares of marriage than from asceticism, and does not hesitate to condemn those who abandoned their wives even from the

¹ "Si gloriatur, perditur: et si videri velit plus Episcopo, corruptus est."—Ad Polycarp. cap. v. (Cureton's *Corpus Ignat.* p. 10.) This is the received Latin text, but the weight of authority seems to incline rather to the reading *πλήν τοῦ ἐπισκόπου* than *πλέον* (Cureton, p. 228—Petermann's *Ignatius*, 274–5). The difference, however, is of little moment to our present purpose.

highest motives.¹ The impulse towards asceticism, however, was too strong to be resisted. Zealots were not wanting who boldly declared that to follow the precepts of the Creator was incompatible with salvation, as though a beneficent God should create a species which could only preserve its temporal existence by forfeiting its promised eternity. Ambitious men were to be found who sought notoriety or power by the reputation to be gained from self-denying austerities, which brought to them followers and believers venerating them as prophets. Philosophers were there also, who, wearied with the endless speculations of Pythagorean and Platonic mysticism, sought relief in the practical morality of the Gospel, and perverted the simplicity of its teachings by interweaving with it the subtle philosophy of the schools, producing an apparent intoxication which plunged them either into the grossest sensuality or the most rigorous asceticism. Such were Julius Cassianus, Saturnilus, Marcion, the founder of the Marcionites, Tatianus, the heresiarch of the Encratitians, and the unknown authors of a crowd of sects which, under the names of Abstinentes, Apotactici, Excalceati, etc., practised various forms of self-mortification, and denounced marriage as a deadly sin.² Such, on the other hand, were Valentinus and Prodicus, who originated the mystic libertinism of the Gnostics; Marcus, whose followers, the Marcosians, were accused of advocating the most disgusting practices; Carpocrates, who held that the soul was obliged to have experience of all manner of evil before it could be elevated to God;

¹ Just. Mart. *Apol.* II.—Athenagor. *pro Christianis Legat.*—M. Minuc. *Felicitis Octavius.*—Origenis *Comment.* in *Matt.* XIV. 24–5.

² So widely spread had these doctrines become by the end of the second century that Clement of Alexandria devotes the third book of his *Stromata* to their discussion and refutation. It is not worth while to examine their peculiarities minutely here. The curious reader can find all that he is likely to want concerning them in Irenæus, Hippolytus, Clement, Epiphanius, and Philastrius, without plunging further into the vast sea of controversial patristic theology.

Basilides, whose sectaries honoured the passions as emanating from the Creator, and taught that their impulses were to be followed. Even the Ebionites did not escape the taint, if Epiphanius is to be believed; and there was also a sect advocating promiscuous intercourse, to whom the name of Nicolites was given in memory of the story of Nicholas, the deacon of the primitive Church, who offered to his fellow-disciples the wife whom he was accused of loving with too exclusive a devotion—a sect which merited the reproof of St. John, and which has a special interest for us, because in the eleventh century all who opposed clerical celibacy were branded with its name, thus affording to the sacerdotal party the inestimable advantage of stigmatising their antagonists with an opprobrious epithet of the most damaging character, and of invoking the authority of the Apocalypse for their destruction.¹

The Church was too pure to be led astray by the libertinism of the latter class of heresiarchs. The time had not yet come for the former, and men who, in the thirteenth century, might perhaps have founded powerful orders, and have been revered by the Christian world as almost equal to Christ himself, were, through their anachronism, stigmatised as heretics, and expelled from the communion of the faithful. Still, their religious fervour and rigorous virtue had a gradually increasing influence in stimulating the development of the ascetic principle, if not in the acknowledged dogmas, at all events, in the practice of the Church, as may be seen when, towards the close of the second century, Dionysius

¹ Apocalyps. II. 6, 14, 15, 20.—Irenæi contr. Hæres. I. xxvi.—Hippolyti Ref. omn. Hæres. IV. xxiv.—Clem. Alex. Stromat. Lib. III.—Epiphan. Hæres. xxv.—The injustice thus inflicted on the memory of the worthy Nicholas is recognised by the Apostolic Constitutions (Lib. IV. c. viii.). In 1679, E. P. Rothius published a dissertation (*De Nicholaitis*), in which a vast mass of curious learning is brought to the vindication of the apostolic deacon.

of Corinth finds himself obliged to reprove Pinytus, Bishop of Gnosus, for endeavouring to render celibacy compulsory among his flock, to the manifest danger of those whose virtue was less austere.¹ In all this, unquestionably, the ascetic ideas of the East had much to do, and these were chiefly represented by Buddhism, which, since the reign of Asoka, in the third century B.C., had been the dominant religion of India. A curious allusion in St. Jerome to Buddha's having been born of a virgin,² shows a familiarity with details of Buddhist belief which presupposes a general knowledge of that faith; and though the divinised Maya, wife of Suddhodana, is not absolutely described as a virgin in Eastern tradition, yet she and her husband had taken a vow of continence before Buddha, from the Tushita heaven, to fulfil his predestined salvation of mankind and establishment of the kingdom of righteousness, had selected her as the vehicle of his incarnation. Much in the legend of his birth, of the miracles which attended it, of his encounter with the Tempter, and other details of his life, is curiously suggestive of the source whence sprang the corresponding legend of the life of Christ, more particularly as related in the pseudo-gospels.³ Not only this, but many of the

¹ Rufin. Hist. Eccles.—Euseb. IV. 23.

² Hieron. adv. Jovin. Lib. I. c. 42.

³ Compare Beal's "Romantic Legend of Sakhya Buddha from the Chinese Sanscrit," pp. 32 sqq., with the Protevangelion, the Gospel of the Infancy, the Gospel of Nicodemus, etc.

Somewhat similar to the Buddhist legend is the assertion of the Jainas that their great Tirthankara, Mahavira, selected the womb of Brahmani Devanandi, wife of Rishabha Datta, as his place of birth; but Sakra, indignant that he should be born in the Brahman caste, caused him to be transferred to Trisala, wife of the Kshatriya Siddhartha (Kalpa Sutra, Bk. I. ch. i. Stevenson's Translation, pp. 24, 38). Concerning the comparative priority of Jainism and Buddhism, see Thomas's "Jainism, or the early Faith of Asoka," London, 1877.

In this connection, it is perhaps worth while to note the Mazdean belief in Saoshyans, the future Messiah, who, as in Judaism, is to overcome the evil powers at the end of the world, and preside over the resurrection of mankind, and who is to be born of a virgin, Eredhat Fedri. (Vendidad, Fargard XIX. 18; Bundeshesh

observances of Latin Christianity would seem explicable by derivation from Buddhism, such as monasticism, the tonsure, the use of beads, confession, penance, and absolution, the sign of the cross, relic-worship, and miracles wrought by relics, the purchase of salvation by gifts to the Church, pilgrimages to sacred places, etc. etc. Even the nimbus which in sacred art surrounds the head of holy personages, is to be found in the sculptures of the Buddhist Topes, and the Sangreal, or Holy Cup of the Last Supper, which was the object of lifelong quest by the Christian knight, is like the Patra or begging-dish of Buddha, which was the subject of many curious legends.¹ It is no wonder that when the good Jesuit missionaries of the sixteenth century found among the heathen of Asia so much of what they were familiar with at home, they could not decide whether it was the remains of a pre-existing Catholicism, or whether Satan, to damn irrevocably the souls of men, had parodied and travestied the sacred mysteries and ceremonies, and introduced them in those distant regions.² We may therefore, perhaps, ascribe to Buddhist beliefs at least a portion of the influence which led the Church into the extravagances of asceticism.

The first official manifestation of this growing tendency, applied to the relations of the sexes, is to be seen in the legislation with regard to second marriages. In the passages alluded to above from Athenagoras and Minucius Felix, the fact is referred to that second marriages were already regarded as little better than adulterous, while Justin Martyr denounces them as sinful, in spite of the permission so freely granted by St. Paul

xxx. xxxii. 8, 9; Haug's Essays, Ed. 1878, pp. 313-14.) The mode of his conception as related in the Bundelesh, may be compared with the less decent speculations of Sanchez as to that of Christ.

¹ Beal's Buddhist Tripitaka, pp. 114-5.

² Marini, Missioni di Tumkino, Roma, 1663, pp. 125, 481, 490 sq.

for such unions.¹ Though this opinion was branded by the Church as heretical when it was elevated into an article of belief by the Montanists and Cathari, or Puritans, and though even the eminence and piety of Tertullian could not save him from excommunication when he embraced the doctrine, yet the orthodox came very near accepting it, for the Council of Neocæsarea, in 314, forbade priests from honouring with their presence the festivities customary on such occasions, as those who married a second time were subject to penance, and that of Laodicea, in 352, deemed it a matter of indulgence to admit to communion those who contracted such unions, after they had redeemed their fault by fasting and prayer for a certain time—a principle repeated by innumerable councils during the succeeding centuries. So far did this prejudice extend that as late as 484 we find the Pope, St. Gelasius, obliged to remind the faithful that such marriages are not to be refused to laymen.² It is by no means impossible that this opposition to repeated wedlock may have arisen, or perhaps have been intensified, by a similar feeling which existed among the Pagans, at least with regard to the second marriages of women. Moreover, in Rome the Flamen Dialis was restricted to a single marriage with a virgin, and such was the strictness with which this was observed that, as the assistance of the Flaminica,

¹ "Quare vel ut natus est unusquisque nostrum manet, vel nuptiis copulatus unicis, secundæ enim decorum quoddam adulterium sunt." Athenag. pro Christ. Legat.—"Unius matrimonii vinculo libenter inhæremus, cupiditate procreandi aut unam scimus aut nullam." M. Minuc. Felicis Octavius.—"Ut ii qui lege humana bis conjugium ineunt peccatores sunt apud præceptorem nostrum." Justin. Mart. Apol. II.—I. Cor. VII. 39.

² Concil. Neocæs. ann. 314 c. 7.—Concil. Laodicens. ann. 352 c. 1.—Gelasii PP. I. Epist. IX. Rubr. ad cap. xxii.—Cf. Hieron. Epist. XLVIII. apologeticus, c. 18.—Ejusd. Comment. in Jeremiam Prolog. Even in modern times the priest who pronounces the nuptial benediction on a second marriage commits an offence subjecting him to punishment (Rodriguez, Nuova Somma de' Casi di Coscienza, Venez. 1609. P. I. cap. CCXL. No. 4).

his wife, was necessary to the performance of some religious rites, he was obliged to resign when left a widower.¹

Although the Church forbore to prohibit absolutely the repetition of matrimony among the laity, it yet, at an early though uncertain period, imitated the rule enforced on the Flamen Dialis, and rendered it obligatory on the priesthood, thus for the first time drawing a distinct line of separation between the great body of the faithful and those who officiated as ministers of Christ. It thus became firmly and irrevocably established that no "digamus" or husband of a second wife was admissible to holy orders. As early as the time of Tertullian we find the rule formally expressed by him, and he even assures us that the whole structure of the Church was based upon the single marriages of its ministers. Indeed, the holy rites came to be regarded as so entirely incompatible with repetition of wedlock that the Council of Elvira, in 305, while admitting that in cases of extreme necessity a layman might administer baptism, is careful to specify that he must not be a "digamus."²

Yet this restriction on the priesthood was not easily enforced, and already we begin to hear the complaints, which have followed uninterruptedly for more than fifteen hundred years, of the evasion or disregard of the regulations whereby the Church has sought to repress the irrepressible instincts of humanity. In the early part of the third century Hippolytus, Bishop of Portus, in his enumeration of the evil ways of Pope Calixtus, taxes the pontiff with admitting to the priesthood men who had been married twice, and even thrice, and with

¹ Val. Max. II. i. 3.—Plut. Quæstt. Roman. 105.—Diod. Sicul. XII. 14.—Tertull. Lib. de Exhort. Castit. xiii.—Auli Gellii x. 15.

² Tertull. Lib. de Exhort. Castit. VII.; de Monogam. xi.—Concil. Eliberit. xxxviii

permitting priests to marry while in orders. Even the great apostle of celibacy, St. Jerome, expresses surprise that Oceanus should object to Carterius, a Spanish bishop, on the ground that he had had a wife before baptism, and a second one after admission to the Church. The world, he adds, is full of such prelates, not only in the lower orders but in the episcopate, the digamous members of which exceed in number the three hundred prelates lately assembled at the Council of Rimini. Yet this was the formal rule of the Church as enunciated in the Apostolic Constitutions and Canons—bodies of ecclesiastical law not included, indeed, in the canon of Scripture, but yet so venerable that their origin was already lost sight of, and they were everywhere received as authoritative expositions of primitive discipline.¹

The introduction of this entering-wedge is easily explicable. St. Paul had specified the monogamic condition—"unius uxoris vir"—as a prerequisite to the diaconate, priesthood, and episcopate, and the temper of the times was such as to lead irresistibly to this being taken in its literal sense, rather than to adopt the more rational view that it was intended to exclude those among the Gentiles who indulged in the prevalent vice of concubinage, or who among the Jews had fallen into the sin of polygamy—or those among either race who had taken advantage, either before or after conversion, of the disgraceful laxity prevalent with regard to divorces, for, as we learn from Origen, the rule was by no means obeyed which forbade a divorced person to marry during the lifetime of the other spouse.²

¹ Hippol. Ref. omn. Hæres. IX. vii.—Hieron. Epist. LXIX. ad Oceanum.—Constit. Apostol. VI. 17.—Canon. Apostol. xvii., xviii., xix.

² I. Tim. III. 2, 11, 12—Tit. I. 6.—Origenis Comment. in Matt. XIV. 23. The polygamy practised by the Jews from the earliest times was continued after the Dispersion. Justin Martyr taxes them with it (Dial. cum Tryphone), and Theodosius,

When once this principle was fairly established, and when at the same time the efforts of the Montanists to render it binding on the whole body of Christian believers had failed, a distinction was enforced between the clergy and the laity, as regards the marriage-tie, which gave to the former an affectation of sanctity, and which was readily capable of indefinite expansion. It is therefore easy to comprehend the revival, which shortly followed, of the old Levitical rule requiring the priesthood to marry none but virgins—a rule which was early adopted, though it took long to establish it in practice, for as late as 414 we find Innocent I. complaining that men who had taken widows to wife were even elevated to the episcopate, and Leo I. devoted several of his epistles to its enforcement.¹ A corollary to this speedily followed, which required a priest whose wife was guilty of adultery to put her away, since further commerce with her rendered him unfit for the functions of his office; and this again, as subsequent authorities were careful to point out, afforded a powerful reason for requiring absolute celibacy on the part of the clergy,

in 393, endeavoured to suppress it (Const. 7 Cod. Lib. II. Tit. ix.) by a law, the preservation of which by Justinian, after an interval of nearly a century and a half, shows that the necessity for the prohibition still existed. Even among some of the eastern Christians the precept was required, if we may believe some ancient Arabic canons, which pass under the name of the Council of Nicæa (Decret. ex quatuor Regum libris can. v. *ap.* Harduin. Concil. I. 511).

This explanation of St. Paul's injunction is adopted by Theophylact (Comment. in I. Epist. ad Timoth.) and is expressed in the paraphrase "*non plures habens uxores quam unam*," in a tract of uncertain date, attributed to St. Cyprian or St. Augustin (De XII. Abusionibus Seculæ cap. x. *ap.* Opp. S. Cypriani Mantissa, p. 49, Oxon. 1682). This is likewise the view put forward by the Church of Geneva in 1563, when replying to certain queries of the Huguenot Synod of Lyons (Cap. XXI. Art. x. *ap.* Quick, Synodicon in Gall. Reform. I. 49). Origen's discussion of the matter (Comment. in Matt. XIV. 23-4) shows how doubtful he considered it.

In fact, if the text is to be construed with rigorous exactness, it would exclude all unmarried men from the episcopate, and this seems to be the sense attributed to it in the Apostolic Constitutions (Lib. II. c. ii.), which in commenting upon it do not appear to contemplate bachelors as eligible.

¹ Levit. XXI. 13-14.—Innocent. PP. I. Epist. xxii. c. 1.—Epistt. Leon. PP. I. *ap.* Harduin. Concil. I. 1767, 1772, etc.

for, in view of the fragility of the sex, no man could feel assured that he was not subject to this disability, nor could the faithful be certain that his ministrations were not tainted with irregularity.¹ We thus reach the state of ecclesiastical discipline at the close of the third century, as authoritatively set forth in the Apostolical Constitutions and Canons—bishops and priests allowed to retain the wives whom they may have had before ordination, but not to marry in orders; the lower grades, deacons, subdeacons, etc., allowed to marry after entering the Church; but all were to be husbands of but one wife, who must be neither a widow, a divorced woman, nor a concubine.²

Meanwhile, public opinion had moved faster than the canons. Ascetic sects multiplied and increased, and the highest authorities in the Church could not always resist the contagion. A fresh incitement, indeed, had been found in the neo-platonic philosophy which arose in the beginning of the third century. Ammonius Saccas, its founder, was a Christian, though not altogether orthodox, and his two most noted disciples, Origen and Plotinus, fairly illustrate the influence which his doctrines had upon both the Christian and the Pagan world. As to the latter, neo-platonism borrowed from Christian and Indian as well as Greek philosophy, evolving out of them all a system of elevated mysticism in which the senses and the appetites were to be controlled as severely almost as in the Sankhya and Buddhist schools. Commerce between the sexes was denounced as a pollution degrad-

¹ Concil. Eliberit. can. 65.—Concil. Neocæsarens. c. 8.—Concil. Tarraconens. ann. 516. can. 9.—Boussardus de Continent. Sacerdot. Prop. 6, Nuremb., 1510.

² Constit. Apostol. vi. 17.—Canon. Apostol. vi. xvii. xviii. xix. xxvii.

This latter prescription has continued to be the law of the Church, but in establishing this fanciful purity it conveniently excuses immorality. A married man who commits adultery is not thereby rendered ineligible to the priesthood on the death of his wife.—Casus Conscientiæ Benedicti xiv., Dec. 1738, c. ii. (Ferrariæ, 1764, p. 84).

ing to the soul, and the best offering which a worshipper could bring to the Deity was a soul absolutely free from all trace of passion.¹ Although neo-platonism engaged in a hopeless struggle to stay the advancing tide of Christianity, and thus became its most active opponent, yet the lofty asceticism which it inculcated could not be without influence upon its antagonists, were it only through inflaming the emulation of those who were already predisposed to regard the mortification of the flesh as a means of raising the soul to communion with God.²

How these motives worked upon an ardent and uncompromising temperament is seen in the self-sacrifice of Origen, showing how absorbing was the struggle, and how intense was the conviction that nature must be conquered at all hazards and by any practicable means, although he himself afterwards condemned this practical rendering of the text (Matt. XIX. 12) on which it was founded. Origen was by no means the first who had sought in this way to gain the kingdom of heaven, for he alludes to it as a matter by no means unexampled, and before him Justin Martyr had chronicled with approbation a similar case. In fact, there is said to have been an obscene sect which, under the name of Valesians, followed the practice and procured proselytes by inflicting forcible mutilation upon all who were unhappy enough to fall into their hands; and though their date and locality are unknown to those who allude to them, it would be rash, in view of similar eccentricities existing in more modern times, to pronounce them wholly apocryphal. The repeated prohibitions of the practice, in the canons of the succeeding century, show how

¹ Porphy. de Abstin. II. 46, 61; IV. 20.—Cf. Jambl. de Mysteriis IV. xi.—Damasceni Vit. Isidori 311.

² For the influence of Buddhism on Neo-platonism, Gnosticism, and Manichæism, see A. Weber, Indische Skizzen, pp. 63, 91.

difficult it was to eradicate the belief that such self-immolation was an acceptable offering to a beneficent Creator. Sextus Philosophus, an ascetic author of the third century, whose writings long passed current under the name of Pope Sixtus II., did not hesitate openly to advocate it, and though his arguments were regarded as heretical by the Church, they were at least as logical as the practical application given to the texts commonly cited in defence of the prohibition of marriage.¹

Not all, however, who sought the praise or the merits of austerity were prepared to pay such a price for victory in the struggle with themselves. Enthusiastic spirits, exalted with the prospect of earthly peace and heavenly rewards promised to those who should preserve the purity of virginity and live abstracted from the cares and pleasures of family life, frequently took the vow of continence which had already become customary. This vow as yet was purely voluntary. It bound those who assumed it only during their own pleasure, nor were they, during its continuance, in any way segregated from the

¹ Origenis Comment. in Matt. xv. 1-3.—Just. Martyr. Apolog. II.—Epiphan. Hæres. LVII.—Can. Apostol. XXII. XXIII. XXIV.—Concil. Nicæn. c. i.—Concil. Arelatens. II. ann. 452 c. vii., etc.—Sexti Philos. Sent. ix.—At the close of the twelfth century the canons were relaxed by Clement III. in favour of a priest of Ravenna whose ascetic ardour had led him to follow the example of Origen, and who was permitted to retain all the functions of the priesthood except the ministry of the altar (Can. iv. Extra, I. xx.). Thomas of Cantimpré (De Bono Universali, Lib. II. c. 53) tells a similar story of a friar of his acquaintance, who barely escaped with his life. The practice has perpetuated itself to the nineteenth century in a Russian sect, which Catherine II. and her successors endeavoured in vain to repress. In 1818 Alexander II. ordered the enthusiasts to be banished to Siberia, but the ardour with which they courted martyrdom rendered their zeal dangerously contagious and they were left in obscurity, in the hope of their dying out (Pluquet, Dict. des Hérésies, s. v. *Mutilés de Russie*). This proved equally ineffectual, for a recent traveller describes them under the name of *Skopsis* as a large tribe inhabiting the Caucasus, where they flourish in spite of the most energetic measures of repression on the part of the government—imprisonment, banishment to Siberia, conscription, and even the death penalty being powerless to overcome their fanaticism (Brugsch, Reise der Preussischen Gesandtschaft nach Persien, 1860-1, ap. London "Reader," Jan. 3, 1863). Buffon (Hist. Nat. de l'Homme, ap. Helsen, Abus du Célibat des Prêtres, p. 52) states that he was acquainted with a priest who had adopted this mode as the only one to preserve his virtue.

world. So untrammelled, indeed, were their actions that Cyprian is forced to rebuke the holy virgins for frequenting the public baths in which both sexes indiscriminately exposed themselves, and he does not hesitate to attribute to this cause much of the ruin and dishonour of its votaries which afflicted the Church.¹ Yet this was by no means the severest trial to which many of them subjected their constancy. Perhaps it was to court spiritual martyrdom, and to show to their admirers a virtue robust enough to endure the most fiery trials, perhaps it was that they found too late that they had overestimated their strength, and that existence was a burden without the society of some beloved object—but, whatever may have been the motive, it became a frequent custom to associate themselves with congenial souls of the other sex, and form Platonic unions in which they aspired to maintain the purity which they had vowed to God. At the best, the sensible members of the Church were scandalised by these performances, which afforded so much scope for the mockery of the heathen; but scandal frequently was justified, for Nature often asserted her outraged rights, to the shame and confusion of the hapless votaries of an artificial and superhuman perfection. Tertullian does not hesitate to assert that the desire of enjoying the reputation of virginity led to much secret immorality, the effects of which were concealed by resort to infanticide.² Cyprian chronicles, not with surprise but sorrow, the numerous instances which he had known of ruin resulting to those who had so fatally miscalculated their power of resistance: with honest indignation he denounces the ecclesiastics who abandoned themselves to practices which, if not absolutely criminal,

¹ Cyprian. *de Habit. Virgin.*—That such laxity was indulged in by professed virgins is the more remarkable since promiscuous bathing was forbidden to every one by the Apostolic Constitutions, *Lib. i. c. x.*

² Tertull. *de Virgin. veland. c. xv.*

were brutally degrading: and with a degree of common-sense hardly to be looked for in so warm an admirer of the perfection of virginity, he advises that those whose weakness rendered doubtful the strict observance of their vows, should return to the world and satisfy their longings in legitimate marriage.¹ The heresiarch Paul of Samosata affords, perhaps, the most conspicuous example of the extent to which these and similar practices were sometimes carried, and, in condemning him, the good fathers of the Council of Antioch lamented the general prevalence of the evils thence arising.² Cyprian's prudent consideration for the weakness of human nature was as yet shared by the ecclesiastical authorities. In the order of widows professed, which was recognised by the early Church, the Apostolic Constitutions enjoin that none should be admitted below the age of sixty, in order to avoid the danger of their infringing their vows by a second marriage, but the writer is careful to add that such a marriage is not to be condemned for itself, but only on account of the falsehood which it occasioned. These widows and virgins were supported out of the tithes of the Church, and were, therefore, necessarily subjected to its control, so that it is evident that there was nothing irrevocable in the vows wherewith they were bound. The change is marked by the end of the century, when widows who thus forsook their order were unrelentingly and irrevocably condemned, deprived of communion, and expelled from social intercourse.³

While the Christian world was thus agitated with

¹ Cyprian. Epist. iv. ad Pomponium.

² Concil. Antioch (Harduin. Concil. I. 198). Cf. Lactant. Divin. Institut. vi. xix.—Extravagances of this kind long continued to be a favourite exercise with enthusiasts. In 450 the anchorites of Palestine are described as herding together without distinction of sex, and with no garments but a breech-clout; while others who frequented the cities exhibited their self-control by appearing in the public baths with women. (Niceph. Callist. H. E. xiv. 50.)

³ Constit. Apost. II. i. ii.—Statut. Eccles. Antiq. civ.

the speculative doctrines and practical observances of so many enthusiasts, heretical and orthodox, who seemed to regard the relations between the sexes as the crucial test and most trustworthy exponent of religious ardour, a new dogma arose in the East and advanced with a rapidity which shows how much progress the ascetic spirit had already made, and how ripe were the unsettled minds of zealots to welcome whatever system of belief promised to trample most ruthlessly upon nature, and to render the path of salvation inaccessible to all save those capable of the sternest self-mortification. Towards the end of the third century, the Persian Manes made his advent in the Empire, proclaiming himself as the Paraclete and as a new and higher Apostle. Though his career as an envoy of Christ was stoutly resisted by the orthodox, and though, after a chequered life, he was flayed alive, and his followers in Persia were slaughtered by Varahran I.,¹ his western disciples were more fortunate, and the hateful name of Manichæan acquired a sinister notoriety which maintained its significance for a thousand years. His system was a compound of several faiths, and though it failed in its comprehensive design to bring all mankind together in one form of belief, it yet had features which won for it the enthusiastic adhesion of men of diverse races. The way was already prepared for its reception among both Gentiles and Christians by the prevalence on the one hand of the Mithraic worship, and on the other of Gnosticism. The Dualistic theory was attractive to those who were disheartened in the vain attempt to reconcile the existence of evil with an omnipotent and all-merciful Creator; the Platonic identity of the soul with

¹ Chronique de Tabari, Ed. Rothenberg, II. 90. It is curious to observe that Persian tradition represented Manes as a Chinese magician and an excellent painter, who constructed figures that were able to move, and thus deceived the people. After gaining the confidence of the monarch, he was vanquished in controversy with the chief Mobed, and was flayed alive. (Mohl's *Livre des Rois*, V. 379-81.)

the Godhead was a recommendation to the schoolmen; the Brahmanical and Buddhist views as to abstinence from meat and marriage won adherents among the remains of the ascetic sects, and were acceptable even to those among the orthodox who were yielding to the increasing influence of asceticism. The fierce temporal persecution of the still Pagan emperors, and the unavailing anathemas of the Church, as yet confined to mere spiritual censures, seemed only to give fresh impetus to the proselyting energy of the Elect, and to scatter the seed more widely among the faithful. After this period we hear but little of the earlier ascetic heresies; the system of Manes, as moulded by his followers, was so much more complete, that it swallowed up its prototypes and rivals, and concentrated upon itself the vindictiveness of a combined Church and State. So thorough was this identification that in 381 an edict of Theodosius the Great directed against the Manichæans assumes that the sects of Encratitæ, Apotactitæ, Hydroparastitæ, and Saccofori were merely nominal disguises adopted to elude detection.¹

That Manichæism, in fact, exercised a substantial influence over orthodoxy is shown in other directions besides that of asceticism. The Eucharist was thus diverted from its original form of a substantial meal—one of the means by which the charity of the Church was administered to the poor—into the symbolical wafer and wine which assimilated it so closely to the Izesne sacrifice, the most frequent Mazdean rite, and one which, like the Mass, was customarily performed for the benefit

¹ Lib. XVI. Cod. Theod. Tit. v. l. 7.—Cf. Concil. Quinisext, c. 95.

Scythianus, the precursor of Manes, is said by Epiphanius (*Hæres.* LXVI.) to have visited India and to have brought from there certain books of magic, which must have been Buddhist, as Buddhism was at that period supreme in the Peninsula. His disciple, Terbinthus, the link between him and Manes, assumed the name of the Buddha.

of departed souls.¹ Manes, in combining Mazdeism with Christianity, had adopted the Eucharist in the Mazdean form, and had confined the use of the cup to the priesthood; and this lay communion in one element became so well recognised as a test of Manichæism that Leo the Great ordered the excommunication of all who received the sacrament after that fashion.² It may therefore be remarked as a curious coincidence that when Manichæism was revived by the Albigenes, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Church, which until then had preserved its ancient custom, adopted the lay communion in one element and adhered to it so rigidly that, as we shall see hereafter, not even the dread of the Hussite schism nor the earnest requests of those who remained faithful during the perils of the Reformation, could induce it to grant the cup to the laity. Lay communion in one element drew a line of distinction between the priest and his flock which the former would not willingly abandon.

Although, in the region of asceticism, the Church might not be willing to adopt the Manichæan doctrine that man's body is the work of the Evil Principle, and that the Soul as partaking of the substance of God was engaged in an eternal war with it, and should thus abuse and mortify it,³ yet the general tendencies of the religious enthusiasm of the time made the practical result common to all, and there can scarce be doubt that the spreading belief in Manes exercised a powerful influence in accelerating progress of orthodox asceticism. The fact that as yet the Church was persecuted and

¹ Thomas's Sassanian Inscriptions, p. 65.—Mainyo-i-khard, West's Ed. xvi. 16 sq. and West's note, p. 160; Glossary, p. 64.—Haug's Essays, Bombay Ed., p. 239.—Shayast la-Shayast xvii. 2 (West's Pahlavi Texts, Pt. I. p. 382, and West's note, p. 284).—Dadistan-i-Dinik, ch. xxviii.—xxx. (Pahlavi Texts, II. 58 sqq.).—Plutarch de Isid. et Osirid. 46.—Justin Mart. Apolog. II.

² Leon. PP. I. Serm. XLII. cap. 5.

³ Epiphan. Hæres. LXVI.—The same doctrine was held by the Patricians, according to Philastrius, P. III. No. 15.

had no power of imposing its yoke on others bound it to the necessity of maintaining its character for superior sanctity and virtue; and ardent believers could not afford to let themselves be outdone by heretics in the austerities which were popularly received as the conclusive evidence of religious sincerity. We may therefore easily imagine a rivalry in asceticism which, however unconscious, may yet have powerfully stimulated the stern and unbending souls of such men as St. Antony, Malchus, and Hilarion, even as Tertullian, after combating the errors of Montanus, adopted and exaggerated his ascetic heresies. It would be easy to show from the hagiologies how soon the Church virtually assented to the Manichæan notion that the body was to be mortified and macerated as the only mode of triumphing in the perennial struggle with the evil principle, but this would be foreign to our subject. It is sufficient for us here to indicate how narrowly in process of time she escaped from adopting practically, if not theoretically, the Manichæan condemnation of marriage. This is clearly demonstrated by the writings of the orthodox Fathers, who in their extravagant praise of virginity could not escape from decrying wedlock. It was stigmatised as the means of transmitting and perpetuating original sin, an act which necessarily entailed sin on its participants, and one which at best could only look for mercy and pardon and be allowed only on sufferance. It is therefore not surprising if those who were not prepared to join in the progress of asceticism should habitually stigmatise the mortifications of their more enthusiastic brethren as Manichæism in spirit if not in name. Jovinian, it would seem, did not neglect this ready means of attack; nor was he alone, for Jerome complains that the worldly and dissolute sheltered themselves behind the same excuse, and derided as Manichæans all who were pallid and faint

from maceration and fasting.¹ The comparison, indeed, became a not untruthful one, when the Christian and the heretic both adopted the plan of restricting their sacred class from the pleasures of the world—when the Manichæan Elect, who remained unmarried and fasted upon vegetable food, were equivalent to the priesthood, while the Auditors, to whom a larger liberty was allowed, represented the orthodox laity. It is by no means improbable that the tenets of the Manichæans have been exaggerated by their opponents in controversy, and that in process of time, when the Church became avowedly ascetic, there was practically little difference on this point between Manichæism and Orthodoxy. St. Augustin, indeed, represents the Manichæan Faustus as arguing that both in doctrine and practice his sect only followed the example of the Church. He ridiculed the idea that it could prohibit marriage, and asserts positively that it only encouraged those who manifested a desire to persevere in continence. If this is to be received as an authentic exposition of Manichæan principles, it will be seen that the Church was not long in outstripping the heretics.²

In fact, even as early as the time of Cyprian, that saint, in allusion to the parable of the sower, had rated the comparative merits of martyrdom to virginity as one hundred to sixty; while, after martyrdom had gone out of fashion, St. Patrick, in the fifth century, undertook a more elaborate classification in which bishops and doctors of the Church, monks and virgins, were rated at one hundred, ecclesiastics in general and widows professed at sixty, while the faithful laity stand only at thirty.³ It was therefore a heresy for Jovinian to

¹ Hieron. adv. Jovin. I. 3.—Ejusd. Epist. ad Eustoch. c. 5.

² Augustin. Epist. LXXIV. ad Deuterium.—Ejusd. contra Faustum Lib. xxx. c. iv.

³ Cyprian. de Habit. Virgin.—Synod. II. S. Patric. c. 18.

claim equal merit for maidens, wives, and widows; and though St. Jerome, in controverting this, commenced by carefully denying any intentional disrespect towards marriage, still his controversial ardour carried him so far in that direction, that he aroused considerable feeling among reasonable men and was obliged formally and repeatedly to excuse himself. His contempt for marriage, indeed, was so extreme that in spite of the recognised primacy of St. Peter, he considered that apostle as decidedly inferior to St. John, because the one had a wife and the other was a virgin—apparently not observing that, as he denied the marriage of all the apostles save Peter, he was thus relegating the head of the Church to the last place among the holy twelve.¹ St. Augustin recognised the difficulty of reconciling the current views of his time with the necessities of humanity when he wrote a treatise for the purpose of proving the difference between the good of marriage and the evil of carnal desire, which, while it perpetuated the species, likewise perpetuated original sin; and he gave a signal example of the manner in which enthusiastic asceticism sought to improve upon the work of the Creator when he uttered the pious wish that all mankind should abstain from marriage, so that the human race might the sooner come to an end.² St. Martin of Tours was somewhat less extravagant when he was willing to admit that marriage was pardonable, while licentiousness was punishable and virginity glorious; and he was far behind the enthusiasts of his time, for, while he deploras the miserable folly of those who consider marriage to be equal

¹ Hieron. adv. Jovin. I. 2, 26.—Ejusd. Epist. L. LI. LII.

² Augustin. de Concupisc. et de Nuptiis.—Ejusd. de Bono Conjugali c. x.—Panzini (Confessione di un Prigioniero, p. 193) is not far wrong in suggesting that the learned doctors who thus decry marriage are guilty of the blasphemy of addressing their creator—"Vergognatevi di avere inventato un modo così turpe per darci l'esistenza!"

to virginity, he is likewise obliged to reprove the error of those who were willing only to compare it to lechery—the former belief being evidently much more erroneous than the latter in the Saint's estimation.¹ So a treatise on chastity, which passes under the name of Sixtus III., barely admits that married people can earn eternal life; and it apparently is only the dread of being classed with Manichæans that leads the author to shrink from the conclusions of his own reasoning, and to state that he does not absolutely condemn wedlock or prohibit it to those who cannot restrain their passions.² Not a little Manichæan in its tendency is a declaration of Gregory the Great to Augustine the Apostle of England that connubial pleasures cannot possibly be free from sin; and quite as decided is another assertion of the same Pope that the strictness of monastic life is the only possible mode of salvation for the greater portion of mankind.³ It was the natural practical deduction from this which is drawn by the Penitential of Theodore, when it commands those who contract a first marriage to abstain from entering a church for thirty days, after which they are to perform penance for forty more; while a digamus is subjected to penance for a year, and a trigamus, or one oftener married, for seven years.⁴ When marriage was thus regarded as a sin, we can scarcely be surprised at the practical Manichæism of Epiphanius, who declares that the Church is based upon virginity as on its corner-stone.⁵

This ascetic development, however, was not destined to triumph without occasional efforts at repression. At the close of the third century, the highest authorities

¹ Sulpic. Sever. Dial. II.

² In Mag. Bib. Pat. T. V. P. II. pp. 652, 658.

³ Gregor. P.P. I. Regist. Lib. XI. Epist. lxiv. Respons. 10; Lib. III. Epist. lxxv.

⁴ Theodor. Penitent. Lib. I. c. xiv. 1, 2, 3. (Haddon & Stubbs's Councils, III. 187.)

⁵ Epiphan. Exposit. Fid. Cathol.

of the Church still condemned the ruthless asceticism, which was subsequently glorified as the loftiest achievement of Christian virtue. Thus in the Apostolic Constitutions, the influence of Manichæism and its kindred sects is as yet only manifested by the opposition aroused to their doctrines; and the necessity of that opposition is indicated by the careful and repeated declaration of the purity and sanctity of the marriage-tie, both as regards the priesthood and the laity. Not less instructive is the bare toleration almost grudgingly extended to vows of celibacy, and the cautious restriction which declares that such vows are not to be held as justifying a disparagement of matrimony.¹ No stronger contrast can be looked for than that produced by little more than a century between the rational piety of these provisions and the extravagant rhapsodies of Jerome, Augustin, and Martin. The calm good sense of Lactantius also takes occasion to reprove the extravagance which regarded all indulgence of the natural affections as a sin requiring repentance and pardon. He assumes indeed that perpetual continence, as being opposed to the law of nature, is not recommended, but only permitted by the Creator, thus reversing the maxims of the zealots.² Equally suggestive are the Apostolic Canons. The sixth of these pronounces deposition on the bishop or priest who separates himself from his wife under pretext of religion; while the fiftieth threatens equally rigorous punishment on the clerk or layman who shall abstain from marriage, from wine, or from meat, not for the purpose of devoting himself to piety, but on account of holding them in abomination—such belief being a slander on the goodness of God, and a calumny on the perfection

¹ *Constit. Apostol.* Lib. IV. c. 14; VI. 11, 14, 26, 27, 28; VIII. 30.

² *Lactant. Instit. Divin.* VI. xvi. xxiii.

of His works.¹ Even a hundred years later there is still an occasional protest to be heard, showing how the more moderate section of the Church still felt the danger to which she was exposed by intemperate ascetic zeal, and how narrow was the path which she had to trace between orthodoxy and heresy. The Fourth Council of Carthage, in 398, prescribing the examination to which all bishops-elect were to be subjected, specifies for inquiry among other points of faith questions as to whether the candidate disapproves of marriage, or condemns second marriages, or prohibits the use of meat.² It shows how readily Manichæism or Catharism might lurk in the asceticism of the most devout.

The tide, however, was fairly on the flood, and the resistance of the more reasonable among ecclesiastics was unavailing. It is true, that the influences which were now so powerful could evidently not be applied to the whole body of believers, as they would only result in gradual extinction or in lawless licentiousness; but as the ecclesiastical body was perpetuated by a kind of spiritual generation, it could, without hazarding a decrease of numbers, be subjected to regulations which should render obligatory the asceticism which as yet had been optional. The only wonder, in fact, is that this had not been earlier attempted. Such a rule, by widening the distinction between laymen and ecclesiastics, would be grateful to the growing sacerdotalism which ere long was to take complete possession of the Church. Such a rule, moreover, was not only indicated by the examples of Buddhism

¹ The fiftieth canon was omitted by Dionysius Exiguus, but was subsequently admitted by the Church, notwithstanding that it proves in the clearest manner the full enjoyment of marriage by all grades of the clergy. The sixth canon (numbered fifth in the full collection), which prohibits the separation of ecclesiastics from their wives, was likewise accepted, although in the eighteenth century Cabassut stigmatises it as heretical.

² Conc. Carthag. IV. c. 1.

and Manichæism, but had abundant precedent among the Pagans of the Empire. More than one passage in classical writers shows that abstinence from women was regarded as an essential prerequisite to certain religious observances, and the existence of this feeling among the primitive Christians, based upon the injunction of Ahimelech, is indicated by St. Paul¹—and this custom, as sacerdotalism developed, and formalism rendered the life of the minister of the altar a ceaseless round of daily service, would practically separate husband and wife. Moreover, much of the Pagan worship subjected its officials to general restrictions of greater or less severity. Diodorus Siculus states that the Egyptian priests were permitted to have but one wife, although unlimited polygamy was allowed to the people; while Chæremon the Stoic, according to St. Jerome, and Plutarch indicate that they were obliged to observe entire continence. The castration of the Galli, the priests of Rhea at Hierapolis, though explained by the myth of Attys, was evidently only a survival of the fierce asceticism which counterbalanced the licentiousness of the older Phœnician worship. The rites of the Gaditanian Hercules were conducted by ministers obliged to observe chastity, and the foot of woman was not permitted to pollute the sacred precincts of the temple; while the priestesses of Gea Eurysternus at Ægæ were required to preserve the strictest celibacy.² The hierophants of Demeter in Athens, were obliged to

¹ Thus Tibullus (Lib. I. El. I.)—

“Vos quoque abesse procul jubeo, discedite ab aris,
 Quis tulit hesterna gaudia nocte Venus.
 Casta placent Superis.”

Cf. Juvenal. vi. 534-5.—Ælii Lamprid. Alex. Sever. xxix.—Porphyr. de Abstinent. ii. 50; iv. 6, 7.—Arriani de Epictet. Disertt. Lib. iii. c. xxi.—I. Cor. vii. 5.

² Diod. Sicul. i. 80.—Hieron. adv. Jovin. ii. 13.—Plut. de Isid. et Osirid. 2.—Lucian. de Syria Dea xv.—Sil. Ital. Punicor. iii. 21-8.—Cf. Virg. Æneid, vi. 661.—Pausan. vii. xxv. 8. Egyptian customs in this respect may perhaps be traced to the vow of continence made by Isis after the death of her husband-brother, Osiris (Diod. Sicul. i. 27). The Emperor Julian's neo-platonic explanation of the Syrian asceticism (Orat V.) is not without analogy to some of the rhapsodies of the fathers in the praise of virginity.

maintain unsullied continence. The priestesses of the Delphic Apollo, the Achaian Hera, the Scythian Artemis, and the Thespian Heracles were virgins. In Africa, those of Ceres were separated from their husbands with a rigour of asceticism which forbade even a kiss to their orphaned children; while in Rome the name of Vestal has passed into a proverb, although it is true that while they were only six or seven in number, the distinguished honours and privileges accorded to them were insufficient to induce parents to devote them to the holy service, and there was difficulty in keeping the ranks filled.¹

The earliest recorded attempt by the Church to imitate these restrictions, was made in 305 by the Spanish Council of Elvira, which declared, in the most positive manner, that all concerned in the ministry of the altar should maintain entire abstinence from their wives under pain of forfeiting their positions. It further endeavoured to put an end to the scandals of the *Agapetæ*, or female companions of the clergy, which the rigour of this canon was so well fitted to increase, by decreeing that no ecclesiastic should permit any woman to dwell with him, except a sister or a daughter, and even these only when bound by a vow of virginity.² This was simply the legislation of a local synod, and its canons were not entitled to respect or obedience beyond the limits of the churches directly represented. Its action may not improbably be attributed to the commanding influence of one of its leading members, Osius, Bishop of Cordova, and that action had no result in inducing the Church at large to adopt the new rule, for some ten years

¹ Juliani Imp. Orat. V.—Tertull. de Monogam. xvii. ; ad Uxorem i. 6 ; de Exhort. Castit. xiii.—Hieron. adv. Jovin. i. 26.—Pausan. ix. xxvii. 5.—Sueton. Octav. xxxviii.

² Concil. Eliberit. can. 27, 33.—The 29th canon of the first council of Arles, held in 314, if genuine, marks the extension of the movement eastward, but as it is contained in but one MS., Mansi supposes it probably to belong to some subsequent and forgotten synod. It is almost identical with Concil. Telensis ann. 386 can. 9 ; and, whatever be its date, its phraseology evidently indicates that it records the first introduction of the rule in its locality.

later were held the more important Councils of Ancyra and Neocæsarea, and the absence of any allusion to it in their proceedings seems to fix for us the discipline of the period in this respect, at least in the East. By the canons of Ancyra we learn that marriage in orders was still permitted, as far as the diaconate, provided the postulant at the time of ordination declared his desire to enjoy the privilege and asserted his inability to remain single. This is even less stringent than the rule quoted above from the Apostolic Constitutions, and proves incontestably that there was no thought of imposing any restriction upon the intercourse between the married clergy and their wives. By the Council of Neocæsarea it was provided that a priest marrying in orders should be deposed, but a heavier punishment was reserved for what was then, in reverse of the standard of later times, regarded as the greater sin of licentiousness. That no interference was intended by this with the relations existing between those who had married in the lower grades and their wives, is shown by another canon which deprives of his functions any priest who submitted to the commission of adultery by his wife without separating from her—being a practical extension of the Levitical rule, now by common consent adopted as a portion of ecclesiastical discipline.¹ Yet, even in the East, there was a growing tendency to more rigid asceticism than this, for, about the same period, we find Eusebius stating that it is becoming in those who are engaged in the ministry of God, to abstain from their wives, though his argument in justification of this is based upon the multiplicity of occupation, which in civilised society rendered it desirable for those enlisted in the service of the Church to be relieved from family cares and anxieties.²

¹ Concil. Ancyran. ann. 314 can. 9.—Concil. Neocæsar. ann. 314 can. 1, 8.

² Euseb. Demonstr. Evang. I. ix.

CHAPTER III

THE COUNCIL OF NICÆA

THUS far the Church had grown and strengthened without any recognised head or acknowledged legislative power. Each patriarch or metropolitan, surrounded by his provincial synod, established regulations for his own region, with no standard but the canon of Scripture, being responsible only to the opinion of his compeers, who might refuse to receive his clergy to communion. Under this democratic autonomy the Church had outlived persecution, had repudiated and cast out innumerable successive heresies, and, thanks to external pressure, had managed to preserve its unity. The time, however, had now come for a different order of things. Constantine, following the dictates of his unerring political sagacity, allied himself with the Christians and professed conversion; and Christianity, powerful even when merely existing on sufferance, became the religion of the state. As such, the maintenance of its unity seemed to be a political necessity, to accomplish which required some central power entitled to general respect and implicit obedience. The subtle disputations concerning the fast-spreading Arian heresy were not likely to be stilled by the mere *ipse dixit* of any of the Apostolic Sees, nor by the secular wisdom of crown lawyers and philosophic courtiers. A legislative tribunal, which should be at once a court of last appeal and a senate empowered to enact laws of binding force, as the final decisions of the Church Universal, was not an unpromising suggestion. Such an assemblage had hitherto been impossible, for the distances

to be traversed and the expenses of the journey would have precluded an attendance sufficiently numerous to earn the title of Œcumenic; but an imperial rescript which put the governmental machinery of posts at the service of the prelates could smooth all difficulties, and enable every diocese to send its representative. In the year 325, therefore, the FIRST GENERAL COUNCIL assembled at Nicæa. With the fruitlessness of its endeavours to extinguish the Arian controversy we have nothing to do, but in its legislative capacity its labours had an influence upon our subject which merits a closer examination than would appear necessary from the seemingly unimportant nature of the proceedings themselves.

With the full belief that the canons of a general council were the direct operation of the Holy Ghost, they were of course entitled to unquestioning reverence, and those of Nicæa have always been regarded as of special and peculiar authority, cutting off all debate on any question to which they might be applicable. The third of the series has been the main reliance of sacerdotal controversialists, and has been constantly appealed to as the unanswerable justification for enforcing the rule of discipline which enjoined celibacy on all admitted to holy orders. Its simple phraseology would hardly seem to warrant such conclusion. "The Great Synod has strictly forbidden to bishop, priest, and deacon, and to every ecclesiastic, to have a 'subintroductam mulierem,' unless perhaps a mother, a sister, an aunt, or such person only as may be above suspicion."¹

¹ I give the version of Dionysius Exiguus: "Interdixit per omnia magna synodus, non episcopo, non presbytero, non diacono, nec alicui omnino qui in clero est, licere subintroductam habere mulierem; nisi forte matrem, aut sororem, aut amitam, vel eas tantum personas quæ suspiciones effugiunt."

An Arabic version of the Nicene canons specially limits the prohibition to bishops, and to unmarried priests and deacons.—"Decernimus ut episcopi non habitent cum mulieribus. . . . Idem decernitur de omni sacerdote cœlibe, idemque de diaconis qui sine uxore sunt." (Harduin. Concil. I. 463.)—This expresses nearly the discipline of the Greek Church.

This is the only allusion to the subject in the Nicene canons. As it does not include wives among those exempted from the prohibition of residence, we can hardly be surprised that those who believe celibacy to be of apostolic origin should assume that it was intended to pronounce an absolute separation between husband and wife. As the Council of Elvira, however, contains the only enunciation of such a rule, previous to that of Nicæa, and as those of Ancyra and Neocæsarea and the Apostolic Constitutions and Canons, directly or indirectly, allow the conjugal relations of ecclesiastics to remain undisturbed, we are certainly justified in assuming the impossibility that an innovation of so much importance would be introduced in the discipline of the universal Church without being specifically designated and commanded in terms which would admit of no misunderstanding. That the meaning of the canon is really and simply that alone which appears on the surface—to put an end to the disorders and scandals arising from the improper female companions of unmarried priests—is, moreover, I think, susceptible of easy demonstration.

The term “subintroducta mulier”—*γυνή συνεισακτος*—is almost invariably used in an unfavourable sense, and is equivalent to the “*foemina extranea*,” and nearly to the “*focaria*” and “*concubina*” of later times, as well as to the “*agapeta*” and “*dilecta*” of earlier date. We have already seen how Cyprian, seventy-five years before, denounced the *agapetæ* who even then were so common, and whose companionship proved so disastrous to all parties, but the custom continued, and its evil consequences became more and more openly and shamelessly displayed. In 314 the Council of Ancyra denounced it in terms implying its public recognition.¹ At the close of the same century, Jerome still finds in it ample

¹ Concil. Ancyran. can. 18.

material for his fiery indignation; and his denunciations manifest that it was still a corroding cancer in the purity of the Church, prevailing to an extent that rendered its suppression a matter of the utmost importance.¹ The testimony of Epiphanius is almost equally strong, and shows that it was a source of general popular reproach.² Such a reform was therefore well worthy the attention of the Nicene fathers, and that this was the special object of the canon is indicated by Jerome himself, who appeals to it as the authority under which an ecclesiastic refusing to separate himself from his agapeta could be punished; it was to be read to the offender, and if he neglected obedience to its commands, he was to be anathematised.³

That it had no bearing upon the wives of priests can moreover be proved by several reasons. The restriction on matrimony has never at any time extended below the subdiaconate, the inferior grades of the secular clergy having always been free to live with their wives, even in the periods of the most rigid asceticism. The canon, however, makes no distinction. Its commands are applicable "*alicui omnino qui in clero est.*" To suppose, therefore, that it was intended to include wives in its restriction is to prove too much—the *reductio ad absurdum* is complete.⁴ Equally convincing is the fact

¹ Pudet dicere, proh nefas! triste sed verum est. Unde in ecclesias Agapetarum pestis introiit? unde sine nuptiis aliud nomen uxorum? immo unde novum concubinarum genus? Plus inferam. Unde meretrices univiræ? eadem domo, uno cubiculo sæpe tenentur et lectulo: et suspiciosos nos vocant si aliquid extimemus. Frater sororem virginem deserit, cœlibum spernit virgo germanum, fratrem quærit extraneum: et cum in eodem proposito esse se simulent, quærunt alienorum spiritale solatium, ut domi habeant carnale commercium. (Epist. XXII. ad Eustoch. c. 5.) It should be observed that celibacy had become the rule of the Church at the time when Jerome wrote thus.

² Accusant nimirum eos qui in ecclesia dilectas appellatas, aliunde introductas ac cohabitantes fœminas habent.—Panar. Hæres. LXIII.

³ Hieron. Epist. ad Oceanum de Vit. Cleric.

⁴ When; during the demoralisation of the tenth century, the council of Augsburg made a spasmodic effort to revive the neglected rule of celibacy, it endeavoured to include the lower orders of the clergy within its scope. Ratramnus of Corvey also does not fail to point out that such was the incontrovertible meaning of the Nicene canon, which in his time was universally considered to refer to marriage.

that when, towards the close of the century, the rule of celibacy and separation was introduced, and Siricius and Innocent I. ransacked the Gospels for texts of more than doubtful application with which to support the innovation, they made no reference whatever to the Nicene canon.¹ Had it been understood at that period as bearing on the subject, it would have been all-sufficient in itself. The reverence felt for the Council of Nicæa was too great, and the absolute obedience claimed for its commands was too willingly rendered, for such an omission to be possible. That Siricius and Innocent should not have adduced it is therefore proof incontrovertible that it was as yet construed as directed solely against the improper companions of the clergy. If further evidence to the same effect be required, it may be found in a law of Honorius, promulgated in 420, in which, while forbidding the clergy to keep "*mulieres extraneæ*" under the name of "*sorores*," and permitting only mothers, daughters, and sisters, he adds that the desire for chastity does not prohibit the residence of wives whose merits have assisted in rendering their husbands worthy of the priesthood.² The object of the law is evidently to give practical force and effect to the Nicene canon, and the imperial power under Honorius had sunk to too low an ebb for us to imagine the possibility of his venturing to tamper with and overrule the decrees of the most venerable council.³ Even in the sixth century the Nicene canon was not yet considered to have the meaning subsequently attributed to it, for otherwise there would have been no necessity of inserting a provision prohibiting the marriage of priests

¹ Siricii Epist. 2.—Innocent. ad Victricium, ad Exuperium, &c.

² Lib. xvi. Cod. Theod. Tit. ii. l. 44.

³ The learned and orthodox Zaccaria concludes that the Nicene canon was only intended to forbid the irregular connexions with *agapetæ*, whence he ingeniously argues that as the Council of Nicæa did not in any way forbid priestly marriage, the origin of the rule of celibacy is to be assigned to the Apostles.—*Storia Polemica*, p. 90.

in the account forged at that time of a Roman council said to have been held by Silvester I.¹

If the proof thus adduced be as convincing as it appears to me, the story of Paphnutius is not so important as to deserve the amount of controversy that has been expended upon it, and a brief reference is all that seems necessary. Socrates and Sozomen relate that while the canons of the council were under consideration, some of the fathers desired to introduce one interdicting all intercourse between those in orders and their wives. Whereupon Paphnutius, an Egyptian bishop, protested against the heavy burden to be thus imposed upon the clergy, quoting the well-known declaration of St. Paul to the Hebrews respecting the purity of the marriage-bed. The influence of St. Paphnutius was great, for he was a confessor of peculiar sanctity; the loss of his right eye bore testimony to the severity of the persecutions which he had endured, and his immaculate chastity, preserved from boyhood in a monastery, rendered his motives and his impartiality on the subject unimpeachable. The bishops, who had been on the point of accepting the proposed canon, were convinced, and the project was abandoned.²

If this account be true, it of course follows that the third canon has no bearing on the wives of ecclesiastics, and that the enforcement of celibacy dates from a later period than that of the council. Accordingly, when the Nicene canon was found necessary to give authority to the rule, it became requisite to discredit the story of Paphnutius. The first attempt to do this, which has come under my observation, occurred during the fierce contentions aroused by the efforts of Gregory VII. to restore the almost forgotten law of celibacy. Bernald of Constance has left a record of a discussion held by him

¹ Pseudo-Concil. Roman. sub. Silvest. can. xix. (Migne's Patrol. VIII. 840).

² Socrat. H. E. Lib. I. c. 11.—Sozomen. H. E. Lib. I. c. 22.

in 1076 with Albain, a zealous defender of sacerdotal marriage, in which the authenticity of the story is hotly contested.¹ Bernald's logic may be condensed into the declaration that he considered it much more credible that Sozomen was in error than that so holy a man as St. Paphnutius could have been guilty of such blasphemy. No reason whatever was vouchsafed when Gregory VII. caused the story to be condemned in the Synod of Rome of 1079.² In spite of this, Pius IV., in 1564, admitted its authenticity in his epistle to the German princes who had requested of him the concession of sacerdotal marriage.³ Later writers, from Bellarmine down, have, however, entered into elaborate arguments to prove its impossibility. They rest their case principally on the assertion of the existence of celibacy as a rule anterior to the council, and on its enforcement afterwards; on the fact that Socrates and Sozomen flourished a little more than a century after the council, and that they are therefore untrustworthy; and that the name of St. Paphnutius does not appear in the acts of the council. To the first of these objections the preceding pages afford, I think, a sufficient answer; to the second it can only be replied that we must be content with the best testimony attainable, and that there is none better than that of the two historians, whose general truthfulness and candour are acknowledged;⁴ and to the third it may be remarked that of the 318 bishops present,

¹ Bernald. *Altercat. de Incont. Sacerd.*

² *Monumenta Gregoriana* (Migne's *Patrol. T. CXLVIII.* p. 1378).

³ *Verum quidem est, quod ob ministrorum Dei defectum in primitiva ecclesia conjugati admittebantur ad sacerdotium, ut ex canonibus apostolorum et Paphnutii responso liquet, et in Concilio Nicæno.*—(Respons. Pii. IV. *ap. Le Plat, Concil. Trident. Monument. VI.* 337.)

⁴ *Sed præ cæteris omnibus Socrates et Sozomeus ac Theodoretus totius antiquitatis judicio celebrati sunt, qui ab iis temporibus exorsi, in quibus Eusebius scribendi finem fecerat, ad Theodosii junioris tempora opus suum perduxerunt.*—H. Valesii *Præfat.*

but 222 affixed their signatures to the acts, while Rufinus and Theodoret both expressly assert that Paphnutius was present.¹ That the statement was not discredited until controversialists found it desirable to do so, is shown by its retention in the full account of the proceedings of the council by Gelasius of Cyzicus, in the fifth century, and also by its repetition in the "*Historia Tripartita*," a condensation of the narratives of Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, compiled in the sixth century by Cassiodorus, whose irreproachable orthodoxy would hardly have permitted him to give it currency if it had then been considered as blasphemous as the writers of the eleventh century would have us believe. In fact, the learned and orthodox Christian Wolff, in his great work on the Councils, rejects as trifling the assertion that the story of Paphnutius is fictitious. His theory of the whole matter is that the Western Church endeavoured to subject the Eastern to its views on the celibacy required of the priesthood; that the effort failed, in consequence of the opposition of Paphnutius, and that the canon adopted had reference merely to the scandals of the *Agapetæ*.²

Various indications have been collected by controversialists to show that for some time after the Council of Nicæa no interference was attempted with married priests. Of these, one or two will suffice.

St. Athanasius, whose orthodoxy it would not be prudent for any one to question, and whose appearance during his diaconate at the Council of Nicæa first attracted general attention to his commanding abilities, has left us convincing testimony as to the perfect freedom allowed

¹ Theodoret. *Hist. Eccles. Lib. i. c. 7.*

So also Rufinus (*Hist. Eccles. Lib. x. c. 4*): "*Fuit præterea in illo concilio et Paphnutius homo Dei, episcopus Ægypti partibus, confessor, etc.*," but he makes no allusion to the incident related by Socrates and Sozomen.

² *Act. Concil. Nicæn. II. xxxii. (Harduin. I. 438).—Hist. Tripart. II. 13.—Chr. Lupi Opp. I. 239 (Venet. 1724).*

during his time to all classes of ecclesiastics. An Egyptian monk named Dracontius had been elected to an episcopate, and hesitated to accept the dignity lest its duties should prove incompatible with the fulfilment of his vows. To remove these scruples, Athanasius addressed him an epistle containing various arguments, among which was the declaration that in his new sphere of action he would find no difficulty in carrying out whatever rules he might prescribe for himself. "Many bishops," said the Saint, "have not contracted matrimony, while, on the other hand, monks have become fathers. Again, we see bishops who have children, and monks who take no thought of having posterity."¹ The tenor of the whole passage is such as to show that no laws had yet been enacted to control individual action in such matters, and while rigid asceticism was largely practised, it was to be admired as the result of private conviction, and not as mere enforced submission to an established rule.

Testimony equally unequivocal is afforded by the case of St. Gregory Theologos, Bishop of Nazianzum. He relates that his father, who was likewise a St. Gregory Bishop of Nazianzum, was converted about the period of the Nicene Council, and was shortly afterwards admitted to the priesthood and created bishop. His mother, St. Nonna, prayed earnestly for male issue, saw her future son St. Gregory in a prophetic vision, and devoted him, before his birth, to the service of God. That this occurred after his father's admission to orders is shown by the address which he represents the latter as making to him, "I have passed more years in offering the sacrifice than measure your whole life,"²

¹ Epist. ad Dracontium.

² Οὐπω τοσούτον ἐκμετρηκας βιον,

Ὅσος διηλθε θυσίων ἐμοι χρονος.

Baronius labours hard to break the force of this assertion, but his arguments

while the birth of a younger son, Cæsarius, shows that conjugal relations continued undisturbed. St. Gregory evidently felt that neither shame nor irregularity attached to his birth during the sacred ministry of his father.

seem to me successfully controverted by Calixtus. (*De Conjug. Cleric.* Ed. 1783, pp. 261-74.) The chapter devoted to this question by Zaccaria (*Storia Polem.* Lib. I. cap. vii.) is an example of desperate special pleading.

CHAPTER IV

LEGISLATION

THUS far the progress of asceticism had been the result of moral influence alone. Those who saw in the various forms of abstinence and mortification the only path to salvation, and those who may have felt that worldly advantages of power or reputation would compensate them for the self-inflicted restrictions which they underwent, already formed a numerous body in the Church, but as yet had not acquired the numerical ascendancy requisite to enable them to impose upon their brethren the rules which they had adopted for their own guidance. The period was one of transition, and for sixty years after the Council of Nicæa there was doubtless a struggle for supremacy, not perhaps the less severe because at this late date we can but dimly trace its outlines amid the records of the fierce Arian controversy which constitutes the ecclesiastical history of the time, and which absorbed the attention of writers almost to the exclusion of everything else.

The first triumph of the ascetic party was in establishing recognised restrictions on those who had voluntarily assumed vows of celibacy. With them, at least, the case was clear. Aspiring to no rank in the Church, they simply dedicated themselves to God, and pledged themselves to lives of abstinence. Their backsliding caused scandal to the Church, which, if it were held responsible in the eyes of men for their conduct, must necessarily assume the power to control their mode of life, while the fact of simply holding them to the per-

formance of vows solemnly undertaken could not reasonably be regarded as an arbitrary stretch of authority. These voluntary vows, which speedily led to the establishment of the vast fabric of monachism, will form the subject of a subsequent chapter, and need not be further alluded to here.

Another move in the direction of asceticism was the prohibition by the Council of Laodicea in 352 of women serving as priests or presiding over the churches.¹ Although in later Judaism the Temple service was confined to men, the examples of Deborah and Huldah show that in earlier times women were considered as capable of inspiration and were sometimes revered as prophets; the Gentiles, among whom the infant Churches were founded, had priestesses almost everywhere actively employed in the duties of worship and sacrifice; and it would have been strange if women, to whom the propagation of the Gospel was so greatly owing, had not been sometimes admitted to the function of conducting the simple services of the primitive Church. We learn from St. Paul that Phœbe was a deacon (*διάκονος*) of the Church at Cenchrea;² the Apostolic Constitutions contain a regular formula for their ordination;³ and the canon of Laodicea shows that until the middle of the fourth century they still occasionally occupied recognised positions in the active ministry of the Church. They could not have been numerous, or the references to them in the history of the period would have been more frequent, and the enforcement of their disability for divine service would have required constant repetition in the canons of the general and local synods; but unquestion-

¹ Concil. Laodicens. can. xi.

² Romans XVI. 1. The number of women alluded to by St. Paul in this chapter shows how active they were in disseminating the faith. Junia he dignifies with the title of Apostle.

³ Constitt. Apostol. Lib. VIII. c. xxvi.

ably the growth of the veneration of the Virgin and of female saints would have sufficed to prevent the inconsistency of regarding women as absolutely unfitted for any function in public worship, had it not been for the rising influence of asceticism, which demanded the separation of the sexes, and insisted upon an artificial purity in all concerned in the ministry of the altar. Even in the tenth century, so good a celibatarian as Atto of Vercelli was perfectly willing to assert that in the early Church, when the labourers were few, women were admitted to share in the ceremonies of divine worship;¹ and, as late as the fourteenth, Bishop Alvaro Pelagio complains that women take orders, though they cannot legally do so, fulminate excommunications and hear confessions.²

Still, as yet, the secular clergy were at liberty to follow the dictates of their own consciences, and if an attempt was made to erect the necessity of ascetic abstinence into an article of either faith or discipline, the Church was prompt to stamp it with the seal of unequivocal reprobation. Eustathius, Bishop of Sebastia, in Cappadocia, himself the son of the Bishop of Cappadocian Cæsarea, Eulalius, carried his zeal for purity to so great an excess that his exaggerated notions of the inferiority of the married state trenched closely upon Manichæism, although his heretical rejection of canonical fasting showed that on other points he was bitterly opposed to the tenets of that obnoxious sect. His

¹ Atton. Vercell. Epist. viii.—Epiphanius (Hæres. LXXIX.) denies that women had ever been permitted to rise beyond the diaconate, and asserts that their functions in that grade were simply to render to women such offices as decency forbade to men. In the West, the ordination of deaconesses was prohibited by Concil. Arausican. I. ann. 441 can. xxvi.; Concil. Epaonens. ann. 513 can. xxi., and Concil. Aurelianens. II. ann. 533 can. xviii., on account of disorders arising through the fragility of the sex, as was perhaps not unnatural, after the adoption of enforced celibacy. It was probably for the sake of order that St. Paul forbade women from teaching or asking questions in church (I. Cor. XIV. 34, 35; I. Tim. II. 11, 12).

² Alvar. Pelag. de Planctu Ecclesiæ, Lib. II. Art. xlv. Nos. 61, 72.

horror of matrimony went so far as to lead him to the dogma that married people were incapable of salvation; he forbade the offering of prayer in houses occupied by them; and he declared that the blessings and sacraments of priests living with their wives were to be rejected, and their persons treated with contempt.¹

There were not wanting those to whom even these extreme opinions were acceptable, and Eustathius speedily accumulated around him a host of devotees whose proselyting zeal threatened a stubborn heresy. The excesses attributed to their inability to endure the practical operation of their leader's doctrines may be true, or may be merely the accusations which are customarily disseminated when it becomes necessary to invest schismatics with odium. Be this as it may, the orthodox clergy felt the importance of promptly repressing opinions which, although at variance with the creed of the Church, were yet dangerously akin to the extreme views of those who were regarded as pre-eminently holy. Eulalius, the father of the heresiarch, himself presided at a local synod held at Cæsarea, and condemned his son. This did not suffice to repress the heresy, and about the year 362 a provincial council was assembled at Gangra, where fifteen bishops, among whom was Eulalius, pronounced their verdict on Eustathius and his misguided followers, and drew up a series of canons defining the orthodox belief

¹ Declaratum est enim hos eosdem nuptias accusare et docere quod nullus in conjugali positus gradu spem habeat apud Deum. . . . In domibus conjugatorum nec orationes quidem debere celebrari, persuasisse in tantum ut easdem fieri vetent. . . . Presbyteros vero qui matrimonia contraxerunt sperni debere dicunt, nec sacramenta quas ab eis conficiuntur, attingi.—Concil. Gangrens. Proem.

So also Socrates—"Benedictionem presbyteri habentis uxorem, quam lege cum esset laicus duxisset, tanquam scelus declinandum præcepit."—Hist. Eccles. Lib. II. c. 33.

After the specific condemnation of this latter doctrine by the undoubtedly orthodox council of Gangra, it is somewhat remarkable to see it enunciated and erected into a law of the Church by Gregory VII. in his internecine conflict with the married priests. Thus the heresy of one age becomes the received and adopted faith of another.

on the questions involved. That they were received by the Church as authoritative is evident from their being included in the collections of Dionysius and Isidor. These canons anathematise all who refuse the sacraments of a married priest, and who hold that he cannot officiate on account of his marriage; also those who, priding themselves on their professed virginity, arrogantly despise their married brethren, and who hold that the duties of wedlock are incompatible with salvation.¹ The whole affords a singularly distinct record of the doctrines accepted at this period, showing that there was no authority admitted for imposing restrictions of any kind on the married clergy. It probably was an effort on the part of the conservatives of the Church to restrain their more progressive brethren, and they no doubt gladly availed themselves of the wild theories of Eustathius to stigmatise the extravagances which were daily becoming more influential. At the same time, they were careful to shield themselves behind a qualified concession to the ascetic spirit of the period, for in an epilogue they apologetically declare their humble admiration of virginity, and their belief that pious continence is most acceptable to God.²

In little more than twenty years after this emphatic denunciation of all interference with married priests, we find the first absolute command addressed to the higher orders of the clergy to preserve inviolate celibacy. So abrupt a contrast provokes an inquiry into its possible

¹ Concil. Gangrens. c. 4.—Si quis decernit presbyterum conjugatum tanquam occasione nuptiarum quod offerre non debeat, et ab ejus oblatione ideo se abstinet, anathema sit.—I give the Isidorian version adopted by Gratian, Dist. XXVIII. c. 15, and by Burchard, Lib. III. 75. That of Dionysius Exiguus is somewhat different.

Can. 10.—Si quis propter Deum virginitatem professus in conjugio positos per arrogantiam vituperaverit, anathema sit.—Can. 1 and 9 are directed against those who condemn marriage, and teach that it affords no chance of heaven.

² Concil. Gangrens. Epilog.

causes, as no records have reached us exhibiting any special reasons for the change.

While the admirers of ascetic virginity became louder and more enthusiastic in their praises of that blessed condition, it is fair to presume that they were daily more sensible of a lower standard of morality in the ministers of the altar, and that their susceptibilities were more deeply shocked by the introduction and growth of abuses. While the Church was kept purified by the fires of persecution, it offered few attractions for the worldly and ambitious. Its ministry was too dangerous to be sought except by the pure and zealous Christian, and there was little danger that pastors would err except from over-tenderness of conscience or unthinking ardour. When, however, its temporal position was incalculably improved by its domination throughout the empire, it became the avenue through which ambition might attain its ends, while its wealth held out prospects of idle self-indulgence to the slothful and the sensual. A new class of men, dangerous alike from their talents or their vices, would thus naturally find their way into the fold, and corruption, masked under the semblance of austere virtue, or displayed with careless cynicism, would not be long in penetrating into the Holy of Holies. Immorality must have been flagrant when, in 370, the temporal power felt the necessity of interfering by a law of the Emperor Valentinian, which denounced severe punishment on ecclesiastics who visited the houses of widows and virgins.¹ When an increasing laxity of morals thus threatened to overcome the purity of the Church, it is not surprising that the advocates of asceticism should have triumphed over the more moderate and conservative party, and that they should improve their victory by seeking a remedy for existing evils in such laws as

¹ Lib. XVI. Cod. Theod. Tit. ii. l. 20.

should render the strictest continence imperative on all who entered into holy orders. They might reasonably argue that, if nothing else were gained, the change would at least render the life of the priest less attractive to the vicious and the sensual, and that the rigid enforcement of the new rules would elevate the character of the Church by preventing such wolves from seeking a place among the sheep. If by such legislation they only added fresh fuel to the flame; if they heightened immorality by hypocrisy, and drove into vagabond licentiousness those who would perhaps have been content with lawful marriage, they only committed an error which has ever been too common with earnest men of one idea to warrant special surprise.

Another object may not improbably have entered into the motives of those who introduced the rule. The Church was daily receiving vast accessions of property from the pious zeal of its wealthy members, the death-bed repentance of despairing sinners, and the munificence of emperors and prefects, while the effort to procure the inalienability of its possessions dates from an early period.¹ Its acquisitions, both real and personal, were of course exposed to much greater risk of dilapidation when the ecclesiastics in charge of its widely scattered riches had families for whose provision a natural parental anxiety might be expected to override the sense of duty in discharging the trust confided to them. The simplest mode of averting the danger might therefore seem to be to relieve the churchman of the cares of paternity, and, by cutting asunder all the ties of family and kindred, to

¹ So great was the influx of wealth to the Church from the pious legacies of the faithful that it became an evil of magnitude to the state, and in 370 a law of Valentinian pronounced null and void all such testamentary provisions made by those under priestly influence (*Lib. xvi. Cod. Theod. Tit. ii. l. 20*)—a provision repeated in 390 (*Ibid. l. 27*) with such additional details as show its successful evasion during the interval. Godefroi, in his notes to these laws (*T. VI. pp. 48-50, 60-64*), has collected much curious matter bearing on the subject.

bind him completely and for ever to the Church and to that alone. This motive, as we shall see, was openly acknowledged as a powerful one in later times, and it no doubt served as an argument of weight in the minds of those who urged and secured the adoption of the canon.

It appears to me not unreasonable to suppose that all these various motives lent additional force to the zeal for the purity of the Church, and to the undoubting belief in the necessity of perpetual celibacy, which impelled the popes, about the year 385, to issue the first definite command imposing it as an absolute rule of discipline on the ministers of the altar. The question evidently was one which largely occupied the minds of men, and the conclusion was reached progressively. A Roman synod, to which the date of 384 is conjecturally assigned, answered a series of interrogatories propounded by the bishops of Gaul, among which was one relating to the chastity of the priesthood. To this the response was rather argumentatory and advisory in its character than imperative; the continence of the higher grades of ecclesiastics was insisted on, but no definite punishment was ordered for its violation¹—and no maxim in legislation is better understood than that a law without a penalty expressed is practically a dead letter. Allusion was made to previous efforts to enforce the observance in various Churches; surprise was expressed that light should be sought for on such a question—for the Gallic prelates had evidently been in doubt respecting it—and numerous reasons were alleged in a manner to show that the subject was as yet open to argument, and could not be assumed as proved or be decided by authority alone. These

¹ Synod. Roman. ad Gallos Episc. Respons. c. 3.—The date of this synod is not certain, but the year mentioned in the text is the earliest to which it is assigned. By some authorities it has been attributed to 398, and Hardouin suggests that it may even have been held under Innocent I.

reasons may be briefly summed up as consisting of references to the well-known texts referred to in a previous chapter, together with a vague assertion of the opinion of the Fathers to the same effect. Allusion was made to the inconsistency of exhortations to virginity proceeding from those who themselves were involved in family cares and duties, a reasonable view when we consider how much of ecclesiastical machinery by this time turned on monachism; and the necessity was urged of bishops, priests, and deacons preserving the purity requisite to fit them for the daily sacrifice of the altar and the ministration of the sacraments. This latter point was based upon the assumption of a similar abstinence being imposed by the old law on the Levites during their term of service in the Temple, and the example of the pagan priesthood was indignantly adduced to shame those who could entertain a sacrilegious doubt upon a matter so self-evident.¹ The conclusion arrived at was definite, but, as I have already remarked, no means were suggested or commanded for its enforcement.

Not many months later Pope Damasus died, but the cause was safe in the hands of his successor. Scarcely had Siricius ascended the pontifical throne, when, in 385, he addressed an epistle to Himerius, Archbishop of Tarragona, expressing his grief and indignation that the

¹ "Certe idololatræ, ut impietates exerceant et dæmonibus immolent, imperant sibi continentiam muliebrem, et ab escis quoque se purgari volunt, et me interrogas si sacerdos Dei vivi spiritualia oblaturus sacrificia purgatus perpetuo debeat esse, an totus in carne carnis curam debeat facere?"

If all the postulates be granted, the reasoning is unanswerable, and as the precedents of the Old Testament have been relied upon in all arguments since the time of Siricius, it may be worth while to refer to the caution of Ahimelech before giving the shew-bread to David (I. Sam. 21) as one of the texts most constantly quoted, and to the residence of Zacharias in the Temple during his term of ministration (Luke i. 23), which was frequently instanced. These are certainly more germane to the matter than the linen breeches provided for Aaron and his sons (Exod. xxviii. 42-3), by which the Venerable Bede assures us (De Tabernac. Lib. iii. c. 9) "significatum esse sacerdotes Novi Testamenti aut virgines esse, aut contracta cum uxoribus fœdera dissolvisse."

Spanish clergy should pay so little regard to the sanctity of their calling as to maintain relations with their wives. It is evident from the tenor of the decretal that Himerius had been unable to enforce the new discipline, and had appealed to Rome for assistance in breaking down the stubborn resistance which he had encountered, for allusion is made to some of the refractory who had justified themselves by the freedom of marriage allowed to the Levites under the old law, while others had expressed their regret and had declared their sin to be the result of ignorance. Siricius adopted a much firmer tone than his predecessor. He indulged in less elaboration of argument; a few texts, more or less apposite; an expression of wonder that the rule should be called in question; a distinct assertion of its application to the three grades of bishops, priests, and deacons; a sentence of expulsion on all who dared to offer resistance, and a promise of pardon for those who had offended through ignorance, allowing them to retain their positions as long as they observed complete separation from their wives, though even then they were pronounced incapable of all promotion—such was the first definitive canon, prescribing and enforcing sacerdotal celibacy, exhibited by the records of the Church.¹

The confident manner in which the law is thus laid down as incontrovertible and absolute might almost make us doubt whether it were not older than the preceding pages have shown it to be, if Siricius had not confessed the weakness of the cause by adopting a very different tone within a year. In 386 he addressed the Church of Africa, sending it certain canons adopted by a Roman synod. Of these the first eight relate to observances about which there was at that time no question, and

¹ Siricii Epist. i. c. 7.—It would seem from this decretal (cap. 8, 9, 10, 11) that even the rule excluding digami was wholly neglected. Siricius further (cap. 13) urges the admission of monks to holy orders, for the purpose of providing a priesthood vowed to chastity.

they are expressed in the curtest and most decisive phraseology. The ninth canon is conceived in a spirit totally different. It persuades, exhorts, and entreats that the three orders shall preserve their purity; it argues as to the propriety and necessity of the matter, which it supports by various texts, but it does not assume that the observance thus enjoined is even a custom, much less a law, of the Church; it urges that the scandal of marriage be removed from the clergy, but it threatens no penalty for refusal.¹ Siricius was too imperious and too earnest in all that he undertook for us to imagine that he would have adopted pleading and entreaty if he had felt that he possessed the right to command; nor would he have condescended to beg for the removal of an opprobrium if he were speaking with all the authority of unquestioned tradition to enforce a canon which had become an unalterable part of ecclesiastical discipline.

It is observable that in these decretals no authority is quoted later than the Apostolic texts, which, as we have seen, have but little bearing on the subject. No canons of councils, no epistles of earlier popes, no injunctions of the Fathers are brought forward to strengthen the position assumed, whence the presumption is irresistible that none such existed, and we may rest satisfied that no evidence has been lost that would prove the pre-existence of the rule.

¹ Præterea, quod dignum, pudicum et honestum est, suademus ut sacerdotes et levitæ cum uxoribus suis non coeant, quia in ministerio divino quotidianis necessitatibus occupantur. . . . Qua de re hortor, moneo, rogo, tollatur hoc opprobrium quod potest etiam jure gentilitas accusare.—Concil. Teleptens. c. 9 (Siricii PP. Epist. v. § 3).

CHAPTER V

ENFORCEMENT OF CELIBACY

CELIBACY was but one of the many shapes in which the rapidly progressing sacerdotalism of Rome was overlaying religion with a multitude of formal observances. That which in earlier times had been the spontaneous expression of fervid zeal, or the joyful self-sacrifice of ardent asceticism, was thus changed into a law, bearing upon all alike, and taking no count of the individual idiosyncrasies which might render the burden too heavy for the shoulders of the less fiery though not less conscientious Christian. That it should meet with resistance was to be expected when we consider that the local independence of primitive times had not as yet been crushed under the rapidly growing preponderance of the Roman see. In fact energetic protests were not wanting, as well as the more perplexing stubbornness of passive resistance.

St. Ambrose admits that although the necessity of celibacy was generally acknowledged, still, in many of the remoter districts, there were to be found those who neglected it, and who justified themselves by ancient custom, relying on precautions to purify themselves for their sacred ministry.¹ In this he gives countenance to the tradition of the Leonistæ, simple Christians whose refusal to adapt themselves to the sacerdotalism, which was daily becoming more rigorous and indispensable, caused their expulsion from Rome, and who, taking

¹ Quod eo non præterii quia in plerisque abditioribus locis, cum ministerium gererent, vel etiam sacerdotium, filios susceperent, et id tanquam usu veteri defendunt, quando per intervallo dierum sacrificium deferebatur.—Ambros. de Officiis Lib. i. c. 50.

refuge in the recesses of the Cottian Alps, endeavoured to preserve the unadulterated faith of earlier times in the seclusion and privation of exile.

All who revolted against the increasing oppression of the hierarchy were not, however, content to bury themselves in solitude and silence, and heresiarchs sprang up who waged a bold but unequal contest. Bonosus, Jovinian, and Vigilantius are the names which have reached us as the most conspicuous leaders in the unsuccessful attempt to turn back the advancing spirit of the age, and of these Jovinian is the foremost figure. Bonosus, who was Bishop of Sardica, acquired a peculiarly sinister notoriety, for, in his opposition to the ascetic spirit, he adopted a heresy of Tertullian and Photinus, and assailed one of the chief arguments of the admirers of celibacy by denying the perpetual virginity of the Virgin; whence his followers acquired the euphonious title of Bonosiacs.¹ For this he was naturally denounced by Pope Siricius,

¹ Tertullian has no scruple in asserting—"Et Christum quidem virgo enixa est, semel nuptura post partum" (De Monog. c. 8). This belief was founded on the words of Matthew (I. 25), "*καὶ οὐκ ἐγίνωσκεν αὐτὴν ἕως οὗ ἔτεκετον υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτότοκον, καὶ ἐκάλεσε τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν.*"—"And he knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son; and he called his name JESUS." The restrictive "till" and the characterisation of Jesus as the first-born of the Virgin (though the latter is omitted in the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS.) are certainly not easily explicable on any other supposition; nor is the difficulty lessened by the various explanations concerning the family of Joseph, by which such expressions as *ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ*—fratres et mater ejus (Marc. III. xxxi.), or the enumeration of his brothers and sisters in Matt. XIII. 55-6, Mark VI. 3, or the phrase *ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου*—Jacobum fratrem Domini (Galat. I. 19)—are taken by commentators in a spiritual sense, or are eluded by transferring to the Greek a Hebrew idiom which confounds brothers with cousins. In the *Constitutiones Apostolicæ* occurs a passage—"Et ego Jacobus frater quidem Christi secundum carnem, servus autem tanquam Dei"—which seems to place it in an unmistakable light, if it be an extract from some forgotten Gospel, although it may only reflect the opinions of the third century when the collection was written or compiled.

The Bonosiacs were also sometimes called Helvidians.—S. Augustin. de Hæresibus § 84.—Isidor. Hispalens. Etymolog. Lib. VIII. c. v. § 57.

In an age which was accustomed to such arguments as "*per mulierem culpa successit, per virginem salus evenit*" (Rescript. Episcop. ad Siricium), it is easy to appreciate the pious horror evoked by such blasphemous heresies.

St. Clement of Alexandria alludes to a belief current in his day that after the Nativity the Virgin had to submit to an inspection *ab obstetricæ* to prove her purity

and his followers were duly condemned by the Council of Capua in 389, while the tireless pen of St. Jerome was called into requisition to refute errors so unpardonable.¹ Notwithstanding this they continued to flourish, for an epistle of Innocent I. to Laurence, Bishop of Segna, proves that the error was openly taught on the eastern shores of the Adriatic in the early part of the fifth century;² in 443 the Council of Arles shows their existence in France by promising reconciliation to those who should manifest proper repentance, and that of Orleans as late as 538 still contains an allusion to them;³ even as late as the middle of the seventh century St. Ildefonso of Toledo wrote a treatise on the subject in which he overwhelmed Jovinian and Helvidius with opprobrious epithets.⁴ About the same period the Bonosiacs are the only heretics referred to by name in a canon of the Penitential of St. Columban, as though they were the most prominent misbelievers of the time.⁵ The belief even extended to Arabia, where a sect professing it is stigmatised by Epiphanius as Antidicomarianitarians, whose conversion that worthy bishop endeavoured to secure by a long epistle, in which his laboured explanations of the stubborn text of Matthew are accompanied with hearty objurgations of the blasphemous dogma, and an illustrative comparison of the Virgin to a lioness bearing but one whelp.⁶

(Stromat. Lib. vii.)—a story which continued to trouble the orthodox until the seventeenth century.

The Buddhists eluded all these troublesome questions by making Queen Maya die seven days after the birth of Sakyamuni, and asserting that this was the case with the mothers of all the Buddhas.—Rgya Tch'er Rol P (Ed. Fou-a aux, p. 100).

¹ Siricii PP. Epist. ix. § 3 (Migne's Patrol. XIII. 1177).—Hieron. de Perpet. Virgin. B. Mariæ adv. Helvidium.

² Epist. xx.

³ Concil. Arelatens. II. can. 17.—Concil. Aurelian. III. can. 31.

⁴ S. Ildefonsi Toletani Lib. de Virgin. perpet. S. Mariæ, c. i. ii.

⁵ Pœnitent. Columban. B. cap. 25 (Wasserschleben, Bussordnungen, p. 359).

⁶ Panar. Hæres. 78.—At the time of the Reformation the Bonosiac heresy naturally was revived. In 1523, at the Diet of Nuremberg, the Papal orator accused

While Jovinian shared in this particular the error of Bonosus and Helvidius, he did not attach undue importance to it. More practically inclined, his heresy consisted principally in denying the efficacy of celibacy, and this he maintained in Rome itself, with more zeal than discretion. Siricius caused his condemnation and that of his associates in a synod held about the year 390,¹ and succeeded in driving him to Milan, where he had many proselytes. There was no peace for him there. A synod held under the auspices of St. Ambrose bears testimony to the wickedness of his doctrines and to the popular clamour raised against him, and the wanderer again set forth on his weary pilgrimage.² Deprived of refuge in the cities, he disseminated his tenets throughout the country, where ardent followers, in spite of contumely and persecution, gathered around him and conducted their worship in the fields and hamlets. The laws promulgated about this time against heresy were severe and searching, and bore directly upon all who deviated from the orthodox formulas of the Catholic Church, yet Jovinian braved them all. The outraged Church called upon its most unscrupulous polemic, St. Jerome, who indulged in the customary abuse which represented the schismatics as indulging in the grossest promiscuous licentiousness and Jovinian as teaching them that all things were permitted to those baptized in Christ, in contradiction to St. Augustin, who admits the sobriety and virtue of

Osiander "*quod prædicasset Beatam Virginem Mariam post Christi partum non mansisse Virginem*" (Spalatini Annal. ann. 1523), but Osiander found few followers. At the Colloquy of Poissy, in 1561, the learned Claude d'Espence, doctor of Sorbonne in arguing that there were many things the authority of which rested solely on tradition, and yet which were admitted as undoubted by all parties, instanced "*que la Vierge Marie demoura vierge après l'enfantement, et plusieurs autres semblables par conséquent ; ce qui a esté baillé de main en main par nos pères, ores qu'il ne soit escript, n'est pourtant moins certain et approuvé que s'il estoit temoigné par l'Escripture*" (Pierre de la Place, Liv. VII.).

¹ Siricii PP. Epist. vii. (Migne, *op. cit.*, p. 1168).

² Rescript. Episcopop. ad Siricium. (Harduin. Concil. I. 853.)

Jovinian, in spite of his denying the efficacy of celibacy.¹ All this was insufficient to put down the stubborn schismatics, who maintained their faith until the Church, wearied out with their obstinacy and unable to convert or to silence them, appealed to the secular power for more efficient assistance. Perhaps Jovinian's long career of successful resistance may have emboldened him; perhaps his sect was growing numerous enough to promise protection; at all events, despite the imperial rescripts which shielded with peculiar care the Apostolic city from the presence of heretics, Jovinian in 412 openly held assemblages of his followers in Rome to the scandal of the faithful, and made at least sufficient impression to lead a number of professed virgins to abandon their vows and marry.² The complaints of the orthodox were heard by the miserable shadow who then occupied the throne of Augustus, and Honorius applied himself to the task of persecution with relentless zeal. Jovinian was scourged with a leaded thong and exiled to the rock of Boa, on the coast of Dalmatia, while his followers were hunted down, deported, and scattered among the savage islands of the Adriatic.³

Nor was this the only struggle. A wild shepherd lad named Vigilantius, born among the Pyrenean valleys, was fortunate enough to be the slave of St. Sulpicius Severus, whose wealth, culture, talents, and piety rendered him prominent throughout Southern Gaul. The earnest character of the slave attracted the attention of the master; education developed his powers; he was manu-

¹ Hieron. adv. Jovin.—Augustin. de Hæres. No. lxxxii.

² Augustin. Retractt. II. xxii. 1.

³ Lib. XVI. Cod. Theod. Tit. v. l. 53. It is generally assumed from this law that Jovinian lived until 412. An expression of St. Jerome, however (adv. Vigilant. cap. i.), would seem to show that he was already dead in 406, and critics have suggested either that there is an error in the date of the law or that another heresiarch is referred to.

mitted, and the people of his native Calagurris chose him for their priest. Sent by Sulpicius as bearer of letters to his friends St. Paulinus at Nola, and St. Jerome in his Bethlehem retreat, Vigilantius had the opportunity of comparing the simple Christianity of his native mountains with the splendid pageantry of Rome, the elegant retirement of Nola, and the heated controversialism which agitated the asceticism of Bethlehem. Notwithstanding the cordiality of their first acquaintance, his residence with Jerome was short. Both were too earnestly dogmatic in their natures for harmony to exist between the primitive Cantabrian shepherd and the fierce apostle of Buddhist and Mazdean Christianity, who devoted his life to reconciling the doctrines of the Latin Church with the practices of Manichæism. Brief friendship ended in a quarrel, and Vigilantius extended his experiences by a survey of Egypt, where the vast hordes of Nitrian anchorites were involved in civil strife over the question of Origenism. Returning through Italy, he tarried in Milan and among the Alps, where he found the solution of his doubts and the realisation of his ideas in the teaching of Jovinian. He had left Gaul a disciple; he returned to it a missionary, prepared to do battle with sacerdotalism in all its forms. Not only did he deny the necessity of celibacy, but he pronounced it to be the fertile source of impurity, and in his zeal for reform he swept away fasting and maceration, he ridiculed the veneration of relics, and pronounced the miracles wrought at their altars to be the work of demons; he objected to the candles and incense around the shrines, to prayers for the dead, and to the oblations of the faithful.¹

¹ *Exortus est subito Vigilantius, seu verius Dormitantius, qui immundo spiritu pugnat contra Christi spiritum, et martyrum neget sepulchra veneranda, damnandas dicat esse vigilias; nunquam nisi in Pascha alleluia cantandum; continentiam hæresim; pudicitiam libidinis seminarium. Et quomodo Euphorbus in Pythagora renatus esse perhibetur, sic in isto Joviniani mens prava surrexit; ut et in illo et in hoc diaboli respondere cogamur insidiis.*—Hieron. adv. Vigilant. c. 1.

No doubt the decretals of Siricius had rendered compulsory the celibacy of the priesthood throughout Gaul and Spain. The machinery of the hierarchy may readily have stifled open opposition, however frequent may have been the secret infractions of the rule. This may perhaps have contributed to the success of Vigilantius. Even his former master, St. Sulpicius Severus, and St. Exuperius, Bishop of Toulouse, were inclined to favour his reforms. That they spread with dangerous rapidity throughout Gaul from south to north is shown by the fact that in 404 Victricius, Bishop of Rouen, and in 405 St. Exuperius of Toulouse applied to Innocent I. for advice as to the manner in which they should deal with the new heresy. It also counted numerous adherents throughout Spain, among whom even some bishops were enumerated. The alarm was promptly sounded, and the enginery of the Church was brought to bear upon the hardy heretic. The vast reputation and authority of Jerome lent force to the coarse invective with which he endeavoured to overwhelm his whilom acquaintance, and though the nickname of Dormitantius which he bestowed on Vigilantius was a sarcasm neither very severe nor very refined, the disgusting exaggeration of his adversary's tenets, in which he as usual indulged, had doubtless its destined effect.¹ Pope Innocent was not backward in asserting the authority of Rome and the inviolable nature of the canon. In his epistle to Victricius, he repeated the decretal of Siricius, but in a somewhat more positive form ;²

¹ *Proh nefas ! episcopus sui sceleris dicitur habere consortes : si tamen episcopi nominandi sunt qui non ordinant diaconos nisi prius uxores duxerint ; nulli cœlibi credentes pudicitiam, immo ostendentes quam sancte vivant qui male de omnibus suspicantur ; et nisi pręgnantes uxores viderint clericorum, infantesque de ulnis matrum vagientes, Christi sacramenta non tribuant. . . . Hoc docuit Dormitantius, libidini fręna permittens, et naturalem carnis ardorem, qui in adolescentia plerumque fervescit, suis hortatibus duplicans, immo extinguens coitu fœminarum, ut nihil sit quo distemus a porcis, etc.*—Hieron. adv. Vigilant. c. 2.

² *Pręterea quod dignum, pudicum et honestum est, tenere ecclesia omnino debet, ut sacerdotes et livitę cum uxoribus non misceantur. . . . Maxime ut vetus*

while in the following year (405) he confirmed the vacillating faith of Exuperius by declaring that any violation of the strictest celibacy on the part of priest or deacon subjects the offender to the deprivation of his position.¹ As in the previous effort of Siricius, however, ignorance is admitted as an excuse, entitling him who can plead it to retain his grade without hope of preferment—and the test of this ignorance is held to be the canon of 385. This latter point is noteworthy, for it is a tacit confession of the novelty of the rule, although Innocent laboured at great length to prove both its antiquity and necessity from the well-known texts of St. Paul and the Levitical observances. Yet no intermediate authority was quoted, and punishment was only to be inflicted on those who could be proved to have seen the decretal of Siricius.

The further career of Vigilantius and his sectaries is lost in the darkness and confusion attendant upon the ravages of the Alans and Vandals who overran Gaul during the following year. We only know that Sulpicius and Exuperius, frightened by the violence of Jerome and the authority of Innocent, abandoned their protégé, and we can presume that, during the period of wild disorder which followed the irruption of the Barbarians, what little protection Rome could afford was too consoling to the afflicted Churches for them to risk its withdrawal by resisting on any point the daily increasing pretensions of the Apostolic See to absolute command.²

regula hoc habet ut quisquis corruptus baptizatus clericus esse voluisset, spondeat uxorem omnino non ducere.—Innocent. PP. I. Epist. ii. c. 9, 10.

¹ *Ut incontinentes in officiis talibus positi, omni ecclesiastico honore priventur, nec admittantur ad tale ministerium, quod sola continentia oportet impleri.*—As for those who could be proved to have seen the epistle of Siricius—"illi sunt modis omnibus submovendi."—Innocent. PP. I. Epist. iii. c. 1.

² The observance of the rule and its effects are well illustrated in the story of Urbicus, Bishop of Clermont, and his unhappy wife, as naïvely related by Gregory of Tours (*Hist. Franc. L. I. c. 44*).

The victory was won, for with the death of Vigilantius and Jovinian ended the last organised and acknowledged attempt to stay the progress of celibacy in the Latin Church, until centuries later, when the regulation was already too ancient and too well supported by tradition and precedent to be successfully called in question.

In Africa we find no trace of open resistance to the introduction of the rule, though time was evidently required to procure its enforcement. We have seen that Siricius, in 386, addressed an appeal to the African bishops. To this they responded by holding a council in which they agreed "*conscriptio quædam*" that chastity should be preserved by the three higher orders. This apparently was not conclusive, for in 390 another council was held in which Aurelius, Bishop of Carthage, again introduced the subject. He recapitulated their recent action, urged that the teaching of the Apostles and ancient usage required the observance of the rule, and obtained the assent of his brother prelates to the separation from their wives of those who were concerned in administering the sacraments.¹ The form of these proceedings shows that it was an innovation, requiring deliberation and the assent of the ecclesiastics present, not a simple affirmation of a traditional and unalterable point of discipline, and, moreover, no penalty is mentioned for disobedience. Little respect, probably, was paid to the new rule. The third and fourth Councils of Carthage, held in 397 and 398, passed numerous canons relating to discipline, prescribing minutely the qualifications and duties of the clergy, and of the votaries of the monastic profession. The absence from among

¹ *Ab universis episcopis dictum est : Omnibus placet, ut episcopi, presbyteri et diaconi, vel qui sacramenta contrectant, pudicitie custodes etiam ab uxoribus se absteineant.*—Concil. Carthag. II. can. 2 (Cod. Eccles. African. can. 3).

these canons of any allusion to enforced celibacy would therefore appear to prove that it was still left to the conscience of the individual. If this be so, the triumph of the sacerdotal party was not long delayed, as might be expected from the rising influence and authority of St. Augustin, whose early Manichæism led him, after his conversion, to be one of the most enthusiastic admirers and promoters of austere asceticism. We may not unreasonably assume that it was through his prompting that his friend St. Aurelius, at the fifth Council of Carthage in 401, proposed a canon, which was adopted, ordering the separation of the married clergy of the higher grades from their wives, under pain of deprivation of office.¹ As before, the form of the canon shows it to be an innovation.

That the rule was positively adopted and frequently submitted to is shown by St. Augustin, who, in his

¹ Aurelius episcopus dixit: Addimus fratres carissimi præterea, cum de quorundam clericorum, quamvis lectorum, erga uxores proprias incontinentia referretur, placuit, quod et in diversis conciliis firmatum est, ut subdiaconi, qui sacra mysteria contrectant, et diaconi et presbyteri, sed et episcopi, secundum priora statuta etiam ab uxoribus se contineant, ut tanquam non habentes videantur esse: quod nisi fecerint, ab ecclesiastico removeantur officio. Ceteros autem clericos ad hoc non cogi, nisi maturiori ætate. Ab universo concilio dictum est: Quæ vestra sanctitas est juste moderata, et sancta et Deo placita sunt, confirmamus.—Concil. Carthag. V. c. 3 (Cod. Eccles. Afric. c. 25).

The councils thus alluded to are probably the Roman Synods under Damasus and Siricius.

I give the version most favoured by modern critics, but it should be observed that there is doubt concerning several important points. In the older collections of councils (*e.g.* Surius, Ed. 1567, T. I. pp. 519–20) the canon indicates no compulsion for the orders beneath the diaconate, commencing "Placuit episcopos et presbyteros et diaconos," and ending "Cæteros autem clericos ad hoc non cogi sed secundum uniuscujusque ecclesiæ consuetudinem observari debere," and this has probability in its favour, since the subdiaconate was not included in the restriction for nearly two centuries after this period, and the lower grades were never subjected to the rule.

The expression "secundum priora statuta" is probably the emendation of a copyist for "secundum propria statuta," which latter is the reading given by Dionysius Exiguus. That this is the correct one is rendered almost certain by the Greek version, which is *κατὰ τοὺς ἰδίους ὁρῶν* (Calixt. Conjug. Cleric. p. 350), which would seem to leave the matter very much to the preëxisting customs of the individual churches.

treatise against second marriages, states that, in arguing with those desirous of entering upon those unhallowed unions, he was accustomed to strengthen his logic by citing the continence of the clergy, who, however unwillingly they had in most cases been forced to undertake the burden, still, by the aid of God, were enabled to endure it to the end.¹ Yet it is evident that its enforcement was attended with many difficulties and much opposition, for, twenty years later, at another Council of Carthage, we find Faustinus, the Papal Legate, proposing that the three higher orders shall be separated from their wives, to which the fathers of the council somewhat evasively replied that those who were concerned in the ministry of the altar should be chaste in all things. No attempt, however, was apparently made to strengthen the resolution by affixing a penalty for its infringement. It was a simple declaration of opinion, and nothing more.²

Symptoms of similar difficulty in the rigid enforcement of the canon are observable elsewhere. The proceedings of the first Council of Toledo, held in the year 400, shows not only that it was a recent innovation which continued to be disregarded, but that it had given rise to a crowd of novel questions which required im-

¹ De Adulterin. Conjug. Lib. II. c. 20.

² Faustinus episcopus ecclesiæ Potentinae, provinciæ Piceni, legatus Romanæ ecclesiæ, dixit: Placet ut episcopus, presbyter et diaconus vel qui sacramenta contrectant pudicitiae custodes ab uxoribus se abstineant. Ab universis episcopis dictum est: Placet ut in omnibus pudicitia custodiatur qui altari inserviunt (Cod. Eccles. African. can. iv.).

That strict rules were not enforced in the African Church is rendered probable by another circumstance. Faustus the Manichaean, in defending the tenets of his sect on the subject of marriage and celibacy, enters into an elaborate comparison of their doctrines and practices with those of the Catholic Church. In ridiculing the idea that the Manichæans prohibited marriage to their followers, he could not have omitted the argument and contrast derivable from prohibition of marriage by the Catholics, had such prohibition been enforced. His omission to do this is therefore a negative proof of great weight.—See Augustin. contra Faust. Manich. Lib. xxx. c. iv.

peratively to be settled, as to the status of the several grades of clerks who were guilty of various forms of disobedience¹—the prototype and exemplar of innumerable similar attempts at legislation which continued for more than a thousand years to occupy a good part of the attention of almost every council and synod. The prelates of Cis-Alpine Gaul, assembled in the Council of Turin in 401, could only be brought to pronounce incapable of promotion those who contravened the injunction which separated them from their wives.² The practical working of this was to permit those to retain their wives who were satisfied with the grade to which they had attained. Thus the priest, who saw little prospect of elevation to the episcopate, might readily console himself with the society of his wife, while the powerful influence of the wives would be brought to bear against the promptings of ambition on the part of their husbands. The punishment thus was heaviest on the lower grades and lightest on the higher clergy, whose position should have rendered the sin more heinous—in fact, the bishop, to whom further promotion was impossible, escaped entirely from the penalty.

Even as late as 441 the first Council of Orange shows how utterly the rule had been neglected by ordering that for the future no married man should be ordained deacon without making promise of separation from his wife, for contravention of which he was to suffer degradation; while those who had previously been admitted to orders were only subjected to the canon of the Council of Turin, incurring merely loss of promotion.³ This evidently indicates that the regulation was a novelty,

¹ Concil. Toletan. I. ann. 400 can. 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 18, 19.

² *Hi autem qui contra interdictum sunt ordinati, vel in ministerio filios genuerunt, ne ad majores gradus ordinum permittantur synodi decrevit auctoritas.*—Concil. Taurinens. c. 8.

³ Concil. Arausic. I. c. 22, 23, 24.

for it admits the injustice of subjecting to the rigour of the canon those who had taken orders without being aware of the obligations incurred; and it is a fair conclusion to suppose that this was a compromise by which the existing clergy gave their assent to the rule for the benefit of their successors, provided that they themselves escaped its full severity. In fact, it seemed to be impossible to make the Church of Gaul accept the rule of discipline. About 459, we find Leo I., in answer to some interrogatories of Rusticus, Bishop of Narbonne, laboriously explaining that deacons and subdeacons, as well as bishops and priests, must treat their wives as sisters.¹ Rusticus had evidently asked the question, and Leo expresses no surprise at his ignorance.

The Irish Church, founded about the middle of the fifth century, although it was to a great extent based on monachism, apparently did not at first order the separation of the sexes. A century later an effort seems to have been made in this direction; but the canons of a synod held in the early part of the eighth century show that priests at that time were not prevented from having wives.²

Even where the authority of the decretals of Siricius and Innocent was received with respectful silence, it was not always easy to enforce their provisions. An epistle of Innocent to the bishops of Calabria shows that, within territory depending strictly upon Rome itself, a passive resistance was maintained, requiring constant supervision and interference to render the rule imperative. Some priests, whose growing families rendered their disregard of discipline as unquestionable as it was defiant, remained

¹ Leon. PP. I. Epist. clxvii. Inquis. iii.

² Catalogus Sanctt. Hibern. (Haddan & Stubbs II. 292)—Confessio S. Patricii (Ibid. 308, 310)—Epist. S. Patricii (Ibid. 317)—Synod. S. Patricii can. 6 (Ibid. 329). The date of all these documents is of course somewhat conjectural, but I have assumed it safe to follow the conclusions of the painstaking and lamented Mr. Haddan.

unpunished. Either the bishops refused to execute the laws, or their sympathies were known to be with the offenders, for the pious layman whose sensibilities were wounded by the scandal felt himself obliged to appeal to the Pope. Innocent accordingly ordered the accused to be tried and to be expelled, while he expressed no little surprise at the negligence of the prelates who were so remiss.¹ It is more difficult to understand the edict of 420, issued by Honorius, to which allusion has already been made (p. 49). This law expressly declares that the desire for purity does not require the separation of wives whose marriage took place before the ordination of their husbands.

These disconnected attempts at resistance were unsuccessful. Sacerdotalism triumphed, and the rule which forbade marriage to those in orders, and separated husband and wife, when the former was promoted to the ministry of the altar, became irrevocably incorporated in the canon law. Throughout the struggle the Papacy had a most efficient ally in the people. The holiness and the necessity of absolute purity was so favourite a theme with the leading minds of the Church, and formed so prominent a portion of their daily homilies and exhortations, that the popular mind could not but be deeply impressed with its importance, and therefore naturally exacted of the pastor the sacrifice which cost so little to the flock. An instance or two occurring about this period will show how vigilant was the watch kept upon the virtue of ecclesiastics, and how summary was the process by which indignation was visited upon even the most exalted, when suspected of a lapse from the rigid virtue required of them. Thirty years after the ordination of St. Brice, who succeeded St. Martin in the diocese of Tours, rumour credited him with the paternity of a child unseasonably

¹ Innocent. P.P. I. Epist. v.

born of a nun. In their wrath the citizens by common consent determined to stone him. The saint calmly ordered the infant, then in its thirtieth day, to be brought to him, and adjured it in the name of Christ to declare if it were his, to which the little one firmly replied, "Thou art not my father!" The people, attributing the miracle to magic, persisted in their resolution, when St. Brice wrapped a quantity of burning coals in his robe, and pressing the mass to his bosom carried it to the tomb of St. Martin, where he deposited his burden, and displayed his robe uninjured. Even this was insufficient to satisfy the outraged feelings of the populace, and St. Brice deemed himself fortunate in making his escape uninjured, when a successor was elected to the bishopric.¹ Somewhat similar was the case of St. Simplicius, Bishop of Autun. Even as a layman, his holy zeal had led him to treat as a sister his beautiful wife, who was inspired with equal piety. On his elevation to the episcopate, still confident of their mutual self-control, she refused to be separated from him. The people, scandalised at the impropriety, and entertaining a settled incredulity as to the superhuman virtue requisite to such restraint, mobbed the bishop's dwelling, and expressed their sentiments in a manner more energetic than respectful. The saintly virgin called for a portable furnace full of fire, emptied its contents into her robe, and held it uninjured for an hour, when she transferred the ordeal to her husband, saying, that the trial was as nothing to the flames through which they had already passed unscathed. The result with him was the same, and the people retired, ashamed of their unworthy suspicions.² Gregory of Tours, who relates these legends, was sufficiently near in point of time for them to have an historical value, even when

¹ Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. Lib. II. c. 1.

² Greg. Turon. de Glor. Confess. c. 76.

divested of their miraculous ornaments. They bring before us the popular tendencies and modes of thought, and show us how powerful an instrument the passions of the people became, when skilfully aroused and directed by those in authority.

The Western Church was thus at length irrevocably committed to the strict maintenance of ecclesiastical celibacy, and the labours of the three great Latin Fathers, Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustin, were crowned with success. It is perhaps worth while to cast a glance at such evidences as remain to us of the state of morals about this period and during the fifth century, and to judge whether the new rule of discipline had resulted in purifying the Church of the corruptions which had so excited the indignation of the anchorite of Bethlehem, and had nerved him in his fierce contests with those who opposed the enforced asceticism of the ministers of Christ.

How the morals of the Church fared during the struggle is well exhibited in the writings of St. Jerome himself, as quoted above, describing the unlawful unions of the *agapetæ* with ecclesiastics and the horrors induced by the desire to escape the consequences of incautious frailty. Conclusions not less convincing may be drawn from his assertion that holy orders were sometimes assumed on account of the superior opportunities which clericulture gave of improper intercourse with women;¹ and from his description of the ecclesiastics, who passed their lives in female companionship, surrounded by young female slaves, and leading an existence which differed from matrimony only in the absence of the marriage ceremony.²

¹ *Sunt alii (de mei ordinis hominibus loquor) qui ideo presbyteratum et diaconatum ambiunt ut mulieres licentius videant.*—*Epist. XXII. ad Eustoch. cap. 28.*

² *Epist. CXXV. ad Rusticum, cap. 6.*

But a short time after the recognition of the rule appeared the law of Honorius, promulgated in 420, to which reference has already been made. It is possible that the permission of residence there granted to the wives of priests may have been intended to act as a partial cure for evils caused by the enforcement of celibacy; and this is rendered the more probable, since other portions of the edict show that intercourse with improper females had increased to such a degree that the censures of the Church could no longer restrain it, and that an appeal to secular interference was necessary, by which such practices should be made a crime to be punished by the civil tribunals.¹ That even this failed lamentably in purifying the Church may be gathered from the proceedings of the provincial councils of the period.

Thus, in 453, the Council of Anjou repeats the prohibition of improper female intimacy, giving as a reason the ruin constantly wrought by it. For those who thereafter persisted in their guilt, however, the only penalty threatened was incapacity for promotion on the part of the lower grades, and suspension of functions for the higher²—whence we may conclude that practically an option was afforded to those who preferred sin to ambition. The second Council of Arles, in 443, likewise gives an insight into the subterfuges adopted to evade the rule and to escape detection.³ About this period a newly-appointed bishop, Talasius of Angers, applied to Lupus of Troyes and Euphronius of Autun for advice concerning various knotty points, among which were the rules respecting the celibacy of the different grades. In their reply the prelates advised their brother that it would be well if the increase of priests' families could be prevented,

¹ Lib. xvi. Cod. Theod. Tit. ii. l. 44.

² Concil. Andegav. ann. 453 c. 4.

³ Nullus diaconus vel presbyter vel episcopus ad cellarii secretum intromittat puellam vel ingenuam vel ancillam.—Concil. Arelatens. II. c. 4.

but that such a consummation was almost impossible if married men were admitted to orders, and that if he wanted to escape ceaseless wrangling and the scandal of seeing children born to his priests, he had better ordain those only who were single.¹ The subject was one of endless effort. In fact, of the numerous councils whose canons have reached us, held in Gaul and Spain during the centuries which intervened until the invasion of the Saracens and the decrepitude of the Merovingian dynasty caused their discontinuance, there is scarcely one which did not feel the necessity of legislating on this delicate matter. It would be tedious and unprofitable to detail specifically the innumerable exhortations, threats, and ingenious devices resorted to in the desperate hope of enforcing obedience to the rules and of purifying the morals of the clergy. Suffice it to say that the constantly varying punishments enacted, the minute supervision ordered over every action of the priesthood, the constant attendance of witnesses whose inseparable companionship should testify to the virtue of each ecclesiastic, and the perpetual iteration of the rule in every conceivable shape, prove at once the hopelessness of the attempt, and the incurable nature of the disorders of which the Church was at once the cause and the victim. In short, this perpetual legislation frequently betrays the fact that it was not only practically impossible to maintain separation between the clergy and their wives, but that at times marriage was not uncommon even within the prohibited orders.²

¹ Epist. Lupi et Euphronii. (Harduin. II. 792.)

² Whatever interest there might be in exhibiting in detail the varying legislation and the expedients of lenity or severity by turns adopted, it would scarcely repay the space which it would occupy, or relieve the monotony of retracing the circle in which the unfortunate fathers of the Church perpetually moved. I therefore content myself with simply indicating such canons of the period as bear upon the subject, for the benefit of any student who may desire to examine the matter more minutely.

Concil. Turon. I. (ann. 460) c. 2, 3.—Agathens. (506) c. 9.—Aurelianus. I. (511)

Perhaps this may not move our surprise when we glance at the condition of morality existing throughout the Empire in the second quarter of the fifth century, as sketched by a zealous churchman of the period. Salvianus, Bishop of Marseilles, was a native of Trèves. Three times he witnessed the sack of that unfortunate city by the successive barbarian hordes which swept over Western Europe, and he lifts up his voice, like Jeremiah, to bewail the sins of his people, and the unutterable misfortunes which were the punishment but not the cure of those sins. Nothing can be conceived more utterly licentious and depraved than the whole framework of society as described by him, though we may charitably hope that holy indignation or pious sensibility led him to exaggerate the outlines and to darken the shades of the picture. The criminal and frivolous pleasures of a decrepit civilisation left no thought for the absorbing duties of the day or the fearful trials of the morrow. Unbridled lust and unblushing indecency admitted no sanctity in the marriage-tie. The rich and powerful established harems, in the recesses of which their wives lingered, forgotten, neglected, and despised. The banquet, the theatre, and the circus exhausted what little strength and energy were left by domestic excesses. The poor aped the vices of the rich, and hideous depravity reigned supreme and invited the vengeance of Heaven. Such rare souls as could remain pure amid the prevailing

c. 13.—Tarracoenens. (516) c. 1.—Gerundens. (517) c. 6, 7.—Epaonens. (517) c. 2, 32.—Ilerdens. (523) c. 2, 5, 15.—Toletan. II. (531) c. 1, 3.—Aurelianens. II. (533) c. 8.—Arvernens. I. (535) c. 13, 16.—Aurelianens. III. (538) c. 2, 4, 7.—Aurelianens. IV. (541) c. 17.—Aurelianens. V. (549) c. 3, 4.—Bracarens. I. (563) c. 15.—Turonens. II. (567) c. 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20.—Bracarens. II. (572) c. 8, 32, 39.—Autissiodor. (578) c. 21.—Matiscon. I. (581) c. 1, 2, 3, 11.—Lugdunens. III. (583) c. 1.—Toletan. III. (589) c. 5.—Hispalens. I. (590) c. 3.—Cæsaraugustan. (592) c. 1.—Toletan. (597) c. 1.—Oscensis (598) c. 2.—Egarens. (614) c. unic.—Concil. loc. incert. (a. 613) c. 8, 12.—Toletan. IV. (633) c. 42, 44, 52, 55.—Cabilonens. (649) c. 3.—Toletan. VIII. (653) c. 4, 5, 6, 7.—Toletan. IX. (655) c. 10.—Toletan. XI. (675) c. 5.—Bracarens. III. (675) c. 4.—Augustodunens. (690) c. 10.

contamination would naturally take refuge in the contrast of severe asceticism, and resolutely seek absolute seclusion from a world whose every touch was pollution. The secular clergy, however, drawn from the ranks of a society so utterly corrupt, and enjoying the wealth and station which rendered their position an object for the ambition of the worldly, could not avoid sharing to a great extent the guilt of their flocks, whose sins were more easily imitated than eradicated. Nor does Salvianus confine his denunciations to Gaul and Spain. Africa and Italy are represented as even worse, the prevalence of unnatural crimes lending a deeper disgust to the rivalry in iniquity. Rome was the sewer of the nations, the centre of abomination of the world, where vice openly assumed its most repulsive form, and wickedness reigned unchecked and supreme.

It is true that the descriptions of Salvianus are intended to include the whole body of the people, and that his special references to the Church are but few. Those occasional references, however, are not of a nature to exempt it from sharing in the full force of his indignation. When he pronounces the Africans to be utterly licentious, he excepts those who have been regenerated in religion—but these he declares to be so few in number that it is difficult to believe them Africans. What hope, he asks, can there be for the people when even in the Church itself the most diligent search can scarce discover one chaste amid so many thousands: and when imperial Carthage was tottering to its fall under the assaults of the besieging Vandals, he describes its clergy as wantoning in the circus and the theatre—those without falling under the sword of the barbarian, those within abandoning themselves to sensuality.¹ This, be it remembered, is that African Church which had just been so carefully nurtured in the

¹ Salvian. *De Gubernat. Dei* Lib. VI. VII.

purest asceticism for thirty years, under the unremitting care of Augustin, who died while his episcopal city of Hippo was encircled with the leaguer of the Vandals.

Nor were these disorders attributable to the irruption of the Barbarians, for Salvianus sorrowfully contrasts their purity of morals with the reckless dissoluteness of the Romans. The respect for female virtue, inherent in the Teutonic tribes, has no warmer admirer than he, and he recounts with wonder how the temptations of luxury and vice, spread before them in the wealthy cities which they sacked, excited only their disgust, and how, so far from yielding to the allurements that surrounded them, they sternly set to work to reform the depravity of their new subjects, and enacted laws to repress at least the open manifestations which shocked their untutored virtue.

When corruption so ineradicable pervaded every class, we can scarce wonder that in the story of the trial of Sixtus III., in 440, for the seduction of a nun, when his accusers were unable to substantiate the charge, he is said to have addressed the synod assembled in judgment by repeating to them the story of the woman taken in adultery, and the decision of Christ. Whether it were intended to be regarded as a confession, or as a sarcasm on the prelates around him, whom he thus challenged to cast the first stone, the tale whether true or false is symptomatic of the time that gave it birth.¹

As regards the East, if the accusations brought against Ibas, Metropolitan of Edessa, at the Synod of Berytus in 448,² are worthy of credit, the Oriental Church was not behind the West in the effrontery of sin.

¹ *Expurgat. Sixti Papæ c. vi.* (Harduin. *Concil. II.* 1742).—Pagi (ann. 433, No. 19) casts doubt on the authenticity of the proceedings of this trial, and modern criticism (see "*Janus*," *The Pope and the Council*, p. 124) assumes it to be a fabrication of the early part of the sixth century, made for the purpose of vindicating the immunity of the clergy from secular law.

² *Concil. Chalcedon. Act. X.* (Harduin. *II.* 518-9).

CHAPTER VI

THE EASTERN CHURCH

DURING the period which we have been considering, there had gradually arisen a divergence between the Christians of the East and of the West. The Arianism of Constantius opposed to the orthodoxy of Constantine lent increased development to the separation which the division of the Empire had commenced. The rapid growth of the New Rome founded on the shores of the Bosphorus gave to the East a political metropolis which rendered it independent of the power of Rome, and the patriarchate there erected absorbed to itself the supremacy of the old Apostolic Sees, which had previously divided the ecclesiastical strength of the East. In the West, the Bishop of Rome was unquestionably the highest dignitary, and when the separation relieved him of the rivalry of prelates equal in rank, he was enabled to acquire an authority over the churches of the Occident undreamed of in previous ages. As yet, however, there was little pretension of extending that power over the East, and though the ceaseless quarrels which raged in Antioch, Constantinople, and Alexandria enabled him frequently to intervene as arbiter, still he had not yet assumed the tone of a judge without appeal or of an autocratic lawgiver.

Though five hundred years were still to pass before the Greek schism formally separated Constantinople from the communion of Rome, yet already, by the close of the fourth century, the characteristics which ultimately led to that schism were beginning to develop themselves with

some distinctness.¹ The sacerdotal spirit of the West showed itself in the formalism which loaded religion with rules of observance and discipline enforced with Roman severity. The inquiring and metaphysical tendencies of the East discovered unnumbered doubtful points of belief, which were argued with exhaustive subtlety and supported by relentless persecution. However important it might be for any polemic to obtain for his favourite dogma the assent of the Roman bishop, whose decisions on such points thus constantly acquired increased authority, yet when the Pope undertook to issue laws and promulgate rules of discipline, whatever force they had was restricted to the limits of the Latin tongue. Accordingly, we find that the decretals of Siricius and Innocent I. produced no effect throughout the East. Asceticism continued to flourish there as in its birthplace, but it was voluntary, and there is no trace of any official attempt to render it universally imperative. The canon of Nicæa of course was law, and the purity of the Church required its strict observance, to avoid scandals and immorality;² but beyond this and the ancient rules excluding digami and prohibiting marriage in orders no general laws were insisted on, and each province or patriarchate was allowed to govern itself in this respect. How little the Eastern prelates thought of introducing compulsory celibacy is shown by the fact that at the second general council, held at Constan-

¹ *Vide* "The Churches separated from Rome," by Mgr. L. Duchesne, London, 1907.

² The strictness with which the Nicene canon was enforced is shown by an epistle of St. Basil, about the middle of the fourth century, in which he sternly reproves a priest named Paregorius, who at the age of 70 had thought himself sufficiently protected against scandal to allow to his infirmities the comfort of a housekeeper. The unlucky female is ordered to be forthwith immured in a convent, and, until this is accomplished, Paregorius is forbidden to perform his priestly functions. The whole is based on the authority of the Council of Nicæa.—"Nec primo nec soli (tibi Paregori) sancivimus, non debere mulierculas cohabitare viris. Lege canonem, a sanctis patribus nostris in Nicæna synodo constitutum: qui manifeste interdixit, ne quis mulierculam subintroductam habeat. Cœlibatus autem honestatem suam in eo habet, si quis a nexu mulieris secesserit."

tinople in 381, only four or five years before the decretals of Siricius, there is no trace of any legislation on the subject; and this acquires increased significance when we observe that although this council has always been reckoned Œcumenical, and has enjoyed full authority throughout the Church universal, yet out of one hundred and fifty bishops who signed the acts, but one—a Spanish prelate—was from the West.

This avoidance of action was not merely an omission of surplusage. Had the disposition existed to erect the custom of celibacy into a law, there was ample cause for legislation on the subject. Epiphanius, who died in the year 403 at a very advanced age, probably compiled his “Panarium” not long after this period; he belonged to the extreme school of ascetics, and lost no opportunity of asserting the most rigid rule with regard to virginity and continence, which he considered to be the base and cornerstone of the Church. While assuming celibacy to be the rule for all concerned in the functions of the priesthood, he admits that in many places it was not observed, on account of the degradation of morals or of the impossibility of obtaining enough ministers irreprehensible in character to satisfy the needs of the faithful.¹

That Epiphanius endeavoured to erect into a universal canon rules only adopted in certain Churches is rendered probable by an allusion to St. Jerome, who, in his controversy with Vigilantius, urged in support of celibacy the custom of the Churches of the East (or Antioch), of Alexandria, and of Rome.² He thus omits the great exarchates of Ephesus, Pontus, and Thrace, as not lending strength to his argument. Of these the first is perhaps explicable by the latitudinarianism of its metro-

¹ Hæres. LIX. c. 4.

² Quid faciunt Orientis ecclesiæ? Quid Ægypti et sedis Apostolicæ, quæ aut virgines clericos accipiunt, aut continentes: aut si uxores habuerint, mariti esse desistunt.—Lib. adv. Vigilant. c. 2.

politan, Anthony, Bishop of Ephesus. At the Council of Constantinople, held in 400, this prelate was accused of many crimes, among which were simony, the conversion to the use of his family of ecclesiastical property and even of the sacred vessels, and, further, that after having vowed separation from his wife, he had had children by her.¹ Even Egypt, the nursery of monachism, affords a somewhat suspicious example in the person of Synesius, Bishop of Ptolemais. This philosophic disciple of Hypatia, when pressed to accept the bishopric, declined it on various grounds, among which was his unwillingness to be separated from his wife, or to live with her secretly like an adulterer, the separation being particularly objectionable to him, as interfering with his desire for numerous offspring.² Synesius, however, was apparently able to reconcile the incompatibilities, for after accepting the episcopal office we find, when the Libyans invaded the Pentapolis and he stood boldly forth to protect his flock, that two days before an expected encounter he confided to his brother's care his children, to whom he asked the transfer of that tender fraternal affection which he himself had always enjoyed.³

It is easy to imagine what efforts were doubtless made to extend the rule, and to render it as imperative throughout the East as it was becoming in the West, when we read the extravagant laudations of virginity uttered about this time by St. John Chrysostom, who lent the sanction of his great name and authority to the assertion that it is as superior to marriage as heaven is to earth, or as angels are to men.⁴ Strenuous as these

¹ Sextum, quod dimissa uxore sua cum ea rursus congressus est, filiosque ex ea procreasset.—Palladii Dial. de Vit. S. Joan. Chrysost. cap. xiii.

² Synesii Epist. cv.

³ Ejusd. Epist. cviii.

⁴ Et si placet, quanto etiam melior sit addam, quanto cœlum terra, quanto hominibus angeli.—Lib. de Virgin. c. x.

efforts may have been, however, they have left no permanent record, and their effect was short-lived. Within thirty years of the time when Jerome quoted the example of the Eastern Churches as an argument against Vigilantius, Socrates chronicles as a novelty the introduction into Thessalia of compulsory separation between married priests and their wives, which he says was commanded by Heliodorus, Bishop of Trica, apparently to compensate for the amatory character of the "*Æthiopica*," written in his youth. The same rule, Socrates informs us, was observed in Greece, Macedonia, and Thessalonica, but throughout the rest of the East he asserts that such separation was purely voluntary, and even that many bishops had no scruple in maintaining ordinary intercourse with their wives¹—a statement easy to be believed in view of the complaints of St. Isidor of Pelusium, about the same time, that the rules of the Church enjoining chastity received little respect among the priesthood.²

The influence of Jerome, Chrysostom, and other eminent Churchmen, the example of the West, and the efforts of the Origenians in favour of philosophic asceticism, doubtless had a powerful effect during the first years of the fifth century in extending the custom, but they failed in the endeavour to render it universal and obligatory, and the testimony of Socrates shows how soon even those provinces which adopted it in Jerome's time returned to the previous practice of leaving the matter to the election of the individual. The East thus preserved the traditions of earlier times, as recorded in the Apostolic Constitutions and Canons, prohibiting marriage in orders and the ordination of digami, but imposing no compulsory separation on those who had been married previous to ordination.

¹ Socrat. H. E. Lib. v. c. 21.

² S. Isidor. Pelusiot. Epist. Lib. III. No. 75.

Even these rules required to be occasionally enunciated in order to maintain their observance. In 530 a constitution of Justinian calls attention to the regulation prohibiting the marriage of deacons and subdeacons, and, in view of the little respect paid to it, the Emperor proceeds to declare the children of such unions spurious (not even *nothi* or *naturales*), and incompetent to inherit anything; the wife is likewise incapacitated from inheritance, and the whole estate of the father is escheated to the Church—the severity of which may perhaps be a fair measure of the extent of the evil which it was intended to repress.¹ Five years later Justinian recurs to the subject, and lays down the received regulations in all their details. Any one who keeps a concubine, or who has married a divorced woman or a second wife, is to be held ineligible to the diaconate or priesthood. Any member of those orders or of the subdiaconate who takes a wife or a concubine, whether publicly or secretly, is thereupon to be degraded and to lose all clerical privileges; and though the strongest preference is expressed for those who, though married, preserve strict continence, the very phrase employed indicates that this was altogether a matter of choice, and that previous conjugal relations were not subject to any legislative interference.² These same regulations were repeated some ten years later in a law, promulgated about 545,³ which was preserved throughout the whole period of Greek jurisprudence, being inserted by Leo the Philosopher in his

¹ Constit. 45 Cod. I. 3. This law is preserved by Photius (Nomoc. Tit. IX. c. 29), but Balsamon (Schol. ad. loc.) says that it is omitted in the Basilicon.

² “Nihil enim sic in sacris ordinationibus diligimus quam cum castitate viventes, aut cum uxoris non cohabitantes, aut unius uxoris virum, qui vel fuerit vel sit, et ipsam castitatem eligentem.” The lector could, by forfeiting his prospects of promotion, marry a second time, if pressed by overmastering necessity, but he was not allowed, under any excuse, to take a third wife.—Novell. VI. c. 5.—These provisions were repeated the following year in Novell. XXII. c. 42.

³ Novell. CXXIII. c. 12.

Basilicon,¹ quoted by Photius in the Nomocanon, and referred to as still in force by Balsamon in the thirteenth century.² At the same time Justinian tacitly admits the failure of previous efforts when he adds a provision by which an unmarried postulant for the diaconate is obliged to pledge himself not to marry, and any bishop permitting such marriage is threatened with degradation.³

Bishops, however, were subjected to the full severity of the Latin discipline. As early as 528, Justinian ordered that no one should be eligible to the episcopate who was burdened with either children or grandchildren, giving as a reason the engrossing duties of the office, which required that the whole mind and soul should be devoted to them, and still more significantly hinting the indecency of converting to the use of the prelate's family the wealth bestowed by the faithful on the Church for pious uses and for charity.⁴ It is probable that this was not strictly observed, for in 535, when repeating the injunction, and adding a restriction on conjugal intercourse, he intimates that no inquiry shall be made into infractions previously occurring, but that it shall be rigidly enforced for the future.⁵ The decision was final as regards the absence of a wife, for it was again alluded to in 548, and that law is carried through the Nomocanon and Basilicon.⁶ The absence of children as a prerequisite to the episcopate, however, was not insisted upon so pertinaciously, for Leo the Philosopher, after the compilation of the Basilicon, issued a constitution allowing the ordination of bishops who had legitimate offspring, arguing that brothers and other relatives were equally prone to withdraw them from the duties of their position.⁷

¹ Basilicon III. i. 26.

² Balsamon Schol. ad Nomocanon. Tit. I. c. 23.

³ Novell. CXXIII. c. 14.

⁴ Const. 42 § 1. Cod. I. 3.—Basilicon III. i. 26.

⁵ Novell. VI. c. 1.

⁶ Novell. CXXXVII. c. 2.—Basilicon III. i. c. 8.—Balsamon Schol. ad Nomocan. Tit. i. c. 23.

⁷ Leonis Novell. Constit. II.

It is not worth while to enter into the interminable controversy respecting the council held at Constantinople in 680, the canons of which were promulgated in 692, and which is known to polemics as the *Quinisext in Trullo*. The Greeks maintain that it was Œcumenical, and its legislation binding upon Christendom; the Latins, that it was provincial and schismatic: but whether Pope Agatho acceded to its canons or not; whether a century later Adrian I. admitted them; or whether their authentication by the second Council of Nicæa gave them authority over the whole Church or not, are questions of little practical importance for our purpose, for they never were really incorporated into the law of the West, and they are only to be regarded as forming a portion of the received ecclesiastical jurisprudence of the East. In one sense, however, their bearing upon the Latin Church is interesting, for, in spite of them, Rome maintained communion with Constantinople for more than a century and a half, and the schism which then took place arose from altogether different causes.¹ In the West, therefore, celibacy was only a point of discipline, of no doctrinal importance, and not a matter of heresy, as we shall see it afterwards become under the stimulus afforded by Protestant controversy.

The canons of the *Quinisext* are very full upon all the questions relating to celibacy, and show that great relaxation had occurred in enforcing the regulations embodied in the laws of Justinian. Digami must have become numerous in the Church, for the prohibition of their ordination is renewed, and all who had not released themselves from such forbidden unions by June 15th of the preceding year are condemned to suffer deposition. So marriage in orders had evidently become frequent, for all guilty of it are enjoined to leave their wives, when,

¹ Vide "The Beginnings of the Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes," by Mgr. Duchesne, London, 1907.

after a short suspension, they are to be restored to their position, though ineligible for promotion.¹ A much severer punishment is, however, provided for those who should subsequently be guilty of the same indiscretion, for all such infractions of the rule are visited with absolute deposition²—thus proving that it had fallen into desuetude, since those who sinned after its restoration were regarded as much more culpable than those who had merely transgressed an obsolete law. Even bishops had neglected the restrictions imposed upon them by Justinian, for the council refers to prelates in Africa, Libya, and elsewhere, who lived openly with their wives; and although this is prohibited for the future under penalty of deposition, and although all wives of those promoted to the episcopate are directed to be placed in nunneries at a distance from their husbands, yet the remarkable admission is made that this is done for the sake of the people, who regarded such things as a scandal, and not for the purpose of changing that which had been ordained by the Apostles.³

With regard to the future discipline of the great body of the clergy, the council, after significantly acknowledging that the Roman Church required a promise of abstinence from married candidates for the diaconate and priesthood, proceeds to state that it desires to adhere to the Apostolic canon by keeping inviolate the conjugal relations of those in holy orders, and by permitting them to associate with their wives, only stipulating for continence during the time devoted to the ministry of the sacraments. To put an end to all opposition to this privilege, deposition is threatened against those who shall presume to interfere between the clergy and their wives,

¹ Quinisext can. 3.

² Ibid. c. 6.

³ Ibid. can. 12, 48.—“Hoc autem dicimus non ad ea abolenda et evertenda quæ Apostolice antea constituta sunt, sed . . . ne status ecclesiasticus ullo probro efficiatur.”

and likewise against all who, under pretence of religion, shall put their wives away. At the same time, in order to promote the extension of the Church in the foreign provinces, this latter penalty is remitted, as a concession to the prejudices of the "Barbarians."¹ How thoroughly in some regions sacerdotal marriage had come to be the rule we learn from a reference to Armenia, where the Levitical custom of the Hebrews was imitated, in the creation of a sacerdotal caste, transmitted from father to son, and confined to the priestly houses. This limitation is condemned by the council, which orders that all who are worthy of ordination shall be regarded as eligible.²

The Eastern Church thus formally and in the most solemn manner recorded its separate and independent discipline on this point, and refused to be bound by the sacerdotalism of Rome. It thus maintained the customs transmitted from the early period, when asceticism had commenced to show itself, but it shrank from carrying out the principles involved to their ultimate result, as was sternly attempted by the inexorable logic of Rome. The system thus laid down was permanent, for throughout the East the Quinisext was received unquestioningly as a general council, and its decrees were authoritative and unalterable. It is true that in the confusion of the two following centuries a laxity of practice gradually crept in, by which those who desired to marry were admitted to holy orders while single, and were granted two years after ordination during which they were at liberty to take wives, but this was acknowledged to be

¹ Quinisext c. 13, 30.

² Quinisext c. 33.—The Armenian Church in the middle ages was excessively severe as to the chastity of its ministers. A postulant for orders was obliged to confess, and if he had been guilty of a single lapse, he was rejected. So priests in orders, if yielding to the weakness of the flesh out of wedlock, were expelled, though they were not obliged to part with their wives, and the Greek rule permitting marriage in the lower orders was maintained.—Concil. Armenor. ann. 1362 Art. 50, 53, 93 (Martene Ampl. Collect. VII. 366-7, 403).

an abuse, and about the year 900 it was formally prohibited by a constitution of Leo the Philosopher.¹ Thus restored, the Greek Church has preserved its early traditions unaltered to the present day. Marriage in orders is not permitted, nor are digami admissible, but the lower grades of the clergy are free to marry, nor are they separated from their wives when promoted to the sacred functions of the diaconate or priesthood. The bishops are selected from the regular clergy or monks, and, being bound by the vow of chastity, are of course unmarried and unable to marry. Thus the legislation of Justinian is practically transmitted to the nineteenth century. Even this restriction on the freedom of marriage renders it difficult to preserve the purity of the priesthood, and the Greek Church, like the Latin, is forced occasionally to renew the Nicene prohibition against the residence of suspected women.²

The strongly marked hereditary tendency, which is so distinguishing a characteristic of mediæval European institutions, has led, in Russia at least, since the time of Peter the Great, to the customary transmission of the priesthood, and even of individual churches, from

¹ Leonis Novell. Constit. III.—It is not improbable that this custom resulted from the iconoclastic schism of Leo the Isaurian and Constantine Copronymus, which occupied nearly the whole of the eighth century. These emperors found their most unyielding enemies in the monks. In the savage persecutions which disgraced the struggle, Constantine endeavoured to extirpate monachism altogether. The accounts which his adversaries have transmitted of the violence and cruelties which he perpetrated are doubtless exaggerated, but there is likelihood that his efforts to discountenance celibacy, as the foundation of the obnoxious institution, are correctly reported. “Publice defamavit et dehonestavit habitum monachorum in hippodromo, præcipiens unumquemque monachum manutenere mulierem, et taliter transire per hippodromum, sumptis injuriis ab omni populo cumulatis” (Baronii Annal. ann. 766, No. 1). He ejected the monks from the monasteries, which he turned into barracks; some of the monks were tortured, others fled to the mountains and deserts, where they suffered every extremity, while others again succumbed to threats and temptations, and were publicly married—“alii corporeis voluptatibus addicti, suas etiam uxores circumducere non erubescabant” (Ibid. No. 28, 29).

² Synod. Montis Libani ann. 1736 P. II. c. v. No. 16, 17, Tab. I. No. 11; P. III. c. i. No. 11; P. IV. c. ii. No. 16.—Synod. Ain-Traz ann. 1835 c. xii. (Concil. Collect. Lacens. II. 134, 138, 262, 263, 366, 367, 585).

father to son, thus creating a sacerdotal caste. To such an extent has this been carried that marriage is obligatory on the parish priest, and custom requires that the wife shall be the daughter of a priest. Some of the results of this are to be seen in a law of 1867, forbidding for the future the aspirant to a cure from marrying the daughter of his predecessor or undertaking to support the family of the late incumbent as a condition precedent to obtaining the preferment. It shows how entirely the duties of the clergy had been lost in the sense of property and hereditary right attaching to benefices, leading inevitably to the neglect or perfunctory performance of ecclesiastical duties.¹ We shall see hereafter how narrowly the Latin Church escaped a similar transformation, and how prolonged was the struggle to avoid it.

One branch of the Eastern Church, however, relaxed the rules of the Quinisext. In 431, Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, was excommunicated for his heretical subtleties as to the nature of the Godhead in Christ. Driven out from the empire by the orthodox authorities, his followers spread throughout Mesopotamia and Persia, where, by the end of the century, their efforts had gradually converted nearly the whole population. About the year 480, Barsuma, Metropolitan of Nisibis, added to his Nestorian heresy the guilt of marrying a nun, when to justify himself he assembled a synod in which the privilege of marriage was granted not only to priests, but even to monks. In 485, Babueus, Patriarch of Seleucia, held a council which excommunicated Barsuma and condemned his licentious doctrines; but, about ten years later, a subsequent patriarch, Babeus, in the Council of

¹ London "Academy," Nov. 13th, 1869, p. 51.—See also "The Russian Clergy," by Father Gagarin, London, 1872 (London "Athenæum," No. 2334, pp. 72-3).

Seleucia, obtained the enactment of canons conferring the privilege of marriage on all ranks of the clergy, from monk to patriarch. Some forty years later a debate recorded between the Patriarch Mar Aba and King Chosroes shows that repeated marriages were common among all orders, but Mar Aba subsequently issued a canon depriving patriarchs and bishops of the right, and subjecting them to the rules of the Latin and Greek Churches.¹

The career of the Nestorians shows that matrimony is not incompatible with mission-work, for they were the most successful missionaries on record. They penetrated throughout India, Tartary, and China. In the latter empire they lasted until the thirteenth century; while in India they not improbably exercised an influence in modifying the doctrines of ancient Brahmanism,² and the Portuguese discoverers in the fifteenth century found them flourishing in Malabar. So numerous were they that during the existence of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem they are described, in conjunction with the monophysite sect of the Jacobites, as exceeding in numbers the inhabitants of the rest of Christendom.³

Another segment of the Eastern Church may properly receive attention here. The Abyssinians and Coptic Christians of Egypt can scarcely in truth be considered a part of the Greek Church, as they are monophysite

¹ For these details from the collection of Asseman I am indebted to the Abate Zaccaria's *Nuova Giustificazione del Celibato Sacro*, pp. 129-30.

² The strange similarity between some of the teachings of the Bhagavad-gita and Christianity, and the apparent identity of the name and of some of the story of Krishna with those of Christ, would seem to need some such explanation as the above. The problem, however, is too complicated for discussion here.—See Weber's *Indian Literature*, p. 238, and Monier Williams's *Indian Wisdom*, p. 136. For the question of St. Thomas's Indian Apostolate see Hohlenberg's learned tract, "*De Originibus et Fatis Eccles. Christ. in India Orientali.*" Havniæ, 1822.

³ *Hi omnes Nestoriani . . . cum Jacobinis longe plures esse dicuntur quam Latini et Græci.*—Jac. de Vitriaco *Hist. Hierosol.* cap. lxxvi.

in belief, and have in many particulars adopted Jewish customs, such as circumcision, &c. Their observances as regards marriages, however, tally closely with the canons of the Quinisext, except that bishops are permitted to retain their wives. In the sixteenth century, Bishop Zaga Zabo, who was sent as envoy to Portugal by David, King of Abyssinia, left behind him a confession of faith for the edification of the curious. In this document he describes the discipline of his Church as strict in forbidding the clericature to illegitimates; marriage is not dissolved by ordination, but second marriage, or marriage in orders, is prohibited, except under dispensation from the Patriarch, a favour occasionally granted to magnates for public reasons. Without such dispensation, the offender is expelled from the priesthood, while a bishop or other ecclesiastic convicted of having an illegitimate child is forthwith deprived of all his benefices and possessions. Monasteries, moreover, were numerous, and monachal chastity was strictly enforced.¹ These rules, I presume, are still in force. A recent traveller in those regions states that "if a priest be married previous to his ordination, he is allowed to remain so; but no one can marry after having entered the priesthood"—while a mass of superstitious and ascetic observances has overlaid religion, until little trace is left of original Christianity.²

¹ Calixt. de Conjug. Cleric. p. 415.—Osorii de Rebus Emmanuelis Regis. Lusit. Lib. IX. (Colon. 1574, p. 305a).

² Parkyns's Life in Abyssinia, chapter xxxi.—Mr. Parkyns sums up about 260 fast days in the year, most of them much more rigid than those observed in the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER VII

MONACHISM

THE Monastic Orders occupy too prominent a place in ecclesiastical history, and were too powerful an instrument both for good and evil, to be passed over without some cursory allusion, although the secular clergy is more particularly the subject of the present sketch, and the rise and progress of monachism is a topic too extensive in its details to be thoroughly considered in the space which can be allotted to it.

In this, as in some other forms of asceticism, we may look to Buddhism for the model on which the Church fashioned her institutions. Ages before the time of Sakyamuni, or the Buddha, the life of the anchorite had become a favourite mode of securing the *moksha*, or supreme good of absorption in Brahma. Buddhism, in throwing open the way of salvation to all mankind, popularised this, and thus multiplied enormously the crowd of mendicants, who lived upon the charity of the faithful, and who abandoned all the cares and duties of life in the hope of advancing a step in the scale of being, and of ultimately obtaining the highest bliss of admission to Nirvana. In the hopeless confusion of Hindu chronology, it is impossible to define dates with exactness, but we know that at a very early period these Bhikshus and Bhikshunis, or mendicants of either sex, were organised in monasteries (Viharas or Sangharamas) erected by the piety of the faithful, and were subjected to definite rules, prominent among which were those of poverty and chastity, which subsequently became the

foundation of all the Western orders. Probably the oldest existing scripture of Buddhism is the *Pratimoksha*, or collection of rules for observance by the *bhikshus*, which tradition, not without probability, ascribes to *Sakyamuni* himself. In this, infraction of chastity falls under the first of the four *Parajika* rules; it is classed, with murder, among the most serious offences, entailing excommunication and expulsion without forgiveness. The solicitation of a woman comes within the scope of the thirteen *Sanghadisesa* rules, entailing penance and probation, after which the offender may be absolved by an assembly of not less than twenty *bhikshus*. Other punishments are allotted for every suspicious act, and the utmost care is shown in the regulations laid down for the minutest details of social intercourse between the sexes.¹

Under these rules, Buddhist monachism developed to an extent which more than rivals that of its Western derivative. The remains of the magnificent *Viharas* still to be seen in India testify at once to the enormous multitudes which found shelter in them and to the munificent piety of the monarchs and wealthy men who, as in Europe, sought to purchase the favour of Heaven by founding and enlarging these retreats for the devotee. In China, Buddhism was not introduced until the first century A.D., and yet, by the middle of the seventh century, in spite of repeated and severe persecutions, the number of monasteries already amounted to 3716, while two hundred years later the persecuting Emperor *Wu-Tsung* ordered the destruction of no less than 4600; and at the present day it is estimated that there are 80,000 Buddhist monks in the environs of

¹ Davids & Oldenberg's *Vinaya Texts*, Part I. pp. 4, 8, 14, 16, 32, 35-7, 42, 47, 56.—Cf. Beal's *Catena*, pp. 209-14.—Burnouf, *Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme indien*. 2e Éd. pp. 245-8.

Pekin alone. When, in the seventh century, Hiouen-Thsang visited India, he describes the Sangharama of Nalanda as containing ten thousand monks and novices; and the later pilgrim, Fah-Hian, found fifty or sixty thousand in the island of Ceylon. In the fourteenth century, the city of Ilchi, in Chinese Tartary, possessed fourteen monasteries, averaging three thousand devotees in each; while in Tibet, at the present time, there are in the vicinity of Lhasa twelve great monasteries, containing a population of 18,500 lamas. In Ladak, the proportion of lamas to the laity is as one to thirteen; in Spiti, one to seven; and in Burmah, one to thirty.¹ Great as were the proportions to which European monachism grew, it never attained dimensions such as these.

Whether the West may have borrowed from the East in this matter of monachism, or was independently inspired by similar impulses, is a question which we are not called upon to answer. As an historical fact, the first rudimentary development of a tendency in such direction is to be found in the vows, which, as stated in a previous section, had already, at an early period in the history of the Church, become common among female devotees. In fact an order of widows, employed in charitable works and supported from the offerings of the faithful, was apparently one of the primitive institutions of the Apostles. To prevent any conflict between the claims of the world and of the Church, St. Paul directs that they shall be childless and not less than sixty years of age, so that on the one hand there might be no neglect of the first duty which he recognised as owing to the family, nor, on the other hand, that the devotee should

¹ Beal's Chinese Pilgrims, pp. xxxviii., xl., 155-9.—Schlagintweit's Buddhism in Tibet, pp. 164-5.—Wheeler's History of India, III. 270.—Proc. Roy. Geog. Society, in London "Reader," Nov. 17, 1866.

be tempted by the flesh to quit the service which she had undertaken.¹

This admirable plan may be considered the germ of the countless associations by which the Church has in all ages earned the gratitude of mankind by giving to Christianity its truest practical exposition. It combined a refuge for the desolate with a most efficient organisation for spreading the faith and administering charity; and there was no thought of marring its utility by rendering it simply an instrument for exaggerating and propagating asceticism. St. Paul, indeed, expressly commands the younger ones to marry and bring up children;² and he could little have anticipated the time when this order of widows, so venerable in its origin and labours, would, by the caprice of ascetic progress, come to be regarded as degraded in comparison with the virgin spouses of Christ, who selfishly endeavoured to purchase their own salvation by shunning all the duties imposed on them by the Creator.³ Nor could he have imagined that, after eighteen centuries, enthusiastic theologians would seriously argue that Christ and his Apostles had founded regular religious orders, bound by the three customary vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience.⁴

¹ I. Tim. v. 3-14, cf. Act. ix. 39-41.—In the time of Tertullian these women were regularly ordained (*Ad Uxor. Lib. I. c. 7*). This was forbidden by the Council of Nicæa (can. 19) and by that of Laodicea (can. 11) in 372. In 451, however, we see by the Council of Chalcedon (can. 15) that the ancient practice had been revived. The authorities on the question will be found very fully given by Chr. Lupus (*Scholia in Can. 15 Concil. Chalced.*—Opp. II. 90 sqq.). Even as late as the middle of the ninth century stringent rules were promulgated to punish the marriage of deaconesses (*Capitul. Add. III. Cap. 75.*—Baluz. I. 1191).

² *Volo ergo juniores [viduas] nubere, filios procreare, matresfamilias esse, nullam occasionem dare adversario*—I. Tim. v. 14.

³ See Leon. I. *Epist. lxxxvii. cap. 2* (Harduin. I. 1775). This was not so in the earlier periods. Tertullian (*De Præscription. iii.*), in alluding to the various classes of ecclesiastics, places the widows immediately after the order of deacons, and before the virgins.

⁴ Nothing is so illogical as the logic resorted to in order to prove foregone conclusions. Donato Calvi (*apud* Panzini, *Pubblica Confessione di un Frigioneiro*,

In the early Church, as has been already shown, all vows of continence and dedication to the service of God were a matter of simple volition, not only as to their inception, but also as to their duration. The male or female devotee was at liberty to return to the world and to marry at any time;¹ although during the purer periods of persecution, such conduct was doubtless visited with disapprobation and was attended with loss of reputation. As, moreover, there was no actual segregation from the world and no sundering of family ties, there was no necessity for special rules of discipline. When, under the Decian persecution, Paul the Thebæan, and shortly afterwards St. Antony, retired to the desert in order to satisfy a craving for ascetic mortification which could only be satiated by solitude, and thus unconsciously founded the vast society of Egyptian cenobites, they gave rise to what at length became a new necessity.²

Torino, 1865, p. 111) quotes the texts Matt. XIX. 12, Luke XIV. 33, and Matt. XIX. 21, 27, and then triumphantly concludes—"Ben lice conchiudere chiaramente da'sacri Vangeli raccogliersi fossero gli Apostoli veri religiosi coi tre voti della religione legati."

¹ If further proof of this be required, beyond what has already been incidentally adduced, it is to be found in the 19th canon of the Council of Ancyra, held about the year 314. By this, the vow of celibacy or virginity when broken only rendered the offender incapable of receiving holy orders. He was to be treated as a "digamete," showing evidently that no punishment was inflicted, beyond the disability which attached to second marriages.

Even in the time of St. Augustin monks were frequently married, as we learn from his remarks concerning the heretics who styled themselves Apostolici and who gloried in their superior asceticism—"Eo quod in suam communionem non recipere utentes conjugibus et res proprias possidentes; quales habet Catholica [ecclesia] et monachos et clericos plurimos."—Augustin. de Hæresib. No. XL.

Even Epiphanius, the ardent admirer of virginity, when controverting the errors of the same sect, declares that those who cannot persevere in their vows had better marry and reconcile themselves by penitence to the Church rather than sin in secret—"Melius est lapsum a cursu palam sibi uxorem sumere secundum legem et a virginitate multo tempore poenitentiam agere et sic rursus ad ecclesiam induci, etc."—Panar. Hæres. LXI.

We shall see hereafter how long it took to enforce the strict segregation of the cenobite from the world.

² St. Jerome vindicates for Paul the priority which was commonly ascribed to Antony, but he fully admits that the latter is entitled to the credit of popularising the practice—"Alii, autem, in quam opinionem vulgus omne consentit, asserunt

The associations which gradually formed themselves required some government, and the institution of monachism became too important a portion of the Church, both in numbers and influence, to remain long without rules of discipline to regulate its piety and to direct its powers. As yet, however, a portion of the Church, adhering to ancient tradition, looked reprovingly on these exaggerated vagaries. Lactantius, for instance, in a passage written subsequent to the conversion of Constantine, earnestly denounces the life of a hermit as that of a beast rather than of a man, and urges that the bonds of human society ought not to be broken, since man cannot exist without his fellows.¹

It was in vain to attempt to stem the tide which had now fairly set in, nor is it difficult to understand the impulsion which drove so many to abandon the world. No small portion of pastoral duty consisted in exhortations to virginity, the praises of which were reiterated with ever-increasing vehemence, and the rewards of which, in this world and the next, were magnified with constantly augmenting promises. Indeed, a perusal of the writings of that age seems to render it difficult to conceive how any truly devout soul could remain involved in worldly duties and pleasures, when the abandonment of all the ties and responsibilities imposed on man by Providence was represented as rendering the path to heaven so much shorter and more certain, and when every pulpit resounded with perpetual amplifications of the one theme. Equally efficacious with the timid and slothful was the prospect of a quiet retreat from the confusion and strife

Antonium hujus propositi caput, quod ex parte verum est: non enim tam ipse ante omnes fuit, quam ab eo omnium incitata sunt studia," etc.—Hieron. Vit. Pauli cap. 1.—Epist. xxii. ad Eustoch. cap. 36.

Jerome also asserts that monachism was unknown in Palestine and Syria until it was introduced there by Hilarion, a disciple of St. Antony.—Vit. Hilarion. cap. 14

¹ Instit. Divin. Lib. vi. cap. 10.—Cf. c. 17.

which the accelerating decline of the empire rendered every day wilder and more hopeless; while the crushing burdens of the state drove many, in spite of all the efforts of the civil power, to seek their escape in the exemptions accorded to those connected with the Church. When to these classes are added the penitents—prototypes of St. Mary of Egypt, who retired to the desert as the only refuge from her profligate life, and for seventeen years waged an endless struggle with the burning passions which she could control but could not conquer—it is not difficult to understand how vast were the multitudes unconsciously engaged in laying the foundations of that monastic structure which was eventually to overshadow all Christendom.¹ Indeed, even the Church itself at times became alarmed at the increasing tendency, as when the Council of Saragossa, in 381, found it necessary to denounce the practice of ecclesiastics abandoning their functions and embracing the monastic life, which it assumes was done from unworthy motives.²

Soon after his conversion, Constantine had encouraged the prevailing tendency by not only repealing the disabilities imposed by the old Roman law on those who remained unmarried, but by extending the power of making wills to minors who professed the intention of celibacy.³ His piety and that of subsequent emperors speedily attributed to all connected with the Church certain exemptions from the intolerable municipal burdens which were eating out the heart of the empire. An enormous premium was thus offered to swell the ecclesi-

¹ As early as the commencement of the fourth century, we find Faustus, in his "*tu quoque*" defence of Manichæism, asserting that in the Christian Churches the number of professed virgins exceeded that of women not bound by vows.—Augustin. contra Faust. Manich. Lib. xxx. c. iv.

² *Propter luxum vanitatemque præsumptam*.—Concil. Cæsaraug. I. ann. 381 c. vi. —Disobedience to the prohibition is threatened with prolonged suspension from communion.

³ Cassiod. Hist. Tripart. Lib. I. c. 9

astical ranks, while, as the number of the officiating clergy was necessarily limited, the influx would naturally flow into the mass of monks and nuns, on whose increase there was no restriction, and whose condition was open to all, with but slender examination into the fitness of the applicant.¹ The rapidly increasing wealth of the Church and the large sums devoted to the maintenance of all orders of the clergy offered additional temptations to those who might regard the life of the ascetic as the means of securing an assured existence of idleness, free from all care of the morrow. If, therefore, during a period when ridicule and persecution were the portion of those who vowed perpetual continence, it had been found impossible to avoid the most deplorable scandals,² it can readily be conceived that allurements such as these would crowd the monastic profession with proselytes of a most questionable character, drawn from a society so frightfully dissolute as that of the fourth century. The fierce declamations of St. Jerome afford a terrible picture of the disorders prevalent among those vowed to celibacy, and of the hideous crimes resorted to in order to conceal or remove the consequences of guilt, showing that the asceticism enforced by Siricius had not wrought any improvement.³

¹ See Lib. xvi. Cod. Theod. Tit. ii. ll. 9, 10, 11, 14, etc. This evil had become so great by the time of Valens that in 365 that emperor declares "*Quidam ignavia sectatores desertis civitatum muneribus, captant solitudines ac secreta, et specie religionis catibus monizonton congregantur.*" The most vigorous measures were requisite, "*erui e latebris consulta præceptione mandavimus,*" and he orders the culprits to be subjected again to their municipal duties under pain of forfeiture of all their property (Lib. xii. Cod. Theod. Tit. i. l. 63). In 376 the same emperor endeavoured to enforce the obligation of military service on the crowds of vigorous men who filled the monasteries, and on their resistance a persecution arose in which many were killed.—Hieron. Euseb. Chron. ann. 378.

² The lamentations of St. Cyprian have already been alluded to. In 305 the Council of Elvira found it necessary to denounce perpetual excommunication against the "*virgines sacratæ*" who abandoned themselves to a life of licentiousness, while those guilty only of a single lapse were allowed restoration to communion on the deathbed, if earned by continual penitence (Concil. Eliberit. c. 13).

³ Piget dicere quot quotidie virgines ruant, quantas de suo gremio mater perdat ecclesia: super quæ sidera inimicus superbus ponat thronum suum; quot petras

The necessity of subjecting those bound by vows to established rules must therefore have soon become generally recognised; and although, as we have already seen, they were free at any time to abandon the profession which they had assumed, still, while they remained as members, the welfare of the Church would render it imperative to establish rules of wholesome discipline. The first authoritative attempt to check disorders of the kind is to be found in the first Council of Carthage, which in 348 insisted that all who, shunning marriage, elected the better lot of chastity, should live separate and solitary, and that none should have access to them under penalty of excommunication; and in 381 the Council of Saragossa sought to remedy the evil at its root by forbidding virgins to take the veil unless they could furnish proof that they were at least forty years of age.¹

Although the Church, in becoming an affair of state, had to a great extent sacrificed its independence, still it enjoyed the countervailing advantage of being able to call upon the temporal power for assistance when its own authority was defied, nor was it long in requiring this aid in the enforcement of its regulations. Accordingly, in 364, we find a law of Jovian forbidding, under pain of actual or civil death, any attempt to marry a sacred virgin,² the extreme severity of which is the best indication of the condition of morals that could justify a resort to penalties so exaggerated. How great was the necessity for reform, and how little was actually accomplished by

excavet et habitet coluber in foraminibus earum. Videas plerasque viduas antequam nuptas, infelicem conscientiam mutata tantum veste protegere. Quas nisi tumor uteri, et infantum prodiderit vagitus, sanctas et castas se esse gloriantur, et erecta cervice et ludentibus pedibus incedunt. Aliæ vero sterilitatem præbunt, et necdum sati hominis homicidium faciunt. Nonnullæ cum se senserint concepisse de scelere, abortii venena meditantur, et frequenter etiam ipsæ commortuæ, trium criminum reæ, ad inferos producuntur, homicidæ suæ, Christi adulteræ, necdum nati filii parricidæ.—Hieron. Epist. xxii. ad Eustoch. c. 5.

¹ Concil. Carthag. I. c. 3.—Concil. Cæsaraugust. I. c. 8.

² Lib. ix. Cod. Theod. Tit. xxv. l. 2.

these attempts, may be estimated from an effort of the Council of Valence, in 374, to prevent those who married from being pardoned after too short a penance,¹ and from the description which ten years later Pope Siricius gives of the unbridled and shameless license indulged in by both sexes in violation of their monastic vows.²

Thus definite rules for the governance of these constantly increasing crowds of all stations, conditions, and characters, who were obviously so ill-fitted for the obligations which they had assumed, became necessary, but it was long before they assumed an irrevocable and binding force. The treatise which is known as the rule of St. Orsiesius is only a long and somewhat mystic exhortation to asceticism. That which St. Pachomius is said to have received from an angel is manifestly posterior to the date of that saint, and probably belongs to the commencement of the fifth century. Minute as are its instructions, and rigid as are its injunctions respecting every action of the cenobite, yet it fully displays the voluntary nature of the profession and the lightness of the bonds which tied the monk to his order. A stranger applying for admission to a monastery was exposed only to a probation of a few days, to test his sincerity and to prove that he was not a slave; no vows were imposed, only his simple promise to obey the rules being required. If he grew tired of ascetic life, he departed, but he could not be again taken back without penitence and the consent of the archimandrite.³ Even female travellers applying for hospitality were not refused admittance,

¹ Concil. Valent. I. ann. 374 can. ii.

² Postea vero in abruptum conscientiae desperatione producti, de illicitis complexibus libere filios procreaverint, quod et publicæ leges et ecclesiastica jura condemnant.—Siricii Epist. I. c. 6.

³ Regul. S. Pachom. c. 26, 79, 95.—The Rule which passes under the name of John, Bishop of Jerusalem, I believe is universally acknowledged to be spurious, and therefore requires no special reference.

and an inclosure was set apart for them, where they were entertained with special honour and attention; a place was likewise provided for them in which to be present at vespers.¹

A similar system of discipline is manifested in the detailed statement of the regulations of the Egyptian monasteries left us by John Cassianus, Abbot of St. Victor of Marseilles, who died in 448. No vows or religious ceremonies were required of the postulant for admission. He was proved by ten days' waiting at the gate, and a year's probation inside, yet the slender tie between him and the community is shown by the preservation of his worldly garments, to be returned to him in case of his expulsion for disobedience or discontent, and also by the refusal to receive from him the gift of his private fortune—although no one within the sacred walls was permitted to call the simplest article his own—lest he should leave the convent and then claim to revoke his donation, as not unfrequently happened in institutions which neglected this salutary rule.² So, in a series of directions for cenobitic life, appended to a curious Arabic version of the Nicene canons, the punishment provided for persistent disobedience and turbulence is expulsion of the offender from the monastery.³

As a temporary refuge from the trials of life, where the soul could be strengthened by seclusion, meditation, peaceful labour, and rigid discipline, thousands must have found the institution of monachism most beneficial who had not resolution enough to give themselves up to a life of ascetic devotion and privation. These facilities

¹ Ibid. c. 29. This is in particularly striking contrast with mediæval monachism, which, as we shall see hereafter, considered the sacred precincts polluted by the foot of woman.

² Cassian. de Cœnob. Institut. Lib. iv. c. 3, 4, 5, 6, 13.—Cassianus declares chastity to be the virtue by which men are rendered most like angels.

³ De Monach. Decret. can. x. (Harduin. Concil. I. 498).

for entrance and departure, however, only rendered more probable the admission of the turbulent and the worldly ; and the want of stringent and effective regulations must have rendered itself every day more apparent, as the holy multitudes waxed larger and more difficult to manage, and as the empire became covered with wandering monks, described by St. Augustin as beggars, swindlers, and peddlers of false relics, who resorted to the most shameless mendacity to procure the means of sustaining their idle and vagabond life.¹

It was this, no doubt, which led to the adoption and enforcement of the third of the monastic vows—that of obedience—as being the only mode by which, during the period when residence was voluntary, the crowds of devotees could be kept in a condition of subjection. To what a length this was carried, and how completely the system of religious asceticism succeeded in its object of destroying all human feeling, is well exemplified by the shining example of the holy Mucius, who presented himself for admission in a monastery, accompanied by his child, a boy eight years of age. His persistent humility gained for him a relaxation of the rules, and father and son were admitted together. To test his worthiness, however, they were separated, and all intercourse forbidden. His patience encouraged a further trial. The helpless child was neglected and abused systematically, but all the perverse ingenuity which rendered him a mass of filth and visited him with perpetual chastisement failed to excite a sign of interest in the father. Finally, the abbot feigned to lose all patience with the little sufferer's moans, and ordered Mucius to cast him in the river. The obedient monk carried him to the bank and threw him in with such

¹ *Nusquam missos, nusquam fixos, nusquam stantes, nusquam sedentes. Alii membra martyrum, si tamen martyrum, venditant; alii fimbrias et phylacteria sua magnificant . . . et omnes petunt, omnes exigunt, aut sumptus lucrosæ egestatis, aut simulatæ pretium sanctitatis, etc.*—Augustin. de Opere Monachor. cap. 28.

promptitude that the admiring spectators were barely able to rescue him. All that is wanting to complete the hideous picture is the declaration of the abbot that in Mucius the sacrifice of Abraham was completed.¹ This epitomises the whole system—the transfer to man of the obedience due to God—and shows how little, by this time, was left of the hopeful reliance on a beneficent God which distinguished the primitive Church, and which led Athenagoras, in the second century, to argue from the premises “God certainly impels no one to those things which are unnatural.”

The weaker sex, whether from the greater value attached to the purity of woman or from her presumed frailty, as well as from some difference in the nature of the engagement entered into, was the first to become the subject of distinct legislation, and the frequency of the efforts required shows the difficulty of enforcing the rule of celibacy and chastity. Allusion has already been made to a law of Jovian which, as early as 364, denounced the attempt to marry a nun as a capital crime. Subsequent canons of the Church show that this was wholly ineffectual. The Council of Valence, in 374, endeavoured to check such marriages. The Synod of Rome, in 384, alludes with horror to these unions, which it stigmatises as adultery, and drawing a distinction between virgins professed and those who had taken the veil, it prescribes an indefinite penance before they can be received back into the Church, but at the same time it does not venture

¹ Cassian. Lib. v. c. 27, 28. The extravagant lengths to which this implicit subjection was habitually carried are further illustrated by Cassianus in Lib. iv. c. 10.

The same spirit is shown in the story told of St. Francis of Assisi, who took with him into the garden two novices to assist him in planting cabbages. He commenced by setting out the vegetables with their heads in the earth and their roots in the air. One of the novices ventured to remonstrate—“Father, that is not the way to make cabbages grow”—“My son,” interrupted the Saint, “you are not fitted for our order,”—and he dismissed the incautious youth on the spot.

to order their separation from their husbands.¹ A year later, the bolder Siricius commands both monks and nuns guilty of unchastity to be imprisoned, but he makes no allusion to marriage.² Notwithstanding the fervour of St. Augustin's admiration for virginity and the earnestness with which he waged war in favour of celibacy, he pronounces that the marriage of nuns is binding, ridicules those who consider it as invalid, and deprecates the evil results of separating man and wife under such circumstances, but yet his asceticism, satisfied with this concession to common sense, pronounces such unions to be worse than adulterous.³ From this it is evident that these infractions of discipline were far from uncommon, and that the stricter Churchmen already treated such marriages as null and void, which resulted in the husbands considering themselves at liberty to marry again. Such view of monastic vows was not sustained by the authorities of the Church, for about the same period Innocent I., like St. Augustin, while condemning such marriages as worse than adulterous, admitted their validity by refusing communion to the offenders until one of the partners in guilt should be dead; and, like the Synod of 384, he considered the transgression as somewhat less culpable in the professed virgin than in her who had consummated her marriage with Christ by absolutely taking the veil.⁴ It

¹ Synod. Roman. ann. 384 c. 1, 2.

² Siricii Epist. 1, c. 6.—A rather curious episode in monastic discipline is a law promulgated in 390 by Theodosius the Great prohibiting nuns from shaving their heads under severe penalties. "*Feminae quæ crinem suum contra divinas humanasque leges instinctu persuasæ professionis absciderint ab ecclesiæ foribus arceantur,*" and any bishop permitting them to enter a church is threatened with deposition.—Lib. XVI. Cod. Theod. Tit. ii. l. 27.

³ De Bono Viduit. c. 10, 11.—It will be seen hereafter that in the twelfth century the Church adopted as a rule of discipline the practices condemned by St. Augustin, and that in the sixteenth century the Council of Trent elevated it into a point of faith.

⁴ Innocent. Epist. ad Victricium. c. 12, 13.—The difficulty of the questions which arose in establishing the monastic system is shown in an epistle of Leo I. to the Mauritanian Bishops concerning some virgins professed who had suffered

was probably this assumed marriage with Christ—a theory which St. Cyprian shows to be as old as the third century, and which is very strongly stated by Innocent—which rendered the Church so much more sensitive as to the frailty of the female devotees than to that of the men. As yet, however, the stability of such marriages was generally accepted throughout the Church, for, a few years before the epistle of Innocent, we find it enunciated by the first Council of Toledo, which decided that the nun who married was not admissible to penitence during the life of her husband, unless she separated herself from him.¹

It is evident from all this that an effort had been made to have such marriages condemned as invalid, and that it had failed. We see, however, that the lines had gradually been drawn more tightly around the monastic order, that the vows could no longer be shaken off with ease, and that there was a growing tendency to render the monastic character ineffaceable when once assumed. Towards the middle of the fifth century, however, a reaction took place, possibly because the extreme views may have been found impracticable. Thus Leo I. treats recalcitrant cenobites with singular tenderness. He declares that monks cannot without sin abandon their profession, and therefore that he who returns to the world and marries must redeem himself by penitence, for however honourable be the marriage-tie and the active duties of life, still it is a transgression to desert the better path. So professed virgins, who throw off the habit and

violence from the Barbarians. He decides that they had committed no sin, and could be admitted to communion if they persevered in a life of chastity and religious observance, but that they could not continue to be numbered with the holy maidens, while yet they were not to be degraded to the order of widows; and he further requires that they shall exhibit their sense of shame and humiliation. The problem evidently was one which transcended the acuteness even of Leo to solve.—Leonis I. Epist. Episcop. per Cæsarien. Mauritan. cap. ii. v. (Harduin. I. 1775-6).

¹ Concil. Toletan. I. c. 16.

marry, violate their duty, and those who in addition to this have been regularly consecrated commit a great crime—and yet no further punishment is indicated for them;¹ and the little respect still paid to the indelible character claimed for monachism is shown by the manner in which the civil power was ready to interfere for the purpose of putting an end to some of the many abuses arising from monastic institutions. In 458 Majorian promulgated a law in which he inveighs with natural indignation against the parents who, to get rid of their offspring, compel their unhappy daughters to enter convents at a tender age, and he orders that, until the ardour of the passions shall be tempered by advancing years, no vows shall be administered. The minimum age for taking the veil is fixed at forty years, and stringent measures are provided for insuring its observance. If infringed by order of the parents, or by an orphan girl of her own free will, one-third of all the possessions of the offender is confiscated to the State, and the ecclesiastics officiating at the ceremony are visited with the heavy punishment of proscription. A woman forced into a nunnery, if her parents die before she reaches the age of forty, is declared to be free to leave it and to marry, nor can she be disinherited thereafter.² Fruitless as this well-intentioned effort proved, it is highly suggestive as to the wrongs which were perpetrated under the name of religion, the stern efforts felt to be requisite for their prevention, and the power exercised to annul the vows.

In the East, the tendency was to give a more rigid and unalterable character to the vows, nor is it difficult to

¹ Leo. Epist. ad Rusticum c. 12, 13, 14. So the second Council of Arles, in 443 (can. 52), excommunicates the nun who marries until due penance shall have been performed, but does not indicate separation.

² Novell. Majorian. Tit. vi. This law continued in force for but five years, being abrogated in 463 by Severus.—Novell. Severi. Tit. i.

understand the cause. Both Church and State began to feel the necessity of reducing to subjection under some competent authority the vast hordes of idle and ignorant men who had embraced monastic life. In the West, monachism was as yet in its infancy, and was to be stimulated rather than to be dreaded, but it was far otherwise in the East, where the influence of the ascetic ideas of India was probably much more direct and immediate. The examples of Antony and Pachomius had brought them innumerable followers. The solitudes of the deserts had become peopled with vast communities, and as the contagion spread, monasteries arose everywhere and were rapidly filled and enlarged.¹ The blindly bigoted and the turbulently ambitious found a place among those whose only aim was retirement and peace; while the authority wielded by the superior of each establishment, through the blind obedience claimed under monastic vows, gave him a degree of power which rendered him not only important but dangerous. The monks thus became in time a body of no little weight which it behoved the Church to thoroughly control, as it might become efficient for good or evil. By encouraging and directing it, she gained an instrument of incalculable force, morally and physically, to consolidate her authority and extend her influence. How that influence was used, and how the monks became at times a terror even to the State is written broadly on the history of the age. Even early in the fifth century the hordes of savage Nitrian cenobites were the janizaries of the fiery Cyril, with which he lorded it over the city of Alexandria, and almost openly bade defiance to the imperial authority. The tumult in which Orestes nearly lost his life, the banishment of the Jews,

¹ For the ascetic extravagances which accompanied the development of monachism the reader is referred to the vigorous summary by Mr. Lecky in his *History of European Morals*.

and the shocking catastrophe of Hypatia show how dangerous an element to society they were even then, when under the guidance of an able and unscrupulous leader.¹ So the prominent part taken by the monks in the deplorable Nestorian and Eutychian controversies, the example of the Abbot Barsumas at the Robber Synod in Ephesus, the exploits of Theodosius of Jerusalem and Peter of Antioch, who drove out their bishops and usurped the episcopal chairs, the career of Eutyches himself, the bloodthirsty rabble of monks who controlled the Synod of Ephesus and endeavoured to overawe that of Chalcedon, and, in the succeeding century, the insurrections against the Emperor Anastasius which were largely attributed to their efforts—all these were warnings not lightly to be neglected. The monks, in fact, were fast becoming not only disagreeable but even dangerous to the civil power; their organisation and obedience to their leaders gave them strength to threaten seriously the influence even of the hierarchy, and the effort to keep them strictly under subjection and within their convent walls became necessary to the peace of both Church and State.

At the Council of Chalcedon, in 451, the hierarchy had their revenge for the insults which they had suffered two years before in the Robber Synod. A large portion of the monks, infected with Eutychianism, came into direct antagonism with the bishops, whom they defied. With the aid of the civil power, the bishops triumphed, and endeavoured to put an end for the future to monastic insubordination, by placing the monasteries under the

¹ Socrat. Hist. Eccles. Lib. VII. c. 13, 14, 15.—Even before this, in the province of Africa, the political utility of such enthusiastic disciples had been recognised and acted on. At the Council of Carthage, in 411, where the Donatists were condemned, the Imperial Commissioner, in pronouncing sentence, warned the Donatist bishops that they must restrain the turbulent monks within their dioceses—"Ii autem qui in præsidiis suis circumcellionum turbas se habere cognoscunt, scient nisi eorum insolentiam omnimodis comprimere et refrenare gestierint, maxime ea loca fisco mox occupanda."—Concil. Carthage. ann. 411 Cognit. III. cap. ult. (Harduin. I. 1190).

direct control and supervision of the secular prelates. A series of canons was adopted which declared that monks and nuns were not at liberty to marry ; but while excommunication was the punishment provided for the offence, power was given to the bishops to extend mercy to the offenders. At the suggestion of the Emperor Marcian, the council deplored the turbulence of the monks who, leaving their monasteries, stirred up confusion everywhere, and it commanded them to devote themselves solely to prayer and fasting in the spot which they had chosen as a retreat from the world. It forbade them to abandon the holy life to which they had devoted themselves, and pronounced the dread sentence of the anathema on the renegades who refused to return and undergo due penance. No monastery was to be founded without the license of the bishop of the locality, and he alone could give permission to a monk to leave it for any purpose.¹

This legislation was well adapted to the end in view, but the evil was too deep-seated and too powerful to be thus easily eradicated. Finding the Church unable to enforce a remedy, the civil power was compelled to intervene. As early as 390 Theodosius the Great had ordered the monks to confine themselves strictly to deserts and solitudes.² Two years later he repealed this law and allowed them to enter the cities.³ This laxity was abused, and in 466 the Emperors Leo and Anthemius issued an edict forbidding for the future all monks to go beyond the walls of their monasteries on any pretext, except the apocrisarii, or legal officers, on legitimate business alone, and these were strictly enjoined not to engage in religious disputes, not to stir up the

¹ Concil. Chalced. c. 4, 7, 16. The most important of these, the fourth canon, was laid before the council by the Emperor in person.

² Lib. xvi. Cod. Theod. iii. 1.

³ Lib. xvi. Cod. Theod. iii. 2.

people, and not to preside over assemblages of any nature.¹

History shows us how little obedience this also received, nor is it probable that much more attention was paid to the imperial rescript when, in 532, Justinian confirmed the legislation of his predecessors, and added provisions forbidding those who had once taken the vows from returning to the world under penalty of being handed over to the *curia* of their municipality, with confiscation of their property, and personal punishment if penniless.² Had the effort then been successful, he would not have been under the necessity of renewing it in 535 by a law making over to the monastery, by way of satisfaction to God, the property of any monk presuming to abandon a life of religion and returning to the cares of the world.³ The prevalent laxity of morals is further shown by another provision according to which the monk who received orders was not allowed to marry, even if he entered grades in which marriage was permitted to the secular clergy, the penalty for taking a wife or a concubine being degradation and dismissal, with incapacity for serving the State.⁴ Ten years later, further legislation was found necessary, and at length the final expedient was hit upon, by which the apostate monk was handed over to the bishop to be placed in a monastery, from which if he escaped again he was delivered to the secular tribunal as incorrigible.⁵ The trouble was apparently incurable. Three hundred and fifty years later, Leo the Philosopher deplotes it, and orders all recalcitrant monks to be returned to their convents as often as they may escape. As for the morals of monastic life, it may be sufficient to refer to the regulation of

¹ Const. 29 Cod. i. 3.

² Novell. v. c. 4, 6.

³ Const. 53 § 1 Cod. i. 3.

⁴ Novell. v. c. 8.

⁵ Novell. CXXIII, c. 42.

St. Theodore Studita, in the ninth century, prohibiting the entrance of even female animals.¹

Thus gradually the irrevocable nature of monastic vows became established in the East, more from reasons of State than from ecclesiastical considerations. In the West, matters were longer in reaching a settlement, and the causes operating were somewhat different. Monachism there had not become a terror to the civil power, and its management was left to the Church; yet, if its influence was insufficient to excite tumults and seditions, it was none the less disorganised, and its disorders were a disgrace to those on whom rested the responsibility.

The Latin Church was not by any means insensible to this disgrace, nor did it underrate the importance of rendering the vows indissoluble, of binding its servants absolutely and forever to its service, and of maintaining its character and influence by endeavouring to enforce a discipline that should insure purity. During the period sketched above, and for the two following centuries, there is scarcely a council which did not enact canons showing at once the persistent effort to produce these results and the almost insurmountable difficulty of accomplishing them. It would lead us too far to enter upon the minutiae of these perpetually reiterated exhortations and threats, or of the various expedients which were successively tried. Suffice it to say that the end in view was never lost sight of, while the perseverance of the wrongdoer seems to have rivalled that of the disciplinarian. The anvil bade fair to wear out the hammer, while the confusion and lawlessness of those dismal ages gave constantly increasing facilities to those who desired to escape from the strictness of the ascetic life to which they had devoted themselves. Thus arose a crowd of vagabond

¹ S. Theod. Studit. Testament. v. (Max. Bib. Pat. IX. i. 276).

monks, *gyrovagi*, *acephali*, *circilliones*, *sarabaitæ*, who, without acknowledging obedience to any superior, or having any definite place of abode, wandered over the face of the country, claiming the respect and immunities due to a sacred calling, for the purpose of indulging in an idle and dissolute life—vagrants of the worst description, according to the unanimous testimony of the ecclesiastical authorities of the period.¹

Thus, up to the middle of the fifth century, no regular system of discipline had been introduced in the monastic establishments of the Latin Church. About that period Cassianus, the first abbot of St. Victor of Marseilles, wrote out, for the benefit of the ruder monasticism of the West, the details of discipline in which he had perfected himself among the renowned communities of the East. He deplores the absence of any fixed rule in the Latin convents, where every abbot governed on the plan which suited his fancy; where more difficulty was found in preserving order among two or three monks than the Abbot of Tabenna in the Thebaïd experienced with the flock of five thousand committed to his single charge; and where each individual retained his own private hoards, which were carefully locked up and sealed to keep them from the unscrupulous covetousness of his brethren.² How little all these efforts accomplished is clearly manifested when, in 494, we find Gelasius I.

¹ St. Benedict of Nursia, the real founder of Latin monachism, who quitted the world in 494, thus describes the wandering monks of his time: "Tertium vero monachorum terribilissimum genus est Sarabaitarum . . . qui bini aut terni, aut certe singuli sine pastore, non Dominicis sed suis inclusi ovilibus, pro lege eis est desideriorum voluptas; cum quidquid putaverint vel elegerint, hoc dicunt sanctum, et quod noluerint putant non licere. Quartum vero genus est monachorum quod nominatur gyrovagum, qui tota vita sua per diversas provincias ternis aut quaternis diebus per diversorum cellas hospitantur, semper vagi et nunquam stabiles, et propriis voluptatibus et gulæ illecebris servientes, et per omnia deteriores Sarabaitis: de quorum omnium miserrima conversatione melius est silere quam loqui."—Regul. S. Benedicti c. 1.

² Cassiani de Cœnob. Instit. Lib. II. c. 3; Lib. v. c. 1, 15.

lamenting the incestuous marriages which were not uncommon among the virgins dedicated to God, and venturing only to denounce excommunication on the offenders, unless they should avert it by undergoing public penance. As for widows who married after professing chastity, he could indicate no earthly chastisement, but only held out to them the prospect of eternal reward or punishment, and left it for them to decide whether they would seek or abandon the better part.¹ Still, the irrevocable nature of the vow of celibacy was so little understood or respected that in 502 Cæsarius, who had just been translated from the abbacy of a monastery to the bishopric of Arles, wrote to Pope Symmachus asking him to issue a precept forbidding marriage to nuns, to which the pontiff promptly acceded.²

A new apostle was clearly needed to aid the organising spirit of Rome in her efforts to regulate the increasing number of devotees, who threatened to become the worst scandal of the Church, and who could be rendered so efficient an instrument for its aggrandisement. He was found in the person of St. Benedict of Nursia, who, about the year 494, at the early age of sixteen, tore himself from the pleasures of the world, and buried his youth in the solitudes of the Latian Apennines. A nature that could wrench itself away from the allurements of a splendid career dawning amid the blandishments of Rome was not likely to shrink from the austerities which awe and attract the credulous and the devout. Tempted by the Evil Spirit in the guise of a beautiful maiden, and finding his resolution on the point of yielding, with a supreme effort Benedict cast off his simple garment and threw himself into a thicket of brambles and nettles, through

¹ Gelasii PP. I. Epist. IX. cap. xx., xxi.

² Symmachi PP. Epist. vi.

which he rolled until his naked body was lacerated from head to foot. The experiment, though rude, was eminently successful; the flesh was effectually conquered, and Benedict was never again tormented by rebellious desires.¹ A light so shining was not created for obscurity. Zealous disciples assembled around him, attracted from distant regions by his sanctity, and after various vicissitudes he founded the monastery of Monte Cassino, on which for a thousand years were lavished all that veneration and munificence could accumulate to render illustrious the birthplace and capital of the great Benedictine Order.

The rule promulgated by Benedict, which virtually became the established law of Latin Monachism, shows the more practical character of the Western mind. Though pervaded by the austerest asceticism, yet labour, charity, and good works occupy a much more prominent place in its injunctions than in the system of the East. Salvation was not to be sought simply by abstinence and mortification, and the innate selfishness of the monastic principle was relaxed in favour of a broader and more human view of the duties of man to his Creator and to his fellows. This gave to the institution a firmer hold on the affections of mankind and a more enduring vitality, which preserved

¹ Greg. Mag. Vit. S. Benedicti c. 2.—Juan Cirita, a Spanish saint of the twelfth century, was exposed to the same temptation as St. Benedict, the devil visiting him in the shape of a lovely woman who sought refuge from her pursuers in his cell. During a sleepless night, feeling his resolution giving way, he roused his fire and with a glowing brand burned his arm to the bone, whereupon the devil vanished, loading him with reproaches (Henriquez Vit. Joannis Cirita, cap. ii.). Legends of this nature are not uncommon, nor are there wanting those of another class in which the immediate and visible agency of the Evil Spirit is not called into play. Thus the holy Godric, a Welsh saint of the twelfth century, endeavoured to subdue his rebellious flesh in the manner which St. Benedict found so effectual, but without success. He then buried a cask in the earthen floor of his cell, filled it with water and fitted it with a cover, and in this receptacle he shut himself up whenever he felt the titillations of desire. In this manner, varied by occasionally passing the night up to his chin in a river of which he had broken the ice, he finally succeeded in mastering his fiery nature.—Girald. Cambrens. Gemm. Eccles. Dist. II. c. x.

its fortunes through the centuries, in spite of innumerable aberrations and frightful abuses.

Still there were as yet no irrevocable vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience exacted of the novice. After a year of probation he promised, before God and the Saints, to keep the Rule under pain of damnation, and he was then admitted with imposing religious ceremonies. His worldly garments were, however, preserved, to be returned to him in case of expulsion, to which he was liable if incorrigibly disobedient. If he left the monastery, or if he was ejected, he could return twice, but after the third admission, if he again abandoned the order, he was no longer eligible.¹ Voluntary submission was thus the cornerstone of discipline, and there was nothing indelible in the engagement which bound the monk to his brethren.

Contemporary with St. Benedict was St. Cæsarius of Arles, whose Rule has been transmitted to us by his nephew, St. Tetradius. It is very short, but is more rigid than that of Benedict, inasmuch as it requires from the applicant the condition of remaining for life in the convent, nor will it permit his assumption of the habit until he shall have executed a deed bestowing all his property either on his relatives or on the establishment of his choice, thus insuring the rule of poverty, and depriving him of all inducement to retire.² The Rule of St. Aurelian of Arles, which dates from about 550, likewise insists on similar conditions.³

The Rule of St. Benedict, however, overcame all rivalry, and was at length universally adopted; Charlemagne, indeed, inquired in 811 whether there could be any monks except those who professed obedience to it.⁴

¹ Regul. S. Benedicti c. 58, 28, 29.

² Tetrad. Regul. c. 1.

³ Regul. S. Aurel. Arelatens. c. ii, iii. (Migne Patrol. LXVIII. 389).

⁴ Capit. Car. Mag. I. ann. 811 cap. xi. He also asks whether there were any monks in Gaul before the rule of St. Benedict was brought there, and is naturally not a little puzzled when told that St. Martin of Tours was a monk long anterior to the time of Benedict.—Capit. II. ann. 811 cap. xii. (Baluz. I. 331-2, Ed. Venet.).

Under it were founded the innumerable monasteries which sprang up in every part of Europe, and were everywhere the pioneers of civilisation ; which exercised a more potent influence in extending Christianity over the Heathen than all other agencies combined ; which carried the useful art into barbarous regions, and preserved to modern times whatever of classic culture has remained to us. If they were equally efficient in extending the authority of the Roman curia, and in breaking down the independence of local and national Churches, it is not to be assumed that even that result was an unalloyed misfortune, when the centrifugal tendencies of the Middle Ages were to be neutralised. Until the thirteenth century the Benedictines were practically without rivals, and their numbers and holiness may be estimated by the fact that in the fifteenth century one of their historians computed that the order had furnished fifty-five thousand five hundred and five blessed members to the calendar of saints.¹

Yet it could not but be a scandal to all devout minds that a man who had once devoted himself to religious observances should return to the world. Not only did it tend to break down the important distinction now rapidly developing itself between the clergy and the laity, but the possibility of such escape interfered with the control of the Church over those who formed so large a class of its members, and diminished their utility in aiding the progress of its aggrandisement. We cannot be surprised, therefore, that within half a century after the death of St. Benedict, among the reforms energetically inaugurated by St. Gregory the Great, in the first year of his ponti-

¹ *Quinquaginta quinque millia quingenta quinque
Omnes canonizati a te sunt translati.*

Est monachus sanctus. Caput vero Benedictus.—

(*Birek de Monast. Campidonens. c. 25.*)

Abbot Trithemius is more moderate, his estimate amounting to only 15,559.
(*Miræi Orig. Benedict.*)

ficatē, was that of commanding the forcible return of all who abandoned their profession—the terms of the decretal showing that no concealment had been thought necessary by the renegades in leading a secular life and in publicly marrying.¹ Equally determined were his efforts to reform the abuses which had so relaxed the discipline of some monasteries that women were allowed perfect freedom of access, and the monks contracted such intimacy with them that they openly acted as godfathers to their children;² and when, in 601, he learned that the monks of St. Vitus, on Mount Etna, considered themselves at liberty to marry, apparently without leaving their convent, he checked the abuse by the most prompt and decided commands to the ecclesiastical authorities of Sicily.³

By the efforts of Gregory the monk was thus, in theory at least, separated irrevocably from the world, and committed to an existence which depended solely upon the Church. Cut off from family and friends, the door closed behind him for ever, and his only aspirations, beyond his own personal wants and hopes, could but be for his abbey, his order, or the Church, with which he was thus indissolubly connected. There was one exception, however, to this general rule. No married man was allowed to become a monk unless his wife assented, and likewise became a nun. The marriage-tie was too sacred to be broken, unless both parties agreed simultaneously to em-

¹ Gregor. PP. I. Lib. I. Epist. 42.—Six years later he had to repeat his commands in stronger terms. (Cf. Lib. VII. Epist. 35. Lib. II. Epist. 28. Lib. IV. Epist. 27. Lib. X. Epist. 8.) Yet when the offender was a man of rank and power, as in the case of Venantius, Patrician of Syracuse, Gregory could lay aside the tone of lofty command and condescend to tender entreaty and earnest exhortation (Lib. I. Epist. 34), without even a threat of excommunication, and remain for years on the friendliest terms with him (Lib. XI. Epist. 30, 35, 36), showing that the rule was as yet by no means firmly established. In another case, however, nothing can be more indignant and peremptory than his commands (Lib. VIII. Epist. 8, 9).

² Gregor. PP. I. Lib. IV. Epist. 42.

³ Gregor. PP. I. Lib. X. Epist. 22, 23.—He states, “*ut etiam monachis ibidem degentibus mulieribus se jungere sine metu sit licitum*,” which he characterises as “*res . . . omnino detestabilis et nefanda*.”

brace the better life. Thus, on the complaint of a wife, Gregory orders her husband to be forcibly removed from the monastery which he had entered and to be restored to her. We shall see hereafter how entirely the Church in time outgrew these scruples, and how insignificant the sacrament of marriage became in comparison with that of ordination or the vow of religion.¹

The theory of perpetual segregation from the world was thus established, and it accomplished at last the objects for which it was designed, but it was too much in opposition to the invincible tendencies of human nature to be universally enforced without a struggle which lasted for nearly a thousand years. To follow out in detail the vicissitudes of this struggle would require too much space. Its nature will be indicated by occasional references in the following pages, and meanwhile it will be sufficient to observe how little was accomplished even in his own age by the energy and authority of Gregory. It was only a few years after his death that the Council of Paris, in 615, proves to us that residence in monasteries was not considered necessary for women who took the vows, and that the civil power had to be invoked to prevent their marriage.² Indeed, it was not uncommon for men to turn their houses, nominally at least, into convents, living there surrounded with their wives and families, and deriving no little worldly profit from the assumption of superior piety, to the scandal of the truly religious.³ St. Isidor of Seville, about the same period, copies the words of St. Augustin in describing the wandering monastic impostors who lived upon the credulous charity of the

¹ Gregor. PP. I. Lib. XI. Epist. 50.

² Concil. Parisiens. V. ann. 615 c. xiii.—In the decree of Clotair II., confirming the acts of this council, we find—"Puellas et viduas religiosas, aut sanctimoniales, quæ se Deo voverunt, tam quæ in propriis domibus resident, quam qua in monasteriis positæ sunt, nullus nec per præceptum nostrum competat, nec trahere nec sibi in conjugio sociare penitus præsumat, etc."—Edict. Chlot. II. ann. 615 c. xviii. (Baluze).

³ S. Fructuosi Bracarens. Regul. Commun. cap. 1.

faithful ;¹ and he also enlarges upon the disgraceful license of the *acephali*, or clerks bound by no rule, whose vagabond life and countless numbers were an infamy to the western kingdoms which they infested.² The quotation of this passage by Louis-le-Débonnaire, in his attempt to reform the Church, shows that these degraded vagrants continued to flourish unchecked in the ninth century ;³ and, indeed, Smaragdus, in his Commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict, assures us that the evil had rather increased than diminished.⁴

Monachism was but one application of the doctrine of justification by works, which, by the enthusiasm and superstition of ages, was gradually built into a vast system of sacerdotalism. Through it were eventually opened to the mediæval Church sources of illimitable power and wealth, under the sole control of the central head, to which were committed the power of the keys and the dispensation of the exhaustless treasure of the merits of the Redeemer and of the saints. To discuss these collateral themes, however, would carry us too far from our subject, and I must dismiss them with the remark that at the period now under consideration there could have been no anticipation of these ulterior advantages to be gained by assuming to regulate the mode in which individual piety might seek to propitiate an offended God. Sufficient motives for the assumption existed in the evils and aspirations of the moment, without anticipating others which only received their fullest development under the skilful dialectic of the Schoolmen.

¹ De Ecclesiast. Offic. Lib. II. cap. xvi. § 7.

² Solutos atque oberrantes, sola turpis vita complectitur et vaga, . . . quique dum, nullum metuentes, explendæ voluptatis suæ licentiam consectantur, quasi animalia bruta, libertate ac desiderio suo feruntur, habentes signum religionis, non religionis officium, hippocentauris similes, neque equi neque homines, . . . quorum quidem sordida atque infami numerositate satis superque nostra pars occidua pollet.—Ibid. Lib. II. c. iii.

³ Ludov. Pii de Reform. Eccles. cap. 100. (Goldast. Const. Imp. III. 199.)

⁴ Smaragd. Comment. in Regul. Benedict. c. 1.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BARBARIANS

WHILE the Latin Church had thus been engaged in its hopeless combat with the incurable vices of a worn-out civilisation, it had found itself confronted by a new and essentially different task. The Barbarians who wrenched province after province from the feeble grasp of the Cæsars had to be conquered, or religion and culture would be involved in the wreck which blotted out the political system of the Empire. The destinies of the future hung trembling in the balance, and it might not be an uninteresting speculation to consider what had been the present condition of the world if Western Europe had shared the fate of the East, and had fallen under the domination of a race bigoted in its own belief and incapable of learning from its subjects. Fortunately for mankind, the invaders of the West were not semi-civilised and self-satisfied; their belief was not a burning zeal for a faith sufficiently elevated to meet many of the wants of the soul; they were simple barbarians, who, while they might despise the cowardly voluptuaries on whom they trampled, could not fail to recognise the superiority of a civilisation awful even in its ruins. Fortunately, too, the Latin Church was a more compact and independently organised body than its Eastern rival, inspired by a warmer faith and a more resolute ambition. It faced the difficulties of its new position with consummate tact and tireless energy; and whether its adversaries were Pagans like the Franks, or Arians like the Goths and Burgundians, by alternate pious zeal and artful energy it

triumphed where success seemed hopeless, and where bare toleration would have appeared a sufficient victory.

While the celibacy, which bound every ecclesiastic to the Church and dis severed all other ties, may doubtless be credited with a considerable share in this result, it could only lead, in the confusion of the time, to additional corruption of morals, already sufficiently corrupt. The chaste purity of the Barbarians at their advent aroused the wondering admiration of Salvianus, as that of their fathers four centuries earlier had won the severe encomium of Tacitus ;¹ but the virtue which sufficed for the simplicity of the German forests was not long proof against the allurements accumulated by the cynicism of Roman luxury. At first the wild converts, content with the battle-axe and javelin, might leave the holy functions of religion to their new subjects, their strength scarcely feeling the restraint of a faith which to them was little more than an idle ceremony ; but as they gradually settled down in their conquests, and recognised that the high places of the Church conferred riches, honour, and power, they coveted the prizes which were too valuable to be monopolised by an inferior race. Gradually the hierarchy thus became filled with a class of warrior bishops, who, however efficient in maintaining and extending ecclesiastical prerogatives, were not likely to shed lustre on their order by the rigidity of their virtue, or to remove, by a strict enforcement of discipline, the scandals inseparable from endless civil commotions.

Reference has been made above (p. 83), to the perpetual iteration of the canon of celibacy, and of the ingenious devices to prevent its violation, by the numerous councils

¹ De Mor. German. c. 18, 19. It is a little singular that Salvianus names the Alemanni as the only exception to the character for chastity which he bestows on the Barbarians in general.

held during this period, showing at once the disorders which prevailed among the clergy and the fruitlessness of the effort to repress them. The history of the time is full of examples illustrating the various phases of this struggle.

The episcopal chair, which at an earlier period had been filled by the votes of the people, and which subsequently came under the control of the Papacy, was at this time a gift in the hands of the untamed Merovingians, who carelessly bestowed it on him who could most lavishly fill the royal coffers, or who had earned it by courtly subservience or warlike prowess. The supple Roman or the turbulent Frank, who perchance could not recite a line of the Mass, thus leaped at once from the laity through all the grades;¹ and as he was most probably married, there can be no room for surprise if the rule of continence, thus suddenly assumed from the most worldly motives, should often prove unendurable. Even in the early days of the Frankish conquest we see a cultured noble, like Genebaldus, married to the niece of St. Remy, when placed in the see of Laon ostensibly putting his wife away and visiting her only under pretext of religious instruction, until the successive births of a son and a daughter—whom he named Latro and Vulpecula in token of his sin—and we may not unreasonably doubt the chronicler's veracity when he informs us that the

¹ From such chance allusions as are made by Gregory of Tours, this would almost seem to be the general rule, and not the exception. Thus he mentions that Apollinaris obtained the see of Rhodéz at the solicitation of his wife and sister (*Hist. Franc. Lib. III. c. 2*), and shortly afterwards the same episcopate is filled by the appointment of "Innocentius Gabalitanorum comes" (*Ibid. Lib. VI. c. 38*). Sulpitius, when nominated to that of Bourges, "ad clericatum deductus, episcopatum . . . suscepit" (*Ibid. Lib. VI. c. 39*). Badegisilus, Clotair's mayor of the palace, received the bishopric of Le Mans "qui tonsuratus, gradus quos clerici sortiuntur ascensus," was duly installed (*Ibid. Lib. VI. c. 9*). Indeed, in his catalogue of the Bishops of Tours, Gregory specifies of Euphronius, the eighteenth bishop, that he was "ab ineunte ætate clericus," showing how unusual it was to be regularly bred to the Church.

remorse of Genebaldus led him to submit to seven years' imprisonment as an expiatory penance.¹ Equally instructive is the story of Felix of Nantes, whose wife, banished from his bed on his elevation to the episcopate, rebelled against the separation, and, finding him obdurate to her allurements, was filled with jealousy, believing that only another attachment could account for his coldness. Hoping to detect and expose his infidelity, she stole into the chamber where he was sleeping and saw on his breast a lamb, shining with heavenly light, indicative of the peaceful repose which had replaced all earthly passions in his heart.² A virtue which was regarded as worthy of so miraculous a manifestation must have been rare indeed among the illiterate and untutored nominees of a licentious court, and that it was so in fact is indicated by the frequent injunctions of the councils that bishops must regard their wives as sisters; while a canon promulgated by the Council of Macon, in 581, ordering that no woman should enter the chamber of a bishop without two priests, or at least two deacons, in her company, shows how little hesitation there was in publishing to the world the suspicions that were generally entertained.³ How the rule was sometimes obeyed by the wild prelates of the age, while trampling upon other equally well-known canons, is exemplified by the story of Macliaus of Brittany. Chanao, Count of Brittany, had made away with three of his brothers; the fourth, Macliaus, after an unsuccessful conspiracy, sought safety in flight, entered the Church, and was created Bishop of Vannes. On the death of Chanao, he promptly seized the vacant throne, left the Church, threw off his episcopal robes, and took back to

¹ Hincmari Vit. S. Remigii c. 42, 43. For the legend of the exemplary penitence and obedience of Genebaldus, see Alvar. Pelag. de Planctu Ecclesiæ, Lib. II. Art. 53, fol. 171b (Ed. 1517).

² Greg. Turon. de Glor. Confess. c. 78.

³ Concil. Matiscon. I. c. 3.

himself the wife whom he had quitted on obtaining the see of Vannes—for all of which he was duly excommunicated by his brother prelates.¹

When such was the condition of morals and discipline in the high places of the Church, it is not to be wondered at if the second Council of Tours, in 567, could declare that the people suspect, not indeed all, but many of the arch-priests, vicars, deacons, and subdeacons, of maintaining improper relations with their wives, and should command that no one in orders should visit his own house except in company with a subordinate clerk, without whom, moreover, he was never to sleep; the clerk refusing the performance of the duty to be whipped, and the priest neglecting the precaution to be deprived of communion for thirty days. Any one in orders found with his wife was to be excommunicated for a year, deposed, and relegated among the laity; while the arch-priest who neglected the enforcement of these rules was to be imprisoned on bread and water for a month. An equally suggestive illustration of the condition of society is afforded by another canon, directed against the frequent marriages of nuns, who excused themselves on the ground that they had taken the veil to avoid the risk of forcible abduction. Allusion is made to the laws of Childebert and Clotair, maintained in vigour by Charibert, punishing such attempts severely, and girls who anticipate them are directed to seek temporary asylum in the Church until their kindred can protect them under the royal authority, or find husbands for them.²

¹ Greg. Turon. Hist. Franc. Lib. IV. c. 4. At this period the Church of Brittany was rather British than Frankish. See Haddan & Stubbs, II. 72 sqq.

² Concil. Turon. II. c. 19, 20.—A remark of Gregory of Tours (Hist. Franc. Lib. VIII. cap. 19) has been assumed to indicate that priests could legitimately have commerce with their wives. By comparing it with the canons cited above, however, it evidently can at the most have reference to the lower orders of the clergy.

Morals were even worse among the Arian Wisigoths of Spain than among the orthodox believers of France. It is true that priestly marriage formed no part of the Arian doctrines, but as the heresy originated prior to the Council of Nicæa, and professed no obedience to that or any other council or decretal, its practice in this respect was left to such influence as individual asceticism might exercise. Having no acknowledged head to promulgate general canons or to insist upon their observance, no rule of the kind, even if theoretically admitted, could be effectually enforced. How little, indeed, the rule was obeyed is shown by the proceedings of the third Council of Toledo, held in 589 to confirm the reunion of the Spanish kingdom with the orthodox Church. It complains that even the converted bishops, priests, and deacons are found to be publicly living with their wives, which it forbids for the future under threat of degrading all recalcitrants to the rank of lector.¹ The conversion of the kingdom to Catholicism did not improve matters. The clergy continued not only to associate with their wives, but also to marry openly, for the secular power was soon afterwards forced to interfere, and King Recared I. issued a law directing that any priest, deacon, or subdeacon connecting himself with a woman by marriage or otherwise, should be separated from his guilty consort by either the bishop or judge, and be punished according to the canons of the Church, while the unfortunate woman was subjected to a hundred lashes and denied all access to her husband. To ensure the enforcement of the edict, the heavy mulct of two pounds of gold was levied on any bishop neglecting his duty in the premises.² Recared also interposed to put a stop to

¹ Concil. Toletan. III. c. 5.

² L. Wisigoth. Lib. III. Tit. iv. l. 18. This law is preserved in the *Fuero Juzgo*, or mediæval Romance version of the code (Lib. III. Tit. iv. ley 18).

the frequent marriages of nuns, whose separation from their husbands and condign punishment were decreed, with the enormous fine of five pounds of gold exacted of the careless ecclesiastic who might neglect to carry the law into effect—a fair measure of the difficulties experienced in enforcing the rule of celibacy.¹ This legislation had little effect, for half a century later the eighth Council of Toledo, in 653, shows us that all ranks of the clergy, from bishops to subdeacons, had still no scruple in publicly maintaining relations with wives and concubines.² Such was the state of discipline in Spain when the Saracen conquest, in 711, overwhelmed the Wisigothic monarchy.

Italy was almost equally far removed from the ideal purity of Jerome and Augustin. In the early part of the sixth century was fabricated an account of a supposititious council, said to have been held in Rome by Silvester I., and the neglect of celibacy is evident when it was felt to be necessary to insert in this forgery a canon forbidding marriage to priests, under penalty of deprivation of functions for ten years.³ Even in this it is observable that there was no thought of annulling the marriage, as subsequently became established in orthodox doctrines. Nothing can be more suggestive of the demoralisation of the Italian Church than the permission granted about the year 580 by Pelagius II., for the elevation to the diaconate of a clerk at Florence, who while a widower had had children by a concubine. What renders the circumstance peculiarly significant is the fact that the Pope pleads the degeneracy of the age as his apology for this laxity.⁴

¹ L. Wisigoth. Lib. III. Tit. v. l. 2.

² Concil. Toletan. VIII. ann. 653 can. iv. v. vi.—These measures were as fruitless as the preceding. Cf. Concil. Toletan. IX. ann. 655 can. x.

³ Concil. Roman. sub Silvest. can. xix. (Migne's Patol. VIII. 840).

⁴ Pelagii PP. II. Epist. xiv.

Such was the condition of the Christian world when Gregory the Great, in 590, ascended the pontifical throne. He was too devout a Churchman, and too sagacious a statesman, not to appreciate thoroughly the importance of the canon in all its various aspects—not only as necessary to ecclesiastical purity according to the ideas of the age, but also as a prime element in the influence of the Church over the minds of the people, as well as an essential aid in extending ecclesiastical power, and in retaining undiminished the enormous possessions acquired by the Church through the munificence of the pious. The prevailing laxity, indeed, was already threatening serious dilapidation of the ecclesiastical estates and foundations. How clearly this was understood is shown by Pelagius I. in 557, when he refused for a year to permit the consecration of a bishop elected by the Syracusans. On their persisting in their choice he wrote to the Patrician Cethegus, giving as the reason for his opposition the prelate's wife and children, by whom, if they survive, the substance of the Church is wont to be jeopardised;¹ and his consent was finally given only on the condition that the bishop-elect should provide competent security against any conversion of the estate of the diocese for the benefit of his family, a detailed statement of the property being made out in advance to guard against attempted infractions of the agreement. That this was not a merely local abuse is evident from a law of the Wisigoths, which provides that on the accession of any bishop, priest, or deacon, an accurate inventory of all Church possessions under his control shall be made by five freemen, and that after his death an inquest shall be held for the purpose of making good any deficiencies out of the estate of the decedent, and forcing the restoration of anything that might have been alienated.²

¹ Superstes uxor aut filii, per quos ecclesiastica solet periclitari substantia.—Pelagii PP. I. Cethego Patricio.

² L. Wisigoth. Lib. v. Tit. i. l. 2.

There evidently was ample motive for a thorough reformation, and Gregory accordingly addressed himself energetically to the work of enforcing the canons. In his decretals there are numerous references to the subject, showing that he lost no opportunity of reviving the neglected rules of discipline regarding the ordination of digami,¹ the residence of women, and abstinence from all intercourse with the sex.² In his zeal he even went so far as to decree that any one guilty of even a single lapse from virtue should be for ever debarred from the ministry of the altar³—a law nullified by its own severity, which rendered its observance impossible. In 587, his predecessor Pelagius had ordered that in Sicily the Roman rule should be followed of separating subdeacons from their wives, but it appeared cruel to Gregory that this should be enforced on those who had no warning of such rigour when accepting the subdiaconate, and one of the earliest acts of his pontificate was to allow them to resume relations with their wives; but he ordered that they should abstain from all service of the altar, and that in future no one should be admitted to that grade who would not formally take a vow of continence.⁴ There is not much trace in con-

¹ Gregor. PP. I. Lib. XIII. Epist. 6.—This rule had come to be very generally neglected. The importance attached to it, however, by strict disciplinarians is well illustrated in the firmness displayed by John, Patriarch of Alexandria, a contemporary of Gregory, whose bountiful charity had earned for him the title of *Eleemosynarius*. In a time of extreme famine, a wealthy aspirant offered him 200,000 bushels of corn and 100 pounds of gold for the grade of deacon. He had unluckily been twice married, and John refused the dazzling bribe, although the episcopal treasury had been exhausted in relieving the necessities of the suffering people (Thomassin, *Discip. de l'Église*, Pt. II. Liv. 3, c. 15).

² Gregor. PP. I. Lib. XIII. Epist. 35, 36.

³ *Ibid.* Lib. IV. Epist. 26; Lib. V. Epist. 3; Lib. VIII. Epist. 24.—Similar attempts had previously been made by sundry provincial councils. In the case of Andrew, Bishop of Tarentum, who was accused of maintaining relations with a former concubine, Gregory, recognising the impossibility of obtaining proof, leaves it to his own conscience. If he has had any commerce with her since his ordination, he is commanded at once to resign his position as the only mode of insuring his salvation (*Ibid.* Lib. III. Epist. 45, 46).

⁴ *Ibid.* Lib. I. Epist. 44; Lib. IV. Epist. 5, 36.

temporary history of any improvement resulting from these efforts, and towards the very close of his pontificate, in 602, we find him entreating Queen Brunhilda to exercise her power in restraining the still unbridled license of the Frankish clergy—a task which he assures her is essential if she desires to transmit her possessions in peace to her posterity.¹ He also endeavoured to reform the perennial abuse of the residence of women, a reform which the Church had been vainly attempting ever since the canon of Nicæa.² That Gregory's zeal, however, exercised some influence is manifested by the fact that tradition in the Middle Ages occasionally associated his name with the introduction of celibacy in the Church. The impression which he produced is shown by the wild legend which relates that, soon after issuing and strictly enforcing a decretal on the subject, he happened to have his fish-ponds drawn off, when the heads of no less than six thousand infants were found in them—the offspring of ecclesiastics, destroyed to avoid detection—which filled him with so much horror that he abandoned the vain attempt.³ Yet in Italy the residence of wives was still permitted to those in orders, under the restriction that they should be treated as sisters;⁴ and Gregory relates as worthy of all imitation the case of a holy priest of Nursia who, following the example of the saints in depriving himself of even lawful indulgences, had persistently relegated his wife to a distance. When at length he lay on his death-bed, to all appearance inanimate, the wife came to bid him a last farewell, and placed a mirror to his lips to see whether life was yet extinct. Her kindly ministrations roused the dominant asceticism in his expiring

¹ Gregor. PP. I. Lib. XI. Epist. 69.

² Ibid. Lib. IX. Epist. 106.

³ Udalic. Bamberg. Cod. Lib. II. Epist. 10.

⁴ Gregor. PP. I. Lib. I. Epist. 52; Lib. IX. Epist. 60.

soul, and he gathered strength enough to exclaim, "Woman, depart! Take away the straw, for there is yet fire here"—which supreme effort of self-immolation procured him on the instant a beatific vision of St. Peter and St. Paul, during which he lapsed ecstatically into eternity.¹

In considering so thoroughly artificial a system of morality, it is perhaps scarcely worth while to inquire into the value of a virtue which could only be preserved by shunning temptation with so scrupulous a care.

¹ Gregor. PP. I. Dial. Lib. iv. cap. xi.

CHAPTER IX

THE CARLOVINGIANS

EVEN the energy and authority of Gregory the Great were powerless to restore order in the chaos of an utterly demoralised society. In Spain, the languishing empire of the Wisigoths was fast sinking under the imbecility which invited the easy conquest of the Saracens. In France, Brunhilda and Fredegonda were inflaming the fierce contentions which eventually destroyed the Merovingian dynasty, and which abandoned the kingdom at once to the vices of civilisation and the savage atrocities of barbarism.¹ In Italy, the Lombards, more detested than any of their predecessors, by their ceaseless ravages made the Ostrogothic rule regretted, and gleaned with their swords such scanty remnants of plunder as had escaped the hordes which had successively swept from the gloomy forests of the North across the rich valleys and fertile plains of the mistress of the world. Anarchy and confusion everywhere scarce offered a field for the exercise of the humbler virtues, nor could the Church expect to escape the corruption which infected every class from which she could draw her recruits. Still, among the crowd of turbulent and worldly ecclesiastics, whose only aim was the gratification of the senses or the success of criminal ambition, some holy men were to be found who sought the mountain and forest as a refuge from the ceaseless and all-pervading disorder around them. St. Gall and St.

¹ In 649 we find Amandus, Bishop of Maestricht, resigning his office on account of the impossibility of enforcing the canons among his priests and deacons. Martin I. endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, and urged his proceeding with the utmost rigour against all transgressors (Hartzheim Concil. German. I. 28).

Columba, Willibrod and Boniface, were types of these. Devoted to the severest asceticism, burying themselves in the wilderness and subsisting on such simple fare as the labour of their hands could wring from a savage land, the selfishness of the anchorite did not extinguish in them the larger aims of the Christian, and by their civilising labours among the heathen they proved themselves worthy disciples of the Apostles.

Thicker grew the darkness as Tarik drove the Gothic fugitives before him on the plains of Xeres, and as the house of Pepin d'Heristel gradually supplanted the long-haired descendants of Clovis. The Austrasian Mayors of the Palace had scanty reverence for mitre and crozier, and it is a proof how little hold the clergy had gained upon the respect and affection of the people, when the usurpers in that long revolution did not find it necessary to conciliate their support. In fact, the policy of these shrewd and able men was rather to oppress the Church and to parcel out its wealth and dignities among their warriors, who made no pretence of piety nor deigned to undertake the mockery of religious duties. Rome could interpose no resistance to these abuses, for, involved alternately in strife with the Lombards and the Iconoclastic Emperors, the Popes implored the aid of the oppressor himself, and were in no position to protest against the aggressions which he might commit at home.

In Italy, the condition of discipline may be inferred from the fact that, in 721, Gregory II. considered it necessary to call a synod for the special purpose of condemning incestuous unions and the marriages of nuns, which he declared were openly practised,¹ and the canons then promulgated received so little attention that they had to be repeated by another synod in 732.² In fact, the vow of chastity was frequently taken by widows that

¹ Concil. Roman. ann. 721.

² Chron. Gradensis Supplement.

they might escape a second marriage and thus be able to live in shameless license without being subject to the watchful control of a husband; and an edict of Arechis, Duke of Beneventum, about the year 774 orders that all such godless women shall be seized and shut up in convents.¹ That the secular clergy should consider ordination no bar to matrimony need therefore excite little surprise. There is extant a charter of Talesperianus, Bishop of Lucca, in 725, by which he confirms a little monastery and hospital to Romuald the priest and his wife —“presbytera sua.” The document recites that this couple had come on a pilgrimage from beyond the Po; that they had settled on the lands of the Convent of St. Peter and St. Martin in the diocese of Lucca, where they had bought land and built the institution which the good bishop thus confirms to them with certain privileges. He evidently felt that there was nothing irregular in their maintaining the connection, and he lays upon them no conditions of separation.²

In France, it may be readily believed that discipline was even more neglected. For eighty years scarce a council was held; no attempts were made to renew or enforce the rules of discipline, and the observances of religion were at length well-nigh forgotten. In 726, Boniface even felt scruples as to associating in ordinary intercourse with men so licentious and depraved as the Frankish bishops and priests, and he applied to Gregory II. for the solution of his doubts. Gregory, in reply, ordered him to employ argument in endeavouring to convince them of their errors, and by no means to withdraw himself from their society,³ a politic toleration of vice contrasting strangely with his fierce defiance of the iconoclastic

¹ Capitul. Arechis Benevent. cap. XII. (Canciani I. 262).

² Muratori Antiq. Med. Ævi Dissert. LXXIV.

³ Gregor. PP. II. Epist. 14 cap. 12.

heresy of Leo the Isaurian, when he risked the Papacy itself in his eagerness to preserve his beloved images.

When, however, the new dynasty began to assume a permanent position, it sought to strengthen itself by the influence of the Church. Like the modern Charlemagne, it saw in a restoration of religion a means of assuring its stability by linking its fortunes with those of the hierarchy. A Radical in opposition becomes of necessity a Conservative in power; and the arts which had served to supplant the hereditary occupants of the throne were no longer advisable after success had indicated a new line of policy. As Clovis embraced Christianity in order to consolidate his conquests into an empire, so Carloman and Pepin-le-Bref sought the sanction of religion to consecrate their power to their descendants, and the Carolingian system thenceforth became that of law and order, organising a firm and settled government out of the anarchical chaos of social elements.

It was the pious Carloman who first saw clearly how necessary was the aid of the Church in any attempt to introduce civilisation and subordination among his turbulent subjects. Immediately on his accession, he called upon St. Boniface to assist him in the work, and the Apostle of Germany undertook the arduous task. How arduous it was may be conceived from his description of the utterly demoralised condition of the clergy, when he appealed to Pope Zachary for advice and authority to assist in eradicating the frightful promiscuous licentiousness which was displayed with careless cynicism throughout all grades of the ecclesiastical body.¹ The details are

¹ *Modo autem maxima ex parte episcopales sedes traditæ sunt laicis cupidis ad possidendum, vel adulteratis clericis, scortatoribus et publicanis sæculariter ad perfruedum. . . . Si invenero inter illos diaconos quos nominant, qui a pueritia sua semper in stupris, semper in adulteriis et in omnibus semper spurcitiis vitam ducentes, sub tali testimonio venerunt ad diaconatum, et modo in diaconatu concubinas quatuor vel quinque vel plures noctu in lecto habentes, evangelium tamen legere et diaconos se nominare non erubescunt, nec metuunt : et sic in talibus incestis ad ordinem presby-*

unfit for translation, but the statement can readily be believed when we see what manner of men filled the controlling positions in the hierarchy.

Charles Martel had driven out St. Rigobert, Archbishop of Rheims, and had bestowed that primatial see on one of his warriors named Milo, who soon succeeded in likewise obtaining possession of the equally important archiepiscopate of Trèves.¹ Milo was himself an indication of the prevailing laxity of discipline, for he was the son of Basinus, his predecessor in the see of Trèves.² He is described as being a clerk in tonsure, but in every other respect an irreligious laic, yet Boniface, with all the aid of his royal patrons, was unable to oust him from his inappropriate dignities, and in 752, ten years after the commencement of his reforms, we find Pope Zachary, in response to an appeal for advice, counselling him to leave Milo and other similar wolves in sheep's clothing to the divine vengeance.³ Boniface, apparently, found it requisite to follow this advice, and the divine vengeance did not come until Milo had enjoyed his incongruous dignities for forty years, when at length he was removed by an appropriate death, received from a wild boar in hunting.⁴ He was only a type of many others who openly defied all attempts to remove them. One, who is described as "pugnator et fornicator," gave up, it is true, the spiritu-

teratus venientes, in iisdem peccatis perdurantes, et peccata peccatis adjicientes, presbyteratus officio fungentes, dicunt se pro populo posse intercedere, et sacras oblationes offerre. Novissime, quod pejus est, sub talibus testimoniis per gradus singulos ascendentes, ordinantur et nominantur episcopi. Si usquam tales invenero inter illos, rogo ut habeam præceptum et conscriptum auctoritatis vestræ, quid de talibus diffiniatis, ut per responsum Apostolicum convincantur et arguantur peccatores.—Bonifacii Epist. 132.

¹ Milo quidam, tonsura clericus, moribus, habitu, et actu irreligiosis laicus, episcopia Remorum ac Trevirorum usurpans insimul, per multos annos pessumdedit.—Hincmar. Epist. xxx. c. 20.—Sola tonsura clerico, qui secum processerat ad bellum.—Flodoard. Hist. Remens. Lib. II. c. 12.—Nihilque in eo de clericali honore vel vita nisi sola tonsura enituit.—Hist. Trevirens. (D'Achery Spicileg. II. 212).

² Hist. Trevirens. loc. cit. ³ Bonifacii Epist. 142. ⁴ Hist. Trevirens. loc. cit.

alities of his see, but held to the temporalities with a grip that nothing could loosen; another utterly disregarded the excommunications launched at his head, and Zachary and Boniface at last were fain to abandon him to his evil courses.¹ Somewhat more success, indeed, he had with Gervilius, son and successor to Geroldus, Bishop of Mainz. The latter, accompanying Carloman in an expedition against the Saxons, was killed in battle. Bishop Gervilius, in another foray, recognised his father's slayer, invited him to a friendly interview, and treacherously stabbed him, exclaiming, in the rude poetry of the chronicler, "*Accipe jam ferrum quo patrem vindico carum.*" This act of filial piety was not looked upon as unclerical, until Boniface took it up; Gervilius was finally forced to abandon the see of Mainz, and it was given to Boniface himself.² When such were the prelates, it is not to be supposed that rules of abstinence and asceticism received much attention from their subordinates. Boniface admits, in an epistle to King Ecgberht, that, in consequence of the universal licentiousness, he was compelled to restore the guilty to their functions after penitence, as the canonical punishment of dismissal would leave none to perform the sacred offices.³ What the Church, however, could not prevent on earth, it at least had the satisfaction of seeing punished in the future life. It was principally for the support given to Milo of Rheims among his many other similar misdeeds, that Charles Martel was condemned to eternal torture, which was, as a wholesome example, made manifest to the most incredulous. St. Eucherius, in a vision, saw him plunged into the depths of hell, and on consulting St. Boniface and Fulrad, Abbot of St. Denis, it was resolved to open Charles's tomb. The only tenant of the sepulchre was

¹ Bonifacii loc. cit.

² Othlon. Vit. S. Bonifac. Lib. i. c. 44.

³ Bonifacii Epist. 85.

found to be a serpent, and the walls were blackened as though by fire, thus proving the truth of the revelation, and holding out an awful warning to future wrongdoers.¹

How much of the license complained of was indiscriminate concubinage, and how much was merely intercourse with legitimate wives, we have no means of ascertaining. The latter Boniface succeeded in suppressing, for the Church could control her sacraments.² The former was beyond his power.

Armed with full authority from Pope Zachary, Carloman and Boniface commenced the labour of reducing to order this chaos of passion and license. Under their auspices a synod was held, April 23rd, 742, in which all unchaste priests and deacons were declared incapable of holding benefices, were degraded, and forced to do penance. Bishops were required to have a witness to testify to the purity of their lives and doctrines, before they could perform their episcopal functions. For all future lapses from virtue, priests were to be severely whipped and imprisoned for two years on bread and water, with prolongation of the punishment at the discretion of their bishops. Other ecclesiastics, monks, and nuns were to be whipped thrice and similarly imprisoned for one year, besides the stigma of having the head shaved. All monasteries, moreover, were to adopt and follow rigidly the rule of St. Benedict.³

The stringency of these measures shows not only the extent of the evil requiring such means of cure, but the fixed determination of the authorities to effect their purpose. The clergy, however, did not submit without

¹ Flodoard. Hist. Remens. Lib. II. cap. 12.—Capit. Caroli Calvi Tit. xxvii. cap. 7 (Baluze).

² Et tam laicorum injusta concubinarum copula partim exhortante sancto viro separata est, quam etiam clericorum nefanda cum uxoribus conjunctio sejuncta ac separata.—Willibald. Vit. S. Bonifac. c. 9.

³ Capit. Caroloman. ann. 742 c. 1, 3, 6.

resistance. It is probable that they stirred up the people, and that signs of general disapprobation were manifested at a rigour so extreme in punishing faults which for more than two generations had passed wholly unnoticed, for during the same year Zachary addressed an epistle to the Franks with the object of enlisting them in the cause. The ill-success of their arms against the Pagans he attributes to the vices of their clergy, and he promises them that if they show themselves obedient to Boniface, and if they can enjoy the prayers of pure and holy priests, they shall in future have an easy triumph over their heathen foes.¹ Yet many adulterous priests and bishops, noted for the infamy of their lives, pretended that they had received from Rome itself dispensations to continue in their ministry—an allegation which Zachary of course repelled with indignation.²

Carloman, however, pursued his self-imposed task without flinching. On March 1st, 743, he held another synod at Leptines, where the clergy promised to observe the ancient canons, and to restore the discipline of the Church. The statutes enacted the previous year were again declared to be in full vigour for future offences, while for previous ones penitence and degradation were once more decreed.³

These regulations affected only Austrasia, the German portion of the Frankish empire, ruled by Carloman. His brother, Pepin-le-Bref, who governed Neustria, or France, was less pious, and had not apparently as yet recognised the policy of reforming out of their possessions the warrior vassals whom his father had gratified with ecclesiastical benefices. At length, however, he was induced to lend his aid, and in 744 he assembled a synod at Soissons for the purpose. So completely had the discipline of the

¹ Bonifacii Epist. 137.

² Ibid. Epist. 132, 142.

³ Capit. Caroloman. ann. 743 c. 1.

Church been neglected and forgotten, that Pepin was obliged to appeal to Pope Zachary for an authoritative declaration as to the grades in which marriage was prohibited.¹ Yet his measures were but lukewarm, for he contented himself with simply forbidding unchastity in priests, the marriage of nuns, and the residence of stranger women with clerks, no special punishment being threatened, beyond a general allusion to existing laws.²

Thus assailed by both the supreme ecclesiastical and temporal authorities, the clergy still were stubborn. Some defended themselves as being legitimately entitled to have a concubine—or rather, we may presume, a wife. Among these we find a certain Bishop Clement described as a pestilent heresiarch, with followers, who maintained that his two children, born during his prelacy, did not unfit him for his episcopal functions; and a synod held in Rome, October 31st, 745, was required for his condemnation, the local authorities apparently proving powerless. Even this was not sufficient, for in January, 747, we find Zachary directing Boniface to bring him before a local council, and if he still proved contumacious, to refer the matter again to Rome.³ Others, again, unwilling to forgo their secular mode of existence, or to abandon the livelihood afforded by the Church, were numerous and hardy enough to ask Pepin and Carloman to set apart for them churches and monasteries in which they could live as they were accustomed to do. So nearly did they succeed in this attempt, that Boniface found it necessary to appeal to Zachary to prevent so flagrant an infraction of the canons, and Zachary wrote to the princes with instructions as to the mode of answering the petition.⁴ Others, still more audacious, assailed Boniface in every

¹ Zachar. PP. Epist. 8 c. 11, 18.

² Pippini Capit. ann. 744 c. 4, 8, 9.

³ Bonifac. Epistt. 135, 139 (Zachar. PP. Epist. 9).

⁴ Othlon. Vit. S. Bonif. Lib. II. c. 11.

way, endeavoured to weary him out, and even, rightly regarding him as the cause of their persecution and tribulations, made attempts upon his life.¹

That he should have escaped, indeed, is surprising, when the character of the age is considered, and the nature of the evils inflicted on those who must have regarded the reform as a wanton outrage on their rights. As late as 748, Boniface describes the false bishops and priests, sacrilegious and wandering hypocrites and adulterers, as much more numerous than those who as yet had been forced to compliance with the rules. Driven from the churches, but supported by the sympathising people, they performed their ministry among the fields and in the cabins of the peasants, who concealed them from the ecclesiastical authorities.² This is not a description of mere sensual worldlings, and it is probable that by this time persecution had ranged the evil disposed on the winning side. Those who thus exercised their ministry in secret and in wretchedness, retaining the veneration of the people, were therefore men who believed themselves honourably and legitimately married, and who were incapable of sacrificing wife and children for worldly advantage or in blind obedience to a rule which to them was novel, unnatural, and indefensible.

Boniface escaped from the vengeful efforts of those who suffered from his zeal, to fall, in 755, under the sword of the equally ungrateful Frisians. It is probable that up to the time of his death he was occupied with the reformation of the clergy in conjunction with his missionary labours, for in 752 we find him still engaged in the hopeless endeavour to eject the unclerical prelates, who even yet held over from the iron age of Charles Martel. His disappearance from the scene, however,

¹ Bonifacii Epist. 135.—S. Ludgeri Vit. S. Bonifacii.

² Bonifacii Epist. 140.

made but little change in the movement which had owed so much to his zeal.

In 747 Carloman's pious aspirations had led him from a throne to a cloister, and the monastery of Monte Cassino welcomed its most illustrious inmate. Pepin received the whole vast kingdom, and his ambitious designs drew him daily closer to the Church, the importance of whose support he commenced to appreciate. His policy, in consolidating the power of his house and in founding a new dynasty, led him necessarily to reorganise the anarchical elements of society. As an acknowledged monarch, a regularly constituted hierarchy and recognised subordination to the laws, both civil and ecclesiastical, were requisite to the success of his government and to the establishment of his race. Accordingly, we find him carrying out systematically the work commenced by Carloman and Boniface, to which at first his support had been rather negative than positive.

Six weeks after the martyrdom of Boniface, Pepin held a synod in his royal palace of Verneuil, in which this tendency is very apparent. Full power was given to the bishops in their respective dioceses to enforce the canons of the Church on the clergy, the monks, and the laity. The monasteries were especially entrusted to the episcopal care, and means were provided for reducing the refractory to submission. The Rule of Benedict was proclaimed as in force in all conventual establishments, and cloistered residence was strictly enjoined. All ecclesiastics were ordered to pay implicit obedience to their bishops, and this was secured by the power of excommunication, which was no longer, as in earlier stages, the simple suspension from religious privileges, but was a ban which deprived the offender of all association with his fellows, and exposed him, if contumacious, to

exile by the secular power. By the appointment of metropolitans, a tribunal of higher resort was instituted, while two synods, to be held each year, gave the opportunity both of legislation and of final judgment. Submission to their decisions was ensured by threatening stripes to all who should appeal from them to the royal court.¹

Such are the main features, as far as they relate to our subject, of this Capitulary, which so strikingly reveals the organising system of the Carolingian polity. Carried out by the rare intelligence and vigour of Charlemagne, it gave a precocious development of civilisation to Europe, transitory because in advance of the age, and because it was based on the intellectual force of the ruler, and not on the virtue and cultivation of a people as yet too barbarous to appreciate it.

The organisation of the Church, moreover, received at the same time an efficient impulse by the institution of the order of canons, founded virtually in 762, the year in which St. Chrodegang, Bishop of Metz, promulgated the Rule for their government. This Rule of course entirely forbids all intercourse with women, and endeavours to suppress it by punishing transgressors with stripes, incarceration, and deposition.² The lofty rank of St. Chrodegang, who was a cousin of Pepin-le-Bref, and the eminent piety which merited canonisation, gave him wide influence, which doubtless assisted in extending the new institution, but it also had recommendations of its own which were sufficient to ensure success. By converting the cathedral clergy into monks, bound by implicit obedience towards their superiors, it brought no little increase of power to the bishops, and enabled them to exert new authority and influence. It is no wonder,

¹ Capit. Pippini ann. 755.

² Regul. S. Chrodegangi, cap. 29, 56, 68, 70.

therefore, that the order spread rapidly, and was adopted in most of the dioceses.

For a century we hear nothing more of sacerdotal marriage—and yet it may be doubted whether clerical morality had really been improved by the well-meant reforms of Boniface. These were followed up by Charlemagne with all his resistless energy, and the importance which he attached to the subject is shown by an epistle of Adrian I. denying certain assertions made to the Frankish sovereign, inculcating the purity of the Roman clergy. Adrian, in defending his flock, assumes that the object of the slanders can only have been to produce a quarrel between himself and Charlemagne, who must evidently have made strong representations on the subject to the Pontiff.¹ Under such pressure perhaps there was something less of shameless licentiousness; the episcopal chairs were no longer defiled by the cynical lubricity of unworthy prelates; but in the mass of the clergy the passions, deprived of all legitimate gratification, could not be restrained in a race so little accustomed to self-control, and unchastity remained a corroding ulcer which Charlemagne and Louis-le-Débonnaire vainly endeavoured to eradicate. The former, indeed, we find asking in 811 whether the only difference between clerk and layman is that the former does not bear arms and is not publicly married;² while Ghaerbald, Bishop of Liège, a few years before had ordered that all priests maintaining intercourse with their wives should be deprived of their benefices and be subjected to penitence until death.³

¹ Cod. Carolini Epist. lxiv. (Patrolog. T. 98, p. 319). Yet even in 772 we find that a council in Bavaria found it necessary to prohibit the marriage of nuns.—Concil. Dingolving. can. 2 (Hartzheim Concil. German. I. 129).

² Capit. Car. Mag. II. ann. 811 cap. iv. (Baluz. I. 329—Ed. Venet.).

³ Ghaerbaldi Judicia Sacerdotalia de Criminibus, c. 13 (Martene Ampl. Coll. VII. 31).

It would be an unprofitable task to recapitulate the constantly repeated legislation prohibiting the residence of women with the clergy and repressing the disorders and irregularities of the monastic establishments. It would be but a reiteration of the story already related in previous centuries, and its only importance would be in showing by the frequency of the edicts how utterly ineffectual they were. When Louis-le-Débonnaire, in 826, decreed that the seduction of a nun was to be punished by the death of both the partners in guilt; that the property of both was to be confiscated to the Church; and that the count in whose district the crime occurred, if he neglected its prosecution, was to be degraded, deprived of his office, undergo public penance, and pay his full *wer-gild* to the fisc;¹ the frightful severity of the enactment is the measure of the impossibility of effecting its purpose, and of the inefficiency of the reformation which had been so elaborately prepared and so energetically promulgated by Louis in 817.²

But perhaps the most convincing evidence of the debased morality of the clergy, and of the low standard which even the most zealous prelates were forced to adopt, is to be found in a curious fabrication by the authors of the *False Decretals*. The collection of decretals which they put forth in the names of the early popes embodied their conception of a perfect Church establishment, as adapted to the necessities and aspirations of the ninth century. While straining every point to throw off all subjection to the temporal power, and to obtain for the hierarchy full and absolute control over all ecclesiastical matters and persons, they seem to have felt it necessary to relax in an important point

¹ Ludov. Pii. Capit. Ingelenheim. c. 5.

² Capit. Aquisgran. ann. 817. Cf. *Miræi Cod. Donat. Piar.* c. 13.—This Capitulary regulating monastic life was generally adopted as a supplement to the rule of Benedict (*Leo. Ostiens. Chron. Cassinens. Lib. 1. c. 16*).

the rigour of the canons respecting sacerdotal purity. Gregory the Great had proclaimed in the clearest and most definite manner the rule that a single lapse from virtue condemned the sinner to irrevocable degradation, and rendered him for ever unfit for the ministry of the altar.¹ Yet "Isidor Mercator" added to a genuine epistle of Gregory a long passage elaborately arguing the necessity of forgiveness for those who expiate by repentance the sin of impurity, "of which, among many, so few are guiltless."² The direct testimony is notable, but not less so is the indirect evidence of the prevalent laxity which could induce such a bid for popularity on the part of high Churchmen like those concerned in the Isidorian forgeries.

Evidence, also, is not wanting, that the denial of the appropriate and healthful human affections led to the results which might be expected, of fearful and unnatural crimes. That the inmates of monasteries, debarred from female society, occasionally abandoned themselves to the worst excesses, or, breaking through all restraint, indulged in less reprehensible but more open scandals, is proclaimed by Charlemagne, who threatened to vindicate the outrage upon religion with the severest punishment.³ Nor were the female convents more successfully regu-

¹ See ante, p. 138. Cf. Pseudo-Hormisdæ Epist. Encyc. (Migne's Patrol. T. LXIII. p. 527).

² Quid enim est gravius carnale delictum admittere *sine quo in multis pauci inveniuntur*, an Dei filium timendo negare? in quo uno ipsum beatum Petrum apostolorum principem, ad cujus nunc corpus indigni sedemus, lapsum esse cognoscimus, sed post negationem poenitentia secuta, et post poenitentiam misericordia data.—Pseudo-Gregor. Epist. ad Secundinum.

Isidor Mercator also includes two canons from the sixth century forgery of the Roman Council said to have been held under Silvester I. (see p. 136). Of these, one prohibits bishops from celebrating the marriage of nuns under seventy years of age; the other forbids priests from marrying, under a penalty of ten years' suspension, with a threat of perpetual deprivation for contumacy. (Constit. Pseudo-Silvestri, cap. x. xix.) The adoption of these in the False Decretals would seem at least to be superfluous.

³ Capit. Carol. Mag. I. ann. 802 c. 17.

lated, for the Council of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 836, states that in many places they were rather brothels than houses of God; and it shows how close a supervision over the spouses of Christ was thought requisite when it proceeds to direct that nunneries shall be so built as to have no dark corners in which scandals may be perpetrated out of view.¹ The effect of these efforts may be estimated from a remark in a collection of laws which bears the name of Erchenbald, Chancellor of Charlemagne, but which is rather attributable to the close of the ninth century, that the licentiousness of nuns commonly resulted in a worse crime, infanticide;² and, as this is extracted textually from an epistle of St. Boniface to Ethelbald, King of Mercia,³ it is presumable that the evil became notorious simultaneously with the reform under the early Carovingians, and continued unabated throughout their dynasty. One device to subjugate nature, adopted in the monasteries, was to let blood at stated intervals, in the hope of reducing the system and thus mitigating the effects of prolonged continence—a device prohibited by Louis-le-Débonnaire, but long subsequently maintained as part of monastic discipline.⁴ As regards the secular clergy, even darker horrors are asserted by Theodulf, Bishop of Orleans, and other prelates, who forbade to their clergy the residence of mother, aunt, and sister, in consequence of the crimes so frequently perpetrated with them at the instigation of the devil;⁵

¹ Concil. Aquisgran. ann. 836, de vit. et doc. infer. ordin. can. xii. xiv.—De monasteriis puellarum quæ in quibusdam locis lupanaria potius videntur esse quam monasteria.

² Capit. add. iv. cap. clx. (Baluze, I. 1227).

³ Bonifacii Epist. 19.

⁴ Capit. Aquisgran. ann. 817 c. xi.—Chavard, Célibat des Prêtres, Genève, 1874, p. 35. See also "The Life and Times of Hildebrand," London, 1907, by the Abbé O. Delarc.

⁵ Quia, instigante diabolo, etiam in illis scelus frequenter perpetratum invenitur, aut etiam in pedissequis earum. Nec igitur matrem, neque amitam, neque sororem permittimus ultra habitare in domo una cum sacerdote.—Theodulf. Aurelian. Capit. Secund. (Baluz. et Mansi II. 99).

and the truth of this hideous fact is unfortunately confirmed by the declarations of councils held at various periods.¹

If, under the external polish of Carolingian civilisation, such utter demoralisation existed, while the laws were enforced by the stern vigour of Charlemagne, or the sensitive piety of Louis-le-Débonnaire, it is easy to understand what was the condition of society when the sons of the latter involved the whole empire in a ceaseless tumult of civil war. Not only was the watchful care of the first two emperors withdrawn, but the state was turned against itself, and rapine and desolation became almost universal. The royal power was parcelled out, by the rising feudal system, among a crowd of nobles whose energies were solely directed to consolidating their position, and was chiefly employed, as far as it affected the Church, in granting abbeys and other

He had previously (Epist. c. 12) promulgated the prohibition, assigning for it the more decent reason, in imitation of St. Augustin, of the danger arising from female attendants. In this he was imitated, about 850, by Rodulf of Bourges (Capit. Rodulf. Bituricens. c. 16), and about 871 by Walter of Orleans (Capit. Walteri Aurelian. c. 3).

In 889, however, Riculfus of Soissons declares the lamentable truth without reserve: "*Nos vero etiam a matribus, amitibus, sororibus vel propinquis cavendum dicimus, ne forte illud eveniat quod in sancta scriptura legitur de Thamar sorore Absalon . . . de Loth etiam . . . Quod si aliquis vestrum matrem, sororem vel amitam ad convescendum vocaverit, expleto convivio ad domos suas vel ad hospitium a domo presbyteri remota, cum luce diei eas faciat remeare; periculosum quippe est ut vobiscum habitent.*"—Riculf. Suess. Const. c. 14.

¹ Thus the Council of Mainz in 888—"Quod multum dolendum est, sæpe audivimus per illam concessionem plurima scelera esse commissa, ita ut quidam sacerdotum, cum propriis sororibus concumbentes, filios ex eis generassent, et ideo constituit hæc sancta synodus, ut nullus presbyter ullam feminam secum in domo propria permittat quatenus occasio malæ suspitionis vel facti iniqui penitus auferratur" (Concil. Mogunt. ann. 888 c. 10). In the same year the third canon of the Council of Metz repeats the prohibition; while in 895 the Council of Nantes declares—"Sed neque illas quas canones concedunt; quia instigante diabolo, etiam in illis scelus frequenter perpetratum reperitur, aut etiam in pedissequis illarum, scilicet matrem, amitam, sororem."—Concil. Namnetens. ann. 895 c. 3.

It is true that some authorities, including the great name of Pagi, attribute to this Council of Nantes the date of 660, but this is unimportant as regards the canon in question, for its necessity during the period under consideration is shown by its insertion in the Capitularies of Benedict the Levite (Lib. VII. c. 376), and in the collection of Regino of Pruhm (Lib. I. c. 104).

ecclesiastical dignities to worthless laymen, whose support could only be secured by bribes which the royal fisc could no longer supply. Pagan Danes and infidel Saracens were ravaging the fairest provinces of the empire, and their blows fell with peculiar weight on the representatives of a hated religion. For seventy years previous to the treaty of Clair-sur-Epte no mass resounded in the walls of the cathedral church of Coutances, so fierce and unremitting had been the incursions of the Northmen. It is therefore no wonder that, as early as 845, the bishops assembled at the Council of Vernon confess that their ecclesiastical authority is no longer sufficient to prevent the marriage of monks and nuns, and to suppress the crowds who escaped from their convents, and wandered over the country in licentiousness and vagabondage. To restrain these disorders they are obliged to invoke the royal power to cast into prison these reprobates and force them to undergo canonical penance.¹

During this period of anarchy and lawlessness, the Church was skilfully emancipating itself from subjection to the temporal power, and was laying the foundation of that supremacy which was eventually to dominate Christendom. While its aspirations and ambitions were thus worldly, and its ranks were recruited from a generation trained under such influences, it is easy to believe that the disorders which Charlemagne himself could not repress, grew more and more flagrant. Even the greatly augmented power of the papacy added to the increasing license, although Nicholas I. in 861 had ordered the deposition and degradation of all priests convicted of immorality,² for the appellate jurisdiction claimed by Rome gave practical immunity to those against whom

¹ Capit. Carol. Calvi Tit. III. cap. 4, 5.

² Martene Ampliss. Collect. I. 151.

the enforcement of the canons was attempted. About the year 876, Charles-le-Chauve, in a spirited argument against the pretensions of the popes, calls attention specially to the exemption thus afforded to unchaste priests, who, after due conviction by their bishops, obtained letters from Rome overruling the judgments; the distance and dangers of the journey precluding the local authorities from supporting their verdicts by sending commissioners and witnesses to carry on a second trial beyond the Alps.¹

This shows that the effort to enforce purity was not as yet abandoned, however slender may have been the success in eradicating an evil so general and so deeply rooted. The nominal punishment for unchastity—loss of benefice and deposition—was severe enough to induce the guilty to hide their excesses with care, when they chanced to have a bishop who was zealous in the performance of his duties. Efforts at concealment, moreover, were favoured by the forms of judicial procedure, which were such as to throw every difficulty in the way of procuring a conviction, and to afford, in most cases, practical immunity for sin, unless committed in the most open and shameless manner. Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, the leading ecclesiastic of his day, whose reputation for learning and piety would have rendered him one of the lights of the Church, had not his consistent opposition to the innovations of the papacy caused his sanctity to be questioned in Rome, has left us elaborate directions as to the forms of prosecution in such matters. Notwithstanding his earnest exhortations and arguments in favour of the most ascetic purity, he discourages investigation by means of neighbours and parishioners, or irreverent inquiries on the subject. Only such testimony was admissible as the laws allowed, and the laws were

¹ Hincmari Epist. xxxii. c. 20.

very strict as to the position and character of witnesses. In addition to the accusers themselves, seven witnesses were necessary. Of these, one was required to substantiate the oaths of the rest by undergoing the ordeal, thus exposing himself and all his fellows to the heavy penalties visited on perjury, upon the chance of the red-hot iron or cold-water trial, administered, perhaps, by those interested in shielding the guilty. If, as we can readily believe was generally the case, these formidable difficulties could not be overcome, and the necessary number of witnesses were not ready to sacrifice themselves, then the accused could purge himself of the sins imputed to him by his own oath, supported by one, three, or six compurgators of his own order; and Hincmar himself bears testimony to the associations which were formed among the clergy to swear each other through all troubles.¹ Even simpler, indeed, was the process prescribed not long before by Pope Nicholas I., who ordered that, when legal evidence was not procurable, the accused priest could clear himself on his own unsupported oath.²

Under these regulations, Hincmar orders an annual investigation to be made throughout his province, but the results would appear to have been as unsatisfactory as might have been expected. In 874, at the Synod of Rheims, he complains that his orders have been neglected and despised, and he warns his clergy that proof of actual criminality will not be required, but that undue famili-

¹ Hincmari Capit. Presbyteris data. cap. XXI.-XXV.

Hincmar repeats his instructions, with some amplifications, in another document, in which he declares them to be the received traditional rules—"a majoribus nostris accepimus" (De Presbyt. criminos. c. XI.-XVIII.). That they were generally practised is shown in their almost literal repetition by the Council of Trosley in 909—with the exception that in some cases fourteen or twenty-one witnesses were required for conviction (Concil. Troslei. c. ix.).

² Martene Ampl. Collect. I. 151.

arity with women, if persisted in, will be sufficient for condemnation when properly proved.¹

In the presence of facilities for escape such as were afforded by the practice of ecclesiastical law as constructed by the decretalists, and as expounded by Hincmar himself, the threats in which he indulged could carry but little terror. We need not wonder, therefore, if we meet with but slender indications of priestly marriage during all this disorder, for there was evidently little danger of punishment for the unchaste priest who exercised ordinary discretion in his amours, while the penalties impending over those who should openly brave the canonical rules were heavy, and could hardly be avoided by any one who should dare to unite himself publicly to a woman in marriage. Every consideration of worldly prudence and passion therefore induced the priest to pursue a course of illicit licentiousness—and yet, as the century wore on, traces of entire neglect or utter contempt of the canons began to manifest themselves. How little the rule really was respected by the ecclesiastical authorities, when anything was to be gained by its suppression, is shown in the decision made by Nicholas I., the highest of high Churchmen, when encouraging the Bulgarians to abandon the Greek Church, although the separation between Rome and Constantinople was not, as yet, formal and complete. To their inquiry whether married priests should be ejected, he replied that though such ministers were objectionable, yet the mercy of God was to be imitated, who causes His sun to shine on good and evil alike, and as Christ did not dismiss Judas, so they were not to be dismissed. Besides, laymen were not to judge priests for any crime, nor to make any investigation into their lives, such inquiries being reserved for bishops.² As no

¹ Capit. Synod. Remens. ann. 874 c. 3.

² Nicholai I. Respons. ad Consult. Bulgar. c. 70.

bishops had yet been appointed by Rome, the answer was a skilfully tacit permission of priestly marriage, while avoiding an open avowal.

It need awaken no surprise if those who united recklessness and power should openly trample on the canons thus feebly supported. A somewhat prominent personage of the period was Hubert, brother of Teutberga, Queen of Lotharingia, and his turbulent conduct was a favourite theme for animadversion by the quiet monastic chroniclers. That he was an abbot is perhaps no proof of his clerical profession, but when we find his wife and children alluded to as a proof of his abandoned character, it shows that he was bound by vows or ordained within the prohibited grades, and that he publicly violated the rules and defied their enforcement.¹

The earliest absolute evidence that has reached us, however, of marriage committed by a member of the great body of the plebeian clergy, subsequent to the reforms of Boniface, occurs about the year 893. Angelric, priest of Vasnau, appealed to the Synod of Chalons, stating that he had been publicly joined in wedlock to a woman named Grimma. Such an attempt by a priest, the consent of the woman and her relatives, and the performance of the ceremony by another priest, all show the prevailing laxity and ignorance, yet still there were found some faithful and pious souls to object to the transaction, and Angelric was not allowed to enjoy undisturbed the fruits of his sin. Yet even the synod was perplexed, and unable to decide what ought to be done. It therefore only temporarily suspended Angelric from communion, while Mancio, his bishop, applied for advice to Foulques of Rheims, metropolitan of the province, and the ignorance

¹ *Efficitur ad hæc uxorius, liberos procreans, et ad suæ damnationis cumulum nil sibi clericale præter tonsuram præferens.*—Folcuin, *de Gest. Abbat. Laubiens.* c. 12.

and good faith of all parties are manifested by the fact that Angelric himself was sent to Foulques as the bearer of the letter of inquiry.¹

With the ninth century the power, the cultivation, and the civilisation of the Carlovingians may be considered virtually to disappear, though for nearly a hundred years longer a spectral crown encircled the brows of the ill-starred descendants of Pepin. Centralisation, rendered impossible in temporal affairs by feudalism, was transferred to the Church, which, thenceforth, more than ever independent of secular control, became wholly responsible for its own shortcomings; and the records of the period make only too plainly manifest how utterly the power, so strenuously contended for, failed to accomplish good amid the ignorance and the barbarism of the age.

¹ Manton. *Episc. Catalaun. Epist. ad Fulc. Remens.* (Migne's *Patrol.* T. 131, p. 23).

CHAPTER X

THE TENTH CENTURY

THE tenth century, well characterised by Cave as the "Sæculum Obscurum," is perhaps the most repulsive in Christian annals. The last vestiges of Roman culture have disappeared, while the dawn of modern civilisation is as yet far off. Society, in a state of transition, is painfully and vainly seeking some form of security and stability. The marauding wars of petty neighbouring chiefs become the normal condition, only interrupted when two or three unite to carry destruction to some more powerful rival. Though the settlement of Normandy relieved Continental Europe to a great extent from the terror of the Dane, yet the still more dreaded Hun took his place and ravaged the nations from the Danube to the Atlantic, while England bore the undivided fury of the Vikings, and the Saracen left little to glean upon the shores of the Mediterranean.

When brutal ignorance and savage ferocity were the distinguishing characteristics of the age, the Church could scarce expect to escape from the general debasement. It is rather a matter of grateful surprise that religion itself was not overwhelmed in the general chaos which engulfed almost all previously existing institutions. When the crown of St. Peter became the sport of barbarous nobles, or of a still more barbarous populace, we may grieve, but we cannot affect astonishment, at the unconcealed dissoluteness of Sergius III., whose bastard, twenty years later, was placed in the pontifical chair by the influence of that embodiment of all possible vices, his mother

Marozia.¹ The last extreme of depravity would seem attained by John XII., but as his deposition in 963 by Otho the Great loosened the tongues of his accusers, it is possible that he was no worse than some of his predecessors. No extreme of wickedness was beyond his capacity; the sacred palace of the Lateran was turned into a brothel; incest gave a flavour to crime when simple profligacy palled upon his exhausted senses, and the honest citizens of Rome complained that the female pilgrims who formerly crowded the holy fanes were deterred from coming through fear of his promiscuous and unbridled lust.²

With such corruption at the head of the Church, it is grotesque to see the popes inculcating lessons of purity, and urging the maintenance of canons which they set the example of disregarding so utterly. The clergy were now beginning to arrogate to themselves the privilege of matrimony; and marriage, so powerful a corrective of indiscriminate vice, was regarded with peculiar detestation by the ecclesiastical authorities, and awoke a far more energetic opposition than the more dangerous and corrupting forms of illicit indulgence. The pastor who intrigued in secret with his penitents and parishioners was scattering the seeds of death in place of the bread of life, and was abusing his holy trust to destroy the souls confided to his charge, but this worked no damage to the temporal interests of the Church at large. The priest who, in honest ignorance of the canons, took to himself a wife, and endeavoured faithfully to perform the duties of his humble sphere, could scarcely avoid seeking the comfort and worldly welfare of his offspring, and this exposed the common property of all to dilapidation and embezzlement. Disinterested virtue perhaps would not

¹ Liutprand. Antapod. Lib. III. c. 43.

² Liutprand. Hist. Otton. c. 4, 10.—Chron. Benedict. S. Andreæ Monach. c. 35.

be long in making a selection between the comparative evils, but disinterested virtue was not a distinguishing characteristic of the age.

Yet a motive of even greater importance than this rendered matrimony more objectionable than concubinage or licentiousness. By the overruling tendency of the age, all possessions previously held by laymen on precarious tenure were rapidly becoming hereditary. As the royal power slipped from hands unable to retain it, offices, dignities, and lands became the property of the holders, and were transmitted from father to son. Had marriage been openly permitted to ecclesiastics, their functions and benefices would undoubtedly have followed the example. An hereditary caste would have been established, who would have held their churches and lands of right; independent of the central authority, all unity would have been destroyed, and the collective power of the Church would have disappeared. Having nothing to gain from obedience, submission to control would have become the exception, and, laymen in all but name, the ecclesiastics would have had no incentive to perform their functions, except what little influence, under such circumstances, might have been retained over the people by maintaining the sacred character thus rendered a mockery.

In an age when everything was unsettled, yet with tendencies so strongly marked, it thus became a matter of vital importance to the Church to prevent anything like hereditary occupation of benefices or private appropriation of property, and against these abuses its strongest efforts were directed. The struggle lasted for centuries, and it may perhaps be fortunate for our civilisation that sacerdotalism triumphed, even at the expense of what at the moment was of greater importance. I cannot here pause to trace the progress of the contest in its long and

various vicissitudes. It will be found constantly re-appearing in the course of the following pages, and for the present it will suffice to group together a few evidences to show how rapidly the hereditary tendency developed itself in the period under consideration.

The narrowness of the escape from ecclesiastical feudalisation is well illustrated by an incident at the Council of Tours, in 925, where two priests, *father and son*, Ranald and Raymond, appeared as complainants, claiming certain tithes detained from them by another priest. They gained the suit, and the tithes were confirmed to them and their successors for ever.¹ Even more suggestive is the complaint, some thirty years later, of Ratherius, Bishop of Verona, who objects strenuously to the ordination of the children sprung from these illegal marriages, as each successive father made his son a priest, thus perpetuating the scandal indefinitely throughout the Church; and as he sorrowfully admits that his clergy could not be restrained from marriage, he begs them at least to bring their children up as laymen.² This, however, by his own showing, would not remove the material evil, for in another treatise he states that his priests and deacons divided the Church property between them, that they might have lands and vineyards wherewith to provide marriage portions for their sons and daughters.³ This system of appropriation also forms the subject of lamentation for Atto, Bishop of Vercelli, whose clergy insisted on publicly keeping concubines—as he stigmatises those who evidently were wives—to whom they left by will everything that they could gather from the possessions of the Church, from the alms of the pious, or from any other source, to

¹ Concil. Turon. ann. 925 (Martene Thesaur. IV. 73).

² Ratherii de nuptu cujusdam illicito, c. 4.

³ Ratherii de contemptu canon. P. I. c. 4.

the ruin of ecclesiastical property and to the deprivation of the poor.¹ How well founded were these complaints is evident from a document of the eleventh century concerning the churches of St. Stephen and St. Donatus in Aretino. The priests in charge appropriated to themselves all the possessions of the churches, including the revenues of the altars, the oblations, and the confessional. These they portioned out among each other and handed down from father to son as regularly as any other property, selling and exchanging their shares as the interest of the moment might suggest, and the successive transmission of each fragment of property is detailed with all the precision of a brief of title. The natural result was that for generations the religious services of Aretino were utterly disregarded. Sometimes the priestly owners would hire some one to ring the bells, light the candles, and minister to the altar, but in the multitude of owner-ships the stipends were irregularly paid, and the officiator refused continually to serve, candles were not furnished, bell-ropes were not renewed, and even the leathers which attached the clappers to the bells were neglected. The church of St. Stephen was the cathedral of Aretino, yet the bishops were powerless to correct these abuses. The marriages of their priests they do not seem to have even attempted to repress, and were quite satisfied if they could occasionally get a portion of the revenues devoted to the offices of religion.² The same condition of affairs existed among the Anglo-Saxons. "It is all the worse when they have it all, for they do not dispose of it as they ought, but decorate their wives with what they should the altars, and turn everything to their own worldly pomp. . . . Let those who before this had the evil custom of

¹ Atton. Vercell. Epist. ix.

² *Enarratio eorum quæ perverse gesta sunt*, etc. (Muratori, *Antiq. Med. Ævi Diss.* LXII.).

decorating their women as they should the altars, refrain from this evil custom, and decorate their churches, as they best can; then would they command for themselves both divine counsel and worldly worship. A priest's wife is nothing but a snare of the devil, and he who is ensnared thereby on to his end, he will be seized fast by the devil."¹

It will be observed that, as the century advanced, sacerdotal marriage became more and more common. Indeed, in 966, Ratherius not only intimates that his clergy were all married, but declares that if the canon prohibiting repeated marriages were put in force, only boys would be left in the Church, while even they would be ejected under the rule which rendered ineligible the offspring of illicit unions;² and, in spite of his earnest asceticism, he only ventures to prohibit his clergy from conjugal intercourse during the periods likewise forbidden to laymen, such as Advent, Christmas, Lent, etc.³ It was not that the ancient canons were forgotten,⁴ nor that strenuous efforts were not made to enforce them, but that the temper of the times created a spirit of personal independence so complete that the power of the ecclesiastical authorities seemed utterly inadequate to control the growing license. About the year 938, Gerard, Archbishop of Lorsch and Papal Legate for Southern Germany, laid before Leo VII. a series of questions relating to various points in which the ancient canons were set at naught throughout the region under his supervision. Leo answered by a decretal addressed to all the princes and potentates of Europe, in which he

¹ Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical, c. 19, 23 (Thorpe, Ancient Laws, &c. of England, II. 329, 337).

² Ratherii Itinerar. c. 5.

³ Ratherii Synodica, c. 15.

⁴ Gunzo the Grammarian, in his learned treatise, makes use of the recognised celibacy of the clergy as a comparison. "Non enim una eademque res bona, licet æque omnibus conceditur. Siquidem nuptiæ, laicis concessæ, sacris ordinibus dene-gantur."—Gunzonis Epist. ad Augienses.

laments over Gerard's statement of the public marriages of priests, and replies to his inquiry as to the capacity of their children for ecclesiastical promotion. The first he pronounces forbidden by the canons, and those guilty of it he orders to be deprived of their benefices. As for the offspring of such marriages, however, he says that they are not involved in the sins of their parents.¹

The unusual liberality of this latter declaration, however, was not a precedent. The Church always endeavoured to prevent the ordination of the children of ecclesiastics, and Leo, in permitting it, was only yielding to a pressure which he could not withstand. It was a most dangerous concession, for it led directly to the establishment of the hereditary principle. An effort was soon after made, by an appeal to the temporal power, to recover the ground lost, and about the year 940 Otho the Great was induced to issue an edict prohibiting the sons of deacons, priests, and bishops from occupying the positions of notary, judge, or count²—the bare necessity of which shows how numerous and powerful the class had already become.

Although, as early as 925, the Council of Spalatro seemed to find nothing to condemn in a single marriage, but threatened excommunication against those who so far forgot themselves as to contract a second,³ and though by the middle of the century the practice had become generally established, yet some rigid prelates

¹ Leon. PP. VII. Epist. 15.

² Constit. Otton. ann. 940 c. 12.

³ Quod si sacerdotes incontinenter propter ipsam continentiam primam quam sortitus est, separati a consortio cellæ, teneat uxorem; si vere aliam duxerit, excommunicetur.—Concil. Spalatens. ann. 925 c. 15.

The passage is evidently corrupt, but its intention is manifest. The reading suggested by Batthyani may be reasonably accepted. "Quod si sacerdotes incontinentes propter ipsam continentiam quam quis primam sortitus est, separati a consortio cellæ, teneant uxorem, tolerantur; si vero aliam duxerint, excommunicentur." (Batthyani Legg. Eccles. Hungar. I. 333-4.)

continued to keep alive the memory of the ancient canons by fruitless protests and ineffectual efforts at reform. In 948 the Synod of Engelheim, under the presidency of Marino, Bishop of Ostia and Papal Vicar, condemned such marriages as incestuous and unlawful.¹ In 952, at the Council of Augsburg, the assembled German and Italian prelates made a further and more desperate effort. Deposition was pronounced against the subdeacon, deacon, priest, or bishop who should take to himself a wife; separation of those already married was ordered, and even the lower grades of the clergy, who had not previously been subjected to any such rule, were commanded to observe the strictest continence. An attempt was also made to prevent concubinage by visiting suspected women with stripes and shaving; but there evidently was some difficulty anticipated in enforcing this, for the royal power is invoked to prevent secular interference with the sentence.²

This stringent legislation of course proved utterly nugatory, but, futile as it was, it yet awakened considerable opposition. St. Ulric, in whose episcopal town of Augsburg the council was held, addressed a long epistle to the Pope remonstrating against his efforts to enforce the rule of celibacy, and arguing the question, temperately but forcibly, on the grounds both of scriptural authority and of expediency. He pointed out how much more obnoxious to Divine wrath were the promiscuous and nameless crimes indulged in by those who were foremost in advocating the reform than the chaste and single marriages of the clergy; and the violent distortion of the sacred texts, by those who sought authority to justify the canon, he not unhappily

¹ Richeri Hist. Lib. II. c. 81. The canons of the council, however, as they have reached us, are silent on the subject.

² Concil. Augustan. ann. 952 c. 1, 4, 11.

characterised as straining the breast of Scripture until it yielded blood in place of milk.¹

Despite the inefficiency of these attempts, the clergy were not always allowed to enjoy their unlawful domestic ties in peace, and, where the votaries of asceticism were bold and determined, the contest was sometimes severe. The nature of the struggle is well illustrated by the troubles which arose between Ratherius of Verona and the ecclesiastics of his diocese. In April, 967, John XIII. held a council at Ravenna which commanded those who were in holy orders to give up at once either their wives or their ministry, and Otho the Great was induced to issue a precept confirming this peremptory decree. Ratherius had long been vainly wishing for some authority on the subject more potent than the ancient and now obsolete canons, and on his return from Ravenna he summoned a synod for the purpose of promulgating the new regulations. His clergy got wind of his intention; very few of them obeyed the summons, and most of those who came boldly declared that they would neither be separated from their wives nor abandon their functions—in fact, they did not scruple to maintain that marriage was not only permissible, but even necessary to protect the Church from the most hideous

¹ Cod. Bamberg. Lib. II. Epist. 10.

St. Ulric is noteworthy as the first subject of papal canonisation, having been enrolled in the calendar by the Council of Rome in 993. That priestly marriage should be advocated by so pious and venerable a father was of course not agreeable to the sacerdotal party, and his evidence against celibacy has not infrequently been ruled out of court by discrediting the authenticity of the epistle. The compiler of the collection containing it, made in 1125, prefixed the name of Nicholas as that of the pope to whom it was addressed, and as St. Ulric was about equidistant between Nicholas I. in the ninth and Nicholas II. in the eleventh century, it has been suggested that the epistle was addressed to the latter, on the occasion of his reforms in 1059, the use of St. Ulric's name being assumed as a mistake of the compiler. That this is not so is shown by the fact that already in 1079 it was known as St. Ulric's, being condemned as such in that year by Gregory VII.—“scriptum quod dicitur sancti Oudalrici ad papam Nicholaum, de nuptiis presbiterorum” (Bernald. Constant. Ceron. ann. 1079). The authenticity of the document, I believe, is generally admitted by unprejudiced critics.

vices. The utmost concession he could obtain, indeed, came from a few who endeavoured to excuse themselves on the ground of poverty, which did not enable them to live without the assistance of their wives, and who professed to be willing to separate from them if they could be assured of a regular stipend.¹ Ratherius had passed through too many vicissitudes in his long and agitated career to shrink from the collision, now that he was backed by both the papal and imperial authority. He promptly threw the recalcitrant pastors into prison, declaring that they should lie there until they paid a heavy fine for the benefit of the Cathedral of the Virgin, and he further commanded the presence of those who had failed to appear. The clergy of the diocese, finding that the resistance of inertia was unavailing, took more decided steps, and appealed for protection to the temporal power, in the person of Nanno, Count of Verona. He promptly espoused their cause, and his *missus* Gilbert forbade their obedience to the summons of their bishop for a year. Ratherius remonstrated vehemently against the assumption of Nanno that the priests were his vassals, subject to his jurisdiction, and entitled to protection, and he lost no time in invoking the power of Otho, in a letter to Ambrose, the Imperial Chancellor.² The clergy were too powerful; the imperial court decided against the bishop, and before the end of the year Ratherius was forced to retire from the unequal contest and to take refuge in the peaceful abbey of Lobbes, whence he had been withdrawn a quarter of a century before to fill the see of Verona. Three times had he thus been driven from that city, and an intermediate episcopate of Liège, with which one of his

¹ Ratherii *Discordia*, c. 1, 6.

² Ratherii *Epist.* XI., XII.—His letter to the Empress Adelaide, announcing his willingness to retire from the contest, and to seek the congenial shades of a monastery, is most uncourtly. (*Epist.* XIII.)

periods of exile was gratified, had been terminated in the same abrupt manner by the unruly clergy, unable to endure the severity of his virtue.¹ How great was the revolution, to the unavailing repression of which he sacrificed his life, is shown by his declaration, two years before, that ecclesiastics differed from laymen only in shaving and the tonsure, in some slight fashioning of their garments, and in the careless performance of the Church ritual. The progress of sacerdotal marriage during the preceding quarter of a century is shown by a similar comparison drawn by Ratherius some thirty years before, in which matrimony is included among the few points of difference, along with shaving and the tonsure.²

That the Veronese clergy were not alone in obtaining from the secular potentates protection against these efforts on the part of reforming bishops, is evident from the lamentations of Atto of Vercelli. That estimable prelate deplores the blindness of those who, when paternally warned to mend their evil ways, refuse submission, and seek protection from the nobles. If we may believe him, however, they gained but little from this course, for their criminal lives placed them at the mercy of the secular officials, whose threats to seize their wives and children could only be averted by continual presents. Thus they not only plundered the property of their churches, but forfeited the respect and esteem of their flocks; all reverence for them was thereby destroyed, and, living in perpetual dread of the punishment due to their

¹ Ruotgeri Vit. S. Brunonis, c. 38.—Ratherius consoled himself epigrammatically by condensing his misfortunes in the Leonine verse—"Veronæ præsul, sed ter Ratherius exsul."

² De Contempt. Canon. P. II. c. 2.—Præloquiorum Lib. v. c. 18.

The existing confusion is well exemplified by another remark—"Expertus sum talem qui ante ordinationem adulterium perpetravit, postea quasi continenter vixit; alterum qui post ordinationem uxorem duxit; et iste illum, ille istum carpebat."—De Contempt. Canon. P. I. c. 11.

excesses, in place of commanding obedience, they were exposed to constant oppression and petty tyranny.¹

When prelates so sincere and so earnest as Ratherius and Atto were able to accomplish so little, it is easy to understand what must have been the condition of the dioceses entrusted to the great mass of bishops, who were rather feudal nobles than Christian prelates. St. Wolfgang of Ratisbon might issue thousands of exhortations to his clergy, inculcating chastity as the one indispensable virtue, and might laboriously reform his monasteries, in which monks and nuns led a life almost openly secular;² but he was well-nigh powerless for good compared with the potentiality of evil conveyed by the example of such a bishop as Segenfrid of Le Mans, who, during an episcopate which lasted for thirty-three years, took to himself a wife named Hildeberga, and who stripped the Church for the benefit of his son Alberic, the sole survivor of a numerous progeny by her whom he caused to be revered as his *Episcopissa*:³ or of Archembald, Archbishop of Sens, who, taking a fancy to the Abbey of St. Peter, drove out the monks and established a harem of concu-

¹ Atton. Vercell. Epist. 9. In another epistle (No. 10) Atto congratulates himself on the reform of some of his clergy, and threatens the contumacious with degradation.

² Othloni Vit. S. Wolfkangi, c. 15, 16, 17, 23.

³ "Ad cumulum damnationis suæ, accepit mulierem, nomine Hildeburgam, in senectute, quæ, ingresso illo ad se, concepit et peperit filios et filias, &c." The chronicler makes the end of this aged sinner an example of poetical justice such as may frequently be found in the monkish annals of those times—"Qui dum esset flebotomatus, nocte insecuta dormivit cum Episcopissa; qua de re vulnus cœpit intumescere, et dolor usque ad interiora cordis devenire." Finding his end approaching, he assumed the monastic habit and took the vows, after which he immediately expired.—Act. Pontif. Cenoman. c. 29 (Dom Bouquet, X. 384-5).

Fulbert of Chartres has left us a lively sketch of the military bishops of the period.—"Tyrannos potius appellabo, qui bellicis occupati negotiis, multo stipati latus milite, solidarios pretio conducunt, ut nullos sæculi reges aut principes noverim adeo instructos bellorum legibus, totam armorum disciplinam in procinctu militiæ servare, digerere turmas, ordines componere, ad turbandam ecclesiæ pacem, et Christianorum, licet hostium, sanguinem, effundendum."—Fulbert. Carnot. Epist. 112.

bines in the refectory, and installed his hounds and hawks in the cloister.¹ Guarino of Modena might hope to stem the tide of license by refusing preferment to all who would not agree to hold their benefices on a sort of feudal tenure of chastity;² but he had much less influence on his age than such a man as Alberic of Marsico, whose story is related as a warning by Peter Damiani. He was married (for, in the language of Damiani, "*obscæna meretricula*" may safely be translated a wife), and had a son to whom he transferred his bishopric, as though it had been an hereditary fief. Growing tired of private life, however, he aspired to the abbacy of Monte Cassino. That humble foundation of St. Benedict had become a formidable military power, of which its neighbours the Capuans stood in constant dread. Alberic leagued with them, and a plot was laid by which the reigning abbot's eyes were to be plucked out and Alberic placed in possession, for which service he agreed to pay a heavy sum, one half in advance, and the rest when the abbot's eyes should be delivered to him. The deed was accomplished, but while the envoys were bearing to Alberic the bloody tokens of success, they were met by tidings of his death, and on comparing notes they found that he had expired at the very moment of the perpetration of the atrocious crime.³

So St. Abbo of Fleury might exhaust his eloquence in inculcating the beauty and holiness of immaculate purity, and might pile authority on authority to demonstrate the punishments which, in this world and the next, attended on those who disobeyed the rule;⁴ yet when he en-

¹ Chron. S. Petri Vivi (D'Achery Spicileg. II. 470).

² This singular oath has been published by Muratori (Antiq. Ital. Diss. xx.).—"Ego Andrea presbiter promitto coram Deo et omnibus sanctis, et tibi Guarino episcopo, quod carnalem commistionem non faciam; et si fecero, et onoris mei et beneficio ecclesiæ perdam."

³ S. Petri Damiani Epist. Lib. iv. Epist. 8.—Leo Marsicanus (Chron. Cassinens. Lib. II. c. 16) asserts that in his youth he himself had seen and conversed with a priest who had been one of the eye-bearers.

⁴ Abbon. Floriac. Epist. 14.

deavoured, in the monastery of La Réole, a dependency on his own great abbey of Fleury, to put his precepts into practice, the recalcitrant monks flew to arms and murdered him in the most brutal manner, not even sparing the faithful Adalard, who was reverently supporting the head of his beloved and dying master.¹ Damiani might well exclaim, when bewailing the unfortunate fate of abbots, on whom was thrown the responsibility of the morals of their communities—

Phinees si imitatur,
Fugit vel expellitur;
Si Eli, tunc irridetur
Atque parvipenditur;
Odiosus est, si fervens,
Et vilis, si tepidus.²

How little disposed were the ecclesiastical authorities in general to sustain the efforts of puritans like St. Abbo was clearly shown in the Council of St. Denis, convened in 995 for the purpose of restoring the neglected discipline of the Church, when, passing over the object of its assembling, the reverend fathers devoted their whole attention to the more practically interesting question of tithes.³

All prelates, however, were not either feudal chiefs or ascetic puritans. Some, who were pious and virtuous, had so far become infected with the prevailing laxity that they regarded the stricter canons as obsolete, and offered no opposition to the domestic aspirations of their clergy.

¹ Although Aimoin, who was an eye-witness, does not specially mention the cause that excited the monks to ungovernable fury, yet a casual allusion shows that women were responsible for it.—“Cæterum, tantæ cladis compilatores certissime agnoscentes beatum obiisse Abbonem, certatim cuncti in fugam vertuntur, ita ut, terris reddito die, ne mulieres quidam in universis forensibus ipsius villæ invenirentur domibus”—(Abbon. Floriac. Vit. c. 20)—and the day after his death “una ex his mulieribus quæ clamore suo seditionem concitaverant” became suddenly mad, and was struck with incurable leprosy—(Aimoin. Mirac. S. Abbonis, c. 2).

² Damian. Carm. ccxxi.

³ Aimoin. Vit. S. Abbonis, c. 9.

Thus Constantine, Abbot of the great house of St. Symphorian of Metz, in his life of Adalbero II., who was Bishop of Metz from 984 to 1005, actually praises him for his liberality in not refusing ordination to the sons of priests, and attributes discreditable motives to those bishops who insisted on the observance of the canons prohibiting all such promotions.¹ As Constantine was a monk and a disciple of Adalbero, the tone which he adopts shows that the higher prelates and the regular clergy were beginning to recognise sacerdotal marriage as a necessity of the age. This view is strengthened by the fact that no effort to reform an abuse so universal was made at the great Synod of Dortmund, held in 1005 for the special purpose of restoring the discipline of the Church.²

How completely, indeed, marriage came to be regarded as a matter of course is manifest when, in 1019, an assembly of German bishops, with the Emperor St. Henry at their head, gravely deliberated over the knotty question whether, when a noble permitted his serf to enter into holy orders, and the serf, presuming upon his new-born dignities and the wealth of his benefices, married a free woman and endeavoured to withhold his children from the servitude which he still owed to his master, such infraction of his master's rights could be permitted out of respect to his sacerdotal character. Long and vehement was the argument among the learned prelates, until finally St. Henry decided the point authoritatively by pronouncing in favour of the servitude of the children.³

¹ *Episcopi sui temporis aliqui fastu superbiæ, aliqui simplicitate cordis, filios sæcularium sacerdotum ad sacros ordines admittere dedignabantur, nec ad clericatum eos recipere volentes; hic vero beatus, neminem despiciens, neminem spernens, passim cunctos recipiebat.*—Constant. S. Symphor. Vit. Adalberon. II. c. 24.

² Dithmar. Merseberg. Lib. VI. c. 24.

³ S. Heinrici Sentent. de Conjug. Cleric. (Patrologiæ T. 140, p. 231).

But perhaps the most instructive illustration of the character and temper of the age may be found in the three prelates who for more than a century filled the rich and powerful archiepiscopal see of Rouen. Hugh, whose episcopate lasted from 942 to 989, was nominated at a period when William Longsword, Duke of Normandy, was contemplating retirement from the world to shroud his almost regal dignity under the cowl of a monk; yet what little is known of his archbishop is that, though he was a monk in habit, he was an habitual violator of the laws of God¹—in short, we may presume, a man well suited to the wild, half-pagan times which witnessed the assassination of Duke William and the minority of Richard the Fearless. On his death, in 989, Duke Richard, whose piety was incontestably proved by the liberality of his monastic foundations and by his zeal for the purity of his monkish protégés,² filled the vacant see with his son Robert, who held the position until 1037. Robert was publicly and openly married, and by his wife Herleva he had three sons, Richard, Rodolf, and William, to whom he distributed his vast possessions. Ordericus, the conscientious cenobite of the twelfth century, looks, in truth, somewhat askance at this disregard of the rules accepted in his own time,³ yet no blame seems to have attached to Robert in the estimation

¹ A nullo scriptorum qui de illo sive de episcopo ejus locuti sunt, laudatus est. Palam memorant quod habitu non opere monachus fuerit.

Successit Hugo, legis Domini violator
Clara stirpe satus, sed Christi lumine cassus.

—Order. Vital. Lib. v. 10, § 41.

² About the year 990, for instance, we find Duke Richard reforming the celebrated Abbey of Fécamp and replacing with Benedictines the former occupants—canons whose secular mode of life outraged his pious sensibilities—"contigit Fiscannenses canonicos aliorum canonicorum mores imitari, latas perditionis vias ingredi, et rerum temporalium luxus et desidias voluptuose sectari."—Anon. Fiscannens. c. 17.

³ Nam conjugem nomine Herlevam, ut comes, habuit, ex qua tres filios, Richardum, Radulfum et Guillelmum genuit; quibus Ebroicensem comitatum et

of his contemporaries. The family chronicler characterises him as “Robert bons clers, honestes hom,” and assures us that he was highly esteemed as a wise and learned prelate

Li secunz fu genz e aperz
Et si fu apelez Roberz.
Clere en firent, mult aprist bien,
Si fi sage sor tote rien ;
De Roem out l'arcevesquié
Honoré fu mult e preisié.¹

His successor, Mauger, son of Duke Richard II., and archbishop from 1037 to 1054, was worthy of his predecessors. Abandoned to worldly and carnal pleasures, his *legitimate* son Michael was a distinguished knight, and half a century later stood high in the favour of Henry I. of England, in whose court he was personally known to the historian.² The times were changing, however, and Mauger felt the full effects of reformatory zeal, for he was deposed in 1054; the see was bestowed on St. Maurilio, a Norman, who as abbot of Santa Maria in Florence had been driven out and nearly poisoned to death by his monks on account of the severity of his rule, and the Norman clergy, as we shall see hereafter, experienced their share of suffering in the mutation of discipline.

Notwithstanding this all-pervading laxity, the canons of the Church remained unaltered, and their full force

alios honores amplissimos secundum jus sæculi distribuit.—Orderic. Vital. Lib. v. c. 10, § 42.

So in the *Normanniæ Nova Chronica*, published by Chéruef in 1850, “Iste Robertus fuit uxoratus, et ex Herleva conjuge sua tres filios habuit, Richardum, Radulfum et Willelmum.”

¹ Bénéit, *Chronique des Ducs de Normandie*, v. 32427, 24912. We may fairly conclude from these expressions that Robert was educated for the priesthood.

² *Voluptatibus carnis mundanisque curis indecenter inhæsit, filiumque nomine Michaellem probum militem et legitimum genuit, quem in Anglia jam senem rex Henricus honorat et diligit.*—Orderic. Vital. Lib. v. c. 10, § 43.

was theoretically admitted. Hopeless efforts, moreover, were occasionally made to re-establish them, as in the Council of Anse in 990, which reminded the clergy that intercourse with wives after ordination was punishable with forfeiture of benefice and deprivation of priestly functions;¹ and in that of Poitiers about the year 1000, which prohibited concubines under pain of degradation.² In a similar spirit, a Penitential of the period recapitulates the severe punishments of a former age, involving degradation and fearfully long terms of penance.³ All this, however, was practically a dead letter. The person who best represents the active intelligence of the age was Gerbert of Aurillac, the most enlightened man of his time, who, after occupying the archiepiscopal seats of Rheims and Ravenna, finally became pope under the name of Sylvester II. The lightness with which he treats the subject of celibacy is therefore fairly a measure of the views entertained by the ruling spirits of the Church, beyond the narrow bounds of cloistered asceticism. Gerbert, describing in a sermon the requisites of the episcopal and sacerdotal offices, barely refers to the “*unius uxoris vir*,” which he seems to regard in an allegorical rather than in a literal sense; he scarcely alludes to chastity, while he dilates with much energy on simony, which he truly characterises as the almost universal vice of his contemporaries.⁴ So when, in 997, he

¹ Concil. Ansan. ann. 990 c. 5.

² Concil. Pictaviens. c. ann. 1000 c. 3.

³ Si clericus superioris gradus, qui uxorem habuit, et post confessionem vel honorem clericatus iterum eam cognoverit, sciat sibi adulterium commisisse, sicut superiore sententia unusquisque juxta ordine suo poeniteat [i.e. diaconus et monachi VII. (annos) III. ex his pane et aqua. Presbyter X. Episcopus XII., v. ex his pane et aqua.] . . . Si quis clericus aut monachus postquam se devoerit ad sæcularem habitum iterum reversus fuerit aut uxorem duxerit, X. annos poeniteat, III. ex his in pane et aqua, nunquam postea in conjugium copuletur.—Judicium Poenitentis ex Sacrament. Rhenaug.

Cf. Penitent. Pseudo-Theodori (Wasserschleben, Bussordnungen, p. 578). This is of the ninth century, and reflects a severer standard, for it enacts “Presbiter vel diaconus, si uxorem extraneam duxerit, in conscientia populi deponatur.”

⁴ Gerberti Sermo de Informat. Episcoporum.

convened the Council of Ravenna to regulate the discipline of his Church, he paid no attention whatever to incontinence, while strenuously endeavouring to root out simony.¹ At an earlier period, while Abbot of Bobbio, in an epistle to his patron, the Emperor Otho II., refuting various calumnies of his enemies, he alludes to a report of his having a wife and children in terms which show how little importance he attached to the accusation.²

Such, at the opening of the eleventh century, was the condition of the Church as regards ascetic celibacy. Though the ancient canons were still theoretically in force, they were practically obsolete everywhere. Legitimate marriage or promiscuous profligacy was almost universal, in some places unconcealed, in others covered with a thin veil of hypocrisy, according as the temper of the ruling prelate might be indulgent or severe. So far, therefore, Latin Christianity had gained but little in its struggle of six centuries with human nature. Whether the next eight hundred years will show a more favourable result remains for us to develop.

Before proceeding, however, to discuss the events of the succeeding century, it will be well to pass a rapid glance at a portion of Christendom, the isolation of which has thus far precluded it from receiving attention.

¹ Gerberti Opp. p. 197 sqq. (Ed. Migne).

² "Taceo de me quem novo locutionis genere equum emissarium susurrant, uxorem et filios habentem, propter partem familiæ meæ de Francia recollectam."—Gerberti Epist. Sect. I. No. XI.—Gerbert's reputation for sanctity is not such as to render scandalous the suspicion that the family thus gathered around him might afford legitimate occasion for gossip, notwithstanding his abbacy and the fact that he had been bred in a convent.

CHAPTER XI

SAXON ENGLAND

WHATEVER of virtue or purity may have distinguished the Church of Britain under Roman domination was speedily extinguished in the confusion of the Saxon occupation. Gildas, who flourished in the first half of the sixth century, describes the clergy of his time as utterly corrupt.¹ He apparently would have been satisfied if the bishops had followed the apostolic precept and contented themselves with being husbands of one wife; and he complains that instead of bringing up their children in chastity, the latter were corrupted by the evil example of their parents.² Under Saxon rule, Christianity was probably well-nigh trampled out, except in the remoter mountain districts, to be subsequently restored in its sacerdotal form under the direct auspices of Rome.

Meanwhile, the British Isles were the theatre of another and independent religious movement. Palladius, who assumed the title of Patricius, was sent to Ireland as bishop, in 432, by Coëlestin I.³ It is not our province to determine whether he is the traditional St. Patrick who Christianised Ireland, or whether a supposititious saint was invented in the seventh century, bearing the

¹ Ita ut clerici (quod non absque dolore cordis fateor) impudici, bilingues, ebrii, turpis lucri cupidi, habentes fidem, et ut verius dicam, infidelitatem, in conscientia impura, non probati in bona, sed in malo opere præsciti ministrantes, et innumera crimina habentes, sacro ministerio adsciscantur.—Gildæ de Excid. Britan. Pt. III. cap. 23—Cf. cap. 1, 2, 3.

² “*Unius uxoris virum.*” Quid ita apud nos quoque contemnitur, quasi non audiretur, vel idem dicere et virum uxorum? . . . Sed quid erit, ubi nec pater nec filius mali genitoris exemplo pravatus conspicitur castus?—Gildæ loc. cit.

³ Bedæ Hist. Eccles., I. 13.

same name, as a factor in the struggle between the Romanising party and the supporters of the native Church. It suffices for us to have seen (p. 78) that celibacy was not one of the rules enforced in the infant Irish Church; but this was of comparatively little moment, for that Church was almost exclusively monastic in its character, and preserved the strictest views as to the observance of the vows by those who had once taken them.¹ That the principles thus established were long preserved is evident from an ancient Penitential, presumably Hibernian, which breathes the most vigorous asceticism. A single passing emotion of lust for a woman, not expressed, is visited with seven days' penance, on a measured amount of bread and water. Innocent familiarity with a woman requires forty days' penance, but if a kiss passes between them it is lengthened to a year. Fornication forfeits the tonsure, but if it is not known it can be redeemed with three years of penance, after which the functions are restored. If a child is born, the penalty is nine years of penance, of which seven must be passed in exile, with subsequent resumption of functions—being the same as for homicide.² As no punishment is provided for clerical marriage, it was evidently not regarded as supposable.

The missionary career by which the Irish Church repaid the debt that it owed to Christianity is well known, and the form of faith which it spread was almost exclusively monastic. Luanus, one of the monks of Benchor, is said to have founded no less than a

¹ Synod. S. Patricii, c. 9, 17 (Haddan & Stubbs, II. 328-9)—Synod. II. S. Patricii, c. 17, 21 (Ibid. 335-6).

² Pœnitentiale Vinniai, §§ 10-16 (Wasserschleben, Bussordnungen, pp. 110-11).

In these long courses of penance three months were to be spent in solitary confinement, with bread and water at night; then eighteen months in fasting on bread and water; then bread and water three days in the week for five years and three months; then bread and water on Fridays for the remaining three years.—Gratian. Dist. LXXXII. c. 5.

hundred monasteries ;¹ and when Columba established the Christian religion in Scotland, he carried with him this tendency to asceticism and inculcated it among his Pictish neophytes. His Rule enjoins the most absolute purity of mind as well as body ;² and that his teachings were long obeyed is evident when we find that, a hundred and fifty years later, his disciples are praised for the chastity and zeal of their self-denying lives by the Venerable Bede, who was fully alive to the importance of the rule, and who would have wasted no such admiration on them had they lived in open disregard of it.³ Equally convincing is the fact that Scotland and the Islands were claimed to be under the supremacy of the see of York, and that during the long controversy requisite to break down their schismatic notions respecting the date of Easter and the shape of the tonsure, not a word was said that can lead to the supposition that they held any unorthodox views on the far more important subject of sacerdotal purity.⁴

When, a hundred and fifty years after the Anglo-Saxon invasion, Gregory the Great undertook the conversion of the islanders, the missionaries whom he despatched under Augustine of course carried with them the views and ideas which then held undisputed sway in Rome.

¹ Bernardi Vit. S. Malachiae, cap. vi.

² S. Columbanus Regul. cap. vi.

³ Reliquit (Columbanus) successores magna continentia ac divino amore regulare institutione insignes . . . pietatis et castitatis opera diligenter observantes (Bede's Hist. Eccles. Lib. III. c. 4, cf. also c. 26). Bede's orthodoxy on the subject is unquestionable: "Sacerdotibus ut semper altari queant assistere, semper ab uxoribus continendum, semper castitas observanda præcipitur" (In Lucæ Evang. Exposit. Lib. I. cap. 1).—"Quanta sunt maledictione digni qui prohibent nubere et dispositionem cælestis decreti quasi a diabolo repertam condemnant? . . . sed magis honoranda, majore est digna benedictione virginitas." (Hexæmeron. Lib. I. sub. tit. Benedixitque illis.) See also De Tabernac. Lib. III. c. 9, already referred to (p. 64).

⁴ See, for instance, the proceedings of the Synod of Whitby in 664, where the differences between the Scottish and Roman observances were fully discussed (Spelman. Concil. I. 145). So when, in 633, Honorius I. addressed the Scottish clergy, reproving their false computation of Easter and their Pelagianism, he made no allusion to any want of clerical purity (Bede's Hist. Eccles. Lib. II. c. 19).

Apparently, however, asceticism found little favour at first with the new converts, rendering it difficult for Augustine to obtain sufficient co-labourers among his disciples, for he applied to Gregory to learn whether he might allow those who could not restrain their passions to marry and yet remain in the ministry. To this Gregory replied evasively, stating, what Augustine already knew, that the lower grades might marry, but making no reference whatever to the higher orders.¹ He apparently did not wish to assume the responsibility of relaxing the rule, while willing perhaps to connive at its suspension in order to encourage the infant Anglican Church. If so, the indulgence was but temporary.

The attempt has been made to prove that marriage was permitted in the early Saxon Church, and support for this supposition has been sought from a clause in the Dooms of King Ina, of which the date is about the year 700, fixing the wer-gild of the son of a bishop. But the rubric of the law shows that it refers rather to a godson;² and even if it were not so, we have already seen how often in France, at the same period, the episcopal office was bestowed on eminent or influential laymen, who were obliged on its acceptance to part with their wives.³

These speculations are manifestly groundless. The Penitential which goes by the name of the celebrated Theodore, who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 668 to 690, forbids the marriage of the clergy under pain of deposition, and all intercourse with such wives was

¹ "Opto enim doceri an clerici continere non valentes, possint contrahere; et si contraxerint, an debeant ad sæculum redire"—to which Gregory responds with a long exhortation as to the duties of the "clerici extra sacros ordines constituti"—Gregor. I. Regist. Lib. XI. Epist. lxiv. Respons. 2.

² Si episcopi filius sit, sit dimidium hoc (Leg. Inæ, c. LXXVI.). The rubric of the law is "De occidente filiolum vel patrinum alienjus" (Thorpe, Ancient Laws of England, II. 472).

³ Denique promulgatur decretum . . . de abdicandis sacerdotum uxoribus.—Spelman. Concil. I. 216.

punished by life-long penance as laymen; not only were digami ineligible to ordination, but also even those who had kept concubines; the bishop, priest, or deacon, who was guilty of fornication was degraded, and all who had been baptized by him were required to be re-baptized—an expression of reprobation which it would be hard to parallel elsewhere in the history of the Church.¹ The Christianity introduced into Britain was purely Roman, and, although these rules were impossible of rigid enforcement, it is not likely that they were wholly inoperative, in a Church sufficiently enlightened to produce the learning and piety of men like Bede and St. Aldhelm; where the admiration of virginity was as great as that which finds utterance in the writings of these fathers,² and the principles of asceticism were so influential as to lead a powerful monarch like Ina to retire with his queen, Ethelberga, from the throne which he had gloriously filled, to the holy restrictions of a monastic life.

Ecgberht, who was Archbishop of York from 732 to 766, is almost equally decisive in his condemnation of priestly irregularities, though he returned to the received doctrine of the Church that baptism could not be repeated.³ It is also probable that even the Britons, who derived their Christianity from the older and purer sources

¹ Theodori Pœnitent. I. ix. 1, 4, 5, 6, 10; II. ii. 12 (Wasserschleben, op. cit. pp. 194, 203).

² See, for instance, St. Aldhelm's rhapsodies, "De laudibus virginitatis" and "De laudibus virginum." The orthodoxy of Bede on this question has already been alluded to.

According to the legend, St. Aldhelm tried his virtue by the same crucial experiments as those resorted to by some of the ardent devotees of the third century, concealing his motive in order that his humility might enjoy the benefit of undeserved reprobation. "Sancti Aldelmi Malmesburiensis, qui inter duas puellas, unam ab uno latere, alteram ab altero, singulis noctibus ut ab hominibus diffamaretur, a Deo vero cui nota fuerat conscientia ipsius et continentia copiosius in futurum remuneraretur, jacuisse describitur."—Girald. Cambrens. Gemm. Eccles. Dist. II. cap. xv.

³ Ecgberti Pœnitent. I. II. 3; IV. 2, 7, 8; V. 1-22.—Ejusd. Dialog. v. (Haddan & Stubbs, III. 406, 419-23).

of the Primitive Church, preserved the rule with equal reverence. At the request of a national council, St. Aldhelm addressed an epistle to the Welsh king, Geruntius, to induce him to reform his Church so as to bring it within the pale of Catholic unity. To accomplish this, he argues at length upon the points of difference, discussing the various errors of faith and discipline, such as the shape of the tonsure, the date of Easter, &c., but he is silent with regard to marriage or concubinage.¹ Had the Welsh Church been schismatic in this respect, so ardent a celibatarian as Aldhelm would certainly not have omitted all reference to a subject of so much interest to him. The inference is therefore justifiable that no difference of this nature existed.

We may fairly conclude that the discipline of the Church in these matters was reasonably well maintained by the Saxon clergy, with the exception of the monasteries, the morals of which institutions appear to have been deplorably and incurably loose. About the middle of the seventh century John IV. reproves the laxity of the Saxon monasticism, under which the holy virgins did not hesitate to marry.² In 734 we find Bede, in an epistle to Ecgberht of York, advising him to create suffragan bishoprics and to endow them from the monastic foundations, of which there were a countless number totally neglectful of all monastic discipline, whose reformation could apparently be accomplished in no other way.³ St. Boniface, whose zeal on the subject has already been sufficiently made manifest, about the year 746 paused in his reformation of the French priesthood to urge upon Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, the necessity of repressing the vices of the Saxon ecclesiastics. He dwells at considerable length upon their various crimes and mis-

¹ Epist. ad Geruntium.—Aldhelmi Opp. p. 83 (Ed. Oxon. 1844).

² Johan. PP. IV. Epist. iii.

³ Bedæ Epist. II.

demeanours—drunkenness, unclerical garments, neglect of their sacred functions, &c.—but he does not accuse them of unchastity, which he could not well have avoided doing had there been colourable grounds for such a charge. In fact, the only allusion connected with the question in his epistle is a request that some restrictions should be laid upon the permissions granted to women and nuns for pilgrimage to Rome, on account of the attendant dangers to their virtue; in illustration of which he states the lamentable fact that scarcely a city in Lombardy, France, or the Rhinelands but had Saxon courtesans derived from this source, to the shame and scandal of the whole Church.¹

Pope Zachary seconded these representations, and in 747 Cuthbert, yielding to the impulsion, held the celebrated Council of Clovesho, which adopted thirty canons on discipline, to remedy the disorders enumerated by Boniface. Among these, the only ones directed against unchastity relate solely to the nunneries, which were represented as being in a condition of gross immorality.² The council does not spare the vices of the secular clergy, and its silence with respect to their purity fairly permits the inference that there was not much to correct with regard to it, for had licentiousness been so prevalent that Cuthbert had feared to denounce it, or had sacerdotal marriage

¹ Bonifacii Epist. 105.

² Can. 20 directs greater strictness with regard to visitors, “unde non sint sanctimonialium domicilia turpium confabulationum, commensationum ebrietatum, luxuriantiumque cubilia.” Can. 28 orders that nuns after taking the veil shall not wear lay garments; and can. 29 that clerks, monks, and nuns shall not live with the laity. (Spelman. Concil. I. 250-4.—Haddan & Stubbs, III. 369, 374.)

This demoralisation of the nunneries is not to be wondered at when Boniface, in reproving Ethelbald, King of Mercia, for his evil courses, could say, “Et adhuc, quod pejus est, qui nobis narrant adjiciunt: quod hoc scelus maxime cum sanctis monialibus et sacratissimis Deo virginibus per monasteria commissum sit.” This sacrilegious licentiousness, indeed, would seem almost to have been habitual with the Anglo-Saxon reguli, for Boniface instances the fate of Ethelbald’s predecessor, Ceolred, and of Orsed of Northumbria, who had both come to an untimely end in consequence of indulgence in similar evil courses.—Bonifacii Epist. 19.

been passed over as lawful, the zeal of St. Boniface would have led to an explosion, and Zachary would not have sanctioned the proceedings by his approval.

The same argument is applicable to the Council of Chelsea, held in 787 by the legates of Adrian I., under the presidency of Gregory, Bishop of Ostia. The vices and shortcomings of the Anglican Church were there sharply reproved, but no allusion was made to any unchastity prevailing among the priesthood, with the exception, as before, of nuns, on whom we may infer that previous reformatory efforts had been wasted;¹ and in an epistle from Alcuin to Ethelred, King of Northumbria, near the close of the century there is the same reference to nuns, without special condemnation of the other classes of the clergy.² That this reticence did not arise from any license granted for marriage is conclusively shown by the interpolation of the word *laicus* in the text I. Cor. VII. 2, which is quoted among the canons adopted.³ To the same effect are the canons of the Council of Chelsea, in 816, in which the only allusion to such matters is a provision to prevent the election of unfit persons to abbacies, and to punish monks and nuns who secularise themselves.⁴

On the other hand, it is true that about this time St. Swithun, after obtaining orders, was openly married; but his biographer states that he had a special dispensation from Leo III., and that he consented to it because, on the death of his parents, he was the sole representative of his family.⁵ As Swithun was tutor to Ethelwulf, son of King Ecgberht, the papal condescension is by no means impossible.

¹ Concil. Celchyth. can. 15, 16 (Haddan & Stubbs, III. 455-6).

² Haddan & Stubbs, III. 493.

³ Propter fornicationem fugiendam unusquisque *laicus* suam uxorem legitimam habeat.—Concil. Celchyth. can. 16.

⁴ Concil. Celchyth. ann. 816 can. 4, 8 (Haddan & Stubbs, III. 580-3).

⁵ Goscelini Vit. S. Swithuni, c. 1, 2.

Such was the condition of the Anglo-Saxon Church at this period. During the century which follows, the materials for tracing the vicissitudes of the question before us are of the scantiest description. The occasional councils which were held have left but meagre records of their deliberations, with few or no references to the subject of celibacy. It is probable, however, that a rapid deterioration in the strictness of discipline occurred, for even the power of the great Bretwalda Ecgberht was unequal to the task of repressing effectually the first invasions of the Northmen, and under his feeblers successors they grew more and more destructive, until they culminated in the anarchy which gave occasion to the romantic adventures of Alfred.

It is to this period of darkness that we must attribute the introduction of sacerdotal marriage, which became so firmly established, and was finally so much a matter of course, that it attracted no special attention, until the efforts made for its abrogation late in the succeeding century. When Alfred undertook to restore order in his recovered kingdom, the body of the laws which he compiled contains no allusion to celibacy, except as regards the chastity of nuns. The same may be said of the Constitutions of Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury, to which the date of 943 is attributed, although they contain instructions as to the conduct of bishops, priests, and clerks¹—whence we may infer that the marriage even of consecrated virgins was not uncommon, and that it was the only infraction of the rule which aroused the opposition of the hierarchy. Simple immorality called forth an occasional enactment, as in the laws of Edward and Guthrun about the year 906, and in those of Edmund I. in 944,² yet even to this but little attention seems to have been

¹ Leg. Aluredi, c. 8, 18.—Constit. Odon. Cantuar. c. 7.

² Leg. Edwardi et Guthrun. c. 3.—Leg. Eadmund. Eccles. c. 1.

attracted, until St. Dunstan undertook a reformation which was sorely needed.

St. Dunstan himself, although regularly bred to the Church, with the most brilliant prospects both from his distinguished abilities and his powerful kindred, betrothed himself in marriage after receiving the minor orders. His uncle, St. Elphege, Bishop of Winchester—apparently a Churchman of the stricter school—vehemently opposed the union, but Dunstan was immovable in his determination. Elphege, finding his worldly wisdom set at nought, appealed to the assistance of Heaven. His prayer was answered, and Dunstan was attacked with a mysterious and loathsome malady, under which his iron resolution gave way. He sought Elphege, took the monastic vow (the only inseparable bar to matrimony), and was ordained a priest.¹ This stern experience might have taught him charity for the weakness of nature less unbending than his own, but his temperament was not one to pause half-way. If, too, religious conviction urged him to the task of restoring the forgotten discipline of the Church, worldly ambition might reasonably claim its share in his motives. He could not but feel that his authority would be vastly enhanced by rendering the great ecclesiastical body dependent entirely upon him as the representative of Rome, and by sundering the ties which divided the allegiance due wholly to the Church.

The opportunity to effect a reformation presented itself when the young king, Edgar the Pacific, in 963 violated all the dictates of honour and religion in his adventure with the nun at Wilton. Her resistance

¹ Bridfrit. Vit. S. Dunstan. c. 5, 7.—Bridfrith was a disciple of St. Dunstan, and composed his biography but a few years after the death of his patron. He does not state what was the position of Dunstan at the time of his betrothal; but Osbern, a hundred years later, asserts that he had acquired the lower orders only, and that he received the priesthood and took the monastic vows simultaneously.—Osbern Vit. S. Dunstan. c. 8, 12.

attested her innocence, and the birth of a daughter did not prevent her subsequent canonisation as St. Wilfreda; but Edgar's crime and remorse were only the more heightened. When the terror-stricken king sought pardon and absolution, Dunstan was prepared with his conditions. Seven years of penitence, during which he was to abstain from wearing the crown, was the personal infliction imposed on him, but the most important portion of the sentence was that by which the vices of the king were to be redeemed by the enforced virtues of his subjects. He promised the founding of monasteries and the reformation of the clergy; and his implicit obedience to the demands of his ghostly judge is shown, perhaps, less in the fact that his coronation did not take place until 973, than in the active measures immediately set on foot with respect to the morals of the ecclesiastics.¹

That their morals, indeed, needed reformation is the unanimous testimony of all the chroniclers of the period. Among all the monasteries of England, formerly so noted for their zeal and prosperity, only those of Glastonbury and Abingdon were inhabited by monks.² The rest had fallen into ruin, or were occupied by the secular clergy, with their wives, or worse, and were notorious as places of the most scandalous dissipation and disorder.³ So low was the standard of morality that priests even scrupled not to put away the wives of whom they grew tired, and

¹ Osbern. Vit. S. Dunstan. c. 35.—Florent. Wigorn. ann. 964, 973.—Matt. Westmonast. ann. 963.

² Vit. S. Æthelwoldi c. 14.

³ Si ista solerti scrutinio curassetis, non tam horrenda et abominanda ad aures nostras de clericis pervenissent . . . dicam dolens quo modo diffuant in commensationibus, in ebrietatibus, in cubilibus et impudiciis, ut jam domus clericorum putentur prostibula meretricum, conciliabulum histrionum . . . Ad hoc ergo exhaurerunt patres nostri thesauros suos? ad hoc fiscus regius, detractis redditibus multis elargitus est? ad hoc ecclesiis Christi agros et possessiones regalis munificentia contulit, ut deliciis clericorum meretrices ornentur? luxuriosæ convivæ præparentur? canes ac aves et talia ludicra comparabentur? Hoc milites clamant, plebs submurmurat, mimi cantant et saltant, et vos negligitis, vos parcitis, vos dissimulatis.—Oratio Edgari ann. 969 (Spelman Concil. I. 477).

to form new connections, of open and public adultery;¹ and so common had this become that a code of ecclesiastical law, probably drawn up about this time, reproves this systematic bigamy, and appears to tacitly authorise marriage as legitimate and honourable.² One author declares that none but paupers could be found willing to bind themselves by monastic vows;³ and another asserts, with every show of reason, that the clergy were not only not superior to the laity in any respect, but were even far worse in the scandals of their daily life.⁴

When King Edgar made his peace with the Church by consenting to the vicarious penitence of the priesthood, three rigid and austere monks were the ardent ministers of the royal determination. Of St. Dunstan, the primate of England, I have already spoken. St. Ethelwold, his pupil, Abbot of Abingdon, was elevated to the see of Winchester, and commenced the movement by expelling the occupants of the monastery there. A few who consented to take monastic vows were allowed to remain, and the remainder were replaced by monks; but even St. Ethelwold's rigour had to bend to the depravity of the age, and he was forced to relax the rigidity of discipline in non-essentials in order to obtain recruits of a better class.⁵ The difficulties he encountered are indicated by the legend which relates that he was poisoned in his wine and carried from table to his couch in excruciating torment, where he lay hopeless till,

¹ Vit. S. Æthelwold. c. 12.

² "Gif preost cwenan forlæte and oðre nime, anapema sit" (Leg. Presbyt. Northumbriens. c. 35). Spelman's translation of this, "Si presbyter concubinam suam dimiserit et aliam acceperit anathema sit" (Concil. I. 498), is perhaps hardly correct. Cwene can be interpreted in either a good or a bad sense, as a wife or a mistress; and the terms of the law show that the connection was a recognised one, the sin consisting in disregarding it. If the priest's companion were only a concubine, his guilt would not be measurably increased by merely changing his unlawful consort.

³ Chron. de Abbat. Abbendonæ (Chron. Abingdon. II. 279).

⁴ Osborni Vit. S. Dunstan. c. 36.

⁵ Chron. de Abbat. Abbendon. *loc. cit.*

reproaching himself with want of faith, he repeated the text—"Et si mortiferum quid biberint, non eis nocebitur," and was cured on the instant.¹ That his canons were quite capable of such an attempt may be assumed from the description given of them in the bull procured by Dunstan from John XIII., authorising their ejection by the king. The pope does not hesitate to stigmatise them as vessels of the devil, hateful to all good Christians on account of their inveterate and ineradicable wickedness.²

The third member of the reforming triumvirate was St. Oswald, Bishop of Worcester, who undertook a similar transformation of the clergy occupying the monastery of St. Mary in his cathedral city. Many promises they made to conform to his wishes, and many times they eluded the performance, till, losing patience with the prolonged procrastination, he one day entered the chapel with a quantity of monkish habits as they were vigorously chanting "*Servite Domino in timore*," when he made practical application of the text by forcing them to put on the garments and take the vows on the spot, under the alternative of instant expulsion.³

These proceedings met the unqualified approbation of Edgar, who in 964, by his "*Charter of Oswalde's Law*," confirmed the ejection of the recusants who refused to part with their wives, and transferred all their rights and possessions to the newcomers. In the same document he boasted that he had instituted forty-seven abbeys of monks and nuns, and that he hoped to increase the number to fifty.⁴ The same year a similar summary process was carried out in the convents of Chertsey and Winchester; ⁵ and in 966 Edgar was able to boast of the

¹ Vit. S. Æthelwold. c. 14, 15.

² Johannis PP. XIII. Epist. xxii.

³ Concil. sub Dunstano (Spelman I. 480).

⁴ Ædgari Charta de Oswalde's Law (Spelman I. 433).

⁵ Anglo-Saxon Chron. ann. 964.

numerous religious houses throughout England which he had purified by replacing lascivious clerks with pious monks.¹

These efforts, however, tended only to restore these monastic foundations to their original position, and left the secular clergy untouched, except in so far as a few of them were deprived of the comfortable quarters which they had usurped in the abbeys. This immunity it was no part of Dunstan's plan to permit, and accordingly Edgar issued a series of laws restoring the obsolete ecclesiastical discipline throughout his kingdom. By this code a lapse from virtue on the part of a priest or monk was visited with the same penalty as homicide, with a fast of ten years; for a deacon the period of penitence was seven years; for the lower grades, six years. The monk, priest, or deacon who maintained relations with his wife was subjected to the same punishment; but there is no mention of degradation or deprivation of benefice.²

The struggle was long, and at one time the three reformers seem to have grown wearied with the stubborn resistance which they met, while the zeal of King Edgar grew more fiery as, with the true spirit of the huntsman, he followed up the prey, his ardour increasing as the chase grew more difficult. In 969 he eloquently addressed Dunstan, Ethelwold, and Oswald, blaming their lukewarmness in the good cause, and promising them every support and assistance in removing this opprobrium from the Church.³ Stimulated by these reproaches, Dunstan summoned a council which adopted a canon depriving unchaste priests of their benefices.⁴ Still the conflict continued, and a charter dated in 974, the last year of

¹ Monach. Hydens. Leg. c. 8, 9 (Spelman I. 438).

² Canon. sub Edgardo—Mod. imponend. Pœnitent. c. 28, 29 (Thorpe II. 273).

³ Oratio Edgari (Spelman I. 476).

⁴ Spelman I. 479.

Edgar's reign, shows that he persevered to the end with unabated zeal.¹

The contumacious clerks may have been silenced; they were not subdued, and they but waited their opportunity. It came in 975, with the early death of Edgar and with the dissensions caused by his widow, Elfritha, who endeavoured to deprive of the succession his eldest son, the youthful Edward, fruit of a former marriage. During the confusion, the ejected priests banded together and bribed Elfhere, the powerful Ealdorman of Mercia, together with some other magnates, to espouse their cause. In many abbeys the regulars were expelled and the priests with their wives were reinstated. In East Anglia, however, the nobles took sides with the monks, and, rising in arms, valiantly defended the monasteries. At length, on the accession of Edward, a council was assembled to make final disposition of the question. The married priests were present, and promised amendment; their noble protectors pleaded earnestly for them; the boy-king was moved, and was about to pronounce in their favour, when a miracle preserved the purity of the Church. The council was sitting in the refectory of the monastery of Hyde, the headquarters of the ascetic party; Edward and Dunstan were enthroned separately from the rest, with their backs to a wall on which, between them, hung a small crucifix. At the critical moment, just as the king was yielding, the crucifix spoke, in a low tone inaudible to all save Edward and the primate, "Let not this thing be done"—the mandate was imperative, and the married clergy lost their cause.²

Still the stubborn priests and their patrons held out,

¹ Guillel. Malmesbur. Lib. II. c. 8.

² Florent. Wigorn. ann. 975.—Matt. Westmonast. Lib. III. c. 18.—Chron. Winton. (Spelman I. 490-2).

and another miracle was necessary—this time a more impressive one. A second council was called to discuss the matter, and was held at Calne in 978. During the heat of the argument the floor gave way, carrying with it the whole assembly, except St. Dunstan, who remained triumphantly and miraculously perched upon a joist, while his adversaries lay groaning below, in every variety of mutilation.¹ His triumph, however, was but short. The same year the pious child Edward perished through the intrigues of Elfritha, whose son, Ethelred the Unready, succeeded to the throne. The mixed political and religious character of these events is shown by the canonisation of Edward, who, though yet a child, was regarded as a martyr by the ascetics, whose cause he had espoused.

As Elfritha had evidently sought the alliance of the secular clergy to strengthen her party, her success proved disastrous to the cause of reform. The respite of peace, too, which had blessed the island during the vigorous reigns of Athelstan the Magnificent and Edgar the Pacific, gave place to the ravages invited by the feeble and vacillating policy of Ethelred the Unready; the incursions of the pagan Danes became more and more frequent and terrible; and what little respect had been inculcated for the strictness of discipline was speedily forgotten in the anarchy which ensued.

The efforts of the reformers appear to have extended even to the British churches of Wales, which had followed Saxon example in abandoning celibacy. The Brut y Tywysogion relates that about the year 861 the priests were forbidden to marry without dispensation from the pope; but they did not submit, and the disturbances

¹ Matt. Westmonast. Lib. III. c. 18. Henry of Huntingdon, however (Lib. v. ann. 978), who, as a secular priest and the son of a priest, did not look upon the labours of St. Dunstan with much favour, insinuates that the accident was intended to foreshow that the assembled wisdom and power of England were about to fall similarly from the grace of God.

thus provoked rendered necessary the abandonment of the effort, so that sacerdotal marriage remained unchecked.¹ We shall see hereafter that in the Principality the custom remained in full vigour until the thirteenth century was well advanced.

How thoroughly the work of Dunstan and Edgar was undone in England is sufficiently indicated by the efforts made not long after, with the consent of Ethelred, to introduce some feeble restraints upon the prevailing immorality. About the year 1006 we find the chief monastery of England, Christ Church at Canterbury, in full possession of the secular clergy, whose irregularities were so flagrant that even Ethelred was forced to expel them, and to fill their places with monks.² What was the condition of discipline among the secular priests may be guessed from the reformatory efforts of St. Ælfric, who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 995 to 1006. In his series of canons the first eight are devoted to inculcating the necessity of continence; after quoting the Nicene canon, he feels it to be so much at variance with the habits and customs of the age, that he actually deprecates the surprise of his clergy at hearing a rule so novel and so oppugnant to the received practice, "as though there was no danger in priests living as married men;" he anticipates the arguments which they will bring against him, and refutes them with more gravity than success.³ There is also extant, under the name of St. Ælfric, a pastoral epistle, which is regarded as supposititious by some critics; but its passages on this subject are too similar in spirit to the canons of Ælfric

¹ Haddan & Stubbs I. 286.

² Privileg. Reg. Ethelredi (Spelman I. 504).

³ Ælfrici Canon. c. i.-viii. (Thorpe II. 345). "*Quasi periculosum non esset sacerdotem vivere more conjugati. Sed dicetis eum haud posse carere muliebribus servitiis. Respondeo, quoniam pacto vitam transegerunt sancti olim viri absque femina vel uxore,*" &c. (Spelman I. 573). Spelman's MS. was defective; that in Thorpe is perfect.

to be reasonably rejected. They show how hopeless was the effort to maintain the purity desired by the ecclesiastical authorities, and that entreaties and exhortations were uttered merely from a sense of duty, and with hardly an expectation of commanding attention. "This, to you, priests, will seem grievous, because ye have your misdeeds in custom, so that it seems to yourselves that ye have no sin in so living in female intercourse as laymen; and say that Peter the Apostle had a wife and children. . . . Beloved, we cannot now forcibly compel you to chastity, but we admonish you, nevertheless, that ye observe chastity, so as Christ's ministers ought, in good reputation, to the pleasure of God."¹

That these well-meant homilies effected little in reforming the hearts of so obdurate a generation becomes manifest by the proceedings of the Council of Enham, held by King Ethelred in 1009. The priests are there entreated, by the obedience which they owe to God, to observe the chastity which they know to be due. Yet so great was the laxity prevailing that some are stated to have two or more wives, and many to be in the habit of changing their spouses at pleasure, in violation of all Christian law. The council was apparently, however, powerless to repress these scandals by an adequate punishment, and contented itself with promising to those who lived chastely the privileges and legal status of nobles, while the vicious were vaguely threatened with the loss of the grace of God and man.²

¹ Ælfric's Pastoral Epistle, c. 32, 33 (Thorpe II. 377).

² Omnes ministros Dei, præsertim sacerdotes, obsecramus et docemus, ut Deo obedientes, castitatem colant, et contra iram Domini se hoc modo muniant et tueantur. Certius enim norint quod non habeant debite ob aliquam coitus causam uxoris consortium. In more tamen est, ut quidam duas, quidam plures habeat; et nonnullus quamvis eam dimiserit quam nuper habuit, aliam tamen, ipsa vivente, accipit, quod nulla Christianorum lege est permissum. Dimittens autem et castitatem recolens, e caelo assequetur misericordiam, in mundo etiam venerationem, adeo ut iuribus et tributis habeatur Thaini dignus cum in vita tum in funere. Qui

The injunctions of the council as regards the regular clergy, though not particularly specific in their nature, show that even the monks had not responded to the benefits conferred upon them by Edgar the Pacific, nor fulfilled the expectations of the pious Dunstan. An expression employed, indeed, leads the learned Spelman to suggest that there possibly were two orders of monks, the one married and the other unmarried; but this is probably without foundation.¹

Such was the condition of the Church when the increasing assaults of the Northman finally culminated in overthrowing the house of Cerdic, and placing the hated Dane upon the throne of England. Cnut's long and prosperous reign, and his earnest veneration for the Church, as shown by his pilgrimage to Rome, may perhaps have succeeded in removing some of the grosser immoralities of the clergy, but that marriage was still openly and unrestrainedly practised by those in orders is evident. The ecclesiastical laws of Cnut exhort priests to chastity in precisely the same words, and with the same promises, as the canons of the Council of Enham, but do not allude to the habit of keeping a plurality

autem ordinis sui regulam abdicaverit, omni cum apud Deum tum apud homines gratia exuatur.—Concil. Ænham. c. 2 (Spelman I. 514–5).

I give the translation of Spelman, as being more faithful in spirit, although less literal than that of Thorpe; for though the expression "*wifes gemanan*" may not be especially limited to wifely relations, yet the whole tenor of the passage shows that the women concerned were not merely concubines, but were entitled to the consideration of legal wives.

Thethane-right promised to those who should reform their lives was one of the recognised privileges of the Church. In a list of *wer-gilds*, anterior to the period under consideration by about a century, the *wer-gild* for the priest—"mæsse-þegnes" is the same as that for the secular noble—"woruld-þegnes" (Thorpe I. 187).

¹ "*Munecas and mynecena canonicas and nunnan*" (Concil. Ænham. c. 1). Spelman thinks that the *mynecena* were perhaps the wives or concubines of monks (Concil. I. 530). *Mynecen* is merely the feminine of *munuc*, a monk; Thorpe translates it as "*myenchens*," and suggests that the "*mynecena*" were merely the younger nuns, not quite so strictly governed as the elder "*nunnan*." To this opinion Bosworth (Dictionary, s. v. *nunne*) seems to incline. It would appear to be so from chapter xv (be *Mynecen*) of the "*Institutes of Polity*" (Thorpe II. 322).

of wives; while, in the same chapter, a warning to the whole people against unlawful concubinage would seem to indicate that the clergy and laity were bound by rules identical in strictness.¹

That the rule of celibacy was recognised as only binding on the regulars, or monks, and that the secular priesthood were at full liberty to marry, is evident from the system of purgation enjoined on them by the same code. The priest, who was also a monk (*sacerdos regulariter vivens*—*sacerd þe regollice libbe*), could clear himself from an accusation in a simple suit by merely saying mass, and receiving communion, while the secular priest (*plebeius sacerdos*—*mæssepreost þe regol-lif næbbe*) is only equal to the deacon-monk (*diaconus regularis*—*diacon þe regollice libbe*), requiring two of his peers as compurgators.² The significance of the distinction thus drawn is rendered clear by the version of the passage in a curious Latin text of the code published by Kolderup-Rosenvinge. The chapter is divided into two, the first one with the rubric "*De Sacerdotibus*," and commencing "*Si contigerit presbyterum regulariter et caste viventem*," &c., while the second is headed "*De vulgare sacerdote non casto*," the meaning of which is defined in the expression "*Si vulgaris presbyter qui non regulariter vivit*."³ It is thus evident that purity was

¹ Cnutes Domas c. vi. (Thorpe I. 364).

² Cnutes Domas c. v. (Thorpe I. 362). To appreciate the full weight of the privileges thus distributed, we should bear in mind how completely, in those times, the various classes of society were distinguished by the facilities afforded them of acquittal in cases of accusation, and by the graduated scale of fines established for injuries inflicted on them. These were most substantial advantages when the wergild, or blood-money, was the only safeguard guaranteed by law for life and limb, and were most important privileges of the aristocracy. This constitutes the thane-right alluded to in the Council of Enham, and retained by the laws of Cnut, as attaching to priests who preserve their chastity. Thus "*sacramentum presbyteri regulariter viventis tantundem valeat sicut liberalis hominis*" (Cnuti Leg. Sæcul. c. 128—ed. Kolderup-Rosenvinge)—the expression "*liberalis homo*" being, in this version, used for the "*taynus*" or thane of the other texts.

³ Cnuti Leg. Eccles. c. 8, 9 (Kolderup-Rosenvinge, Hauniae, 1826, p. 12).

expected from those only who had entered into the obligations of monastic life, and also that the reforms of Dunstan had caused the ministers of the altar to be frequently selected from among the monks.

To this period are also, in all probability, to be attributed the "Institutes of Polity, civil and ecclesiastical," to which reference has been made in the preceding section as blaming priests for decorating their wives with the ornaments belonging to their churches. Unable to denounce efficient penalties for the prevention of such evil practices, the author is obliged to content himself with invoking future punishment from heaven, in vague and meaningless threats—"A priest's wife is nothing but a snare of the devil, and he who is ensnared thereby on to his end, he will be seized fast by the devil."¹

From all this it is evident that the memory of the ancient canons was not forgotten, and that their observance was still urged by some ardent Churchmen, but that the customs of the period had rendered them virtually obsolete, and that no sufficient means existed of enforcing obedience. If open scandals and shameless bigamy and concubinage could be restrained, the ecclesiastical authorities were evidently content. Celibacy could not be enjoined as a law, but was rendered attractive by surrounding it with privileges and immunities denied to him who yielded to the temptations of the flesh, and who thus in some degree assimilated his sacred character to that of the laity.

The Saxon Church thus was practically regardless of the rule of celibacy when Edward the Confessor ascended the throne. The ascetic piety of that prince and his

¹ *Institutes of Polity, &c.*, c. 16, 19, 23 (Thorpe II. 325, 329, 337). It is observable that the words *wif* and *cwene* are used interchangeably to denote the consorts of priests.

Norman education alike led him to abhor the sensual indulgences in which he found his subjects plunged, and he attached himself almost exclusively to the horde of Norman monks who flocked to his court from across the Channel. Their influence was all-powerful, and though reasons of the highest state necessity forced him to ally himself in marriage with Edith, daughter of the puissant Duke Godwin, whom Edward hated with all the energy of his feeble nature, it was not difficult for his artful ghostly counsellors to persuade him that a vow of virginity, taken and kept amid the seductions of a throne, would insure his glory in this world and his salvation in the next. A minstrel historian describes at length the engagement of perpetual chastity entered into between Edward and Edith at their marriage, and though he mentions the popular derision to which this exposed the royal monk at the hands of a gross and brutal generation, he is firmly persuaded that the crown of martyrdom was worthily won and worn—

Par veincre charnel desir,
 Bein deit estre clamez martir.
 Ne sai cunter en nul estoire
 Rei ki feist si grant victoire,
 Sa char, diable e mund venqui,
 Ki sont troi fort enimi.¹

How little the royal pair expected this example to be followed, and how relaxed were all the rules of monastic discipline, is shown by an anecdote of the period. The austere Gervinus, Abbot of St. Riquier in Ponthieu, was

¹ Lives of Edward the Confessor, pp. 60–1 (Chron. & Memor. of Gr. Brit.). In the same curious collection there is another life of Edward by a follower of Queen Edith, and dedicated to her, the writer of which freely attributes the worst motives to the intrigues of the Norman monks in separating her from the king. See, for instance, his account of her immurement in the abbey of Wilton (Op. cit. p. 403).

Edward's virginity is likewise attested by the MS. Monast. Ramesiens. (Spelman I. 637)—“*Cœlibem pudicitiae florem, quem inter regni delicias et inter amplexus conjugales . . . conservaret, virtutemque perpetuo floribus immiscuit paradisi.*” In this, however, Edward only imitated the asceticism ascribed to the Emperor St. Henry II. and his Empress St. Cunegunda, half a century earlier.

always welcomed by them when he visited England, and on one occasion Queen Edith offered to kiss him. The abbot's rigidity overcame his courtliness, and he refused the royal salutation, to the great indignation of the queen, who ordered certain gifts which she had set apart for him to be withdrawn. Edward, however, approved of the action of the monk, and after Edith had been made to understand his motives she not only joined in applauding him but demanded that a similar rule should be made imperative on all the monks of England.¹

It cannot be doubted that Edward made efforts to effect a reform among his sensual and self-indulgent subjects, but his want of success is developed in the description of the Saxon clergy at the time of the Conquest. The Norman chroniclers speak of them as abandoned to sloth, ignorance, and the lusts of the flesh; even monastic institutions were matters rather of tradition than of actual existence, and the monks themselves were hardly distinguishable by their mode of life from the laity.² There doubtless may be some contemptuous exaggeration in this, and yet one author of the period, who is wholly Saxon in his feelings, does not hesitate to attribute the ruin of the Saxon monarchy and the devastation of the kingdom to the just wrath of God, provoked by the vices of the clergy.³

The rule of the Normans removed England from her isolation. Brought into the commonwealth of Christendom and under the active supremacy of the Holy See, her history henceforth becomes more closely connected with the general ecclesiastical movement which received its irresistible impulsion about this period. That movement it is now our business to examine.

¹ Chron. Centulens. Lib. IV. c. xxii. (D'Achery II. 345).

² Orderic. Vital. P. II. Lib. iv. c. 10.—The testimony of William of Malmesbury (De Gest. Regum Lib. III.) is equally emphatic.

³ Lives of Edward the Confessor, p. 432.

CHAPTER XII

PETER DAMIANI

IN a previous section I have shown the laxity prevailing throughout Continental Europe at the commencement of the eleventh century. It is not to be supposed, however, that even where this was tacitly permitted it was openly and unreservedly authorised. The perversity of a sinful generation might render impossible the enforcement of the ancient canons; they might even be forgotten by the worldly and unthinking; but they were still the law of the Church, and their authority was still admitted by some ardent devotees who longed to restore the purity of earlier ages. Burckhardt, who was Bishop of Worms from the year 1000 to 1025, in his voluminous collection of canons, gives a fair selection from the councils and decretals prohibiting all female intercourse to the clergy.¹ Benedict VIII. and the Emperor St. Henry II.—whose admiration of virginity was evinced by the personal sacrifice to which reference has just been made—in 1022 endeavoured in the most solemn manner to reform the universal laxity. At the Synod of Pavia a series of canons was adopted pronouncing sentence of deposition upon all priests, deacons, and subdeacons having wives or concubines, and upon all bishops keeping women near them, while special stress was laid upon the continued servitude of the children of all such ecclesiastics as were serfs of the Church.² These canons, signed by the pope and attendant bishops, were laid before the emperor, who indorsed them with his sanction, declared

¹ Burchardi Decret. Lib. III. c. 108–116. ² Synod. Ticinens. ann. 1022 c. 1, 2, 3, 4.

them to be municipal as well as ecclesiastical law, promised that their observance should be enforced by the civil magistrates, and thanked Benedict and his prelates for their vigilance in seeking a remedy for the incontinence of the clergy, the evils whereof swept like a storm over the face of Christendom.¹

In France, the long reign of Robert the Pious seems to have been marked with almost entire indifference to the subject, but the accession of his son Henry I. was attended with a strenuous effort to effect a reform. The Council of Bourges, held in November 1031, but four months after the death of Robert, may perhaps have been assembled at the request of the dying monarch, desirous of redeeming his own sins with the vicarious penance of his subjects. It addressed itself vigorously to eradicating the evil by a comprehensive series of measures, admirably adapted to the end in view. Priests, deacons, and subdeacons were forbidden to have wives or concubines, and all such consorts were ordered to be dismissed at once and for ever. Those who refused obedience were to be degraded to the rank of lectors or chanters, and in future no ecclesiastic was to be permitted to take either wife or concubine. A vow of chastity was commanded as a necessary pre-requisite to assuming the subdiaconate, and no bishop was to ordain a candidate without exacting from him a promise to take neither wife nor concubine. Children of the clergy in orders, born during the ministry of their parents, were pronounced incapable of entering the Church, in justification of which was cited the provision of the municipal law which incapacitated illegitimates from receiving inheritance or bearing witness in court; but those who were born after their fathers had been reduced to the condition of laymen were not to be considered as the

¹ Respons. Imperatoris in Synod. Ticinens.

children of ecclesiastics.¹ As this is apparently the earliest instance of a vow of chastity being imposed in conferring orders, it is as well to remark that this precaution has never been adopted by the Church, but such a duty is considered as implied, and became what was known in the schools as a *votum adnexum*.²

Nothing could be more reasonable than these provisions of the council, considered from the high-church standpoint, and nothing better adapted to effect the object in view. All that was wanting was the enforcement of the legislation—and laws, when opposed to the spirit of the age, are not apt to be enforced. How much was really gained by the united efforts of the pope, the emperor, and the Gallican hierarchy can readily be gathered from a few out of innumerable incidents afforded by the history of the period.

The able and energetic, though unscrupulous, Benedict VIII. was no more, and the great House of Tusculum, which ruled the Eternal City, had filled the chair of St. Peter with a worthless scion of their stock, as though to declare their contempt for the lofty pretensions of the Apostolic Episcopate. A fit descendant of the infamous Marozia and Alberic, Benedict IX., a child of ten years old at the time of his elevation in 1032, grew up in unrestrained license, and shocked even the dull sensibilities of a gross and barbarous age by the scandals of his daily life.³ The popular appreciation of his character is shown by the legend of his appearing after death to a holy man, in the figure of a bear, with the

¹ Concil. Bituricens. ann. 1031 c. 5, 6, 8, 10.

² *Quamvis enim qui in sacris ordinibus constituuntur verbis non voveant, quia tamen tale quid in se suscipiunt cui perpetuum castitatis votum adnexum est, quasi solemnī voto tenentur advēxi.*—Stephani Tarnacensis Summa Caus. XXVIII. Q 1 (Ed. Fr. v. Schulte, Giessen, 1891, p. 233).

³ *Quoniam infelicem habuit introitum, infeliciorem persensit exitum. Horrendum quippe referri turpitudine illius conversationis et vitæ.*—Rad. Glabri Lib. v. c. 5. *Vide* also "The Life and Times of Hildebrand," vol. i., by the Abbé O. Délaré.

ears and tail of an ass, and declaring that, as he had lived in bestiality, so he was destined to wear the form of a beast and to suffer fiery torments until the Day of Judgment, after which he was to be plunged, body and soul, into the fathomless pit of hell.¹ When the Vicegerent of God, the head of the Christian Church, was thus utterly depraved, the prospect of reforming the corruption of the clergy was not promising, and the good work was not likely to be prosecuted with vigour.

Nor were the members of the hierarchy unworthy of their superior. We hear of Rainbaldo, Bishop of Fiesole, who, not contented with numerous concubines, had publicly married a wife, and whose children were established as a widespread and powerful family—and, what is perhaps more remarkable, this dissolute prelate was gifted with the power of working miracles.² The bishops, indeed, at this period, were still rather warrior nobles than Christian ministers. Bisantio, the good Bishop of Bari, is praised quite as much for his terrible prowess in battle as for his pious benevolence and munificence; and on his death, in 1035, his flock chose a military official as his successor.³

Descending in the scale, we may instance the priest Marino, who, though he lived openly with his wife, was a noted miracle-worker. Among quaint wonders wrought by him it is recorded that water rendered holy by his blessing, when sprinkled over the cornfields, had the power of driving away all caterpillars and other noxious insects. His child, Eleuchadio, was a most venerable man, who subsequently as abbot of the monastery of the Virgin at Fiano, won the esteem and respect of

¹ Johann. Chron. Angliæ c. 47 (Ludewig *Rer. Monachorum*, XII. 145).—*Semper enim luxuriæ et carnalibus illecebris deditus fuit.*

² P. Damiani *Opusc.* VI. c. 18.

³ *Annal. Barenses ann.* 1035.—Shortly after this, we hear of two bishops killed in battle (*Ibid.* ann. 1041).

even the stern Damiani himself.¹ In fact, the pious Desiderius, Abbot of Monte Cassino, better known as pope under the name of Victor III., declares that throughout Italy, under the pontificate of Benedict, all orders, from bishops down, without shame or concealment, were publicly married and lived with their wives as laymen, leaving their children fully provided for in their wills; and what rendered the disgrace more poignant was the fact that the scandal was greatest in Rome itself, whence the light of religion and discipline had formerly illuminated the Christian world.² Another contemporary writer asserts that this laxity prevailed throughout the whole of Latin Christendom, sacerdotal marriage being everywhere so common that it was no longer punished as unlawful, and scarcely even reprehended.³

In becoming thus universal and tacitly permitted it was not incompatible with the most fervent piety; and though it may be an evidence of hierarchical disorganisation, it can no longer be considered as indicating of itself a lowered standard of morals in the ministers of the Church. This is forcibly illustrated in the case of St. Procopius, selected by Duke Ulrich of Bohemia as the first abbot of the monastery of Zagow. He was regularly bred to the Church under the care of Bishop Quirillus, and was noted for the rectitude of his deportment in the priesthood; yet we learn that he was married during this period, when we are told that, on being disgusted with the hollow vanities of the world, he abandoned wife and friends for the solitude of a hermit's cave. Here an accidental meeting with Duke Ulrich,

¹ P. Damiani, loc. cit.

² Desiderii Dialog. de Mirac. S. Benedict. Lib. III. (Muratori, S.R.I. V. 396).

³ John, a disciple of St. Peter Damiani, in alluding to the prevailing twin vices of simony and marriage, says: "*Quæ videlicet pestes tam perniciose consuetudine prævaluerant, tamque impune totam ferme ecclesiam in omni Romano orbe fædaverant, ut vix jam reprehensorem, tamquam licite, formidarent.*"—Vit. S. P. Damiani c. 16.

while hunting, led to the foundation of Zagow and to the installation of Procopius as its head.¹

Silently the Church seemed to acquiesce in the violation of her canons, until, at length, she appeared content if her ministers would satisfy themselves with reputable marriage and avoid the grosser scandals. When Ulrich, Abbot of Tegernsee, about 1041, deplored the evil influence of a priest who had two wives living, he seems to have felt that lawful marriage might be tolerated, but that polygamy was of evil example in a Christian pastor.² So when Albert the Magnificent, Archbishop of Hamburg, was accustomed to exhort his clergy to continence and to shun the pestiferous society of women, his worldly wisdom prompted him to add that, if they were unequal to the effort, they should at least keep unsullied the bonds of marriage and should live "si non caste, tamen caute."³

If irregularities such as these existed, they are not justly imputable to the Church itself. It can scarcely be a matter of wonder if the clergy, in assimilating themselves to the laity as regards the liberty of wedlock, should also have adopted the license which in that lawless age rendered the marriage-tie a slender protection for the weakness of woman. Though it was indissoluble according to the teachings of religion, yet the Church, which at that time was the only protector of the feeble against the strong, had not acquired the commanding authority which subsequently enabled it to enforce its decrees everywhere and on all occasions. If, under a vigorous pope, the sentence of excommunication had been able to frighten a superstitious monarch like Robert the Pious, yet the pontiffs of the House of Tusculum

¹ Cosmæ Pragens. Chron. Boem. Lib. III. (Mencken. Script. Rer. German. III. p. 1782).

² Batthyani Leg. Eccles. Hung. I. 335.

³ Adam. Bremens. Gest. Pontif. Hammaburg. Schol. ad cap. 29 Lib. III.

were not men to trouble themselves, or to be successful had they made the attempt, to rectify the wrongs perpetrated in every obscure baronial castle or petty hamlet in Europe. The isolation and independence of the feudal system made every freeman, so to speak, the arbiter of his own actions. The wife whose charms ceased to gratify the senses of her husband, or whose temper threatened to disturb his equanimity, stood little chance of retaining her position, if an opportunity offered of replacing her to advantage, unless she was fortunate in having kindred able to resent the wrong which the Church and the law were powerless to prevent or to punish.¹ If, then, the clergy occasionally indulged in similar practices, the evil is not attributable to the license of marriage which they had usurped. That license had, at all events, borne some fruits of good, for, during its existence, we hear somewhat less of the system of concubinage so prevalent before and after this period, and there is no authentic indication of the nameless horrors so suggestively intimated by the restrictions on the residence of relatives enjoined in the frequent canons promulgated at the close of the ninth century.

It is not to be supposed, however, that the race of ascetics was extinct. Amid the license which prevailed in every class, there were still some men who, disgusted with the turbulent and dissolute world, despairing of salvation among the temptations and trials of active life or the sloth and luxury of the monastic establishments, sought the path to heaven in solitude and maceration.

¹ Perhaps as suggestive an illustration of the morals and manners of the age as can well be given is afforded by a deed executed in 1055 by a noble count of Catalonia on the occasion of his marriage. He pledges himself not to cast off his bride, except for infidelity—such infidelity not being plotted for by him—and to secure the performance of this promise he places in the hands of his father-in-law four castles, to be held in pledge, subject to forfeiture in case of his violating the agreement (Baluz. Capit. Francor. Append. Actor. Vet. No. 148).

Such men could not but look with detestation on the worldly priests who divided their thoughts between their sacred calling and the cares of an increasing household, and who profaned the unutterable mysteries of the altar with hearts and hands not kept pure from the lusts of the flesh.

Prominent among these holy anchorites was S. Giovanni Gaulberto, who fled from the snares of the world to the forests of Camaldoli, where his austerities, his holiness, and his miracles soon attracted crowds of disciples, who formed a numerous community of humble imitators of his virtues. Restoring in its strictness the neglected Rule of Benedict, his example and his teaching wrought conviction, and the order of monks which he founded and carried with him to the peaceful shades of Vallombrosa became renowned for its sanctity and purity. Thus withdrawn by the will of Heaven from the selfish egotism of a hermit's existence, he laboured earnestly to reform the laxity of priestly life in general, and his success was most encouraging. Moved by his admonitions, self-indulgent clerks abandoned wives and mistresses, devoted themselves to the performance of their sacred functions, or sought in monastic seclusion to make atonement for their past excesses.¹

Though it may well be supposed that Gaulberto was not unassisted in his efforts, yet all such individual exertions, dependent upon persuasion alone, could be but limited in their influence and temporary in their results. Reform, to be universal and permanent, required to be authoritative in its character, and to proceed from above downward. The papacy itself must cease to be a scandal to Christendom, and must be prepared to wield the awful force of its authority, seconded by the moral weight of its example, before disorders so firmly rooted could be

¹ Atton. Vit. S. Johannis Gualbert. c. 31.

attacked with any hope of success. In 1044, Benedict IX. was driven out of Rome by a faction of rebels or patriots, who elected Silvester III. as pontiff in his place. A sudden revolution sent Silvester into exile, and brought Benedict back, who, to complete the confusion, sold the papal dignity to a new aspirant, known as Gregory VI. The transaction was not one which could decently be recognised by the Church, and Benedict was held incapable of thus transferring the allegiance of Christendom, or of depriving himself of his position. There were thus three popes, whose conflicting claims to reverence threw all Europe into the doubt and danger of schism, nor could the knotty question be solved by the power of distracted Italy. A more potent judge was required, and the decision was referred, as a matter of course, to the sagacious and energetic Emperor, Henry the Black, whose success in repressing the turbulence of the empire, and whose sincere reverence for the Church, gave reasonable promise of a happy solution of the tangled problem.¹ His proceeding was summary. The three competitors were unceremoniously dismissed, and Henry filled the vacancy thus created by the appointment of Suidger, Bishop of Bamberg, who assumed the name of Clement II.

Henry III. was moved by a profound conviction that a thorough and searching reform was vitally necessary to the Church. The conscientious severity of his character led him to have little toleration for the abuses and dis-

¹ The popular feelings which greeted his interposition are well conveyed in the jingle verse addressed to him by a holy hermit—

Una Sunamitis nupsit tribus maritis ;
Rex Henrice, Omnipotentis vice,
Solve connubium, triforme, dubium.

(Annalista Saxo, ann. 1046.)

The invitation to interfere, however, was not needed. Henry's prerogative as the representative of Charlemagne and Otho the Great was sufficient warrant, and his religious ardour an ample motive, without any special reference to his tribunal.

orders which were everywhere so painfully apparent. How far his views were in advance of those generally entertained, even by ecclesiastical dignitaries, was clearly manifested as early as 1042, when Gebhardt, Bishop of Ratisbon, urged the claims of his favourite arch-priest Cuno for the vacant see of Eichstedt. Henry refused on the ground that Cuno was the son of a priest, and therefore by the established canons ineligible to the position. The reason, though unanswerable, was so novel that Gebhardt refused to accept it as the true one, and Henry, to pacify him, promised to nominate any other one of the Ratisbon clergy whom Gebhardt might select. The choice fell upon a young and unknown man, also named Gebhardt, whose abilities, brought into notice thus accidentally, rendered him afterwards more conspicuous as Pope Victor II.¹

Henry did not neglect the opportunity now afforded him of carrying into effect his reformatory views, and in his selection of a pontiff he was apparently influenced by the conviction that the Italian clergy were too hopelessly corrupt for him to expect from them assistance in his plans. Clement exchanged with him promises of mutual support in the arduous undertaking. We have nothing to do with the most crying evil; the one first vigorously attacked, and the one which was productive of the greatest real detriment to the Church—simony. That was everywhere open and avowed. From the blessing of the priest to the nomination for a primacy, every ecclesiastical act was the subject of bargain and sale, reduced in many places to a regular scale of prices.² To

¹ Anon. de Episcop. Eichstett. c. 34 (Patrolog. T. 146, pp. 1021-2).

² It would be a work of supererogation to quote the innumerable evidences of this which crowd the pages of contemporary writers. The generalising remark of Glaber will suffice—"Omnes quippe gradus ecclesiastici a maximo pontifice usque ad hostianum opprimuntur per suæ damnationis precium, ac juxta vocem Dominicam in cunctis grassatur spiritale latrocinium."—Glab. Rodolph. Hist. Lib. v. c. 5.

remove this scandal, Clement set vigorously to work, and soon found an united opposition which promised little for the success of the undertaking. He was doubtless sincere, but he was clearly alone in his struggle with the fierce Italian prelates, who were resolved not to abandon the emoluments and indulgences to which they had grown accustomed, and the result of his efforts did not fulfil the expectations of the more sanguine aspirants for the purification of the Church. Even his patron the emperor appears to have doubted his earnestness in the cause, for we find Henry not only addressing him a letter urging him to fresh exertion, but entrusting it to Peter Damiani, with a command to present it in person, and to use all his powers of exhortation to stimulate the flagging zeal of the Pope. Damiani refused to leave his hermitage even at the imperial mandate, but he enclosed the missive in one of his own, deploring the unhealed wounds of the Church, recapitulating the shortcomings of Clement, and goading him to fresh efforts, in a style which savoured little of the reverence due to the Vicegerent of God.¹ The pontifical crown was evidently not a wreath of roses. Clement sank under its weight, and died 9th October 1047, in less than ten months after he had accepted the perilous dignity.

St. Peter Damiani, who thus introduces himself to our notice, was one of the remarkable men of the epoch. Born about the year 988 at Ravenna, of a noble but decayed family, and the last of a numerous progeny, he owed his life to a woman of the very class to the extirpation of which he devoted all the energies of his prime. His mother, worn out in the struggle with poverty, regarded his birth with aversion, refused to suckle the infant saint, and neglected him until his forlorn and

¹ Damiani Lib. VIII. Epist. 3.

emaciated condition awoke the compassion of a female retainer, the wife of a priest, who remonstrated with the unfeeling parent until she succeeded in arousing the sense of duty, and restored to existence the little sufferer, who was destined to bring unnumbered woes to all who were of her condition.¹ His early years are said to have been passed as a swineherd, till the opportunity for instruction offered itself, which he eagerly embraced. Retiring at length from the world, he joined the disciples of St. Romuald, who practised the strictest monastic life, either as monks or hermits, at Avellana, near Gubbio. Immuring himself there in the desert, his austerities soon gained for him the reputation of pre-eminent sanctity, and led to his election as prior of the brotherhood. Gifted by nature with an intellect of unusual strength, informed with all the learning of the day, his stern asceticism, his dauntless spirit, and the uncompromising force of his zeal brought him into notice, and marked him as a fitting instrument in the cause of reform. Occasionally, at the call of his superiors, he left his beloved retreat to do battle with the hosts of evil, returning with renewed zest to the charms of solitude, until, in 1057, Stephen IX. forced him to accept the cardinalate and bishopric of Ostia—the highest dignity in the Roman court. The duties of his episcopate, however, conflicted with his monastic fervour, and after a few years he rendered up the pastoral ring and staff and again returned to Avellana, where he died in 1072, full of years and honours. His position and authority can best be estimated from the terms employed by Alexander II., who, when sending him on an important mission to France, described him as next in influence to himself in the Roman Church, and the chief support of the Holy See.²

¹ *Johannis Vit. B. P. Damiani* c. 1.

² *Alex. II. Epist.* 15.

With a nature ardent and combative, worked up to the highest pitch of ascetic intolerance by the introspective musings of his cell, it may readily be conceived that the corruptions of the Church filled him with warm indignation and fierce desire to restore it to its pristine purity. To this holy cause he devoted the last half of his life, and was always ready, with tongue and pen, at the sacrifice of his dearly prized solitude, to further the great movement on which he felt that the future of Christianity depended. The brief hopes excited by the promises of Clement and Henry were speedily quenched by the untimely death of the German pontiff, and the most sanguine might well despair at seeing the odious Benedict IX. reinstated as pope. But the emperor was in earnest, and listened willingly to the cry of those who besought him not to leave his work unfinished. Nine brief months saw Benedict again a wanderer, and another German prelate installed in his place. Poppo of Brixen, however, enjoyed his new dignity, as Damasus II., but twenty-one days, when he fell a martyr to the cause, perishing miserably, either through the insalubrious heats of a Roman summer, or the hidden vindictiveness of Italian party rage. It required some courage to accept the honourable but fatal post, and six months elapsed ere a worthy candidate could be found. Henry's choice fell this time upon Bruno of Toul, a prelate to whom admiring biographers ascribe every virtue and every qualification. As Leo IX. he ascended the pontifical throne in February 1049, and he soon gave ample evidence of the sincerity with which he intended to carry out the views of the puritans whom he represented.

It was significant that he took with him to Rome the monk Hildebrand, lately released from the service of his master Gregory VI., who had died in his German exile, restored by a miracle at his death to the honours

of which he had been adjudged unworthy while living.¹ Still more significant was the fact that Leo entered Rome, not as pope, but as a barefooted pilgrim, and that he required the empty formality of an election within the city, as though the nomination of the emperor had given him no claim to his high office. Whether this was the result of a voice from heaven, as related by the papal historians,² or whether it was done at the suggestion of the high Churchman Hildebrand, it showed that the new pontiff magnified his office, and felt that the line of distinction between the clerk and the layman was to be sharply drawn and vigorously defended.

Damiani lost no time in stimulating the stranger to the duties expected of him by the party of reform. From the retreat of Avellana he addressed to Leo an essay, which is the saddest of all the sad monuments bequeathed to us by that age of desolation. With cynical boldness he develops the frightful excesses epidemically prevalent among the cloistered crowds of men, attributable to the unnatural restraints imposed upon the passions of those unfitted by nature or by training to control themselves; and his laborious efforts to demonstrate the propriety of punishing the guilty by degradation shows how hideous was the laxity of morals which was disposed to regard such crimes with indulgence.³ Like the nameless horrors of the Penitentials, it is the most convincing commentary on the system which sought

¹ Learning, on his death-bed, that he was not to be buried as a pope, he requested the prelates around him to place his coffin at the church door securely fastened, and if the portals opened without human hands, it would be a sign that he should receive papal honours. It was done, when a gust of wind burst open the door and lifted the coffin from the bier (Martin. Fuldens. Chron. ann. 1046).

² Martin. Fuldens. ann. 1050.

³ Damiani Opusc. VII. (Liber Gomorrhianus).—Some ten or twelve years later, Alexander II. obtained the manuscript from Damiani, under pretence of having it copied, but prudently locked it up and refused to return it. The saintly author complained bitterly of the deception thus practised upon him, which he unceremoniously characterised as a fraud (Damiani Lib. II. Epist. 6).

to enforce an impossible exaltation of purity on the ministers of a religion whose outward formalism had absorbed its internal life.¹

Leo IX. was not long in manifesting his intentions, and his first point of attack was chosen with some skill, the ecclesiastical rank of the victim and his want of power rendering him at once a striking example and an easy sacrifice. Dabralis, Archbishop of Salona (or Spalatro) in Dalmatia, was married and lived openly with his wife. Leo sent a legate to investigate and punish. Called before a synod, Dabralis could not or deigned not to deny his guilt, but boldly justified it, as the woman was his lawful wife, and he instanced the customs of the Greek Church in his defence. This only aggravated his guilt, and he was promptly degraded for ever.²

Leaving, for a time, the Italian Church for subsequent efforts at reformation, Leo undertook a progress throughout Northern Europe, for the purpose of restoring the neglected discipline of those regions. Before the year of his installation had expired, in November 1049, we find him presiding with the emperor at a council in Mainz, where the simony and marriage of the clergy

¹ The world can never know the long and silent suffering endured in the terrible self-combat of ardent natures in the solitude of the cloister. If many succumb, the indignation which Damiani and his class so freely bestow on the victims should be transferred rather to the system which produces them. A monk of the period has left us a vivid and curious picture of his own tortures in the endless struggle with the tempter; and the mental torments to which his fellow-unfortunates were exposed are aptly condensed in the simple tale of the Abbess Sarah, who for thirteen long years maintained her ground without shrinking from the ceaseless assaults of the enemy by continually invoking the aid of God—"Da mihi fortitudinem Deus!" (Othlon. de Tentat. suis, P. I.) nb

The hagiology of the Church is full of legends, more or less veritable, of the sufferings of these martyrs and of their triumphs over the flesh, from the time of St. Ammonius, who, when less decisive measures failed, bored his flesh in many places with red-hot iron, and thus vanquished passion by suffering. A collection of these stories, more curious than decent, may be found admirably detailed by Giraldus Cambrensis in his *Gemma Ecclesiastica*, Dist. II.

² Batthyani Leg. Eccles. Hung. I. 401.

were condemned under severe penalties.¹ That the influence thus brought to bear had some effect, at least in externals, is shown by the courtly Albert of Hamburg, who, on returning from the council to his see, revived a forgotten regulation of his predecessors, in virtue of which the women of ecclesiastics were ordered to live outside of the towns, in order to avoid public scandal.² A few weeks before, in France, Leo had presided over a national council at Rheims, where his vigorous action against simony caused numerous vacancies in the hierarchy. The records and canons of this council contain no allusions to the subject of marriage or concubinage, but it is altogether improbable that they escaped attention, for they were indulged in without concealment by all classes of ecclesiastics, and some subsequent writers assert that they were rigorously prohibited by the council, but that the injunctions promulgated were unavailing.³

Returning to the South, the Easter of 1051 beheld a council assembled at Rome for the purpose of restoring discipline. Apparently, the Italian prelates were disposed to exercise considerable caution in furthering the wishes of their chief, for they abstained from visiting their indignation on the guilty priests, and directed their penalties against the unfortunate females. In the city itself these were declared to be enslaved, and were

¹ Adami Bremens. Gest. Pontif. Hammaburg. Lib. III. c. 29.—*Annalista Saxo*, ann. 1048.

² Adam. Bremens. loc. cit.

³ Tunc quippe in Neustria, post adventum Normannorum, in tantum dissoluta erat castitas clericorum, ut non solum presbyteri sed etiam præsules libere uterentur toris concubinarum, et palam superbirent multiplici propagine filiorum ac filiarum. . . . Tandem . . . Leo Papa . . . in Gallias A.D. 1049 venit. . . . Tunc ibidem (Remis) generale concilium tenuit, et inter reliqua ecclesiæ commoda quæ instituit, presbyteris arma ferre et conjuges habere prohibuit. Arma quidem ferre presbyteri jam gratanter desiere, sed a pellicibus adhuc nolunt abstinere, nec pudicitia in-hærere.—Orderic. Vital. P. II. Lib. v. c. 15.—This portion of the work of Ordericus was written about the year 1125.

Ibi vero simoniaci, tam populares quam clerici, presbyterique uxorati, persuasione sancti Hugonis, a catholicorum communione et ab ecclesiis eliminati sunt.—Alberic. Trium Fontium Chron. ann. 1049.

bestowed on the cathedral church of the Lateran, while all bishops throughout Christendom were desired to apply the rule to their own dioceses, and to seize the offending women for the benefit of their churches.¹ The atrocity of this legislation against the wives of priests is all the more noteworthy when contrasted with the tenderness shown to worse crimes committed by men whose high position only rendered their guilt the more heinous. At this council, Gregory, Bishop of Vercelli, was convicted of what, by the rules of the Church, was considered as incest—an amour with a widow betrothed to his uncle. For this aggravated offence he was merely excommunicated, and when, soon after, he presented himself in Rome, he was restored to communion on his simple promise to perform adequate penance.²

The reformatory zeal of Leo and of the monastic followers of Damiani was thus evidently not seconded by the Italian Church. A still more striking proof of this was afforded by the attempt to hold a council at Mantua early in 1053. The prelates who dreaded the result conspired to break it up. A riot was provoked between their retainers and the papal domestics; the latter, taken unawares and speedily overpowered, fled to the council-chamber for safety, and Leo, rushing to the door to protect them, was in imminent danger from the arrows and stones which hurtled thickly around him.³ The reckless plot succeeded, and the council dispersed in undignified haste. Whether Leo was disgusted with his want of success and convinced of the impracticability of the undertaking, or whether his attention was

¹ Damiani Opusc. XVIII. Diss. ii. c. 7.—It was probably some vague recollection of this provision, combined with the regulations adopted at Pavia in 1022 (p. 206) that led Dr. Martin, one of the commissioners who presided at the trial of Archbishop Cranmer, to declare to that unhappy culprit that “his children were bondmen to the see of Canterbury.”—*Strype, Memorials of Cranmer*, Book III. chap. 27.

² Herman. Contract. Chron. ann. 1051.

³ Muratori Annali, ann. 1053.

thenceforward absorbed by his unlucky military operations against the rapidly augmenting Norman power in Southern Italy, it is not easy now to ascertain: suffice it to say that no further indications remain of any endeavour to carry out the reforms so eagerly commenced in the first ardour of his pontificate. The consistent Damiani opposed the warlike aspirations of the pontiff, but Leo persisted in leading his armies himself. A lost battle threw Leo into the power of the hated Normans, when, after nine months, he returned to Rome to die, in April 1054, and to be revered as a saint after death by those who had withstood him during life in every possible manner.¹

It is not easy to repress a smile on seeing Leo, who had been so utterly unable to enforce the canons of the Latin Church at home, seriously undertaking to procure their adoption in Constantinople. From his prison, in January 1054, he sent Cardinal Humbert of Silva Candida on a mission to convert the Greek Church. There is extant a controversy between the legate and Nicetas Pectoratus, a learned Greek abbot, on the various points in dispute. I cannot profess to decide which of the antagonists had the advantage on the recondite questions of the use of unleavened bread, the Sabbath fasts, the calculation of Easter, &c., but the contrast between the urbanity of the Greek and the coarse vituperation of the Latin is strikingly suggestive as a tacit confession of defeat on the part of the latter. In view of the frightful immorality of the Italian clergy, there is something peculiarly ludicrous in the mingled anger, contempt, and abhorrence with which Humbert alludes to the marriage of the Greek clergy, which, as he declares, renders their Church the synagogue of Satan and the brothel of Balaam and Jezebel, with other equally

¹ S. Leonis PP. IX. Mirac. (Migne's Patrolog. CXLIII. 525 sqq.).

courteous and convincing arguments. Humbert attributes priestly marriage altogether to the heresy of the Nicolites, and lays down the law on the subject as inexorably as though it were at the time observed in his own Church.¹

After an interval of about a year, the line of German pontiffs was continued in the person of Gebhardt, Bishop of Eichstedt (Victor II.), whose appointment by the emperor was owing in no small degree to the influence of Hildebrand—an influence which was daily making itself more felt. Installed in the pontifical seat by Godfrey, Duke of Tuscany, his efforts to continue the reformation commenced by his predecessors aroused a stubborn resistance. There may be no foundation for the legend of his being saved by a miracle from a sacramental cup poisoned by a vengeful subdeacon, nor for the rumours that his early death was hastened by the recalcitrant clergy who sought to escape the severity of his discipline. There is some probability in the stories, however, for, during his short pontificate, interrupted by a lengthened stay in Germany and the perpetual vicissitudes of the Neapolitan troubles, he yet found time to hold a synod at Florence, where he degraded numerous prelates for simony and licentiousness; but, whether true or false, the existence of the reports attests at once the sincerity of his zeal and the difficulties of the task.²

His death in July 1057 was followed after but a few days' interval by the election of Frederic, Duke of Lorraine—the empire having passed in 1056 from the able hands of Henry III. to the feeble regency of his empress, Agnes, as guardian of the unfortunate infant Henry IV.—thus releasing the Roman clergy from the degrading

¹ Humberti Card. contra Nicetam xxv, xxvi.

² Lambert. Schaffnab. ann. 1054.—Martin. Polon. ann. 1057.

dictation of a Teutonic potentate. That Frederic should have abandoned the temptations and ambitions of his lofty station to embrace the austerities of monastic life in the abbey of Monte Cassino, is a sufficient voucher that he would not draw back from the work thus far hopelessly undertaken by his predecessors. Notwithstanding the severity of the canons promulgated during the previous decade, and the incessant attempts to enforce them, Rome was still full of married priests, and the battle had to be recommenced, as though nothing had yet been done. Immediately on his installation, as Stephen IX., he addressed himself unshrinkingly to the task. For four months, during the most unhealthy season, he remained in Rome, calling synod after synod, and labouring with both clergy and people to put an end to such unholy unions,¹ and he summarily expelled from the Church all who had been guilty of incontinence since the prohibitions issued in the time of Leo.² One case is related of a contumacious priest whose sudden death gave him the opportunity of striking terror into the hearts of the reckless, for the mutilated funeral rites which deprived the hardened sinner of the consolation of a Christian burial it was hoped would prove an effectual warning to his fellows.³ Feeling the necessity of support in these thankless labours, he forced Damiani to leave the retirement of the cloistered shades of Avellana, and to bear, as Bishop of Ostia, his share of the burden in the contest which he had done so much to provoke—but it was all in vain.

In little more than half a year Stephen found refuge from strife and turmoil in the tomb. The election of his successor, Gerard, Bishop of Florence, was the formal proclamation that the Church was no longer subjected to

¹ Leo. Marsic. Chron. Casinens. Lib. II. c. 97.

² Damiani Opusc. XVIII. Diss. ii. c. 6.

³ Ibid.

the control of the secular authority. January 18th, 1058, saw the power of the emperor defied, and the gauntlet thrown for the quarrel which for three centuries was to plunge Central and Southern Europe in turmoil and bloodshed. Henry III. had laboured conscientiously to rescue the papacy from the disgrace into which it had fallen. By removing it from the petty sphere of the counts of Tusculum and the barons of the Campagna, and by providing for it a series of high-minded and energetic pontiffs, he had restored its forfeited position, and indeed had conferred upon it an amount of influence which it had never before possessed. His thorough disinterestedness and his labours for its improvement had disarmed all resistance to the exercise of his power, but when that power passed into the hands of an infant but five years old, it was natural that the Church should seek to emancipate itself from subjection; and if almost the first use made of its new-found prerogatives was to crush the hand that had enabled it to obtain them, we must not tax with ingratitude those who were undoubtedly penetrated with the conviction that they were only vindicating the imprescriptible rights of the Church, and that to them was confided the future of religion and civilisation.

In the revolution which thus may date its successful commencement at this period the two foremost figures are Damiani and Hildebrand. Damiani the monk, with no further object than the abolition of simony and the enforcement of the austerities which he deemed indispensable to the salvation of the individual and to the purity of the Church, looked not beyond the narrow circle of his daily life, and sought merely to level mankind by the measure of his own stature. Hildebrand, the far-seeing statesman, could make use of Damiani and his

tribe, perhaps equally fervent in his belief that the asceticism of his fellow labourer was an acceptable offering to God, but yet with ulterior views of transcendently greater importance. In his grand scheme of a theocratic empire, it became an absolute prerequisite that the Church should hold undivided sway over its members; that no human affection should render their allegiance doubtful, but that their every thought and action should be devoted to the common aggrandisement; that they should be separated from the people by an impassable barrier, and should wield an influence which could only be obtained by those who were recognised as superior to the weaknesses of common humanity; that the immense landed possessions of the Church should remain untouched and constantly increasing as the common property of all, and not be subjected to the incessant dilapidations inseparable from uxorious or paternal affections at a time when the restraints of law and of public opinion could not be brought to bear with effect. In short, if the Church was to assume and maintain the position to which it was entitled by the traditions of the canon law and of the False Decretals, it must be a compact and mutually supporting body, earning by its self-inflicted austerities the reverence to which it laid claim, and not be diverted from its splendid goal by worldly allurements or carnal indulgences and pre-occupations. Such was the vision to the realisation of which Hildebrand devoted his commanding talents and matchless force of will. The temporal success was at length all that he could have anticipated. If the spiritual results were craft, subtlety, arrogance, cruelty, and sensuality, hidden or cynical, it merely proves that his confidence in the strength of human nature to endure the intoxicating effects of irresponsible power was misplaced. Meanwhile he laboured with Damiani at the preliminary measures of his enterprise, and together they bent their

energies to procure the enforcement of the neglected rules of discipline.

The new pope, Nicholas II. by name, entered unreservedly into their views. Apparently taught by experience the fruitlessness of additional legislation when the existing canons were amply sufficient, but their execution impossible through the negligence or collusion of the ecclesiastical authorities, he assembled, in 1059, a council of a hundred and thirteen bishops, in which he adopted the novel and hazardous expedient of appealing to the laity, and of rendering them at once the judges and executioners of their pastors. A canon was promulgated forbidding all Christians to be present at the mass of any priest known to keep a concubine or female in his house.¹ This probably remained, like its predecessors, a dead letter for the present, but we shall see what confusion it excited when it was revived and put effectually in force by Gregory VII. some fifteen years later. Meanwhile I may observe that it trenched very nearly on the Donatist heresy that the sacrament was polluted in polluted hands, and it required the most careful word-splitting to prevent the faithful from drawing a conclusion so natural.²

¹ Ut nullus missam audiat presbyteri quem scit concubinam indubitanter habere aut subintroductam mulierem.—Concil. Roman. ann. 1059 c. 3.

Singularly enough, this clause is omitted in the synodical epistle addressed to the Gallic clergy, as given by Hugh of Flavigny, Chron. Lib. II. ann. 1059.

² How utterly this was opposed to the received dogmas and practice of the Church can be seen from the decision of Nicholas I. on the same question—"Sciscitantibus vobis, si a sacerdote, qui sive comprehensus est in adulterio, sive de hoc fama sola respersus est, debeatis communionem suscipere, necne, respondemus: Non potest aliquis quantumcumque pollutus sit, sacramenta divina polluere, quæ purgatoria cunctarum remedia contagionum existunt. . . . Sumite, igitur, intrepide ab omni sacerdote Christi mysteria, quoniam omnia in fide purgantur" (Nicolai I. Epist. XCVII. c. 71). See also a similar decision in 727 by Gregory II. (Bonifacii Epist. CXXVI.).

The only adverse authority of this period that I have met with is the Penitential of Theodore of Canterbury, already referred to (p. 186), prescribing rebaptism for those baptised by priests of known unchastity.

Damiani saw the danger to which a practice such as this exposed the Church, and lifted up his voice to prevent the evil results—

In addition to this, the council ordered, under pain of excommunication, that no priest who openly took a concubine (or rather a wife), or who did not forthwith

Audite etiam, laici,
Qui Christo famulamini;
Pro ullo unquam crimine,
Pastores non despicite.

(Carmen ccxxii.)

and when, about the year 1060, the Florentines refused the ministrations of their bishop, whom they were determined from other causes to eject, he reproved them warmly, adducing the only reasonable view of the question, "*quod Spiritus Sanctus per improbi ministerium dare potest sua charismata*" (Opusc. XXX. c. 2).

Simoniacal priests as well as concubinary ones were included in the ban, and when, in 1049, Leo IX. commenced his vigorous persecution of simony, there arose a belief that ordination received at hands tainted with that sin was null and void. This was promptly stigmatised as a heresy, and Damiani's untiring pen was employed in combating it. He argued the question very thoroughly and keenly when it was under debate by a synod, and succeeded in procuring its condemnation (Opusc. VI. c. 12).

The prohibition, first proclaimed by Nicholas II. and finally enforced by Gregory VII., caused no little trouble in the Church. Towards the close of the century, Urban II. found himself obliged to discuss the question, and in an epistle to Lucius, provost of the church of St. Juventius at Pavia, he admits that the sacraments administered by guilty priests are uncorrupted, yet he approves of their rejection in order to stimulate the clergy to virtue, and even declares that those who receive them, except under instant and pressing necessity, are guilty of idolatry ("*nisi forte sola morte interveniente, utpote ne sine baptisate vel communione quilibet humanis rebus excedat; eis, inquam, in tantum obsunt, ut veri idolatræ sint*"—Urbani II. Epist. 273)—a decision the logic of which is not readily apprehended. St. Anselm of Canterbury assents to the doctrine, but places it in a more reasonable and practical shape—"non quo quis ea quæ tractant contemnenda, sed tractantes execrandos existimet" (Epist. VIII.). The consequences of such a system, however, if strictly carried out, would have been most disastrous to the Church, and when the zeal of Hildebrand became forgotten his injunctions were overruled. The century was scarcely out before Honorius of Autun maintained most positively that Christ operates through the hands of the vilest as well as of the most holy ministers, provided only they are orthodox in faith (Euchariston, c. vi.—Pez, Thesaur. II. i. 355). About 1150, however, Geroch of Reichersperg declares that he considered Gregory's commands as still in force, and that he paid no more attention to the masses of concubinary priests than if they were so many Pagans (Gerhohi Dial. de Differentia Cleri—Pez, Thesaur. II. ii. 463). Yet before the end of the twelfth century, Lucius III. had returned to the policy of Nicholas I.—"*Sumite ergo ab omni sacerdote intrepide Christi mysteria, quia omnia in fide Christi purgantur*" (Post Lateran. Concil. P. L. c. 38), the positiveness of which was not much affected by the subtle distinctions which he endeavoured to draw between crimes notorious and tolerated. Yet St. Thomas Aquinas, on the other hand, affirmed that it was a mortal sin to assist at the Mass celebrated by a priest who was notoriously unchaste (Pontas, Dict. de Cas de Conscience, II. 1445). The Church, however, gradually returned to the old doctrine and practice. The policy of Gregory was condemned as a heresy when adopted by the followers of Arnold of Brescia (Bonacursi Vit. Hæreticorum—D'Achery, I. 214) and an austere priest,

separate himself from such a connection already existing, should dare to perform any sacred function, or enjoy any portion of ecclesiastical revenue.¹ Hildebrand, who was

Albero of Mercke, near Cologne, who taught it was promptly silenced (Anon. adv. Alberonis errores—Martene Ampl. Coll. IX. 1251). In 1292 the Council of Aschafenburg anathematised those who “*præsumptione dampnabili*” taught the heresy that priests in mortal sin could not perform the sacred mysteries, and it decided “*licite ergo a quocumque sacerdote ab ecclesia tolerato, divina mysteria audiantur et alia recipiantur ecclesiastica sacramenta*” (Concil. Schafnaburg. ann. 1292 can. i.—Hartzheim IV. 7). And when Wickliffe and Huss undertook to carry out the dicta of Nicholas II. and Gregory VII. to their legitimate conclusions, the policy was at once recognised as a heresy of the worst character and most destructive consequence. Thus in 1491 a Synod of Bamberg condemns as heretics those who refuse to receive the ministrations of sinful priests.—Synod. Bamberg. ann. 1491 Tit. xlv. (Ludewig. Script. Rer. German. I. 1241–2).

¹ *Quicumque sacerdotum, diaconorum, subdiaconorum . . . concubinam palam duxerit vel ductam non reliquerit, . . . præcipimus et omnino contradicimus, ut missam non cantet, neque evangelium vel epistolam ac missam legat, neque in presbyterio ad divina officia cum iis qui præfatæ constitutioni obedientes fuerint, maneat; neque partem ab ecclesia suscipiat.*—Concil. Roman. ann. 1059 c. 3.

It is evident here that the opprobrious epithet “concubine” is applied to those who were as legally wives as it was possible to make them. Damiani, indeed, admits it, and even intimates that concubine was too honourable a word to be applied to the wives of priests—“*Illorum vero clericorum feminas, qui matrimonia nequeunt legali jure contrahere, non conjuges sed concubinas potius, sive prostibula congrue possumus appellare*” (Opusc. XVIII. Diss. iii. c. 2). After this period it will be found that the wives of priests were rarely dignified with the title of “uxores,” although ordination was not yet an impediment destructive of marriage.

It is as well to observe here that at this period and for some time later the position of the concubine had not the odium attaching to it by modern manners, and this should be borne in mind when reviewing the morals of the Middle Ages. The connection was a recognised and almost a legal one, following the traditions of the Roman law, by which it was legitimate and permanent, so long as the parties respectively remained unmarried. A man could not have a wife and concubine at the same time (Pauli Sentent. II. 20), nor could he legally have two concubines together (Novel. XVIII. c. 5), but the mutual engagement was regarded as legal in the imperial jurisprudence, until it was abolished, about 900, by Leo the Philosopher (Imp. Leonis Constit. xci.). Not only were such regulations thus promulgated by Christian emperors, but the relationship was duly recognised by the Christian Church. The first Council of Toledo, in 398, enjoined upon the faithful “*tantum aut unius mulieris, aut uxoris aut concubinæ, ut ei placuerit, sit conjunctione contentus*” (Concil. Toletan. I. c. 17), showing that either connection apparently was legitimate, and this is quoted at the commencement of the tenth century, as still in force, by Regino (De Discip. Eccles. Lib. II. c. 100). A half century later, about 450, Leo I. was actually appealed to to decide whether a man who quitted a concubine and took a wife committed bigamy—which Leo reasonably enough answered in the negative (Leon. Epist. xc. c. 5). The principle of the Roman law was still the rule of the Church in the ninth century, for a Roman synod held by Eugenius II. in 826 declared “*Ut non liceat uno tempore duas habere uxores, uxoremve et concubinam. De illo vero qui cum uxore concubinam habet, præcipit, ut si admonitus eam a se abicere noluerit, communione privetur.*” (Pertz, Legum

all-powerful at the papal court—his enemies accused him of keeping Nicholas like an ass in the stable, feeding him to do his work—has the credit of procuring this legislation.¹ Nicholas, whether acting under the impulsion of Hildebrand and Damiani, or from his own convictions, followed up the reform with vigour. During the same year he visited Southern Italy, and by his decided proceedings at the Council of Melfi endeavoured to put an end to the sacerdotal marriages which were openly prac-

T. II. P. ii. p. 12.) The view entertained of the matter at the time under consideration may be gathered from a canon of the councils of Rome, in 1052 and 1063, suspending from communion the layman who had a wife and concubine at the same time (Concil. Roman. ann. 1059 c. 12: ann. 1063 c. 10)—whence we may deduce that a concubine alone was hardly considered irregular. During the latter part of the succeeding century we find the concubine a recognised institution in Scotland, for the laws of William the Lion, after stating that the wife was not bound to reveal the crimes of her husband, adds “De concubina vero et de familia domus non est ita; quia ipsi tenentur revelare maleficia magistri sui, aut debent a servitio suo recedere” (Statut. Willelmi c. XIX. § 9). In England, late in the thirteenth century, Bracton speaks of the “concubina legitima” as entitled to certain rights and consideration (Lib. III. Tract. ii. c. 28, § 1, and Lib. IV. Tract. vi. c. 8, § 4). In Spain, at the same period, the son of an unmarried noble by a concubine, was noble (Juan Perez de Lara, in Arch. Seld. 130, Bib. Bodl.), and in the Danish code of Waldemar II., which was in force from 1280 to 1683, there is a provision that a concubine kept openly for three years shall be held to be a legitimate and legal wife (Leg. Cimbric. Lib. I. cap. xxvii. Ed. Ancher); while the elaborate provisions for the division of estates between legitimate and illegitimate children, contained in the code compiled by Andreas, Archbishop of Lunden, in the thirteenth century, show that certain legal rights were recognised in the latter (Legg. Scan. Provin. Ed. Thorsen, pp. 110–2). Indeed, in the Norwegian law of that period, when the king left no legitimate sons the crown descended to illegitimates (Jarnsida, Kristendoms-Balkr, c. III.). In Bigorre, concubines, under the name of *Massipia*, were recognised by law, and formal notarial contracts were drawn up, as late as the close of the fifteenth century, specifying the price to be paid and the duration of the connection; and when the man was already married he sometimes engaged to marry the *massipia* in case of his wife's death during the term (Lagrèze, Hist. du Droit dans les Pyrénées, Paris, 1867, p. 377). We must therefore bear in mind that, until the rule of sacerdotal celibacy became rigorously enforced, the “concubina” of the canons generally means a wife, and that for some time afterwards the concubine was by no means necessarily the shameless woman implied under the modern acceptance of the term.

¹ *Hujus autem constitutionis maxime fuit auctor Hildebrandus, tunc Romanæ ecclesiæ archidiaconus, hæreticis maxime infestus.*—Bernaldi Chron. ann. 1061. Benzo declares, in his slashing way, stigmatising Hildebrand as a Sarabite, or wandering monk, “De cetero pascebat suum Nicholaum Prandellus in Lateranensi palatio, quasi asinum in stabulo. Nullum erat opus Nicholaitæ, nisi per verbum Sarabaitæ” (Comment. de Reb. Henr. IV. Lib. VII. c. 2). The verses of Damiani on the influence of Hildebrand are too well known to quote.

tised everywhere throughout that region, and the Bishop of Trani was deposed as an example and warning to others.¹ Damiani was also intrusted with a mission to Milan for the same purpose, of which more anon.

Nor did Nicholas confine his efforts to Italy. His legates in other countries endeavoured to enforce the canons, and apparently had little difficulty in obtaining the adoption of stringent regulations—the more easily acceded to that they were utterly disregarded. Thus his legate Stephen, early in 1060, held councils at Vienne and Tours, where the prohibitions of the Synod of Rome were agreed to, and those who did not at once abandon either their women or their benefices were declared to be degraded for ever, without hope of restitution.²

In practice, however, all these measures of reform were scarcely felt except by the lower grades of the ecclesiastical body. The prelates, whose lives were equally flagitious, and far more damaging to the reputation and purity of the Church, were enabled virtually to escape. The storm passed beneath them, and with few exceptions persecuted only those who were powerless to oppose anything but passive resistance. The uncompromising zeal of Damiani was not likely to let a temporising lenity so misplaced and so fatal to the success of the cause remain unrebuked; and he calls to it the attention of Nicholas, stigmatising the toleration of

¹ . . . Hic [Nicholaus] ecclesiastica propter
Ad partes illas tractanda negotia venit;
Namque sacerdotes, levitæ, clericus omnis
Hac regione palam se conjugio sociabant.
Concilium celebrans ibi, Papa faventibus illi
Præsulibus centum jus ad synodale vocatis,
Ferre Sacerdotes monet, altarisque ministros
Arma pudicitie, vocat hos et præcipit esse
Ecclesiæ sponso, quia non est jure sacerdos
Luxuriæ cultor: sic extirpavit ab illis
Partibus uxores omnino presbyterorum.

(Gulielmi Appuli de Normann. Lib. II.)

² Concil. Turon. ann. 1060 c. 6.

episcopal sins as an absurdity no longer to be endured.¹ The occasion of this exhortation was a commission entrusted by the pope to Damiani, to hold a friendly conference with the prelates, and to induce them to reform their evil ways without forcing the authorities to the scandal of public proceedings. The fear of such results and the fiery eloquence of Damiani were alike unheeded. The bishops confessed themselves unequal to the task of preserving their chastity, and indifferent to the remote contingency of punishment which had so often been ineffectually threatened that its capacity for exciting apprehension had become exhausted. With all the coarseness of monastic asceticism, Damiani describes the extent of the evil, and its public and unblushing exhibition; the families which grew and increased around the prelates, the relationships which were ostentatiously acknowledged, and the scandals perpetrated in the Church of God. In the boldest strain he then incites the pope to action, blames his misplaced clemency, and urges the degradation of all offenders, irrespective of rank, pointing out the impossibility of reforming the priesthood if the bishops are allowed full and undisturbed license.²

This shows that even if the machinery of ecclesiastical authority was at work to correct the errors of the plebeian clergy, it was only local and sporadic in its efforts. In some favoured dioceses, perhaps, blessed with a Puritan

¹ Porro autem nos contra divina mandata, personarum acceptores, in minoribus quidam sacerdotibus luxuriæ inquinamenta persequimur; in episcopis autem, quod nimis absurdum est, per silentii tolerantiam veneramur.—Damiani Opusc. XVII. c. 1.

² Sanctis eorum femoribus volui seras apponere. Tentavi genitalibus sacerdotum (ut ita loquar) continentiae fibulas adhibere. . . . Hujus autem capituli nudam saltem promissionem tremulis prolata labiis difficilius extorquemus. Primo, quia fastigium castitatis attingere se posse desperant; deinde quia synodali se plectendos esse sententia propter luxuriæ vitium non formidant. . . . Si enim malum hoc esset occultum, fuerat fortassis utcunque ferendum; sed, ah scelus! omni pudore postposito, pestis hæc in tantum prorupit audaciam, ut per ora populi volitent loca scortantium, nomina concubinarum, socerorum quoque vocabula simul et socrum . . . postremo, ubi omnis dubietas tollitur, uteri tumentes et pueri vagientes, etc.—Damiani Opusc. XVII.

bishop, the decrees of the innumerable councils may have been put in force, but in the great body of the Church the evil remained unaltered. During this very year, 1060, Nicholas again found it necessary to promulgate a decretal ordering priests to quit their wives or resign their position, and this in terms which prove how utterly futile had been all previous fulminations. He also manifested some consideration for temporal necessities by allowing the discarded wives to live with their husbands under proper supervision.¹

How complete was the disregard of these commands is well illustrated by an epistle which about this time Damiani addressed to the chaplains of Godfrey the Bearded, Duke of Tuscany. From this we learn that these prominent ecclesiastics openly defended sacerdotal marriage, pronounced it canonical, and were ready to sustain their position in controversy.² As Duke Godfrey, with the pious Beatrice his wife, was the leading potentate in Italy, and as his territories were in close proximity to Rome itself, it is evident that the reform so laboriously prosecuted for the previous ten or fifteen years had thus far accomplished little.

Parties were now beginning to define themselves. The reformers, irritated by their want of success, were for more stringent measures, and when the canonical punishments of degradation and excommunication were derided and defied, they were ready, as we shall see hereafter at Milan, to have recourse to the secular arm, and to invoke the aid of sword and lance. The clergy, finding that passive resistance did not wear out the zeal of their persecutors, that the storm promised to be endless, and

¹ Decret. Nicolai PP. c. 3, 4 (Baluz. et Mansi II. 118-9).

² "Dogmatizatis enim sacri ministros altaris jure posse mulieribus permisceri . . . Jam vero quod impudenter asseritis, ministros altaris conjugio debere sociari, etc."—Damiani Lib. v. Epist. 13.

warned by the fate of the Milanese, were prepared to adopt an aggressive policy, and to seek their safety in revolutionising the central authority. Perhaps the bishops, whose silence had been secured by the toleration so distasteful to Damiani, began to feel the pressure which he was bringing to bear upon them, and to look forward with apprehension to the unknown evils of the future. If so, they were ready to make common cause with their flocks, and throw into the scale the immense influence due to their sacred character and temporal power. Thus only the occasion was wanting for an open rupture, and that occasion was furnished by the death of Nicholas in July 1061.

The factions of the day had alienated a powerful portion of the Roman barons from the papal party as represented by Hildebrand. They at once united with the Lombard clergy in addressing a deputation to the young Henry IV., who was still under the tutelage of his mother Agnes, offering him a golden crown and the title of Patrician. The empire was not indisposed to vindicate its old prerogatives, recently annulled by the initial act of Nicholas limiting the right of papal election to the Roman clergy. The overtures were therefore welcomed, and while Anselmo, Bishop of Lucca, was chosen in Rome, 1st October 1061, assuming the name of Alexander II., on the 28th of the same month a rival election took place in Germany, by which Cadalus, Bishop of Parma, was invested with the perilous dignity of Antipope, and divided the allegiance of Christendom under the title of Honorius II. At least two Italian bishops lent their suffrages to these proceedings—those of Vercelli and Piacenza—as representatives of the Lombard interest; and, if the testimony of Damiani is to be believed, they were men whose dissolute lives fitly represented the

license which the reformers asserted to be the principal object of the schismatics.¹

The married or concubinary clergy were now no longer merely isolated criminals, to be punished more or less severely for infractions of discipline. They were a united body, who boldly proclaimed the correctness of their course, and defended themselves by argument as well as by political intrigues and military operations. They thus became offenders of a far deeper dye, for the principles of the Church led irrevocably to the conclusion, paradoxical as it may seem, that he who was guilty of immorality, knowing it to be wrong, was far less criminal than he who married, believing it to be right.² What before had been a transgression, to be redeemed by penance and repentance, became heresy—an awful word in those fierce times. The odious name of Nicolites was speedily fastened on the schismatics, and the Apocalyptic denunciations of St. John were universally held applicable to them. According to Damiani, they supported Cadalus in the expectation that his success would lead to a modification in the discipline of the Church, by which the license to marry would be accorded to all ecclesiastics.³

That support was efficient, and it was shortly needed. A revolution suddenly occurred in the politics of Germany. Some dissatisfied nobles and prelates conspired to obtain power by overthrowing the regency of the

¹ Ad Cadaloum Lib. I. Epist. 20.

² In 1060, Cardinal Humbert of Silva-Candida, in combating the prevailing vice of simony, made use of this argument, reasoning that an immoral priest may be suspended or may be tolerated in hope of amendment, but if he trenches on heresy, there can be neither hope nor mercy for him (Humbert. Cardinal. adv. Simoniac. Lib. III. c. 43). Damiani applied this to the defenders of marriage with all his vigour. "Qui nimirum dum corrumpunt, impudici; dum defendere nituntur, merito judicantur hæretici" (Opusc. XVIII. Diss. ii. c. 8). "Nam cum peccat homo, quasi in puteum labitur; cum vero peccata defendit, os putei super eum, ne pateat egressus, urgetur. . . . Hoc autem inter peccatorem et hæreticum distat: quia peccator est qui delinquit, hæreticus autem qui peccatum per pravum dogma defendit" (Opusc. XXIV. Præf.).

³ Opusc. XVIII. Diss. ii. c. 8.

dowager Empress Agnes. A stroke of daring treachery put them in possession of the person of the boy-king, and the arch-conspirator, Hanno of Cologne, earned his canonisation by reversing at once the policy of the previous administration. In a solemn council held at Osber in 1062, the pretensions of Cadalus were repudiated, and Alexander II. was recognised as pope. Still Cadalus did not despair, but with the aid of the Lombard clergy he raised forces and marched on Rome, relying on his adherents within the walls. They admitted him into the Leonine city, where he threw himself into the impregnable castle of Sant' Angelo. Immediately besieged by the Romans, he resolutely held out for two years, in spite of incredible privations, but at length he sought safety in flight with but a single follower. Meanwhile his party, as a political body, had become broken up, and though Henry, Archbishop of Ravenna, still adhered to him, he was powerless to maintain his claims. Finally, in 1067, Alexander held a council at Mantua, cleared his election of imputed irregularity, and was universally recognised.

During this period, the "Nicolitan" clergy by no means abandoned their tenets. In 1063, as soon as he could feel reasonably assured of his eventual success, Alexander assembled more than a hundred bishops in council at Rome, where he emphatically repeated the canon promulgated in 1059 by Nicholas II., which was not only a proclamation of his fidelity to the cause of reform, but an admission that the legislation of his predecessor had thus far proved fruitless. Damiani, also, laboured unceasingly with argument and exhortation, but the vehemence of his declamation only shows how widely extended and how powerful the heresy still was. We shall see hereafter that on a mission to Milan, to reduce the married clergy to obedience, he barely escaped with his life; and on another to Lodi, with the same object,

the schismatics, after exhausting argument, in support of priestly marriage, threatened him with arms in their hands, and again his saintly dignity came near being enhanced by the honours of martyrdom.¹ Even the restriction upon second marriages was occasionally lost sight of, and such most irregular unions were celebrated with all the ceremony and rejoicings that were customary among laymen in their public nuptials.² Yet, notwithstanding the pious fervour which habitually stigmatised the wives as harlots and the husbands as unbridled adulterers, Damiani himself allows us to see that the marriage relation was preserved with thorough fidelity on the part of the women, and was compatible with learning, decency, and strict attention to religious duty by the men. Urging the wives to quit their husbands, he finds it necessary to combat their scruples at breaking what was to them a solemn engagement, fortified with all legal provisions and religious rites, but which he pronounces a frivolous and meaningless ceremony.³ So, in deploring the habitual practice of marriage among the Piedmontese clergy, he regards it as the only blot upon men who otherwise appeared to him as a chorus of angels, and as shining lights in the Church.

Such considerations as these, however, had no influence in diminishing Damiani's zeal. To Cunibert, Bishop of Turin, whose spiritual flock he thus so much admired, he addressed, about 1065, an epistle reproaching him with

¹ Opusc. XVIII. Diss. ii. c. 3.

² Obeunte igitur pellice, viduatus adjecit iterare conjugium. Quid plura? Confoederat sibi quasi tabularum lege prostibulum, amicorum atque confinium congregat nuptiali more conventum, epulaturis etiam totius affluentiae providet apparatus.—Damiani Opusc. XVIII. Diss. ii. c. 6.

³ Nec vos terreat quod forte, non dicam fidei sed perfidiæ, vos annulus subarrhavit: quod rata et monimenta dotalia notarius quasi matrimonii jure conscripsit; quod juramentum ad confirmandam quodammodo conjugii copulam utrinque processit. Totum hoc quod videlicet apud alios est conjugii firmamentum, inter vos vanum judicatur et frivolum.—Opusc. XVIII. Diss. ii. c. 7.

⁴ Opusc. XVIII. Diss. ii. Præf.

his criminal laxity in permitting such transgressions in his diocese, and urging him strenuously to undertake the reform which was so necessary to the purity of the Church.¹ Cunibert apparently did not respond to the exhortation, for Damiani proceeded to appeal to the temporal sovereign of Savoy and Piedmont, Adelaide, widow of Humbert-aux-Blanches-Mains, who was then regent. In an elaborate epistle he urges her to attack the wives, while her bishops shall coerce the husbands; but if the latter neglect that duty, he invites her to interpose with the secular power, and thus avert from her house and her country the Divine wrath which must else overtake them.² That so strict a Churchman as Damiani should not only tolerate but advise the exercise of temporal authority over ecclesiastics, and this, too, in a matter purely ecclesiastical, shows how completely the one idea had become dominant in his mind, since he was willing to sacrifice to it the privileges and immunities for which the Church had been struggling, by fair means and foul, for six centuries. It would appear, moreover, that this was not the first time that potentates had been allowed, or had assumed, to exercise power in the matter, for Damiani cautions the Countess Adelaide not to follow the example of some evil-minded magnates and make the pretence of reformation an excuse for spoiling the Church.³

The zeal of the indefatigable Damiani continued to be as unconquerable as the stubbornness of his adversaries, and some two years later we find him again at work. The date of 1067 is generally attributed to a letter which he addressed to Peter, Cardinal Archpriest of the Lateran, stimulating him to renewed exertions in extirpating this foul disgrace to the Church, and arguing

¹ Opusc. XVIII. Diss. ii.

² Opusc. XVIII. Diss. iii. c. i, 2.

³ Opusc. XVIII. Diss. iii, c. 3.

at great length in reply to the reasons and excuses with which the clerical Benedicks continued to defend their vile heresy.¹

In all this controversy, it is instructive to observe how Damiani shows himself to be the pure model of monkish asceticism, untainted with any practical wisdom and unwarped by any earthly considerations. When Hildebrand struggled for sacerdotal celibacy, the shrewdness of the serpent guided the innocence of the dove, and he fought for what he knew would prove a weapon of tremendous power in securing for the Church the theocracy which was his pure ideal of human institutions. Not a thought of the worldly advantages consequent upon the reform appears to have crossed the mind of Damiani. To him it was simply a matter of conscience that the ministers of Christ should be adorned with the austere purity through which alone lay the path to salvation. Accordingly, the arguments which he employs in his endless disputations carefully avoid the practical reasons which were the principal motive for enforcing celibacy. His main reliance is on the assumption that, as Christ was born of a virgin, so he should be served and the Eucharist be handled only by virgins; and his subsidiary logic consists of mystical interpretations of passages in the Jewish history of the Old Testament. Phineas, of course, affords a favourite and oft-repeated argument and illustration. Allusions to Ahimelech can also be understood, but the reasoning based upon the tower of Sichein, the linen girdle of Jeremiah, and the catastrophe of Cain and Abel is convincing only as to the unworldliness of the recluse of Avellana.

Notwithstanding all his learning and eloquence, the authority of his name, the lustre of his example, and the tireless efforts of his fiery energy, the cause to which he

¹ Opusc. XVIII. Diss. i.

had devoted himself did not advance. The later years of Alexander's pontificate afford unmistakable indications that the puritan party were becoming discouraged; that they were disposed to abate some of their demands, and were ready to make concessions to the refractory spirit which refused obedience both in principle and in practice. Thus, in 1068, a decretal addressed to the authorities of Dalmatia merely threatens suspension until satisfaction is made by those who marry in orders or who refuse to abandon their wives.¹ A somewhat different position was taken with the Venetians. An epistle to the Patriarch of Grado orders the deprivation of those who live in open and undisguised concubinage, but significantly confines its penalties to notorious infractions of the rule, and leaves to God the investigation of such as may be prudently concealed.² This manifests a willingness to temporise with offenders whose respect for papal authority would induce them to abstain from defiant disobedience—a pusillanimous tempting of hypocrisy to which the bolder Hildebrand could never have given his consent. A principle of great importance, moreover, was abandoned when, in 1070, Alexander assented to the consecration of the bishop-elect of Le Mans, who was the son of a priest;³ and when he stated that this was not a precedent for

¹ Alex. II. Epist. 125.—Batthyani (Leg. Eccles. Hungar. I. 407) remarks that this lenity arose from the fact that otherwise divine service would have ceased—"omnes ecclesiæ a divinis officiis vacassent."

It is also observable that subdeacons are not included in this prohibition—a remarkable exemption, since by this time their subjection to the law of celibacy had become a settled rule in the Roman Church. I may here remark that I had collected considerable material to trace the varying practice with regard to the subdiaconate, but as it involves no principle, merely depending in earlier times upon the local custom as to the functions of the grade, the discussion would scarcely repay the space that it would occupy.

² De manifestis loquimur; secretorum autem cognitur et iudex Deus est.—Alex. II. Epist. 118.

³ Cenomanensem electum, pro eo quod filius sacerdotis dicitur, si cæteræ virtutes in eum conveniunt, non rejicimus; sed, suffragantibus meritis, patienter suscipimus; non tamen ut hoc pro regula in posterum assumatur, sed ad tempus ecclesiæ periculo consulitur.—Gratian. Dist. LVI. c. 13.

the future, but merely a concession to the evil of the times, his laxity was the more impressive, since he thus admitted his violation of the canons. He subsequently even enlarged this special permission into a general rule, with merely the saving clause that the proposed incumbent should be more worthy than his competitors.¹ Alexander, moreover, maintained in force the ancient rule that no married man could assume monastic vows unless his wife gave her free consent, and entered a convent at the same time.² We shall see that in little more than half a century the progress of sacerdotalism rendered the sacrament of marriage powerless in comparison with the vows of religion.

Alexander clearly had not in him the stuff of which persecutors and reformers are made, as, indeed, his merciful liberality in extending over the Jews throughout Europe the protection of the Holy See would sufficiently demonstrate. At length he, too, was released from earthly cares, and on the day after his decease, on 22nd April 1073, his place was filled by the man who of all others was the most perfect impersonation of the aggressive churchmanship of the age.

Before proceeding, however, to sketch the stormy pontificate of Hildebrand in its relation to our subject, I must pause to relate the episode of the Milanese clergy. The struggle in that city to enforce the ascetic

¹ *Nam pro eo quod filius sacerdotis dicitur, si cæteræ virtutes in eum convenient, non rejicimus, sed suffragantibus meritis connivendo, eum recipimus.*—Alex. II. Epist. 133. Baronius attributes to this the date of 1071.

The contrast between the weakness of Alexander and the unbending rigidity of his successor, Hildebrand, is well shown by comparing this unlimited acceptance of priestly offspring with the refusal of the latter to permit the elevation of a clerk requested by both his bishop and the King of Aragon, simply because he was illegitimate, although in other respects admitted to be unexceptionable (Gregor. VII. Lib. II. Epist. 50). We have already seen that, even amid the license which prevailed during the early part of the century, some German bishops habitually refused orders to the sons of priests.

² Alex. II. Epist. 112.

principles of the reformers gives so perfect an inside view of the reformation itself, and its various stages have been handed down to us with so much minuteness by contemporary writers, that it deserves to be treated by itself as a disconnected whole.

CHAPTER XIII

MILAN

IN the primitive ages of the Church, Milan was at the head of the Northern Vicariate of Italy, as Rome was of the Southern. When the preponderance of the latter city became established, the glory of St. Ambrose shed a lustre over his capital which the true Milanese fondly regarded as rivalling that of St. Peter, and the superiority of Rome was grudgingly admitted. In the eleventh century, Milan is found occupying the chief place among the Lombard cities, virtually governed by its archbishop, whose temporal as well as spiritual power rendered his position one of great influence and importance. Yet even at that early period, the republican spirit was already developed, and the city was divided into factions, as the nobles and citizens struggled for alternate supremacy.

Milan was moreover the headquarters of the hidden Manichæism which, after surviving centuries of persecution in the East, was now secretly invading Europe through Bulgaria, and had already attracted the vigilant attention of the Church in localities widely separated. Its earliest open manifestation was in Toulouse, in 1018; at Orleans, in 1023, King Robert the Pious caused numerous sectaries to expiate their heresy at the stake, where their unshrinking zeal excited general wonder. At Cambrai and Liège similar measures of repression became necessary in 1025; the Emperor Henry III. endeavoured at Goslar, in 1052, to put an end to them with the gallows; and traces of them are to be found at Agen about the year 1100; at Soissons in 1114; at

Toulouse in 1118; at Cologne in 1146; at Périgord in 1147; in England in 1166, until we can trace their connection with the Albigenses, whose misfortunes fill so black a page in the history of the thirteenth century. Calling themselves Cathari, and stigmatised by true believers under various opprobrious names, of which the commonest was Paterins, their doctrines were those of the ancient Manichæans, their most characteristic tenets being belief in the dualistic principle, and the abhorrence of animal food and of marriage.¹ The prevalence of these dogmas among the Milanese populace furnishes a probable explanation of much that took place during the contest between Rome and the married priests.

Eriberto di Arzago, who filled the archiepiscopal chair of Milan from 1019 to 1045, was one of the most powerful princes of Italy, and though unsuccessful in the revolt which he organised in 1034 against the Emperor Conrad the Salic, his influence was scarcely diminished after his return from the expulsion which punished his rebellion.² At the time of his death, Milan was passing through one of its accustomed civil dissensions. The Motta, or body of burgesses, had quarrelled with the nobles and archbishop, and, under the leadership of an apostate noble named Lanzo, had expelled them from the city—an ejection which was followed by an unsuccessful siege of three years. At length, in 1044, Lanzo obtained promise of armed assist-

¹ For the doctrines of the Cathari see the Author's "History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages," Vol. I. chap. iii.

² It is scarcely worth while to more than refer to the assertion of mediæval Milanese chroniclers that Eriberto married a noble lady named Useria. Puricelli (Muratori Script. Rer. Ital. V. 122-3) has sufficiently demonstrated its improbability. He does not, however, allude to the argument derivable from the fact that Eriberto's name is signed to the proceedings of the Council of Pavia in 1022, where priestly marriage was so severely condemned.

Vide "The Life and Times of Hildebrand," by the Abbé O. Délarc; also "The Papal Monarchy," by the Rev. Father W. Barry, D.D.; "The Beginnings of the Temporal Sovereignty of the Popes," by Monsignor L. Duchesne, D.D.

ance from Henry III., which reduced the nobles to subjection, and they returned in peace. Eriberto died the following year, and the election of his successor caused great excitement. Erlembaldo, the popular chief (*dominus populi*), called the citizens together to nominate candidates, and induced them to select four. One of these was Landolfo Cotta, a notary of the sacred palace, who was brother to Erlembaldo; another was Anselmo di Badagio, Cardinal of the Milanese Church, subsequently Bishop of Lucca, and finally, as we have seen, pope, under the name of Alexander II.; the third was Arialdo, of the family of the capitanei of Carinate; and the fourth was Otho, another Milanese cardinal. These four were sent to the emperor, for him to make his selection; but the faction of the nobles despatched a rival in the person of Guido di Valate, who already held the appointment of secretary from the emperor, and who had recommended himself by zealous services, which now claimed their reward. Henry gave the coveted dignity to Guido, to the great surprise and indignation of the popular nominees. Their expostulations were unavailing, and both parties returned—Guido to assume an office harassed by the opposition of the people on whom he had been forced, and the disappointed candidates to brood over the wrongs which had deprived them of the splendid prize.¹ We shall see how thoroughly three of those candidates avenged themselves.

It is observable from this transaction that Milan was completely independent of Rome. The sovereignty of the distant emperor, absorbed in the dissensions of Germany, could press but lightly on the powerful and turbulent city. Rome was not even thought of in creating the archbishop, whose spiritual and temporal power

¹ Gualvaneo Flamma, Chron. Mag. c. 763.—Landulph. Senior. Mediolan. Hist. Lib. III. c. 2.

were granted by the imperial investiture. But when, soon after, the German popes had rescued the papacy from the contempt into which it had fallen, its domination over Milan became a necessary step in its progress to universal supremacy, and lent additional vigour to the desires of the reformers to restore the forgotten discipline of the Church in a city so influential.

Marriage, at this time, was a universal privilege of the Milanese clergy. If we may believe the testimony of one who was almost a contemporary, the candidate for holy orders was strictly examined as to his learning and morals. These being satisfactory, he was, if unmarried, asked if he had strength to remain so, and if he replied in the negative, he could forthwith betroth himself and marry with the ordinary legal and religious ceremonies. Second marriages were not allowed, and the Levitical law as to the virginity of the bride was strictly observed. Those who remained single were objects of suspicion, while those who performed their sacred functions duly, and brought up their families in the fear of God, were respected and obeyed by their flocks as pastors should be, and were eligible to the episcopate. Concubinage was regarded as a heinous offence, and those guilty of it were debarred from all promotion¹—in this reversing the estimate placed upon

¹ Landulf. Senior. L. II. c. 35.

The writer was a partisan of the married clergy; but his description is confirmed by the testimony which Damiani bears (ante, p. 239) to the good character of the married clergy of Savoy. Still, in view of the manners of the age, this is evidently a too partial account, and there is truth in the counter statement of an opponent, St. Andrea of Vallombrosa, a disciple of St. Arialdo—"Nam alii cum canibus et accipitribus huc illucque pervagantes, suum venationi lubricæ famulatum tradebant; alii vero tabernarii et nequam villici, alii impii usurarii existebant; cuncti fere aut cum publicis uxoribus sive scortis, suam ignominiose ducebant vitam . . . Universi sic sub simoniaca hæresi tenebantur impliciti."—Vit. S. Arialdi c. I. No. 7.

The Milanese defended their position not only by Scripture texts, but also by a decision which they affirmed was rendered by St. Ambrose, to whom the question of the permissibility of sacerdotal marriage had been referred by the pope and bishops. Of course the story was without foundation, but singularly enough, the Milanese clung to it long after the subject had ceased to be open to discussion.

the respective infractions of discipline by the Roman Church.

The see of Lucca consoled Anselmo di Badagio for the failure of his aspirations towards the archiepiscopate, and the other disappointed candidates for a while cherished their mortification in silence. Landolfo and Arialdo were inclined to asceticism, and a visit which Anselmo paid to Milan stimulated them to undertake a reform which could not but prove a source of endless trouble to their successful competitor Guido. Leaders of the people, and masters of the art of inflaming popular passion, they caused assemblies to be held in which they inveighed in the strongest terms against the irregularities of the clergy, whose sacraments they stigmatised as the foulest corruption, whose churches they denounced as dens of prostitution, and whose property they assumed to be legitimate prey for the spoiler. Guido in vain endeavoured to repress the agitation thus produced, argued in favour of the married clergy, and was sustained by the party of nobles. In a city like Milan, it was not difficult to excite a tumult. Besides the influence of the perennial factions, ever eager to tear each other's throats, the populace were ready to yield to the eloquence of the bold reformers. The Manichæan heresy had taken deep root among the masses, who, afraid to declare their damnable doctrines openly, were rejoiced in any way to undermine the authority of the priesthood, and whose views were in accordance with those now broached on the subject of

Puricelli has investigated the matter with his usual conscientious industry, and shows the repetition of the legend not only by Datius and Landulfus Senior in the eleventh century, but by Gualvaneo Flamma in the thirteenth, by the author of the *Flos Florum*, by Pietro Agario, and by Bernardino Corio in the fifteenth, and by Tristano Calco in the sixteenth century—the two latter falling in consequence under the revision of the Index (Script. Rer. Ital. V. 122-3).

marriage.¹ While these motives would urge forward the serious portion of the citizens, the unthinking rabble would naturally be prompt to embrace any cause which promised a prospect of disturbance and plunder. Party lines were quickly drawn, and if the reformers were able to revive a forgotten scandal by stigmatising their opponents as Nicolites, the party of the clergy and the nobles had their revenge. The meetings of Landolfo and Arialdo were held in a spot called Pataria, whence they soon became known as Paterins—a term which for centuries continued to be of fearful import, as synonymous with Manichæans.²

Matters could not long remain in this condition. During an altercation in the church of San Celso, a hot-headed priest assaulted Arialdo, whom Landolfo extricated from the crowd at considerable personal risk. Thereupon the reformers called the people together in the theatre; inflammatory addresses speedily wrought up the popular passions to ungovernable fury; the priests were turned out of their churches, their houses sacked, their

¹ Milan long retained its bad pre-eminence as a nest of heresy. When Frederic II., in 1236, delayed his promised crusade to subdue the rebellious Milanese, his excuse to the pope was that he ought not to leave behind him unbelievers worse than those whom he would seek across the seas. "*Cum . . . jam zizania segetes incipiant suffocare per civitates Italicas, præcipue Mediolanensium, transire ad Saracenos hostiliter expugnandos, et illos incorrectos pertransire, esset vulnus infixum ferro fomentis superficialibus delinire, et cicatricem deformam non medelam procurare,*" and Matthew Paris calls Milan "*omnium hæreticorum, Paterinorum, Luciferanorum, Publicanorum, Albigenensium, Usurariorum refugium ac receptaculum.*"—Hist. Angl. ann. 1236.

² Arnulf. Gest. Archiep. Mediolan. Lib. III. c. 9.—Landulf. Sen. Lib. III. c. 10.

Benzo, the uncompromising imperialist, always alludes to the papal party when he speaks of the Patarini—that term not having yet assumed the significance which it subsequently obtained. He accuses Anselmo di Badagio of being the author of the troubles—"primitus Patariam invenit, arcanum domini sui archiepiscopi cui juraverat inimicis aperuit. Abusus est etiam quadam monacha, cum Landulphino suo proprio consobрино."—Comment. de Reb. Henric. IV. Lib. VII. c. 2.—The latter accusation can no doubt be set down as one of the baseless scandals so freely cast from one party to the other in those turbulent times.

Rag-pickers were known as Patari, and the quarter of Milan inhabited by them was called Pataria even as late as the eighteenth century.—Schmidt, *Histoire des Cathares*, II. 279.

persons maltreated, and they were finally obliged to purchase a suspension of oppression by subscribing a paper binding themselves to chastity. The nobles, far from being able to protect the clergy, finding themselves also in danger, sought safety in flight; while the rabble, having exhausted the support derivable from intramural plunder, spread over the country and repeated in the villages the devastations of priestly property which they had committed in Milan.¹

The suffering clergy applied for relief to the bishops of the province, and finding none, at length appealed to Rome itself. Stephen IX., who then filled the papal chair, authorised the archbishop to hold a synod for the purpose of restoring peace. It met, in the early part of 1058, at Fontaneto, near Novaro. The prelates were unanimous in sustaining their clergy, and the reformers Landolfo and Arialdo were excommunicated without a dissentient voice. They disregarded the interdict, however, redoubled their efforts with the people, whom they bound by a solemn oath to adhere to the sacred cause, and even forced the priests to join in the compact. Arialdo then proceeded to Rome, where he developed in full the objects of the movement, and pointed out that it would not only result in restoring purity and discipline, but might also be used to break down the dangerous independence of the Ambrosian Church and reduce it to the subjection which it owed and refused to the apostolic see. The arguments were convincing, the excommunication was removed, and Arialdo returned to his work with zeal more fiery than ever.²

Meanwhile the nobles had taken heart and offered armed resistance to the Patarian faction, resulting in incessant fights and increasing bloodshed. Nicholas II.,

¹ Arnulf. Lib. III. c. 10.—Landulf. Sen. Lib. III. c. 9.

² Arnulf. Lib. III. c. 11.

who by this time had succeeded Stephen IX., sent Hildebrand and Anselmo di Badagio on a mission to Milan, with instructions to allay the passions which led to such deplorable results, and, while endeavouring to uphold the rules of discipline, to pacify if possible the people, and to arrange such a basis of reconciliation as might restore peace to the distracted Church. The milder Anselmo might perhaps have succeeded in this errand of charity, but the unbending Hildebrand was not likely to listen to aught but unconditional subjection to the canons and to Rome. The quarrel therefore waxed fiercer and deadlier; the turmoil became more inextricable as daily combats embittered both parties, and the missionaries departed, leaving Guido with scarcely a shadow of authority over his rebellious city, and the seeds of discord more widely scattered and more deeply planted than ever.¹

Again, in 1059, a papal legation was sent with full authority to force the recalcitrant clergy to submission. Anselmo again returned to his native city, accompanied this time by Peter Damiani. Their presence and their pretensions caused a fearful tumult, in which Damiani and Landolfo were in deadly peril.² An assembly was at length held, where the legates asserted the papal pre-eminence by taking the place of honour, to the general indignation of the Milanese, who did not relish the degradation of their archbishop before the representatives of a foreign prelate. The question in debate hinged upon the authority of Rome, which was stoutly denied by the Lombards.³ Peter, in a long oration, showed that Rome

¹ Landulf. Sen. Lib. III. c. 13.

² "Quod Mediolanensis civitas tunc in seditionem versa, repentinum utique nostrum minatur interitum."—The peril must have been serious, for even Landolfo, whose nerves were seasoned by constant civic strife, made a vow to become a monk if he should escape—his delay in fulfilling which, after the danger was past, called forth the urgent remonstrances of Damiani.—Damiani Opusc. XLII. cap. 1.

³ Their defence was "non debere Ambrosianam ecclesiam Romanis legibus subiacere, nullumque judicandi vel disponendi jus Romano pontifici in illa sede competere."—Damiani Opusc. v.

had Christianised the rest of Western Europe, and that St. Ambrose himself had invoked the papal power as superior to his own. The pride of the Ambrosian Church gave way, and the supremacy of St. Peter was finally acknowledged. This granted, the rest followed as a matter of course, and the heretical errors of simony and marriage had to be abandoned. Peter thought himself merciful in his triumph; where all alike were guilty, punishment for the past became impossible, and he restricted himself to provisions for the future. The archbishop and his clergy signed a paper expressing their contrition in the most humiliating terms, and binding themselves and their successors, under penalty of eternal damnation, to render simony thereafter unknown. As regards the Nicolitan heresy, a significant caution was observed, for its extirpation was only promised in as far as it should be found possible;¹ and when Arnolfo, the nephew of Guido, swore for his uncle that in future monks should be the only persons ordained without a preliminary oath that no money had been paid or received, it is observable that the maintenance of chastity was discreetly passed over. Then the archbishop and his clergy swore, in the hands of Damiani at the altar, their faithful observance of the pledge to destroy the simoniacal and Nicolitan heresies, under penalties the most tremendous; and Guido, prostrating himself on the ground, humbly deplored his negligence in the past, imposed on himself a penitence of a hundred years (redeemable at a certain sum per annum), and vowed a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella to atone for his sin. Not content with this, Damiani mounted the pulpit and made both priests and people take an oath to extirpate

¹ *Nicolaitarum quoque hæresim nihilominus condemnamus, et non modo presbyteros : et diaconos et subdiaconos ab uxorum et concubinarum fædo consortio, nostris studiis, in quantum nobis possibilitas fuerit, sub eodem quo supra testimonio arcendos esse promittimus.—Damiani Opusc. v.

both heresies; and the clergy, before being reconciled to the Church and restored to the positions which they had forfeited by their contumacy, were forced individually under oath to anathematise all heresies, and especially those of simony and marriage. A penance was imposed on every one involved in simony—no allusion being made to those who were married; some, who were manifestly unfit for their sacred duties, were suspended, and the legates returned, after triumphantly accomplishing the objects of their mission.¹

If Damiani fancied that argumentative subtlety and paper promises, even though solemnly given in the name of God and all His saints, were to settle a question involving the fiercest passions of men, the cloistered saint knew little of human nature. The pride of the Milanese was deeply wounded by a subjection to Rome, unknown for many generations, and ill endured by men who gloried in the ancient dignity of the Ambrosian Church. When, therefore, in 1061, their townsman, Anselmo di Badagio, was elevated from the episcopate of Lucca to that of the Holy See, Milan, in common with the rest of Lombardy, eagerly embraced the cause of the anti-pope Cadalus. One of Anselmo's earliest acts as pope was to address a letter to the Milanese, affectionately exhorting them to amendment, and expressing a hope that his pontificate was to witness an extinction of the heresies which had distracted and degraded the Church.² He could scarcely have entertained the confidence which he expressed, for though Landolfo and Arialdo endeavoured, with unabated zeal, to enforce the canons, the Nicotian faction, regardless of the pledges given to Damiani, maintained the conquest with equal stubborn-

¹ Damiani *op. cit.*—Damiani's account is addressed to the pope, who, he seems to think, may be dissatisfied with the lenity which permitted heretics to return to the Church on such easy terms, and he is at some pains to justify himself for his mildness.

² Alexand. II. *Epist.* 1.

ness. Landolfo, on a mission to Rome, was attacked at Piacenza, wounded, and forced to return. Soon after this he was prostrated by a pulmonary affection, lost his voice, and died after a lingering illness of two years.¹ The Paterins, thus deprived of their leader, found another in the person of his brother, Erlembaldo, just then returned from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Gifted with every knightly accomplishment, valiant in war, sagacious in council, of a commanding presence, and endowed with eloquence to sway the passions of the multitude, he was the impersonation of a popular leader; while, in the cause to which he was now called, his deep religious convictions lent an attraction which was heightened by an unpardonable personal wrong—for, early in life, he had been betrothed to a young girl, who fell under the seductive wiles of an unprincipled priest. Yet Erlembaldo did not embark in civil strife without a hesitation which reflects honour on his character. He refused, at first, but was persuaded to seek counsel of the pope. Arialdo accompanied him to Rome, and urged Alexander to adopt him as military leader in the war against sacerdotal marriage. Alexander, too, shrank from the responsibility of authorising war in such a cause, but Arialdo sought the assistance of Hildebrand, and the scruples of the pope were removed by the prospect of asserting the authority of Rome. When Erlembaldo heard the commands of the Vicegerent of God, and received a sacred banner to be borne through the expected battles, he could no longer doubt as to his duty. He accepted the mission, and to it he devoted his life.²

¹ His followers claimed for him the honours of martyrdom. He was revered accordingly, and Muratori gravely asserts that the evidence in his favour is indubitable.

² Arnulf. Lib. III. c. 13, 14.—Landolf. Sen. Lib. III. c. 13, 14.

To this period may probably be attributed two epistles of Alexander II. (Epist. 93, 94) to the clergy and people of Milan, informing both parties that a Roman

Returning to Milan with this sanction, the zeal and military experience of Erlembaldo soon made themselves felt. He enrolled secretly all the young men whom persuasion, threats, or promises could induce to follow his standard, and thus supported by an organised body, he endeavoured to enforce the decretals inhibiting simony and marriage. All recalcitrant priests presuming to officiate were torn from the altars. The riots, which seem to have ceased for a time, became, with varying fortune, more numerous and alarming than ever, and the persecution of the clergy was greatly intensified. Guido, at length, after vainly endeavouring to uphold and protect the sacerdotal body, was driven from the city, and the popular reformers seemed at last to have carried their point, after a civil war which had now lasted, with short intervals, for nearly ten years.¹

As though to confirm the victory, Arialdo, in 1066, at a council held in Rome, procured the excommunication of his archbishop, Guido, with which he returned triumphantly to Milan. Some popular revolution among the factions, however, had brought Guido back to the city, where he maintained a precarious position. Disregarding the excommunication, he resolved to officiate in the solemn services of Pentecost (June 4, 1066), and, braving all opposition, he appeared at the altar. Excited to fury at this unexpected contumacy, the popular party, led on by Erlembaldo and Arialdo, attacked him in the church; his followers rallied in his defence, but, after a stubborn fight, were forced to leave him in the hands of

synod had recently prohibited incontinent priests from officiating, and had ordered the people not to attend at their ministrations. He adds that those who abandon their functions to cleave to their wives, must be forced also to give up their benefices.

¹ Arnulf. Lib. III. c. 15.—Landulf. Sen. Lib. III. c. 15.—Arnulfus alludes to a dispute concerning the litany, which complicated the quarrel. The troubles even invaded the monasteries, for Erlembaldo procured the forcible ejection of sundry abbots appointed by Guido.

his enemies, by whom he was beaten nearly to death. Shocked by this outrage, many of the citizens abandoned the party of the reformers, and the nobles, taking advantage of the revulsion of feeling, again had the ascendancy. Arialdo was obliged to fly for his life, and endeavoured to conceal himself, travelling only by night. The avengers were close upon his track, however; he was betrayed by a priest, and the satellites of Guido carried him to an island in Lago Maggiore, where (June 27, 1066) they put him to death, with all the refinement of cruelty. A series of miracles prevented the attempted concealment of the martyred corpse, and ten months later Erlembaldo recovered it, fresh and untouched by corruption. Carried to Milan, it was interred with stately pomp in the monastery of San Celso, where the miracles wrought at his tomb proclaimed the sanctity of him who had died for the faith, and ere long his canonisation formally enrolled St. Arialdo in the calendar of saints.¹

Erlembaldo for a while remained quiet, but in secret he reconstructed his party, and, undaunted by the fate of his associate, he suddenly renewed the civil strife. Successful at first, he forced the clergy to bind themselves by fresh oaths, and expelled Guido again from the city; but the clerical party recovered its strength, and the war was carried on with varying fortune, until, in 1067, Alexander II. despatched another legation with orders to harmonise, if possible, the endless strife. Car-

¹ Arnulf. Lib. III. c. 18.—Landulf. Lib. III. c. 29. In 1090 the remains of St. Arialdo were translated by Archbishop Anselmo IV. to the church of St. Denis, and Muratori quotes from Alciati a curious statement to the effect that in 1508 Louis XII. removed them to Paris in mistake for the relics of St. Denis the Areopagite, the Parisians in his time still venerating them as those of the latter saint.

About the time of Arialdo's martyrdom, Cremona must have been won over to the cause of the reformers, for in 1066 we find Alexander II. addressing the "*religiosis clericis et fidelibus laicis*" of that city, thanking God that they had been moved to extirpate the simoniacal and Nicolitan heresies, and commanding that in future all those in orders who contaminated themselves with women should be degraded.—Alex. II. Epist. 36.

dinals Mainardo and Minuto appear to have been sincerely desirous of reconciling the angry factions. They proclaimed an amnesty, and promulgated a constitution which protected the clergy from abuse and persecution, and though they decreed suspension for married and concubinary priests, they required that none should be punished on suspicion, and laid down such regulations for trial as gave great prospect of immunity.¹ There must have been pressing necessity for some such regulations, if we may believe the assertion of Landolfo that when Erlembaldo found his funds running low he appointed thirty judges to examine all ecclesiastics in holy orders. Those who could not procure twelve conjurators to swear with them on the Gospels as to their immaculate purity since ordination, had all their property confiscated. At the same time the rabble used to prowl around at night and throw female ornaments and articles of apparel into priests' houses; then, breaking open the doors, they would proclaim the criminality of the inmates, and plunder everything that they could lay their hands on.²

Moderate men of both parties, wearied with the unceasing strife, eagerly hailed the accommodation proposed by the papal legates, and rejoiced at the prospect of peace. Erlembaldo, however, was dissatisfied, and, visiting Rome, soon aroused a fresh cause of quarrel. At the suggestion of Hildebrand he started the portentous question of investitures, and on his return he endeavoured to force both clergy and laity to take an oath that in future their archbishops should apply to the pope, and not to the emperor, for confirmation—thus securing a chief devoted to the cause of reform. Guido sought to anticipate this movement, and, in 1069, old and wearied with the unending contention, he resigned his archbishopric to the subdeacon Gotefrido, who had long been

¹ Arnulf. Lib. III. c. 18, 19.

Landulf. Sen. Lib. III. c. 20.

his principal adviser. The latter procured his confirmation from Henry IV., but the Milanese, defrauded of their electoral privileges, refused to recognise him. Erlembaldo was not slow to take advantage of the popular feeling; a tumult was readily excited, and Gotefrido was glad to escape at night from the rebellious city. Guido added fresh confusion by asserting that he had been deceived by Gotefrido, and by endeavouring to resume his see. To this end he made a treaty with Erlembaldo, but that crafty chieftain, obtaining possession of his person, imprisoned him in the monastery of San Celso, and then proceeded to besiege Gotefrido in Castiglione. The new archbishop defended himself bravely, until, in 1071, Erlembaldo was forced to abandon the enterprise.¹

Meanwhile another aspirant, Azzo, installed by Erlembaldo, fared no better than his rivals. The people, unbidden guests, rushed in to his inaugural banquet, unearthed him in the corner where he had hidden himself, dragged him by the heels into the street, and, placing him in a pulpit, forced him to swear that he would make no further pretensions to the see; while the papal legate, who had presided over the solemnities, was glad to escape with his life. Azzo, however, was recognised by Rome; he was released from the obligation of his oath, and money was furnished to enable him to maintain his quarrel. On the other hand, Henry IV. sent assistance to Gotefrido, which enabled him to carry on the campaign with some vigour; but he was unable to obtain a foothold in Milan. Azzo fled to Rome, and the city remained without an archbishop and under an interdict launched in 1074 by Hildebrand, who, in April 1073, had succeeded to Alexander II.²

The Milanese were disposed to disregard the interdict,

¹ Arnulf. Lib. III. c. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.—Landulf. Sen. Lib. III. c. 28.

² Arnulf. Lib. III. c. 23; Lib. IV. c. 2, 3, 4.

while Erlembaldo, who now held undisputed command of the city—and, indeed, of almost all Lombardy—used every effort to enforce respect for it. At length, at Easter 1075, he resolutely prevented the solemnisation of the sacred rites, and cast out the holy chrism which the priests had persisted in preparing. This roused the populace to resistance; both parties flew to arms, and, at the very commencement of the fray, Erlembaldo fell mortally wounded under the shade of the papal banner, which was still the emblem of his cause, and in virtue of which he was canonised as a saintly martyr to the faith. The Milanese, sinking all past animosities, united in promptly sending an embassy to Henry IV. to congratulate him on the death of the common enemy, and to request the appointment of another bishop. To this he responded by nominating Tedaldo, who was duly consecrated, notwithstanding the pretensions of his competitors, Gotefrido and Azzo. Tedaldo was the leader of the disaffected bishops who, at the Synod of Pavia, in 1076, excommunicated Pope Gregory himself; and though, after the interview at Canossa, in 1077, the Lombards, disgusted with Henry's voluntary humiliation before that papal power which they had learned to despise, abandoned the imperialists for a time, yet Tedaldo kept his seat until his death in 1085, notwithstanding the repeated excommunications launched against him by Gregory.¹

In the later years of this long and bloody controversy, it is evident that the political element greatly complicated the religious ground of quarrel—that pope and emperor without made use of burgher and noble within, and the

¹ Arnulf. Lib. IV., Lib. V. c. 2, 5, 9.—Landulf. Sen. Lib. III. c. 29; Lib. IV. c. 2.—Lambert. Schafnab. ann. 1077.

Erlembaldo was canonised by Urban II. towards the end of the century. Muratori (Annal. ann. 1085) styles Tedaldo “capo e colonna maestra degli Scismatici di Lombardia.”

latter took sides, as respects simony and sacerdotal marriage, to further the ends of individual ambition. Still, the disputed points of discipline were the ostensible causes of the struggle, whatever might be the private aims of civic factions, or of imperial and papal rivals; and these points gave a keener purpose to the strife, and furnished an inexhaustible supply of recruits to each contending faction. Thus, about the year 1070, a conference took place at Milan between priests deputed by both sides, in which the question of marriage was argued as earnestly as though it were the source of all the intestine troubles.¹ So when, in 1073, Gregory, shortly after his accession, addressed letters to Erlembaldo urging him to persevere in the good work, and to the Lombard bishops commanding them to assist him, the object of his labours is assumed to be the extirpation of simony and the restoration of the clergy to the purity becoming their sacred office.² And when, in 1076, the schismatic bishops, under the lead of Tedaldo of Milan, met in council at Pavia to renounce all obedience to Gregory, one of the articles of accusation brought against him was that he separated husbands and wives, and preferred licentiousness to marriage, thus giving, in their grounds of complaint against him, especial prominence to his zeal for the introduction of celibacy.³

Yet at last the question of sacerdotal marriage sank out of sight when the civil broils of Milan merged into the European quarrel between the empire and papacy. When, in 1093, Henry IV. was driven out of Italy by the revolt of his son Conrad, and the latter was created King of Lombardy by Urban II. and the Countess Ma-

¹ Landulf. Sen. Lib. III. c. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25.

² Gregor. II. Regist. Lib. I. Epistt. 25, 26, 27.

³ *Maritos ab uxoribus separat; scorta pudicis conjugibus; stupra, incestus, adulteria, casto præfert connubio; populares adversus sacerdotes, vulgus adversum episcopos concitat.*—Comit. Ticinens. ann. 1076 (Goldast. III. 314).

tilda, the dependence of the young king upon the pope rendered impossible any further open defiance of the laws of the Church, and public marriage there, as elsewhere, was doubtless replaced by secret immorality.¹ The triumph of the sacerdotal party was consummated at the great Council of Piacenza, held by Urban II. in February 1095, to which prelates flocked from every part of Europe, and the people gathered in immense numbers. If, as the chronicler informs us, four thousand ecclesiastics and thirty thousand laymen assembled on the occasion, and the sessions were held in the open air because no building could contain the thronging masses, we may reasonably attribute so unprecedented an assemblage to the wild religious ardour which was about to culminate in the first Crusade. That council condemned Nicolitism in the most absolute and peremptory manner, and there is no reason to believe that the power of so formidable a demonstration was lightly disregarded.² Yet in Milan, as we shall see elsewhere throughout Europe, the custom of sacerdotal marriage had become so thoroughly established that it could not be eradicated suddenly. It continued to survive stubbornly after every attempt at repression with more or less openness as the persecution of married priests was more or less severe. A synod held in Milan in 1098 is discreetly silent as to wedlock or concubinage

¹ To this period is no doubt referable a fragment of a decretal addressed by Urban II. to Anselmo, Archbishop of Milan, giving him instructions as to the ceremony of restoring to the Church the ecclesiastics who were to be reconciled (Ivon. Decret. P. VI. c. 407—Urbani II. Epist. 74)—showing that Milan had submitted, and that her clergy were forced to seek absolution and obey the canons. It was this revolution in Lombardy that drove the anti-pope Clement III. from Rome.

² Item heresis Nicolaitarum, id est incontinentium subdiaconorum, diaconorum et præcipue sacerdotum inretractabiliter damnata est, ut deinceps de officio se non intromittant qui in illa heresi manere non formidant; nec populus eorum officia ullo modo recipiat, si ipsi Nicolaitæ contra hæc interdicta ministrare præsumant.—Bernald. Constant. ann. 1095.

The very terms of this canon, however, show that "Nicolitism" was still an existing fact.

among ecclesiastics, though it is severe upon the concurrent vice of simony, and though its prohibition of hereditary succession in Church benefices and dignities would show that marriage among their incumbents must have been by no means infrequent. Moreover, even as late as 1152, Mainerio Boccardo, a canon of Monza, in his will specifies that certain provisions for the benefit of his brother canons shall not be enjoyed by those who are married, thus proving that the Hildebrandine reforms had not yet been successful, though Rome had long since attained its object in breaking down the independence of the Ambrosian Church.¹ One result of the struggle had been the destruction of the temporal power of the archbishop and the conversion of the city into a republic, an example which was largely followed throughout Upper Italy.

It is not to be supposed that the story of Milan is an exceptional one. Perhaps the factions there were fiercer, and the contest more prolonged, than elsewhere; but the same causes were at work in other Italian cities, and were attended with results similar in character, if differing in intensity. In Lucca, for instance, in 1051, we find Leo IX., when confirming the possessions of the canons of the cathedral church of St. Martin, expressing the hope that God would liberate them from their married priests, who dissipated the property of the foundation, while utterly unworthy of partaking of the divine oblation.² His desire that they would live in concord and harmony with their bishop was, however, not destined to be long gratified. When St. Anselmo, in 1073, accepted the episcopate at the urgent request of his friend, Gregory VII., he laboured for years to reform

¹ 'Tamburini, Storia generale dell' Inquisizione, Milano, 1862, T. I. pp. 307-9.

² S. Leon. IX. Epist. 55.

the dissolute lives of his clergy, until at length, finding threats and expostulations alike ineffectual, he implored the intervention of the Countess Matilda. Even the sovereign of Tuscany was unable to accomplish the submission of the recalcitrant ecclesiastics, and in 1074 St. Anselmo took advantage of the presence of Gregory VII. in the city to invoke his interposition. The resolute pope, finding his personal efforts fruitless, summoned the offenders to trial before a court of bishops, presided over by the celebrated Pietro Igneo, Bishop of Albano. Being condemned and excommunicated, they resisted by force of arms, excited a rebellion in the city, drove out St. Anselmo, and joined the imperialists; and when, in 1081, Guiberto the anti-pope came to Italy, he consecrated their leader, a sub-deacon named Pietro, as bishop, in place of the exiled martyr.¹ In Piacenza, the schismatics were guilty of excesses more deplorable, for, not content with deposing Bonizo, who had been set over them as bishop, they gave him the fullest honours of martyrdom by plucking out his eyes and then cutting him to pieces.² Similar troubles occurred in Parma, Modena, Reggio, and Pistoia, and it was not until the death of their respective schismatic bishops that the Countess Matilda was able to recover her authority in those places.

¹ Vit. S. Anselmi Lucensis.—In his collection of canons, S. Anselmo is careful to accumulate authorities justifying his course, and condemning his antagonists.—S. Anselmi Collect. Canon. Lib. VIII. c. 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10.

² Bernald. Constant. ann. 1089.

CHAPTER XIV

HILDEBRAND

ALEXANDER II. died 21st April 1073, and within twenty-four hours the archdeacon Hildebrand was elected as his successor—a promptitude and unanimity which showed the general recognition of his fitness for the high office. For more than twenty years he had been the power behind the throne which had directed and given purpose to the policy of Rome, and the assertion of his biographers that his disinclination for the position had alone prevented his previous elevation may readily be believed. Whether he was forced on the present occasion to assent to the choice of the conclave, against his earnest resistance, is, however, more problematical.

Hildebrand was the son of a poor carpenter of Soano, and had been trained in the ascetic monachism of Cluny. Gifted by nature with rare sagacity, unbending will, and indomitable spirit, imbued with the principles of the False Decretals, and firmly believing in the wildest pretensions of ecclesiastical supremacy, he had conceived a scheme of hierarchical autocracy, which he regarded not only as the imprescriptible right of the Church, but also as the perfection of human institutions. To the realisation of this ideal he devoted his life with a fiery zeal and unshaken purpose that shrank from no obstacles, and to it he was ready to sacrifice not only the men who stood in his path, but also the immutable principles of truth and justice. All considerations were as dross compared with the one object, and his own well-being

and life were ventured as recklessly as the peace of the world.

Such a man could comprehend the full importance of the rule of celibacy, not alone as essential to the ascetic purity of the Church, but as necessary to the theocratic structure which he proposed to elevate on the ruins of kingdoms and empires. The priest must be a man set apart from his fellows, consecrated to the one holy purpose, revered by the world as a being superior to human passions and frailties, devoted, soul and body, to the interests of the Church, and distracted by no temporal cares and anxieties foreign to the welfare of the great corporation of which he was a member. We have seen the strenuous efforts which, for a quarter of a century, successive pontiffs had unceasingly made to accomplish this reform, and we have also seen how fruitlessly those efforts were expended on the passive or active resistance of the priesthood. When Hildebrand took the reins into his vigorous grasp, the change at once became manifest, and the zeal of his predecessors appears lukewarm by comparison. He had had ample leisure to note how inefficient was the ordinary machinery to accomplish the result, and he hesitated not to call to his assistance external powers; to give to the secular princes authority over ecclesiastics at which enthusiastic Churchmen stood aghast, and to risk apparently the most precious immunities of the Church to secure the result. The end proved his wisdom, for the power delegated to the laity for a special object was readily withdrawn, after it had served its purpose, and the rebellious clerks were subdued and rendered fit instruments in the lapse of time for humiliating their temporary masters. In one respect, however, Hildebrand's policy proved a blunder. The faithful readily submitted to the restoration of clerical immunity, but the idea that ecclesiastics

forfeited their privileges by sin became a favourite one with almost all heretics, as we shall see hereafter in the case of the Albigenses, Waldenses, Wickliffites, and Hussites, costing the Church many a desperate struggle.

To Gregory, as we must hereafter call him, was generally attributed, by his immediate successors, the honour of introducing, or of enforcing, the absolute chastity of the ministers of the altar. Some chroniclers mention Alexander II. or Leo IX. as participating in the struggle, but to his vigorous management its success was popularly conceded.¹ He earned the tribute thoroughly, for during his whole pontificate it seems to have been ever present to his thoughts, and whatever were his preoccupations in his fearful struggle with the empire, on which he risked the present and the future of the papacy, he always had leisure to attend to the one subject in its minutest details and in the remotest corner of Christendom.

¹ Cujus prudentia, non solum in Italia sed etiam in Theutonicis partibus refrenata est sacerdotum incontinentia, scilicet quod prædecessores ejus in Italia prohibuerunt, hoc ipse in aliis ecclesiæ catholicæ partibus prohibere studiosus attemptavit.—Bertold. Constant. ann. 1073.—Also Bernald. Constant. ann. 1073.

Gregorius . . . connubia clericorum a subdiaconatu et supra, per totum orbem Romanum edicto decretali, in æternum prohibuit.—Gotefrid. Viterb. Chron. P. xvii.

Sed et datis decretis clericorum a subdiaconatu et supra connubia in toto orbe Romano cohibuit.—Otton. Frisingen. Chron. Lib. vi. c. 34.

Eodem quoque tempore canones antiqui de continentia ministrorum sacri altaris innovari novis accedentibus præceptis cœperunt, per hunc Urbanum Papam et prædecessores suos Gregorium VII. et Nicholaum II. atque Alexandrum II.—Chron. Reichersperg. ann. 1098.

Tempore illo cum Gregorius qui et Hiltebrant Romani pontificatus jura disponeret, hoc decretum quidem antiquitus promulgatum, nunc autem innovatum est, ut videlicet omnes in sacris ordinibus constituti, presbyteri scilicet et diaconi, a cohabitationibus feminarum se, ut decet, cohiberent, aut ab officio cessarent.—Gest. Trevir. Archiep. cap. xxx. (Martene Ampliss. Collect. IV. 174).

Hoc tamen ab eo tempore fuit introductum ut nullus ordinaretur in presbyterum conjugatus: et ordinandi omnes castitatem promittere compellantur coram ordinante.—Chron. Hirsau. ann. 1074.

One chronicler, however, attributes the reform to Alexander II. "Constituit etiam ut nullus presbyter sive diaconus vel subdiaconus, uxorem habeat, sive concubinam in occidentali ecclesia, sed ut sint casti."—Chron. S. Ægid. in Brunswig. ann. 1071.

Perhaps in this there may have been an unrecognised motive urging him to action. Sprung from so humble an origin, he may have sympathised with the democratic element, which rendered the Church the only career open to peasant and plebeian. He may have felt that this was a source of hidden power, as binding the populations more closely to the Church, and as enabling it to press into service an unknown amount of fresh and vigorous talent belonging to men who would owe everything to the establishment which had raised them from nothingness, and who would have no relationships to embarrass their devotion. All this would be lost if, by legalising marriage, the hereditary transmission of benefices generally resulting should convert the Church into a separate caste of individual proprietors, having only general interests in common, and lazily luxuriating on the proceeds of former popular beneficence. To us, retrospectively philosophising, it further appears evident that if celibacy were an efficient agent in obtaining for the Church the immense temporal power and spiritual authority which it enjoyed, that very power and that authority rendered celibacy a factor not devoid of advantage to the progress of civilisation. When even the humblest priest came to be regarded as a superior being, holding the keys of heaven in his hand, and by the machinery of confession, absolution, and excommunication wielding incalculable influence over each member of his flock, it was well for both parties that the ecclesiastic should be free from the ties of family and the vulgar ambition of race. It is easy to see how the Churchmen could have selected matrimonial alliances of politic and aggrandising character; and as possession of property and hereditary transmission of benefices would have followed on the permission to marry, an ecclesiastical caste, combining temporal and spiritual power to a dangerous excess, might

have repeated in Europe the distinctions between the Brahman and Sudra of India. The perpetual admission of self-made men into the hierarchy, which distinguished the Church even in times of the most aristocratic feudalism, was for ages the only practical recognition of the equality of man. If, therefore, the Church was to attain the theocratic supremacy, which was the object of its ambition, sacerdotal celibacy was not only an element necessary to its success, but a safeguard against the development of an hereditary ecclesiastical aristocracy which might have proved fatal to intellectual and social progress.

What we may now readily discern to have been a means, to Gregory, however, was an end, and to the enforcement of celibacy as necessary to that object he devoted himself with unrelenting vigour. The belief that he was appointed of God, and set apart for the task of cleansing the Church of the Nicolitan heresy which had defied his predecessors, is well illustrated by the contemporary legend of some pious Pisan, who, spending the night before his election in prayer in the basilica of St. Peter, saw that holy saint himself traverse the church accompanied by Hildebrand, whom he commanded to gather some droppings of mares with which the sacred edifice was defiled, to place them in a sack, and to carry them out on his shoulders.¹ The severe austerity of his virtue, moreover, was displayed by his admirers in the story that once, when dangerously ill, his niece came to inquire as to his health. To relieve her anxiety he played with her necklace, and jestingly asked if she wished to be married; but on his recovery he found that he could no longer weep with due contrition over his sins, and that he had lost the grace of repentance. He long and vainly searched for the cause, and finally entreated his

¹ Pauli Bernried. Vit. Gregor. VII. c. ii. § 20.

friends to pray for him, when the Virgin appeared to one of them, and sent word to Gregory that he had fallen from grace in consequence of the infraction of his vows committed in touching the necklace of his niece.¹

His first movement on the subject appears to have been an epistle addressed, in November 1073, to Gebhardt, Archbishop of Salzburg, taking him severely to task for his neglect in enforcing the canons promulgated not long before in Rome, and ordering him to carry them rigidly into effect among his clergy.² This, no doubt, was a circular letter addressed to all the prelates of Christendom, and it was but a preliminary step. Early in Lent of the next year (March 1074) he held his first synod, which adopted a canon prohibiting sacerdotal marriage, ordering that no one in future should be admitted to orders without a vow of celibacy, and renewing the legislation of Nicholas II., which commanded the people not to attend the ministrations of those whose

¹ Pauli Bernried. Vit. Gregor. VII. c. iii. § 26.

Even Gregory, however, was not equal to his contemporary Hugh, Bishop of Grenoble, who, during fifty-three years spent in the active duties of his calling, never saw the face of a woman, except that of an aged mendicant.—*Rolevink Fascic. Temp. ann. 1074.*

The fanciful purity which came to be considered requisite to the episcopal office is well illustrated by the case of Faricius, Abbot of Abingdon, who was elected to the see of Canterbury. His suffragans refused his consecration because he was a skilful leech—"tunc electus est Faricius ad archiepiscopatum, sed episcopus Lincolnensis et episcopus Salesburiensis obstiterunt, dicentes non debere archiepiscopum urinas mulierum inspicere" (*De Abbat. Abendon.—Chron. Abingdon. II. 287*). The prejudice against the practice of physic as incompatible with the purity of an ecclesiastic was wide-spread and long-lived, as chronicled in the canons of numerous councils prohibiting it (e.g. *Concil. Claromont. ann. 1130 c. 5*)—but it was not always so. In 998 Theodatus, a monk of Corvey, received the bishopric of Prague from Otho III., as a reward for curing Boleslas I., Duke of Bohemia, of paralysis, by means of a bath of wine, herbs, spices, and three living black puppies four weeks old (*Paulini Dissert. Hist. p. 198*); and about the year 1200, Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, bestowed the see of St. David's on Geoffrey, Prior of Llanthony, his physician, whose skill had won his gratitude.—*Girald. Cambrens. de Jur. et Stat. Menev. Eccles. Dist. VII.*

² *Gregor. VII. Regist. Lib. I. Epist. 30.*

lives were a violation of the rule.¹ There was nothing in the terms of this more severe than what had been decreed in innumerable previous councils—indeed, it was by no means as threatening as many decretals of recent date; but Gregory was resolved that it should not remain, like them, a mere protest, and he took immediate measures to have it enforced wherever the authority of Rome extended.

The controversy as respects Italy has already been so fully described that to dilate upon it further would be superfluous. Even though Alexander II. in his later years had shrunk somewhat from the contest, yet from Naples to the Tyrol the question was thoroughly understood, and its results depended more upon political revolutions than on ecclesiastical exertions. Beyond the Alps, however, the efforts of preceding popes had thus far proved wholly nugatory, and on this field Gregory now bent all his energies. The new canon was sent to all the bishops of Europe, with instructions to promulgate it throughout their respective dioceses, and to see that it was strictly obeyed; while legates were sent in every direction to support these commands with their personal supervision and exertion.²

That the course which Gregory thus adopted was essentially different from that pursued by his predecessors is amply attested by the furious storm which these measures aroused. The clergy protested in the most energetic terms that they would rather abandon their

¹ *Ut secundum instituta antiquorum canonum presbyteri uxores non habeant, habentes aut dimittant aut deponantur; nec quisquam omnino ad sacerdotium admittatur qui non in perpetuum continentiam vitamque cœlibem profiteatur.*—Lambert. Hersfeldens. ann. 1074. Cf. Gregor. Epist. extrav. 4.

² As regards Germany, Gregory, in 1074, sent two legates to Henry IV., who promulgated the canon in a national council; and the next year he followed this up by a legation empowered to forbid the laity from attending the offices of married priests (Herman. Contract. ann. 1074–5). His correspondence, however, shows that he did not rely alone on such measures, but that he also addressed the prelates directly.

calling than their wives; they denounced Gregory as a madman and a heretic, who expected to compel men to live as angels, and who in his folly, while denying to natural affection its accustomed and proper gratification, would open the door to indiscriminate licentiousness; and they tauntingly asked where, when he should have driven them from the priesthood, he expected to find the angels who were to replace them.¹ Even those who favoured celibacy condemned the means adopted as injudicious, contrary to the canons, and leading to scandals more injurious to the Church than the worst of heresies.² Gregory paid little heed to threats or remonstrances, but sent legate after legate to accuse the bishops of their inertness, and to menace them with deposition if they should neglect to carry out the canon to the letter, and he accompanied these measures with others of even more practically efficient character.

The bishops, in fact, were placed in a most embarrassing position, which may be understood from the adventures of three prelates, who took different positions with regard to the instructions of Gregory—Otho of Constance, who leaned to the side of the clergy; St. Altmann of Passau, who was an enthusiastic papalist; and Siegfried of Mainz, who was a trimmer afraid of both parties.

To Otho, Gregory, in 1074, sent the canons of the synod inhibiting marriage and simony, with orders to use every exertion to secure the compliance of his clergy. Otho apparently did not manifest much eagerness to undertake the unpopular task, and Gregory lost little time in calling him to account. Before the year expired,

¹ Lambert. Hersfeldens. ann. 1074.

² *Novo exemplo et inconsiderato prejudicio, necnon et contra sanctorum patrum sententiam . . . ex qua re tam grave scandalum in ecclesia oritur, quod antea sancta ecclesia nullius hæresis schismati tam graviter est attrita.*—Chron. Turonens. (Martene Ampl. Collect. V. 1007).

we find the pope addressing a second epistle to the bishop, angrily accusing him of disobedience in permitting the ministration of married priests, and summoning him to answer for his contumacy at a synod to be held in Rome during the approaching Lent. Nor was this all, for at the same time he wrote to the clergy and people of the diocese, informing them of the disobedience of their bishop and of his summons to trial, commanding them, in case of his persistent rebellion, to no longer obey or reverence him as bishop, and formally releasing them from all subjection to him. Otho doubtless considered it imprudent to show himself at the synod of 1075; consequently in that of 1076 he was excommunicated and deprived of his episcopal functions. During the autumn of the same year, however, the legate Altmann of Passau restored him to communion at Ulm, but without granting him the privilege of officiating. Otho disregarded this restriction, and not only persisted in exercising his functions, but openly favoured and protected the married clergy. For this Gregory absolved his flock from all obedience to him, whereupon Otho abandoned the Catholic party and formally joined the imperialists, who were then engaged in the effort to depose Gregory. From some motives of policy, the pope granted the hardened sinner three years for repentance, at the expiration of which, in 1080, he sent Altmann to Constance to superintend the election of another bishop. The new incumbent, however, proved incapable through bodily infirmity; and, in 1084, Otto of Ostia was sent to Constance, and under his auspices Gebhardt was elected bishop, and duly consecrated in 1085.¹ Evidently Gregory was not a man to abandon his purpose, and those who

¹ Gregor. VII. Epist. extrav. 4, 12, 13.—Bernald. pro Gebhardo Episc. Apologet. c. 4, 5, 6, 7.

opposed him could not count upon perpetual immunity.

St. Altmann of Passau was renowned for his piety and the strictness of his religious observance. When the canon of 1074 reached him, he assembled his clergy, read it to them, and adjured them to pay to it the respect which was requisite. His eloquence was wasted; the clerks openly refused obedience, and defended themselves by immemorial custom, and by the fact that none of their predecessors had been called upon to endure so severe and unnatural a regulation. Finding the occasion unpropitious, the pious Altmann dissembled; he assured his clergy that he was perfectly willing to indulge them if the papal mandate would permit it, and with this he dismissed them. He allowed the matter to lie in abeyance until the high feast of St. Stephen, the patron saint of the Church, which was always attended by the magnates of the diocese. Then, without giving warning of his intentions, he suddenly mounted the pulpit, read to the assembled clergy and laity the letters of the pope, and threatened exemplary punishment for disobedience. Though thus taken at advantage and by surprise, the clerks were not disposed to submit. A terrible tumult at once arose, and the crafty saint would have been torn to pieces had it not been for the strenuous interference of the nobles, aided, as his biographer assures us, by the assistance of God. The clergy continued their resistance, and when, not long after, the empire and papacy became involved in internecine strife, they sought the protection of Henry IV., who marched upon Passau, and drove out St. Altmann and his faction.¹ How unbending was this opposition, and how successfully it was maintained, is manifest from the fact that when St. Altmann at length returned to his diocese as papal legate, about the year

¹ *Vide* "The Life and Times of Hildebrand" by the Abbé O. Délaire.

1081, even Gregory felt it necessary to use policy rather than force, and instructed him to yield to the pressure of the evil times, and to reserve the strict enforcement of the reform for a more fortunate period.¹ The political question had thus, for the moment, overshadowed the religious one.

The archiepiscopate of Mainz was, both temporally and spiritually, one of the most powerful of the ecclesiastical principalities of Germany. To the Archbishop Siegfrid, Gregory sent the canon of 1074 with instructions similar to those contained in his epistle to Otho of Constance. In reply, Siegfrid promised implicit obedience; but, recognising the almost insuperable difficulties of the task assigned him, he temporised, and gave his clergy six months in which to make up their minds, exhorting them to render willing obedience and relieve him from the necessity of employing coercion. At the expiration of the period, in October 1074, he assembled a synod at Erfurt, where he boldly insisted that they should give up their wives or abandon their functions and their benefices. Their arguments and entreaties were in vain. Finding him immovable, they retired for consultation, when some proposed to separate and return home at once, without further parley, and thus elude giving sanction to the new regulations; while bolder spirits urged that it would be better to put the archbishop to instant death, before he could promulgate so execrable a decree, thus leaving for posterity a shining example, which would prevent any of his successors from attempting so abominable an enterprise.

Siegfrid's friends advised him of the turn which affairs were likely to take. He therefore sent to his clergy a request that they would reassemble in synod, promising

¹ Vit. S. Altmanni.—Hinc capitulum illud de incontinentia sacerdotum a tam invicto propugnatore castitatis dissimulatum non approbatum remansit.

that he would take the first opportunity to apply to Rome for a relaxation of the canon. They agreed to this, and on meeting them the next day, Siegfried astutely started the question of his claims on the Thuringian tithes, which had shortly before been settled by the Saxon war. Indignant at this, the Thuringian clergy raised a tumult, flew to arms, and the synod broke up in the utmost confusion. In December, Gregory wrote to the shuffling archbishop an angry letter, reproaching him with his lukewarmness in the cause, and ordering him to present himself at the synod announced for the coming Lent. Siegfried obediently went to Rome, but was with difficulty admitted to communion. What promises he made to obtain it were not kept, for again, in September 1075, Gregory addressed him with commands to enforce the canons. Stimulated by this, Siegfried convoked a synod at Mainz in October, where the Bishop of Coire appeared with a papal mandate threatening him with degradation and expulsion if he failed in compelling the priests to abandon either their wives or their ministry. Thus goaded, Siegfried did his best, but the whole body of the clergy raised such a clamour, and made demonstrations so active and so formidable, that the archbishop saw little prospect of escaping with life. The danger from his mutinous flock was more instant and pressing than that from the angry pope; his resolution gave way, and he dissolved the synod, declaring that he washed his hands of the affair, and that Gregory might deal as he saw fit with a matter which was beyond his power to control. Thus placed between the upper and the nether millstone, it is not to be wondered at if Siegfried took refuge in the party of the imperialists, nor that his name stands at the head of the list of bishops who in 1076 passed judgment on Gregory, and pronounced that he had forfeited all claim to the papacy; neither is it surprising that Gregory

lost no time in excommunicating him at the Roman synod of the same year.¹

These examples are sufficient to illustrate the difficulties with which Gregory had to contend, and the manner in which he endeavoured to overcome them. The incidents are by no means exceptional, and his marvellous vigour and energy in supervising the movement everywhere, encouraging the zealous co-worker and punishing the lukewarm and indifferent, are abundantly attested by his correspondence. He apparently had an eye on every corner of Europe, and lost no opportunity of enforcing his views with threats or promises, as the case might seem to demand.²

It did not take long, however, to convince him that he could count upon no efficient assistance from the hierarchy, and that if the Church was to be purified, it must be purified from without, and not from within. To the unutterable horror of those strict Churchmen who regarded the immunity from all temporal supervision or jurisdiction as one of the most precious of ecclesiastical privileges, he took, as early as 1074, the decided and unprecedented step of authorising the laity to withdraw their obedience from all prelates and priests who dis-

¹ Gregor. VII. Epist. extrav. 12.—Lambert. Hersfeld. ann. 1074–5–6.—Udalr. Babenh. Cod. Lib. II. c. 132.—Gregor. Regist. Lib. II. Epist. 29.—Goldast. Constit. Imp. I. 237.

An encyclical letter of Siegfried, in 1075, states that Gregory had sent to his diocese commissioners to reform the immorality of the clergy, and that they had laboured earnestly, but fruitlessly, to accomplish the task by a liberal use of suspension and excommunication. He had thereupon reported to the pope the scandal and infamy of his Church, when Gregory, considering the multitude of the transgressors, counselled moderation. Siegfried therefore orders all incorrigible offenders to be suspended and sent to him for judgment. (Hartzheim Concil. German III. 175.)—Hartzheim also (III. 749) gives, under date of 1077, another letter from Siegfried to Gregory, in which he promises to do his best in reforming the clergy, but advises moderation towards those whose weakness merits compassion.

² See, for instance, Lib. I. Epist. 30; Lib. II. Epist. 25, 55, 61, 62, 64, 66, 67, 68; Lib. II. Epist. 4; Lib. IV. Epist. 10, 11, 20; Lib. VII. Epist. 1; Epist. extrav. 4, 12, 13, &c.

regarded the canons of the Holy See on the subjects of simony and incontinence.¹ This principle, once adopted, was followed up with his customary unalterable resolution. In October 1074 he wrote to a certain Count Albert, exhorting him not to mind what the simoniacal and concubinary priests might say, but, in spite of them, to persist in enforcing the orders which emanated from Rome. Still more menacing was an epistle addressed in January 1075 to Rodolf, Duke of Swabia, and Bertolf, Duke of Carinthia, commanding them—"whatever the bishops may say or may not say concerning this, do you in no manner receive the ministrations of those who owe promotion or ordination to simony, or whom you know to be guilty of concubinage . . . and, as far as you can, do you prevent, by force if necessary, all such persons from officiating. And if any shall presume to prate and say that it is not your business, tell them to come to us and dispute about the obedience which we thus enjoin upon you"—and adding a bitter complaint of the archbishops and bishops who, with rare exceptions, had taken no steps to put an end to these execrable customs, or to punish the guilty.²

These extraordinary measures called forth indignant denunciations on the part of ecclesiastics, for these letters were circulars sent to all the princes on whom he could depend, and he ensured their publicity by causing similar orders to be published in the churches themselves. Thus Theodoric, Bishop of Verdun, who had inclined to the side of Gregory and had secretly left the Assembly of

¹ His præcipimus vos nullo modo obedire, vel eorum præceptis consentire, sicut ipsi apostolicæ sedis præceptis non obediunt, neque auctoritati sanctorum patrum consentiunt.—Gregor. VII. Epist. extrav. 14. "Omnibus clericis et laicis in regno Teutonicorum constitutis."

² Regist. Lib. II. Epist. 45.

Letters conceived in the same spirit are extant, addressed to the principal laymen of Chiusi in Tuscany, to the Count and Countess of Flanders, &c. (Lib. II. Epist. 47; Lib. IV. Epist. 10, 11.)

Utrecht in 1076 to avoid countenancing by his presence the excommunication then pronounced against the pope, in a letter to Gregory bitterly reproaches his own folly in promulgating the decretal and in not foreseeing its effect as destructive to the peace of the Church, to the safety of the clerical order, and as declaring a disturbance which threatened even the Christian faith.¹ So Henry, Bishop of Speyer, indignantly denounced him as having destroyed the authority of the bishops and subjected the Church to the madness of the people;² and when the bishops, at the Diet of Worms, threw off their allegiance to him, one of the reasons alleged, in Henry's letter to him, is the surrender which he had made of the Church to the laity.³ Yet Gregory was not to be diverted from his course, and he was at least successful in rousing the Teutonic Church from the attitude of passive resistance which threatened to render his efforts futile. The princes of Germany, who were already intriguing with Gregory for support in their perennial revolts against their sovereign, were delighted to seize the opportunity of at once obliging the pope, creating disturbance at home, and profiting by the Church property which they could manage to get into their hands by ejecting the unfortunate married priests. They accordingly proceeded to exercise, without delay and to the fullest extent, the unlimited power so suddenly

¹ Martene et Durand. *Thesaur.* I. 218.—Hugon. Flavin. *Chron. Lib.* II. ann. 1079.—*Cf.* *Chron. Augustinens.* ann. 1075. Theodoric was naturally forced in the end to take a decided stand against Gregory. See his letter in Goldastus, *T. I.* p. 236, and the account of his episcopate in the *Gesta Trevir. Archiep.* (Martene *Ampl. Collect.* IV. 175–8.)

² Udalr. Babenb. *Cod. Lib.* II. cap. 162.

³ *Annalista Saxo*, ann. 1076.

We have already seen (p. 161) that Nicholas I., in the ninth century, had expressly forbidden any popular interference with married priests, and it is a little singular to observe that his decretal on the subject is extracted by Ivo of Chartres (*Decreti P. II.* cap. 82) and presented as valid law, in less than a generation after the death of Gregory VII.

granted them over a class which had hitherto successfully defied their jurisdiction; nor was it difficult to excite the people to join in the persecution of those who had always held themselves as superior beings, and who were now pronounced by the highest authority in the Church to be sinners of the worst description. The ignorant populace were naturally captivated by the idea of the vicarious mortification with which their own errors were to be redeemed by the abstinence imposed upon their pastors, and they were not unreasonably led to believe that they were themselves deeply wronged by the want of purity in their ecclesiastics. Add to this the attraction which persecution always possesses for the persecutor, and the license of plunder so dear to a turbulent and barbarous age, and it is not difficult to comprehend the motive power of the storm which burst over the heads of the secular clergy, and which must have satisfied by its severity the stern soul of Gregory himself.

A contemporary writer, whose name has been lost, but who is supposed by Dom Martène to have been a priest of Trèves, gives us a very lively picture of the horrors which ensued, and as he shows himself friendly in principle to the reform attempted, his account may be received as trustworthy. He describes what amounted almost to a dissolution of society, slave betraying master and master slave; friend informing against friend; snares and pitfalls spread before the feet of all; faith and truth unknown. The peccant priests suffered terribly. Some, reduced to utter poverty, and unable to bear the scorn and contempt of those from whom they had been wont to receive honour and respect, wandered off as homeless exiles; others, mutilated by the indecent zeal of ardent puritans, were carried around to exhibit their shame and misery; others, tortured in lingering death, bore to the

tribunal on high the testimony of blood-guiltiness against their persecutors; while others, again, in spite of danger, secretly continued the connections which exposed them to all these cruelties. In the midst of these troubles, as might be expected, the offices of religion were wholly neglected; the new-born babe received no holy baptism; the dying penitent expired without the saving viaticum; the sinner could cleanse his soul by no confession and absolution; and the devotee could no longer be strengthened by the daily sacrifice of the mass.¹ Another writer, of nearly the same date, relates with holy horror how the laity shook off all the obedience which they owed to their pastors, and, despising the sacraments prepared by them, trod the Eucharist under foot and cast out the sacred wine, administered baptism with unlicensed hands, and substituted for the holy chrism the filthy wax collected from their own ears.²

When such was the fate of the pastors, it is easy to imagine the misery inflicted on their unfortunate wives. A zealous admirer of Gregory relates with pious gratulation, as indubitable evidence of divine vengeance, how, maddened by their wrongs, some of them openly committed suicide, while others were found dead in the beds which they had sought in perfect health; and this being proof of their possession by the devil, they were denied Christian sepulture. The case of Count Manigold of Veringen affords a not uninteresting instance of the frightful passions aroused by the relentless cruelty which thus branded them as infamous, tore them from their families, and cast them adrift upon a mocking world. The count had put in force the orders of Gregory

¹ The writer indignantly adds—"Si autem quæris talis fructus a qua radice pullulaverit, lex ad laicos promulgata, qua imperitis persuasum est conjugatorum sacerdotum missas et quæcumque per eos implentur mysteria fugienda esse, in reipublicæ nostræ ornatum illud adjecit."—*Martene et Durand. Thesaur. I. 230-1.*

² Sigebert. *Gemblac. ann. 1074.*

with strict severity throughout his estates in the Swabian Alps. One miserable creature, thus driven from her husband, swore that the count should undergo the same fate, and, in the blindness of her rage, she poisoned the Countess of Veringen, whose widowed husband, overwhelmed with grief, sought no second mate.¹

Nor was the customary machinery of miracles wanting to stimulate the zeal of the faithful in the pious work, and to convince the doubters whose worldly wisdom or humanity might shrink from the task assigned them. Unchaste priests at mass would find sudden blasts of wind overturn the cup, and scatter the sacred wine upon the ground, or the holy wafer would be miraculously snatched out of their polluted hands. The saintly virgin Herluca saw in a vision the Saviour, with His wounds profusely bleeding, and was told that if she desired to escape a repetition of the horrifying spectacle, she must no longer be present at the ministrations of Father Richard, the officiating priest of her convent—a revelation which she employed effectually upon him and his parishioners. The same holy maiden, being observed staring intently out of the window, declared, upon being questioned, that she had seen the soul of the priest of Rota carried off by demons to eternal punishment; and, on sending to his habitation, it was found that he had expired at the very moment.² Puerile as these tales may seem to us, they were stern realities to those against whose weaknesses they were directed, and whose sufferings were thus enhanced by every art which bigotry could bring to bear upon the credulous passions of a barbarous populace.

It cannot be a matter of surprise if men, who were thus threatened with almost every worldly evil, should

¹ Pauli Bernried. Vit. Gregor. VII. No. 81, 107.

² Ibid. No. 105, 106, 107.

seek to defend themselves by means as violent as those employed by their persecutors. Their cruel intensity of fear is aptly illustrated by what occurred at Cambrai in 1077, where a man was actually burned at the stake as a heretic for declaring his adhesion to the Hildebrandine doctrine that the masses of simoniacal and concubinary priests were not to be attended by the faithful.¹ So, in the same year, when the pseudo-emperor Rodolf of Swabia was elected by the papalists at the Diet of Forcheim as a competitor of Henry IV., he manifested his zeal to suppress the heresies of avarice and lust by refusing the ministration of a simoniacal deacon in the coronation solemnities at Mainz. The clergy of that city, who had so successfully resisted, for two years, the efforts of their archbishop Siegfried to reduce them to subjection to the canons, were dismayed at the prospect of coming under the control of so pious a prince, who would indubitably degrade them or compel them to give up their wives and simoniacally acquired churches. They therefore stirred up a tumult among the citizens, who were ready to espouse their cause; and when Rodolf left his palace for vespers, he was attacked by the people. The conflict was renewed on his return, causing heavy slaughter on both sides, and though the townsmen were driven back, Rodolf was forced to leave the city.²

This incident affords us a glimpse into the political aspects of the reform. In the tremendous struggle between the empire and the papacy, Gregory allied himself with all the disaffected princes of Germany, and they

¹ Gregor. VII. Regist. Lib. iv. Epist. 20.

² Pauli Bernried. Vit. Gregor. VII. No. 87.—Ekkehard of Uraugen and the Annalista Saxo, however, in their accounts of these disturbances, attribute them to political rather than to ecclesiastical causes. The latter, no doubt, would hardly have been efficient without the former. The efforts of Henry to reduce the savage feudal nobles to order made him, throughout his reign, a favourite with the cities.

were careful to justify their rebellions under the specious pretext of zeal for the apostolic Church. They of course, therefore, entered heartily into his measures for the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline, and professed the sternest indignation towards those whom he placed under the ban. Thus, after Henry, in 1076, had caused his bishops to declare the degradation of Gregory, when the revolted princes held their assembly at Tribur, and in turn decreed the deposition of Henry, they used the utmost caution to exclude all who had communicated with Henry since his excommunication, together with those who had obtained preferment by simony, or who had joined in communion with married priests.¹ The connection, indeed, became so marked that the papalists throughout Germany were stigmatised by the name of Patarini—a term which had acquired so sinister a significance in the troubles of Milan.² In this state of affairs it was natural that common enmities and common dangers should unite the persecuted clergy and the hunted sovereign. Yet it is a curious illustration of the influence which the denunciations of sacerdotal marriage had exercised over the public mind, that although Henry tacitly protected the simoniacal and married ecclesiastics, and although they rallied around him and afforded him unquestionable and invaluable aid, still he never ventured openly to defend them. Writers both then and since have attributed the measure of success with which he sustained the fluctuating contest, and the consequent sufferings of the unbending pope, to the efforts of the recalcitrant clergy who resisted the yoke imposed on them by Rome.³ Yet Henry had formally and absolutely pledged his assistance when Gregory commenced

¹ Lambert, Hersfeld, ann. 1076.

² Hugon. Flaviniac. Lib. II.

³ *Ob hanc igitur causam, quia scilicet sanctam Dei ecclesiam castam esse volebat, liberam atque catholicam, quia de sanctuario Dei simoniacam et neophytorum hæresim et fedam libidinose contagionis pollutionem volebat expellere, membra*

his efforts, and had repeated the promise in 1075;¹ and from this position he never definitely withdrew. Even when the schismatic bishops of his party, at the Synod of Brixen, in 1080, pronounced sentence of deposition on Gregory, and filled the assumed vacancy with an anti-pope, the man whom they elected never ventured to dispute the principle of Gregory's reforms, although the Lombard prelates, at that very time, were warmly defending their married and simoniacal clergy.² Indeed, Guiberto of Ravenna, or Clement III., took occasion to express his detestation of concubinage in language nearly as strong as that of his rival, although he threatened with excommunication the presumptuous laymen who should refuse to receive the sacraments of priests that had not been regularly tried and condemned at his own papal tribunal.³ In thus endeavouring to place himself as a

diaboli cœperunt in eum insurgere, et usque ad sanguinem præsumperunt in eum manus injicere.—Hugon. Flaviniac. Lib. II.

Eo vesaniæ imperatorem induxerat cæca sacerdotum (qui tunc frequentes apud eum erant) libido. Timebant enim si cum pontifice in gratiam rediret, actum esse de concubinis suis, quas illi pluris quam vel propriam salutem vel publicam pendebant honestatem.—Hieron. Emser Vit. S. Bennon. c. III. § 40.

Gregory's celebrated exclamation on his death-bed does not, however, specially recognise this—"Dilexi justitiam et odi iniquitatem, propterea morior in exilio."

¹ Gregor. VII. Regist. Lib. I. Epist. 30; Lib. III. Epist. 3.

² According to Conrad of Ursperg (Chron. ann. 1080) among the reasons adduced for the deposition of Gregory by the Synod of Brixen, was "*Qui inter concordēs seminavit discordiam, inter pacificos lites, inter fratres scandala, inter conjuges divortia, et quicquid quiete inter pie viventes stare videbatur, concussit*"—in which the words italicised may possibly allude to the separation of the married clergy. Conrad, however, was a compiler of the thirteenth century, and his statements are not to be received without caution. If this motive had its weight with the prelates of the synod, they did not care to publish it to the world, for there is no allusion to it in the letter of renunciation addressed by them to Gregory (Goldast. Const. Imp. I. 238)—forming a striking contrast to the proceedings of the Synod of Pavia in 1076, already alluded to.

³ Wibert Antipap. Epist. VI.

Bishop Benzo, the most bitter of imperialists, did not desire to be confounded with the Nicolitan heretics—

"Omnis enim caste vivens templum Dei dicitur;
Si quis tantum sacramentum violare nititur,
Unus de porcorum grege protinus efficitur.
Facti cœlibes ardentem fugiamus Sodomam:
Hierosolymam petamus, Christianis commodam."

Comment. de Reb. Hen. IV. Lib. v. c. 6.

shield between the suffering priesthood and the persecuting populace, he was virtually striving to annul the reforms of Gregory, since in no other way could they be carried into effect; but he was forced to coincide with Gregory as to the principle which dictated those reforms. Notwithstanding all these precautions, however, the papalists were not disposed to allow their opponents to escape the responsibility of the alliance which brought them so much strength by dividing the Church, and no opportunity was lost of stigmatising them for the license which they protected. When Guiberto and his cardinals were driven out of Rome in 1084 by Robert Guiscard and his Normans, the flying prelates were ridiculed, not for their cowardice, but for their shaven chins, and the wives and concubines whom they publicly carried about with them.¹

At length Henry and his partisans appear to have felt it necessary to make some public declaration to relieve themselves from the odium of supporting and favouring a practice which was popularly regarded as a heresy and a scandal. When the papalists, under their King Hermann, at the Easter of 1085 (April 20th), convened a general assembly of their faction at Quedlinburg and again forbade all commerce with women to those in orders,² the imperialists lost no time in putting themselves on the same record with their rivals. Three weeks later Henry gathered around him, at Mainz, all the princes and prelates who professed allegiance to him, for the purpose of securing the succession to his eldest son, Conrad, as King of Germany, and there, in that solemn diet, marriage was formally prohibited to the priesthood.³ Gregory

¹ Honorius III. in Vit. Gregor. VII. No. 15.

² Bernald. Constant. ad. Herman. Contract. Append. ann. 1085.

³ Henricus multitudinem sequens, accessit eis qui sacerdotum conjugium sublatum volebant. Quare resistentes ei opinioni condemnati sunt.—H. Mutii German. Chron. Lib. xv.

I do not remember to have met with any contemporary authority for this

was then lying on his dying bed in the far-off castle of Salerno, and ere the news could reach him he was past the vanities of earthly triumph. Could he have known, however, that the cause for which he had risked the integrity and independence of the Church had thus received the support of its bitterest enemies, and that his unwavering purpose had thus achieved the moral victory of forcing his adversaries to range themselves under his banner, his spirit would have rejoiced, and his confidence in the ultimate success of the great theocratic system, for the maintenance of which he was thus expiring in exile, would have softened the sorrows of a life which closed in the darkness and doubt of defeat.

assertion, nor is there any provision of this nature in the decrees of the Diet as given by Goldastus (I. 245); but the chroniclers of the period were generally papalists, and would be apt to omit recording anything which they would deem so creditable to their adversaries. Yet that the imperialists were no longer held responsible for clerical irregularities is evident from a letter written in 1090 by Stephen, the papalist Bishop of Halberstadt, to Waltram of Magdeburg, who was a follower of Henry. In all his violent invectives against the imperialists, and in his long catalogue of their sins, he makes no allusion to priestly incontinence, showing that they must have disavowed these irregularities so formally as to leave no ground for imputations of complicity (Dodechini Append. ad Mar. Scot. ann. 1090).

CHAPTER XV

CENTRAL EUROPE

HILDEBRAND had passed away, leaving to his successors the legacy of inextinguishable hate and unattained ambition. Nor was the reform for which he had laboured as yet by any means secured in practice, even though his opponents had been reduced to silence or had been forced to render a formal adhesion to the canons which he had proclaimed so boldly.

The cause of asceticism, it is true, had gained many adherents among the laity. Throughout Germany, husbands and wives separated from each other in vast numbers, and devoted themselves to the service of the Church, without taking vows or assuming ecclesiastical garments; while those who were unmarried renounced the pleasures of the world, and, placing themselves under the direction of spiritual guides, abandoned themselves entirely to religious duties. To such an extent did this prevail, that the pope was applied to for his sanction, which he eagerly granted, and the movement doubtless added strength to the party of reform.¹ Yet but little had thus far been really gained in purifying the Church itself, notwithstanding the fearful ordeal through which its ministers had passed.

As for Germany, the indomitable energy of Henry IV., unrepressed by defeat and unchilled by misfortune, had at length achieved a virtual triumph over his banded enemies. But four bishops of the Empire—those of Wurzburg, Passau, Worms, and Constance—owned alle-

¹ Bernald. Constant. ann. 1091.

giance to Urban II. All the other dioceses were filled by schismatics, who rendered obedience to the anti-pope Clement. In 1089 the Catholic or papalist princes offered to lay down their arms and do homage to Henry if he would acknowledge Urban and make his peace with the true Church. The emperor, however, had a pope who suited him, and he entertained too lively a recollection of the trials from which he was escaping to open the door to a renewal of the papal pretensions, which he had at length successfully defied, nor would he consent to stigmatise his faithful prelates as schismatics.¹ He therefore pursued his own course, and Guiberto of Ravenna enjoyed the honours of the popedom, checkered by alternate vicissitudes of good and evil fortune, until removed by death in the year 1100,² his sanctity attested by the numerous miracles wrought at his tomb, which only needed the final success of the imperialist cause to enrich the calendar with a St. Clement in place of a St. Gregory and a St. Urban.³

Under such auspices, no very zealous maintenance of ecclesiastical discipline was to be expected. If Clement's sensibilities were humoured by a nominal reprobation of sacerdotal marriage, he could scarcely ask for more, or insist that Henry should rekindle the embers of disaffection by enforcing the odious rules which had proved so powerful a cause of trouble to their authors and his enemies. Accordingly, it cannot surprise us to observe that Urban II., in following out the views of his predecessors, felt it necessary to adopt measures even more violent than those which in Gregory's hands had caused so much excitement and confusion, but whose inefficiency

¹ Bernald. Constant. ann. 1089.

² A monkish chronicler professes to record of his own knowledge Guiberto's death-bed remorse for the schism he had been instrumental in causing. "*Malens, ut ab ore ipsius didicimus, apostolici nomen nunquam suscepisse.*"—Chron. Reg. S. Pantaleon. ann. 1100.

³ Udalt. Babenb. Cod. Lib. II. c. 173.

was confessed by the very effort to supplement them. In 1089, the year after his consecration, Urban published at the Council of Amalfi a decree by which, as usual, married ecclesiastics were sentenced to deposition, and bishops who permitted such irregularities were suspended; but where Gregory had been content with ejecting husbands and wives, and with empowering secular rulers to enforce the edict on recalcitrants, Urban, with a refinement of cruelty, reduced the unfortunate women to slavery, and offered their servitude as a bribe to the nobles who should aid in thus purifying the Church.¹ If this infamous canon did not work misery so widespread as the comparatively milder decretals of Gregory, it was because the power of Urban was circumscribed by the schism, while he was apparently himself ashamed or afraid to promulgate it in regions where obedience was doubtful. When Pibo, Bishop of Toul, in the same year, 1089, sent an envoy to ask his decision on various points of discipline, including sacerdotal marriage (the necessity of such inquiry showing the futility of previous efforts), Urban transmitted the canons of Amalfi in response, but omitted this provision, which well might startle the honest German mind.² Perhaps, on reflection, Urban may himself have wished to disavow the atrocity, for in a subsequent council, when again attacking the ineradicable sin, he contented himself with simply forbidding all such marriages, and ordering all persons who were bound by orders or vows to be separated from their

¹ *Eos qui in subdiaconatu uxoribus vacare voluerint, ab omni sacro ordine removemus, officio atque beneficio ecclesiæ carere decernimus. Quod si ab episcopo commoniti non se correxerint, principibus licentiam indulgemus ut eorum feminas mancipent servituti. Si vero episcopi consenserint eorum pravitatibus, ipsi officii interdictione mulotentur.*—Synod. Melfit. ann. 1089 can. 12.

The second canon of the same council—"Sacrorum canonum instituta renovantes, præcipimus ut a tempore subdiaconatus nulli liceat carnale commercium exercere. Quod si deprehensus fuerit, ordinis sui periculum sustinebit"—shows how much more venial was the offence of promiscuous licentiousness than the heresy of marriage.

² Urbani II. Epist. 24.

wives or concubines, and to be subjected to due penance.¹

Yet even in those regions of Germany which persevered in resisting Henry and in recognising Urban as pope, the persecution of twenty years was still unsuccessful, and the people had apparently relapsed into condoning the wickedness of their pastors. In an assembly held at Constance in 1094, it was deemed necessary to impose a fine on all who should be present at the services performed by priests who had transgressed the canons.² When this was the case in the Catholic provinces, it is easy to imagine that in the imperialist territories the thunders of Gregory and Urban had long since been forgotten, and that marrying and giving in marriage were practised with as little scruple as ever. A fair illustration, indeed, of the amount of respect paid to the rules of discipline is afforded by a discussion on the choice of a successor to Cosmo, Bishop of Prague, who died in 1098. Duke Brecislas, in filling the vacancy with his chaplain Hermann, endeavoured to rebut the arguments of those who objected to the foreign birth of the appointee by urging that fact as a recommendation, since, as a stranger, he would not be pressed upon by a crowd of kindred nor be burdened with the care of children, thus showing that the native priesthood, as a general rule, were heads of families.³ For this, moreover, they could not plead ignorance, for a Bohemian penitential of the period ex-

¹ Gratian. Dist. XXVII. c. 8.

² Decret. Comit. Constant. c. 2 (Goldast. I. 246).

³ *Et quia hospes est, plus ecclesiæ prodest: non eum parentela exhauriet, non liberorum cura aggravabit, non cognatorum turba despoliet*—Cosmæ Pragenses. Chron. Lib. III. ann. 1098.—It should, however, be borne in mind that Bohemia had been Christianised in 871 by Cyrillus and Methodius, missionaries from Constantinople, and the national Slavonic worship, founded on the Greek faith, after many struggles, was not abolished until 1094 (see Krasinski's Reformation in Poland, London, 1838, I. 13). The attachment of the race to their ancestral rites explains the proneness of the Bohemians and Poles to fall away into heresy.

pressly prohibits priests from having companions whose society could give rise to suspicion of any kind.¹

At length the duel which, for more than thirty years, Henry had so gallantly fought with the successors of St. Peter drew to a close. Ten years of supremacy he had enjoyed in Germany, and he looked forward to the peaceful decline of his unquiet life, when the treacherous calm was suddenly disturbed. Papal intrigues in 1093 had caused the parricidal revolt of his eldest born, the weak and vacillating Conrad, whose early death had then extinguished the memory of his crime. That unnatural rebellion had gained for Rome the North of Italy; and as the emperor's second son, Henry, grew to manhood, he, too, was marked as a fit instrument to pierce his father's heart, and to extend the domination of the Church by the foulest wrongs that man can perpetrate. The startling revolution which in 1105 precipitated Henry from a throne to a prison, from an absolute monarch to a captive embracing the knees of his son and pleading for his wretched life, established for ever the supremacy of the papacy over Germany. The consequent enforcement of the law of celibacy became only a question of time.

As the excuse for the rebellion was the necessity of restoring the empire to the communion of Rome, one of the first measures of the conspirators was the convocation of a council to be held at Nordhausen, May 29, 1105, and one of the objects specified for its action was the expulsion of all married priests.² The council was duly held, and duly performed its work of condemning the heresy which permitted benefices to be occupied and sacred functions exercised by those who were involved

¹ Höfler, *Concilia Pragensia*, p. xiii. (Prag, 1862).

² *Annalista Saxo*, ann. 1105.

in the ties of matrimony.¹ Pope Paschal II. was not remiss in his share of the ceremony, by which he was to receive the fruits of his treacherous intrigues. The following year a great council was held at Guastalla, where, after interminable discussions as to the propriety of receiving without re-ordination those who had compromised themselves or who had been ordained by schismatics, he admitted into the fold all the repentant ecclesiastics of the party of Henry IV.² The text of the canon granting this boon to the imperialist clergy bears striking testimony to the completeness of the separation which had existed between the Teutonic and the Roman Churches in stating that throughout the empire scarce any Catholic ecclesiastics were to be found.³ It scarcely needed the declaration which Paschal made in 1107 at the Synod of Troyes, condemning married priests to degradation and deprivation,⁴ to show that the doctrines of Damiani and Hildebrand were thenceforth to be the law of the empire.

The question thus was definitely settled in prohibiting the priests of Germany from marrying or from retaining the wives whom they had taken previous to ordination. It was settled, indeed, in the rolls of parchment which recorded the decrees of council and the trading bargains of pope and kaiser, yet the perennial struggle continued, and the parchment roll for yet awhile was powerless before the passions of man, who did not cease to be man because his crown was shaven and his shoulders wore cope and stole.

Cosmo, who was Dean of Prague, who had been bred

¹ *Nycholaitarum quoque fornicaria commixtio ibidem est ab omnibus abdicata.* — Chron. Reg. S. Pantaleon, ann. 1105. Cf. *Annal. Saxo*, ann. 1105.

² Compare Bernaldi Constant. de Reordinatione vitanda, &c.

³ *Quod cum dolore dicimus, vix pauci sacerdotes aut clerici Catholici in tanta terrarum latitudine reperiantur.* — *Annal. Saxo*, ann. 1106.

⁴ Concil. Trecent. ann. 1107 c. 2 (Pertz, *Legum T. II. P. ii. p. 181*).

to the Church, and had been promoted to the priesthood in 1099, chronicles in 1118 the death of Boseteha, his wife, in terms which show that no separation had ever occurred between them; and five years later he alludes to his son Henry in a manner to indicate that there was no irregularity in such relationship, nor aught that would cause him to forfeit the respect of his contemporaries in acknowledging it.¹ Even more to the point is the case of a pious priest, his friend, who, on the death of his wife ("presbytera"), made a vow that he would have no further intercourse with women. Cosmo relates that the unaccustomed deprivation proved harder than he had expected, and that for some years he was tortured with burning temptation. Finding at length that his resolution was giving way, he resolved to imitate St. Benedict in conquering the flesh; and having no suitable solitude for the execution of his purpose, he took a handful of nettles to his chamber, where, casting off his garments, he thrashed himself so unmercifully that for three days he lay moribund. Then he hung the nettles in a conspicuous place on his wall, that he might always have before his eyes so significant a memento and warning.² Cosmo's admiration for this, as a rare and almost incredible exhibition of priestly virtue and fortitude, shows how few were capable of even remaining widowers, while the whole story proves that not only the clergy were free to marry, but also that it was only the voluntary vow that prevented a second marriage. At the close of the century Pietro, Cardinal of Santa Maria in Via Lata, sent as legate to Bohemia by Celestin III., was much scandalised at this state of affairs; and when a number of

¹ Cosmæ Pragensis Chron. Lib. III. ann. 1118, 1123.

Rerum cunctarum comes indimota mearum
Bis Februi quinis obiit Boseteha kalendis.

² Ibid. Lib. III. ann. 1125 (Mencken. Script. Rer. German. III. 1799).

postulants for holy orders were assembled in the Church of St. Vitus at Prague, before ordaining them he pronounced a discourse on the subject of celibacy, and demanded that they should all swear to preserve continence. Thereupon all the priests who were present rushed forward and urged them not to assume an obligation hitherto unknown, and when the cardinal ordered the archdeacon to repress their somewhat active demonstrations, they proceeded to pummel that unhappy official, and the tumult was with difficulty repressed by the soldiery who were summoned. The legate sentenced some of the rioters to be starved to death in prison and the rest to be exiled—a wholesome severity which broke the spirit of the Bohemian priesthood and led to the introduction of celibacy.¹

That this state of things was not confined to the wild Bohemian Marches, but obtained throughout Germany in general, is sufficiently attested by the fact that when Innocent II. was driven out of Rome by the anti-pope Anaclet, and was wandering throughout Europe begging recognition, he held, in conjunction with the Emperor Lothair, in 1131, a council at Liège, where he procured the adoption of a canon prohibiting priestly marriage or attendance at the mass of married priests. Not only does the necessity of this fresh legislation show that previous enactments had become obsolete, but the manner in which these proceedings are referred to by the chroniclers plainly indicates that it took the Teutonic mind somewhat by surprise, and that the efforts of Gregory and Urban had not only remained without result, but had become absolutely forgotten.²

¹ Dubravii Hist. Bohem. Lib. XIV. (Ed. 1687, pp. 380–1).

² Statuitur et hoc semper memorabile, secundum decreta canonum, presbyteros parochianos castos et sine uxoribus esse debere: uxorati vero presbyteri missam a nemine audiendam esse.—Annal. Bosoviens. ann. 1131.

Statuitur quoque ab omnibus, secundum decreta canonum, illud antiquum, quod

If these proceedings of Innocent had any effect, it was only to make matters worse. The pious Rupert, Abbot of Duits, writing a few years later, deploras the immorality of the priesthood, who not only entered into forbidden marriages, but, knowing them to be illegal, had no scruple in multiplying the tie, considering it to be, at their pleasure, devoid of all binding force.¹ And in Liège itself, where Innocent had held his council, Bishop Albero, whose episcopate commenced in 1135, permitted his priests to celebrate their marriages openly, so that, as we are told, the citizens rather preferred to give their daughters in marriage to them than to laymen; and the naïve remark of the chronicler, that the clergy gave up keeping concubines in secret and took wives openly, would seem to show that the cause of morality had not gained during the temporary restriction imposed by Innocent.² It was not to much purpose that Albero was deprived of his see for this laxity, for the same state of things continued. No province of Germany was more orthodox than Salzburg, yet the archdeacon of the archiepiscopal Church there, writing in 1175, bewails the complete demoralisation of his clergy, whom he was utterly unable to reform. Priests who were content with their own wives and did not take those of other men were reputed virtuous and holy; and he complains that in his own archidiaconate he was powerless to prevent the ordination and ministry of the sons of priests, even while they were living in open adultery with women whom they had taken from their husbands.³ How little sympathy, indeed, all efforts to

semper erit innovandum, presbyteros castos et sine uxoribus esse, missam autem uxorati presbyteri neminem audire debere.—Chron. Sanpetrin. Erfurt. ann. 1131.

Statuitur etiam hoc semper memorabile, per decreta canonum presbyteros parrochianos castos et sine uxoribus esse debere, uxorati vero presbyteri missam a nemine audiendam esse.—Chron. Pegaviens. Continuat. ann. 1131.

¹ Ruperti Tuitens. Comment. in Apocalyps. Lib. II. cap. ii.

² Hist. Monast. S. Laurent. Leodiens. Lib. v. c. 39 (Martene Ampliss. Collect. IV. 1005).

³ Henrici Salisburg. Archidiac. de Calam. Eccles. Salisburg. cap. ix.

enforce the rule called forth is instructively shown by the wondering contempt with which a writer, strictly papalist in his tendencies, comments upon the indiscreet reformatory zeal of Meinhard, Archbishop of Trèves. Elevated to this lofty dignity in 1128, he at once undertook to force his clergy to obey the rule by the most stringent measures, and speedily became so odious that he was obliged to leave his bishopric within the year; and the chronicler who tells the story has only words of reprobation for the unfortunate prelate.¹ Even as late as the end of the twelfth century, a chronicler of the popes, writing in Southern Germany, calls Gregory VII. an enforcer of impossibilities—"præceptor impossibilium"—because he had endeavoured to make good the rule of celibacy;² and a Council of Ratisbon, in the thirteenth century, while lamenting the fact that there were few priests who did not openly keep their concubines and children in their houses, quotes the canon of Hildebrand forbidding the laity to attend at the ministrations of such persons, but without venturing to hint at its enforcement.³

Hungary had been Christianised at a time when the obligation of celibacy was but lightly regarded, though it had not as yet become obsolete. In reducing the dreaded and barbarous Magyars to civilisation, the managers of the movement might well smooth the path, and interpose as few obstacles as possible to the attainment of so desirable a consummation. It is probable, therefore, that re-

¹ "Deinde dum nimio zelo rectitudinis de incontinentia clericorum multa sæve disponderet, sine condimento discrecionis, magnam sibi comparavit invidiam, et quam nec dici fas est, acquisivit infamiam." He went to Italy, seeking aid from Honorius II., but was captured by Conrad the Swabian, the rival of the Emperor Lothair, and died of affliction in his prison at Parma, October 1, 1130 (Gest. Trevirorum Continuata, c. 27, 28).

² Anon. Zwetlensis Hist. Roman. Pontif. No. CLXI. (Pez, T. I. P. iii. p. 385).

Council. Ratisbonens. sæc. XIII. c. v. (Printed by Schneller, Straubing, 1785.)

strictions on marriage, as applied to the priesthood, were lightly passed over, and, not being insisted on, were disregarded by all parties. Even the decretals of Nicholas II. and the fulminations of Gregory VII. appear to have never penetrated into the kingdom of St. Stephen, for sacerdotal celibacy seems to have been unknown among the Hungarians until the close of the century. The first allusion to it occurs in the Synod of Zabolcs, held in 1092, under the auspices of St. Ladislav II., and is of a nature to show not only that it was an innovation on established usages, but also that the subject required tender handling to reconcile it to the weakness of undisciplined human nature. After the bitter denunciations and cruelly harsh measures which the popes had been promulgating for nearly half a century, there is an impressive contrast in the mildness with which the Hungarian Church offered indulgence to those legitimately united to a first wife, until the Holy See could be consulted for a definitive decision;¹ and though marriages with second wives, widows, or divorced women were pronounced null and void, the disposition to evade a direct meeting of the question is manifested in a regulation which provided that if a priest united himself to his female slave "*uxoris in locum*," the woman should be sold; but if he refused to part with her, he was simply to pay her price to the bishop.² Whether or not the pope's decision was actually sought, we have no means of knowing; if it was, his inevitable verdict received little respect, for the Synod of Gran, held about the year 1099 by the Primate Seraphin of Gran, only ventured to recommend moderation to

¹ *Presbyteris autem qui prima et legitima duxere conjugia, indulgentia ad tempus datur, propter vinculum pacis et unitatem Spiritus Sancti, quousque nobis in hoc Domini Apostolici paternitas consilietur.*—Synod. Zabolcs ann. 1092 c. 3, or Decret. St. Ladisl. Lib. I. c. 3 (Batthyani, I. 434–5).

² Synod. Zabolcs c. 1, 2.—Any prelate assenting to such illicit unions, and not insisting on immediate separation, was punishable to a reasonable extent (Ibid. c. 4).

married priests, while its endeavour to enforce the rule prohibiting marriage after the assumption of orders shows how utterly the recognised discipline of the Church was neglected. The consent of wives was also required before married priests could be elevated to the episcopate, and after consecration separation was strictly enjoined, affording still further evidence of the laxity allowed to the other grades. The iteration of the rules respecting *digami* and marriage with widows also indicates how difficult was the effort to resuscitate those well-known regulations, although they were universally admitted to be binding on all ecclesiastics.¹

King Coloman, whose reign extended from 1095 to 1114, has the credit of being the first who definitely enjoined immaculate purity on the Hungarian priesthood. His laws, as collected by Alberic, have no dates, and therefore we are unable to affix precise epochs to them; but his legislation on the subject appears to have been progressive, for we find edicts containing injunctions respecting *digami* and irregular unions in terms which indicate that single marriages were not interfered with; and these may reasonably be deemed earlier than other laws which formally prohibit the elevation to the diaconate of an unmarried man without exacting from him a vow of continence, or of a married man without the consent of his wife. The import of this latter condition is explained by another law, which provided that no married man should officiate at the altar unless his wife professed continence, and was furnished by her husband with the means of dwelling apart from him.² As these stringent regulations form part of the canons of a council held by Archbishop Seraphin about the

¹ Synod. Strigonens. II. (Batthyani, II. 121-8). Peterffy's emendation of "voluerint" for "noluerint," in the clause respecting *digami*, can hardly be questioned.

² Decret. Coloman. cap. 41, 42. Comp. cap. 27 and 37.

year 1109,¹ they were probably borrowed from that council by Coloman, and incorporated into his laws at a period somewhat later.

I have not met with any indications of the results of the legislation which thus combined the influence of the temporal and ecclesiastical authorities. That it effected little, however, is apparent from the evidence afforded by Dalmatia, at that time a province of Hungary. Shortly before it lost its independence, its duke, Dimitri, resolved to assume the crown of royalty, and purchased the assent of Gregory VII. at the price of acknowledging him as feudal superior. Gregory took advantage of Dimitri's aspirations to further the plans of reform, of which he never lost sight; for, in the coronation oath taken in 1076 before Gebizo, the papal legate, the new king swore that he would take such measures as would insure the chastity of all ecclesiastics, from the bishop to the subdeacon.² The new dynasty did not last long, for before the end of the century St. Ladislas united the province of Dalmatia to the kingdom of Hungary; but neither the oath of Dimitri, the laws of Coloman, nor the canons of the national councils succeeded in eradicating the custom of priestly marriage. When we find, in 1185, Urban III., in approving the acts of the Synod of Spalatro, graciously expressing his approbation of its prohibiting the marriage of priests, and desiring that the injunction should be extended so as to include the diaconate,³ we see that marriage must have been openly enjoyed by all ranks, that the synod had not ventured to include in the restriction any but the highest order, and that Urban himself did not undertake to apply the rule to subdeacons, although they had been specially included in Dimitri's

¹ Synod. Vencellina circa 1109.

² Batthyani, I. 431.

³ Epist. Urbani apud Batthyani, II. 274.

oath. Yet still pope and synod laboured in vain, for fourteen years later, in 1199, another national council complained that priests kept both wives and benefices. It therefore commanded that those who indulged in this species of adultery should either dismiss their partners in guilt, and undergo due penance, or else should give up their churches; while no married man should be admitted to the diaconate, unless his wife would take a vow of continence before the bishop.¹ Even yet, however, the subdiaconate is not alluded to, although the legates who presided over the council were those of Innocent III.

Of how little avail were these efforts is shown by the national council held at Vienna as late as 1267, by Cardinal Guido, legate of Clement IV. It was still found necessary to order the deprivation of priests and deacons who persisted in retaining their wives; while the special clauses respecting those who married after taking orders prove that such unions were frequent enough to require tender consideration in removing the evil. The subdiaconate, also, was declared liable to the same regulations, but the resistance of the members of that order was probably stubborn, for the canons were suspended in their favour until further instructions should be received from the pope.²

Poland was equally remiss in enforcing the canons on her clergy. The leaning of the Slavonic races towards the Greek Church rendered them, in fact, peculiarly intractable, and marriage was commonly practised by the clergy at least until the close of the twelfth century.³ At length the efforts of Rome were extended to that distant region, and in 1197 the papal legate,

¹ Synod. Dalmatiæ ann. 1199 (Batthyani, II. 289-90).

² Concil. Vienn. ann. 1267 (Batthyani, II. 415-17).

³ *Complures ea tempestate sacerdotes uxoribus velut jure legitimo utebantur.*
—Dlugossi Hist. Polon. Lib. VI. ann. 1197.

Cardinal Peter of Capua, held the Synod of Lanciski, when the priests were peremptorily ordered to dismiss their wives and concubines, who, in the words of the historian, were at that time universally and openly kept.¹ The result of this seems to have amounted to little, for in 1207 we find Innocent III. sharply reproving the bishops of the province of Gnesen because married men were publicly admitted to ecclesiastical dignities, and canons took no shame in the families growing up around them. The children of priests were brought up to the sacred profession of their fathers, assisted them in their ministrations, and succeeded to their benefices. Whether or not the other disorders which Innocent designated as infecting the churches were the result of the carnal affections which thus superseded the spiritual we may fairly doubt, in view of the abuses still prevailing in more favoured regions.² The effort was continued, and was apparently at length successful, at least in the western portions of the Polish Church, for at the Council of Breslau, held in 1279, there is no mention of wives, and the constitution of Guido, legate of Clement IV., is quoted, depriving of benefices those who openly kept concubines.³

The Church of Sweden was no purer than its neighbours. That the rule was recognised there at a tolerably early period is shown by the fact that when the people of Scania, about the year 1180, revolted against the exactions of Waldemar I. of Denmark, they demanded to be released from the oppression of tithes, and that the clergy should be married. Singularly enough, the clerks stood by their bishop, Absalom,

¹ Staravolsk. Concil. Epit. ap. Harduin. T. VI. P. II. p. 1937.

² Innocent. PP. III. Regest. Lib. IX. Epist. 235.

³ Concil. Vratislaviens. ann. 1279 c. iii. (Hartzheim III. 808).

when he laid an interdict on the province, and the arms of Waldemar speedily subdued the revolt.¹ Not much, however, was gained for Church discipline by this. In 1204 the Archbishop of Lunden reported to Innocent III. that he had used every endeavour to enforce the canons, and had brought many of his priests to observe chastity, but that there still were many who persisted in retaining their women, whom they treated as though they were legitimate wives, with fidelity and conjugal affection. To this Innocent replied that the recalcitrants must be coerced by suspension, and, if necessary, by deprivation of benefice.² How little result this achieved is evident when we find the archbishop again writing to Innocent III. complaining that the Swedish priests persisted in living with their wives, and that they moreover claimed to have a papal dispensation permitting it. Innocent, in reply, cautiously abstained from pronouncing an opinion as to the validity of these pretensions until he should have an opportunity of examining the document to which they appealed.³ The efforts at this time were fruitless, for in 1237 Gregory IX. ordered Sigund, Archbishop of Drontheim, to put an end to the public marriages of his clergy,⁴ and in 1248 we find the Cardinal of St. Sabina as legate of Innocent IV. holding a council at Schening, of which the principal object was to reform these abuses, which were so firmly established that the Swedes were considered as schismatics of the Greek Church, in consequence of the marriage of their priests. The council, supported by the royal power, succeeded in forcing the Swedish ecclesiastics to give up their wives by a liberal use of all the punishments then in vogue, together with

¹ Saxo. *Grammat. Hist. Dan. Lib.* xv. (Ed. 1576, p. 327).

² Innocent. *PP. III. Regest.* vi. 198.

³ Innocent. *III. Regest.* xvi. 118.

⁴ Potthast. *Regesta* i. 879, No. 10352.

the significant threat of abandoning them to the tender mercies of the secular tribunals.¹

In Denmark, and along the northern coasts of Germany, there was equal delay in enforcing the canon of celibacy. It is suggestive of some powerful intercession in favour of the married clergy when we see Paschal II., in 1117, writing to the King of Denmark that the rule was imperative, and that he could admit of no exceptions to it.² His insistence, however, was of little avail. In 1266 Cardinal Guido, legate of Clement IV., held a council at Bremen, where he was obliged to take rigorous measures to put an end to this Nicolitan heresy. All married priests, deacons, and sub-deacons were pronounced incapable of holding any ecclesiastical office whatever. Children born of such unions were declared infamous, and incapable of inheritance, and any property received by gift or otherwise from their fathers was confiscated. Those who permitted their daughters, sisters, or other female relatives to contract such marriages, or gave them up in concubinage to priests, were excluded from the Church. That a previous struggle had taken place on the subject is evident from the penalties threatened against the prelates who were in the habit of deriving a revenue from the protection of these irregularities, and from an allusion to the armed resistance, made by the married and concubinary priests with their friends, to all efforts to check their scandalous conduct.³

In Friesland, too, the efforts of the sacerdotalists were long set at nought. In 1219 Emo, Abbot of Witte-

¹ *Prima intentio et cura Cardinalis Sabinensis in hoc concilio erat revocare Suecos et Gothos a schismate Græcorum, in quo presbyteri et sacerdotes, ductis publicis uxoribus consensisse videbantur.*—Harduin. VII. 423.

² Jaffé, *Regesta*, pp. 515-6.—Paschal. II. Epist. 497.

³ Concil. Bremens. ann. 1266 (Hartzheim IV. 580).

werum, describing the disastrous inundations which afflicted his country, considers them as a punishment sent to chastise the vices of the land, and among the disorders which were peculiarly obnoxious to the wrath of God he enumerates the public marriage of the priests, the hereditary transmission of benefices, and the testamentary provision made by ecclesiastics for their children out of the property which should accrue to the Church; while his references to the canon law inhibiting these practices show that these digressions were not excusable through ignorance.¹ The warning was unheeded, for Abbot Emo alludes incidentally, on various subsequent occasions, to the hereditary transmission of several deaneries as a matter of course.² The deans in Friesland were ecclesiastics of high position, each having six or more parishes under his jurisdiction, which he governed under legatine power from the Bishop of Munster. When, in 1271, the people rose against them, exasperated by their intolerable exactions, in some temporary truce the deans gave their *children* as hostages; and when, after their expulsion, Gerard of Munster came to their assistance by excommunicating the rebels, the latter defended the movement by the argument that the deans had violated the laws of the Church by handing down their positions from father to son, and that each generation imitated the incontinence of its predecessors.³ Hildebrand might have applauded this reasoning, but his days were past. The Church by this time had gained the position to which it had aspired, and no longer

¹ Emonis Chron. ann. 1219.

² "Eodem tempore defunctus est præfatus decanus (Herbrandus) possessor ecclesiæ in Husquert, tertius heres illius nominis, relicto parvulo ejusdem nominis." (Emonis Chron. ann. 1231.)—and Emo alludes to him as "honesto viro Herbrando."

"Obiit Geyco decanus in Firmetium vir per omnia sæcularibus artibus idoneus, et bene religiosus et obsequiosus. Successit ei Siccio, quartus a proavo Sigrepo."—Ibid. ann. 1233.

³ Menconis Chron. Werens. ann. 1271.

invoked secular assistance to enforce its laws. Even Abbot Menco, while admitting the validity of the popular argument, claimed that such questions were reserved for the decision of the Church alone, and that the people must not interfere.

After thus marking the slow progress of the Hildebrandine movement in these frontier lands of Christendom, let us see what efforts were required to establish the reform in regions less remote.

CHAPTER XVI

FRANCE

GREGORY VII. had not been so engrossed in his quarrels with the Empire as to neglect the prosecution of his favourite schemes of reform elsewhere. If he displayed somewhat less of energy and zeal in dealing with the ecclesiastical foibles of other countries, it was perhaps because the political complications which gave a special zest to his efforts in Germany were wanting, and because there was no organised resistance supported by the temporal authorities. Yet the inertia of passive non-compliance long rendered his endeavours and those of his successors equally nugatory.

As early as 1056 we find Victor II., by means of his vicars at the Council of Toulouse, enjoining on the priesthood separation from their wives, under penalty of excommunication and deprivation of function and benefice.¹ This was followed up in 1060 by Nicholas II., who sought through his envoys to enforce the observance of his decretals on celibacy in France, and under the presidency of his legate the Council of Tours in that year adopted a canon of the most decided character. All who, since the promulgation of the decretal of 1060, had continued in the performance of their sacred functions while still preserving relations with their wives and concubines were deprived of their grades without hope of restoration; and the same irrevocable penalty was denounced against those who in the future should

¹ Concil. Tolosan. ann. 1056 can. vii.

endeavour to combine the incompatible duties of husband and minister of Christ.¹

In what spirit these threats and injunctions were likely to be received may be gathered from an incident which occurred, probably about this time. A French bishop, as in duty bound, excommunicated one of his deacons for marrying. The clergy of the diocese, keen to appreciate the prospect of future trouble, rallied around their persecuted brother, and rose in open rebellion against the prelate. The latter, apparently, was unable to maintain his position, and the matter was referred for adjudication to the celebrated Berenger of Tours. Although, in view of the papal jurisprudence of the period, the bishop would seem to have acted with leniency, yet Berenger blamed both parties for their precipitancy and quarrelsome humour, and decided that the excommunication of a deacon for marrying was contrary to the canons, unless rendered unavoidable by the contumacy of the offender.²

Even more significant was the scene which occurred in 1074 in the Council of Paris, where all, bishops, abbots, and priests, refused to obey the mandate of Hildebrand, declaring that it imposed an insupportable burden; and when the holy St. Gauthier, Abbot of Pontoise, ventured to argue that the commands of the pope must be executed, whether just or unjust, he was set upon, beaten almost to death, carried before the king, and confined until some friendly nobles procured his release.³

When such was the spirit of the ecclesiastical body,

¹ Concil. Turon. ann. 1060 c. 6.

² *Ceterum, quod excommunicavit diaconum suum propter ductam uxorem, contra canones fecisse videtur mihi, nisi forte cogente pertinacia ipsius.*—Epist. Berengar. Turon. (Martene Thesaur. I. 195-6). It must be borne in mind that the persecution of Berenger arose solely from his theological subtleties, and that objections to celibacy formed no portion of his errors.

³ Labbæi et Coleti Supplementum, T. II. p. 5. "The Life and Times of Hildebrand," by the Abbé O. Délarc.

there was little to be expected from any internal attempt at reform. At the stormy Synod of Poitiers, in 1078, the papal legate, Hugh, Bishop of Die, succeeded in obtaining the adoption of a canon which threatened with excommunication all who should knowingly listen to the mass of a concubinary or simoniacal priest,¹ but this seems to have met with little response. Coercion from without was evidently requisite, and in this case, as we have seen, Gregory did not shrink from subjecting the Church to the temporal power. In Normandy, for instance, a synod held at Lisieux in 1055 had commanded the degradation of priests who resided with wives or concubines. This was, of course, ineffective, and in 1072 John, Archbishop of Rouen, held a council in his cathedral city, where he renewed that canon in terms which show how completely all orders and dignitaries were habitually liable to its penalties.² The Norman clergy were not disposed to submit quietly to this abridgment of their accustomed privileges, and they expressed their dissent by raising a terrible clamour and driving their archbishop from the council with a shower of stones, from which he barely escaped alive.³ At length, in view of the utter failure of all ecclesiastical legislation, the laity were called in. William the Conqueror, therefore, in 1080, assisted the Archbishop of Rouen in holding a synod at Lillebonne, where the stern presence of the suzerain prevented any unseemly resistance to the adoption of most unpalatable regulations. All who were in holy orders were forbidden, under any pretext, to keep women in their houses, and if, when accused of disobedience, they were unable to prove themselves innocent, their benefices were irretriev-

¹ Concil. Pictaviens. ann. 1078 can. 9.

² Concil. Rotomag. ann. 1072 can. 16, "de clericis uxoratis."

³ Orderic. Vital. P. II. Lib. iv. c. 2. A full account of this episode will be found in the Abbé O. Délaire's "The Life and Times of Hildebrand," 3 vols.

ably forfeited. If the accusation was made by the ecclesiastical officials, the offender was to be tried by the episcopal court, but if his parishioners or feudal superior were the complainants, he was to be brought before a mixed tribunal composed of the squires of his parish and the officials of the bishop. This startling invasion of the dearest privileges of the Church was declared by William to proceed from no desire to interfere with the jurisdiction of his bishops, but to be a temporary expedient, rendered necessary by their negligence. Nor is this remarkable measure the only thing that renders the Synod of Lillebonne worthy of note, for it affords us the earliest authoritative indication of a practice which subsequently became a standing disgrace to the Church. The fifth canon declares that no priest shall be forced to give anything to the bishop or to the officers of the diocese beyond their lawful dues, and especially that no money shall be exacted on account of women kept by clerks.¹ A tribute known as "cullagium" became at times a recognised source of revenue, in consideration of which the weaknesses of human nature were excused, and ecclesiastics were allowed to enjoy in security the society of their concubines. We shall see hereafter that this infamous custom continued to flourish until the sixteenth century, despite the most strenuous and repeated endeavours to remove so grievous a scandal.

It is probable that the expedient of mixed courts for the trial of married and concubinary priests was not adopted without the concurrence of Gregory, who was willing to make almost any sacrifice necessary to accomplish his purpose. That they were organised and per-

¹ Concil. Tulibonens. ann. 1080 can. 3, 5 (Orderic. Vital. P. II. Lib. v. c. 6.—Harduin. Concil. T. VI. P. I. p. 1599).—Propter eorum feminas nulla pecuniæ emendatio exigatur.

formed the functions delegated to them is shown by a reference in a charter of 1088 to one held at Caumont, which required a priest to abandon either his wife or his church.¹ So far, indeed, was Gregory from protesting against this violation of ecclesiastical immunities, that he was willing even to connive at the abuses which immediately crept into the system, and to purchase the assistance of the laity by allowing them to lay sacrilegious hands on the temporalities of the Church. Many of the nobles who thus assisted in expelling the offending clergy seized the tithes and retained them. The papal legate, Hugh, Bishop of Die—better known by his subsequent primatial dignity of Lyons—proceeded against these invaders of Church property in the usual manner, and excommunicated them as a matter of course. Gregory, however, who under ordinary circumstances would have promptly consigned the spoilers to the bottomless pit, now virtually took their side. He discreetly declined to confirm the excommunication, reproved his legate for superserviceable zeal, and ordered him in future to be more guarded and temperate in his proceedings.²

Church and State—the zeal of the ecclesiastic and the avarice of the noble—vainly united to break down the stubbornness of the Norman priesthood, for marriage continued to be enjoyed as openly as ever. The only effect of the attempted reform, indeed, appeared to be that when a priest entered into matrimony he took a solemn vow never to give up his wife, a measure prompted doubtless by the fears of the bride and her kindred. The nuptials were public; male issue succeeded to benefices by a recognised primogeniture, and female children received their fathers' churches as dower, when other resources were wanting. About the beginning of the

¹ Pauli Carnot. Vet. Agano. Lib. VIII. c. 11.

² Gregor. VII. Regist. Lib. IX. Epist. 5.

twelfth century, three enthusiastic ascetic reformers, the celebrated Robert d'Arbrissel, founder of Fontevrault, Bernard Abbot of Tiron, and Vitalis of Mortain traversed Normandy and preached with great earnestness against these abuses, the result of which was that they nearly came to an untimely end at the hands of the indignant pastors and their more indignant spouses. On one occasion, when Bernard was preaching at Coutances, a married archdeacon assailed him, with a crowd of priests and clerks, asking how he, a monk, dead to the world, presumed to preach to the living. Bernard replied that Samson had slain his foes with the jaw-bone of a dead ass, and then proceeded with so moving a discourse on Samson, that the archdeacon was converted, and interfered to save him from the mob.¹

If William the Conqueror found his advantage in thus assisting the hopeless reform within his duchy of Normandy he had no hesitation in obstructing it when his policy demanded such a course in his subject province of Brittany. During the three and a half centuries through which the Breton Church maintained its independence of the archiepiscopal see of Tours, its metropolis was Dol. Judhaël, who occupied its lofty seat, not only obtained it by simony, but sullied it by a public marriage; and when the offspring of this illicit union reached maturity he portioned them from the property of the Church. This prolonged violation of the canons attracted the attention of Gregory soon after his accession, and in 1076 he informed William that he had deposed the offender. William, however, saw fit to defend the scandal, and refused to receive Evenus, Abbot of St. Melanious, whom Gregory had appointed as a successor.² Judhaël, indeed, was no worse than

¹ Gaufridi Grossi Vit. Bernardi Tironens. c. 6, §§ 51-54.

² Gregor. VII. Epist. extrav. 29.—Epist. in Martene Thesaur. III. 871-6.

his suffragans. For three generations the diocese of Quimper was held by father, son, and grandson; while the Bishops of Rennes, Vannes, and Nantes were openly married, and their wives enjoyed the recognised rank of countesses, as an established right.¹ How much improvement resulted from the efforts of Gregory and his legate Hugh may be estimated from the description, in general terms, of the iniquities ascribed to the Breton clergy, both secular and regular, in the early part of the next century, by Paschal II. when granting the pallium to Baldric, Archbishop of Dol. All classes are described as indulging in enormities hateful to God and man, and as having no hesitation in setting the canons at defiance. In Brittany, as in Wales and Spain, the centralising influence of Rome was at fault, and priestly marriage was persevered in long after it had been abrogated elsewhere.²

In Flanders, Count Robert the Frisian and Adela, his mother, were well disposed to second the reformatory measures of Gregory, but, doubting their right to eject the offenders, they applied to him, in 1076, for instructions. His answers were unequivocal, urging them to the most prompt and summary proceedings.³ The spirit in which the clergy met the attack was manifested by the incident already described, when, in 1077, an unfortunate zealot was burned at the stake in Cambrai for maintaining the propriety of the papal decretals. The same disposition, though fortunately leading to less deplorable results, was exhibited in Artois. At the

¹ Roujoux, *Hist. de Bretagne* II. 98-99. The independence affected by the Breton Church is well shown in a singularly impertinent letter addressed to Leo IX. by the clergy of Nantes, refusing to receive a bishop appointed by him, after the degradation for simony of Prodicus by the Council of Rheims in 1050 (*Martene Thesaur.* I. 172-3).

² *Martene Thesaur.* III. 882.—Haddan and Stubbs II. 96.

³ *Gregor.* VII. *Regist.* Lib. IV. *Epist.* 10, 11.

instance of Adela, Robert, in 1072, had founded the priory of Watten, near St. Omer. Despite this powerful interest and patronage, the house had a severe struggle for existence, as its prior, Otfrid, lent his influence to support the reform and to enforce the decrees of Gregory. Reproaches and curses were showered upon the infant community, and it was openly threatened with fire and sword, until the unfortunate brethren felt equally insecure within their walls and abroad. At length the Countess Adela took Otfrid with her on a pilgrimage to Rome, and there the holy man procured from Gregory a confirmation of the privileges of his house. On his return, he found that this instrument only made the persecution more vehement. Accusations of all kinds were made against the priory, and its enemies succeeded in causing the brethren to be brought for trial before the local synod, where the production of the papal charter was ordered. It was at once pronounced a forgery, was taken away by force, and was retained by the bishop, Drogo of Terouane, in spite of all remonstrance.¹

The opposition of the clergy was not lessened by the manner in which the secular authorities exercised the power bestowed upon them. Count Robert saw the advantages derivable from the position of affairs, and seems to have been resolved to turn it thoroughly to account. Among other modes adopted was that of the "*jus spoli*," by which he seized the effects of dying ecclesiastics, turning their families out of doors and disinheriting the heirs. These arbitrary proceedings he defended on the ground of the incontinence of the sufferers, boldly declaring that wicked priests were no priests—as if, groaned the indignant clerks, sinful men

¹ Ebrardi Chron. Watinens. cap. 22-3. Ebrard was a contemporary, a disciple of Otfrid, and therefore his statement of the motives of the persecution is entitled to credence.

were not men.¹ In 1091, the Flemish priests complained of these acts to Urban II., and he vainly endeavoured to interfere on their behalf.² Finding this resource fail, they appealed to their metropolitan, Renaud, Archbishop of Rheims, who by active measures succeeded in putting an end to the abuse in 1092.

Amid all this the Church proved powerless to enforce its laws, and again it called upon the feudal authority for assistance—this time in a manner by which it admitted its impotence on a question so vital. In 1099, Manasses of Rheims held a provincial synod at St. Omer, which instructed the Count of Flanders, Robert the Hierosolymitan, to seize the wives of all priests who, after excommunication, declined to abandon their guilty partners; and in this he was not to ask or wait for the assent of the bishop of the diocese. The sturdy Crusader would doubtless have carried out this order to the letter, with all its attendant cruelty and misery, but the clergy of the province united in remonstrances so vehement that Manasses was forced to abandon his position. He accordingly requested Robert on no account to disturb the married priests and their wives, or to permit his nobles to do so, except when assistance was demanded by the bishops. He acknowledged the injustice he had committed in overslaughing the constituted authorities of the Church, and deprecated the rapine and spoliation which so ill-advised a proceeding might cause. At the same time he admonished his suffragans to proceed vigorously against all who married in orders, and to call on the seigneurial power to coerce those who should prove contumacious.³

¹ "Addens malos sacerdotes sacerdotes non esse, acsi peccator homo non esset homo." From the tenor of Robert's defence it is evident that it was the children of the clerks whom he disinherited. The documents are in Warnkönig, *Hist. de Flandre* I. 330-3 (Bruxelles, 1835).

² Urbani PP. II. Epist. 70.

³ Lambert. Atrebat. Epist. 60.

Harsh and violent as were the measures thus threatened, there appears to have been extreme hesitation in carrying them out. A certain clerk known as Robert of Artois committed the unpardonable indiscretion of marrying a widow, and openly resisted all the efforts of his bishop to reduce him to obedience. Not only his original crime, but his subsequent contumacious rebellion, would assuredly justify the severest chastisement, yet both the secular and ecclesiastical powers of the province seem to have been at fault, for it was found necessary to ask the interference of no less a personage than Richard, Bishop of Albano, the papal legate in France. In 1104 the legate accordingly addressed the Count of Flanders with the very moderate request that the obstinate rebel and his abettors should be held as excommunicate until they should reconcile themselves to their bishop. Robert finally appealed to Rome itself, but in the end was obliged to succumb. Similar was the case of two Artesian deacons who refused to abandon their wives until Lambert, the Bishop of Artois, excommunicated them, when they travelled to Rome in hopes of reconciliation to the Church. Paschal II. absolved them on their taking a solemn oath upon the Gospels to live chastely in future, and he sent them back to Lambert with instructions to keep a careful watch upon them.¹ These cases, which chance to remain on record, show how obstinately the clergy held to their wives, and how difficult it was to convince them that the authorities of the Church were determined to enforce the canons. We therefore need not be surprised to find Paschal II., after the year 1100, writing to the clergy of Terouane, expressing his astonishment that, in spite of so many decretals of popes and canons of councils, they still

¹ Lambert. Atrebat. Epist. 84—Paschalis PP. II. Epist. 134.—Lambert. Epist. apud Baluz. et Mansi II. 150.

adhered to their consorts, some of them openly and some secretly. To remedy this, he has nothing but a repetition of the old threat of deprivation.¹

The confusion which this attempted reformation caused in France was apparently not so aggravated as we have seen it in Germany, and yet it was sufficiently serious. Guibert de Nogent relates that in his youth commenced the persecution of the married priests by Rome, when a cousin of his, a layman of flagrant and excessive licentiousness, made himself conspicuous by his attacks on the failings of the clergy. The family were anxious to provide for young Guibert, who was destined to the Church, and the cousin used his influence with the patron of a benefice to oust the married incumbent, and bestow the preferment on Guibert. The priest thus forcibly ejected abandoned neither his wife nor his functions, but relieved his mind by excommunicating every day, in the mass, Guibert's mother and all her family, until the good woman's fears were so excited that she abandoned the prebend which she had obtained with so much labour.² We can readily conceive this incident to be a type of what was occurring in every corner of the kingdom, when, in an age of brute force, the reverence which was the only defence of the priesthood was partially destroyed, and the people hardly knew whether they were to adore their pastors as representatives of God, or to dread them as the powerful ministers of evil.

When the religious ardour of Europe rose to the wild excitement that culminated in the Crusades, and Pope Urban II. astutely availed himself of the movement to place the Church in possession of a stronger influence

¹ Paschalis PP. II. Epist. 415.

² Guibert. *Noviogen. de Vita Sua Lib. I. cap. vii.*

over the minds of men than it had ever before enjoyed, it was to no purpose that the great Council of Clermont, in 1095, took the opportunity to proclaim in the most solemn manner the necessity of perfect purity in ministers of the altar, to denounce irrevocable expulsion for contravention of the rule, and to forbid the children of ecclesiastics from entering the Church except as monks or canons.¹ It was the weightiest exposition of Church discipline, and was promulgated under circumstances to give it the widest publicity and the highest authority. Yet, within a few years, we find Gaulo, Bishop of Paris, applying to Ivo of Chartres for advice as to what ought to be done with a canon of his Church who had recently married, and Ivo in reply recommending as a safe course that the marriage be held valid, but that the offender be relieved of his stipend and functions.² His answer, moreover, is written in a singularly undecided tone, and an elaborate argument is presented as though the matter were still open to discussion, although Ivo's laborious compilations of the canon law show that he was thoroughly familiar with the ancient discipline which the depravity of his generation had rendered obsolete.³ Hardly less significant is another epistle in which Ivo calls the attention of Daimbert, Archbishop of Sens, to the conduct of one of his dignitaries, who publicly maintained two concubines and was preparing to marry a third. He urges Daimbert to put an end to the scandal, and suggests that if he is unable to accomplish it single-handed, he should summon two or three of his suffragans to his assistance.⁴ Either of these instances is a sufficient

¹ Concil. Claromont. can. 9, 10, 25.

In Lent of the following year (1096) Urban caused these canons to be received by a provincial council held under his auspices at Tours.—Bernald. Constant. ann. 1096.

² Ivon. Carnot. Epist. 218.

³ Ivon. Decret. P. VI. c. 50 sqq.—Panorm. Lib. III. c. 84 sqq.

⁴ Ivon. Epist. 200.

confession of the utter futility of the ceaseless exertions which for half a century the Church had been making to enforce her discipline. Nor, perhaps, can her ill-success be wondered at when we consider how unworthy were the hands to which was frequently entrusted the administering of the law, and the laxity of opinion which viewed the worst transgressions with indulgence. The archdeacons were the officials to whom was specially confided the supervision over sacerdotal morals, and yet, when a man occupying that responsible position, like Aldebert of Le Mans, publicly surrounded himself with a harem, and took no shame from the resulting crowd of offspring, so little did his conduct shock the sensibilities of the age that he was elevated to the episcopal chair, and only the stern voice of Ivo could be heard reproving the measureless scandal.¹

Equal looseness pervaded the monastic establishments. Hildebert, Bishop of Le Mans, made numerous fruitless attempts to restore discipline in the celebrated abbey of Euron, the monks of which indulged in the grossest licentiousness, and successfully defied his power until he was obliged to appeal to the papal legate for assistance.² Albero of Verdun, after fruitless attempts to reform the monastery of St. Paul, in his episcopal city, was obliged to turn out the monks by force and replace them with Premonstratensians, who were then in the full ardour of their new discipline.³ The description which Ivo of Chartres gives of the convent of St. Fara shows a pro-

¹ Quod ultra modum laxaveris frena pudicitiae, in tantum ut post acceptum archidiaconatum, accubante lateribus tuis plebe muliercularum, multam generis plebem puerorum et puellarum.—Ibid. Epist. 277.

² Est etiam eis publica et inexpugnabilis cum mulieribus familiaritas, quibus illae, promissis et praemissis obligatae munusculis, dies iniquitatis et noctes infamiae indicare comprobantur.—Hildebert. Cenoman. Epist. 38 (Lib. II. Epist. 25).

³ Hist. Episc. Verdunens. (D'Achery Spicileg. II. 254).

miscuous and shameless prostitution, on the part of the nuns of that institution, even more degrading.¹ Instances like these could be almost indefinitely multiplied, such as that of St. Mary of Argentueil, reformed by Heloise, the great foundation of St. Denis, previous to the abbacy of Suger, and that of St. Gildas de Ruys in Brittany, as described by Abelard;² who, moreover, depicts the nuns of the period, in general terms, as abandoned to the most hideous licentiousness—those who were good-looking prostituting themselves for hire, those who were not so fortunate hiring men to gratify their passions, while the older ones, who had passed the age of lust, acted as procuresses.³ Innocent III. may therefore be absolved from the charge of exaggeration when, in ordering the reform of the nuns of St. Agatha, he alludes to their convent as a brothel which infected with its evil reputation the whole country around it.⁴ A contemporary chronicler records as a matter of special wonder that John of Salisbury, Bishop of Chartres, forced his canons to live in cloisters according to the Rule of St. Augustin; and he adds that, stimulated by this example, his uncle, John of Lisieux, and his successor, Geoffrey of Chartres, attempted the same reform, but without success.⁵ It is true that some partial reform was effected by St. Bernard, but the austerities of the new orders founded by enthusiasts like him and St. Bruno, Robert d'Arbrissel, and St. Norbert, did not cure the ineradicable vices of the older establishments.

¹ *Audiui turpissimam famam de monasterio Sanctæ Faræ, quod jam non locus sanctimonialium sed mulierum dæmonialium prostibulum dicendum est, corpora sua ad turpes usus omni generi hominum prostituentium.*—Ivon. Epist. 70.

² *Martene Thesaur. T. V. pp. 1142–3.*—Honorii PP. II. Epist. 91.—Guill. Nangis ann. 1123, 1124.

³ *P. Abælardi Sermo xxix.*

⁴ *Bull. Pontif. No. xxiii. ap. Hahnii Collect. Monument. Vet. I. 147.* As to the reformation of the nuns of Laon, see Guill. de Nangis ann. 1128.

⁵ *Roberti de Monte Chron. ann. 1143.*

With such examples before us, it is not difficult to believe the truth of the denunciations with which Raoul of Poitiers, whose fiery zeal gained for him the distinctive appellation of “*Ardens*,” lashed the vices of his fellows; nor can we conclude that it was mere rhetorical amplification which led him to declare that the clergy, who should be models for their flocks, were more shameless and abandoned than those whose lives it was their duty to guide.¹ Peter Cantor, indeed, deploras the superiority of the laity to the clergy as the greatest injury that afflicted the Church.²

The natural result of such a state of morals was the prevalence of the hereditary principle against which the Church had so long and so perseveringly striven. How completely this came to be regarded as a matter of course, is shown by a contemporary charter to the ancient monastery of Bèze, by which a priest named Germain, on entering it bestowed upon it his holding, consisting of certain specified tithes. This deed of gift is careful to declare the assent of the sons of the donor, showing that the title of the monastery would not have been considered good as against the claims of Germain’s descendants had they not joined in the conveyance.³ Even as late as 1202 we find Innocent III. endeavouring to put a stop to the hereditary transmission of benefices in the bishopric of Toul, where it was practised to an extent which showed how little impression had as yet been made by the unceasing efforts of the last hundred and fifty years.⁴

¹ *Nonne qui nocentes deberemus absolvere, eis malo exemplo nocemus? Nonne qui deberemus pollutos lavare, vitiorum nostrorum contagione alios polluimus? — Sed nos, hodie indigni sacerdotes quid dicemus qui cæteris hominibus non majores sed deteriores sumus? Qui cum in conspectu hominum gradu sacerdotalis ordinis celsiores cæteris videamur, tamen cæteris inferiores vita moribusque jaceamus?—Radulph. Ardent. T. II. P. ii. Homil. 25.—See also Homil. 21.*

² *Nihil enim est quo magis lædatur Ecclesia quam quod laicos videt esse meliores clericis.—Pet. Cant. Verb. Abbreviat. cap. lvii.*

³ *Hoc totum factum est rogatu Germani presbyteri, filiorumque ejus, qui post inde noster effectus est monachus.—Chron. Besuens. Chart. de tenement. German. presbyt.*

⁴ *Innocent. PP. III. Regest. v. 67.*

When, in the presence of so stiff-necked and evil disposed a generation, all human efforts seemed unavailing to secure respect for the canons of councils and decretals of popes, we need scarcely wonder if recourse was had to the miraculous agencies which so often proved efficacious in subduing the minds of men. Wondrous stories, accordingly, were not wanting, to show how offended Heaven sometimes gave in this world a foretaste of the wrath to come, awaiting those who lived in habitual disregard of the teachings of the Church. Thus Peter the Venerable relates with much unction how a priest, who had abandoned himself to carnal indulgences, died amid the horrors of anticipated hell-fire. Visible to him alone, the demons chuckling around his death-bed heated the frying-pan of burning fat in which he was incontinently to be plunged, while a drop flying from the sputtering mass seared him to the bone, as a dreadful material sign that his agony was not the distempered imagining of a tortured conscience. A miracle equally significant wrung a confession of his weakness from the Dean of Minden in 1167.¹

If Heaven thus miraculously manifested its anger, it was equally ready to welcome back the repentant sinner. In the first energy of the reforms of St. Bernard, a priest entered the abbey of Clairvaux. The rigour of the Cistercian discipline wore out his enthusiasm; he fled from the convent, returned to his parish, and, according to the general custom (*"sicut multis consuetudinis est"*) took to himself a concubine, and soon saw a family increasing around him. The holy St. Bernard chanced to pass that way and accepted the priest's warm hospitality without recognising him. When the Saint was ready to depart in the morning he found that his host was absent performing his functions in the church, and, turning to one of the children, he sent him with a message to his

¹ Petri Venerab. de Mirac. Lib. I. c. 25.—Chron. Episc. Mindens. c. 26.

father. Though the child had been a deaf-mute from birth, he promptly performed the errand. Roused by the miracle to a sense of his iniquity, the apostate rushed to the Saint, threw himself at his feet, confessed who he was, and entreated to be taken back to the monastery. St. Bernard, touched by his repentance, promised to call for him on his return. To this the priest objected, on the ground that he might die during the interval, but was comforted with the assurance that if he died in such a frame of mind, he would be received by God as a monk. When St. Bernard returned, the repentant sinner was dead. Inquiring as to the ceremonies of his interment, he was told that the corpse had been buried in its priestly garments; whereupon he ordered the grave to be opened, and it was found arrayed, not in its funeral robes, but in full Cistercian habit and tonsure, showing that God had fulfilled the promises made in His name.¹

Such was the condition of the Gallican Church when, in 1119, Calixtus II. stepped from the archiepiscopal see of Vienne to the chair of St. Peter. His first great object was to end the quarrel with the empire on the subject of investitures, the vicissitudes of which rendered the papacy at the time of his accession an exile from Italy; his second was to carry out the reforms so long and so fruitlessly urged by his predecessors. To accomplish both these results he lost no time in summoning a great council to assemble at Rheims, and when it met, in November 1119, no less than fifteen archbishops, more than two hundred bishops, and numerous abbots responded to the call, representing Italy, France, Aquitaine, Spain, Germany, and England. The attempted reconciliation with the Emperor Henry V. failed, but the vices and corruptions of the Church were vigorously attacked and sternly pro-

¹ S. Bernardi Vitæ Primæ Lib. vii. cap. xxi.

hibited for the future. All commerce with concubines or wives was positively forbidden under pain of deprivation of benefice and function. No choice was granted the offender, for continuance in his sin after expulsion was punishable with excommunication; and the hereditary transmission of ecclesiastical dignities and property was strictly prohibited.¹ Whether it was the lofty character of the new pope, his royal blood and French extraction, or whether the solemnity of the occasion impressed men's minds, it is not easy now to guess, but unquestionably these proceedings produced greater effect upon the Transalpine Churches than any previous efforts of the Holy See. Calixtus was long regarded as the real author of sacerdotal celibacy in France, and his memory has been embalmed in the jingling verses which express the dissatisfaction and spite of the clergy, deprived of their ancestral privileges.

O bone Calliste, nunc clerus odit te;
 Olim presbyteri poterant uxoribus uti;
 Hoc detruxisti quando tu papa fuisti,
 Ergo tuum festum nunquam celebratur honestum.²

Calixtus was not a man to rest half way, nor was he content with an empty promise of obedience. Under the pressure of his influence, the French prelates found themselves obliged to take measures for the vigorous enforcement of the canons. What those measures were, and the disposition with which they were received, may be understood from the resultant proceedings in Normandy. Geoffrey, Archbishop of Rouen, on leaving the Council

¹ Concil. Remens. ann. 1119 can. 4, 5.—"Nullus episcopus, nullus presbyter, nullus omnino de clero ecclesiasticas dignitates vel beneficia cuilibet, quasi hereditario jure, derelinquat." Calixtus had already caused this provision to be adopted by the Council of Toulouse, held in the previous June (Concil. Tolosan. ann. 1119 can. 8).

² Cujas quotes these verses as still current in his day, and attributes to the efforts of Calixtus the suppression of sacerdotal marriage in France (Giannone, *Apologia* c. xiv.).

of Rheims, promptly called a synod, which assembled ere the month was out. The canon prohibiting female intercourse roused abhorrence and resistance among his clergy, and they inveighed loudly against the innovation. Geoffrey singled out one who rendered himself particularly prominent in the tumult, and caused him to be seized and cast into prison; then, leaving the church, he called in his guards, whom, with acute anticipation of trouble, he had posted in readiness. The rude soldiery fell upon the unarmed priests, some of whom promptly escaped; the rest, grasping what weapons they could find, made a gallant resistance, and succeeded in beating back the assailants. A mob speedily collected, which took sides with the archbishop. Assisted by this unexpected reinforcement, the guards again forced their way into the church, where they beat and maltreated the unfortunate clerks to their heart's content; when, as the chronicler quaintly observes, the synod broke up in confusion, and the members fled without awaiting the archiepiscopal benediction.¹

The immediate effect of the reformation thus inaugurated may perhaps be judged with sufficient accuracy by the story of Abelard and Heloise, which occurred about this period. That Abelard was a canon when that immortal love arose, was not, in such a state of morals, any impediment to the gratification of his passion, nor did it diminish the satisfaction of the canon Fulbert at the marriage of his niece, for such marriages, as yet, were valid by ecclesiastical law. In her marvellous self-abnegation, however, Heloise recognised that while the fact of his openly keeping a mistress, and acknowledging Astrolabius as his illegitimate son, would be no bar to his preferment, and would leave open to him a career equal to the dreams of his ambition, yet to admit that

¹ Orderic. Vital. P. III. Lib. xii. c. 13.

he had sanctified their love by marriage, and had repaired, as far as possible, the wrong which he had committed, would ruin his prospects for ever. In a worldly point of view it was better for him, as a Churchman, to have the reputation of shameless immorality than that of a loving and pious husband; and this was so evidently a matter of course that she willingly sacrificed everything, and practised every deceit, that he might be considered a reckless libertine, who had refused her the only reparation in his power. Such was the standard of morals created by the Church, and such were the conclusions inevitably drawn from them.

Nor were these conclusions erroneous, if we may judge by an incident of the period. An archdeacon of Angoulême had committed the crime of seducing the abbess of a convent in the district under his charge. When the results of the amour could be no longer concealed, and the Count of Angoulême ventured to remonstrate with Gérard, the bishop of the diocese, that worthy prelate protected the offender by dismissing the charge with a filthy jest. Yet so far was Gérard from forfeiting the respect of his contemporaries by this laxity, that he was soon afterwards appointed papal legate.¹ It required the interposition of Heaven to punish the guilty, as was seen about this time in the diocese of Comminges, where a deacon was entangled in a guilty connection and was summoned with his paramour before the bishop, St. Bertrand. The reproof of the holy man reduced the deacon to contrition, but the woman was defiant. He escaped punishment, while she was seized by demons and expired on the spot.²

Yet there are evidences that the efforts of Calixtus, and of the fathers whose assembled authority was con-

¹ Arnulf. Lexoviens. de Schismate cap. I. II. (D'Achery I. 153).

² Vit. S. Bertrandi Convenar. No. 13, 14 (Martene Ampliss. Collect. VI. 1028).

centrated at Rheims, did not by any means eradicate a custom which had now become traditional. Soon afterwards King Louis-le-Gros, in granting a charter to the church of St. Cornelius at Compiègne, felt it necessary to accompany the privileges bestowed with a restriction, worded as though it were a novelty, to the effect that those in holy orders connected with the foundation should have no wives—a condition which shows how little confidence existed in the mind of the sagacious prince as to the efficacy of the canons so sententiously promulgated by the rulers, and so energetically resisted by the ruled.¹ That he was justified in this lack of confidence is evident when we see, further on in the century, an epistle of Alexander III., undated, but probably written about 1170, complaining of the canons of St. Ursmar and Antoin, who openly kept concubines in their houses, while some of them did not hesitate to marry;² while as late as 1212 a Council of Paris was obliged to adopt canons forbidding clerks married in the lower orders to hold parishes while retaining their wives, and suspending from benefice and functions all those who marry while in holy orders.³

One cause for this disregard of the laws so energetically promulgated is seen in the case of the Bishop of Terouane, who, about 1225, was ordered by Honorius III. to enforce them against all offenders. He did so, when they had no trouble in obtaining papal letters confirming them in their benefices, and enabling them to persecute the bishop, who was obliged to appeal to Honorius for fresh authority. The Bishop of Constance had had a

¹ Ut clerici ejusdem ecclesiæ sicut usque modo vixerunt permaneant; hoc tamen præcipimus ut presbyteri, diaconi, subdiaconi nullatenus deinceps uxores concubinas habeant; cæteri vero cujuscumque ordinis clerici propter fornicationem, licentiam habeant ducendi uxores.—Du Cange, s. v. *Concubina*.

² Epist. Alex. PP. III. in Martene Ampliss. Collect. II. 794.

³ Concil. Paris. ann. 1212 can. xvi. xviii. (Ibid. VII. 99).

somewhat similar experience in 1195, when he applied to Cœlestin III. for aid in ousting a deacon who while in holy orders had kept a concubine, and on her death had married a wife, retaining his benefice, in spite of all efforts to deprive him. To the good bishop's application the answer was to leave the offender in peace.¹

¹ *Compilat.* II. Lib. I. Tit. xi. c. 4; *Comp.* V. Lib. II. Tit. xx. c. 4; Lib. III. Tit. c. 2 (Friedberg, *Compilationes Quinque antiquæ*, pp. 70, 168-9).

CHAPTER XVII

NORMAN ENGLAND

WE have already seen what was the condition of the Anglo-Saxon Church when William the Conqueror overran the island with his horde of adventurers. Making all due allowance for the fact that our authorities are mostly of the class whose inclination would lead them to misrepresent the conquered and to exaggerate the improvement attributable to the conquest, it cannot be doubted that the standard of morality was extremely low, and that the clergy were scarcely distinguishable from the laity in purity of life or devotion to their sacred calling.

If the reformatory efforts of the popes had not penetrated into the kingdom of Edward the Confessor, it was hardly to be expected that they would excite attention amid the turmoil attendant upon the settlement of the new order of political affairs and the division of the spoils among the conquerors. Accordingly, even the vigilance of Gregory VII. appears to have virtually overlooked the distant land of Britain, conscious, no doubt, that his efforts would be vain, even though the influence of Rome had been freely thrown upon the side of the Norman invader, and had been of no little assistance to him in his preparations for the desperate enterprise. In fact, though William saw fit to aid in the suppression of matrimony among the priests of his hereditary dominions, and had thereby earned the grateful praises of Gregory himself,¹ he does not seem to have regarded the morals of his new subjects as worthy of any special attention. It is true

¹ Gregor. VII. Regist. Lib. IX. Epist. 5.

that in his system of transferring all power from the subject to the dominant race, when Saxon bishops were to be ejected and their places filled with his own creatures, it was necessary for him to effect his purpose in a canonical way, and to procure the degradation of his victims by the Church itself, as it was impossible for him to lay unhallowed hands upon their consecrated heads, or to remove prelates from their sees on questions of mere political expediency. To accomplish this, the scandals and irregularities of their lives afforded the promptest and most effective excuse, and it was freely used. The vigour with which these changes were carried into effect is visible in the Synods of Winchester and Windsor in 1070, where numerous bishops and abbots were deprived on various pleas; and the character of the prelates removed may be assumed from the description of the Bishop of Litchfield (Chester) by Lanfranc, in a letter of the same year to Alexander II., where his public maintenance of wife and children is alleged, in addition to other crimes of which he was accused.¹ Though a puritan, like Lanfranc, bred in the asceticism of the Abbey of Bec, might seek to enforce the canons in an individual case, as when he orders Arfastus, Bishop of Thetford, to degrade a deacon who refused to part with his wife,² yet that no general effort was made to effect a reform in the ranks of the clergy is evident from an epistle addressed in 1071 to William by Alexander II., in which, while praising his zeal in suppressing the heresy of simony, and exhorting him to fresh exertion in the good work, no mention whatever is made of the kindred error of Nicolitism, which is usually inseparable in the papal diatribes of the period.³ Equally conclusive is the fact that when, in 1075, Lanfranc held a national council in

¹ Roger of Hoveden. ann. 1070.—Baron. Annal. ann. 1070, No. 26.

² Lanfranci Epist. XXI.

³ Alexand. II. Epist. 83.

London for the purpose of reforming the English Church, canons were passed to restrain simony, to prevent incestuous marriages, and to effect other needful changes, but nothing was said respecting sacerdotal marriage, at that time the principal object of Gregory's vigorous measures.¹

How thoroughly, indeed, clerical marriage and the hereditary descent of benefices was received as legitimate by common consent is manifested by a case quoted by Camden from the MS. records of the Abbey of St. Peter and St. Paul of Shrewsbury. Under the Conqueror, Roger de Montgomery in founding that house bestowed upon it the church of St. Gregory, subject to the life estate of the canons then holding it, whose prebends as they died should fall within the gift of the monks. The children of the canons, however, disputed the gift, claimed that they had a right to their fathers' holdings, and actually gave rise to a great lawsuit to defend their position.²

The first steps to check the irregularities of the priesthood appear to have been taken in 1076, at the Council of Winchester, and the extreme tenderness there displayed by Lanfranc for the weakness of his flock shows how necessary was the utmost caution in treating a question evidently new, and one which deprived the English clergy of a privilege to which no taint of guilt had previously been attached. We have seen by the instance related above that when Lanfranc could act according to his own convictions, he was inclined to enforce the absolute rule of celibacy, and we may therefore conclude that on this occasion he was overruled by the convictions of his brother prelates that it was impossible to obtain obedience. All that the council would venture upon was a general

¹ Wilkins, *Concil. Mag. Britan.* I. 363.

² Camden's *Britannia*, Tit. Shropshire.

declaration against the wives of men in orders, and it permitted parish priests to retain their consorts, contenting itself with forbidding future marriages, and enjoining on the bishops that they should thereafter ordain no one in the diaconate or priesthood without a pledge not to marry in future.¹

Such legislation could only be irritating and inconclusive. It abandoned the principle for which Rome had been contending, and thus its spirit of worldly temporising deprived it of all respect and influence. Obedience to it could be therefore evoked on no higher ground than that of an arbitrary and unjustifiable command, and accordingly it received so small a share of attention that when, some twenty-six years later, the holy Anselm, at the great Council of London in 1102, endeavoured to enforce the reform, the restrictions which he ordered were exclaimed against as unheard of novelties, which, being impossible to human nature, could only result in indiscriminate vice, bringing disgrace upon the Church.² The tenor of the canons of this council, indeed, proves that the previous injunctions had been utterly disregarded. At the same time they manifest a much stronger determination to eradicate the evil, though they are still far more lenient than the contemporary Continental legislation. No archdeacon, priest, or deacon could marry, nor,

¹ *Decretumque est ut nullus canonicus uxorem habeat. Sacerdotes vero in castellis vel in vicis habitantes, habentes uxores non cogantur ut dimittant; non habentes interdicantur ut habeant; et deinceps caventur episcopi ut sacerdotes vel diaconos non præsumant ordinare, nisi prius profiteantur ut uxores non habeant.*—Wilkins I. 367.

Polydor Virgil describes a Council of London held by Lanfranc in 1078, in which—"Ante omnia mores sacerdotum parum puri quamproxime potuit, ad priscorum patrum regulam revocati sunt, estque illis in posterum tempus recte vivendi modus præscriptus" (*Angl. Hist. Lib. IX.*); but he has evidently mixed together the proceedings of various synods.

² *Henric. Huntingdon. Lib. VII.*—*Matt. Paris, ann. 1102.*—Henry of Huntingdon, though an archdeacon, was himself the son of a priest, and therefore was not disposed to regard with complacency the stigma attached to his birth by the new order of things.

if married, could retain his wife. If a subdeacon, after professing chastity, married, he was to be subjected to the same regulation. No priest, so long as he was involved in such unholy union, could celebrate mass; if he ventured to do so, no one was to listen to him; and he was, moreover, to be deprived of all legal privileges. A profession of chastity was to be exacted at ordination to the subdiaconate and to the higher grades; and, finally, the children of priests were forbidden to inherit their father's churches.¹ Ineffective as was this council, it made a profound impression on the English clergy.²

One symptom of weakness is observable in all this. The council apparently did not venture to prescribe any ecclesiastical punishment for the infraction of the rules thus laid down. If this arose from timidity, St. Anselm did not share it, for, when he proceeded to put the canons in practice, we find him threatening his contumacious ecclesiastics with deprivation for persistence in their irregularities. A letter of instruction from him to William, Archdeacon of Canterbury, shows the earnestness with which he entered upon the reform, and also affords an instructive insight into the difficulties of the enterprise, and the misery which the forcible sundering of family ties caused among those who had never doubted the legality and propriety of their marriages. Some ecclesiastics of rank sent their discarded wives to manors at a distance from their dwellings, and these St. Anselm directs shall not be molested if they will promise to hold no intercourse except in the presence of legitimate witnesses. Some priests were afraid to proceed to extremities with their wives, and for these weak brethren grace is

¹ Concil. Londin. ann. 1102.—Wilkins I. 382 (Eadmer, Hist. Novor. Lib. III. ann. 1102).

² The contemporary author of the *Quadripartitus* speaks of it as "*famosum illud concilium de archidiaconis et canonicis et presbyteris in uxoribus abjurandis.*"—*Quadripartitus* P. II. (Ed. Liebermann, Halle, 1892, p. 154).

accorded until the approaching Lent, provided they do not attempt meanwhile to perform their sacred functions, and can find substitutes of undoubted chastity to minister in their places. The kindred of the unfortunate women apparently endeavoured to avert the blow by furious menaces against those who should render obedience, and these instigators of evil are to be restrained by threats of excommunication.¹ Another letter to the Bishop of Hereford, who had applied for instructions on the subject, directs him to replace recalcitrant priests with monks and to stir up the laity to drive from the land the obstinate parsons and their wives.² In the enforcement of these reforms he seemed to meet with questions for which he was not prepared, for about this time we find him seeking instructions from Paschal II. on several knotty points: whether a priest living with his wife can be allowed to administer the viaticum at the death-bed in the absence of one professing continence; and what is to be done with him if he refuses his ministration on the ground that he is not allowed to celebrate mass. Paschal replies, sensibly enough, that it is better to have the ministrations of an unchaste priest than to die unhouselled, and that a priest refusing his offices under such circumstances is to be punished as a homicide of souls. This abandoned the Hildebrandine theory and practice, and Anselm was more consistent when he assumed that a layman could perform baptism in preference to an unchaste priest.³

Notwithstanding these zealous efforts of the primate, and the countenance of Henry Beauclerc, in whose presence the council had been held, Eadmer is forced sorrowfully to admit that its canons received but scant respect. Many of the priests adopted a kind of passive resistance, and locking up their churches, suspended the perform-

¹ Anselmi Lib. III. Epist. 62.

² D'Achery Spicileg. III. 434.

³ Paschalis PP. II. Epist. lxxiv.—Anselmi Lib. IV. Epist. 41.

ance of all sacred rites.¹ Even in Anselm's own diocese, ecclesiastics were found who obstinately refused either to part with their wives or to pretermitt their functions, and who, when duly excommunicated, laughed at the sentence, and continued to pollute the Church with their unhallowed ministry.² Soon after this Anselm fell into disfavour with the king and was exiled. His absence promised immunity, and the clergy were not slow to avail themselves of it. In 1104 one of his friends, in writing to him, bewails the utter demoralisation of the kingdom, of which the worst manifestation was that priests still continued to marry; and two years later another letter informs him that those who had apparently reformed their evil ways were all returning to their previous life of iniquity. Finally, Henry I. resolved to turn to account this clerical backsliding, as a financial expedient to recruit his exhausted treasury. All who were suspected of disobedience to the canons of the Council of London were seized and tried, and the property of those who could be proved guilty was confiscated. By this time Anselm had been reconciled to the king, and he promptly interfered to check so gross a violation of ecclesiastical immunity. His remonstrances were met by Henry with well-feigned surprise, and finally the matter was compromised by discharging those who had not been fined, while those who

¹ Simeon Dunelmens. *ap.* Pagi IV. 348.

² See the confirmation of excommunication in which St. Anselm exhaled his fiery indignation at those who continued with "*bestiali insania*" to defy the authorities of the Church (Anselmi Lib. III. Epist. 112).

Anselm was not entirely without assistance in his efforts. One of his monks, Reginald, of the great monastery of Canterbury, wrote a fearfully diffuse paraphrase, in Leonine verse, of the life of St. Malchus. It was an evil-minded generation, indeed, that could resist such a denunciation of marriage as that pronounced by the saint—

Plenum sorde thorum subeam plenumque dolorum ?
 Plenus, ait, tenebris thalamus sordet muliebris.
 Displicet amplexus, horror mihi copula, sexus.
 Conjugium vile, vilescit sponsa, cubile.
 Nolo thorum talem, desidero spiritualem.

(Croke's Rhyming Latin Verse, p. 67.)

had been forced to pay were promised three years' undisturbed possession of their positions.¹

That it was impossible to effect suddenly so great a change in the habits and lives of the English clergy was, indeed, admitted by Paschal II. himself, when, in 1107, he wrote to Anselm concerning the questions connected with the children of priests. While reminding him of the rules of the Church, he adds that as, in England, the larger and better portion of the clergy fall within the scope of the prohibition, he grants to the primate power of dispensation, by which, in view of the sad necessity of the times, he can admit to the sacred offices those born during their parents' priesthood, who are fitted for it by their education and purity of life. A second epistle on the same subject attests the perplexity of the pope, recalling to Anselm's recollection his former injunctions, and recommending that, as there was no personal guilt involved, those of the proscribed class who were in orders should, if worthy of their positions, be allowed to retain them, without the privilege of advancement.² The question, indeed, was hotly debated. There is extant a letter written about this time by Thibaut of Étampes, a dignitary of Oxford, to a certain Rosceline, who with more zeal than discretion had promulgated the doctrine that the sons of priests were canonically ineligible to ordination. Thibaut characterises this as not only an innovation, but a blasphemy, and seems utterly unconscious that there was any authority for such a rule.³

It may be remarked that thus far the proceedings of the reformers were directed solely against the marriage of

¹ Eadmer, *Hist. Novor.* Lib. IV.—Anselmi Lib. III. Epist. 109.

² Wilkins I. 378–80.—Paschalis II. Epist. 221.

³ D'Achery *Spicileg.* III. 448.

ecclesiastics. It may possibly be that this arose from general conjugal virtue, and that, satisfied with the privilege, no other disorders prevailed among the clergy; but it is more probable that the heresy of marriage was so heinous in the eyes of the sacerdotalists, that it rendered all other sins venial, and that such other sins might be tacitly passed over in the endeavour to put an end to the greater enormity. Be this as it may, the stubborn wilfulness of the offenders only provoked increasing rigour on the part of the authorities. We have seen that the council of 1102 produced little result, and that when the secular power interfered to enforce its canons, the Church, jealous of its privileges, protested, so that many priests retained their wives, and marriage was still openly practised. King Henry, therefore, at length, in 1108, summoned another council to assemble in London, where he urged the bishops to prosecute the good work, and pledged his power to their support.¹ Fortified by this and by the consent of the barons, they promulgated a series of ten canons, whose stringent nature and liberal denunciation of penalties prove that the prelates felt themselves strengthened by the royal co-operation and thus able to compel obedience. The Nicene canon was declared the unalterable law of the Church; those ecclesiastics who had disregarded the decrees of the previous council were debarred from performing their functions if longer contumacious; any priest requiring to see his wife was only to do so in the open air and in the presence of two legitimate witnesses; accusations of guilt were to be met by regular canonical purgation, a priest requiring six compurgators, a deacon four, and a sub-deacon two, each of his own order. Disobedience to these canons was declared punishable with deprivation of function and benefice, expulsion from the Church, and

¹ Eadmeri Hist. Novor. Lib. IV.

infamy. Only eight days of grace were allowed ; further persistence in wrong-doing being visited with instant excommunication, and confiscation to the bishops of the private property of the transgressors and of their women, together with the persons of the latter. A very significant clause, moreover, shows that grasping officials had discovered the speculative value of previous injunctions, and that the degrading custom of paying hush-money was already in common use, for the council required of all archdeacons and deans, under penalty of forfeiture, an oath that they would not receive money for conniving at infractions of the rule, nor permit priests who kept women, to celebrate mass or to employ vicars to officiate for them.¹

From the account of the historian, we may assume these to be rather acts of parliament than canons of a council, and that the assembly was convened for the special purpose of devising measures for subduing the recalcitrant clergy. The temporal power was thus pledged to enforce the regulations, and as so enterprising and resolute a monarch as Henry had undertaken the reform, there can be little doubt that he prosecuted it with vigour. Anselm died in 1109, and the clergy rejoiced in the hope that their persecution would cease with the removal of their persecutor, but the king proceeded to enforce the regulations of the Council of London with more vigour than ever, and soon obtained at least an outward show of obedience. Eadmer darkly intimates that this resulted in a great increase of shocking crimes committed with those relatives whose residence was allowed, and he is at some pains to argue that Anselm and his attempted reforms were not responsible for an effect so little contemplated in their well-meant endeavours. Finally, the ardour of the king cooled off; ecclesiastical officials were

¹ Eadmeri Hist. Novor. Lib. IV.

found readily accessible to bribes for permitting female intercourse, and those who had grown tired of the wives from whom they had been separated found no difficulty in forming more desirable unions with new ones. Eadmer sorrowfully adds that by this time there were few indeed who continued to preserve the purity with which Anselm had laboured so strenuously to adorn his clergy.¹

The evil influences of this laxity in the Anglican Church were not altogether confined to Britain. At that period the Swedish bishoprics were frequently filled by Englishmen, and it is quite possible that from them was derived the laxity which, as we have seen, at a later period, caused the Swedes to be regarded as heretics adhering to the Greek schism. An incident occurring about this time shows the wisdom of the Church in her endeavours to sunder the earthly ties of her ministers. An English priest, named Edward, was promoted to the Swedish episcopate of Scaren. Unluckily, he had left a wife behind him in England, and, after a short residence in his new dignity had enabled him to collect together the treasures of his see, he absconded with them to his spouse, leaving his diocese widowed and penniless.²

At length the condition of the Church in England attracted the attention of the pontiffs who had bestowed so much fruitless energy on the morals of the Continental priesthood; and Honorius II. sent Cardinal John of Crema to England, for the purpose of restoring its discipline. In September 1126 the legate held a council in London, where he caused the adoption of a canon menacing with degradation all those in orders who did not abstain from the society of their wives, or of other women liable to suspicion;³ and the expressions em-

¹ Eadmeri Hist. Novor. Lib. iv.

² Messenii Chron. Episcoporum per Sueciam, &c. p. 76 (Stockholmizæ, 1611)

³ Concil. Londiniens. ann. 1126 c. 13 (Wilkins I. 408).

ployed show that previous legislation had been altogether nugatory. That the cardinal's endeavours excited the opposition of at least a powerful portion of the clergy is fairly deducible from the unlucky adventure which put a sudden termination to his mission. After fiercely denouncing the concubines of priests and expatiating on the burning shame that the body of Christ should be made by one who had but just left the side of a harlot, he was that very night surprised in the company of a courtesan, though he had on the same day celebrated mass; and the suggestion that he had been entrapped by his enemies, while it did not palliate his guilt, may be assumed to indicate the power and determination of those who opposed his reforms.¹

¹ Henric. Huntingd. Lib. VII.—Matt. Paris, ann. 1125.—Baronius (ann. 1125, No. 12) endeavours to disprove the story, but is only able to offer general negative allegations, of but little weight when opposed to the testimony of a contemporary like Henry of Huntingdon, who speaks of it as a matter of public notoriety, which covered the cardinal with disgrace and drove him from England.

Such conduct was a favourite theme of objurgation with the ascetics of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—

Certe tu qui missam dicis
Post amplexum meretricis,
Potaberis ab inimicis
Liquore sulphuris et picis.

(Du Ménil, *Poésies Latines*, p. 133.)

So also, among the poems which pass under the name of *Goliás Episcopus* is one of fierce invective directed against the priests, in which this is one of the principal accusations—

O sacerdos, hæc responde,
Qui frequenter et jocunde
Cum uxore dormis, unde
Mane surgens, missam dicis,
Corpus Christi benedicis,
Post amplexum meretricis
Minus quam tu peccatricis.

Plenus sorde, plenus mendis,
Ad autorem manus tendis,
Quem contempnis, quem offendis,
Meretrici dum ascendis.

Quali corde, quali ore
Corpus Christi, cum cruore,
Tractas, surgens de fœtore,
Dignus plagis et tortore.

Mapes's Poems (Camd. Soc. Ed pp. 49-50).

The energy of the reformers and the stubborn obstinacy of the clergy are alike manifested by the Council of Westminster, held the following year, which found it necessary to repeat the prohibition and to guard it with stringent provisions, based upon those of 1108.¹ This, however, proved as ineffectual as its predecessors, and another effort was made the next year under auspices which promised a happier result. King Henry seemed suddenly to recover the holy zeal which had lain dormant for a score of years, and in the summer of 1129 he convened a great assembly of all the bishops, archdeacons, abbots, priors, and canons of England, who found that they were summoned to meet for the purpose of putting an end to the immorality of the clergy. After long discussion, it was agreed that all who should not put away their wives by St. Andrew's Day (November 30th) should be deprived of their functions, their churches, and their houses; and the assembly separated, entrusting to the zealous sovereign the execution of the decree. Perhaps Henry remembered how St. Anselm had interfered in 1106 to protect the guilty clergy from the royal extortioners; perhaps the experience of his long reign had shown him the fruitlessness of endeavouring to impose an impossible virtue on carnal-minded men. His exchequer, as usual, was in danger of collapse. The whole transaction may have been a deeply-laid scheme to extort money, or the sudden promptings of temptation may have been too powerful for his self-denial—who now can tell? We only know that he at once put into action an extended system of "cullagium," and having, by the blind simplicity of his prelates, the temporalities of nearly all the minor clergy in his power, he proceeded to traffic in exemptions shamelessly and on the largest scale. As a financial device, the plan

¹ Concil. Westmonast. ann. 1127 c. 5, 6, 7 (Wilkins I. 410).

was a good one; he realised a vast sum of money, and his afflicted priests were at least able to show their superiors a royal license to marry or to keep their concubines in peace.¹

The repetition of almost identical enactments, year after year, with corresponding infinitesimal results, grows wearisome and monotonous. If, therefore, I refer to the Synod of Westminster, held in 1138, by the papal legate Alberic, Bishop of Ostia, which deprived of function and benefice all married and concubinary ecclesiastics,² it is only to observe that no notice was taken of the doctrine of the invalidity of sacerdotal marriage, which at that period Innocent II. was engaged in promulgating. So, if I allude to an epistle of Lucius II. in 1144, reprehending the general English custom by which sons succeeded to the churches of their fathers, it is merely to chronicle the commencement of the direct efforts of the popes, fruitlessly continued during the remainder of the century, to abolish that widespread and seemingly ineradicable abuse.³

What was the condition of the Church resulting from these prolonged and persistent efforts may be guessed from one or two examples. When, in 1139, Nigel, Bishop of Ely, revolted against King Stephen, he entrusted the defence of his castle of Devizes to his concubine, Maud of Ramsbury. She bravely fulfilled her charge and repulsed the assaults of the king, until he bethought him of a way to compel a surrender. Obtaining possession of Roger, son of Maud and Nigel, the unhappy youth was brought before the walls, and

¹ Henric. Huntingd. Lib. VII.—Anglo-Saxon Chron. ann. 1129.—Matt. Paris, ann. 1129.

² Concil. Westmonast. ann. 1138 c. 8 (Wilkins I. 415).

³ Rymer, *Fœdera* Tom. I. ann. 1144.—Post. Concil. Lateran, P. XIX. passim.—Lib. 1. Tit. 17 Extra.

preparations were made to hang him in his mother's sight. At this her courage gave way, and she capitulated at once.¹ Though the monkish chronicler stigmatises Maud as "*pellex episcopi*," she may probably have been his wife—in either case the publicity of the connection is a sufficient commentary on the morals and manners of the age which took no exception to the elevation of Richard Fitz-Neal, another son of the same reverend prelate, to the bishopric of London and to the post of treasurer to King Henry II.

If this be attributed to the unbridled turbulence of Stephen's reign, we may turn to the comparatively calmer times of Henry II., when Alexander III., amid his ceaseless efforts to restore the Church discipline of England, in 1171 ordered the Bishops of Exeter and Worcester and the Abbot of Feversham to examine and report as to the evil reputation of Clarembald, abbot-elect of St. Augustine's of Canterbury. In the execution of this duty they found that that venerable patriarch had seventeen bastards in one village; purity he ridiculed as an impossibility, while even licentiousness had no attraction for his exhausted senses unless spiced with the zest of publicity.² That a man whose profligacy was so openly and shamelessly defiant could be elected to the highest place in the oldest and most honoured religious community in England is a fact which lends colour to an assertion of a writer of the time of King John, that clergy and laity were indis-

¹ Orderic Vital. P. III. Lib. xiii. c. 20.

² *Fluit semine et hinnit in feminas, adeo impudens ut libidinem, nisi quam publicaverit, voluptuosam esse non reputet. . . . Fornicationis abusum comparat necessitati. Proletarius est adeo quod paucis annis ei soboles tanta succrevit ut patriarcharum seriem antecedit.*—Joann. Saresberiens. Epist. 310. Well might Alexander, in ordering his ejection, say "*ipsum invenerint tot excessibus et criminibus publicis irretitum, quod per eorum nobis litteras recitata auribus nostris nimium præstiterunt tædium et dolorem.*"—Elmham, Hist. Monast. August. p. 413.

tinguishably bad,¹ and perhaps justifies the anecdote told of Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, who assumed that the clergy were much worse than the laity.² How little these scandals shocked the public is shown by the fact that it required papal interference to cause the reformation of the nunnery of Avesbury. The abbess had borne three children, and the nuns, as the chronicler informs us, were worse than their superior, but when Alexander forced an investigation no canonical punishment was inflicted on the guilty. Such of the nuns as promised to live chastely in future were allowed to remain, and the rest were simply dismissed, while the abbess was pensioned liberally with ten marks a year to preserve her from disgrace and want. The vacancies thus created were filled with nuns from Fontevraud, who proved to be as bad as those whom they replaced.³ The same insensibility is manifested in a legal transaction of the period, when Witgar, the priest of Mendlesham, desired to secure the reversion of his benefice to his son Nicholas, and applied to the patron of his church, Martin, Abbot of Battle Abbey, who agreed to conform to his wishes on condition that the annual payment exacted from the church in question should be increased

¹ Crescit malorum cumulus,
Est sacerdos ut populus,
Currunt ad illicitum,
Uterque juxta libitum
Audax et imperterritus.

(Wright, *Polit. Songs of England*, p. 9.)

And another indignant Churchman exclaims—

Qui sunt qui ecclesias vendunt et mercantur?
Qui sunt fornicarii? Qui sunt qui moechantur?
Qui naturam transvolant et abominantur?
Qui? clerici; a nobis non longe extra petantur.

Mapes's Poems, pp. 156-7.

² A woman applied to Bishop Hugh for advice "*super impotentia mariti, quia debitum ei reddere non poterat*," when the prelate gravely replied, "*Faciamus ergo si vis eum sacerdotem, et statim illo in opere, reddita sibi facultate, proculdubio potens efficietur*."—Girald. Cambrens. Gemm. Eccles. Dist. II. c. xviii.

³ Benedicti Abbatis Gesta Regis Henr. II. T. I. pp. 135-6; T. II. p. xxx. (M. R. Series).

from ten shillings to forty. Witgar agreed, and on an appointed day, accompanied by his son, he met the abbot and his attendants at Colchester, where oaths were publicly interchanged and a formal agreement was entered into.¹

The efforts of Alexander and his successors were seconded by frequent national and local synods, to whose special injunctions it is scarcely worth while to refer in full. One noticeable point about them, however, is that the term "wife" disappears, and is replaced by "concubina" or "focaria"—the latter meaning a person who was a permanent occupant of the priest's hearth, but was not recognised by the authorities as a lawful wife. Deans and archdeacons were enjoined to hunt up these illegal companions, but from the frequency of the injunctions, we may safely conclude that the search was not often successful, and that the officials found the duty assigned to them too difficult or too unprofitable for execution. That it was not impossible, however, when earnestly undertaken, is shown by the readiness with which King John unearthed the unfortunate creatures when it suited his policy to do so. During the long dispute over the election of Giraldus Cambrensis to the see of St. David's, the king, who was resolved that no Welshman should hold that preferment, instructed his officers, in 1202, to seize the women of all the cathedral chapter who persisted in supporting Giraldus.² The measure was doubtless an efficacious one, and he repeated it when, in 1208, he persecuted the clergy in his blind impotence of wrath at the interdict set upon his kingdom by Innocent III. Discerning in these quasi-conjugal relations the tenderest spot in which to strike those who had rebelled against

¹ Chron. Monast. de Bello, London, 1846, pp. 142-3.

² Haddan & Stubbs's Councils of Great Britain, I. 423-4.

his authority by obeying the interdict, and at the same time, as the surest and readiest means of extorting money, among his other schemes of spoliation he caused all these women to be seized, and then forced the unfortunate Churchmen to buy their partners back at exorbitant prices.¹

The ease, indeed, with which the eyes of the officials were blinded to that which was patent to the public was the subject of constantly recurring legislation, the reiteration and increasing violence of which bears irrefragable testimony at once to its necessity and its impotence. Not only in grave synods and pastorals was the abuse reprehended and deplored, but it offered too favourable a subject for popular animadversion to escape the shafts of satire. In the preceding century, Thomas à Becket, in a vehement attack upon simony, includes this among the many manifestations of that multiform sin—

Symon auffert, Symon donat ;
Hunc expellit, hunc coronat ;
Hunc circumdat gravi peste,
Illum nuptiali veste.²

There were few more popular poems in the Middle Ages than the “*Apocalypsis Goliæ*,” the more than

¹ Matt. Paris, ann. 1208.

Perhaps it is to John's experience in this matter that may be attributed the fact that when, in 1214, he entered into a league with his knight-errant nephew, the Emperor Otho IV., against Philip Augustus, they also declared war against Innocent III., and proposed to carry out a gigantic scheme of spoliation by enriching, from ecclesiastical property, all who might rally to their standard. They proclaimed their intention of humbling the Church, reducing the numbers of the clergy, stripping those who were left of all their temporalities, and leaving them only moderate stipends. Both John and Otho had been under excommunication, and could speak feelingly of the overweening power and abuses of the Church, whose members they characterise as “*genus hoc pigrum et fruges consumere natum, quod otia ducit, quodque sub tecto marcet et umbra, qui frustra vivunt, quorum omnis labor in hoc est, ut Baccho Venerique vacent, quibus crapula obesis poris colla inflat, ventresque abdomine onerat*” (Lünig. Cod. Diplom. Italiæ, I. 34). A few weeks later the Bridge of Bouvines put a sudden end to this promising plan of reformation.

² Du Ménil, *Poésies Pop. Latines*, p. 179.

doubtful authorship of which, at the close of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, is claimed for Walter Mapes in England and Gautier de Châtillon in France; and the enduring reputation of which is attested by an English version as late as the sixteenth century. The author whoever he be, inveighing against the evil courses of the archdeacons, assumes that the extortion of the “cullagium” was almost universal.

Seductam nuntii fraude præambuli
 Capit focariam, ut per cubiculi
 Fortunam habeat fortunam loculi,
 Et per vehiculum omen vehiculi.
 Decano præcipit quod si presbiteri
 Per genitivos scit dativos fieri,
 Accusans faciat vocatum conteri,
 Ablatis fratribus a porta inferi.¹

Towards the middle of the thirteenth century, Peter de Vinea also has his fling at the same corruption, and though the part he took in the fierce quarrels between his master Frederic II. and the papacy renders him perhaps a prejudiced witness, still his ample experience of the disorders of the Church makes him an experienced one.

Non utuntur clerici nostri vestimentis :
 Sed tenent focarias, quod clamor est gentis—
 —Dehinc reum convocant, et, turba rejecta,
 Dicunt : Ista crimina tibi sunt objecta ;
 Pone libras quindecim in nostra collecta,
 Et tua flagitia non erunt detecta.
 Reus dat denarios, Fratres scriptum radunt ;
 Sic infames plurimi per nummos evadunt ;
 Qui totam pecuniam quam petunt non tradunt,
 Simul in infamiam et in pœnam cadunt.²

The example which King John had set, however instructive, was not appreciated by the ecclesiastical

¹ Mapes's Poems, p. 10.

² Du Ménil, op. cit. p. 171.

authorities, and the "focariæ" were allowed to remain virtually undisturbed, at least to such an extent as to render them almost universal. Although by rigid Churchmen they were regarded as mere concubines, there can be little doubt that the tie between them and the priests was of a binding nature, which appears to have wanted none of the rites essential to its entire respectability. Giraldus Cambrensis, who died at an advanced age about the year 1220, speaks of these companions being publicly maintained by nearly all the parish priests in England and Wales. They arranged to have their benefices transmitted to their sons, while their daughters were married to the sons of other priests, thus establishing an hereditary sacerdotal caste in which marriage appears to have been a matter of course.¹ In 1202 the Bishop of Exeter complained to Innocent III. of the numerous sons of parish priests and vicars who seized their churches and claimed to hold them of right, actually appealing to Rome when they sought to interfere with them. Innocent of course ordered their removal and subjection to discipline without appeal; but the evil

¹ Filius autem, more sacerdotum parochialium Angliæ fere cunctorum, damnabili quidem et detestabili, publicam secum habebat comitem individuan, et in foco focariam et in cubiculo concubinam.—Girald. Cambrens. Specul. Eccles. Dist. iii. c. 8. (Girald. Opp. III. 129.) However Giraldus and the severer Churchmen might stigmatise these companions as concubines, they were evidently united in the bonds of matrimony. He says himself, respecting Wales, "Nosse te novi . . . canonicos Menevenses fere cunctos, maxime vero Walensicos, publicos fornicarios et concubenarios esse, sub alis ecclesiæ cathedralis et tanquam in ipso ejusdem gremio focarias suas cum obstetricibus et nutricibus atque cunabulis in laribus et penetralibus exhibentes. . . . Adeo quidem ut sicut patres eorum ipsos ibi genuerunt et promoverunt, sic et ipsi more consimili prolem ibidem suscitant, tam in vitiis sibi quam beneficiis succedaneam. Filiis namque suis statim cum adulti fuerint et plene pubertatis annos excesserint, concanonicorum suorum filias, ut sic firmiori federe sanguinis scilicet et affinitatis jure jungantur, *quasi maritali copula dari procurant*. Postmodum autem . . . canonicas suas filiis suis conferri per cessionem non inefficaciter elaborant." (De Jure et Statu Menev. Eccles. Dist. i.) That this condition of affairs was not confined to the canons of cathedral churches is evident from his general remarks in the Gemm. Eccles. Dist. II. cap. xxiii.

His treatise, De Statu Menevens. Eccles., was written after 1215, and therefore subsequently to the death of Innocent III.

continued, and in 1205 we find him writing on the subject to the Bishop of Winchester, whom he required to eject the sons of priests who in many cases held their father's benefices.¹ The propriety of the connection, and the hereditary ecclesiastical functions of the offspring, are quaintly alluded to in a poem of the period, wherein a logician takes a priest to task for entertaining such a partner—

L.—*Et præ tot innumeris quæ frequentas malis,
Est tibi presbytera plus exitialis.*

P.—*Malo cum presbytera pulchra fornicari,
Servituros domino filios lucrari,
Quam vagas satellites per antra sectari:
Est inhonestissimum sic dehonestari.*²

Even the holy virgins, spouses of Christ, seem to have claimed and enjoyed the largest liberty. To this period is attributed a homily to nuns, which earnestly dissuades them from leaving their blessed state and subjecting themselves to the cares and toils inseparable from matrimony. The writer appeals to no rules of ecclesiastical law that could be enforced to prevent them from following their choice, but labours drearily to prove that they would not better their condition, either in this world or the next, by forsaking their heavenly bridegroom for an earthly one.—“And of godes brude. and his freo dohter. for ba to gederes ha is; bicometh theow under mon and his threl to don al and drehen that him liketh.”³

Innocent III. had not overlooked such a state of discipline, especially after the transactions between himself and John had rendered him the suzerain of England,

¹ Innocent. PP. III. Regest. v. 66; VIII. 147.

² De presbytero et logico. Mapes's Poems, p. 256.

³ Hali Meidenhad, p. 7. (Early English Text Society, 1866.)

and doubly responsible for the morals of the English Church. Thus as early as 1203 we find him expressing to the Bishop of Norwich his surprise that priests in his diocese contend that they can retain their benefices after having solemnly contracted marriage in the face of the Church. All such are peremptorily ordered to be removed without appeal, either by the bishop himself, or by his superior in cases in which he had personally conferred the preferment.¹ His zealous efforts to effect an impossible reform are chronicled by a rhymers of the period, who enters fully into the dismay of the good pastors at the prospect of the innovation, and who argues their cause with all the sturdy common-sense of the Anglo-Saxon mind.

Prisciani regula penitus cassatur,
Sacerdos per hic et hæc olim declinabatur;
Sed per hic solummodo nunc articulatur,
Cum per nostrum præsulem hæc amoveatur.

Quid agant presbyteri propriis carentes?
Alienas violant clanculo molentes,
Nullis pro conjugiiis fœminis parcentes,
Pœnam vel infamiam nihil metuentes.

Non est Innocentius, immo nocens vere,
Qui quod Deus docuit studet abolere;
Jussit enim Dominus fœminas habere,
Sed hoc noster pontifex jussit prohibere.

Gignere nos præcipit vetus testamentum;
Ubi novum prohibet nusquam est inventum.
A modernis latum est istud documentum,
Ad quod nullum ratio præbet argumentum.²

¹ Innocent. PP. III. Regest. vi. 103.

² Mapes's Poems, pp. 171-2. This well-known poem has been attributed to the Venerable Hildebert, Bishop of Le Mans, as written on the occasion of the reformation of the French clergy by Calixtus II. (Croke, Rhyming Latin Verse, p. 85), but the character of that reverend prelate forbids such an assumption, even if the allusion to Innocent did not assign to it a later period.

Nor were the English bishops remiss in seconding the efforts of the pope to break down the opposition which thus openly defied their power and ventured even to justify the heresy of sacerdotal marriage. Councils were held which passed canons more stringent than ever; bishops issued constitutions and pastorals denouncing the custom; inquests were organised to traverse the dioceses and investigate the household of every priest. The women especially were attacked. Christian sepulture was denied them; property left to them and their children by their partners in guilt was confiscated to the bishops; churching after childbirth was interdicted to them; and, if still contumacious after a due series of warnings, they were to be handed over to the secular arm for condign punishment.¹ How much all this bustling legislation effected is best shown by the declaration of the legate, Cardinal Otto, in 1237, at the great Council of London. He deplores the fact that married men received orders and held benefices while still retaining their wives, and did not hesitate to acknowledge their children as legitimate by public deeds and witnesses. After descanting upon the evils of this neglect of discipline, he orders that all married clerks shall be deprived of preferment and benefice, that their property shall not descend to wife or children, but to their churches, and that their sons shall be incapable of holy orders unless specially dispensed for eminent merit; then turning upon concubinary priests, he inveighs strongly against their licentiousness, and decrees that all guilty of the sin shall within thirty days dismiss their women for ever, under pain of suspension from function and benefice until full satisfaction, persistent contumacy being

¹ Concil. Eboracens. ann. 1195 c. 17.—Concil. Londiniens. ann. 1200 c. 10.—Concil. Dunelmens. ann. 1220.—Concil. Oxoniens. ann. 1222 c. 28.—Constit. Archiep. Cantuar. ann. 1225 (Matt. Paris, ann. 1225).—Constit. Episc. Lincoln. ann. 1230 (Wilkins I. 627).—Constit. Provin. Cantuar. ann. 1236 c. 3, 4, 30.—Constit. Coven-
triens. ann. 1237 (Wilkins I. 641), &c.

visited with deprivation. The archbishops and bishops are commanded to make thorough inquisition throughout all the deaneries, to bring offenders to light, and also to put an end to the iniquitous practice of ordaining the offspring of such connections as successors in their father's benefices.¹

This legislation produced much excitement, and the legate even had fears for his life. Some prelates, indeed, maintained that it was binding on the Church of England only during the residence of Otto, but they were overruled, and it remained, at least nominally, in force, and was frequently referred to subsequently as the recognised law in such matters. Its effect was considerable, and some of the bishops endeavoured to carry out its provisions with energy, as may be presumed from a constitution of William of Cantilupe, Bishop of Worcester, issued in 1240, ordering his officials to investigate diligently whether any of the clergy of the diocese had concubines or were married.²

To this period and to the disturbance caused by these proceedings are doubtless to be attributed several satirical pieces of verse describing the excitement occurring among the unfortunate clerks thus attacked in their tenderest spot. The opening lines of one of these poems indicate the novelty and unexpectedness of the new regulations :—

*Rumor novus Angliæ partes pergiravit,
Clericos, presbyteros omnes excitavit,*

*Nasciter presbyteris hinc fera procella :
Quisquis timet graviter pro sua puella.*

The author then describes a great council, attended by more than ten thousand ecclesiastics, assembled to

¹ Matt. Paris, ann. 1237.

² Wilkins I. 672-3.

deliberate on the course to be pursued in so delicate a conjuncture. An old priest commences—

Pro nostris uxoribus sumus congregati ;
Videatis provide quod sitis parati,
Ad mandatum domini papæ vel legati,
Respondere graviter ne sitis dampnati.¹

Another poem of similar character describes a chapter held by all orders and grades to consider the same question. The various speakers declare their inability to obey the new rule, except two, whose age renders them indifferent. A learned doctor exclaims—

Omnis debet clericus habere concubinam ;
Hoc dixit qui coronam gerit auro trinam :
Hanc igitur retinere decet disciplinam.

The general belief in the legality of the connection is shown by the remark of another—

Surgens unus presbyter turba de totali . . .
“Unam” dixit “teneo amore legali,
Quam nolo demittere pro lege tali.”

Another expects to escape by paying his “cullagium.”—

Duodecimus clamat magno cum clamore :
“Non me pontifex terret minis et pavore :
Sed ego nummos præbeam pro Dei amore,
Ut in pace maneam cara cum uxore.”

Another urges the indiscriminate immorality attending upon the attempt to enforce an impossible asceticism—

Addidit ulterius : “Sitis memor horum,
Si vetare præsul vult specialem torum,
Cernet totum brevi plenum esse chorum
Ordine sacrorum adulterorum.”

¹ De Convocatione Sacerdotum (Mapes's Poems, pp. 180-2).

And at length the discussion closes with the speech of a Dominican, who ends his remarks by predicting—

Habebimus clerici duas concubinas :
 Monachi, canonici totidem vel trinas :
 Decani, prælati, quatuor vel quinas :
 Sic tandem leges implebimus divinas.¹

Notwithstanding these flights of the imagination, no organised resistance was offered to the reform. The clergy sullenly acquiesced, and submitted to a pressure which was becoming irresistible. The triumph of the sacerdotal party, however, was gradual, and no exact limit can be assigned to the recognition of the principle of celibacy. In 1250 the idea of married priests was still sufficiently prevalent to lead the populace of London to include matrimony among the accusations brought against Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, when his tyranny had aroused general resistance;² and in 1255 Walter

¹ Mapes's Poems, pp. 176-9.—All the poetasters of the period, however, were not enlisted on one side. There is extant an exhortation against marriage, addressed to the clergy, which consists of a violent invective against the sex, recapitulating the customary accusations against women with all the brutal coarseness of the age:—

Hæc est iniquitas omnis adulteræ
 Qui virum proprium vollet non vivere,
 Ut det adultero non cessat rapere—
 Desistat igitur clerus nuno nubere.

Du Méril, op. cit. p. 184.

The "Confessio Golizæ" feelingly bewails the difficulty of rendering obedience to the new regulations:—

Res est arduissima vincere naturam,
 In aspectu virginum mentem ferre puram ;
 Juvenes non possumus legem sequi duram,
 Leviumque corporum non habere curam.
 Quis in igne positus igne non uratur ?
 Quis in mundo demorans castus habeatur ?
 Ubi Venus digito juvenes venatur
 Oculis illaqueat, facie prædatur ?

Mapes's Poems, p. 72.

² Matt. Paris, ann. 1250.

This Boniface was brother of the Duke of Savoy, and was one of the Italian prelates whose intrusion into the choice places of the English Church was a source of intense irritation. He was beatified in 1838, his sanctity being attested by the incorruption of his body for three hundred years. The career of another brother, Philip, is an instructive illustration of the ecclesiastical manners of the age. He

Kirkham, Bishop of Durham, still felt it necessary to prohibit the marriage of his clergy under pain of suspension and deprivation.¹

While doubtless these efforts were gradually putting an end to priestly marriage, existing unions persisted, and their results were long in disappearing. Dr. Jessopp prints a deed, to which he assigns the approximate date of 1279, granting a piece of land in Keswick to the cleric Henry of Norwich and his wife Katherine, and their legitimate children.² That the transmission of benefices from father to son was recognised as illegal, while they still continued, is seen in the prohibition by Gregory IX. in 1240, and by Innocent IV. in 1243, of the collusive transactions through which it was sought to conceal them.³ Another result of the progress of the reform is found in the large demand for dispensations enabling illegitimates to enter holy orders and hold preferment, accompanied by papal injunctions to eject all such as had not so protected them-

was in deacon's orders, and yet, as a leader of condottieri, he was a strenuous supporter of Innocent IV. in his quarrel with Frederic II. He was created Archbishop of Lyons, Bishop of Valence, Provost of Bruges, and Dean of Vienne, and, after enjoying these miscellaneous dignities for some twenty years, when at length Clement IV. insisted on his ordination and consecration, he threw off his episcopal robe, married first the heiress of Franche-Comté and then a niece of Innocent IV.—dying at last as Duke of Savoy (Milman, *Latin Christ.* IV. 326).

The indignation felt at the standing grievance of the intrusion of foreign prelates is quaintly expressed a century later by Langlande—

And a peril to the pope
And prelates that he maketh,
That bere bisshopes names
Of Bethleem and Babiloigne,
That huppe aboute in Engelond
To halwe mennes auteres,
And crepe amonges curatours,
And confessen ageyn the lawe.

Piers Ploughman, Wright's Edition, l. 10695-702.

¹ Nullusque eorum uxorum ducat: et si antequam sacros ordines suscepit uxorem duxerit, seu postea, si beneficium habeat, ipso privetur, et ab executione sui officii suspendatur, nisi in casu a jure concessio.—*Constit. Walteri Episc. Dunelmensis*. (Wilkins I. 705).

² Proceedings of the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society.

³ Bliss, *Calendar of Papal Registers*, I. 190, 201 (London, 1893).

selves, for these dispensations could always be had from the curia by those willing to pay the fees.¹

By this time, however, priestly marriage may be considered to have become nearly obsolete in England. When, in 1268, the Cardinal-legate Ottoboni held a great national council in London, and renewed the constitutions of his predecessor Otto, he made no allusion to marriage, and only denounced the practice of concubinage, which he endeavoured to eradicate by commanding all archdeacons to make a thorough inquisition annually into the morals of the clergy under his jurisdiction.² These constitutions of Otto and Ottoboni long remained the law of the English Church, and we find them constantly referred to in the canons of councils and pastorals of bishops, ceaselessly labouring to effect the impossible enforcement of discipline; even as late as 1399 the Archbishop of Canterbury ordered his suffragans to have them read and explained in the vernacular in all their episcopal synods.³ How hard was the task may be readily conceived when we see, in 1279, the primate Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, applying to Rome for assistance in prosecuting a certain bishop against whom he had long been vainly endeavouring to bring the law to bear. A concubine had confessed to having borne five children to the offender;⁴ he had himself admitted his guilt in a private interview with Peckham, for which he had afterwards claimed the seal of the confessional;

¹ Bliss, *op. cit.* *passim*.

² Concil. Londiniens. ann. 1268 c. 8 (Wilkins II. 5).

³ Convocat. Cantuar. ann. 1399 c. 13 (Wilkins III. 240).

⁴ The canon law maintained the extraordinary doctrine that the confession of the guilty woman could not be received as evidence against her accomplice, though it was good as against herself. "Unde nec sacerdotes accusare nec in eos testificari valent. . . . Quia ergo ista de se confitetur, super alienum crimen ei credi non oportet; sed contra eam sua confessio interpretanda est" (Gratian. P. II. c. xv. q. 3). It would be hard to imagine a rule of practice better fitted to repress investigation and to shield offenders.

yet the archbishop complains that his efforts will be unsuccessful unless he is fortified with letters from the pope himself. His strict injunctions of secrecy on his correspondent, and his evident dread lest the criminal's agents in Rome should get wind of the application, show how difficult was the enterprise, and how rarely prelates could be expected to undertake duties so arduous and so unpromising.¹

Perhaps the man to whom the Church owed most for his energy and activity in promoting the cause of reform was the celebrated Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln. The leading part which he took in the political troubles of the stormy reign of Henry III. has thrown his ecclesiastical character somewhat into the shade, and he is better known as the friend of Leicester than as the untiring Churchman. Notwithstanding his consistent opposition to Henry III. and to the encroachments of the papacy, he was the inflexible enemy of clerical irregularities, and he enforced the decretals throughout his diocese with as firm a hand as that which he raised in defence of the rights of the nation and the privileges of the English Church. Thus, in 1251, he made a rigorous inquisition in his bishopric, forcing all his beneficed clergy to the observance of the strictest chastity, removing from their houses all suspected women, and punishing transgressors with deprivation. It is not easy to approve of his brutal expedient for testing the virtue of the inmates of his nunneries,² the adoption of which could only be justified and suggested by the conviction that general licentiousness was everywhere prevalent: yet it was doubtless more efficacious than the ordeal of the Eucharist, which was frequently resorted to in special cases.

¹ Wilkins II. 40.

² Ad domos religiosarum veniens, fecit exprimi mammillas earundem, ut sic physice si esset inter eas corruptela, experiretur.—Matt. Paris, ann. 1251.

Not only, however, did he thus endeavour to reform the morals of his flock, but he made the closest scrutiny into the character of applicants for ordination. In this he was largely aided by his ascetic friend and admirer, Adam de Marisco, and the correspondence between them shows not only the importance which they reasonably attached to the subject, but the sleepless vigilance required to counteract the prevalent immorality of the clergy, and the incredible laxity with which the patrons of livings bestowed the benefices in their gift.¹

The rule was now fairly established and generally acknowledged: concubinage, though still prevalent—nay, in fact almost universal—was not defended as a right, but was practised with what concealment was possible, and was the object of unremitting assault from councils and prelates. To enter into the details of the innumerable canons and constitutions directed against the ineradicable vice during the succeeding half century would be unprofitable. Their endless iteration is only interesting as proving their inefficacy. A popular satirist of the reign of Edward II. declares that bribery of the ecclesiastical officials insured the domestic comfort of the clergy and their female companions;² while in time the canon law seems to have lost all its terrors. One of the earliest acts of the reign of Henry VII. was a law empowering the ecclesiastical officials to imprison “priests, clerks, and religious men” convicted of incontinence, and guaran-

¹ Adæ de Marisco Epist. passim (*Monumenta Franciscana*). How little the character of the clergy had improved under the ceaseless efforts of the preceding half century may be guessed from Adam's description of his contemporary brethren—“Nihil aliud pervicacissima caninæ voracitatis impudentia consecantur, quam caducam fastuum arrogantiam, quam mobilem quæstum affluentiam, quam sordidam luxum petulentiam, auctoritatem summæ salvationis in perditionis æternæ crudelitatem depravantes; cernimus usquequaqum quasi solutum Satanam effrænata tyrannide beatam hæreditatem benedicti Dei immanissime depopulari.”—*Ibid.* Epist. CCXLVII. P. i. c. 18.

² And thise ersedeknes that ben set to visite holi churches,
Everich fondeth hu he may shrewedelichest worche;

teeing them against prosecution by the offenders.¹ That the aid of the secular legislator should thus have been invoked for protection under such circumstances showed the audacity resulting from long immunity, and is a confession that the ceaseless labour of four centuries had utterly failed.

In one part of England, however, the reform seems to have penetrated more slowly. We have seen above, on the testimony of Giraldus Cambrensis, that in the early part of the thirteenth century the marriage of priests and the hereditary transmission of benefices were almost universal in Wales. As in the wild fastnesses of the Principality the ecclesiastical regulations seemed powerless, recourse was had to the secular law, which was employed to inflict various disabilities on offenders and their offspring, and the repetition of these shows how obstinately the custom was adhered to by the clergy until a comparatively late period. Thus, in the Gwentian and Dimetian Codes there is a provision that the son of a married priest, born after the ordination of his father, shall not share in the paternal estate:² and this provision

He wole take mede of that on and that other,
And late the parsoun have a wyf and the prest another;
At wille;
Coveytise shal stoppen here mouth, and maken hem al stille.

Wright, *Political Songs of England*, p. 326.

So Robert Langlande states—

In the consistorie bifore the commissarie
He cometh noght but ofte;
For hir lawe dureth over longe,
But if thei lacchen silver,
And matrimoyne for moneie
Maken and unmaken.

Vision of Piers Ploughman, v. 10102-7 (Wright's Edition).

¹ 1 Henry VII. cap. 4.

² Gwentian Code, Book II. chap. xxx. "Because he was begotten contrary to decree."—Dimetian Code, Book II. chap. viii. § 27 (Aneurin Owen's *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales*, Vol. I. pp. 761, 445). Of the latter of these codes, the recension which has reached us contains alterations made by Rys son of Grufudd, showing it to be posterior at least to the year 1180.

is retained and repeated in a collection of laws which contains the date of 2 Henry IV., showing it to be posterior to the year 1400.¹ The same collection enumerates married priests among "thirteen things corrupting the world, and which will ever remain in it; and it can never be delivered of them."² In the same spirit, the Book of Cynog, which is of uncertain date, declares "nor is a married priest, as he has relinquished his law, to be credited in law," and it therefore directs that the testimony of such witnesses shall not be receivable in court;³ while another collection of laws, occurring in a MS. of the fifteenth century, repeats the provision—"their testimony is not to be credited in any place, and they are excluded from the law, unless they ask a pardon from the pope or a bishop, through a public penance."⁴ In fact, we may, perhaps, almost hazard the conclusion that, notwithstanding the efforts of both ecclesiastical and secular legislators, sacerdotal marriage scarcely became obsolete in Wales before it was once more recognised as legitimate under the Reformation.

¹ *Anomalous Laws*, Book x. chap. vii. § 19 (Owen Vol. II. p. 331).

² *Ibid.* chap. ix. (Vol. II. p. 347).

³ *Ibid.* Book viii. chap. xi. § 19 (Vol. II. p. 205).

⁴ *Ibid.* Book xi. chap. iii. § 15 (Vol. II. p. 409).

CHAPTER XVIII

IRELAND AND SCOTLAND

IN a previous section it has already been shown that the rule of celibacy was observed by the Celtic Churches of the British Islands during a period in which their Christianity was a model for the rest of Europe. Their religion, however, could not preserve its purity and simplicity amid the overwhelming barbarism of those dreary ages. From an ancient commentary on the "Cain Patraic," or Patrick's Law, of uncertain date, but probably belonging to the ninth or tenth century, it would seem as though there were at that time two classes of bishops, one bound by monastic vows, the other permitted to marry; and, what is somewhat singular, the law appears to favour the latter, for the "cumad espuc," or virgin bishop, is condemned to perpetual degradation or to the life of a hermit for offences which the "bishop of one wife" can redeem by prompt penance.¹

The Feini, prior to the advent of St. Patrick, were far in advance of the contemporary barbarian tribes, and their conversion to Christianity introduced a new and powerful element of progress. It was not lasting, however, and they lapsed into a condition but little removed from that of savages. The marriage-tie was virtually unknown or habitually disregarded among the laity.²

¹ *Senchus Mor*. Introduction, pp. 57-9. (Edited by Hancock, Dublin, 1865.)

² *Lanfranci Epist.* 37, 38.—*Bernardi Vit. S. Malachie* cap. iii. viii.—The rudeness of the age may be measured by the fact that when Malachy determined to adorn the venerable monastery of Benchor with an oratory of stone such as he had seen abroad, the mere laying of the foundations aroused the wonderment of the people, to whom buildings of that kind were unknown—"quod in terra illa nequid ejusmodi ædificia invenirentur"—and his enemies took advantage of the feeling to

What was the condition of the clergy may be inferred from the fact that the episcopates were regarded as the private property of certain families in which they descended by hereditary succession. Thus, in the primatial see of Armagh, fifteen archbishops were of one house, the last eight of whom were married. At length Celsus, who died about the year 1130, bequeathed the dignity to his friend St. Malachy. The kindred rose in arms at this infringement of their rights, and two of their members successively occupied the position, which Malachy was not able to obtain until the anger of God had miraculously destroyed the whole family.¹

During all this period the Irish Church had been completely independent of the central authority at Rome, but the extension of influence resulting from the labours of Hildebrand and his successors soon began to make itself felt. In the quarrels concerning the succession of Archbishop Celsus, there figures a certain Bishop Gilbert, who is described as being the first papal legate seen in Ireland.² When Malachy abandoned Armagh and revived the extinct episcopate of Down, he resolved on a pilgrimage to Rome to obtain the *pallium*, a powerful instrument of papal authority, until then unknown on the island; and perhaps the opposition manifested to his wishes by his friends as well as by the authorities may be attributable to a repug-

interfere with the work on the ground that such an enterprise was unheard of, and that so stupendous an undertaking could never be accomplished. This piece of presumption was promptly rebuked by the death of the ringleader, and by the finding in the excavations of a treasure which enabled St. Malachy to execute his plans (Vit. S. Malach. c. xxviii.). St. Bernard, who derived his impressions from Malachy and his companions, thus describes the Irish of Connaught, "sic protervos ad mores, sic ferales ad ritus, sic ad fidem impios, ad leges barbaros, cervicosos ad disciplinam, spurcos ad vitam. Christiani nomine, re pagani. Non decimas, non primitias dare, non legitima inire conjugia, non facere confessiones; pœnitentias nec qui peteret, ne qui daret penitus invenire. Ministri altaris pauci admodum erant."—Ibid. cap. viii.

¹ Ibid. c. x. xi. xii. xiii.

² Ibid. c. x.

nance towards the gradual encroachments of Romanising influence.¹

Malachy returned from Rome armed with legatine powers, and proceeded vigorously with the reforms which he had long before commenced. He held numerous councils, extirpating abuses everywhere, renovating the ancient rules of discipline and introducing new ones, bending all his energies to abrogating the national institutions and replacing them with those of Rome.² The earnest asceticism of his nature, exaggerated by the training of his youth, led him to give a strongly monastic character to the Church of which he was thus the second founder. On his journey homeward from Rome, he had tarried a second time at Clairvaux to see his friend St. Bernard, and had left there four of his attendants to be exercised in the severe Cistercian discipline, that they might serve as missionaries and as models for his compatriots, who had heard, indeed, of monkhood, but had never seen it.³ His efforts, in this respect, were to a considerable extent successful, at least in a portion of the island, though his death in 1149, at the comparatively early age of fifty-four, cut short his labours before they could yield their full fruit.⁴

The incongruous character thus imparted to the Irish Church is described by Giraldus Cambrensis some forty years later. The prelates were selected from the monasteries, and the Church was completely monastic. Chastity

¹ Vit. S. Malach. c. xv.

² Ibid. c. xviii.—Fiunt de medio barbaricæ leges, Romanæ introducuntur.—Ibid. c. viii.

³ Ibid. c. xvi.—Illæ gentes quæ a diebus antiquis monachi quidem nomen audierunt, monachum non viderunt.

⁴ In the hymn in which St. Bernard celebrated the virtues of his friend he compares him to the Apostles—

Sobrius victus, castitas perennis,
Fides, doctrina, animarum lucra,
Meritis parem cœtui permiscet
Apostolorum.

was the only rule of discipline thoroughly preserved, and Giraldus confesses his wonder that it could be maintained, in contradiction to all former experience, when gluttony and drunkenness were carried to excess. The monastic principle of selfishness was all-pervading, and the pastors took no care of their flocks. Among the people, marriage was still unknown, incest was of common occurrence, even the rudiments of Christian faith were left untaught, and the Church was regarded without reverence.¹ His account of the absence of regular stipends and tithes is confirmed by the fact that an Irish bishop attending the Council of Lateran in 1179, in complaining of the condition of his native Church, stated that his only revenues were derived from three milch cows, which his flock were bound to replace as they became dry.² This poverty, however apostolic in itself, can only, in an age of magnificent sacerdotalism, be regarded as an indication of a Church whose degradation could command neither the respect nor the support of its children. That the reforms of Malachy, one-sided as they were, extended only over a portion of the island, is evident from the inquiry which, a few years later, the Archbishop of Cashel addressed to Clement III. as to whether the children of bishops could receive orders and hold benefices; and the exceptional character of the Irish establishment was recognised by the pope when he decided that they could, provided they were born in wedlock, and were otherwise worthy of position.³ This requisite of legitimacy was apparently

¹ Sermo Giraldi in Concil. Dublinens. (De Rebus a se Gestis Lib. II. c. 14).

In the "Topographia Hibernica," Dist. III. cap. 27, Giraldus confirms his assertion as to the chastity and drunkenness of the Irish clergy, but admits that they observed the canonical fasts with praiseworthy strictness.

² Hist. Archiep. Bremens. ann. 1179 (Lindenbrog. Script. Septent. p. 107).

It must be borne in mind, however, that in the Irish Church bishops were almost as numerous as in the primitive Church of Africa—"singulæ pene ecclesiæ singulos haberent episcopos."—Bernard. Vit. S. Malachiae cap. x.

³ Cap. 13 Extra Lib. I. Tit. xvii.

not imposed in ignorance, for at the Council of Cashel in 1171 we find an effort made to enforce Christian marriage among the people, who are still described as indulging in unrestricted polygamy and disregarding the nearest ties of consanguinity.¹

When about this period the English commenced the conquest which was to lead to five centuries of cruel anarchy, they of course carried with them their civil and ecclesiastical institutions. The original conquerors—the Butlers, the Clares, and the Fitzgeralds—speedily became incorporated with the native race, and were as Irish as the O'Briens and the McCauras. Although the royal authority was limited practically to the confines of the Pale, and embraced little beyond the Ostman ports, yet it is easy to understand that the clerical license habitual to the English spread beyond the political boundaries, and the monastic spirit of the Hibernians was grievously wounded by the unchastity which was disseminated like a contagion from the dissolute priests who followed in the wake of Strong-bow and Prince John.² Not twenty years after the first invasion, a council, summoned in 1186 by John in Dublin, was troubled by a quarrel between the Saxon priests of Wexford, who mutually accused each other of publicly marrying and keeping wives. This being duly proved, they were promptly degraded, to the intense satisfaction of the Irish clergy, triumphant in their own comparative purity of morals.³ When, therefore, in 1205, Innocent III. specially ordered his legate, Cardinal Julian, to put an end to the hereditary transmission of benefices common in Ireland, the abuse to which he referred was probably confined to the English Pale.⁴ The Church establishments, in fact, were distinct,

¹ *Benedicti Abbatis Gesta Henrici II. ann. 1171.*

² *Girald. Cambrens. op. cit. Lib. II. c. 13.*

³ *Girald. Cambrens. loc. cit.*

⁴ *Innocent PP. III. Regest. v. 158.*

and consequently, when an Irish synod was held in Dublin, in 1217, its canons cannot be considered as having authority beyond the narrow territory through which the king's writ would likewise run. Those canons show us that the morality of the Saxon priesthood had not improved by the example made of the priests of Wexford. The denunciations of concubinage indicate the prevalence of that vice, and the severities threatened against the unfortunate women contrast strangely with the leniency shown to their more guilty partners.¹ That little was accomplished is indicated by an epistle of Honorius III. in 1219, denouncing the laxities of the Hibernian Church, which in his eyes were equivalent to heresies.² In 1250, Innocent IV. ordered the Bishop of Ossory to deprive all married clerks of benefices, and to remove all priests who had succeeded to their fathers' parishes without an intermediate incumbent.³ This effort was equally fruitless, if we may believe the Synod of Ossory in 1320, which declares that the evil continued to flourish, open, avowed, and universal, resisting alike the authority of the Church and the efforts to repress it by severity.⁴ Whether the offenders dismissed their consorts after the thirty days' grace allowed by the synod may well be doubted. With the spread of English domination, the purity of the native Church disappeared, and so great became the general disregard of the canons that shortly before the Reformation it was not an unusual thing for Irish priests to be openly married, nor did those who did so seem to have thereby forfeited the esteem of their neighbours.⁵

¹ Concil. Dublinens. ann. 1217 (Wilkins I. 548).

² Martene Thesaur. I. 875.

³ Berger, Registres d'Innocent IV. No. 4791.

⁴ Quia putridum libidinosæ spurcitie contagium adeo apud clericos et presbyteros invaluit his diebus, quod nec auctoritas evangelica, nec canonica severitas illud hactenus extirpare potuit, quia in suæ perpetuæ damnationis periculum, et ordinis ecclesiasticæ ignominiam, populi que perniciosum exemplum manifestum, adhuc suas publicæ detinent concubinas, etc.—Constit. Synod. Ossoriens. (Wilkins II. 502).

⁵ Bradshaw's Enniskillen (London "Athenæum," Sept. 7, 1878, p. 305).

In Scotland, the Christianity introduced by St. Columba had fallen into the hands of the Culdees. These were originally monks of a more than ordinary strictness of discipline, to whom the earliest recorded allusion occurs in Ireland towards the close of the eighth century—the name, Céle-dé (Keledeus, or Servus Dei), meaning simply Servant of God. In the course of time the Culdees had so relaxed their rule that they reappear in the eleventh century as an order nominally of monks, yet fulfilling the functions of the secular clergy, and enjoying free permission to marry, only abstaining from their wives when employed in the actual ministry of the altar. With marriage had come the hereditary transmission of the endowments of the Church to their children, so that the ancient abbeys and churches were well-nigh stripped of all their possessions, and the distinction between clergy and laity was rather a term than in fact. It may please the poet to reconstruct a world of his own, peopled by imaginary beings of angelic purity—

Peace to their shades! The pure Culdees
Were Albyn's earliest priests of God,
Ere yet an island of her seas
By foot of Saxon monk was trod,
Long ere her churchmen by bigotry
Were barred from wedlock's holy tie.
'Twas then that Aodh, famed afar,
In Iona preached the word with power,
And Reullura, beauty's star,
Was the partner of his bower—

but in sober truth the Culdees were pure as long as they kept the tradition of their founder, and it was not until they sank to a level with their savage compatriots that they transgressed the rule and became worldly and corrupt.¹ In 1125 the Cardinal-legate, John of Crema,

¹ Haddan and Stubbs II. 175–80.

whose unlucky adventure in London has been already alluded to, visited Scotland in the execution of his reformatory mission. There he found on the throne David I., a prince whose life was devoted to rescuing his subjects from their primæval barbarism. We know few details of the history of those times, but it is fair to conjecture that the exhortations of the legate had a share in arousing David to a realisation of the deficiencies and the corruptions of the Scottish Church, and in guiding him to the course which he adopted in its reformation. After some fruitless efforts to restore the order of Culdees to its original condition, he resolved on the sweeping measure of removing all who should prove incorrigible. They were accordingly turned out bodily from their establishments, such property as could be traced was restored, and donations on an extended scale were made both to the old foundations and to the new ones which the royal reformer established—donations which gained for him, from an ungodly descendant, the appellation of “Ane soir sanct for the crown.” These foundations were then filled with regular clergy, brought from France and England—chiefly canons of the order of St. Augustin—and the unfortunate Culdees were turned adrift unless they would promise to observe the strictness of monastic rule. That in a few places they did so, is shown by references to Culdees even in the next century, but these measures were effective, and practically they and their customs disappeared together.¹

In a Church thus constructed from the regular clergy,

¹ Haddan and Stubbs II. 216, 224-7, 235.—See also Cosmo Innes’ “Scotland in the Middle Ages,” pp. 107 sqq. Towards the end of the twelfth century, Giraldus Cambrensis calls the Culdees of Bardsey in Wales “Coelibes vel Colidei,” and characterises them as “religiosissimi” (Itin. Cambr. II. 6—*ap.* Haddan and Stubbs II. xxiii.).

In 1251 we find Innocent. IV. settling a quarrel between the chapter of St. Andrews and the Culdees of the same place, and in 1255 the chapter protests against their participating in the election of bishops as insisted upon by King Alexander III.—Theiner, *Vet. Monument. Hibern. et Scotor.* No. 145, 177 (pp. 53, 67).

the heresy of marriage could find no foothold, especially as it had been so sternly punished in the expulsion of the Culdees. Still was the desired purity not yet attained. In 1181, during the long quarrel between William the Lion and the papacy on the subject of the archbishopric of St. Andrews, an interdict was pronounced on all ecclesiastics who should refuse to recognise the papal candidate John, whereupon the king persecuted those who obeyed the mandate, and the chronicler, in expatiating upon his cruelty, is careful to mention that he did not spare their children, even to babes in their mothers' arms, who were remorselessly driven into exile.¹ The state of things indicated by this remained without improvement. In 1225, Honorius III. ordered the Scottish ecclesiastics to assemble in council for the correction of the many enormities which were committed with impunity; and the council held in obedience to the papal command denounced the shameless licentiousness of the clergy as a disgrace to the Church.² Inquests to detect the offenders, suspension and deprivation to punish them, were ordered with all the verbal energy of which we have already witnessed so many examples, and were attended with the same plentiful lack of success. With what disposition the clergy regarded these efforts for their improvement we may guess from the reception which they gave to the constitutions of Cardinal Ottoboni. Reference has already been made to the council held by that legate in London in 1268. The Church of Scotland had been ordered to join in this council, and had sent two bishops and two abbots as its representative delegates. These took home with them the constitutions of Ottoboni, which the clergy of Scotland utterly refused to obey.³

¹ *Gesta Henrici II.* T. I. p. 282 (M. R. Series).

² *Concil. Scotican.* ann. 1225 c. 18, 62 (Wilkins I. 610).

³ *Chron. Paslatens.* ann. 1268 (Wilkins II. 19).

CHAPTER XIX

SPAIN

WE have already seen (p. 135) that among the Wisigoths of Spain the rule of celibacy had never been successfully enforced, and that during the later period of the Gothic dynasty the demoralisation of the clergy was daily increasing. The Saracenic invasion, and the subsequent struggles of the Christians, who founded petty kingdoms among the wild, mountainous regions of the North and East of the Peninsula, were not favourable to the growth of regular discipline and settled observances. The centralised sacerdotalism of Rome, which took so remarkable an extension in the ninth and tenth centuries, and which penetrated every portion of the Carolingian empire, was powerless to intrude into the strongholds of the Jalikiah, whence the descendants of Pelayo and his companions gradually extended their frontiers from Oviedo to Toledo. Communication with the apostolic city was rare. The nominal subjection of Barcelona and Navarre to the Carolingians, indeed, brought the eastern provinces of Spain under the domination of the Archbishops of Narbonne, and kept them, to a certain extent, under the influences which were moulding the rest of Europe; but the kingdoms of Leon and Castile grew up in complete ecclesiastical independence. Even at the close of the eleventh century a Spanish ecclesiastic describes his contemporary brethren as rude and illiterate, owning no obedience to the mother Church of Rome, and governed by the discipline of Toledo.¹ Wild and insubordinate as

¹ Hist. Compostellan. Lib. II. c. 1.

was a large portion of the European clergy, the ecclesiastics of Spain were even wilder and more insubordinate. Another writer of the period, himself a canon of Compostella, and subsequently Bishop of Mondonego, speaking of his brother canons previous to the reforms of Diego Gelmirez, denounces them as reckless and violent men, ready for any crime, prompt in quarrel, and even occasionally indulging in mutual slaughter.¹ How little, indeed, there was to distinguish the clerk from the layman is evident from a regulation promulgated by the Council of Compostella in 1113. It provides that all priests, gentlemen, and peasants shall devote themselves to wolf-hunting on every Sunday, except Easter and Pentecost, under penalty of a fine of five sols for the priest and gentleman, and one sol, or a sheep, for the peasant—visitation of the sick being the only excuse exempting the priest from the performance of this duty. Every Church, moreover, was bound to furnish for the hunt, seven iron-tipped reeds.² A similar condition of society is indicated at the other end of Spain, where, in 1027, the Synod of Elna, in Roussillon, had forbidden, under pain of excommunication, any one to attack a monk or a clerk who was without arms.³

In such lack of social organisation it is easy to imagine that the rule of celibacy received little attention. According to Mariana, the clergy of the period were, for the most part, publicly married;⁴ and when, in 1056, the Council of Compostella specifically forbade to bishops and monks all intercourse with women, except with mothers, aunts, and sisters wearing the monastic habit,⁵

¹ Hist. Compostellan. Lib. I. c. 20.

² Didaci Decret. No. 15 (Hist. Compostellan. Lib. I. cap. 90).

³ Synod. Helenens. ann. 1027 c. 3 (Aguirre IV. 393).

⁴ Hist. de España, Lib. IX. cap. xi.

⁵ Concil. Compostellan. ann. 1056 can. 3. An allusion, however, to those who left the Church and married being allowed to return on abandoning their wives, would seem to show that some supervision was exercised. The Council of Coyanza,

the inference is fair that even so elementary a prohibition was an innovation, and that the secular clergy, below the episcopate, were not regarded as subject to any restriction.

In the comprehensive efforts, however, made during the later half of the eleventh century by the Roman Church to bring all Christendom under its domination, the rising states of Spain were not likely to remain undisturbed in their independent isolation; nor was it to be expected that so complete a defiance of the canons would be passed unobserved by the pontiffs who were convulsing the rest of Europe in their efforts to reform the Church. Accordingly, in 1068, we find the Cardinal Hugo of Silva Candida, as legate of Alexander II., assembling a council at Gerona, and procuring the adoption of a regulation reducing to the condition of laymanship all who, in holy orders, either entered into matrimony or kept concubines; while those who should dismiss their wives were promised immunity for the past and security for the future.¹ In 1077, Gregory VII. sent a certain Bishop Amandus as his legate, with an epistle addressed to the Spaniards, in which he told them that Spain had anciently belonged to St. Peter and the Roman Church; that the carelessness of his predecessors, and the Saracenic conquest, had caused the papal rights to be forgotten, but that the time had come for them to be revindicated, and that he consequently claimed implicit obedience.² Accordingly, in 1078, we find the legate presiding over another council at Gerona, which confirmed the canons

in 1050, had forbidden the residence of strange women, except mother, aunt, or step-mother, but says nothing as to marriage.—*Con. Coyacens. ann. 1050 c. iii.* (Aguirre IV. 405, 407).

¹ *Concil. Gerundens. ann. 1068 can. 7, 8* (Labbei et Coleti T. XII.). The Council of Toulouse, in 1056 (see ante, p. 306), which ordered the separation of priests from their wives, undertook to include Spain in its legislation, presumably meaning the eastern portion of the Peninsula, which was subject to the Archbishops of Narbonne.

² *Gregor. VII. Regist. Lib. IV. Epist. 28.*

of the previous one, and added several others to prevent the ordination of sons of priests, and the hereditary transmission of benefices.¹ Such slender reforms as may have resulted from these efforts were probably confined to Catalonia and Aragon; but not long afterwards influences were brought to bear upon the rest of Spain, which had a powerful effect in extending the authority of Rome over the Peninsula. Constance of Burgundy, Queen of Alfonso VI. of Castile and Leon, prevailed upon her husband to ask of Gregory a legate to reform the Church, and to condemn the Gothic or Mozarabic ritual, which was jealously preserved by the people as a symbol of their independent nationality. The prayer, of course, was granted. Richard, Abbot of Marseilles, was sent, and in 1080 he held a council at Burgos, where he commanded the ordained clergy to put away their wives. The novelty and hardship of this order created great excitement. The pope, who was rightly regarded as its author, became the object of no little abuse and insult, and was held up to popular derision in innumerable lampoons.²

All of these efforts were nugatory, in spite of the cloud of Cluniac monks who settled upon Spain, obtaining abbeys and bishoprics and Gallicising in many ways the national Church.³ The Spaniards, engaged in an interminable and often doubtful struggle with the Infidel, might well claim consideration from the Holy Father, while the independent spirit which they manifested in their resistance to the introduction of the Roman ritual was a warning that it would be prudent not to proceed too abruptly in the process of bringing them within the fold of St. Peter. Whatever be the motives, indeed, which induced such strenuous apostles of celibacy as Gregory,

¹ Concil. Gerundens. ann. 1078 can. 1, 3, 4, 5 (Labbei et Coleti T. XII.).

² Mariana, loc. cit.

³ Menéndez y Pelayo, *Heterodoxos españoles*, I. 372-3.

Urban, Paschal, and Calixtus to abstain from urging upon them the reform which was so earnestly enforced elsewhere, certain it is that little effort was made to deprive the Spanish clergy of their wives. In all the epistles of the popes up to 1130 I can find but one allusion to the subject, though communication between Spain and Italy became daily more frequent, and the papal authority was constantly exercised with greater decisiveness in the internal affairs of the Spanish Church.

When, in 1101, Diego Gelmirez succeeded in obtaining the see of Compostella, Paschal II. addressed him an epistle, reproaching him with the utter contempt of discipline in his diocese, and commanding a reform. He chiefly complained of the incongruous common residence of monks and nuns, which he severely condemned and peremptorily prohibited, but he made some concession to the necessities of the time in permitting the ordination of the sons of those priests who had, "according to the ordinary custom of the country," married prior to the promulgation of what the pope significantly termed the Roman law; and he carefully abstained from ordering a separation between them and their wives, or even an enforcement of the canons for the future.¹

Diego, who possessed no common measure of vigour and ambition, and who needed the particular favour of the popes for the success of his plans in elevating and aggrandising his see, accordingly proceeded to reform his clergy. There is extant a minute and circumstantial contemporary history of his episcopate, written by his admiring disciples, who dwell with much instance on his labours and success in reducing to discipline the refractory canons of his cathedral seat; but in the numerous allusions to these reforms there is no mention of the enforcement of celibacy, while the fact that

¹ Paschal. PP. II. Epist. 57.

he would not allow them to minister at the altar without canonical vestments is made the subject of repeated gratulation and praise.¹ The absolute silence of the authors with respect to the clergy at large shows that the reticence of Pope Paschal was not misunderstood, and that there was no effort made to bring the secular priesthood under subjection to the Roman discipline. In the twenty-five canons of the Council of Compostella in 1113 it therefore need not surprise us that there is no reference whatever to the subject, beyond an allusion to the children of ecclesiastics, whose nurses were declared entitled to clerical privileges, thus giving them a recognised and highly prized position.²

That Diego's reforms, indeed, did not extend to the abrogation of clerical marriage is evident from several incidental circumstances. Thus, in 1114, the lords of the monastery of Botoa made it over to the Church of Santiago of Compostella, reserving to themselves their life interest, with a reversion to any of their descendants who should be ecclesiastics, and who might be willing to profess celibacy, showing that the matter was optional with the secular clergy.³ That even the canons were bound by no absolute rules on the subject is manifested by a very curious transaction, which may be worth recounting as illustrative in several aspects of the spirit of the age. In 1127, Diego, at the head of his Galician troops, accompanied Alfonso VIII. on an expedition into Portugal. On their return, the army halted at Compostella, where the archbishop received and enter-

¹ Hist. Compostellan. Lib. I. cap. 20, 58, 81; Lib. II. cap. 3; Lib. III. cap. 46.—Even the moderate reforms introduced met with violent opposition—"nobis omnibus, veluti bruta animalia, nulla adhuc jugali asperitate depressa, reluctantibus"—and only a portion seem to have submitted "quosdam sibi acquiescentes doctrina et operatione conspicuos divina clementia reddidit."

² Didaci Decreta, No. 21 (Hist. Compostell. Lib. I. cap. 96).

³ Ibid. Lib. I. cap. 100.—"Si qui ex eorum progenie clerici esse et sæculariter continere vellent."

tained his sovereign. They were bound by the closest ties, for Diego had baptised, knighted, and crowned him, and had, moreover, constantly stood his friend throughout his stormy youth, in the endless civil wars which marked the disastrous reign of his mother, Queen Urraca. Yet, prompted by evil counsellors who were jealous of Diego, the king suddenly demanded of him an enormous sum of money, to pay off the army, under the threat of seizing and pillaging the city. After considerable resistance, Diego was forced to submit, and to pay a thousand marks of silver. He then sought a private interview, in which he solemnly and affectionately warned Alfonso of the ruin of his soul which would ensue if he did not undergo penance for thus impiously spoiling the Apostle Santiago.¹ Alfonso listened humbly, and professed entire willingness to repent, but for the difficulty that he had always been taught that penitence was fruitless without restitution, and restitution he was unable and unwilling to make. Diego then suggested that he should meet the chapter and discuss the case, to which he graciously assented. In the assembly which followed, Diego proposed, that the king should follow the example of his father, Raymond of Galicia, in commending himself to the peculiar patronage of Santiago, and in bequeathing his body to be buried in their church, promising, moreover, that if he should do so they would pray specially for him, which, from the promise of his youth, bade fair to be no easy task. Alfonso was delighted to escape so easily: he eagerly accepted the proposition, and added that he would like to become a canon of their Church, in order to enjoy the fullest possible share in the masses of such holy men. To this the chapter assented at once; he was forthwith duly installed as a canon of the Church which

¹ St. James.

he had just despoiled, and his conscience was set at rest, while the Church felt that it had acquired a moral supremacy over the spoiler.¹ In thus formally becoming a canon, there could have been no assumption of celibacy, expressed or implied. Alfonso was but twenty-one years of age, and in the following year he married Berengaria, daughter of the Count of Barcelona.²

In fact, in the absence of urgency on the part of Rome, the question of sacerdotal celibacy seems to have been virtually ignored in Spain. How little importance was attached to the pre-eminent sanctity of asceticism becomes evident when we are told that in the whole of Galicia there was no convent of nuns until Diego, in 1129, founded the house of St. Maria of Conjo.³ Equal indifference is manifest in the legislative assemblies of the Church. The Council of Leon and Compostella, in 1114, only prohibited the residence of such women as were forbidden by the canons,⁴ which, in the existing discipline of the Spanish Church, may safely be presumed to offer no impediment to the marriage relation; and a synod held at Palencia in 1129 is even more significant in its reticence, for it merely provides that notorious concubines of the clergy shall be ejected, without apparently venturing to threaten any punishment on the reverend offenders.⁵

Towards the close of his restless life, however, Archbishop Diego found time, amid his military, political,

¹ Hist. Compostellan. Lib. II. cap. 87.

² The Spanish Church was not alone in this looseness of discipline as regards canons. When Arthur of Brittany took up arms against his uncle King John, and advanced with an army to Tours at Easter, A.D. 1200, he there "more debito in ecclesia B. Martini in canonicum est receptus, et in stallum decani in vestibus chori, sicut canonicus installatus."—Chron. Turonens. ann. 1200 (Martene Ampl. Collect V. 1038).

³ Hist. Compostell. Lib. III. cap. 11.

⁴ Ibid. Lib. I. cap. 101 (Concil. Legionens. ann. 1114 can. 8).

⁵ Concil. Palentin. ann. 1129 can. 5.—"Concubinæ clericorum manifestæ ejiciantur."

and ecclesiastical schemes of aggrandisement, to undertake the much-needed reform of a single monastery. The Abbot of S. Pelayo de Antealtaria was a paragon of brutish sensuality, who wasted the revenues of his house in riotous living and took no shame in a numerous progeny. The archbishop remonstrated with him long and earnestly, both in public and private: seven times in the general chapter of the diocese he admonished and threatened the offender without result. At length, in 1130, after forbearance so remarkable, Diego held a chapter in the abbey for his trial, when he was proved by competent witnesses to have kept no less than seventy concubines. He was accordingly deposed, but was so far from being canonically punished that a benefice in the abbey lands was assigned for his support. A new abbot was then appointed, who swore to observe the Benedictine rule as far as he should find himself able to do so.¹ It is a significant commentary on the state of discipline and opinion to find so weak an effort to remove and punish the grossest licentiousness characterised by the biographer of Diego with the warmest expressions of wondering admiration, as a work which doubtless gave ineffable satisfaction to the Divine Omnipotence, and which was without example in previous history.

It is very evident that the pontiffs who so energetically enforced the rule of celibacy throughout the rest of Europe were content to offer little opposition to the obstinacy of the Celtiberian priesthood. We can safely conclude, indeed, that matters were allowed to remain virtually undisturbed, and that the clergy were permitted to retain their wives. A council held in Galicia in the early part of the thirteenth century, for the purpose of reforming ecclesiastical discipline, preserves absolute silence on the

¹ Hist. Compostellan. Lib. III. cap. 20.—“Pro modulo suæ possibilitatis.”

subject of marriage and concubinage;¹ in 1246, priests of Cordova were able to plead ignorance in justification of their keeping so-called concubines while performing divine service.² Yet, in 1244, under pressure from the Cardinal of St. Sabina, then papal legate, public concubinarians were ordered to be suspended, deprived of their benefices, and degraded from holy orders.³ Notwithstanding this, some twenty years later, Alfonso the Wise of Castile was obliged to formally interdict matrimony to those in holy orders. In the elaborate code drawn up by that monarch and known as "Las Siete Partidas," there is a law punishing sacerdotal marriage with deprivation of function and benefice; while the wives, if vassals of the Church, are to be reduced to servitude, and if serfs, are to be sold and the proceeds appropriated for the benefit of the Church of the offender. The wording of the law would seem to indicate that it was an enactment intended to repress existing disorders, and not merely a well-known provision inserted in the code for the purpose of completing a compilation of statutes;⁴ while the existence in secular legislation of such invasions of the province of ecclesiastical law is a convincing proof of the continued independence of Rome asserted by the Spanish Church and State. The prelates were further authorised to command the assistance of the secular power in enforcing these barbarous penalties to their full measure of severity. This, if enforced, would have put a speedy end to clerical marriage, but the Partidas

¹ Concil. Hispan. Sæc. XIII. (Martene Thesaur. IV. 167).

² Berger, Registres d'Innocent IV. No. 1759.

³ Villanueva, Viage Literario, T. XVII. p. 346.

⁴ "De los clérigos que casan á bendiciones habiendo órdenes sagradas, que pena deben haber ellos et aquellas con quien casan.—Casándose algunt clérigo que hobiese orden sagrada non debe fincar sin pena, ca débenle vedar de oficio, et tollerle el beneficio que hobiere de la iglesia por sentencia de descomulgamiento fasta que la dexe et faga penitencia de aquel yerro, etc."—Siete Partidas, P. I. Tit. iv. l. 41.

were not confirmed by the Cortes until 1348, nearly a century later, and these provisions produced no effect at the time. How little, indeed, the clergy were required to abandon their customs is evident when, in 1262, Alfonso granted to those of the diocese of Salamanca the privilege of bequeathing all their real and personal property to their children, grandchildren or other descendants.¹

The clergy of the dominions of the crown of Aragon were as indifferent to the canons as those of Castile. In Valencia a council in 1255 prohibited the residence with priests of all women, except mothers and sisters and such others as were beyond suspicion, but no penalty was prescribed for infractions of the rule; and the character of the clergy with whom the council had to deal is sufficiently shown by its complaint that the priests of the country parishes frequented the city too much and indulged there in disgraceful excesses, for which reason it forbids them from visiting the city more often than twice a month, and requires them to return home the same day.² Arnaldo de Peralta, Bishop of Valencia, not long after, deploras the utter contempt with which all previous efforts to suppress clerical concubinage had been received, and the prevalence of the custom by which ecclesiastics endowed their bastards with the spoils of the Church. Yet the only punishment he finds himself able to threaten is a fine of thirty maravedis on public concubinarians and of five on parish priests who connive at such offences or neglect to report them to the bishop. Ecclesiastics, indeed, are directed to put away their children, but no penalty is indicated for disobedience.³ A Council of Lerida, about 1250,

¹ Memorial histórico español, Tour. I. p. 193 (Madrid, 1850).

² Concil. Valentin. ann. 1255 (Aguirre V. 197, 201).

³ Constit. Synodal. Arnaldi de Peralta Episc. Valentin. (Aguirre V. 207-8).

imposed a fine of fifty maravedis on public concubiniarians, alleging as a reason that money is more prized than salvation.¹ The Council of Gerona in 1257 was more energetic, for it decreed the deprivation of all concubinary priests who persisted in their sin; but this apparently was not effectual, for in 1274 the threat was repeated, with the addition that the women should be excommunicated and should receive after death the burial of asses;² and very similar was the legislation of the Council of Peñafiel in 1302.³ In 1286 the Council of Urgel recites that efforts had been made to suppress concubinage, by suspending the priest and excommunicating his companion, but this had only led to fresh scandals, for the priests had continued to officiate and had thus incurred "irregularity," while the souls of their parishioners were exposed to grave perils. To remove these evils the penalties were therefore thriftily commuted to a fine of ten gold pieces for the male offender, and of five for the female—a method which doubtless led to a profitable traffic in licences to sin.⁴ In 1314 the Council of Lerida argued in the same way, and restored the old fine of fifty maravedis.⁵

However well meant these efforts were, they proved as useless as all previous ones, for in 1322 the Council of Valladolid, under the presidency of the papal legate, William, Cardinal of St. Sabina, animadverts strongly on the indecency of ecclesiastics, from the highest prelates down, officiating at the nuptials of their children, both legitimate and illegitimate. For those who publicly kept concubines it provides a graduated scale of

¹ Villanueva, *Viage Literario*, XVI. 311.

² Synod. Gerund. ann. 1257 can. 4; ann. 1274 can. 25 (*Martene Ampl. Coll.* VIII. 1461, 1469).

³ Concil. Penna-fidelens. ann. 1302 can. ii. (*Aguirre V.* 226).

⁴ Villanueva, XI. 291.

⁵ *Ibidem*, XVII. 227.

confiscation, ending in the deprivation of the persistently contumacious who gave no prospect of amendment, the exceedingly elaborate regulations prescribed showing at once the difficulty of the subject and the importance attached to it. The acts of this council, moreover, are interesting as presenting the first authentic evidence of a custom which subsequently prevailed to some extent elsewhere, by which parishioners were wont to compel their priest to take a female consort for the purpose of protecting the virtue of their families from his assaults. The iniquity of this precaution seems to have especially scandalised the legate, and he treats the audacious laymen concerned in such transactions with much less ceremony than the concubinary clergy.¹ The elaborate regulations promulgated by this council produced little effect. The Council of Salamanca in 1335 renews the previous repressive legislation, adding a threat of *ipso facto* excommunication for those who give Christian burial to priestly concubines, including all who are present on such occasions, who are not to be absolved until they shall have paid a fine of fifty maravedis to the cathedral church.²

In Aragon, the Council of Tarragona, in 1336, out of consideration for the souls of the guilty or of their parishioners, removed the penalties of suspension and excommunication and substituted a mulct of a year's revenue of beneficed priests and a fine of ten maravedis on the unbeneficed, with a similar fine on the concubines.³ This leniency seems to have been misplaced, for in 1364 the Council of Urgel threatens excommunication and deprivation of benefice unless there is reasonable cause to remit the latter penalty.⁴ In

¹ Concil. Vallis-oletan. ann. 1322 can. vi. vii. (Aguirre V. 243-5).

² Concil. Salmanticens. ann. 1335 can. iii. (Aguirre V. 266).

³ Villanueva, op. cit., XX. 170.

⁴ Ibidem, XI. 324.

Majorca the same troubles existed, and in 1364 the bishop, Antonio de Galiano, as the only method of enforcing the canons, appointed a special commissioner, Pedro de Carrera, to look up delinquents and punish them.¹

The secular power vainly interposed to check this demoralisation. In 1351 the Cortes of Castile complained that the concubines of the clergy walked shamelessly abroad, arrayed in fine garments and adorned with gold and silver, so that they could not be distinguished from married ladies, leading to frequent quarrels and fights. To remedy this King Pedro the Cruel ordered that all clerical concubines should be plainly attired and be distinguished by wearing around the head a red fillet, three fingers in breadth, under penalty for each infraction, of forfeiture of the clothes they had on and a gradually increasing fine.² Of course this was ineffective, and the Cortes of 1380 asked its re-enactment, and represented that the children of such unions inherited from their father and his kinsmen, as though they were legitimate, whence it arose that the clergy could get honest widows and maidens to live with them, causing great scandal. To this King Juan I. could only reply that all such legacies should be void.² At length, in 1388, a national Council of Castile held at Palencia under Cardinal Pedro de Luna, papal legate, made a determined effort to eradicate the ineradicable vice. It renewed the regulations of the Council of Valladolid, which it stated were not obeyed, and added to them a clause by which all benefices were held under a sort of tenure of chastity, and subject to forfeiture. Besides this, all ecclesiastics who, within two months of death, had kept concubines were declared incapable of testating, and their property was adjudged—one-third to the fabric of

¹ Villanueva, *op. cit.*, XXI. 3.

² *Córtes de Leon y de Castilla*, II. 14, 303 (Madrid, 1863).

their churches, one-third to the ordinary of the diocese, and one-third to the fund for the redemption of captives under the care of the Orders of Trinidad and Merced, who were empowered to seize their share. Moreover, all bishops were commanded to appoint official visitors, who were to report at annual synods, to be held thereafter, all cases of infraction of the rules.¹ Such stringent legislation bears emphatic testimony to the magnitude and prevalence of the evils which it was designed to cure, and of the existence of such evils there is ample evidence besides what has been adduced above. In 1335 Benedict XII. addressed to the Spanish prelates an earnest remonstrance on the universal corruption which characterised the whole population, lay and clerical alike, scandalising to the infidel the very name of Christians.² Pedro Gomez de Albornoz, Archbishop of Seville, is equally emphatic,³ and even more deplorable in its details is the description given of his fellow ecclesiastics by Alvar Pelayo, Penitentiary under John XXII. and Bishop of Silva in Portugal. He states that many of the clergy in holy orders throughout the Peninsula publicly associated themselves with women, frequently of noble blood, binding themselves against separation by notarial acts and solemn oaths, endowing their consorts with the goods of the Church, and celebrating with the kindred these illegal espousals as joyously as though they were legitimate nuptials. Yet even this flagrant defiance of the canons was better than the wickedness common between confessors and their penitents, or than the promiscuous and unrestrained licentiousness of those who were not fettered by the forms of marriage, whose children, as

¹ Concil. Palentin. ann. 1388 can. ii. (Aguirre V. 298-99).

² Raynald. Annal. ann. 1335, No. 64.

³ Menéndez y Pelayo, *Heterodoxos Españoles*, I. 490.

Pelayo asserts, almost rivalled in number those of the laity.¹ Evidently the Council of Palencia had an ample field for reform, but its labours proved nugatory. In 1429 the Council of Tortosa, under the presidency of the Cardinal de Foix, papal legate, renewed the lament that the decrees of Valladolid remained unobserved, and in repeating them it added a penalty of incarceration for pertinacious offenders, indicating, moreover, one of the worst abuses to which the subject gave rise, in forbidding all officials to take bribes from those who transgressed the rules.² This effort was as fruitless as all previous ones had been, and we shall see hereafter that the same state of affairs continued throughout the sixteenth century.

¹ Et utinam nunquam continentiam promisissent, maxime Hispani et regnicolæ, in quibus provinciis in paucis maiori numero sunt filii laicorum quam clericorum . . . sæpe cum parochianis mulieribus quas ad confessionem admittunt, scelestissime fornicantur . . . De bonis ecclesiæ pascunt concubinam continue et filios, et de pecunia ecclesiæ emunt eis possessiones. . . . Multi presbyteri et alii constituti in sacris, maxime in Hispania, in Asturia et Galicia et alibi, et publice et aliquoties per publicum instrumentum promittunt et jurant quibusdam, maxime nobilibus mulieribus, nunquam eas dimittere; et dant eis arras de bonis ecclesiæ et possessiones ecclesiæ, publice eas ducunt, cum consanguineis et amicis et solenni convivio, acsi essent uxores legitimæ.—Alv. Pelag. de Planctu Ecclesiæ, Lib. II. Art. xxviii. (Ed. 1517, fol. 131-3).

This forms part of a list of fifty-four charges brought by Pelayo against the clergy of his time—"peccant in his communiter."

² Concil. Dertusan. ann. 1429 can. ii. (Aguirre V. 335-6).

CHAPTER XX

GENERAL LEGISLATION

IN a former section we have seen the efforts made by Calixtus II. to enforce the received discipline of the Church, and we have noted the scanty measure of success which attended his labours. He apparently himself recognised that they were futile, and that some action of more decided character than had as yet been attempted was necessary to accomplish the result so long and so energetically sought, and so illusory to its ardent pursuers. On his return to Italy, and his triumph over his unfortunate rival, the anti-pope Maurice Burdino, he summoned, in 1123, the first general council of the West, to confirm the Concordat of Worms, which had just closed half a century of strife between the papacy and the empire. Nearly a thousand prelates obeyed his call, and that august assembly promulgated a canon which not only forbade matrimony to those bound by vows and holy orders, but commanded that if such marriages were contracted they should be broken, and the parties to them subjected to due penance.¹

This was a bold innovation. With the exception of a decretal of Urban II. in 1090, to which little attention seems to have been paid, we have seen that, previous to Calixtus, while the sacrament of marriage was held incompatible with the ministry of the altar and with the

¹ Presbyteris, diaconibus, subdiaconibus et monachis concubinas habere, seu matrimonia contrahere, penitus interdicimus: contracta quoque matrimonia ab hujusmodi personis disjungi, et personas ad pœnitentiam redigi, juxta sacrorum canonum diffinitiones judicamus.—Concil. Lateran. I. c. 21,

enjoyment of Church property, it yet was respected and its binding force was admitted, even to the point of rendering those who assumed it unfitted for their sacred functions. At most, and as a concession to a lax and irreligious generation, the option had been allowed of abandoning either the wife or the ministry. At Rheims, Calixtus had deprived them of this choice, and had ordered their separation from their wives. He now went a step further, and by the Lateran canon he declared the sacrament of marriage to be less potent than the religious vow: the engagement with the Church swallowed up and destroyed all other ties. This gave the final seal to the separation between the clergy and the laity, by declaring the priestly character to be indelible. When once admitted to orders, he became a being set apart from his fellows, consecrated to the service of God; and the impassable gulf between him and the laity bound him for ever to the exclusive interests of the Church. It is easy to perceive how important an element this irrevocable nature of sacerdotalism became in establishing and consolidating the ecclesiastical power.

The immensity of the change thus wrought in the practice, if not in the doctrine, of the Church can best be understood by comparing the formal command thus issued to the Christian world with the unqualified condemnation pronounced in earlier times against those who attempted to dissolve marriage under religious pretexts.¹ And in all ages the Church has regarded the

¹ Thus Gregory the Great, in 602: "*Si enim dicunt religionis causa conjugia debere dissolvi sciendum est quia etsi hoc lex humana concessit, divina lex tamen prohibuit.*"—Gregor. I. Lib. XI. Epist. 45.

And St. Augustin: "*Proinde qui dicunt talium nuptias non esse nuptias sed potius adulteria non mihi videntur satis acute ac diligenter considerare quid dicant . . . et cum volunt eas separatas reddere continentie faciunt maritos earum adulteros veros, etc.*"—De Bono Viduit. c. 10.

Even after the Lateran canon, Hugh of St. Victor, in treating of marriage and

chastity of the monastic orders as even more imperative than that of the secular clergy.

Revolutions never go backwards. Perhaps the Lateran fathers who adopted the canon scarcely realised its logical conclusions. If they did, they at all events shrank from expressing them openly and fully, and left the faithful to draw their own deductions as to the causes and consequences of such an order. Time, however, familiarised the minds of ardent Churchmen with the idea, and it was seen that if the practice thus enjoined was correct, doctrine must be made to suit and to justify it. To this end an additional stimulus was afforded by the failure of the canon to accomplish the results anticipated from it, for the custom of sacerdotal marriage was as yet by no means eradicated. The Council of Liège, held by Innocent II. in 1131, referred to in a preceding section, and those of Clermont and Rheims, over which he likewise presided, in 1130 and 1131, show how little had been accomplished, and how generally the clergy of Europe disregarded the restrictions nominally imposed upon them, and the punishments which they so easily escaped.¹ In the canons of these councils not only is it observable that the question of marriage and celibacy is treated as though it were a matter now for the first time brought to the attention of the clergy, but also that the innovation attempted by the Council

the causes of its dissolution, seems to have no conception that holy orders were to be enumerated among them.—H. de S. Victor. *Summæ Sententiarum*, Tract. VII. ; *De Sacramentis*, Lib. II. P. xi.

¹ *Decrevimus ut ii qui a subdiaconatu et supra uxores duxerint, aut concubinas habuerint, officio atque beneficio ecclesiastico careant.*—Concil. Claromont. ann. 1130 can. 4.

This is repeated verbatim in the Council of Rheims in 1131, canon 4.

Concerning the latter a contemporary observes: "*Placuit etiam domino apostolico et toti concilio, ne quis audiat missam presbyteri habentis concubinam vel uxorem. Assensu etiam omnium firmatum est ut clerici omnes a subdiacono et supra continentes sint, et qui non fuerint continentes, deponantur.*"—Udalr. Babenb. *Cod. Lib. II. c. 1.*

of Lateran, only seven or eight years previously, is prudently suppressed and passed over without even an allusion.

Innocent, restored to Rome and to power, was bolder than when wandering through Europe, soliciting the aid of the faithful. Surrounded by a thousand prelates at the second great Council of Lateran, in 1139, he no longer dreaded to offend the susceptibilities of the clergy, and he proceeded to justify the canon of 1123 by creating a doctrine to suit the practice there enjoined. After repeating the canons of Clermont and Rheims, he unhesitatingly pronounced that a union contracted in opposition to the rule of the Church was not a marriage.¹ He condescends to no argument, while he admits the innovation by alleging as its object the extension of the law of continence and of the purity pleasing to God.

The abounding wickedness of a perverse generation caused this decree of the loftiest Christian tribunal to fall still-born and abortive as its forerunners had done.² The Church, however, was irrevocably committed to the new doctrine and to all its consequences. When Eugenius III. was driven out of Rome by Arnold of Brescia, he presided, in 1148, over a council held at Rheims, where eleven hundred bishops and abbots from Northern and Western Europe assembled to do honour to the persecuted representative of St. Peter, and to condemn the teachings of Gilbert de la Porrée. From

¹ Ut autem lex continentię et Deo placens munditia in ecclesiasticis personis et sacris ordinibus dilatetur, statuimus quatenus episcopi, presbyteri, diaconi, subdiaconi, regulares canonici et monachi atque conversi professi, qui sanctum transgredientes propositum uxores sibi copulare pręsumperint, separentur. Hujusmodi namque copulationem, quam contra ecclesiasticam regulam constat esse contractam, matrimonium non esse censemus. Qui etiam ab invicem separati, pro tantis excessibus condignam pœnitentiam agant.—Concil. Lateran. II. ann. 1139 c. 7.

² Sed nimis abundans per universum orbem nequitia terrigenarum corda contra ecclesiastica scita obduravit.—Orderic. Vital. P. III. Lib. xiii. c. 20.

this great assembly he procured the confirmation of the new dogma by their adoption of the Lateran canon; while the repetition of that of Clermont and Rheims (of 1130 and 1131) shows that the evil which it was intended to repress still existed in full force.¹ The vague assertion of Eugenius that he was but following in the footsteps of the holy fathers, and a special reference to Innocent II. as his authority, render it probable that the members of the council demurred in committing themselves to the new principle, and that it was only by showing that the matter was already decided under the irrefragable authority of a general council that the consent of the Transalpine Churches was obtained.

St. Bernard himself, the impersonation of ascetic sacerdotalism, hesitated to subscribe to the new dogma, and when the monks of Chartres asked him to reconcile it with the teachings of Augustin and Gregory the Great he candidly confessed that his dialectical skill was unequal to the task.² So when an abbot applied to him for advice in the case of one of his monks, who had left the convent and married, St. Bernard stigmatised the act as highly improper, but hesitated to pronounce it unlawful. He recommended that an attempt be made to convince the parties that they were perilling their salvation, and if this failed he thought that perhaps they might be separated by episcopal authority.³ In fact, four years after the Council of Rheims, St. Bernard reproached Eugenius with having caused the adoption of canons which no one

¹ Concil. Remens. ann. 1148 can. 3, 8. "*Sanctorum patrum et prædecessoris nostri Papæ Innocentii vestigia inhærentes, statuimus quatenus episcopi, presbyteri, diaconi, etc.*"

² Et ad hæc nihil ad præsens certius breviusque respondendum occurrit, nisi quod ita sancti antistites sapuerunt: rectene? ipsi viderint.—Lib. de Præcept. et Dispensat. cap. XVII.—Abelard contrasts the contradictory canons of the Church in these matters in his *Sic et Non*, cap. CXXII. It was possibly among other motives the skilful unveiling of ecclesiastical inconsistencies in this curious work that led the authorities of the Church to procure the compilation of Gratian's "*Decretum*."

³ Bernardi Epist. LXXVI.

pretended to obey. If he thought that they were enforced, he grievously erred; if he did not think so, he had sinned either by decreeing what was not to be observed or in neglecting to punish their non-observance—and no one was punished for his disobedience.¹

Even in Rome itself the point was still disputed. At that very time Gratian, the greatest canonist of the age, was engaged in the compilation of his "*Concordia discordantium Canonum*," a work undertaken to restore to the canon law the pre-eminence which it was fast losing in consequence of the recently revived study of the Justinian jurisprudence. Gratian's use of some of the Lateran canons shows that he was familiar with them,² yet he distinctly declares his opposition to the new doctrine by asserting that a deacon can lawfully marry if he chooses to abandon the ministry, and that the sacrament of marriage is so potent that, even if he had vowed chastity at the time of his ordination, the violation of his vow did not affect it.³ The summists, however, who shortly afterwards condensed his work for practical use, discreetly forbore to allude to this, but

¹ Ejusd. de Considerat. Lib. III. cap. v.

² The exact date of the appearance of the *Decretum* is not known, and has been the subject of considerable debate. It contains nothing posterior to 1139, and even the later utterances of Innocent II. are not given. Gratian is said to have devoted eleven years to its preparation, and the prevailing opinion among scholars refers its publication to 1141. It has never received formal papal confirmation, and is therefore not in itself authoritative; but Gratian's comments are regarded as positive evidence of the opinions of his time.—Schulte, *Die Lehre von den Quellen des Katholischen Kirchenrechts*, I. 319, 330, 332 (Giessen, 1860).

³ *Si vero diaconus a ministerio cessare voluerit, et contracto matrimonio licite potest uti. Nam etsi in ordinatione sua castitatis votum obtulerit, tamen tanta est vis in sacramento conjugii, quod nec ex violatione voti potest dissolvi ipsum conjugium.*—Post Cap. i. Dist. xxvii.

The introduction of the doctrine of Innocent and Eugenius into the Church has given rise to some controversy. In the Encyclical of 22nd August 1851, and in the Syllabus of December 1864, Pius IX. has condemned the error of attributing it to Boniface VIII. Some zealously orthodox writers have endeavoured to prove that the Church consistently maintained this doctrine from the beginning, but the contrary is admitted by the greater number of Catholic authorities. Cf. Zaccaria, *Storia Polemica*, pp. 346–7, and Bernal Diaz, *Practica Criminalis Canonica*, cap. 74.

asserted that a solemn and public vow impeded the contract of marriage and dissolved it if contracted. As the precept to vow chastity at ordination had become obsolete, they further discovered that he who accepted what inferred a vow was held to have vowed. Thus the postulant for orders, though he emitted no vow in words, yet accepted that which inferred perpetual chastity, and therefore was bound by a solemn vow which was destructive of marriage.¹ This, it is true, was reasoning in a circle, but it satisfied the schoolmen, though Gratian had known nothing of such subtilties.²

While the new law was thus accepted by the schoolmen it was long in winning its way to general acceptance, nor can it be a subject of wonder if those who disregarded the acknowledged canons of the Church by marrying in orders, or by permitting such marriages in those under their charge, should neglect a rule of recent origin and of more than doubtful propriety. The Church, however, was committed to it, and, moreover, could see in its eventual recognition a more effectual means of accomplishing the long-desired object than in any expedient previously tried. By destroying all such marriages, pronouncing them null and void, inflicting an ineffaceable stigma on wife and offspring, subjecting the woman to the certainty of being cast off without resource and without option on the part of the husband, the position of the wife of an ecclesiastic would become most unenviable; her kindred would prevent her from exposing

¹ Master Roland (subsequently Alexander III.), whose *Summa* was composed prior to 1159, adopts this line of argument (*Summa Rolandi*, Caus. XXVII. Q. 1.—Innsbruck, 1874, pp. 117–18), and is followed by Stephen of Tournay (*Summa Stephani Tarnacensis*, Caus. XXVIII. Q. 1.—Giessen, 1891, p. 233). Bernard of Pavia is bolder: he simply says that holy orders prevent marriage and dissolve it if contracted, basing this upon the Lateran canon of Calixtus II. (*Bernardi Papiensis, Summa Decretalium*, Lib. IV. Tit. I. § 8; Tit. VI. § 1; *Ejusd. Summa de Matrimonio*, § iii.—Ratisbona, 1860, pp. 132, 149, 288).

² Post Cap. xliii. Caus. XXVII. Q. 1.

herself to such calamities, and no priest could succeed in finding a consort above the lowest class, whose union with him would expose him to the contempt of his flock.

How slender was the immediate result of the efforts of Innocent and Eugenius, however, is manifested in the foregoing sections. If further evidence is desired it is furnished, as regards Germany, by Geroch, Provost of Reichersperg, who, writing about the middle of the century, complains that any one who would shun intercourse with Nicolitan and simoniacal heretics must quit the world, for it was full of them, and he maintains the propriety of calling them heretics because they openly defended and justified their evil courses.¹ Indeed, so shamelessly were their transgressions displayed, that the faithful were sometimes scandalised by the sight of the priests' wives assisting their husbands in the ministry of the altar;² while conventual discipline had sunk so low that nuns were in the habit of deferring their formal vows until the lassitude of old age should render the restraints thereby assumed easy to be endured,³ and canons led a life which was only distinguishable from that of the laity by its shamelessness.⁴ In France, Hugh, Archbishop of Rouen, complains that those who married in orders openly defended their evil practices and quoted Scripture to sustain themselves.⁵ In England, as late

¹ Gerhohi Tract. adv. Simoniac. c. 2.—About the year 1140 we find St. Bernard (Epist. 203) writing to the bishop and clergy of Trèves, urging them to labour for the reformation of a married subdeacon of their church, in terms which show that no severe application of the canons was to be expected.

² Gerhohi Exposit. in Psalm LXIV. cap. xlix.

³ Gerhohi Exposit. in Psalm LXIV. c. xxxv. An allusion in this passage to Eugenius III. and the Council of Rheims shows that it was written between 1148 and 1153. It seems that the nuns rebelled against the canon (Concil. Remens. ann. 1148 can. iv.) confining them to their convents under threat of deprivation of Christian sepulture.

⁴ Ibid. cap. xlvii.

⁵ Hugon. Rothomag. contra Hæret. Lib. III. cap. v.—Hugh gives us in a new form the old calculation as to the comparative merits of virginity, continence, and marriage—"Non centesimo honore cum virginibus gloriatur, non sexagesima continentiae palma lætatur, sed tricesimo conjugii labore fatigatur."

as 1470, Sir John Fortescue incidentally alludes to a recent case in which a priest named John Fringe, who had lived in orders for three years, procured two false witnesses to swear that he had previously been betrothed to a certain maiden, and this preliminary promise of marriage was held by court to supersede his priestly ordination; he was ejected from the priesthood and compelled to marry the girl, with whom he lived fourteen years, until he was executed for treason by the Lancastrians during the wars of the Roses.¹ In Spain, as we have already seen, priestly marriage was forbidden by the secular law as late as the latter half of the thirteenth century, and priests in consequence were wont to protect their partners by entering into the most solemn compacts, the customary employment of which shows that they must have been habitually enforced by the municipal tribunals regardless of the censures of the Church.

The long pontificate of Alexander III., extending from 1159 to 1181, was absorbed for the most part by his deadly strife with Frederic Barbarossa. Yet, even before he was released from that ever-present danger, he found leisure to urge the cause of sacerdotal celibacy; and after the humiliation of his mortal enemy he devoted himself to it with a zeal which earned for him among his contemporaries the credit of establishing its observance.² He who, as the legate Roland, had nearly paid, under the avenging sword of Otho of Wittelsbach, the forfeit of his life for his rude boldness at the imperial court, was little likely to abate one jot of the claims which the Church asserted on the obedience of layman

¹ Fortescue de Laud. Leg. Angl. cap. xxi.—Fortescue speaks of the case as having occurred within his own knowledge.

² Et constituit ut nullus in sacris ordinibus habeat uxorem vel concubinam.—Chron. S. Ægid. in Brunswig.

and clerk; and he recognised too fully the potency of the canons of Lateran and Rheims not to insist upon their observance. The very necessity under which he found himself, however, of repeating those canons shows how utterly neglected they had been, and how successfully the clergy had thus far resisted their reception and acknowledgment. Thus when, in 1163, he held the Council of Tours, he was obliged to content himself with a canon which allowed three warnings to those who publicly kept concubines, and it was only after neglect of these warnings that they were threatened with deprivation of functions and benefice;¹ and when, in 1172, his legates presided over the Council of Avranches, which absolved Henry II. for the murder of A'Becket, the Norman clergy were emphatically reminded that those who married in holy orders must put away their wives, and this in terms which indicate that the rule had not been previously obeyed.² Yet notwithstanding this formal declaration, only a few years later we find the Archbishop of Rheims applying to him for counsel in the case of a deacon who had committed matrimony, to which Alexander of course replied that the marriage was no marriage, and that the offending ecclesiastic must be separated from the woman, and undergo due penance.³ The persistence of the pope, and the necessity

¹ Concil. Turon. ann. 1163 can. 4 (MS. St. Michael. ap. Harduin. Tom. VI. P. ii. p. 1600).

² Qui autem a subdiaconatu vel supra ad matrimonia convolaverint, mulieres etiam invitas et renitentes relinquunt.—Concil. Abrincens. ann. 1172 c. 1. I give this on the authority of the Abate Zaccaria (*Nuova Giustificazione del Celibato Sacro*, p. 120); there is no such canon among those attributed to the council by Hardouin (T. VI. P. II. p. 1634), and by Bessin (Concil. Rotomagensia, p. 86), whose accounts of the proceedings are extracted from Roger of Hoveden and tally with that given in the *Gesta Henrici II.* attributed to Benedict of Peterboro (I. 33. M. R. Series). As a number of canons proposed by the papal legates, Cardinals Theodwin and Albert, were rejected by the Norman bishops, it is possible that the local reports and those current at Rome may have differed.

³ Post Concil. Lateran. P. XVIII. c. 12.

of his urgency, are farther shown by sundry epistles to various English bishops, in which the rule is enunciated as absolute and unvarying;¹ and he takes occasion to stigmatise such marriages with the most degrading epithet, when he graciously pardons those concerned, and permits their restitution after a long course of penitence, on their giving evidence of a reformed life.²

Yet even Alexander was forced to abate somewhat of his stern determination, in consideration of the incorrigible perversity of the time, though he seems not to have remarked that he abandoned the principle by admitting exceptions, and that the reasons assigned in such individual cases might, with equal cogency, be applied to the total withdrawal of the rule. When the Calabrian bishops informed him that clerks in holy orders throughout their dioceses committed matrimony, he ordered that priests and deacons should be irrevocably separated from their wives; but, in the case of subdeacons of doubtful morals, he instructed the prelates that they should tacitly connive at the irregularity, lest, in place of one woman, many should be abused, and a greater evil be incurred, in the endeavour to avoid a less.³ This worldly wisdom also dictated his orders to the Bishop of Exeter, in whose diocese subdeacons were in the habit of openly marrying. He directs an examination into the lives and characters of the offenders; those whose regular habits and staid morality afford fair expectation of their chastity in celibacy are to be forcibly separated from their wives; while those whose disorderly character renders probable their general licentiousness if

¹ Post Concil. Lateran. P. XVIII. c. 2, 6.

² Sane sacerdotes illi, qui nuptias contrahunt, quæ non nuptiæ sed contubernia sunt potius nuncupanda, post longam poenitentiam at vitam laudabilem continentes, officio suo restitui poterunt, et ex indulgentia sui episcopi ejus executionem habere. —Can. 4 Extra Tit. iii. Lib. III.

³ Post Concil. Lateran. P. XVIII. c. 4.

condemned to a single life are not to be disturbed—taking care, however, that they do not minister at the altar, or receive ecclesiastical benefices.¹

Alexander adopted the principle that a simple vow of chastity did not prevent marriage or render it null, but that a formal vow, or the reception of orders, created a dissolution of marriage, or a total inability to enter into it;² but Celestin III. carried the principle still farther, and decreed that a simple vow, while it did not dissolve an existing connection, was sufficient to prevent a future one.³

Alexander did not confine himself to this portion of the question, but with ceaseless activity laboured to enforce the observance of celibacy in general, and to repress the immorality which disgraced the Church throughout Christendom—immorality which led Alain de l'Isle, the "Universal Doctor," to characterise the ecclesiastics of his time as being old men in their in-

¹ Post Concil. Lateran. P. XVIII. c. 13.—In a decretal addressed to the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln, Alexander grants permission of marriage to a certain subdeacon, and forbids interference with such legitimate marriage, giving as a reason that the subdiaconate of the person referred to carried with it no preferment.—Ibid. c. 14.

² Post Concil. Lateran. P. VI. c. 9.

³ *Votum simplex impedit sponsalia de futuro, non autem dirimit matrimonium sequens; secus in voto solenni.*—Can. 6 Extra Lib. IV. Tit. VI.

Stephen of Tournay had already formulated the same rule—"Votum ergo castitatis solenne vel adnexum et impediunt matrimonium contrahendum et dirimunt contractum. . . . Privatum vero votum impedit quidem matrimonium contrahendum, sed non dirimit contractum."—*Ubi sup.*

The practical rule deduced by a shrewd lawyer in the latter half of the thirteenth century from this varying legislation is, "Note deus relles; que simple vou et sollempnié lie maeme quant à Dieu; et simple vou empêche à marier, mès il ne tost pas ce qui est fet; et note que vou, de la nature de soi, ne dépièce pas mariage, mès c'est de constitution d'yglise"—(Livres de Jostice et de Plet, Liv. x. chap. vi. § 6). This is likewise the conclusion reached by Thomas Aquinas, Summ. Theol. Supp. Quæst. LIII. Art. i. ii.

In the seventeenth century we find this legally explained by the application of the rule *beati possidentes*. "Per simplex vero votum promittit solummodo suum corpus ad continentiam Deo servandam, non autem tradit actualiter: et ideo si postea per matrimonium tradat actualem potestatem sui corporis uxori, valide tradit cum potior sit conditio possidentis." But in a solemn vow "actualiter a se transfert dominium sui corporis et tradit Deo et ideo non potest alteri illud tradere."—Marc. Paul. Leonis Praxis ad Litt. Maioris Pœnitentiarii, p. 50 (Mediolani, 1665).

efficiency and young men in their unbridled passions.¹ Alexander's efforts were particularly directed to put an end to the practice of hereditary priesthood, and its constant consequence, hereditary benefices. If I have made little allusion to this subject during the century under consideration, it is not that the Church had relaxed her exertions to place some limit on this apparently incurable disorder, or that the passive resistance to her efforts had been less successful than we have seen it on previous occasions. The perpetual injunctions of Alexander show at once the universality of the vice, and the determination of the pontiff to eradicate it. At the same time it became a frequent, and no doubt a profitable portion of the duties of the papal chancery, to grant special dispensations when those who held such preferment, or who desired to retain their wives, underwent the dangers and expense of a journey to Rome, and were rewarded for their confidence in the benignity of the Holy Father by a rescript to their bishops, commanding their reinstatement in the benefices from which they had been ejected.² The power to grant such dispensations was shrewdly reserved as the exclusive privilege of the papal court;³ and a high Churchman of the period assures us that there was no difficulty in obtaining them.⁴ It need not, therefore, surprise us that Alexander's successor, Lucius III., found the hereditary transmission of the priestly office claimed as an absolute right.⁵ And not

¹ *Alani ab Insulis Lib. Pœnitentialis.*

² *Post Concil. Lateran. P. XIX. c. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10.—Can. 10, 11, 12, 14, Extra Lib. I. Tit. xvii.*

³ *Can. 17, 18, Extra Lib. I. Tit. xvii.*

⁴ *Quia de talibus absque difficultate curia Romana dispensat, quia et de subdiaconibus quibusdam audivimus a domino Papa dispensatum.—Girald. Cambrens. Gemm. Eccles. Dist. II. cap. v.*

⁵ *Consuetudinem introductam quod filii eorum qui vestras ecclesias tenuerunt . . . patribus . . . consecuti, sub reprehensibili collusione volunt ipsas ecclesias jure successionis habere, etc.—Lucii. PP. III. Epist. 88.—Cf. Concil. Rotomag. ann. 1189 can. vi.*

only did the claims of the papal chancery thus interfere with the execution of the law by its power of granting dispensations, but its appellate jurisdiction was constantly used to avert punishment from the worst offenders. Thus Lucius III., about the year 1181, was obliged to grant to Maurice de Sully, Bishop of Paris, the right to dispossess of their benefices and functions, without appeal, certain notorious concubinarians, who, on being threatened with the application of the law, had defied him by interposing an appeal to Rome.¹ This centralisation of all power in the papal court, and the unblushing venality of the Roman officials, meet us in every age as the efficient obstacle to the efforts of reforming prelates throughout Europe.

The uncertainty of this conflicting legislation, at times enforced and at times dispensed with by the supreme power, led to innumerable complications and endless perplexity in private life. Indeed, a large portion of the canons are founded on responses given by the popes to settle cases of peculiar difficulty arising from ignorance or neglect of the discipline enjoined, and many of these reveal extreme hardship inflicted on those who could be convicted of no intentional guilt. Perhaps the most noteworthy instance of the troubles caused by the new regulations was that of Bossaert d'Avesnes, which resulted in a desperate war to determine the possession of the rich provinces of Flanders and Hainault. As it illustrates the doubts which still environed these particular points, and the conflicting decisions to which they were liable, even from the infallibility of successive popes, it may be worth briefly sketching here.

When Baldwin of Flanders, Emperor of Constantinople, died in 1206, his eldest daughter Jane succeeded to his territories of Flanders and Hainault, while his

¹ Chartular. Eccles. Parisiens. No. xx. T. I. p. 35.

second child, Margaret, was placed under the guardianship of Bossaert d'Avesnes. Bossaert was a relative of her mother, Mary of Champagne, and though he held the comparatively insignificant position of chantre of Tournay, he was yet a man of great repute and influence. With the assent and approbation of the estates of Flanders, Margaret and Bossaert were married, the issue of the union being three sons. Whether the fact of his having received the subdiaconate was publicly known or not is somewhat doubtful; but he seems at length to have been awakened to a sense of his uncertain position, when he went to Rome for the purpose of obtaining a dispensation and legitimating his children. Innocent III. not only refused the application, but commanded him to restore Margaret to her relatives and to do penance by a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Disregarding these injunctions, he lived openly with his wife after his return, and was excommunicated in consequence. At length Margaret left him and married Guillaume de Dampierre, while Bossaert was assassinated during a second visit to Rome, where he was seeking reconciliation to the Church. When at last, in 1244, the Countess Jane closed her long and weary career by assuming the veil at Marquette, without leaving heirs, the children of Margaret by both marriages claimed the succession, and Margaret favoured the younger, asserting, without scruple, that her elder sons were illegitimate, while the Emperor Frederick II. had no scruple in recognising the claim of the elder branch. The difficult question was referred to St. Louis for arbitration, and in 1247 the good king assigned Flanders to Gui de Dampierre and Hainault to Jean d'Avesnes, thus recognising both marriages as legitimate. This, of course, satisfied neither party. Innocent IV. was appealed to, and in 1248 he sent commissioners to investigate the

knotty affair. They reported that the marriage of Bossaert had been contracted in the face of all Flanders, and that the d'Avesnes were legitimate, which judgment was confirmed by Innocent himself in 1252. Thus fortified, Jean d'Avesnes resisted the proposed partition, and a bloody civil war arose. The victory of Vacheren placed the Dampierre in the hands of their half-brothers, and promised to be decisive, until Margaret called in Charles de Valois, bribing him with the offer of Hainault to complete the disinheriting of her first-born. The war continued until Louis, returning from the East in 1255, compelled the combatants to lay down their arms, and to abide by his arbitration.¹

In this case we see Innocent III. deciding that marriage was incompatible with the subdiaconate. Yet it is a striking illustration of the uncertainty which still surrounded the matter to find the same pope, in 1208, commanding a subdeacon of Laon to return to the wife whom he had abandoned on taking orders, and to treat her in all respects as a wife. Innocent is not to be suspected of any temporising concession to prevailing laxity, and yet in this case he overruled the uninterrupted tradition of the canons that married men taking orders should thenceforth treat their wives as sisters; and the doubts which experienced ecclesiastics entertained with regard to the law are visible in the fact that when the wife complained of her abandonment to the metropolitan authorities at Rheims they did not pretend to give judgment, but sent the testimony in the case at once to Innocent for his decision.²

Another curious case occurring about the same time illustrates the complexity of the questions which arose

¹ D'Oudegherst, *Annales de Flandre*, chap. CIII.—Baluz. et Mansi T. I.—Miræi *Diplom. Lib. I. c. 88.*—*Grandes Chroniques*, T. IV. pp. 339–42.—Innocent, PP. III. Regest. Append. ad Lib. XIV.

² Innocent, PP. III. Regest. XI. 204.

and the manner in which the selfishness of ascetic zeal sometimes eluded even the very slender barriers with which the Church limited its gratification. As we have seen, it was an ancient rule that no man could assume monastic vows without the assent of his wife, with the additional condition that she must at the same time enter a nunnery. It appears that a husband desiring to become a monk, and finding his wife obstinately opposed to his designs, enlisted the services of various priests to influence her, carefully concealing from her the obligation which her assent would impose upon her to take the veil. Still she obstinately refused, until at last he threatened to castrate himself, when she yielded and went through the ceremony of placing with her own hands his head on the altar. The wife thus abandoned took to evil courses, and the husband-monk applied in person to Innocent III. to learn whether he ought to remain in his order, seeing that his continence might be responsible for her unchastity. In spite of the deceit practised upon the wife, Innocent resolved his doubts in favour of the maintenance of his vows, giving as a reason that her adulteries deprived her of claim on him. At the same time, nothing was said as to compelling the woman to take the veil.¹ In 1244, we find Innocent IV. responding to the appeal of some wives, who had thus been abandoned, by granting to the Bishop of Lincoln to proceed against the husbands, who had embraced monastic life.² A more conspicuous illustration of the rule occurred when the Emperor Ludwig of Bavaria, in 1328, undertook to depose John XXII. as a heretic and replace him with a pope of his own. His choice fell upon Piero di Corbario, a Franciscan distinguished for piety and eloquence, who took the name of Nicholas V.

¹ Innocent. PP. III, Regest. XII. 13.

² Bliss, Calendar of Papal Registers, I. 209.

He had been in the Order for forty years, and had risen to the position of Minister of the province of the Abruzzi and papal Penitentiary. Before taking the vows, however, he had been married for five years; the wife was still living, and, though she had borne the separation uncomplainingly for so long a period, she now asserted that she had never assented to his desertion, either hoping to be bought off or instigated by the papalist party. She applied to her bishop, Giovanni of Rieti, who decided that the marriage had never been annulled, and that Piero must return to her.¹ He had a harder fate when he was carried to his triumphant rival in Avignon and confined until his death.

In view of these perplexities, it is no wonder that even the resolute spirit of Alexander III., dismayed at the arduous nature of the struggle, or appalled at the ineradicable vices which defied even papal authority, at times shrank from the contest and was ready to abandon the principle. If we may believe Giraldus Cambrensis, who, as a contemporary intimately connected with the highest ecclesiastical authorities in England, was not likely to be mistaken, and whose long sojourn at the court of Innocent III. would have afforded him ample opportunities of correcting a mis-statement, Alexander had once resolved to introduce the discipline of the Greek Church in Western Europe, permitting single marriages with virgins. To this he had obtained the assent of his whole court, except his chancellor Albert, who was afterwards pope under the name of Gregory VIII. The resistance of this dignitary was so powerful as to cause the abandonment of the project.² Alexander,

¹ Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, ann. 1328, n. 3, 8.

² Girald. Cambrensis, *Gemma Eccles. Dist. II. cap. vi.*

The "*Gemma*" was the favourite work of its author, who relates with pride the approbation specially bestowed upon it by Innocent III.

indeed, was not alone in this conviction. Giraldus himself was fully convinced that such a change would be most useful to the Church, though as archdeacon of St. David's he had displayed his zeal for the enforcement of the canon by measures too energetic for the degeneracy of the age, and though he occupies, in his "*Gemma Ecclesiastica*," twenty-one chapters with an exhortation to his clergy to abandon their evil courses.¹ Men of high character did not hesitate to take even stronger ground against the rule. The celebrated Peter Comestor, whose orthodoxy is unquestioned, taught publicly in his lectures that the devil had never inflicted so severe a blow on the Church as in procuring the adoption of celibacy.²

These were but individual opinions. The policy of the Church remained unaltered, and Alexander's successors emulated his example in endeavouring to enforce the canons. Clement III. took advantage of the profound impression which the capture of Jerusalem by Saladin (Oct. 1187) produced on all Europe, when the fall of the Latin kingdom was attributed to the sins of Christendom. He preached a general reformation. Abstinence from meat on Wednesdays and Saturdays for five years, and various other kinds of mortification, were enjoined on all, to propitiate a justly offended Deity, but the clergy were the objects of special reproof. Their extreme laxity of morals, their neglect of the dress of their order, their worldly ambition and

¹ Yet so hopeless was this well-intentioned attempt, that Giraldus is willing to let off his recalcitrant clergy with the simple restriction demanded of the laity—abstinence for three days previous to partaking of the communion. "*Qui igitur in immunditiæ veluti suo volutabro volvitur adhuc et versatur, hanc saltem altari sacro et sacrificiis reverentiam sacerdos exhibeat, ut vel tribus diebus et noctibus priusquam corpus Christi consecrare præsumat mundum . . . vas custodiat.*"—*Ibid.* cap. vi.

² Hoc autem magistrum Petrum Manducatorem in audientia totius scholæ suæ quæ tot et tantis viris literatissimis referta fuit dicentem audivi, quia nunquam hostis ille antiquus in aliquo articulo, adeo ecclesiam Dei circumvenit, sicut in voti illius emissionem.—*Ibid.* cap. vi.

pursuits, drinking, gambling, and flocking to tournaments, and the unclerical deportment which left little difference between them and the laity, were some of the accusations brought against them. To their incontinence, however, was chiefly attributed the wrath of God, besides the measureless scandals to which their conduct exposed the Church, and they were commanded to remove all suspected females from their houses within forty days, under pain of suspension from their functions and revenues.¹ That these rebukes were not the mere angry declamation of an ascetic is shown by the declaration of Cœlestin III., a few years later, that throughout Germany the custom still prevailed of fathers substituting in their benefices their sons, born during priesthood, so that frequently parent and offspring ministered together in the same church;² and the extent of the demoralisation is evident when we find the sons of priests and deacons alluded to as a class ineligible to knighthood in a constitution of Frederic Barbarossa in 1187.³ The regular clergy offered no exception to the general relaxation of discipline. In 1192 Odo, Bishop of Toul, felt himself forced to deplore the wickedness of monks who left their monasteries and publicly took to themselves wives, but he could devise no better means of arresting the scandal than excommunicating them and their growing families.⁴

Yet, with all his ardour, Clement admitted that celibacy was only a local rule of discipline, and that there was nothing really incompatible between marriage and the holy functions of the altar. The time had not

¹ Epist. Henr. Card. Albanens. (Ludewig, Rel. Msector. II. 441).

² Baluz. et Mansi III. 388.

³ De filiis quoque sacerdotum, diaconorum, rusticorum, statuimus, ne cingulum militare aliquatenus assumant; et qui jam assumpserunt, per judicem provincie a militia pellantur.—Feudor. Lib. v. Tit. x.—Conf. Conr. Urspergens. ann. 1187.

⁴ Statut. Synod. Odon. Tullens. cap. vi. (Hartzheim III. 456).

yet come when the Council of Trent could erect the inviolable continence of the priesthood into an article of faith, and Clement was willing to allow that priests of the Greek Church, under his jurisdiction, could legitimately be married and could celebrate mass while their families were increasing around them.¹

Innocent III., who, by the fortunate conjunction of the time in which he flourished with his own matchless force of character, enjoyed perhaps the culmination of papal power and prerogative, at length brought to the struggle an influence and a determination which could scarcely fail to prove decisive on any question capable of a favourable solution. By his decretals and his legates he laboured assiduously to enforce obedience to the canons, and when, in 1215, he summoned the whole Christian world to meet in the fourth Council of Lateran, that august assembly of about thirteen hundred prelates, acting under his impulsion, and reflecting his triumph over John of England and Otho of Germany, spoke with an authority which no former body since that of Nicæa had possessed. Its canons on the subject before us were simple, perhaps less violent in their tone than those of former synods, but they breathed the air of conscious strength, and there was no man that dared openly to gainsay them. A more rigid observance of the rules was enjoined, and any one officiating while suspended for contravention was punishable with perpetual degradation and deprivation of his emoluments. Yet the rule was admitted to be merely a local ordinance peculiar to the Latin Church, for, in the effort made by the council to heal the schism with Constantinople, the right of the East to permit the marriage of its priests was acknowledged by a clause visiting with severer penalties those

¹ Can. 7 extra Lib. v. Tit. xxxviii.

who by custom were allowed to marry, and who, notwithstanding this license, still permitted themselves illicit indulgences. The disgraceful traffic by which in some places prelates regularly sold permissions to sin was denounced in the strongest terms, as a vice equal in degree to that which it encouraged; and the common custom of fathers obtaining preferment in their own churches for their illegitimate offspring was reprobated as it deserved.¹

There is nothing novel in these canons, nor can they in strictness be said to constitute an epoch in the history of sacerdotal celibacy. They enunciate no new principles, they threaten no new punishments, yet are they noteworthy as marking the settled policy of the Church at a period when it had acquired that plenitude of power and vigour of organisation which insured at least an outward show of obedience to its commands. The successive labours of so long a series of pontiffs, during more than a century and a half, carrying with them the cumulative authority of Rome, had gradually broken down resistance, and the Lateran canons were the definitive expression of its discipline on this subject. Accordingly, though we shall see how little was accomplished in securing the purity of the priesthood, which was the

¹ Ne vero facilitas veniæ incentivum tribuat delinquendi: statuimus, ut qui deprehensi fuerint incontinentiæ vitio laborare, prout magis aut minus peccaverint, puniantur secundum canonicas sanctiones, quas efficacius et districtius præcipimus observari, ut quos divinus timor a malo non revocat, temporalis saltem pœna a peccato cohibeat.

Si quis igitur hac de causa suspensus, divina celebrare præsumperit, non solum ecclesiasticis beneficiis spoliatur, verum etiam pro hac duplici culpa, perpetuo deponatur.

Prælati vero qui tales præsumperint in suis iniquitatibus sustinere, maxime obtentu pecuniæ vel alterius commodi temporalis, pari subiaceant ultioni.

Qui autem secundum regionis suæ morem non abdicarunt copulam conjugalem, si lapsi fuerint, gravius puniantur, cum legitimo matrimonio possint uti.—Concil. Lateranens. IV. can. 14.

Ad abolendam pessimam, quæ in plerisque inolevit ecclesiis, corruptelam, firmiter prohibemus, ne canonicorum filii, maxime spurii, canonici fiant in sæcularibus ecclesiis, in quibus instituti sunt patres, etc.—Ibid. can. 31.

ostensible object of the rule, yet hereafter there are to be found few traces of marriage in holy orders, except in the distant countries to which reference has already been made.

Yet the readiness to relax the rule when a substantial advantage was to be gained still continued, and when the effort, commenced at the Council of Lyons in 1274, to reunite the Greek Church under the supremacy of the Holy See was apparently successful, Nicholas III. stoutly insisted upon the addition of "*filioque*" to the Symbol, but was discreetly silent as to separating the wives of priests from their husbands, promising in general terms that in all that merely concerned ritual observances the way should be made easy for them.¹

In Southern Italy, when the churches were actually brought together under the domination of Rome, priests of Greek origin were allowed to retain their wives, but married clerks of Latin parentage were not permitted to enter holy orders without separation. It not infrequently happened that the latter endeavoured to elude the prohibition by getting themselves ordained in the Greek Church, and it became necessary to denounce severe penalties not only against them, but against the prelates who permitted it.²

¹ See his instructions to his legates, cap. xi. (Martene Ampl. Collect. VII. 267-74).

² Concil. Melfitan. ann. 1284 c. iii. (Ibid. p. 284).

CHAPTER XXI

RESULTS

THE unrelaxing efforts of two centuries had at length achieved an inevitable triumph. One by one the different churches of Latin Christendom yielded to the fiat of the successor of St. Peter, and their ecclesiastics were forced to forgo the privilege of assuming the most sacred of earthly ties with the sanction of heaven and the approbation of man. Sacerdotalism vindicated its claim to exclusive obedience; the Church successfully asserted its right to command the entire life of its members, and to sunder all the bonds that might allure them to render a divided allegiance. In theory, at least, all who professed a religious life or assumed the sacred ministry were given up wholly to the awful service which they had undertaken: no selfishly personal aspirations could divert their energies from the aggrandisement of their class, nor were the temporal possessions of the establishment to be exposed to the minute but all-pervading dilapidation of the wife and family.

If these were the objects of the movement inaugurated by Damiani and Hildebrand, and followed up with such unrelenting vigour by Calixtus and Alexander and Innocent, the history of the mediæval Church attests how fully they were attained. It is somewhat instructive, indeed, to observe that in the rise of the papal power to its culmination under Innocent III. it was precisely the pontiffs most conspicuous for their enforcement of the rule of celibacy who were likewise most prominent in their assertion of the supremacy, temporal and spiritual,

of the head of the Roman Church. Whether or not they recognised and acknowledged the connection, they laboured as though the end in view was clearly appreciated, and their triumphs on the one field were sure to be followed by corresponding successes on the other.

Yet in all this the ostensible object was always represented to be the purity of the Church and its ministers. The other advantages were either systematically ignored or but casually alluded to. One warning voice, indeed, was raised, in a quarter where it would have at least commanded respectful attention, had not the Church appeared to imagine itself superior to the ordinary laws of cause and effect. While Innocent II. was labouring to enforce his new doctrine that ordination and religious vows were destructive of marriage, St. Bernard, the ascetic reformer of monachism and the foremost ecclesiastic of his day, was thundering against the revival of Manichæism. The heresies of the Albigenses respecting marriage were to be combated, and, in performing this duty, he pointed out with startling vigour the evils to the Church and to mankind of the attempt to enforce a purity incompatible with human nature. Deprive the Church of honourable marriage, he exclaimed, and you fill her with concubinage, incest, and all manner of nameless vice and uncleanness.¹ It was still an age of faith; and while earnest men like St. Bernard could readily anticipate the evils attendant upon the asceticism of heretics, they could yet persuade themselves, as the Council of Trent subsequently expressed it, that God would not deny the gift of chastity to those who rightly sought it in the bosom of the true Church—though St. Bernard himself confessed that crimes which he dared

¹ *Tolle de ecclesia honorabile connubium et torum immaculatum; nonne repleas eam concubinariis, incestuosis, seminifluis, mollibus, masculorum concubitoribus et omni denique genere immundorum?*—Bernardi Serm. lxvi. in Cantic. § 3.—This series is understood to have been written in 1135.

not even to name commonly followed after the fornication, adultery, and incest which specially characterised innumerable ministers of Christ.¹ It remains for us to see what was the success of the attempt thus deliberately to tempt the Lord.

It is somewhat significant that when, in France, the rule of celibacy was completely restored, strict Churchmen should have found it necessary also to revive the hideously suggestive restriction which denied to the priest the society of his mother or of his sister. Even in the profoundest barbarism of the tenth century, or the unbridled license of the eleventh; even when Damiani descanted upon the disorders of his contemporaries with all the cynicism of the most exalted asceticism, horrors such as these are not alluded to. It is reserved for the advancement of the thirteenth century and the enforcement of celibacy to show us how outraged human nature may revenge itself and protest against the shackles imposed by zealous sacerdotalism or unreasoning bigotry. In 1208 Cardinal Guala, Innocent's legate in France, issued an order in which he not only repeated the threadbare prohibitions respecting *focariæ* and concubines, but commanded that even mothers and other relatives should not be allowed to reside with men in holy orders, the devil being the convenient personage on whom, as usual, was thrown the responsibility of the scandals which were known to occur frequently under such circumstances.² That this decree was not allowed to pass into speedy oblivion is shown by a reference to it as still well known and in force a century later in the statutes of the Church of Tréguier.³ And that the necessity for it was not

¹ Bernardi Serm. de Conversione cap. xx.

² Constit. Gallonis cap. (Harduin. I. T. VI. P. II. p. 1975).—Giraldus Cambrensis, a few years earlier, makes the same assertion (Gemma. Eccles. Dist. II. cap. xv.).

³ Statut. Eccles. Trecorens. c. 32 (Martene Thesaur. IV. 1102). Cf. Synod. Andegavens. ann. 1312 cap. 1 (D'Achery I. 742).

evanescent may be assumed from its repetition in the regulations of the see of Nismes, the date of which is uncertain, but probably attributable to the close of the fourteenth century.¹ At the same time, we have evidence that Cardinal Guala's efforts were productive of little effect. Four years later, in 1212, we find Innocent formally authorising the prelates of France mercifully to pardon those who had been excommunicated under Guala's rules, with the suggestive proviso that the power thus conferred was not to be used for the purpose of extorting unhallowed gains.² Still more significant is the fact that in the same year Innocent commissioned another legate, Cardinal Robert de Curzon, to renew the endless task of purifying the Gallican Church. Guala's efforts would seem to have already passed into oblivion, for in a council which Cardinal Robert held in Paris, he gravely promulgated a canon forbidding the priesthood from keeping their concubines so openly as to give rise to scandal, and threatening the recalcitrants with excommunication if they should persist in retaining their improper consorts for forty days after receiving notice.³ This was as fruitless as all previous legislation had been. No matter what decrees were issued, they were neutralised by the facility of obtaining from the Holy See letters of absolution, whenever any too zealous prelate sought to enforce them. A Formulary of the papal Penitentiary, of about the middle of the century, shows, by the number of formulæ for such cases, how frequent were the applications, and their invariable success is indicated by the fact that no formulæ are given for refusing the favour. Even more significant is the endeavour of the peccant clerics to show that the woman was not a permanent

¹ Statut. Eccles. Nemausens. Tit. VII. c. 5 (Martene Thesaur. IV. 1044).

² Innocent. PP. III. Regest. Lib. xv. Epist. 113.

³ Concil. Parisiens. ann. 1212 can. 4 (Harduin. T. VI. P. II. p. 2001).

concubine; the prohibitions were construed as directed solely against durable connections, while sporadic or temporary licentiousness was evidently regarded as so much a matter of course, that it was worthy of no special reprehension.¹ In the next century we find the rehabilitation of the sinner still more facilitated by conceding it to the bishops, for Alvar Pelayo alludes to the number of letters which, as Penitentiary under John XXII., he issued to the prelates authorising them to grant dispensations to concubinary priests to enable them to perform their functions.² It was a simple matter of traffic, reduced to a system. That monachism was no less productive of sin in the depraved moral atmosphere of the age is rendered evident by other canons of the same council, which prohibit both monks and nuns from sleeping two in a bed, with the avowed object of repressing crimes against nature.³ It may well be asked what was the value of the continence aimed at in monastic vows when it resulted in the necessity for such regulations.

The clergy of France were not exceptional, and, unfortunately, there can be no denial of the fact that notorious and undisguised illicit unions, or still more debasing secret licentiousness, was a universal and pervading vice of the Church throughout Christendom. Its traces amid all the ecclesiastical legislation of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries are too broad and deep to be called into question, and if no evidence remained except the constant and unavailing efforts to repress it, that alone would be sufficient. National and local synods, pastoral epistles, statutes of churches, all the records of ecclesiastical discipline are full of it. Now deploring and now threatening, exhausting ingenuity in

¹ Formulary of the Papal Penitentiary in the thirteenth century, pp. 95-100 (Philadelphia, 1891).

² *De Planctu Ecclesiæ*, Lib. II. Art. vii. (Ed. 1517, fol. 101b).

³ *Ibid.* P. II. c. 21, P. III. c. 2 (Harduin. VI. II. 2009, 2011).

devising new regulations and more effective punishments, the prelates of those ages found themselves involved in a task as endless and as bootless as that of the Danaidæ. Occasionally, indeed, it is lost sight of momentarily, when the exactions and usurpations of the laity, or the gradual extension of secular jurisdiction, monopolised the attention of those who were bound to defend the privileges of their class; but, with these rare exceptions, it may be asserted as a general truth that scarcely a synod met, or a body of laws was drawn up to govern some local church, in which the subject did not receive a prominent position and careful consideration. It would be wearisome and unprofitable to recapitulate here the details of this fruitless iteration. Without by any means exhausting the almost limitless materials for investigation, I have collected a formidable mass of references upon the subject, but an examination of them shows so little of novelty, and so constant a recurrence to the starting-point, that no new principles can be evolved from them, and their only interest lies in their universality, and in demonstrating how resultless was the unceasing effort to remove the ineffaceable plague-spot.

Spasmodic efforts, it is true, occasionally wrought a temporary improvement, as when Alexander IV., in 1259, proclaimed to the world that licentious ecclesiastics were the cause of all the evils under which the Church was groaning, for through them the name of God was blasphemed throughout the world, the sacraments were polluted, the Catholic religion lost the reverence of the faithful, the people were deprived of the benefits of divine service, the substance of the Church was dissipated, the word of God was defiled by their impure lips, heretics were encouraged in their opposition, oppressors were emboldened to persecution, and the sacrilegious were able to expose the whole Church to mockery and con-

tempt. To alleviate these troubles, he not only ordered the prelates of Christendom to prosecute all offences of this nature with the utmost severity, but, recognising his own court as an obstacle to reform, he surrendered his appellate jurisdiction in such cases, and forbade all appeals to Rome.¹ His earnestness bore some fruit, and many prelates were stimulated to reform their flocks, causing large numbers of ecclesiastics to be expelled. A contemporary rhymster, Adam de la Halle (better known perhaps as Le Bossu d'Arras), thus alludes to the efforts of the bull:—

Et chascuns le pape encosa
Quant tant de bons clers desposa.—
—Romme a bien le tierche partie
Des clers fais sers et amatis.²

As in all similar attempts, however, the results were but transitory. Ferry, Bishop of Orleans, would scarce have been murdered, in 1299, by a knight whose daughter he had seduced, had the father felt that there was any chance of punishing the criminal by having the canons enforced against him.³

In the confessed nullity of penal legislation it was natural for the Church to have recourse to her supernatural armoury, and accordingly we have ample store of legends, framed with the hope of frightening by spiritual terrors those who were indurated to canon and decretal. The dead concubine of a priest was seen chased by infernal demons, and a knight who sought to protect her had a handful of hair left in his grasp by her mad terror; and the reality of the awful scene was verified on opening her tomb and finding her tresses deficient. So a nun who had yielded to temptation and had sought to conceal her

¹ Chron. Augustens. ann. 1260 (Freher. et Struv. I. 546-7).

² Michel, Théat. Franç. au Moyen Age, p. 23.

³ Guillel. de Nangis, ann. 1299.

frailty by murdering her child, dying unconfessed, was seen wandering hopelessly with a burning infant clasped to her bosom, which she proclaimed was to be her torment throughout eternity.¹ It is no wonder that the well-meant ingenuity which devised these tales met with slender reward, and that the threat of post-mortem punishment was as powerless as that of temporal penalties, for these tales were counterbalanced by other superstitions, such as that which taught that the most sinful, even among laymen, could obtain eternal salvation by the simple expedient of enveloping himself in a monastic habit on his death-bed. The Benedictines had well-authenticated cases in plenty where the most vicious of men, by adopting this plan, were rescued by St. Benedict himself from the hands of demons conducting them to eternal punishment, in spite of Satan's complaints that he was defrauded of his rights.² The Franciscans contended with the Benedictines as to the efficacy of their respective patrons, and related with pride that St. Francis visited purgatory every year and carried with him to heaven the souls of his followers—a general plan of salvation which gave his vestments a decided superiority over those of the older order. As the practice became more common, it was at times recognised as equally dangerous to the welfare of the faithful and to the revenues of the Church, and was condemned as a pernicious error,³ but this did not deter the Carmelites from producing their miraculous scapular and the Sabbatine Bull, which, after many vicissitudes, received the final stamp of papal approbation by Clement X. in 1673.⁴

So open and avowed was the shame of the Church

¹ Caesar. Heisterbach. Dial. Mirac. Dist. XII. c. xx. xxi.

² Chron. Casinens. Lib. III. cap. xxxix.

³ Concil. Hammaburg. ann. 1406 (Hartzheim VI. 2).

⁴ Clement. PP. X. Bull. *Commissa nobis* (Bullar. Roman. T. VI. Append. p. 45).

that the Neapolitan code, promulgated about 1231 by the enlightened Frederick II., absolutely interfered to give a quasi-legitimacy to the children of ecclesiastics, and removed, to a certain extent, their disability of inheritance. The imperial officials were ordered to assign appropriate shares in parental estates to such children, notwithstanding their illegitimacy, conditioned on the payment of an annual tax to the imperial court; and parents were not allowed to alienate their property to the prejudice of such children, any more than in cases of the offspring of lawful wedlock.¹ The numbers and influence of the class thus protected must indeed have been great to induce such interference in their favour.

We have already seen ecclesiastical authority for the assertion that in the Spanish Peninsula the children sprung from such illicit connections rivalled in numbers the offspring of the laity. That they were numerous elsewhere may be presumed when we see Innocent IV., in 1248, forced to grant to the province of Livonia the privilege of having them eligible to holy orders, except when born of parents involved in monastic vows,² for necessity alone could excuse so flagrant a departure from the canons enunciated during the preceding two centuries. A similar conclusion is deducible from the fact that, in the municipal code in force throughout Northern Germany during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, they were deemed of sufficient importance to be entitled to a separate place in the classification of *wer-gilds*, or blood-moneys; while the aim of the lawgiver to stigmatise them is manifested by his placing them below the peasant, deeming

¹ *Constit. Sicular. Lib. III. Tit. 25 c. 1.*

It is possible that Frederick's legislation may have attracted attention to the irregularities of the Neapolitan Church, for in 1230 Gregory IX. addressed an encyclical letter to the prelates of that kingdom "*præsertim super cohabitatione mulierum*;" and two years later he deemed it necessary to repeat his admonitions. —*Raynaldi Annal. ann. 1230, No. 20.*

² *Baluz. et Mansi, I. 211.*

them superior only to the juggler;¹ and that this was not a provision of transient force is clear from the commentary upon it in a body of law dating from the end of the fourteenth century.² Nor is the evidence less convincing which may be drawn from the use of the old German word *pfaffenkind*, or priest's son, which became generally used as equivalent to bastard.³ It would not, indeed, be difficult to understand the numbers of this class of the population if ecclesiastics in general followed the example of Henry III., Bishop of Liège, whose natural children amounted to no less than sixty-five.⁴

The direct encouragement thus given to illicit connections, by providing for the children sprung from them, neutralised one of the principal modes by which the Church endeavoured to suppress them. The innumerable canons issued during this period, forbidding and pronouncing null and void all testamentary provisions in favour of concubines and descendants, prove not only how much stress was laid upon this as an efficient means

¹ Specul. Saxon. Lib. III. art. 45.

² Richstich Landrecht, Lib. II. c. 25.

³ Michelet, Origines des Loix, p. 68. This popular phrase gives point to the story told by Henri Estienne of a German ambassador to Rome, to whom, on his farewell audience, the pope gave a message to his master, commencing, "Tell our well-beloved son." The honest Teuton could not contain himself at what he took to be a flagrant insult, and he interrupted the diplomatic courtesies with an angry exclamation that his noble master was not the son of a priest,—Apol. pour Herodote, Liv. I. chap. iii.

⁴ This admirable prelate, after enjoying the episcopate for twenty-seven years, was at length deposed in 1274 by Gregory X., at the Council of Lyons, in consequence of his excesses, "præsertim de deflorationibus virginum, stupris matronarum et incestibus monialium" (Chron. Cornel. Zanfiet, ann. 1272). For some details of his excesses, see the epistle addressed to him by Gregory X. in Hardouin, Concil. T. VII. p. 665. As Gregory had been archdeacon of Liège, he was probably familiar with the subject. Henry's promotion to the see of Liège was part of the policy of Innocent IV. in elevating William of Holland, his brother, to the imperial throne as a competitor to Frederic II. By special dispensation Henry had enjoyed the see for ten years before he was ordained to the priesthood, and after his degradation he infested the bishopric for twelve years, until his death, one of his exploits being the killing of his successor, John of Enghien.—Hist. Monast. S. Laurent. Leodiens. Lib. v. c. 69 (Martene Ampl. Collect. IV. 1105).

of repression, but also how little endeavour was made by the guilty parties to conceal their sin. As all testaments came within the sphere of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, it would seem that there should have been no difficulty in enforcing regulations of this kind, yet their constant repetition proves either that those who were intrusted with their execution were habitually remiss, or else that the popular feelings were in favour of the unfortunates, and interfered with the efficacy of the laws.

A single instance, out of many that might be cited, will illustrate this. In 1225 the Cardinal-legate Conrad held, at Mainz, a national council of the German empire, of which one of the canons declared that, in order to abolish the custom of ecclesiastics leaving to their concubines and children the fruits of their benefices, not only should such legacies be void, but those guilty of the attempt should lie unburied, all who endeavoured to enforce such testaments should be anathematised, and the Church where it was permitted should lie under an interdict as long as the wrong was permitted.¹ The terrible rigour of these provisions shows how deep seated was the evil aimed at; nor were they uncalled for when we see a will, executed in 1218 by no less a personage than Gotfrid, Archdeacon of Wurzburg, in which he leaves legacies to the children whom he confesses to have been born in sin, and of whom he expects his relatives to take charge.² Had any earnest attempt been made to enforce the canons of the Legate, they would have been amply sufficient to eradicate the evil; yet their utter inefficiency is demonstrated by the Council of Fritzlar in 1246, and that of Cologne in 1260. The former of these was held by the Archbishop of Mainz;

¹ Concil. German. ann. 1225 c. 5 (Hartzheim III. 521). This council was assembled to check the prevalent vices of concubinage and simony, and its elaborate provisions show how fruitless previous efforts had been.

² Gudeni Cod. Diplom. II. 36.—Not a few testaments of this kind are preserved,

it has no canons directed against concubinage, which was as public as ever, but it deplores the dilapidation of the temporalities of the Church by the testamentary provisions of priests in favour of their guilty partners and children, and it repeats, with additional emphasis, the regulations of 1255.¹ The latter renews the complaint that priests not only continue their evil courses throughout life, but are not ashamed, on their death-beds, to leave their children the patrimony of Christ; and another provision is equally significant in forbidding priests to be present at the marriages of their children, or that such marriages should be solemnised with pomp and ostentation.² The following year another council, held at Mainz, repeated the prohibition as to the diversion of Church property to the consorts and natural children of priests.³ In 1296 Boniface VIII. professed to be scandalised at the horrible abuse customary in the see of Utrecht, whereby priests joined themselves to their concubines and apporportioned the property of their Churches among their children;⁴ while in 1342 the Synod of Olmutz was obliged to renew the prohibitions regarding the solemnisation of their children's marriages.⁵ In 1416 the Synod of Breslau deplored that the old canons were forgotten and despised, and that priests were not ashamed to bequeath to their bastards accumulations of property which would form fit portions for lofty nobles.⁶ How thoroughly in

¹ Concil. Fritzlar. ann. 1246 can. xi. (Hartzheim III. 574).

² Concil. Coloniens. ann. 1260 c. 1.

³ Concil. Mogunt. ann. 1261 can. xxvii. xxxix. (Hartzheim III. 604, 607). The latter canon is very prolix and earnest, and inveighs strongly against the "culagium," or payment exacted by archdeacons and deans for permitting irregularities. The authorities apparently grew gradually tired of attempting the impossible. In 1284 the Council of Passau, in a series of long and elaborate canons, contented itself with a vague threat of prosecuting priests who publicly kept concubines, and with prohibiting them from ostentatiously celebrating the marriage of their children.—Concil. Patav. ann. 1284 can. ix. xxxi. (Ibid. pp. 675, 679).

⁴ Faucon et Thomas, *Registres de Boniface VIII.*, n. 1001.

⁵ Synod. Olomucens. ann. 1342 cap. viii. (Hartzheim IV. 338).

⁶ Synod. Wratislav. ann. 1416 § 1 (Hartzheim V. 153).

fact it was deemed a matter of course for the children of ecclesiastics to marry well and to have good dowries, is to be seen in Chaucer's description of the wife of "deinous Simekin," the proud miller of Trompington:—

"A wif he hadde, comen of noble kin;
The person of the toun hire father was.
With hire he yaf ful many a panne of bras,
For that Simkin shuld in his blood allie.
She was yfostered in a nonnerie." (The Reve's Tale.)

As time wore on, and the clergy, despite the innumerable admonitions and threats which were everywhere showered upon them, persisted in retaining their female companions, they appear, in some places, to have gradually assumed the privilege as a matter of right; and, what is even more remarkable, they seem to have had a certain measure of success in the assumption. In 1284 the Papal Legate, Gerard Bishop of Sabina, at the Council of Amalfi, renewed and strengthened the decretals of Alexander III. respecting the concubinary priests of the Neapolitan provinces, ordering the ejection of all who should not separate from their partners within a month, suspending all prelates who should neglect to enforce the rule, and fining heavily those who, as in so many other places, made the frailties of their subordinates a source of filthy gain.¹ The severity of these provisions was as unsuccessful as usual, and at length the secular power endeavoured to come to the assistance of the ecclesiastical authorities. The pious Charles the Lame of Naples, whose close alliance with Rome rendered him eager in everything that would gratify the head of the Church, about the year 1300 imposed a heavy fine on the concubines of priests if they persisted in their sin for a year after excommunication. This law, like so many similar ones, soon fell into desuetude, but in

¹ Concil. Melfitan, ann. 1284 c. v. (Martene Ampl. Coll. VII. 285-6).

1317, under his son Robert the Good, the justiciary of the Principato Citra undertook to put it into execution. In the diocese of Marsico the clergy openly resisted these proceedings, boldly laid their complaints before the king, and were so energetic that Robert was obliged to issue an ordinance directing the discontinuance of all processes before the lay tribunals, and granting that the concubines should be left to the care of the ecclesiastical courts alone. These women thus, by reason of their sinful courses, came to be invested with a quasi-ecclesiastical character, and to enjoy the dearly prized immunities attached to that position, at a time when the Church was vigorously striving to uphold and extend the privileges which the civil lawyers were systematically labouring to undermine. Nor was the pretension thus advanced suffered to lapse. Towards the close of the same century, Carlo Malatesta of Rimini applied to Ancarono, a celebrated doctor of canon and civil law ("juris canonici speculum et civilis anchora"), to know whether he could impose penalties on the concubines of priests, and the learned jurist replied decidedly in the negative; while other legal authorities have not hesitated to state that such women are fully entitled to immunity from secular jurisdiction, as belonging to the families of clerks—*de familia clericorum*.¹ When a premium was thus offered for sin, and the mistresses of priests—like the *mâîtresses-en-titre* of the Bourbons—acquired a certain honourable position among their fellows from the mere fact of their ministering to the lust of their pastors, it is not to be wondered at if such connections multiplied and flourished, and if the humble laity came to regard them as an established institution.

¹ Giannone, *Apologia*, cap. XIV.—Ancarono gave his name to one of the most celebrated colleges of law in Bologna.—Bruni *Vita Gabrielis Palæoti*, c. 4 (Martene *Ampl. Coll.* VI. 1390).

Robert of Naples was not the only potentate who found an organised resistance to his well-meant endeavours to restore discipline. When, in 1410, the stout William, Bishop-elect of Paderborn, had triumphed with fire and sword over his powerful foes, the Archbishop of Cologne and the Count of Cleves, he turned his energies to the reformation of the dissolute morals of his monks. They positively refused to submit to the ejection of their women from the monasteries, and he at length found the task too impracticable even for his warlike temper. For seven long years the quarrel lasted, legal proceedings being varied by attempts at poison on the one side, and reckless devastations by the episcopal troops on the other, until the prelate, worn out by the stubbornness of his flock, was obliged to give way.¹

Equal success waited on the resistance of the Swiss clergy when, in 1230, the civil authorities of Zurich sacrilegiously ordered them to dismiss their women. They resolutely replied that they were flesh and blood, unequal to the task of living like angels, and unable to attend to the kitchen and other household duties. The townsmen entered into a league against them, and succeeded in driving away some of the sacerdotal consorts,

¹ *Gobelinæ Personæ Cosmodrom. Ætat. VI. c. 92, 93.*—How utterly monastic discipline was neglected in Germany is shown by the fact that a century earlier, in 1307, a Council of Cologne found it necessary to denounce the frequency with which nuns were seduced, left their convents, lived in open and public profligacy, and then returned unblushingly to their establishments, where they seem to have been received as a matter of course.—*Concil. Colon. ann. 1307 c. xvii. (Hartzheim IV. 113).* That this had little effect is proved by a repetition of the threats of punishment, three years later (*Concil. Colon. ann. 1310 c. ix.; Hartzheim IV. 122*). In 1347, John van Arckel, Bishop of Utrecht, was obliged to prohibit men from having access to the nunneries of his diocese, in order to put an end to the scandals which were apparently frequent (*Hartzheim IV. 350*). In 1350 the Emperor Charles IV. felt called upon to address an earnest remonstrance to the Archbishop of Mainz concerning the unclerical habits of his canons and clergy who spent the revenues of the Church in jousts and tournaments, and who, in dress, arms, and mode of life, were not to be distinguished from laymen (*Ibid. IV. 358*). How little was effected by these efforts is manifest when, in 1360, William, Archbishop of Cologne, was obliged to refute the assertions of those monks and nuns who alleged in their defence that custom allowed them to leave their convents and contract marriage (*Ibid. IV. 493*).

when the Bishop of Constance and his chapter, allowing perhaps the pride of the churchman to get the better of ascetic zeal, interfered with a threat of excommunication on all who should presume to intervene in a matter which related specially to the Church. He absolved the leaguers from the oaths with which they were mutually bound, and thus restored security to the priestly households. About the same time Gregory IX. appointed a certain Boniface to the see of Lausanne. On his installation, the new bishop commenced with ardour to enforce the canons, but the clergy conspired against his life, and were so nearly successful that he incontinently fled, and never ventured to return.¹

If the irregular though permanent connections which everywhere prevailed had been the only result of the prohibition of marriage, there might perhaps have been little practical evil flowing from it, except to the Church itself and to its guilty members. When the desires of man, however, are once tempted to seek through unlawful means the relief denied to them by artificial rules, it is not easy to set bounds to the unbridled passions which, irritated by the fruitless effort at repression, are no longer restrained by a law which has been broken or a conscience which has lost its power. The records of the Middle Ages are accordingly full of the evidences that indiscriminate license of the worst kind prevailed throughout every rank of the hierarchy.

Even supposing that this fearful immorality were not attributable to the immutable laws of nature revenging themselves for their attempted violation, it could readily be explained by the example set by the central head. Scarcely had the efforts of Nicholas and Gregory put an end to sacerdotal marriage in Rome when the morals of the Roman clergy became a dis-

¹ Henke, *Append. ad Calixt.* pp. 585-6.

grace to Christendom. How little the results of the reform corresponded with the hopes of the zealous puritans who had brought it about may be gathered from the martyrdom of a certain Arnolfo, who, under the pontificate of Honorius II., preached vehemently against the scandals and immorality of the ecclesiastics of the apostolic city. They succeeded in making away with him, notwithstanding the protection of Honorius, and the veneration of the nobles and people who regarded him as a prophet.¹ When such was the condition of clerical virtue, we can scarcely wonder that sufficient suffrages were given in 1130 by the sacred college to Cardinal Pier-Leone to afford him a plausible claim to the papacy, although he was notoriously stained with the foulest crimes. Apparently his children by his sister Tropea, and his carrying about with him a concubine when travelling in the capacity of papal legate, had not proved a bar to his elevation in the Church, nor to his employment in the most conspicuous and important affairs.² A severer satire on the standard of ecclesiastical morality could scarcely be imagined than the inculcation by such a man, in his capacity as pope, of the canons requiring the separation of priests from their wives, on the plea of the spotless purity required for the service of the altar.³

What were the influences of the papal court in the next century may be gathered from the speech which Cardinal Hugo made to the Lyonese, on the occasion of the departure of Innocent IV. in 1251 from their city, after a residence of eight years—"Friends, since our arrival here, we have done much for your city. When we came, we found here three or four brothels.

¹ Trithem. Chron. Hirsau. ann. 1128.—Platina sub Honor. II.

² Arnulphi Lexoviens. de Schismate cap. iii. (D'Achery I. 156).

³ Anacleti Antipapæ Epist. x. (Martene Ampliss. Collect. I. 702).

We leave behind us but one. We must own, however, that it extends without interruption from the eastern to the western gate"—the crude cynicism of which greatly disconcerted the Lyonesse ladies present.¹ Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, therefore only reflected the popular conviction when, on his deathbed in 1253, inveighing against the corruption of the papal court, he applied to it the lines—

*Ejus avaritiæ totus non sufficit orbis,
Ejus luxuriæ meretrix non sufficit omnis.*²

A hundred years later saw the popes again in France. For forty years they had bestowed on Avignon all the benefits, moral and spiritual, arising from the presence of the Vicegerent of Christ, when Petrarch recorded, for the benefit of friends whom he feared to compromise by naming, the impressions produced by his long residence there in the household of a leading dignitary of the Church. Language seems too weak to express his abhorrence of that third Babylon, that Hell upon Earth, which could furnish no Noah, no Deucalion to survive the deluge that alone could cleanse its filth—and yet he intimates that fear compels him to restrain the full expression of his feelings. Chastity was a reproach and licentiousness a virtue. The aged prelates surpassed their younger brethren in wickedness as in years, apparently considering that age conferred upon them the license to do that from which even youthful libertines shrank; while the vilest crimes were the pastimes of

¹ Matt. Paris, ann. 1251.

² Matt. Paris, Hist. Angl. ann. 1253.—The same author preserves a legend that when Innocent IV. heard of the death of Grosseteste, he ordered a letter to be prepared commanding Henry III. to dig up and cast out the remains of the bishop. The following night, however, Grosseteste appeared in his episcopal robes, and with his crozier inflicted a severe castigation on the vengeful pope, who thereupon abandoned his unchristian purpose.—Ibid. ann. 1254.

pontifical ease.¹ Juvenal and Brantôme can suggest nothing more shameless or more foul. Nor was the tone of morality heightened when, fifty years later, Nicholas de Clamenges takes up the tale. His brief reference to the adulteries and vileness with which the cardinals befouled the papal court, and the obscenities in which their families imitated their example, shows that the matter was so generally understood that it needed no details.¹

The Great Schism perhaps could scarcely be expected to improve the morals of the papal court. Yet when the Church universal, to close that weary quarrel, agreed to receive one of the competitors as its head, surely it might have selected, as the visible representative of God upon earth, some more worthy embodiment of humanity than Balthazar Cossa, who, as John XXIII., is alone, of the three competitors, recognised in the list of popes. When the great Council of Constance in 1415 adopted the awful expedient of trying, condemning, and deposing a pope, the catalogue of crimes—notorious incest, adultery, defilement, homicide, and atheism—of which the fathers formally accused him, and which he

¹ Portions of Petrarch's descriptions are unfit for transcription; the following, however, will give a sufficient idea of his experience. "*Veritas ibi dementia est, abstinencia vero rusticitas, pudicitia probrum ingens. Denique peccandi licentia magnanimitas et libertas eximia, et quo pullior eo clarior vita, quo plus scelerum eo plus gloriæ, bonum nomen cæno vilius, atque ultima mercium fama est. . . . Taceo utriusque pestis artifices, et concursantes pontificum thalamis proxonætas . . . Quis, oro, enim non irascatur et rideat, illos senes pueros coma candida, togis amplissimis, adeoque lascivientibus animis ut nihil illuc falsius videatur quam quod ait Maro 'Frigidus in Venerem senior.' Tam calidi tamque præcipites in Venerem senes sunt, tanta eos ætatis et status et virium capit oblivio, sic in libidines inardescunt, sic in omne ruunt dedecus, quasi omnis eorum gloria non in cruce Christi sit, sed in commensationibus et ebrietatibus, et quæ has sequuntur in cubilibus, impudiciis: . . . atque hoc unum senectutis ultimæ lucrum putant, ea facere quæ juvenes non auderent . . . Mitto stupra, raptus, incestus, adulteria qui jam pontificalis lasciviæ ludi sunt," etc. (Lib. sine Titulo, Epist. xvi.).*

In his VII. Eclogue Petrarch describes the cardinals individually. Their portraits, though metaphorically drawn, correspond with the general character of the above extracts. See also the Lib. sine Titulo, Epist. vii. viii. ix.

² Nic. de Clamengiis de Ruina Ecclesiæ, cap. xvii.—Cf. Theod. a Niem Nemor. Union. Tract. VI. cap. xxxvi. xxxvii.

confessed without defending himself,¹ is fearfully suggestive of the corruption which could not only spawn such a monster, but could elevate him to the highest place in the hierarchy, and present him for the veneration of Christendom. It affords a curious insight into the notions of morality prevalent in the papal court to observe that when he had as chamberlain of Boniface IX. scandalised Rome by openly keeping his brother's wife as a concubine, the remedy adopted for the disorder was to create him Cardinal and send him as legate to Bologna, while the lady was conveyed to her husband in Naples. The result of this course of procedure was that during his sway at Bologna two hundred maids, matrons, and widows, including a few nuns, fell victims to his brutal lust.² So obtuse, in fact, were the sensibilities of the age that after his release from the prison to which he had been consigned by the fathers of Constance, his successor, Martin V., consoled him in his degradation by creating him Dean of the Sacred College.

If the Councils of Constance and of Bâle worked some apparent reform in the outward morality of the papacy their effect soon passed away. The latter half of the fifteenth century scarcely saw a supreme pontiff without the visible evidences of human frailty around him, the unblushing acknowledgment of which is the

¹ Quod dominus Johannes papa cum uxore fratris sui et cum sanctis monialibus incestum, cum virginibus stuprum, et cum conjugatis adulterium et alia incontinentiæ crimina, propter quæ ira Dei descendit in filios diffidentiae commisit. . . . Item quod dictus dominus Johannes papa fuit et sit homo peccator, notorie criminosis de homicidio, veneficio, et aliis gravibus criminibus quibus irretitus dicitur graver diffamatus, dissipator bonorum ecclesiæ et dilapidator eorundem, notorius simoniacus, pertinax hæreticus et ecclesiam Christi notorie scandalizans. Item quod dictus Johannes Papa XXIII. sæpe et sæpius coram diversis prælatis et aliis honestis et probis viris pertinaciter, diabolo suadente, dixit, asseruit, dogmatizavit et adstruxit, vitam æternam non esse, neque aliam post hanc, etc.—Concil. Constantiens. Sess. XI.

Even supposing some of those special charges to have been manufactured for the purpose of effecting the desirable political object of getting rid of the objectionable pontiff, yet the profound conviction of his vileness, evinced by the proffering of such accusations, is almost equally damaging.

² Theod. a Niem de Vit. Joann. XXIII.

fittest commentary on the tone of clerical morality. Sixtus IV. was believed to embody the utmost possible concentration of human wickedness,¹ until Borgia came to divide with him the pre-eminence of evil. The success of Innocent VIII. in increasing the population of Rome was a favourite topic with the wits of the day;² but the epitaph which declared that filth, gluttony, avarice, and sloth lay buried in his tomb³ did not anticipate the immediate resurrection of the worst of those vices in the person of his successor, Alexander VI. If the crimes of Borgia were foul, their number and historical importance have rendered them so well known that I may be spared more than a passing allusion to a career which has made his name a byword.⁴ It was reserved for

- ¹ Leno vorax, pathicus, meretrix, delator, adulter,
Si Romam veniet, illico, cretus erit.
Pædico insignis, prædo furiosus, adulter,
Exitumque Urbis, perniciesque Dei,
Gaude prisce Nero, superat te crimine Sixtus,
Hic scelus omne simul clauditur et vitium.

Steph. Infessuræ Diar. Rom. ann. 1484 (Eccard. Corp. Hist. II. 1941).

- ² Innocuo priscos æquam est debere Quirites.
Progenie exhaustam restituit patriam.
(Sannazarii Epigram. Lib. I.)

- ³ Spurcities, gula, avaritia, atque ignavia deses,
Hoc, Octave, jacent quo tegeris tumulo.
(Marulli Epigram. Lib. IV.)

⁴ Sannazaro, as was meet in a Neapolitan, hated Alexander cordially, and was never weary of assailing his wickedness. The relations between him and his daughter Lucretia were a favourite topic—

- Ergo te semper cupiet Lucretia Sextus?
O fatum diri nominis! hic pater est?
(Sannazar. Epigr. Lib. II.)

Humana jura, nec minus cœlestia,
Ipsosque sustulit Deos:
Ut silicet liceret (heu scelus) patri
Natæ sinum permingere,
Nec execrandis abstinere nuptiis
Timore sublato simul.

(Ibid.)

The well-known epigram of Pontanus tersely describes another of his vices—

Vendit Alexander sacramenta, altaria, Christum.
Emerat ille prius, vendere jure potest.

See Burchard's Diary, III. 167, for the description of a banquet in the papal palace, 31st Oct. 1501, at which Alexander was present with his children, Cæsar and

Cesare Cantù to find in the criminal ambition of his son Cæsare Borgia an argument in favour of the celibacy which relieved the world from a succession of papal offspring.¹ Bishop Burchard, Alexander's master of ceremonies, naïvely remarks that he followed and improved on the example set by Innocent of giving daughters in marriage, so that all the clergy diligently set to work to get children, and, from the lowest to the highest, they publicly kept concubines with all the appearance of marriage. He adds that unless God interferes this custom will spread to the monks, although already nearly all the convents in Rome are brothels, without any one taking exception to it.²

Such men as Alexander can hardly be deemed exceptional, save inasmuch as brilliant talents and native force of character might enable them to excel their contemporaries in guilt as in ambition. They were the natural product of a system which for four centuries had bent the unremitting energies of the Church to securing temporal power and wealth, with exemption from the duties and liabilities of the citizen. Such were the fruits of the successful theocracy of Hildebrand, which, intrusting irresponsible authority to fallible humanity, came to regard ecclesiastical aggrandisement as a full atonement for all and every crime. That the infection had spread even to the ultimate fibres of the establishment can readily be believed, for the supremacy of the papal authority gave it the power of controlling

Lucretia. The details are too foul for transcription, even in Burchard's Latin. The matter of fact way in which the honest bishop records it, without a word of surprise or reproof, throws a flood of light on the manners and morals of the holy city.

¹ Cantù, *Eretici d'Italia*, I. 222.

² Burchardi *Diarium* II. 79 (Ed. Thuasne).

Pope Alexander VI. was the father of nine children whose names are known. Two of his mistresses were married women, viz. Vannozza Catanei and Giulia Bella Farnese. The latter was a sister of Cardinal Alexander Farnese, who was afterwards Pope Paul III. Pope Innocent VIII. was credited with sixteen illegitimate children.

the character of every parish in Christendom. We shall see hereafter, as we have already seen, how that power was habitually abused, and how the nullification of the canons was a recognised source of income to the successor of St. Peter and his needy officials. The evil was one that had long been recognised and complained of since Hincmar of Rheims so emphatically denounced it. St. Bernard declared that Rome was the acknowledged refuge of all ambitious and licentious men who desired either promotion or to retain the preferment which they had forfeited.¹ In the fiery zeal with which he warns his protégé, Eugenius III., not to be deceived by such suitors, he shows us how useless were local efforts at reformation when they could be so readily set aside and rendered nugatory by the venal influences at work in the apostolic court. But the abuse was too profitable to be suppressed, and it continued until after the Reformation had shown the necessity of some decent reticence in the exercise of powers no longer regarded as wholly irresponsible.

My object has been to consider the subject of ascetic celibacy as a portion simply of ecclesiastical history, and yet I cannot well conclude this section without a hasty glance at its influence on society at large. That influence, as far as the secular clergy were its instruments, was evidently one of almost unmixed evil. The parish priest, if honestly ascetic, was thereby deprived of the wholesome common bond of human affections and sympathies, and was rendered less efficient for good in consoling the sorrows and aiding the struggles of his flock.

¹ In comparing the labours of the pope with those of St. Paul, St. Bernard exclaims, "Numquid ad eum de toto orbe confluxant ambitiosi, avari, simoniaci, sacrilegi, concubinari, incestuosi, et quæque istiusmodi monstra hominum, ut ipsius apostolica auctoritate vel obtinerent ecclesiasticos honores, vel retinerent?" —De Consideratione Lib. I. c. iv.

If, on the other hand, he was a hypocrite, or if he had found too late that the burden he had assumed was too heavy for his strength, the denial of the natural institution of marriage was the source of immeasurable corruption to those intrusted to his charge, who looked up to him not only as a spiritual director, but as a superior being who could absolve them from sin, and whose partnership in guilt was in itself an absolution.¹ That such was the condition of innumerable parishes throughout Europe there is unfortunately no reason to doubt, and all of the severer churchmen of the period, in attacking the vices of the clergy, give us to understand that either their example led the laity into evil, or that their immorality rendered it impossible for them to correct the vices of the flocks. As Cæsarius of Heisterbach says, "Since the priesthood mostly lead evil and incontinent lives, they soothe rather than stimulate the consciences of the worldly."² The incongruity of this may perhaps explain to some extent the anomaly of the practical grossness of the Middle Ages, combined with the theoretical ascetic purity which was held out as the duty of every Christian who desired to be acceptable to his Creator.

The curious contrasts and confusion of the standard of morality, arising from this striving against nature, are well illustrated by a homily of the thirteenth century against marriage, addressed to youthful nuns, which exhausts all the arguments that the ingenuity of the writer could suggest. On the one hand he appeals to the pride which could be so well gratified by the exalted state of virginity; he pictures the superior bliss vouchsafed in heaven to those who were stained by no earthly contamination, confidently promising them a higher rank

¹ According to St. Bonaventura, this scandalous doctrine was frequently taught.
—Libell. Apologet. Quæst. I,

² Dial Mirac. Dist. XII. c. xix.

and more direct communing with the Father than would be bestowed on the married and the widowed; he rapturously dwells upon the inward peace, the holy ecstasy which are the portion of those who, wedded to Christ, keep pure their mystic marriage vow; and his ascetic fervour exhausts itself in depicting the spiritual delights of a life of religious seclusion. Mingled inextricably with these exalted visions of beatific mysticism, he presents in startling contrasts the retribution awaiting the sin of licentiousness and the evils inseparable from a life of domestic marriage. With a crude nastiness that is almost inconceivable, he minutely describes all the discomforts and suffering, physical and mental, attendant upon wifehood and maternity, entering into every detail and gloating over every revolting circumstance that his prurient imagination can suggest. The license of Shakespeare, the plain speaking of Chaucer, Boccaccio, and the mediæval trouvères show us what our ancestors were, and what they were is easily explained when such a medley of mysticism and grossness could be poured into the pure ears of innocent young girls by their spiritual director.¹

Thus, with the fearful immorality of which we have

¹ Hali Meidenhad. (Early English Text Society, 1866.) The author at times trenches closely on Manichæism. It is true that he revives, with some variation, the ancient computation of the relative merits of the various conditions of life—"For wedlock has its fruit thirtyfold in heaven, widowhood sixtyfold; maidenhood with a hundredfold overpasses both" (p. 22); but while he thus faintly disavows an intention to revile marriage, he again and again alludes to it as wicked and impure *per se*. "Well were it for them, were they on the day of their bridal borne to be buried. . . . If thou askest why God created such a thing to be, I answer thee: God created it never such; but Adam and Eve turned it to be such by their sin, and marred our nature" (p. 8).

Virginity he asserts to be the highest attribute of humanity, and in heaven virgins are the equals of angels and the superiors of saints.—"Maidenhood is a grace granted thee from heaven. . . . 'Tis a virtue above all virtues, and to Christ the most acceptable of all" (p. 10). "To sing that sweet song and that heavenly music which no saints may sing, but maidens only in heaven. . . . But the maiden's song is altogether unlike these, being common to them with angels. Music beyond all music in heaven. In their circle is God himself; and his dear mother, the

seen such ample evidence, the Church still presented the same exaggerated asceticism as her guiding principle. The rhapsodies of St. John Chrysostom and St. Aldhelm were rivalled in an age when the priest was forbidden to live in the same house as his mother, because experience had shown the danger of such propinquity. How the estimate placed on purity increased as virtue diminished is fairly illustrated in a characteristic legend which was very popular with ecclesiastical teachers in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It relates how a pagan entering a heathen temple saw Satan seated in state on a throne. One of the princes of Hell entered, worshipped his master, and proceeded to give an account of his work. For thirty days he had been engaged in provoking a war, wherein many battles had been fought with heavy slaughter. Satan sharply reproached him with accomplishing so little in the time, and ordered him to be severely punished. Another then approached the throne and reported that he had devoted twenty days to raising tempests at sea, whereby navies had been wrecked and multitudes drowned. He was likewise reprov'd and punished for wasting his time. A third had for ten days been engaged in troubling the wedding festivity of a city, causing strife and murder, and he was similarly treated. A fourth then entered and recounted how for forty years he had been occupied

precious maiden, is hidden in that blessed company of gleaming maidens, nor may any but they dance and sing" (pp. 18-20).

As for matrimony and maternity, nothing can redeem them in the eyes of the ascetic.—"All other sins are nothing but sins, but this is a sin and besides denaturalises thee and dishonoureth thy body. It soileth thy soul and maketh it guilty before God, and, moreover, defileth thy flesh. . . . Now what joy hath the mother? She hath from the misshapen child sad care and shame, both, and for the thriving one fear, till she lose it for good, though it would never have been in being for the love of God, nor for the hope of heaven, nor for the dread of hell" (p. 34).—But I dare not follow him in his more nauseous flights of imagination.

This is by no means a solitary example. The same pious obscenity is to be found, for instance, in some of Abelard's theological speculations addressed to Heloise and her nuns, as in his solution of her 42nd problem.

in tempting a hermit to yield to fleshly desire, and how he had that night succeeded. Then Satan arose and placed his crown on the head of the new-comer, seating him on the throne as one who had worthily achieved a signal triumph. The spectator, thus seeing the high estimate placed by the Evil One on ascetic chastity, was immediately converted, and forthwith became a monk.¹

While thus attaching so fanciful a holiness to virginity, the Church came practically to erect a most singular standard of morality, the influence of which could but be most deplorable on the mass of the laity. In the earlier days of celibacy, the rule was regarded by the severer ecclesiastics as simply an expression of the necessity of purity in the minister of God. Theophilus of Alexandria, in the fifth century, decided that a man, who as lector had been punished for unchastity and had subsequently risen to the priesthood, must be expelled on account of his previous sin.² We have seen, however, how, when celibacy was revived under Damiani and Hildebrand, the question of immorality virtually disappeared, and the essential point became, not that a priest should be chaste, but that he should be unmarried, and this was finally adopted as the recognised law of the Church. In 1213 the Archbishop of Lunden inquired of Innocent III. whether a man who had had two concubines was ineligible to orders as a *digamus*, and the pontiff could only reply that no

¹ Ayenbite of Inwyrt, p. 328 (Early English Text Soc. 1866). This is a translation made in 1340 of "Le Somme des Vices et des Vertues," written in 1279 for Philippe-le-Hardi, by Laurentius Gallus. The author is not a whit behind his brother ascetics in extolling the praises of virginity.—"Vor maydenhod is a tresor of zuo grat worth thet hit ne may by be nonen y-zet a pris . . . vor maidenhod aboue alle othre states berth thet gretteste frut" (Ibid. p. 233-4). The legend would seem to be suggested by a somewhat similar story narrated by Gregory the Great (Dialog. Lib. III. cap. 7), and is also related by Alvar Pelayo (De Planctu Ecclesiæ, Lib. II. art. vii).

² Theophili Alexandrin. Commonitor. can. v. (Harduin. I. 1198).

matter how many concubines a man might have, either at one time or in succession, he did not incur the disability of digamy.¹ When such was the result of seven centuries of assiduous sacerdotalism in a Church which was daily growing in authority; when the people thus saw that sexual excesses were no bar to ecclesiastical preferment in that Church which made extravagant pretensions to purity; when the strict rules which forbade ordination to a layman who had married a widow, were relaxed in favour of those who were stained with notorious impurity, it is no wonder that the popular perceptions of morality became blunted, and that the laity did not deny themselves the indulgences which they saw tacitly allowed to their spiritual guides.

Nor was it only in stimulating this general laxity of principle that the influence of the Church was disastrous. The personal evil wrought by a dissolute priesthood was a wide-spreading contagion. The abuse of the awful authority given by the altar and the confessional, was a subject of sorrowful and indignant denunciation in too many synods for a reasonable doubt to be entertained of its frequency or of the corruption which it spread through innumerable parishes and nunneries.² The almost entire practical immunity with which these and

¹ Innocent. III. Regest. Lib. xvi. Epist. 118.

The curiously artificial standard of morals thus created may be estimated from the case of the Archdeacon of Lisieux, who refused to accept an election to the see of that place on account of his inability to maintain the purity requisite for the episcopal office. Vanquished at length by the importunity of his friends, he was consecrated, and resolutely undertook to abandon his evil habits. The unaccustomed privation brought on a fearful disease, but though assured that his life would prove a sacrifice if he persisted in his resolution, he resisted all entreaties, and refused to purchase existence by sullyng his position. He thus fell a martyr to a tenderness of conscience which had not prevented him from indulgence while filling the responsible position of archdeacon.—Girald. Cambrens. Gemm. Eccles. Dist. II. cap. xi.

² Graviore autem sunt animadversione plectendi, qui proprias filias spirituales, quas baptizaverint vel semel ad confessionem admiserint, violaverint.—Constit. Synod. Gilb. Episc. Circestrans. ann. 1289 (Wilkins II. 169). Cf. Synod. Ceno-manens. ann. 1248 (Martene Ampl. Coll. VII. 1375). Concil. Remens. ann. 1408

similar scandals were perpetrated led to an undisguised and cynical profligacy which the severer Churchmen acknowledged to exercise a most deleterious influence on the morals of the laity, who thus saw the exemplars of evil in those who should have been their patterns of virtue.¹ In his bull of 1259, Alexander IV. does not hesitate to declare that the people, instead of being reformed, are absolutely corrupted by their pastors.² Thomas of Cantinpré, one of the early lights of the Dominican order, indeed, is authority for the legend which represents the devil as thanking the prelates of the Church for conducting all Christendom to hell;³ and the conviction which thus expressed itself is justified by the reproach of Gregory X., who, in dismissing the second Council of Lyons, in 1274, told his assembled dignitaries that they were the ruin of the world.⁴ Un-

cap. 21 (Ibid. VII. 418). Concil. Salisburg. XXX. can. de Confess. (Dalham, Concil. Salisburg. p. 155.)

Abelard (Sermo XXIX.) in a passage which, though addressed to the virgins of the Paraclete, is hardly quotable, asserts the frequent corruption of nuns by their spiritual directors. See also St. Bonaventura, *Tractatus quare Fr. Minores prædicent* (Romæ 1773, p. 431), and Gerson, who retorts the charge on the friars, in his *Tract. de Reform. Eccles. in Concil. Constant. cap. x.* (Von der Hardt, T. I. P. v. p. 93). Cf. Marsilli Patav. *Defens. Pacis P. II. cap. xvii.*—Synod. Andegavens. ann. 1262 cap. x.; ann. 1291 cap. 1; ann. 1312 cap. 1 (D'Achery I. 727, 735, 742). Alvar Pelayo, with customary ecclesiastical logic, enumerates the offence among the habitual sins of women (De Planctu Ecclesiæ, Lib. II. art. 45, n. 84).

¹ In 1398, Cardinal Peter d'Ailly, Bishop of Cambrai, speaks of the manner in which his clergy lived with their concubines as man and wife, and brought up their children without concealment in their houses—"tenentes secum in suis domibus suas concubinas, et mulieres publice suspectas, in scandalum plurimorum cohabitantes simul copulati, eisdem domo, mensa, et lecto, residendo, acsi essent vir et uxor matrimonialiter conjuncti: proles super terram gradientes ex hujusmodi suis concubinis susceptas una cum eisdem in suis domibus publice secum habendo et tenendo"—(Hartzheim VI. 709).

² Prout testatur nimia de plerisque regionibus clamans Christiani populi corruptela, quæ cum deberet ex sacerdotalis antidoti curari medelis, invalescit prohdolor! ex malorum contagione quod procedit a clero.—Chron. Augustens. ann. 1260.

³ According to Thomas of Cantinpré, this occurrence took place at Paris, in a synod held in 1248, and Satan explained his candour by saying that he was compelled to it by God.—(Hartzheim IX. 663.)

⁴ Inter alia dixit quod prælati faciebant ruere totum mundum. . . . Unde monuit eos quod ipsi se corrigerent . . . alioquin dixit se duro acturum cum ipsis super reformatione morum.—Harduin. VII. 692.

fortunately, his threat to reform them if they did not reform themselves, remained unexecuted, and the complaint was repeated again and again.¹

That this state of things was clearly understood by the laity is only too visibly reflected in contemporary records. When, in 1374, the dancing mania, one of those strange epidemics which afflicted the Middle Ages, broke out through Germany and Flanders, the populace called to mind the forgotten regulations of Damiani and Hildebrand, and found a ready explanation of the visitation by assuming it to be a consequence of the vitiated baptism of the people by a concubinary priesthood.² Chaucer, with his wide range of observation and shrewd native sense, took a less superstitious, and more practical view of the evil, and in the admirable sermon which forms his "Persone's Tale" he records the convictions which every pure-minded man must have felt with regard to the demoralising tendencies of the sacerdotal licentiousness of the time.³

How instinctively, indeed, the popular mind assumed the immorality of the pastor is illustrated by a passage in the earliest French pastoral that has reached us, dating from the latter half of the thirteenth century—

WARNIERS. Segneur je sui trop courechies.

GUIOS. Comment ?

WARNIERS. Mehalès est agute,

M'amie, et s'a esté dechute ;

Car on dist que ch'est de no prestre.

¹ Clerici et presbyteri . . . maxime per fetidum peccatum luxuriæ seipsos et alios pretrahunt ad infernum.—Concil. Parisiens. ann. 1323 can. iii. (Martene Ampl. Coll. VII. 1289).

² Petri de Herentals Vit. Gregor. XI. ann. 1375 (Muratori, S. R. I., T. III. P. II. p. 675).

³ "Swiche preestes be the sones of Hely . . . hem thinketh that they be free and have no juge, no more than hath a free boll, that taketh which cow that him liketh in the toun. So faren they by women ; for right as on free boll is ynough for all a toun, right so is a wicked preest corruption ynough for all a parish, or for all a countree."

ROGAUS. En non Dieu ! Warnier, bien puet estre ;
 Car ele i aloit trop souvent.
 WARNIERS. Hé, las ! jou avoie en couvent
 De li temprement espouser.
 GUIOS. Tu te puès bien trop dolouser,
 Biaux très dous amis ; ne te caille,
 Car ja ne meteras maaïlle,
 Que bien sai, à l'enfant warder.¹

Those who were heretically disposed were keen to take advantage of a weakness so general and so universally understood. The author of the "Creed of Piers Ploughman" does not hesitate to assert with Gregory X. that the clergy were the corruption of the world—

For falshed of freres
 Hath fullich encombred
 Manye of this maner men,
 And made hem to leven
 Her charité and chastité,
 And shosen hem to lustes,
 And waxen to werly,
 And wayven the trewethe,
 And leven the love of her God.²

The widely received feeling on this subject, perhaps, finds its fittest expression in a satire on the mendicant friars, written by a Franciscan novice who became disgusted with the order and turned Wickliffite. The exaggerated purity and mortification of the early followers of the blessed St. Francis had long since yielded to the temptations which attended on the magnificent success of the institution, and the mystic aspirations which earned for it the name of the Seraphic Order degenerated into sloth and crime which took advantage of the opportunities afforded by the privilege to hear confessions. The grosser accusations of the writer are, perhaps, unfit for quota-

¹ Li Gieus de Robin et de Marion (Michel, Théâtre Français au Moyen Age, p. 129).
 Wright's Edition, p. 491, l. 1359.

tion, but the spirit in which the friars were regarded is sufficiently indicated by the following lines :—

For when the gode man is fro hame
And the frere comes to oure dame,
He spares, nauther for synne ne shame,
That he ne dos his will.

Ich man that here shal lede his life
That has a faire doghter or a wyfe
Be war that no frer ham shryfe
Nauther loude ne still.¹

When such was the moral condition of the priesthood, and such were the influences which it cast upon the flocks intrusted to its guidance, it is not to be wondered at if those who deplored so disgraceful a state of things, and whose respect for the canons precluded them from recommending the natural and appropriate remedy of marriage, should regard an organised system of concubinage as a safeguard. However deplorable such an alternative might be in itself, it was surely preferable

¹ Monumenta Franciscana, pp. 602-4.

This testimony concerning the Franciscans is not confined to heretics and laymen. Early in the fifteenth century, a council of Magdeburg took occasion to reprove them for the dissolute and unclerical mode of life of which they offered a conspicuous example. It appears that they dignified with the name of "Marthas" the female companions who, in primitive ages, were known as "agapetæ," and who had latterly acquired among the secular clergy the title of "focariæ"—"et in domibus suis frequenter soli cum mulieribus quas ipsorum *Martias* (ut eorum verbis utamur) habitare non verentur."—Concil. Magdeburg. ann. 1403, Rubr. de Pœnis. (Hartzheim V. 717.)

On the other hand, in the "Creed of Piers Ploughman," a Franciscan attacks the Carmelites—

They been but jugulers,
And japers of kynde;
Lorels and lechures,
And lemans holden.

And that wicked folk
Wymmen betraieth,
And begileth hem her good
With glaverynge wordes,
And therwith holden her hous
In harlotes warkes.

to the mischief which the unquenched and ungoverned passions of a pastor might inflict upon his parish; and the instances of this were too numerous and too glaring to admit of much hesitation in electing between the two evils. Even Gerson, the leader of mystic ascetics, who recorded his unbounded admiration for the purity of celibacy in his "*Dialogus Naturæ et Sophiæ de Castitate Clericorum*,"¹ saw and appreciated its practical evils, and had no scruple in recommending concubinage as a preventive, which, though scandalous in itself, might serve to prevent greater scandals.² It therefore requires no great stretch of credulity to believe the assertion of Sleidan that in some of the Swiss Cantons, it was the custom to oblige a new pastor, on entering upon his functions, to select a concubine, as a necessary protection to the virtue of his female parishioners, and to the peace of the families intrusted to his spiritual direction.³ Indeed, we have already seen (p. 380), on the authority of the Council of Valladolid in 1322, that such a practice was not uncommon in Spain.

In thus reviewing the influences which a nominally celibate clergy exercised over those intrusted to their care, it is perhaps scarcely too much to conclude that they were largely responsible for the laxity of morals which is a characteristic of mediæval society. No one who has attentively examined the records left to us of that society, can call in question the extreme preval-

¹ This was written in answer to an attack on celibacy by Guillaume Sagnet, entitled "*Lamentatio ob cœlibatu sacerdotum, sive Dialogus Nicenæ Constitutionis et Naturæ ea di re conquerentis*."—Zaccaria, *Storia Polemica del Celibato Sacro*, Præf. p. xiv.

² Vel inexperti forte erant hi doctores quam generale et quam radicum sit hoc malum, et quod deteriora flagitia circa uxores aut filias parochianorum et abominaciones horrendæ in aliis provenirent apud multas patrias, rebus stantibus ut stant, si quærentur per tales censuras arceri. Scandalum certe magnum est apud parochianos curati ad concubinam ingressus, sed longe deterius si ~~erga~~ parochianas suas non servaverit castitatem.—*De Vita Spirit. Animæ Lect. IV. Corol. xiv. prop. 3.*

³ Sleidani *Comment. De Statu. Relig. Lib. I. et Reikub. Lib. III.*

ence of the licentiousness which everywhere infected it. Christianity had arisen as the great reformer of a world utterly corrupt. How earnestly its reform was directed to correcting sexual immorality is visible in the persistence with which the Apostles condemned and forbade a sin that the Gentiles scarcely regarded as a sin. The early Church was consequently pure, and its very asceticism is a measure of the energy of its protest against the all-pervading license which surrounded it. Its teachings, as we have seen, remained unchanged. Fornication continued to be a mortal sin, yet the period of its unquestioned domination over the conscience of Europe was the very period in which license among the Teutonic races was most unchecked. A Church which, though founded on the Gospel, and wielding the illimitable power of the Roman hierarchy, could yet allow the feudal principle to extend to the "jus primæ noctis" or "droit de marquette," and whose ministers in their character of temporal seigneurs could even occasionally claim the disgusting right themselves¹ was evidently exercising its influence not for good but for evil.

¹ There is a tradition that the Abbey of Montariol lost its sovereignty over the inhabitants of the village of that name in consequence of a revolt caused by the monks exacting this feudal right in all its odious cynicism, in place of receiving a payment in commutation as was frequently done. The Abbé Marcellin, in his edition of Le Bret's *Histoire de Montauban* (I. 362-74) seems to me to have successfully proved its falsity. He admits, however, that in his researches on the subject he has found one case in which an ecclesiastic undertook to enforce his rights to the letter. The President Boyer, writing in the sixteenth century (*Decisiones*, No. 17, *Decis.* 297) asserts that he had seen the proceedings of a lawsuit in which "Rector seu curatus parochialis prætendebat ex consuetudine primam habere sponsæ cognitionem" (Eschbach, *Introduction à l'Étude du Droit*, § 174).

The existence of this feudal right has been the subject of no little debate, to the acerbity of which religious as well as scientific partisanship has contributed. Allusions to it in nearly every land of Christendom are too widely spread, however, to render it doubtful that such a right was claimed and exercised, if not universally, at least in certain times and places. The student can find abundant proof of this in Ducange, s.v. *Marcheta*, and in Lagrèze's *Historie du Diable dans les Pyrénées* (Paris, 1867, pp. 384-425), who however denies that ecclesiastics were ever guilty of exacting it.

Documentary evidence of the custom is not wholly wanting. In Béarn, the

There is no injustice in holding the Church responsible for the lax morality of the laity. It had assumed the right to regulate the consciences of men and to make them account for every action and even for every thought. When it promptly caused the burning of those who ventured on any dissidence in doctrinal opinion or in matters of pure speculation, it could not plead lack of authority to control them in practical virtue. Its machinery was all-pervading, and its power autocratic. It had taught that the priest was to be venerated as the representative of God and that his commands were to be implicitly obeyed. It had armed him with the fearful weapon of the confessional, and by authorising him to grant absolution and to pronounce excommunication, it had delegated to him the keys of heaven and hell. By removing him from the jurisdiction of the secular courts it had proclaimed him as superior to all

seigneurs of Lobier claimed it of their *questaus* or serfs.—“Item. Quant auguns de tals maisons se mariden, dabant que conexer lors molhers, sou tenguts de las presentar per la prumère noeyt audit senhor de Lobier per en far a son plaser, ou autrement lou valhar cert tribut,” and the first child born, if a male, was free “per so qui poeyre star engendrat de las obres deudit senhor de Lobier en ladite prumère noeyt et de sous suditz plasers” (Mazure et Hatoulet, *Fors de Béarn*, p. 172, Pau, 1847). This document is of the sixteenth century: in Catalonia it was not until about the same period that the custom was definitely abolished. When, in 1462, the peasants and nobles endeavoured to settle their differences, one of the complaints of the former was that some seigneurs claimed the first night of a peasant bride, or to pass over her when she was in bed as a symbol of his right. To this the lords replied that they did not know or believe in the existence of such a servitude, but, if it was so, they renounced and abolished it as unjust and indecent (E. de Hinujosa, *Annales Internationales d'Histoire*, 2^e Section, p. 224, Paris, 1902). In spite of this disclaimer the grievance continued, and it was left for Ferdinand of Aragon, in his arbitral sentence of 1486, to put an end to it.—“Item, sententiam arbitram e declaram que los dits senyors no' pugan . . . la primera nit que los pages pren muller dormir ab ella o en senyal de senyoria, la nit de las bodas, apres que la muller sera colgada en lo lit, passar sobre aquell, sobre la dita muller” (Pragmaticas e altres Drets de Cathalunya, Lib. IV. Tit. xiii. § 2, n. 9. Barcelona, 1589).

The servitude was known as *Ferma despoli forçadu*. Pujades, writing some three centuries ago, seeks the fanciful explanation of it and of other *mala usus* by attributing them to the Moorish tyranny over Christian vassals, and that the *pages de remensa*, or predial serfs, who remained subject to these customs, were those who refused to aid in throwing off the domination of the infidel.—*Crónica universal del Principado de Cataluña*, IV. 332 (Barcelona, 1832).

temporal authority. Through ages of faith the populations had humbly received these teachings and bowed to these assumptions, until they entered into the texture of the daily life of every man. While thus grasping supremacy and using it to the utmost possibility of worldly advantage, the Church therefore could not absolve itself from the responsibilities inseparably connected with power, and chief among these responsibilities is to be numbered the moral training of the nations thus subjected to its will. While the corruption of the teachers thus had necessarily entailed the corruption of the taught, it is not too much to say that the tireless energy devoted to the acquisition and maintenance of power, privileges, and wealth, if properly directed, under all the advantages of the situation, would have sufficed to render mediæval society the purest that the world has ever seen.

That the contrary was notoriously the case resulted naturally from the fact that the Church, after the long struggle which finally left it supreme over Europe, contented itself with the worldly advantages derivable from the wealth and authority which surpassed its anticipations. If, then, it could secure a verbal submission to its doctrines of purity, it was willing to issue countless commands of chastity and to tacitly connive at their perpetual infraction. The taint of corruption infected equally its own ministers and the peoples committed to their charge, and the sacerdotal theory gradually came to regard with more and more indifference obedience to the Gospel in comparison with obedience to man and subservience to the temporal interests of the hierarchy. As absolution and indulgence grew to be a marketable commodity, it even became the interest of the traders in salvation to have a brisk demand for their wares. When infraction of the Divine precepts

could be redeemed with a few pence or with the performance of ceremonies that had lost their significance, it is not surprising if priest and people at length were led to look upon the violation of the Decalogue with the eye of the merchant and customer rather than with the spirit of the great Lawgiver.¹

The first impulse in the reaction of the sixteenth century was to recur to the Gospel and to interpret its commands in accordance with the immutable principles of human conscience rather than with the cunningly devised subtleties of scholastic theology. The reformers thus stood face to face with God, and, needing no intermediary to negotiate with Him, vice and sin reappeared to them in all their hideous deformity and attended with all their inevitable consequences.² For the first time since primitive Christianity was absorbed in sacerdotalism, were the doctrines of morality enforced as the primal

¹ See the *Taxa Sacra Pœnitentiariæ*, a tariff of prices for absolution in the Roman curia for all infractions of human and divine law, of which more hereafter.

Heretically inclined reformers did not hesitate to accuse the clergy of thus speculating in the power of the keys and the sins of the people—

The power of the apostles
 Thei pasen in speche,
 For to sellen the synnes
 For selver other mede.
 And purliche a pœna
 The puple asoyloth,
 And a culpa also,
 That they may katchen
 Money other money-worth,
 And mede to fonge;
 And ben at lone and at bode,
 As burgeises useth.
 Thus they serven Sathanas,
 And soules bygyleth,
 Marchaunes of malisones,
 Mansede wrecches.

Creed of Piers Ploughman, l. 1417-32.

² The curious confusion of vice with religion, fostered by mediæval sacerdotalism, is well illustrated by the complaint which Erasmus puts in the mouth of the Virgin—"Et nonnumquam ea petunt a virgine quæ verecundus juvenis vix auderet petere a lena, quæque ne pudet literis committere" (Erasmi Colloq. Peregrinatio Religionis). The existence of such inconsistencies is one of the unfathomable mysteries of human intelligence.

laws of man's being and of human society, and the world was made to see, by the energetic action of Puritan sects, that virtue was possible as the rule of life in large communities. We may smile at the eccentricities of Puritanism, but the rescue of modern civilisation from the long heritage of ancient vice, and the decency which characterises modern society, may fairly be attributed to the force of that fierce reaction against the splendid corruptions of the mediæval Church.

In considering, however, the influence of the regular clergy, or monastic orders, we find a more complex array of motives and results. The earlier foundations of the West, as we have seen, to a great extent neutralised the inherent selfishness of monachism by the regulations which prescribed a due proportion of labour to be mingled with prayer. The duty which man owes to the world was to some extent recognised as not incompatible with the duty which he owed to his God, and civilisation has had few more efficient instruments than the self-denying work of the earnest men who, from Columba to Adalbert, sowed the seeds of Christianity and culture among the frontier lands of Christendom. When discipline such as these men inculcated could be enforced, the benefits of monachism far out-weighed its evils. All the peaceful arts, from agriculture to music, owed to the Benedictines their perservation or their advancement, and it would be difficult to estimate exactly the influence for good which resulted from institutions to which the thoughtful and studious could safely retire from a turbulent and barbarous world. These institutions, however, from their own inherent defects, carried in them the germs of corruption. The claims to supereminent sanctity, carrying with it the power of efficacious intercession

with God, were inevitably used as means for the accumulation of wealth wrung from the fears or superstition of the sinner. With wealth came the abandonment of labour; and idleness and luxury were the prolific parents of license. True-hearted men were not wanting to combat the irrepressible evil. From Chrodegang to St. Vincent de Paul, the history of monachism is full of illustrious names of those who devoted themselves to the mission of reforming abuses and restoring the ideal of the perfect monk, dead to the seductions of the world, and living only to do the work which he deems most acceptable to God. Many of these mistakenly assumed that exaggerated mortification was the only gateway to salvation, and the only cure for the frightful immorality which pervaded so many monastic establishments. Others, with a truer insight into the living principles of Christianity, sought to turn the enthusiasm of their disciples to account in works of perennial mercy and charity, at a period when no other organisations existed for the succour of the helpless and miserable.

Yet when we reflect how large a proportion of the wealth and intellect of Europe was absorbed in the religious houses, it will be seen that the system was a most cumbrous and imperfect one, which gave but a slender return for the magnitude of the means which it involved. Still, it was the only system existing, and possibly the only one which could exist in so rude a structure of society, individualised to a degree which destroyed all sense of public responsibility and precluded all idea of a state created for the well-being of its component parts. Thus, the monastery became the shelter of the wayfarer, and the dispenser of alms to the needy. It was the principal school of the poor and humble; and while the Universities of Oxford and Paris were devoting their energies to unprofitable

dialectics and the subtle disputations of Aristotelian logic, in multitudes of abbey libraries quiet monks were multiplying priceless manuscripts, and preserving to after ages the treasures of the past. When fanciful asceticism did not forbid the healing of the sick, monks laboured fearlessly in hospitals and pest-houses, and distributed among the many the benefactions which they had wrung from the late repentance of the few. As time wore on, even the religious teaching of the public passed almost exclusively into their hands, and to the followers of Dominic and Francis of Assisi the people owed such insight as they could obtain into the promises of the gospel. If the enthusiasm which prompted labours so strenuous did not shrink from lighting the fires of persecution, we must remember that religious zeal, accompanied by irresponsible power, has one invariable history.

While thus, in various ways, the ascetic spirit led to institutions which promoted the progress of civilisation, in others it necessarily had a directly opposite tendency. Nothing contributes more strongly to the extension of knowledge and of culture than the striving for material comfort and individual advancement in worldly well-being. Luxury and ambition thus have their uses in stimulating the inquiring and inventive faculties of man, in rendering the forces of nature subservient to our use, and in softening the rugged asperities which are incompatible with the regular administration of law. Every instinct of human nature has its destined purpose in life, and the perfect man is to be found in the proportionate cultivation of each element of his character, not in the exaggerated development of those faculties which are deemed primarily good, nor in the entire repression of those which are evil only when their prominence destroys the balance of the

whole. The ascetic selected for eradication one group of human aspirations, which was the most useful under proper discipline, and not perhaps the worst even in its ordinary excess. Only those who have studied the varied aspects of mediæval society can rightly estimate the enormous influence which the Church possessed, in those ages of faith, to mould the average habits of thought in any desired direction. It can readily be seen that if the tireless preaching of the vanity of human things and the beatitude of mortification occasionally produced such extravagances as those of the flagellants, the spirit which now and then burst forth in such eruption must have been an element of no little power in the forces which governed society at large, and must have exercised a most depressing influence in restraining the general advance of civilisation. Not only did it thus more or less weigh down the efforts of almost every man, but the ardent minds that would otherwise have been leaders in the race of progress were the ones most likely, under the pervading spirit of the age, to be the foremost in maceration and self-denial; while those who would not yield to the seduction were either silenced or wasted their wisdom on a generation which believed too much to believe in them. When idleness was holy, earnest workers had little chance.

The effect of monastic asceticism in moulding the character may be seen in the admiring picture drawn by a disciple in the fifteenth century of a shining light of the Carthusian Order in the monastery of Vallis Dei, near Seez in Normandy. He had every virtue, he was an earnest reader and transcriber of MSS., and he practised mortifications even greater than those prescribed by the severe rules of the order. He rarely slept on the couch provided for each brother, but passed his nights in prayer

on the steps of the altar. In the hair shirt worn next his skin he cultivated lice and maggots so assiduously that they were often seen crawling over his face, and he scourged himself for every unhallowed wandering thought. He had preserved his virginity to old age, and his life had been passed in the Church, yet in his daily confessions he accused himself of every sin possible to man, and he rigorously performed whatever penance was assigned to him. With all this maceration, the flesh would still assert itself, and he was tormented with evil desires which the sharp cords of the discipline failed to subdue. His office of procurator of the abbey required him to make frequent visits on business to the neighbouring town, and he never left the gates of his retreat without lamenting and expressing the fear that he should not return to it the same as he left it.¹ If we consider what might have been effected by the energies of thousands of men such as this, had those energies not been absorbed in lifelong asceticism, we may conceive in some measure the retardation of human progress wrought by the influence of monachism.

Another result which may fairly be attributed to the ascetic teachings of the Church is the slow growth of population during the mediæval period. Notwithstanding the gross and flagrant disregard of the rule, it was impossible to immure in convents men and women by the hundred thousand during successive generations without retarding greatly the rate of increase of the species. The rudeness of the arts and sciences, war, pestilence and famine were doubtless efficient causes, yet were they less efficient than enforced celibacy. This is evident when we see the rapid rate of growth established on the abrogation or even relaxation of the rule. The suppression of

¹ Anon. Cartusiens. de Religionum Orig. cap. 17-19 (Martene Ampl. Coll. VI. 40-46).

the monastic orders in France followed soon after the reforms by which Joseph II. discouraged them throughout the Austrian empire, and the result is visible in the enormous increase of European population which followed, notwithstanding the fearful destruction of life in the Napoleonic wars. It is calculated that in 1788 Europe numbered 144,561,000 souls, which within fifty years had been augmented to 253,622,000, or about seventy-five per cent. Of late years the birth-rate has decreased in consequence of the severity of conscription in the military monarchies, but the enormous growth in the half-century following the French Revolution is the best commentary on the influences which for so many ages kept the population almost stationary.¹

It required the unbelief of the fifteenth century to give free rein to the rising commercial energies and the craving for material improvement that paved the way for the decadence of ascetic sacerdotalism. The corruptions of the Church, which indirectly caused and accompanied that awakening of the human mind, will be alluded to hereafter when we come to consider the movements leading to the Protestant Reformation. At present we must turn aside for a moment to consider one or two external developments of the religious activity of the Middle Ages.

¹ See Lecky's History of Rationalism.

CHAPTER XXII

THE MILITARY ORDERS

THE Military Orders were the natural expression of the admixture of religious and warlike enthusiasm, reacting on each other, which produced and was fostered by the Crusades. When bishops considered that they rendered a service acceptable to God in leading vast hosts to slaughter the Paynim, it was an easy transition for soldiers to turn monks, and to consecrate their swords to the bloody work of avenging their Redeemer.

When the Hospitallers—Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes, or of Malta—first emerged from their humble position of ministering to the afflictions of their fellow-pilgrims, and commenced to assume a military organisation under Raymond du Puy, about the year 1120, their statutes required the three ordinary monastic vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity.¹ In fact, they were at first Benedictines; but when they became numerous enough to form a separate body, they adopted the rule of St. Augustin.

When the rule for the Templars—“*Regula pauperum commilitonum sanctæ civitatis*”—was adopted in 1128, at the Council of Troyes, it contained no special injunction to administer a vow of celibacy, but the context shows that such a condition was understood as a matter of course.² Some little difficulty was evidently experienced

¹ Videlicet castitatem, obedientiam . . . atque vivere sine proprio.—Statut. Ord. S. Johan. Hierosol. Tit. I. § 1 (Lünig Cod. Ital. Diplom. T. II. p. 1743).

² Thus Cap. LV. : “*Hoc enim injustum consideramus ut cum fratribus Deo castitatem promittentibus fratres hujusmodi in una eademque domo mancant.*” Cap. LVI. and LXXII., by the latter of which even the kiss of a mother was denied them,

at first, since, from the nature of the case, novices had to be trained warriors who must frequently have been bound by family ties, and whose education had not been such as to fit them for the restraints of their new life. Married men, it is true, were admitted, but only on condition that both husband and wife should bind themselves to bequeath all their property to the order; they were to lead an honest life, but the husband was not permitted to live with the brethren, nor to wear the white mantle of the order.¹ It is probable that the perpetual nature of the obligations assumed was not easy to be enforced upon the fierce members of the brotherhood, for, in 1183, Lucius III., in confirming the privileges of the order, specially commands that no one who enters it shall be allowed to return to the world.²

The history of these two orders is too well known to require it to be traced minutely here. If, with the growth of their reputation and wealth, the austere ascetism of their early days was lost, and if luxury and vice took the place of religious enthusiasm and soldierly devotion to the Cross, they but obeyed the universal law which in human institutions is so apt to render corruption the consequence of prosperity. One conclusion may be drawn, however, from the proceedings by which the powerful Order of the Temple was extinguished at the

render evident the extreme asceticism which was proposed by the founders of the order (Harduin. T. VI. P. II. pp. 1142, 1146).

At a subsequent period we learn that the Templar's oath of initiation promised "*obedientiam, castitatem, vivere sine proprio, et succurrere terræ sanctæ pro posse suo.*" It was, moreover, enjoined upon them not to enter a house in which a woman lay in child-bed, not to be present at the celebration of weddings or the purification of women, nor to receive any service from a woman, even water for washing the hands.—See the proceedings against them in 1309 in Wilkins II. 331 et seq.

These regulations do not appear in the Templar Rules, but the severe punishment of deprivation of the habit was decreed for all acts implying unchastity, and this, we are told, was not infrequently enforced.—Curzon, *La Règle du Temple*, § 236 (Paris, 1886).

¹ *Regulæ Pauperum Commilitonum* Cap. lv. (Curzon, § 69).

² Rymer, *Fœdera*, I. 55.

commencement of the fourteenth century. Notwithstanding the open and scandalous licentiousness of the order, it is a little singular that the interminable articles of accusation against the members contain no allusion to unchastity, while crimes most fantastic, practices most beastly, and charges most frivolous are heaped upon them in strange confusion.¹ As the object of those who conducted the prosecution was to excite a popular abhorrence that would justify the purposed spoliation, it is evident that the simple infraction of vows of chastity was regarded as so venial a fault and so much a matter of course that its proof could in no way serve the end of rousing indignation against the accused.

It is somewhat remarkable that the same century which saw the foundation of the Orders of the Hospital and Temple also witnessed one which, although bound by the rule of St. Augustin, and subjected to the ordinary vows of obedience, property in common, and inability to return to the world, yet allowed to its members the option of selecting either marriage or celibacy, and even of contracting second marriages. This was the Spanish Order of Santiago. What we have seen of the want of respect paid by the Spanish Church to asceticism may lessen surprise at the founding of an order based upon such regulations, yet it is difficult to understand how so great a violation of established principles could be sanctioned by Alexander III., who confirmed the order in 1175,² or by Innocent III. and Honorius III., who formally approved its privileges.³

The example was one of evil import in the Peninsula. The Council of Valladolid in 1322 felt itself obliged to denounce under severe penalties the practice

¹ Wilkins II. 331-2.—Michelet, *Procès des Templiers*, I. 89 sqq.

² Alexandri III. *Epist. Append.* III. No. 20 (*Harduin*. VI. P. II. p. 1557).

³ Raynald. *Annal. ann.* 1210, No. 6, 7; ann. 1223, No. 54; ann. 1496, No. 33.

of dowering children with the possessions of the community, in which the military orders followed the precedent set them by the Church.¹ During the universal license of the fifteenth century, when ascetic vows became a mockery, and the profligacy of those who took them exposed all such observances to contempt, the military orders formed no exception to the general shamelessness. In 1429 the Council of Tortosa deplored the destruction and waste of the temporal possessions of the religious knights from the general concubinage in which they indulged, and to effect a cure it promulgated regulations of peculiar severity, threatening with a liberal hand the penalties of excommunication and degradation.² These proved as powerless as usual, and not long after a more sensible remedy was adopted by Eugenius IV. when he released the ancient and renowned Order of Calatrava from the obligation of celibacy, for reasons which would have led him to extend the privilege of marriage to the whole Church, had the purity of ecclesiastics been truly the object of the rule. He recounts with sorrow the disorderly lives of the knights, and, quoting the text which says that it is better to marry than to burn, he grants the privilege of marriage because he deems it preferable to live with a wife than with a mistress.³

This apparently did not extend to the *comendadores* of the order, for we hear, in 1538, of negotiations for them and for those of the Order of Alcántara, with Paul III., for permission to marry. He conceded the dispensation, but when they found the price demanded, they refused to pay it, and the matter was left unsettled.⁴

¹ Concil. Vallis-oletan. ann. 1322 can. vi. (Aguirre V. 243).

² Concil. Dertusan. ann. 1429 can. iii. (Harduin. VIII. 1076).

³ Raynaldi Annal. ann. 1441, No. 20.—The Order of Calatrava was under the strictest of the rules, the Cistercian (Giustiniani, Ordini Militari s. v.).

⁴ Boletín de la Real Academia de Historia, Tom. XLVI. p. 7.

Presumably the privileges granted by Eugenius IV. were extended to the Order of Montesa, founded in Valencia in 1319, on the ruins of the Temple, for it was affiliated with the Order of Calatrava, from which its members were drawn. A writer towards the close of the sixteenth century tells us that there had then been fourteen Masters who had vowed chastity, and none of them had married until the present one, Don Cesar de Borja, who was married.¹

Similar arguments were employed to extend the same privilege to the Orders of Avis and of Jesus Christ, of Portugal. The former was founded in 1147 by Alfonso I., under the Cistercian rule, and chastity was one of its fundamental obligations;² the latter was the continuation of the Order of the Temple, which, preserved in Portugal by the humanity of King Dionysius, assumed in the fourteenth century the name of Jesus. Both institutions became incurably corrupted; their preceptories were dens of avowed and scandalous prostitution, and their promiscuous amours filled the kingdom with hate and dissension. When at length, in 1496, King Emanuel applied to Alexander VI. to grant the privilege of marriage, in hopes of reforming the orders, it is interesting to observe how instinctively the minds of men turned to this as the sole efficient remedy for the immorality which all united in attributing to the hopeless attempt to enforce a purity impossible in the existing condition of society. Alexander assented to the request, and bestowed on the orders the right of marriage on the same conditions as those enjoined on the Knights of Santiago.³ It is true that

¹ Zurita, *Añales de Aragon*, Lib. VI. cap. xxvi.—Ilescas, *Historia Pontifical*, Lib. VI. cap. ii.

² Reg. Ord. Mil. Avisii a B. Joanne Cirita edita (*Migne's Patrologie*, T. 188, p. 1669).

³ Alexander's Bull declares that "Milites dictarum militiarum pro majori parte, continentiae et castitatis voto, qui in eorum professione emittunt, contempto, con-

Osorius doubts whether the benefits of the change were not exceeded by its evils, as he states that it lowered the character of the orders, opened the door to unworthy members, and led to the dissipation of their property.¹

There was another Portuguese order of a somewhat different character. Twenty years after founding the Knights of Avis, Alfonso I., in 1167, to commemorate his miraculous victory over the Moors at Santarem, instituted the Order of St. Michael. The knights were allowed to marry once; if widowed, they were obliged to embrace celibacy; and the Abbot of Alcobaça, who was the superior of the order, was empowered to excommunicate them for irregularity of life, to compel them to give up their mistresses. They were moreover bound to perform the same religious exercises as lay brothers of the Cistercians. The order is interesting as forming a curious link between the secular, religious, and military elements of the period.²

During all this, the knights of St. John adhered to their ancient statutes, and endeavoured from time to time to reform the profligacy which seemed inseparable from the institution. When the ascetic Antonio Fluviano, who held the grand mastership from 1421 to 1437, promulgated a regulation that any one guilty of public concubinage should receive three warnings, with severe penalties for contumacy,³ it suggests a condition of morals by no means creditable to the brethren. So,

cubinas etiam plures, et in eorum ac præceptoriarum et prioratum dictarum militum propriis domibus et locis, non sine magno religionis opprobrio, publice tenere et eis cohabitare, et etiam adulteria cum aliis mulieribus conjugatis committere non verentur: ex quo ab eorundem regnorum incolis et habitatoribus maximo odio habentur, dissensiones et inimicitiae oriuntur, diversa scandala quotidie concitantur etc.—Raynaldi Annal. ann. 1496, No. 33.

¹ Osorii de Reb. Emmanuelis R. Lusitan. Lib. I. (Edit. Colon. 1574, p. 12a).

² Patrologie, T. 188, p. 1674.

³ Statut. Ord. S. Johan. Hierosol. Tit. XVIII. § 50.

a century later, the stern Villiers de l'Isle-Adam was forced to declare that any one openly acknowledging an illegitimate child should be for ever after incapacitated for office, benefice, or dignity.¹ What the knights were soon afterwards, the scandalous pages of Brantôme sufficiently attest, and that the succeeding century did not witness an improvement may be inferred from the dictum of an eminent casuist that the mistresses of the members of such orders were not bound to make restitution of the moneys received from their lovers.²

The Marian or Teutonic Order, perhaps the most wealthy and powerful of all, was founded in 1190, and adopted the rule of the Templars as regards its religious government, with that of the Hospitallers to regulate its duties of charity and hospitality. The three vows of chastity, obedience, and poverty were essential, and no one had power to dispense from either of them.³ For a full century of its existence it was sorely oppressed with poverty,⁴ but at length, when transferred from the Holy Land to North-eastern Germany, it bore a prominent part in Christianising those regions, and what it won by the sword it retained possession of in its own right. With wealth came indolence and luxury, and the order became corrupt, as others had been.⁵ Its history offers nothing of special interest to us until, in 1525, the Grand Master Albert of Brandenburg went over to Lutheranism with many of his knights, founded the hereditary dukedom of Prussia, and married—of which more hereafter. Those of the order who adhered to Catholicism maintained the organisation on the rich

¹ Ibid. Tit. xviii. § 51.

² Summa Diana, s. v. *Religiosi Milites*, n. 3 (Venetiis, 1646).

³ Perlbach, Die Statuten des deutschen Ordens, p. 29 (Halle a S. 1890).

⁴ See the supplication of Rodolph of Hapsburg to the Pope for assistance to the order.—Cod. Epist. Rodolphi I. No. xcix. (Lipsiæ, 1806).

⁵ Anon. Cartus. de Relig. Orig. cap. xxviii. (Martene Ampliss. Coll. VII. 62).

possessions which the piety of ages had bestowed upon them throughout Germany, until this worn-out relic of the past disappeared in the convulsions of the Napoleonic wars, though the Archduke Wilhelm of Austria is—or recently was—reckoned as Grand Master, and performing the occasional ceremony of admitting members in assemblages of mail-clad knights. How completely the remnant of the order, still existing in Austria, has become a mere matter of social distinction is seen in the concession made in 1886 by Leo XIII., at the request of the Emperor Franz Joseph, that in future the knights shall take only simple and not solemn vows.¹

¹ Leonis PP. XIII. Litt. Apost. *Neminem profecto*, 16 Martii, 1886 (Acta, VI. 44).

CHAPTER XXIII

THE HERESIES

ALLUSION has already been made to the introduction of Manichæism into Western Europe through Bulgaria and Lombardy. Notwithstanding its stern and unrelenting suppression wherever it was discovered during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, its votaries multiplied in secret. The disorders of the clergy, their oppression of the people, and their quarrels with the nobles over their temporal possessions made them many enemies among the laity; and the simplicity of the Manichæan belief, its freedom from aspirations for temporal aggrandisement, and its denunciations of the immorality and grasping avidity of the priesthood, found for it an appreciative audience and made ready converts. Towards the close of the twelfth century the South of France was discovered to be filled with heretics, in whom the names of Cathari, Paterins, Albigenses, &c., concealed the more odious appellation of Manichæans.

It is not our province to trace out in detail the bloody vicissitudes of the Albigensian Crusades and of the Inquisition which completed their work. It is sufficient for our purpose to indicate the identity of the Catharan belief with that of the ancient sect which we have seen to exercise so powerful an influence in moulding and encouraging the asceticism of the early Church. The Dualistic principle was fully recognised. No necessity was regarded as justifying the use of meat, or even of eggs and cheese, or in fact of anything which had its origin in animal propagation. Marriage was an abomina-

tion and a mortal sin, which could not be intensified by adultery or other excesses.¹

Ingrafted on these errors were others more practically dangerous, as they were the inevitable protest against the all-absorbing sacerdotalism which by this time had become the distinguishing characteristic of the Church. In denying the existence of purgatory, and the efficacy of prayers for the dead and the invocation of saints, a mortal blow was aimed against the system to which the Church owed its firmest hold on the souls and purses of the people. In reviving the Hildebrandine doctrine that the sacraments were not to be administered by ecclesiastics in a state of sin, and in exaggerating it into an incompatibility between sin and holding Church preferment, a most dangerous and revolutionary turn was given to the widespread discontent with which the excesses of the clergy were regarded.² So sure a hold, indeed, had such views upon the popular feeling, that we find them reappear with every heresy, transmitted with regular filiation through the Waldenses, the Wickliffites, and the Hussites, so that in every age, from Gregory to the Reformation, the measures with which he broke down the independence of the local clergy returned to plague their inventors.

Yet with all this, the heretics to outward appearance long continued unexceptionably orthodox. Industrious and sober, none were more devoted to all the observances of the Church, none more regular at mass and confession, more devout at the altar or more liberal at the

¹ *Communis opinio Catharorum est quod matrimonium carnale fuit semper mortale peccatum, et quod non puniatur quis gravius in futuro propter adulterium vel incestum quam propter legitimum conjugium, nec etiam inter eos propter hoc aliquis gravius puniretur.*—*Summa F. Renieri (Martene Thesaur. V. 1761).*

This Regnier describes himself as a heresiarch previous to his conversion, and his summary of the creed of his former associates may be regarded as correct in the main, though perhaps somewhat heightened in repulsiveness.

² *Bernardi Serm. lxi. in Cantica, §§ 9, 11.*

offertory. Hidden beneath this fair seeming, their heresy was only the more dangerous, as it attracted converts with unexampled rapidity. Priests gave up their churches to join the society, wives left their husbands, and husbands abandoned their wives; and when questioned as to their renunciation of the duties and privileges of marriage, they all professed to be bound with a vow of chastity. Yet if so ardent a combatant as St. Bernard is to be believed, their rigorous asceticism was only a cloak for libertinism. It is possible that the enthusiastic self-mortification of the sectaries led them to test their resolution by the dangerous experiments common among the early Christians, and possibly also with the same deplorable results. St. Bernard at least argues that constant companionship of the sexes without sin would require a greater miracle than raising the dead, and as these heretics could not perform the lesser prodigy, it was reasonable to presume that they failed of the greater—and his conclusion is not unlikely to be true.¹ Be this as it may, the virtue of these puritan sects rendered chastity dangerous to the orthodox, for the celebrated Peter Cantor relates as a fact within his own knowledge, that honest matrons who resisted the attempts of priests to seduce them were accused of Manichæism and condemned as heretics.²

The orthodox polemics, in controverting the exaggerated asceticism of these heretics, had a narrow and a difficult path to tread. Their own authorities had so

¹ Bernardi Serm. lxxv. in Cantica, §§ 4, 5.—“Cum femina semper esse et non cognoscere feminam, nonne plus est quam mortuum suscitare? Quod minus est non potes; et quod majus est vis credam tibi? Quotidie latus tuum ad latus juvenculæ est in mensa; lectus tuus ad lectum ejus in camera, oculi tui ad illius oculos in colloquio, manus tuæ ad manus ipsius in opere: et continens vis putari? Esto ut sis; sed ego suspicione non careo.”

The morality of the age had evidently not impressed the Saint with the conviction of human power to resist temptation.

² Pet. Cantor. Verb. Abbreviat. cap. lxxviii.

exalted the praises of virgin purity, that it was not easy to meet the arguments of those who merely carried out the same principle somewhat further, in fearlessly following out the premises to their logical conclusion.¹ There is extant a curious tract, being a dialogue between a Catholic and a Paterin, in which the latter of course has the worst of the disputation, yet he presses his adversary hard with the texts which were customarily cited by the orthodox advocates of clerical celibacy—"qui habent uxores sint tanquam non habentes," "qui non reliquerit uxorem et filios propter me non est me dignus," &c.; and the Catholic can only elude their force by giving to them metaphorical explanations very different from those which of old had been assumed in the canons requiring the separation of man and wife on ordination.² How difficult of definition was the distinction in this matter between orthodoxy and heresy is shown in the case of Heinrich Minneke, Provost of the Cistercian nunnery of Neuwerke in Goslar, burnt as a Manichæan in 1222, when one of the articles of accusation against him was that his praises of virginity seemed

¹ Bishop Gerard, of Cambrai, confesses this in his refutation of the Artesian Manichæans in 1025—"De quibus nos responsuros quodam discretionis gubernaculo nostri sermonis carinam subire oportet, ne quasi inter duos scopulos naufragium incurrentes, occasionem demus in alterutrum, scilicet aut omnes indiscrete a conjugii exterrendo, aut omnes indiscrete ad connubia commonendo."—Concil. Atrabatens. ann. 1025 cap. x. (Hartzheim III. 89).

When St. Bernard, in his fiery denunciation of the Manichæan errors, exclaimed, "non advertant qualiter omni immunditiæ laxat habenas qui nuptias damnat" (In Cantica Sermon. lxvi. § 3), he did not pause to reflect how severe a sentence he was passing on the saints of the fifth century who, as we have seen, would only admit marriage to be a pardonable offence.

² Disputat. inter Cathol. et Paterin. c. ii. (Martene Thesaur. V. 1712-13).

It is somewhat singular that Manichæism should have been attributed to a sect of heretics in Bosnia who styled themselves Christians, and who were brought back to the fold in 1203 by a legate of Innocent III. It would appear that, so far from entertaining Manichæan doctrines, neglect of ecclesiastical celibacy was actually one of their erroneous practices, for in their pledge of reformation they promise that separation of man and wife shall thenceforth be enforced "neque de cætero recipiemus aliquem vel aliquam conjugatum, nisi mutuo consensu, continentia promissa, ambo pariter convertantur."—Batthyani II. 293.

a condemnation of matrimony.¹ It was fortunate for St. Jerome that he did not live in the thirteenth century.

The stubborn resistance of the Albigenses to the enormous odds brought against them shows the unconquerable vitality of the anti-sacerdotal spirit which was then so widely diffused throughout Southern Europe. In a different shape it had already manifested itself during the first half of the twelfth century, when Pierre de Bruys infected all the South of France with the heresy called, after him and his most noted follower, the Petrobrusian or Henrician. This was an uncompromising revolt against the whole system of Roman Christianity. It not only abrogated pædo-baptism, and promulgated heretical notions respecting the Eucharist, but it abolished the visible symbols and ceremonies which formed so large a portion of the sacerdotal fabric—churches, crucifixes, chanting, fasting, gifts and offerings for the dead, and even the mass. But little is known respecting the Petrobrusians, except what can be derived from the refutation of their errors by Peter the Venerable. He says nothing specifically respecting their views upon ascetic celibacy, but we may assume that this was one of the doctrinal and practical corruptions which they assailed, from a passage in which, describing their excesses, he complains of the public eating of flesh on Passion Sunday, the cruel flagellation of priests, the imprisonment of monks, and their being forced to marry by threats and torments. Even after de Bruys was burned alive in 1126, his disciple, Henry, boldly carried on the contest, and the papal legate, Cardinal Alberic, sent for St. Bernard to assist him in suppressing the heretics. The latter, in a letter written in 1147 to the Count of Toulouse, describes the religious

¹ Kaltner, Konrad v. Marburg, pp. 90–95 (Prag. 1882).

condition of his territories as most deplorable in consequence of the prevalence of the heresy—the churches were without congregations, the pastors without flocks, the people without pastors, the sacraments without reverence, the dying without consolation, and the new-born without baptism. Even making allowance for some exaggeration in all this, there can be no doubt that the heresy received extensive popular support and that it was professed publicly without disguise. At Alby it was dominant, so that when the Cardinal-legate went there, the people received him in derision with asses and drums, and when he preached, scarce thirty persons assembled to hear him; but two days later St. Bernard so affected them with his eloquence that they renounced their errors. He was less successful at Vertfeuil where resided a hundred knights-banneret, who refused to listen to him, and whom he cursed in consequence, whereof they all perished miserably. Though St. Bernard was forced to return to Clairvaux without accomplishing the extirpation of the heresy, Henry was finally captured, and probably died in prison.¹

It was probably another branch of the same sect which was discovered at Liège in 1144, described as brought thither from the south and pervading all France and the neighbouring countries. Its followers denied the efficacy of baptism, of the Eucharist and of the imposition of hands; they rejected not only oaths and vows, but marriage itself, and denied that the Holy Spirit could be gained except through good works. These heretics, however, had not in them the spirit of martyrdom, and speedily recanted on being discovered.

It was a period of transition, in which scholastic

¹ S. Petri Venerab. contra Petrobrusianos.—S. Bernardi Epist. 241.—Ejusd. Vit. Prim. Lib. vi. Part iii. c. 10.—Guill. de Podio-Laurent. c. i.—Alberic. Trium-Font. Chron. ann. 1148.

theology was beginning to assume shape, at the hands of the teachers in the University of Paris, and men's minds were easily led astray by any one who proclaimed a new form of belief. This explains the career of the crazy heresiarch, Éon de l'Étoile. During one of the epidemics of maceration and fanaticism which form such curious episodes in mediæval history, Éon, born of a noble Breton family, abandoned himself to the savage life of a hermit in the wilderness. Drawn by a vision to attend divine service, his excited mysticism caught the words which ended the recitation of the collect, "*Per eum* qui venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos;" and the resemblance of "*eum*" with his own name inspired him with the revelation that he was the Son of God. Men's minds were ready for any extravagance, and Éon soon had disciples who adored him as a deity incarnate. Nothing can be wilder than the tales which are related of him by eye-witnesses—the aureole of glory which surrounded him, the countless wealth which was at the disposal of his followers, the rich but unsubstantial banquets which were served at his bidding by invisible hands, the superhuman velocity of his movements when eluding those who were bent on his capture. Éon declared war upon the churches which monopolised the wealth of the people while neglecting the duties for which they had been enriched; and he pillaged them of their treasures, which he distributed lavishly to the poor. Hugues, Archbishop of Rouen, who prided himself on his theological ability, sought to convert the heretics by an elaborate refutation of their tenets, among which he enumerated promiscuous licentiousness and disregard of clerical celibacy. Daniel, he gravely assured them, symbolises virginity, Noah continence, and Job marriage. Then, quoting Ezekiel xiv. 13–20, wherein Jehovah, threatening the land with destruction, says,

"Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls through their righteousness," he proceeded triumphantly to the conclusion that recantation alone could save the heretics from their merited fate. More efficacious were the troops sent to quell the disturbances, who drove Éon to Aquitaine for refuge, but when, in 1148, he reappeared in Champagne he was captured and carried before Eugenius III. at the Council of Rouen, in 1148. There he boldly proclaimed his mission and his power. Exhibiting a forked staff which he carried, he declared that when he held it with the fork upwards, God ruled heaven and hell, and he governed the earth; but that when he reversed its position, then he had at command two-thirds of the universe, and left only the remaining third to God. He was pronounced hopelessly insane, but this would not have saved him had not his captor, the Archbishop of Rheims, represented that his life had been pledged to him on his surrender. He was, therefore, delivered to Suger, Abbot of St. Denis, to be imprisoned, and he soon afterwards died. Even this did not shake the faith of his disciples. Many of them, in their fierce fanaticism, preferred the stake to recantation, and numbers of them were thus put to death before the heresy could be extinguished.¹

When, about the middle of the twelfth century, the sudden death of a companion so impressed Peter Waldo of Lyons that he distributed his fortune among the poor, and devoted himself to preaching the supereminent merits

¹ Guillielm. de Newburgh, Lib. I. cap. 19.—Ottonis Frising. de Gest. Frid. I. Lib. I. cap. liv., lv.—Sigeberti Chron. Continuat. Gemblac. ann. 1146.—Ejusdem Continuat. Præmonstrat. ann. 1148.—Roberti de Monte Chron. ann. 1148.—Hugon. Rotomag. contra Hæret. Lib. III. cap. 6.—The detailed account given by William of Newburgh he professes to have gathered from some of Éon's followers performing penitential pilgrimages after the death of the heresiarch.

of poverty, nothing was further from his thoughts than the founding of a new heresy. Ardent disciples gathered around him, disseminating his views, which spread with rapidity; but their intention was to establish a society within the Church, and they applied, between 1181 and 1185, to Lucius III. for the papal authorisation. Lucius, however, took exception to their going barefoot, to their neglect of the tonsure, and to their retaining the society of women. They were stubborn, and he condemned them as heretics.¹ The enthusiasm which the Church might have turned to so much account, as it subsequently did that of the Franciscans and Dominicans, was thus diverted to unorthodox channels, and speedily arrayed itself in opposition. The character of the revolt is shown in a passage of the *Nobla Leyczon*, which declares that all the popes, cardinals, bishops, and abbots together cannot obtain pardon for a single mortal sin; thus leading directly to the conclusion that no intercessor could be of avail between God and man—

Ma yo aus o dire, car se troba en ver,
 Que tuit li papa que foron de Silvestre entro en aquest,
 Et tuit li cardinal et tuit li vesque e tuit li aba,
 Tuit aquisiti ensem non han tan de potesta,
 Que ilh poissan perdonar un sol pecca mortal.
 Solament Dio perdona, que autre non ho po far.²

Still, they did not even yet consider themselves as separated from the Church, for they consented to submit their peculiar doctrines to the chances of a disputation, presided over by an orthodox priest. Of course, the

¹ Conrad. Urspergens. ann. 1212.—“Hoc quoque probrosum in eis videbatur, quod viri et mulieres simul ambulabant in via, et plerumque simul manebant in una domo, ut de eis diceretur, quod quandoque simul in lectulis accubabant.” The follies of the early Christians were doubtless imitated by the new sectaries. As early as 1197 we find them denounced as heretics, under the various names of Waldenses, Poor Men of Lyons, and Sabatati, and condemned to the stake by the Council of Girona, in Aragon.—Aguirre V. 103.

² La Nobla Leyczon, 408-13.

decision went against them, and a portion of the "Poor Men of Lyons" submitted to the result. The remainder, however, maintained their faith as rigidly as ever. From Bernard de Font-Cauld, who records this disputation, and from Alain de l'Isle, another contemporary, who wrote in confutation of their errors, we have a minute account of their peculiarities of belief. Their principal heresy was a strict adherence to the Hildebrandine doctrine that neither reverence nor obedience was due to priests in mortal sin, whose ministrations to the living and whose prayers for the dead were equally to be despised. In the existing condition of sacerdotal morals, this necessarily destroyed all reverence for the Church at large, and Bernard and Alain had no hesitation in proving it to be most dangerously heterodox. Their recurrence to Scripture, moreover, as the sole foundation of Christian belief, with the claim of private interpretation, was necessarily destructive to all the forms of sacerdotalism, and led them to entertain many other heretical tenets. They admitted no distinction between clergy and laity. Every member of the sect, male or female, was a priest, entitled to preach and to hear confessions. Purgatory was denied, and the power of absolution derided. Lying and swearing were mortal sins, and homicide was not excusable under any circumstances.¹ Yet naturally they did not repudiate the ascetic principles of the Church, and they regarded continence as counselled, though not commanded, by the Christian dispensation—

La ley velha maudi lo ventre que fruc non a porta,
Ma la novella conselha gardar vergeneta.²

¹ Bernardi Fontis Calidi Lib. contra Waldenses.—Alani de Insulis contra Hæret. Lib. II.

² La Nobla Leyczon, 242-3.

Though marriage is praised and its purity is to be preserved—

Gardes ferm lo matrimoni, aquel noble convent,¹

thus showing their disapproval of the Manichæan doctrines of the Cathari. A sect which existed through centuries of persecution, concealed in scattered communities without a head, of course varied considerably in its tenets. In the earlier period the Waldenses recognised vows of chastity and treated the seduction of nuns as incest. Later they held that, in view of the Greek custom, the Latin Church erred in prescribing celibacy to the priesthood, and their ministers, or *barbes*, were married. With incredible fortitude they maintained their faith and, when came the Reformation, at the Synod of Chanforans those of the Valleys adopted most of the Protestant tenets and declared that the rule of virginity was a precept of Satan.²

The Teutonic tendency to mysticism contributed its share of heresy, which bears some relation to our subject. Ortlieb of Strassburg is supposed to have been a disciple of Amaury of Bène, whose pantheistic speculations were condemned by the University of Paris in 1204. Ortlieb carried them to Germany, where they gave rise to a sect calling itself the Brethren of the Free Spirit, and variously known as Ortlibenses, Begghards, Beguines, and Picards. From their pantheism they drew the deduction that man is God, leading to the conclusion that he is impeccable, and that whatever he may do is without sin. While this doubtless led to excesses on the part of those incapable of self-restraint, it was accompanied with the austere

¹ La Nobla Leyczon, 88.

² Reinierus contra Waldenses (Passauer Anonymus), cap. v. (Mag. Bib. Patrum, XIII. 300.—Edouard Montet, *Histoire littéraire des Vaudois*, pp. 97, 98, 108–10 (Paris, 1885).—Herzog, *Abriss der gesammten Kirchengeschichte*, II. 453, 462.

condemnation of all sexual indulgence, save for the exclusive object of procuring offspring. It was taught that a woman in marrying should feel the deepest sorrow for the loss of her virginity, and that no one was perfect in whom promiscuous nudity could excite passion or shame. This served as a test, and was so successfully endured that an antagonistic writer can only explain their resistance to such temptation by the assistance of Satan. The sect was condemned by the Council of Cologne in 1306, and by the General Council of Vienne in 1312; it was ruthlessly persecuted by the ecclesiastical authorities and by the Inquisition, whenever that organisation managed to get a foothold in Germany, but it maintained its existence with remarkable tenacity. It was evidently a branch of the Brethren of the Free Spirit which appeared, in 1411, in Flanders, under the name of Men of Intelligence, under the lead of Giles Cautor and William of Hilderniss. They were accused of pantheism, of rejecting priestly ministrations, and that whatever they did was the work of the spirit, so that there was no sin in the grossest licentiousness. Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly, as Bishop of Cambrai, speedily suppressed them, and tradition related that the inquisitor he employed, Hendrik Selle, was saved only by a miracle from the vengeance of the heretics. As the fifteenth century advanced, the unsettled spiritual condition of Bohemia, under Hussite domination, seemed to offer a favourable field for proselytism, and it was attempted by a missionary of the sect, known as "Pichardus." He speedily gathered numerous disciples of both sexes, to whom he taught the pre-eminent virtue of nudity, and gave them the name of Adamites. They settled on an island in the river Luznic, and speedily came in collision with the neighbouring inhabitants. In an expedition from the island they slew two hundred peasants, which

attracted the attention of Lizka. He made short work with them; fifty of those who escaped the sword were burnt at Klokot, and the rest were gradually hunted down, sharing the same fate, which they endured with song and laughter.¹

There was another heretical sect which, in the opening years of the fourteenth century, attained a terrible notoriety through the exploits and fate of its leader, Dolcino. It was an unauthorised offshoot of the stricter or Spiritual Franciscans, and was founded by Gherardo Segarelli, who was burnt in 1300. Its members styled themselves apostles; they were wanderers, subsisting on charity, and teaching an austerity which, in imitation of the follies of some of the early Christians, required the crucial test of the sexes lying together in nakedness. Persecution naturally induced antagonism, and Dolcino, who succeeded Segarelli in the perilous dignity of heresiarch, foretold the downfall of the existing Church establishment, to be followed by an age of charity and love under a saintly Pope. He proclaimed himself the special envoy of God, and virtually declared war upon the existing organisation of both Church and State. Withdrawing, with some fourteen hundred followers, to fastnesses in the lower Alps, he resisted four crusades

¹ Nider, *Formicarium*, III. vi.—Trithemii *Chron.* Hirsang. ann. 1356.—Hartzheim, IV. 100-1.—Clementin. v. iii. 3; III. xi. 1.—Baluz. et Mansi *Miscell.* I. 288-93.—Fredericq, *Corpus Documentt. Inquisitionis Neerlandicæ*, I. 244.—Æneæ Sylvii *Hist. Bohem.* cap. xli.—Dubravii *Hist. Bohem. Lib.* xxvii.

The Council of Cologne, in 1306, in controverting the errors of the Begghards as to the pre-eminent virtue of celibacy, runs counter to the received teachings of the Church for a thousand years. It says: "Ajunt etiam: Nisi mulier virginitatem in matrimonio deperditam doleat et dolendo deploret, salvari non potest: quasi matrimonium sit peccatum, cum tamen ipsum ante peccatum in loco sancto a sanctorum sanctissimo fuerit institutum: quæ virginitas in fœtum sobolis compensatur, per quam humana natura stabilitate perdurat." Great stress, moreover, is laid upon the indissolubility of the marriage vow and the wickedness of separating husband and wife:—"Quomodo spiritu Dei agantur qui contra spiritum Dei agunt, prohibentis virum ab uxore, et e converso sine causa dimitti?"—*Concil. Coloniens.* ann. 1306 cap. i., ii. (Hartzheim IV. 100-101).

directed against him, but a fifth, in 1307, was successful, and he perished by the most dreadful death that fear and hate could devise. The wandering disciples, however, continued to give occasional occupation to the Inquisition for a hundred years, and we hear of them in regions so far apart as Lubeck and farther Spain.¹

There may possibly have been some connection between the Apostles and John of Pirna, who in 1341 taught the most revolutionary doctrines. According to him, the Pope was Antichrist and Rome was the whore of Babylon and the church of Satan. The Silesians listened eagerly to his denunciations of the clergy, and the citizens of Breslau, with their magistrates, openly embraced his heresy. When the inquisitor, John of Schweidnitz, was sent thither by the Holy Office of Cracow, the people rose in defence of their leader and put the inquisitor to death. John of Pirna appears to have maintained his position, but after his death the Church enjoyed the pious satisfaction of exhuming his body, burning it, and scattering the ashes to the winds.² It was easier to do this than to destroy the leaven which was working everywhere in men's minds. No sooner were its manifestations repressed in one quarter than they displayed themselves in another.

In 1395 Jean de Varennes, a priest of the province of Rheims, was accused of various heretical teachings, the most serious of which was a revival of the old doctrine that the sacraments were vitiated in unworthy hands. He had not the zeal of martyrdom, and was easily brought to recantation, but his heresy has some interest for us as indicating the prevalent morality of the priesthood at the time. The concubinary priest was popularly known as a *prêtre marié*, and this was so universal that

¹ See the author's "History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages," III. 103-124.

² Krasinski, Reformation in Poland, I. 55-56.—Raynaldi Annal. ann. 1341, n. 27.

Jean did not hesitate to assume that all Christians were practically unbaptized.¹

In the ineradicable corruption of the Church, indeed, every effort to purify it could only lead to a heresy. Wickliffe, in his zeal to repress the disorders which had brought the Church into disrepute, swept away bishop, cardinal, and pope, the priesthood being the culminating point in his system of ecclesiastical polity. The temporalities which weighed down the spiritual aspirations of the Church were to be abandoned, and with them the abuses by which the worldly ambition of churchmen was sustained—indulgences, simony, image-worship, the power of excommunication, and the other devices by which the authority to bind and to loose had been converted into broad acres or current coin of the realm. The monastic orders in general were the objects of his special aversion, as having no justification in the precepts of Christ, and his repeated attacks upon them have a bitterness which shows not only his deep-rooted aversion, but his sense of their importance as a bulwark of the abuses which he assailed.² He reduced holy orders to two—the priesthood and diaconate—but he maintained the indelible character of ordination as separating the recipient from his fellows, and he urged that all ministers of Christ should live in saintly poverty.³ All this was unreasonable enough in a perverse and stiff-necked generation, but his unpardonable error was his revival of the doctrine of Gregory VII. regarding the ministrations of unfaithful priests, which he carried out resolutely to its logical consequences.⁴ According to him, a wicked

¹ D'Argentré, *Collect. judic. de novis Erroribus*, I. II. 154.

² *Inter omnia monstra quæ unquam intraverunt ecclesiam, monstrum horum fratrum est seductivius, infundabilius, et a veritate ac a charitate distantius.*—Univ. Oxon. Litt. de Error. Wicklif. Art. 103 (Wilkins III. 344).

³ *Dialogi Lib. IV. cap. 15.*

⁴ A Wickliffite tract ("De Officio Pastoralis," published by Prof. Lechler, Leipzig, 1863) takes strong ground on this point. Speaking of unchaste priests, it says

priest could not perform his sacred functions, and forfeited both his spiritualities and temporalities, of which laymen were justified in depriving him. Nay more, priest and bishop were no longer priest or bishop if they lived in mortal sin, and his definition of mortal sin was such as to render it scarce possible for any one to escape.¹

What his opinions were on the subject of clerical celibacy was a moot point after his death. Thomas of Walden, the confessor of Henry V., in his refutation of the Wickliffite doctrines, approved by Martin V. in 1427, says that the general belief was that Wickliffe was opposed to it, while some asserted that he was strongly in favour of it. Walden admits that he had found in Wickliffe's writings high praise of priestly chastity, but he had at last met, in the tract *De Officio Pastoralis*, a passage condemning celibacy.² Yet had Wickliffe taught

(P. I. cap. viii. pp. 16-17), "Talis sic notorie sustentans curatum dat imprudenter elemosinam contra Christum . . . periculosum peccatum est crimini consentire; sed sic faciunt qui taliter curato in temporalibus subministrant." And again (P. I. cap. xvii.), "Subditi enim non debent audire missam talium sacerdotum, et per consequens non debent dare sibi oblationes vel decimas, ne videantur consencientes crimini sic notorio in curatis."

¹ Si Deus est, domini temporales possunt legitime ac meritorie auferre bona fortunæ ab ecclesia delinquente.—Conclus. Magist. Johan. Wycliff. Art. vi. (Wilkins III. 123).

Licet regibus auferre temporalia a viris ecclesiasticis ipsis abutentibus habitualiter. Ibid. Art. xvii.

So in the proceedings conducted by Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, against Wickliffe in 1382, among the articles presented as extracted from his writings were—

Art. 4. Quod si episcopus vel sacerdos existat in peccato mortali, non ordinat, consecrat nec baptizat.

Art. 16. Quod nullus est dominus civilis, nullus est episcopus, nullus est prælatus dum est in peccato mortali (Wilkins III. 157).

Even "verbum otiosum" and "ira quantumlibet levis" were denounced by him as mortal sins according to the University of Oxford.—Litt. de Error. Art. 210, 211 (Wilkins III. 347).

² Thomæ Waldens. di Sacramentis cap. 128 (Ed. Venet. 1571. T. II. fol. 211). The passage quoted by Walden is "Nam conjugium secundum Christum eis licitum odiunt ut venenum et secularare dominium eis a Christo prohibitum avide amplexantur" (De Off. Pastoralis, P. II. cap. xi. p. 50).

Arnold (Select English Works of John Wyclif, vol. II. p. v.) quotes a similar statement from Walden's *Doctrinale Fidei*, which I have been unable to verify. In

this doctrine it would have been as widely known as his other errors, it would have been condemned in the repeated proceedings taken against him and his teachings, and it would not have been left for Thomas of Walden to discover it in one of the numerous writings which passed from hand to hand as the works of the heresiarch. Wickliffe was too earnest and sincere in his convictions to leave any one in doubt as to his belief on any point that he thought worth discussion.

What his views were on this subject can perhaps best be sought in the most mature of his authentic works, the *Triologus*. No one can read the chapters on Sensuality and Chastity without seeing that the whole line of argument is directed towards proving the superiority of virginity over marriage, even to the fanciful etymology of "coelibatus" from the state of the "beati in cœlo;" while in the chapter on the riches of the clergy, they are regarded as virgins betrothed to Christ, and the vow of chastity which they take is likened to their similar vow of poverty, and not to be infringed.¹ Wickliffe's austerity, in fact, was deeply tinged with asceticism, and in aiming to restore the primitive simplicity of the Church, he had no thought of relegating its ministers to the carnalities of family life, which would render impossible the Apostolic poverty that was his ideal. Even the laity, in his

this he alleges, in proof of Wickliffe's opposition to celibacy, a sermon in English (Arnold I. 364).

This sermon, like the tract *De Officio Pastoralis*, was doubtless mistakenly ascribed to Wickliffe, like so many other writings of his disciples. The same may be said with regard to passages like the following: "God ordeyned prestis in the olde lawe to have wyves, and nevere forbode it in the newe lawe, neither bi Crist ne bi his apostlis, but rather aprovede it. But now, bi ypoecrisie of fendis and fals men, manye binden hem to presthod and chastite, and forsaken wifis bi Goddis lawe, and schenden maydenes and wifis and fallen foulest of alle."—Of Weddid Men and Wifis, cap. i. (Arnold's Wyclif, III. 190; also in Vaughan's Tracts of John de Wyckliffe, p. 58).—See also The Seven Deadly Sins, cap. xxx. (Arnold Vol. III. p. 163).

¹ *Trialogi* Lib. III. c. 22, 23; Lib. IV. 16 (Ed. Lechler, Oxford, 1869).—Cf. Apology for Lollard Doctrines, p. 38 (Ed. Camden Soc.).

scheme, were to be so rendered superior to the lusts of the flesh that he pronounced those who married from any other motive than that of having offspring to be not truly married.¹

It is easier to start a movement than to restrain it. Wickcliffe might deny the authority of tradition, and yet preserve his respect for the tradition of celibacy, but his followers could not observe the distinction. They could see, if he could not, that the structure of sacerdotalism, to the overthrow of which he devoted himself, could not be destroyed without abrogating the rule which separated the priest from his fellow-men, and which severed all other ties in binding him to the Church. In 1394, only ten years after Wickcliffe's death, the Lollards, by that time a powerful party, with strong revolutionary tendencies, presented to Parliament a petition for the thorough reformation of the Church, containing twelve conclusions indicating the points on which they desired change. Of these, the third denounced the rule of celibacy as the cause of the worst disorders, and argued the necessity of its abrogation; while the eleventh attacked the vows of nuns as even more injurious, and demanded permission for their marriage with but scanty show of respect.² This became the received doctrine of the sect, for in a declaration made in 1400 by Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, concerning the Lollard heresies, we find enumerated the belief that those in holy orders could take to themselves wives without sin, and that monks and nuns were at liberty to abandon their profession, and marry at pleasure.³

The fierce persecutions of Henry V., to repress what he rightly considered as a formidable source of civil

¹ Wilkins III. 229.—*Trialogi* Lib. IV. c. 20.

² *Conclusiones Lollardorum* (Wilkins III. 221-3).

³ Wilkins III. 248.

rebellion as well as heresy, succeeded in depriving the sect of political power; yet its religious doctrines still continued to exist among the people, and even sometimes obtained public expression.¹ They unquestionably tended strongly to shake the popular reverence for Rome, and had no little influence in paving the way for the revolt of the sixteenth century.

John Huss was rather a reformer than a heresiarch. Admirer though he was of Wickliffe, even to the point of wishing to risk damnation with him,² he avoided the doctrinal errors of the Englishman on the subject of the Eucharist. Yet his predestinarian views were unorthodox, and he shared in some degree Wickliffe's Gregorian ideas as to the effect of mortal sin in divesting the priesthood of all claim to sacredness or respect. According to his

¹ In 1426, ten years after the execution of Lord Cobham, a Franciscan named Thomas Richmond was brought before the Council of York for publicly preaching the high Wickliffite doctrine "*Sacerdos in peccato mortali lapsus, non est sacerdos. Item quod ecclesia nolente vel non puniente fornicarios, licitum est sæcularibus eosdem poena carceris castigare, et ad hoc astringuntur vinculo charitatis*" (Wilkins III. 488). This practical application of the Hildebrandine principle did not suit the Church of the fifteenth century. It was pronounced heretical, and Friar Thomas was forced to recant.

Equally offensive to the memory of Gregory was the decision of the Sorbonne in 1486, condemning as heretical the propositions of Jean d'Huillier, the puritan bishop of Meaux—"Quarta Propositio. Quod officium vel Sacramentum per talem fornicarium datum non valet plusquam latratum canum. Hæc propositio quoad primam suam partem est falsa et erronea, et quoad secundam partem est hæretica, scandalosa, piarum aurium offensiva et publice revocanda." Even more to the point was it when, in 1498, an Observantine friar, Jean Vitrier, preached in Tournay that it was a mortal sin to assist at the mass of a concubinary priest, and told the people that they ought to drag the concubines of their priests from their houses. The University of Paris forthwith qualified this as savouring of Hussitism.—D'Argentré, *Collect. judic. de novis erroribus*, I. II. 320, 340.

² When, after the fearful disaster of Taas, the Council of Bâle, in 1432, commenced the conferences which resulted in the nominal reconciliation of the Hussites, the fathers of the Council were much scandalised at hearing the Bohemian deputies reverently quote Wickliffe as the Evangelical Doctor. In fact, Peter Payne, his disciple, who did so much to promulgate his doctrines in Bohemia, was one of the disputants (Hartzheim V. 762-4). Even as early as 1403 the errors of Wickliffe were formally condemned by the University of Prague, on presentation by the Ordinary of the diocese, showing that they were already spreading and attracting attention (Höfler, *Concil. Pragense*, p. 43.—Prag, 1862).

enemies, he asserted that no one could be the vicar of Christ or of Peter unless he were an humble imitator of the virtues of him whom he claimed to represent; and a pope who was given to avarice was only the representative of Judas Iscariot.¹ His friend, Jerome of Prague, maintained with his latest breath that Huss was thoroughly orthodox, and was only inspired by indignation at seeing the wealth of the Church, which was the patrimony of the poor, lavished on prostitutes, feasting, hunting, rich apparel, and other unseemly extravagance.² In the Bohemian clergy he had an ample target for his assaults, for they were in no respect better than their neighbours. During the latter half of the fourteenth century scarce a synod was held which did not denounce their vices, gambling, drunkenness, usury, simony, and concubinage; and when to put an end to the latter irregularity a strict visitation was made throughout the archiepiscopal diocese of Prague, the cunning rogues sent away or secreted their partners in guilt, and openly recalled them as soon as the storm had passed. The following year, Archbishop Sbinco peremptorily commanded that all concubines should be dismissed within six days, under pain of perpetual imprisonment, but this was evidently regarded as a mere *brutum fulmen*, for the next year a new device was resorted to, by pronouncing all concubinary priests to be heretics.³ All this might certainly seem to warrant any effort that might be made to accomplish what the authorities so signally failed in doing, but that any indi-

¹ Artic. Damnat. Joannis Husz, No. viii. x. xi. xii. xiii. xxii. xxx. (Concil. Constantiens. Sess. xv.)—On his examination Huss declared that these articles were exaggerated. See the proceedings in Von der Hardt, T. IV. pp. 309–11. But on the next day he defended a proposition which was virtually identical (Ibid. p. 321).

² Poggii Florent. Descript. Hieron. Prag. (Von der Hardt, T. III. p. 69).

³ Statut. Synod. ann. 1405; 1406, No. 1; 1407, No. 3 (Höfler, Concil. Pragenses. pp. 50, 54, 59).

See the extracts from the Visitationsbuch of the Diocese of Prague, in 1379, given by Loserth, "Hus und Wiclif," pp. 261 sqq. (Prag, 1884).

vidual should assert the right of private judgment in reforming the Church in its head and its members threatened results too formidable to the whole structure of sacerdotalism, and the condemnation of Huss was inevitable. Still, like Wickliffe, he was a devout believer in ascetic purity. His denunciations of the wealth and disorders of the clergy raised so great an excitement throughout Bohemia that King Wenceslas was forced to issue a decree depriving immoral ecclesiastics of their revenues. The partisans of Huss took a lively interest in the enforcement of this law, and brought the unhappy ecclesiastics before the tribunals with a pertinacity which amounted to the persecution of an inquisition.¹

Unlike the Lollards, the Hussites maintained the strictness of the founder's views on the subject of celibacy. If the fiercer Taborites cruelly revenged their wrongs upon the religious orders, it was to punish the minions of Rome, and not to manifest their contempt for asceticism; and, at the same time, even the milder Calixtins treated all lapses from clerical virtue among themselves with a severity which proved their sincerity and earnestness, and which had long been a stranger to the administration of the Church.² One of the complaints

¹ Synod. Olomucens. ann. 1413 can. 1. "asserentes etiam . . . quod bona clericorum male viventium possunt rapere et eos spoliare sine pena excommunicationis . . . Ex eadem radice et hæretica pravitate dicunt alii, quod sacerdos in mortali existens peccato non possit conficere corpus Christi" (Hartzheim V. 39, 40).

² Conciliab. Pragense. ann. 1420 can. xii., xiii.—At this time the Hussites had full sway in Bohemia; the Council was held by Conrad, Archbishop of Prague, who had adopted their faith, and its canons were intended for the internal regulation of their own Church (Hartzheim V. 198). How little, in fact, they differed in doctrinal points from Rome is seen in the confession of faith agreed upon at Prague in 1432 (Johan. de Ragus. de Reduct. Bohem. ap. Monument. Concil. General. Sæc. xv. Tom. I. pp. 182 sq.).

This did not, however, save them from the customary accusations of immorality. Thus, a contemporary describes the indulgence of indiscriminate intercourse as one of the rules of the sect (Joann. Fistenportii Chron. ann. 1419.—Hahn. Collect. Monument. T. I. p. 403), and, in 1413, Conrad, Archbishop of Mainz, in convoking a Council to take action against them, says of the sect "exterminavit clerum et omnem cœlibatum commercio nephando stupravit."—Gudeni Cod. Diplom. IV. 185.

against the priesthood formulated in the proclamation of Procopius and the other chiefs in 1431, at the assembling of the Council of Bâle, was that the clergy were all fornicators, committing adultery with men's wives, or having wives and "presbyterissæ" of their own.¹ In the "Compactata," or terms of reunion with the Catholic Church, agreed upon, in 1436, at the Council of Bâle, there is no allusion to priestly marriage, the four points upon which the Bohemians insisted being merely: (1st), communion in both elements; (2nd), the reformation of ecclesiastical morals; (3rd), free preaching of the Scripture; and (4th), the secularisation of Church property. Rome refused to ratify the agreement, though there was nothing save the communion in both elements to distinguish the Bohemian from the orthodox Church, and when, in 1562, the Emperor Ferdinand endeavoured to procure from the Council of Trent the use of the cup for the Utraquists or Calixtins of Bohemia, he urged in their favour that they would not admit the ministrations of any priest who did not lead a celibate life.²

One fragment of the Hussites, however, held wholly aloof from reconciliation to Rome and professed to uphold in their purity the doctrines of their founder, though they denied the real presence in the elements of the Eucharist. These were the remains of the fiercer sect, known as the Taborites, who were virtually destroyed at the battle of Lipan in 1434. They called themselves the Orthodox Brethren, but were stigmatised by their adversaries with the opprobrious name of Picardi, from a belief that they were related to the heretics exterminated by Ziska. In process of time they admitted the validity of priestly marriage, though it was discouraged among them in view of the dangers to which they were exposed and

¹ Epist. Procopii, Art. VIII. (Martene Ampl. Coll. VIII. 25).

² Petit. Cæsaris, No. 12 (Le Plat, Monument. Concil. Trident. V. 348).

the constant risk of martyrdom incurred by all who ventured to be conspicuous among them, for Hussite and Catholic alike sought their extermination. Yet they bravely maintained their existence, until the Reformation, when they eagerly fraternised with Luther,¹ such minor differences as existed in the organisation of the respective Churches being amicably regulated in 1570 by the agreement of Sendomir.² Still it was not until the commencement of the seventeenth century that priestly celibacy was wholly abolished and that even the bishops of the Brethren were married. In the triumphant Catholic reaction, after the disastrous battle of the Weiss Berg in 1620, many of the pastors became more or less sincere converts, and, in the lack of Catholic priests, were allowed to retain their positions, but were obliged to expel their wives and children.³

While thus trampling out these successive revolts, the Church was blind to the lesson taught by their perpetual recurrence. The minds of men were gradually learning to estimate at its true value the claim of the hierarchy to veneration, and at the same time the vices of the establishment were yearly becoming more odious, and its oppression more onerous. The explosion might be delayed by attempts at partial reformation, but it was inevitable.

¹ Camerarii Hist. Narrat. de Fratrum Orthodox. Ecclesiis in Bohemia, etc., pp. 100, 109-10, 114, 121, 128.

² Consensus in Fide inter Ecclesias Evangelicas, etc., Haidelbergæ, 1605.

³ Herzog, Abriss, II. 453.—De Schweinitz, History of the Unitas Fratrum, pp. 21 420.—Gindely, Geschichte der Gegenreformation in Böhmen, p. 195.

END OF VOL. I.