

CHAPTER 7.

Of the beginning and rise of the Romish Papacy, till it attained a height by which the liberty of the Church was destroyed, and all true rule overthrown.

There are five heads in this chapter.

1. The Patriarchate given and confirmed to the Bishop of Rome, first by the Council of Nice, and afterwards by that of Chalcedon though by no means approved of by other bishops, was the commencement of the Papacy, sec. 1-4.
2. The Church at Rome, by taking pious exiles under its protection, and also thereby protecting wicked men who fled to her, helped forward the mystery of iniquity, although at that time neither the ordination of bishops, nor admonitions and censures, nor the right of convening Councils, nor the right of receiving appeals, belonged to the Roman Bishop, whose profane meddling with these things was condemned by Gregory, sec. 5-13.
3. After the Council of Turin, disputes arose as to the authority of Metropolitans. Disgraceful strife between the Patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople. The vile assassin Phocas put an end to these brawls at the instigation of Boniface, sec. 14-18.
4. To the dishonest arts of Boniface succeeded fouler frauds devised in more modern times, and expressly condemned by Gregory and Bernard. sec. 19-21.
5. The Papacy at length appeared complete in all its parts, the seat of Antichrist. Its impiety, execrable tyranny, and wickedness, portrayed, sec. 23-30.

Sections.

1. First part of the chapter, in which the commencement of the Papacy is assigned to the Council of Nice. In subsequent Councils other bishops presided. No attempt then made to claim the first place.
2. Though the Roman Bishop presided in the Council of Chalcedon, this was owing to special circumstances. The same right not given to his successors in other Councils.
3. The ancient Fathers did not give the title of Primate to the Roman Bishop.
4. Gregory was vehement in opposition to the title when claimed by the Bishop of Constantinople, and did not claim it for himself.
5. Second part of the chapter, explaining the ambitious attempts of the Roman See to obtain the primacy. Their reception of pious exiles. Hearing the appeals and complaints of heretics. Their ambition in this respect offensive to the African Church.
6. The power of the Roman Bishops in ordaining bishops, appointing councils, deciding controversies, etc., confined to their own Patriarchate.
7. If they censured other bishops, they themselves were censured in their turn.

8. They had no right of calling provincial councils except within their own boundaries. The calling of a universal council belonged solely to the Emperor.
9. Appeal to the Roman See not acknowledged by other bishops. Stoutly resisted by the Bishops of France and Africa. The impudence and falsehood of the Roman Pontiff detected.
10. Proof from history that the Roman had no jurisdiction over other churches.
11. The decretal epistles of no avail in support of this usurped jurisdiction.
12. The authority of the Roman Bishop extended in the time of Gregory. Still it only consisted in aiding other bishops with their own consent, or at the command of the Emperor.
13. Even the extent of jurisdiction, thus voluntarily conferred, objected to by Gregory as interfering with better duties.
14. Third part of the chapter, showing the increase of the power of the Papacy in defining the limits of Metropolitans. This gave rise to the decree of the Council of Turin. This decree haughtily annulled by Innocent.
15. Hence the great struggle for precedency between the Sees of Rome and Constantinople. The pride and ambition of the Roman Bishops unfolded.
16. Many attempts of the Bishop of Constantinople to deprive the Bishop of Rome of the primacy.
17. Phocas murders the Emperor, and gives Rome the primacy.
18. The Papal tyranny shortly after established. Bitter complaints by Bernard.
19. Fourth part of the chapter. Altered appearance of the Roman See since the days of Gregory.
20. The present demands of the Romanists not formerly conceded. Fictions of Gregory IX. and Martin.
21. Without mentioning the opposition of Cyprian, of councils, and historical facts, the claims now made were condemned by Gregory himself.
22. The abuses of which Gregory and Bernard complained now increased and sanctioned.
23. The fifth and last part of the chapter, containing the chief answer to the claims of the Papacy—viz. that the Pope is not a bishop in the house of God. This answer confirmed by an enumeration of the essential parts of the episcopal office.
24. A second confirmation by appeal to the institution of Christ. A third confirmation e contrario—viz. That in doctrine and morals the Roman Pontiff is altogether different from a true bishop. Conclusion, that Rome is not the Apostolic See, but the Papacy.
25. Proof from Daniel and Paul that the Pope is Antichrist.
26. Rome could not now claim the primacy, even though she had formerly been the first See, especially considering the base trafficking in which she has engaged.
27. Personal character of Popes. Irreligious opinions held by some of them.
28. John XXII. heretical in regard to the immortality of the soul. His name, therefore, ought to be expunged from

the catalogue of Popes, or rather, there is no foundation for the claim of perpetuity of faith in the Roman See.

29. Some Roman Pontiffs atheists, or sworn enemies of religion. Their immoral lives. Practice of the Cardinals and Romish clergy.
30. Cardinals were formerly merely presbyters of the Roman Church, and far inferior to bishops. As they now are, they have no true and legitimate office in the Church. Conclusion.

1. In regard to the antiquity of the primacy of the Roman See, there is nothing in favour of its establishment more ancient than the decree of the Council of Nice, by which the first place among the Patriarchs is assigned to the Bishop of Rome, and he is enjoined to take care of the suburban churches. While the council, in dividing between him and the other Patriarchs, assigns the proper limits of each, it certainly does not appoint him head of all, but only one of the chief. Vitus and Vincentius attended on the part of Julius, who then governed the Roman Church, and to them the fourth place was given. I ask, if Julius was acknowledged the head of the Church, would his legates have been consigned to the fourth place? Would Athanasius have presided in the council where a representative of the hierarchal order should have been most conspicuous? In the Council of Ephesus, it appears that Celestinus (who was then Roman Pontiff) used a cunning device to secure the dignity of his See. For when he sent his deputies, he made Cyril of Alexandria, who otherwise would have presided, his substitute. Why that commission, but just that his name might stand connected with the first See? His legates sit in an inferior place, are asked their opinion along with others, and subscribe in their order, while, at the same time, his name is coupled with that of the Patriarch of Alexandria. What shall I say of the second Council of Ephesus, where, while the deputies of Leo were present, the Alexandrian Patriarch Dioscorus presided as in his own right? They will object that this was not an orthodox council, since by it the venerable Flavianus was condemned, Eutyches acquitted, and his heresy approved. Yet when the council was met, and the bishops distributed the places among themselves, the deputies of the Roman Church sat among the others just as in a sacred and lawful Council. Still they contend not for the first place, but yield it to another: this they never would have done if they had thought it their own by right. For the Roman bishops were never ashamed to stir up the greatest strife in contending for honours, and for this cause alone, to trouble and harass the Church with many pernicious contests; but because Leo saw that it would be too extravagant to ask the first place for his legates, he omitted to do it.

2. Next came the Council of Chalcedon, in which, by concession of the Emperor, the legates of the Roman Church occupied the first place. But Leo himself confesses that this was an extraordinary privilege; for when he asks it of the Emperor Marcian and Pulcheria Augusta, he does not maintain that it is due to him, but only pretends that the Eastern bishops who presided in the Council of Ephesus had thrown all into confusion, and made a bad use of their power. Therefore, seeing there was need of a grave moderator, and it was not probable that those who had once been so fickle and tumultuous would be fit for this purpose, he requests that, because of the fault and unfitness of others, the office of governing should be transferred to him. That which is asked as a special privilege, and out of the usual order, certainly is not due by a common law.

When it is only pretended that there is need of a new president, because the former ones had behaved themselves improperly, it is plain that the thing asked was not previously done, and ought not to be made perpetual, being done only in respect of a present danger. The Roman Pontiff, therefore, holds the first place in the Council of Chalcedon, not because it is due to his See, but because the council is in want of a grave and fit moderator, while those who ought to have presided exclude themselves by their intemperance and passion. This statement the successor of Leo approved by his procedure. For when he sent his legates to the fifth Council, that of Constantinople, which was held long after, he did not quarrel for the first seat, but readily allowed Mennas, the patriarch of Constantinople, to preside. In like manner, in the Council of Carthage, at which Augustine was present, we perceive that not the legates of the Roman See, but Aurelius, the archbishop of the place, presided, although there was then a question as to the authority of the Roman Pontiff. Nay, even in Italy itself, a universal council was held (that of Aquileia), at which the Roman Bishop was not present. Ambrose, who was then in high favour with the Emperor, presided, and no mention is made of the Roman Pontiff. Therefore, owing to the dignity of Ambrose, the See of Milan was then more illustrious than that of Rome.

3. In regard to the mere title of primate and other titles of pride, of which that pontiff now makes a wondrous boast, it is not difficult to understand how and in what way they crept in. Cyprian often makes mention of Cornelius (Cyprian. Lib. 2 Ep. 2; Lib. 4 Ep. 6), nor does he distinguish him by any other name than that of brother, or fellow bishop, or colleague. When he writes to Stephen, the successor of Cornelius, he not only makes him the equal of himself and others, but addresses him in harsh terms, charging him at one time with presumption, at another with ignorance. After Cyprian, we have the judgment of the whole African Church on the subject. For the Council of Carthage enjoined that none should be called chief of the priests, or first bishop, but only bishop of the first See. But any one who will examine the more ancient records will find that the Roman Pontiff was then contented with the common appellation of brother. Certainly, as long as the true and pure form of the Church continued, all these names of pride on which the Roman See afterwards began to plume itself, were altogether unheard of; none knew what was meant by the supreme Pontiff, and the only head of the Church on earth. Had the Roman Bishop presumed to assume any such title, there were right-hearted men who would immediately have repressed his folly. Jerome, seeing he was a Roman presbyter, was not slow to proclaim the dignity of his church, in as far as fact and the circumstances of the times permitted, and yet we see how he brings it under due subordination. "If authority is asked, the world is greater than a city. Why produce to me the custom of one city? Why vindicate a small number with whom superciliousness has originated against the laws of the Church? Wherever the bishop be, whether at Rome, or Eugubium, or Constantinople, or Rhegium, the merit is the same, and the priesthood the same. The power of riches, or the humbleness of poverty, do not make a bishop superior or inferior" (Hieron. Ep. ad Evagr.).

4. The controversy concerning the title of universal bishop arose at length in the time of Gregory, and was occasioned by the ambition of John of Constantinople. For he wished to make himself universal, a thing which no other had ever attempted. In that controversy, Gregory does not allege that he is deprived of a right

which belonged to him, but he strongly insists that the appellation is profane, nay, blasphemous, nay the forerunner of Antichrist. “The whole Church falls from its state, if he who is called universal falls” (Greg. Lib. 4 Ep. 76). Again, “It is very difficult to bear patiently that one who is our brother and fellow bishop should alone be called bishop, while all others are despised. But in this pride of his, what else is intimated but that the days of Antichrist are already near? For he is imitating him, who, despising the company of angels, attempted to ascend the pinnacle of greatness” (Lib. 4 Ep. 76). He elsewhere says to Eulogius of Alexandria and Anastasius of Antioch: “None of my predecessors ever desired to use this profane term: for if one patriarch is called universal, it is derogatory to the name of patriarch in others. But far be it from any Christian mind to wish to arrogate to itself that which would in any degree, however slight, impair the honour of his brethren” (Lib. 4 Ep. 80). “To consent to that impious term is nothing else than to lose the faith” (Lib. 4 Ep. 83). “What we owe to the preservation of the unity of the faith is one thing, what we owe to the suppression of pride is another. I speak with confidence, for every one that calls himself, or desires to be called, universal priest, is by his pride a forerunner of Antichrist, because he acts proudly in preferring himself to others” (Lib. 7 Ep. 154). Thus, again, in a letter to Anastasius of Antioch, “I said, that he could not have peace with us unless he corrected the presumption of a superstitious and haughty term which the first apostate invented; and (to say nothing of the injury to your honour) if one bishop is called universal, the whole Church goes to ruin when that universal bishop falls” (Lib. 4 Ep. 188). But when he writes, that this honour was offered to Leo in the Council of Chalcedon (Lib. 4 Ep. 76, 80; Lib. 7 Ep. 76), he says what has no semblance of truth; nothing of the kind is found among the acts of that council. And Leo himself, who, in many letters, impugns the decree which was then made in honour of the See of Constantinople, undoubtedly would not have omitted this argument, which was the most plausible of all, if it was true that he himself repudiated what was given to him. One who, in other respects, was rather too desirous of honour, would not have omitted what would have been to his praise. Gregory, therefore, is incorrect in saying, that that title was conferred on the Roman See by the Council of Chalcedon; not to mention how ridiculous it is for him to say, that it proceeded from that sacred council, and yet to term it wicked, profane, nefarious, proud, and blasphemous, nay, devised by the devil, and promulgated by the herald of Antichrist. And yet he adds, that his predecessor refused it, lest by that which was given to one individually, all priests should be deprived of their due honour. In another place, he says, “None ever wished to be called by such a name; none arrogated this rash name to himself, lest, by seizing on the honour of supremacy in the office of the Pontificate, he might seem to deny it to all his brethren” (Gregor. Lib. 4 Ep. 82).

5. I come now to jurisdiction, which the Roman Pontiff asserts as an incontrovertible proposition that he possesses over all churches. I am aware of the great disputes which anciently existed on this subject: for there never was a time when the Roman See did not aim at authority over other churches. And here it will not be out of place to investigate the means by which she gradually attained to some influence. I am not now referring to that unlimited power which she seized at a comparatively recent period. The consideration of that we shall defer to its own place. But it is worth while here briefly to show in what way, and by what means, she formerly raised herself, so as to arrogate some authority over other churches. When the churches of the East were troubled and rent

by the factions of the Arians, under the Emperors Constantius and Constans, sons of Constantine the Great; and Athanasius, the principal defender of the orthodox faith, had been driven from his see, the calamity obliged him to come to Rome, in order that by the authority of this see he might both repress the rage of his enemies, and confirm the orthodox under their distress. He was honourably received by Julius, who was then bishop, and engaged those of the West to undertake the defence of his cause. Therefore, when the orthodox stood greatly in need of external aid, and perceived that their chief protection lay in the Roman See, they willingly bestowed upon it all the authority they could. But the utmost extent of this was, that its communion was held in high estimation, and it was deemed ignominious to be excommunicated by it. Dishonest bad men afterwards added much to its authority, for when they wished to escape lawful tribunals, they betook themselves to Rome as an asylum. Accordingly, if any presbyter was condemned by his bishop, or if any bishop was condemned by the synod of his province, he appealed to Rome. These appeals the Roman bishops received more eagerly than they ought, because it seemed a species of extraordinary power to interpose in matters with which their connection was so very remote. Thus, when Eutyches was condemned by Flavianus, Bishop of Constantinople, he complained to Leo that the sentence was unjust. He, nothing loth, no less presumptuously than abruptly, undertook the patronage of a bad cause, and inveighed bitterly against Flavianus, as having condemned an innocent man without due investigation: and thus the effect of Leo’s ambition was, that for some time the impiety of Eutyches was confirmed. It is certain that in Africa the same thing repeatedly occurred, for whenever any miscreant had been condemned by his ordinary judge, he fled to Rome, and brought many calumnious charges against his own people. The Roman See was always ready to interpose. This dishonesty obliged the African bishops to decree that no one should carry an appeal beyond sea under pain of excommunication.

6. Be this as it may, let us consider what right or authority the Roman See then possessed. Ecclesiastical power may be reduced to four heads—viz. ordination of bishops, calling of councils, hearing of appeals (or jurisdiction), inflicting monitory chastisements or censures. All ancient councils enjoin that bishops shall be ordained by their own Metropolitans; they nowhere enjoin an application to the Roman Bishop, except in his own patriarchate. Gradually, however, it became customary for all Italian bishops to go to Rome for consecration, with the exception of the Metropolitans, who did not allow themselves to be thus brought into subjection; but when any Metropolitan was to be ordained, the Roman Bishop sent one of his presbyters merely to be present, but not to preside. An example of this kind is extant in Gregory (Lib. 2 Ep. 68, 70), in the consecration of Constantius of Milan, after the death of Laurence. I do not, however, think that this was a very ancient custom. At first, as a mark of respect and good-will, they sent deputies to one another to witness the ordination, and attest their communion. What was thus voluntary afterwards began to be regarded as necessary. However this be, it is certain that anciently the Roman Bishop had no power of ordaining except within the bounds of his own patriarchate, that is, as a canon of the Council of Nice expresses it, in suburban churches. To ordination was added the sending of a synodical epistle, but this implied no authority. The patriarchs were accustomed, immediately after consecration, to attest their faith by a formal writing, in which they declared that they assented to sacred and orthodox councils. Thus, by rendering an

account of their faith, they mutually approved of each other. If the Roman Bishop had received this confession from others, and not given it, he would therein have been acknowledged superior; but when it behoved to give as well as to receive, and to be subject to the common law, this was a sign of equality, not of lordship. Of this we have an example in a letter of Gregory to Anastasius and Cyriac of Constantinople, and in another letter to all the patriarchs together (Gregor. Lib. 1 Ep. 24, 25; Lib. 6 Ep. 169).

7. Next come admonitions or censures. These the Roman Bishops anciently employed towards others, and in their turn received. Irenaeus sharply rebuked Victor for rashly troubling the Church with a pernicious schism, for a matter of no moment. He submitted without objecting. Holy bishops were then wont to use the freedom as brethren, of admonishing and rebuking the Roman Prelate when he happened to err. He in his turn, when the case required, reminded others of their duty, and reprimanded them for their faults. For Cyprian, when he exhorts Stephen to admonish the bishops of France, does not found on his larger power, but on the common right which priests have in regard to each other (Cyprian. Lib. 3 Ep. 13). I ask if Stephen had then presided over France, would not Cyprian have said, "Check them, for they are yours"? but his language is very different. "The brotherly fellowship which binds us together requires that we should mutually admonish each other" (Cyprian. ad Pomp. Cont. Epist. Steph.) And we see also with what severity of expression, a man otherwise of a mild temper, inveighs against Stephen himself, when he thinks him chargeable with insolence. Therefore, it does not yet appear in this respect that the Roman Bishop possessed any jurisdiction over those who did not belong to his province.

8. In regard to calling of councils, it was the duty of every Metropolitan to assemble a provincial synod at stated times. Here the Roman Bishop had no jurisdiction, while the Emperor alone could summon a general council. Had any of the bishops attempted this, not only would those out of the province not have obeyed the call, but a tumult would instantly have arisen. Therefore the Emperor gave intimation to all alike to attend. Socrates, indeed, relates that Julius expostulated with the Eastern bishops for not having called him to the Council of Antioch, seeing it was forbidden by the canons that anything should be decided without the knowledge of the Roman Bishop (Tripart. Hist. Lib. 4). But who does not perceive that this is to be understood of those decrees which bind the whole Church? At the same time, it is not strange if, in deference both to the antiquity and largeness of the city, and the dignity of the see, no universal decree concerning religion should be made in the absence of the Bishop of Rome, provided he did not refuse to be present. But what has this to do with the dominion of the whole Church? For we deny not that he was one of the principal bishops, though we are unwilling to admit what the Romanists now contend for—viz. that he had power over all.

9. The fourth remaining species of power is that of hearing appeals. It is evident that the supreme power belongs to him to whose tribunal appeals are made. Many had repeatedly appealed to the Roman Pontiff. He also had endeavoured to bring causes under his cognisance, but he had always been derided whenever he went beyond his own boundaries. I say nothing of the East and of Greece, but it is certain, that the bishops of France stoutly re-

sisted when he seemed to assume authority over them. In Africa, the subject was long disputed, for in the Council of Milevita, at which Augustine was present, when those who carried appeals beyond seas were excommunicated, the Roman Pontiff attempted to obtain an alteration of the decree, and sent legates to show that the privilege of hearing appeals was given him by the Council of Nice. The legates produced acts of the council drawn from the armoury of their church. The African bishops resisted, and maintained, that credit was not to be given to the Bishop of Rome in his own cause; accordingly, they said that they would send to Constantinople, and other cities of Greece, where less suspicious copies might be had. It was found that nothing like what the Romanists had pretended was contained in the acts, and thus the decree which abrogated the supreme jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiff was confirmed. In this matter was manifested the egregious effrontery of the Roman Pontiff. For when he had fraudulently substituted the Council of Sardis for that of Nice, he was disgracefully detected in a palpable falsehood; but still greater and more impudent was the iniquity of those who added a fictitious letter to the Council, in which some Bishop of Carthage condemns the arrogance of Aurelius his predecessor, in promising to withdraw himself from obedience to the Apostolic See, and making a surrender of himself and his church, suppliantly prays for pardon. These are the noble records of antiquity on which the majesty of the Roman See is founded, while, under the pretext of antiquity, they deal in falsehoods so puerile, that even a blind man might feel them. "Aurelius (says he), elated by diabolical audacity and contumacy, was rebellious against Christ and St Peter, and, accordingly, deserved to be anathematised." What does Augustine say? and what the many Fathers who were present at the Council of Milevita? But what need is there to give a lengthened refutation of that absurd writing, which not even Romanists, if they have any modesty left them, can look at without a deep feeling of shame? Thus Gratian, whether through malice or ignorance, I know not, after quoting the decree, That those are to be deprived of communion who carry appeals beyond seas, subjoins the exception, Unless, perhaps, they have appealed to the Roman See (Grat. 2, Quaest. 4, cap. Placuit.). What can you make of creatures like these, who are so devoid of common sense that they set down as an exception from the law the very thing on account of which, as everybody sees, the law was made? For the Council, in condemning transmarine appeals, simply prohibits an appeal to Rome. Yet this worthy expounder excepts Rome from the common law.

10. But (to end the question at once) the kind of jurisdiction which belonged to the Roman Bishop one narrative will make manifest. Donatus of Casa Nigra had accused Cecilianus the Bishop of Carthage. Cecilianus was condemned without a hearing: for, having ascertained that the bishops had entered into a conspiracy against him, he refused to appear. The case was brought before the Emperor Constantine. who, wishing the matter to be ended by an ecclesiastical decision; gave the cognisance of it to Melciades, the Roman Bishop, appointing as his colleagues some bishops from Italy, France, and Spain. If it formed part of the ordinary jurisdiction of the Roman See to hear appeals in ecclesiastical causes, why did he allow others to be conjoined with him at the Emperor's discretion? nay, why does he undertake to decide more from the command of the Emperor than his own office? But let us hear what afterwards happened (see August. Ep. 162, et alibi). Cecilianus prevails. Donatus of Casa Nigra is thrown in his calumnious action and appeals. Constantine devolves the decision of the appeal on the Bishop of Arles, who sits as judge, to give sentence after the

Roman Pontiff.¹ If the Roman See has supreme power not subject to appeal, why does Melciades allow himself to be so greatly insulted as to have the Bishop of Arles preferred to him? And who is the Emperor that does this? Constantine, who they boast not only made it his constant study, but employed all the resources of the empire to enlarge the dignity of that see. We see, therefore, how far in every way the Roman Pontiff was from that supreme dominion, which he asserts to have been given him by Christ over all churches, and which he falsely alleges that he possessed in all ages, with the consent of the whole world.

11. I know how many epistles there are, how many rescripts and edicts in which there is nothing which the pontiffs do not ascribe and confidently arrogate to themselves. But all men of the least intellect and learning know, that the greater part of them are in themselves so absurd, that it is easy at the first sight to detect the forge from which they have come. Does any man of sense and soberness think that Anacletus is the author of that famous interpretation which is given in Gratian, under the name of Anacletus—viz. that Cephas is head? (Dist. 22, cap. Sacrosancta.) Numerous folios of the same kind which Gratian has heaped together without judgment, the Romanists of the present day employ against us in defence of their see. The smoke, by which, in the former days of ignorance, they imposed upon the ignorant, they would still vend in the present light. I am unwilling to take much trouble in refuting things which, by their extreme absurdity, plainly refute themselves. I admit the existence of genuine epistles by ancient Pontiffs, in which they pronounce magnificent eulogiums on the extent of their see. Such are some of the epistles of Leo. For as he possessed learning and eloquence, so he was excessively desirous of glory and dominion; but the true question is, whether or not, when he thus extolled himself, the churches gave credit to his testimony? It appears that many were offended with his ambition, and also resisted his cupidity. He in one place appoints the Bishop of Thessalonica his vicar throughout Greece and other neighbouring regions (Leo, Ep. 85), and elsewhere gives the same office to the Bishop of Arles or some other throughout France (Ep. 83). In like manner, he appointed Hormisdas, Bishop of Hispala, his vicar throughout Spain, but he uniformly makes this reservation, that in giving such commissions, the ancient privileges of the Metropolitans were to remain safe and entire. These appointments, therefore, were made on the condition, that no bishop should be impeded in his ordinary jurisdiction, no Metropolitan in taking cognisance of appeals, no provincial council in constituting churches. But what else was this than to decline all jurisdiction, and to interpose for the purpose of settling discord only, in so far as the law and nature of ecclesiastical communion admit?

12. In the time of Gregory, that ancient rule was greatly changed. For when the empire was convulsed and torn, when France and Spain were suffering from the many disasters which they ever and anon received, when Illyricum was laid waste, Italy harassed, and Africa almost destroyed by uninterrupted calamities, in order that, during these civil convulsions, the integrity of the faith might remain, or at least not entirely perish, the bishops in all quarters attached themselves more to the Roman Pontiff. In

¹ French, "Voilà l'Archeveque d'Arles assis pour retracter; si bon lui semble la sentence de l'Eveque Romain. au moins pour juger par dessus lui."—Here is the Archbishop of Arles seated to recall, if he thinks fit, the sentence of the Bishop of Rome, or at least to judge as his superior.

this way, not only the dignity, but also the power of the see, exceedingly increased, although I attach no great importance to the means by which this was accomplished. It is certain, that it was then greater than in former ages. And yet it was very different from the unbridled dominion of one ruling others as he pleased. Still the reverence paid to the Roman See was such, that by its authority it could guide and repress those whom their own colleagues were unable to keep to their duty; for Gregory is careful ever and anon to testify that he was not less faithful in preserving the rights of others, than in insisting that his own should be preserved. "I do not," says he, "under the stimulus of ambition, derogate from any man's right, but desire to honour my brethren in all things" (Gregor. Lib. 2 Ep. 68). There is no sentence in his writings in which he boasts more proudly of the extent of his primacy than the following: "I know not what bishop is not subject to the Roman See, when he is discovered in a fault" (Leo. Lib. 2, Epist. 68). However, he immediately adds, "Where faults do not call for interference, all are equal according to the rule of humility." He claims for himself the right of correcting those who have sinned; if all do their duty, he puts himself on a footing of equality. He, indeed, claimed this right, and those who chose assented to it, while those who were not pleased with it were at liberty to object with impunity; and it is known that the greater part did so. We may add, that he is then speaking of the primate of Byzantium, who, when condemned by a provincial synod, repudiated the whole judgment. His colleagues had informed the Emperor of his contumacy, and the Emperor had given the cognisance of the matter to Gregory. We see, therefore, that he does not interfere in any way with the ordinary jurisdiction, and that, in acting as a subsidiary to others, he acts entirely by the Emperor's command.

13. At this time, therefore, the whole power of the Roman Bishop consisted in opposing stubborn and ungovernable spirits, where some extraordinary remedy was required, and this in order to assist other bishops, not to interfere with them. Therefore, he assumes no more power over others than he elsewhere gives others over himself, when he confesses that he is ready to be corrected by all, amended by all (Lib. 2 Ep. 37). So, in another place, though he orders the Bishop of Aquileia to come to Rome to plead his cause in a controversy as to doctrine which had arisen between himself and others, he thus orders not of his own authority, but in obedience to the Emperor's command. Nor does he declare that he himself will be sole judge, but promises to call a synod, by which the whole business may be determined. But although the moderation was still such, that the power of the Roman See had certain limits which it was not permitted to overstep, and the Roman Bishop himself was not more above than under others, it appears how much Gregory was dissatisfied with this state of matters. For he ever and anon complains, that he, under the colour of the episcopate, was brought back to the world, and was more involved in earthly cares than when living as a laic; that he, in that honourable office, was oppressed by the tumult of secular affairs. Elsewhere he says, "So many burdensome occupations depress me, that my mind cannot at all rise to things above. I am shaken by the many billows of causes, and after they are quieted, am afflicted by the tempests of a tumultuous life, so that I may truly say I am come into the depths of the sea, and the flood has overwhelmed me." From this I infer what he would have said if he had fallen on the present times. If he did not fulfil, he at least did the duty of a pastor. He declined the administration of civil power, and acknowledged himself subject, like others, to the Emperor. He did not interfere

with the management of other churches, unless forced by necessity. And yet he thinks himself in a labyrinth, because he cannot devote himself entirely to the duty of a bishop.

14. At that time, as has already been said, the Bishop of Constantinople was disputing with the Bishop of Rome for the primacy. For after the seat of empire was fixed at Constantinople, the majesty of the empire seemed to demand that that church should have the next place of honour to that of Rome. And certainly, at the outset, nothing had tended more to give the primacy to Rome, than that it was then the capital of the empire. In Gratian, (Dist. 80), there is a rescript under the name of Pope Lucinus, to the effect that the only way in which the cities where Metropolitans and Primates ought to preside were distinguished, was by means of the civil government which had previously existed. There is a similar rescript under the name of Pope Clement, in which he says, that patriarchs were appointed in those cities which had previously had the first flamens. Although this is absurd, it was borrowed from what was true. For it is certain, that in order to make as little change as possible, provinces were distributed according to the state of matters then existing, and Primates and Metropolitans were placed in those cities which surpassed others in honours and power. Accordingly, it was decreed in the Council of Turin, that the cities of every province which were first in the civil government should be the first sees of bishops. But if it should happen that the honour of civil government was transferred from one city to another, then the right of the metropolis should be at the same time transferred thither. But Innocent, the Roman Pontiff, seeing that the ancient dignity of the city had been decaying ever since the seat of empire had been transferred to Constantinople, and fearing for his see, enacted a contrary law, in which he denies the necessity of changing metropolitan churches as imperial metropolitan cities were changed. But the authority of a synod is justly to be preferred to the opinion of one individual, and Innocent himself should be suspected in his own cause. However this be, he by his caveat shows the original rule to have been, that Metropolitans should be distributed according to the order of the empire.

15. Agreeably to this ancient custom, the first Council of Constantinople decreed that the bishop of that city should take precedence after the Roman Pontiff, because it was a new Rome. But long after, when a similar decree was made at Chalcedon, Leo keenly protested (Socrat. Hist. Trop. Lib. 9 cap. 13). And not only did he permit himself to set at nought what six hundred bishops or more had decreed, but he even assailed them with bitter reproaches, because they had derogated from other sees in the honour which they had presumed to confer on the Church of Constantinople (in Decr. 22, Distinct. cap. Constantinop.). What, pray, could have incited the man to trouble the world for so small an affair but mere ambition? He says, that what the Council of Nice had once sanctioned ought to have been inviolable; as if the Christian faith was in any danger if one church was preferred to another; or as if separate Patriarchates had been established on any other grounds than that of policy. But we know that policy varies with times, nay, demands various changes. It is therefore futile in Leo to pretend that the See of Constantinople ought not to receive the honour which was given to that of Alexandria, by the authority of the Council of Nice. For it is the dictate of common sense, that the decree was one of those which might be abrogated, in respect of a change of times. What shall we say to the fact, that none of the Eastern churches,

though chiefly interested, objected? Proterius, who had been appointed at Alexandria instead of Dioscorus, was certainly present; other patriarchs whose honour was impaired were present. It belonged to them to interfere, not to Leo, whose station remained entire. While all of them are silent, many assent, and the Roman Bishop alone resists, it is easy to judge what it is that moves him; just because he foresaw what happened not long after, that when the glory of ancient Rome declined, Constantinople, not contented with the second place, would dispute the primacy with her. And yet his clamour was not so successful as to prevent the decree of the council from being ratified. Accordingly, his successors seeing themselves defeated, quietly desisted from that petulance, and allowed the Bishop of Constantinople to be regarded as the second Patriarch.

16. But shortly after, John, who, in the time of Gregory, presided over the church of Constantinople, went so far as to say that he was universal Patriarch. Here Gregory, that he might not be wanting to his See in a most excellent cause, constantly opposed. And certainly it was impossible to tolerate the pride and madness of John, who wished to make the limits of his bishopric equal to the limits of the empire. This, which Gregory denies to another, he claims not for himself, but abominates the title by whomsoever used, as wicked, impious, and nefarious. Nay, he is offended with Eulogius, Bishop of Alexandria, who had honoured him with this title, "See (says he, Lib. 8 Ep. 30) in the address of the letter which you have directed to me, though I prohibited you, you have taken care to write a word of proud signification by calling me Universal Pope. What I ask is, that your holiness do not go farther, because, whatever is given to another more than reason demands is withdrawn from you. I do not regard that as honour by which I see that the honour of my brethren is diminished. For my honour is the universal honour of the Church, and entire prerogative of my brethren. If your holiness calls me universal Pope, it denies itself to be this whole which it acknowledges me to be." The cause of Gregory was indeed good and honourable; but John, aided by the favour of the Emperor Maurice, could not be dissuaded from his purpose. Cyriac also, his successor, never allowed himself to be spoken to on the subject.

17. At length Phocas, who had slain Maurice, and usurped his place (more friendly to the Romans, for what reason I know not, or rather because he had been crowned king there without opposition), conceded to Boniface III. what Gregory by no means demanded—viz. that Rome should be the head of all the churches. In this way the controversy was ended. And yet this kindness of the Emperor to the Romans would not have been of very much avail had not other circumstances occurred. For shortly after Greece and all Asia were cut off from his communion, while all the reverence which he received from France was obedience only in so far as she pleased. She was brought into subjection for the first time when Pepin got possession of the throne. For Zachary, the Roman Pontiff, having aided him in his perfidy and robbery when he expelled the lawful sovereign, and seized upon the kingdom, which lay exposed as a kind of prey, was rewarded by having the jurisdiction of the Roman See established over the churches of France. In the same way as robbers are wont to divide and share the common spoil, those two worthies arranged that Pepin should have the worldly and civil power by spoiling the true prince, while Zachary should become the head of all the bishops, and have the spiritual

power. This, though weak at the first (as usually happens with new power), was afterwards confirmed by the authority of Charlemagne for a very similar cause. For he too was under obligation to the Roman Pontiff, to whose zeal he was indebted for the honour of empire. Though there is reason to believe that the churches had previously been greatly altered, it is certain that the ancient form of the Church was then only completely effaced in Gaul and Germany. There are still extant among the archives of the Parliament of Paris short commentaries on those times, which, in treating of ecclesiastical affairs, make mention of the compacts both of Pepin and Charlemagne with the Roman Pontiff. Hence we may infer that the ancient state of matters was then changed.

18. From that time, while everywhere matters were becoming daily worse, the tyranny of the Roman Bishop was established, and ever and anon increased, and this partly by the ignorance, partly by the sluggishness, of the bishops. For while he was arrogating everything to himself, and proceeding more and more to exalt himself without measure, contrary to law and right, the bishops did not exert themselves so zealously as they ought in curbing his pretensions. And though they had not been deficient in spirit, they were devoid of true doctrine and experience, so that they were by no means fit for so important an effort. Accordingly, we see how great and monstrous was the profanation of all sacred things, and the dissipation of the whole ecclesiastical order at Rome, in the age of Bernard. He complains (*Lib. 1 de Consider. ad Eugen.*) that the ambitious, avaricious, demoniacal, sacrilegious, fornicators, incestuous, and similar miscreants, flocked from all quarters of the world to Rome, that by apostolic authority they might acquire or retain ecclesiastical honours: that fraud, circumvention, and violence, prevailed. The mode of judging causes then in use he describes as execrable, as disgraceful, not only to the Church, but the bar. He exclaims that the Church is filled with the ambitious: that not one is more afraid to perpetrate crimes than robbers in their den when they share the spoils of the traveller. “Few (say he) look to the mouth of the legislator, but all to his hands. Not without cause, however: for their hands do the whole business of the Pope. What kind of thing is it when those are bought by the spoils of the Church, who say to you, Well done, well done? The life of the poor is sown in the highways of the rich: silver glitters in the mire: they run together from all sides: it is not the poorer that takes it up, but the stronger, or, perhaps, he who runs fastest. That custom, however, or rather that death, comes not of you: I wish it would end in you. While these things are going on, you, a pastor, come forth robed in much costly clothing. If I might presume to say it, this is more the pasture of demons than of sheep. Peter, forsooth, acted thus; Paul sported thus. Your court has been more accustomed to receive good men than to make them. The bad do not gain much there, but the good degenerate.” Then when he describes the abuses of appeals, no pious man can read them without being horrified. At length, speaking of the unbridled cupidity of the Roman See in usurping jurisdiction, he thus concludes (*Lib. 3 de Concil.*), “I express the murmur and common complaint of the churches. Their cry is, that they are maimed and dismembered. There are none, or very few, who do not lament or fear that plague. Do you ask what plague? Abbots are encroached upon by bishops, bishops by archbishops, etc. It is strange if this can be excused. By thus acting, you prove that you have the fulness of power, but not the fulness of righteousness. You do this because you are able; but whether you also ought to do it is the question. You are appointed to preserve, not to envy, the honour and rank of each.” I have

thought it proper to quote these few passages out of many, partly that my readers may see how grievously the Church had then fallen, partly, too, that they may see with what grief and lamentation all pious men beheld this calamity.

19. But though we were to concede to the Roman Pontiff of the present day the eminence and extent of jurisdiction which his see had in the middle ages, as in the time of Leo and Gregory, what would this be to the existing Papacy? I am not now speaking of worldly dominion, or of civil power, which will afterwards be explained in their own place (*chap. 11 sec. 8-14*); but what resemblance is there between the spiritual government of which they boast and the state of those times? The only definition which they give of the Pope is, that he is the supreme head of the Church on earth, and the universal bishop of the whole globe. The Pontiffs themselves, when they speak of their authority, declare with great superciliousness, that the power of commanding belongs to them,—that the necessity of obedience remains with others,—that all their decrees are to be regarded as confirmed by the divine voice of Peter,—that provincial synods, from not having the presence of the Pope, are deficient in authority,—that they can ordain the clergy of any church,—and can summon to their See any who have been ordained elsewhere. Innumerable things of this kind are contained in the farrago of Gratian, which I do not mention, that I may not be tedious to my readers. The whole comes to this, that to the Roman Pontiff belongs the supreme cognisance of all ecclesiastical causes, whether in determining and defining doctrines, or in enacting laws, or in appointing discipline, or in giving sentences. It were also tedious and superfluous to review the privileges which they assume to themselves in what they call reservations. But the most intolerable of all things is their leaving no judicial authority in the world to restrain and curb them when they licentiously abuse their immense power. “No man (say they¹) is entitled to alter the judgment of this See, on account of the primacy of the Roman Church.” Again, “The judge shall not be judged either by the emperor, or by kings, or by the clergy, or by the people.” It is surely imperious enough for one man to appoint himself the judge of all, while he will not submit to the judgment of any. But what if he tyrannises over the people of God? if he dissipates and lays waste the kingdom of Christ? if he troubles the whole Church? if he convert the pastoral office into robbery? Nay, though he should be the most abandoned of all, he insists that none can call him to account. The language of Pontiffs is, “God has been pleased to terminate the causes of other men by men, but the Prelate of this See he has reserved unquestioned for his own judgment.” Again, “The deeds of subjects are judged by us; ours by God only.”

20. And in order that edicts of this kind might have more weight, they falsely substituted the names of ancient Pontiffs, as if matters had been so constituted from the beginning, while it is absolutely certain that whatever attributes more to the Pontiff than we have stated to have been given to him by ancient councils, is new and of recent fabrication. Nay, they have carried their effrontery so far as to publish a rescript under the name of Anastasius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, in which he testifies that it was appointed by ancient regulations, that nothing should be done in the remotest provinces without being previously referred to the Roman See.

¹ Nicolas, whose view is given in *Decretis* 17, *Quaest.* 3, *cap.* Nemini; Innocent IX. *Quaest.* 3, *cap.* Nemo. *Symmachi* 9. *Quaest.* 3, *cap.* Aliorum. *Antherius, ibidem, cap.* Facta.

Besides its extreme folly, who can believe it credible that such an eulogium on the Roman See proceeded from an opponent and rival of its honour and dignity? But doubtless it was necessary that those Antichrists should proceed to such a degree of madness and blindness, that their iniquity might be manifest to all men of sound mind who will only open their eyes. The decretal epistles collected by Gregory IX., also the Clementines and Extravagants of Martin, breathe still more plainly, and in more bombastic terms bespeak this boundless ferocity and tyranny, as it were, of barbarian kings. But these are the oracles out of which the Romanists would have their Papacy to be judged. Hence have sprung those famous axioms which have the force of oracles throughout the Papacy in the present day—viz. that the Pope cannot err; that the Pope is superior to councils; that the Pope is the universal bishop of all churches, and the chief Head of the Church on earth. I say nothing of the still greater absurdities which are babbled by the foolish canonists in their schools, absurdities, however, which Roman theologians not only assent to, but even applaud in flattery of their idol.

21. I will not treat with them on the strictest terms. In opposition to their great insolence, some would quote the language which Cyprian used to the bishops in the council over which he presided: “None of us styles himself bishop of bishops, or forces his colleagues to the necessity of obeying by the tyranny of terror.” Some might object what was long after decreed at Carthage, “Let no one be called the prince of priests or first bishop;” and might gather many proofs from history, and canons from councils, and many passages from ancient writers, which bring the Roman Pontiff into due order. But these I omit, that I may not seem to press too hard upon them. However, let these worthy defenders of the Roman See tell me with what face they can defend the title of universal bishop, while they see it so often anathematised by Gregory. If effect is to be given to his testimony, then they, by making their Pontiff universal, declare him to be Antichrist. The name of head was not more approved. For Gregory thus speaks: “Peter was the chief member in the body, John, Andrew, and James, the heads of particular communities. All, however, are under one head members of the Church: nay, the saints before the law, the saints under the law, the saints under grace, all perfecting the body of the Lord, are constituted members: none of them ever wished to be styled universal” (Gregor. Lib. 4 Ep. 83). When the Pontiff arrogates to himself the power of ordering, he little accords with what Gregory elsewhere says. For Eulogius, Bishop of Alexandria, having said that he had received an order from him, he replies in this manner: “This word order I beg you to take out of my hearing, for I know who I am, and who you are: in station you are my brethren, in character my fathers. I therefore did not order, but took care to suggest what seemed useful” (Gregor. Lib. 7 Ep. 80). When the Pope extends his jurisdiction without limit, he does great and atrocious injustice not only to other bishops, but to each single church, tearing and dismembering them, that he may build his see upon their ruins. When he exempts himself from all tribunals, and wishes to reign in the manner of a tyrant, holding his own caprice to be his only law, the thing is too insulting, and too foreign to ecclesiastical rule, to be on any account submitted to. It is altogether abhorrent, not only from pious feeling, but also from common sense.

22. But that I may not be forced to discuss and follow out each point singly, I again appeal to those who, in the present day, would be thought the best and most faithful defenders of the Ro-

man See, whether they are not ashamed to defend the existing state of the Papacy, which is clearly a hundred times more corrupt than in the days of Gregory and Bernard, though even then these holy men were so much displeased with it. Gregory everywhere complains (Lib. 1 Ep. 5; item, Ep. 7, 25, etc.) that he was distracted above measure by foreign occupations: that under colour of the episcopate he was taken back to the world, being subject to more worldly cares than he remembered to have ever had when a laic; that he was so oppressed by the trouble of secular affairs, as to be unable to raise his mind to things above; that he was so tossed by the many billows of causes, and afflicted by the tempests of a tumultuous life, that he might well say, “I am come into the depths of the sea.” It is certain, that amid these worldly occupations, he could teach the people in sermons, admonish in private, and correct those who required it; order the Church, give counsel to his colleagues, and exhort them to their duty. Moreover, some time was left for writing, and yet he deplores it as his calamity, that he was plunged into the very deepest sea. If the administration at that time was a sea, what shall we say of the present Papacy? For what resemblance is there between the periods? Now there are no sermons, no care for discipline, no zeal for churches, no spiritual function; nothing, in short, but the world. And yet this labyrinth is lauded as if nothing could be found better ordered and arranged. What complaints also does Bernard pour forth, what groans does he utter, when he beholds the vices of his own age? What then would he have done on beholding this iron, or, if possible, worse than iron, age of ours? How dishonest, therefore, not only obstinately to defend as sacred and divine what all the saints have always with one mouth disapproved, but to abuse their testimony in favour of the Papacy, which, it is evident, was altogether unknown to them? Although I admit, in respect to the time of Bernard, that all things were so corrupt as to make it not unlike our own. But it betrays a want of all sense of shame to seek any excuse from that middle period—namely, from that of Leo, Gregory, and the like—for it is just as if one were to vindicate the monarchy of the Caesars by lauding the ancient state of the Roman empire; in other words, were to borrow the praises of liberty in order to eulogise tyranny.

23. Lastly, Although all these things were granted, an entirely new question arises, when we deny that there is at Rome a Church in which privileges of this nature can reside; when we deny that there is a bishop to sustain the dignity of these privileges. Assume, therefore, that all these things are true (though we have already extorted the contrary from them), that Peter was by the words of Christ constituted head of the universal Church, and that the honour thus conferred upon him he deposited in the Roman See, that this was sanctioned by the authority of the ancient Church, and confirmed by long use; that supreme power was always with one consent devolved by all on the Roman Pontiff, that while he was the judge of all causes and all men, he was subject to the judgment of none. Let even more be conceded to them if they will, I answer, in one word, that none of these things avail if there be not a Church and a Bishop at Rome. They must of necessity concede to me that she is not a mother of churches who is not herself a church, that he cannot be the chief of bishops who is not himself a bishop. Would they then have the Apostolic See at Rome? Let them give me a true and lawful apostleship. Would they have a supreme pontiff, let them give me a bishop. But how? Where will they show me any semblance of a church? They, no doubt, talk of one, and have it ever in their mouths. But surely the Church is recognised by certain marks, and bishopric is the name of an office. I am not now speak-

ing of the people but of the government, which ought perpetually to be conspicuous in the Church. Where, then, is a ministry such as the institution of Christ requires? Let us remember what was formerly said of the duty of presbyters and bishops. If we bring the office of cardinals to that test, we will acknowledge that they are nothing less than presbyters. But I should like to know what one quality of a bishop the Pope himself has? The first point in the office of a bishop is to instruct the people in the word of God; the second and next to it is to administer the sacraments; the third is to admonish and exhort, to correct those who are in fault, and restrain the people by holy discipline. Which of these things does he do? Nay, which of these things does he pretend to do? Let them say, then, on what ground they will have him to be regarded as a bishop, who does not even in semblance touch any part of the duty with his little finger.

24. It is not with a bishop as with a king; the latter, though he does not execute the proper duty of a king, nevertheless retains the title and the honour; but in deciding on a bishop respect is had to the command of Christ, to which effect ought always to be given in the Church. Let the Romanists then untie this knot. I deny that their pontiff is the prince of bishops, seeing he is no bishop. This allegation of mine they must prove to be false if they would succeed in theirs. What then do I maintain? That he has nothing proper to a bishop, but is in all things the opposite of a bishop. But with what shall I here begin? With doctrine or with morals? What shall I say, or what shall I pass in silence, or where shall I end? This I maintain: while in the present day the world is so inundated with perverse and impious doctrines, so full of all kinds of superstition, so blinded by error and sunk in idolatry, there is not one of them which has not emanated from the Papacy, or at least been confirmed by it. Nor is there any other reason why the pontiffs are so enraged against the reviving doctrine of the Gospel, why they stretch every nerve to oppress it, and urge all kings and princes to cruelty, than just that they see their whole dominion tottering and falling to pieces the moment the Gospel of Christ prevails. Leo was cruel and Clement sanguinary, Paul is truculent. But in assailing the truth, it is not so much natural temper that impels them as the conviction that they have no other method of maintaining their power. Therefore, seeing they cannot be safe unless they put Christ to flight, they labour in this cause as if they were fighting for their altars and hearths, for their own lives and those of their adherents. What then? Shall we recognise the Apostolic See where we see nothing but horrible apostacy? Shall he be the vicar of Christ who, by his furious efforts in persecuting the Gospel, plainly declares himself to be Antichrist? Shall he be the successor of Peter who goes about with fire and sword demolishing everything that Peter built? Shall he be the Head of the Church who, after dissevering the Church from Christ, her only true Head, tears and lacerates her members? Rome, indeed, was once the mother of all the churches, but since she began to be the seat of Antichrist she ceased to be what she was.

25. To some we seem slanderous and petulant, when we call the Roman Pontiff Antichrist. But those who think so perceive not that they are bringing a charge of intemperance against Paul, after whom we speak, nay, in whose very words we speak. But lest any one object that Paul's words have a different meaning, and are wrested by us against the Roman Pontiff, I will briefly show that they can only be understood of the Papacy. Paul says that Anti-

christ would sit in the temple of God (2 Thess. 2:4). In another passage, the Spirit, portraying him in the person of Antiochus, says that his reign would be with great swelling words of vanity (Dan. 7:25). Hence we infer that his tyranny is more over souls than bodies, a tyranny set up in opposition to the spiritual kingdom of Christ. Then his nature is such, that he abolishes not the name either of Christ or the Church, but rather uses the name of Christ as a pretext, and lurks under the name of Church as under a mask. But though all the heresies and schisms which have existed from the beginning belong to the kingdom of Antichrist, yet when Paul foretells that defection will come, he by the description intimates that that seat of abomination will be erected, when a kind of universal defection comes upon the Church, though many members of the Church scattered up and down should continue in the true unity of the faith. But when he adds, that in his own time, the mystery of iniquity, which was afterwards to be openly manifested, had begun to work in secret, we thereby understand that this calamity was neither to be introduced by one man, nor to terminate in one man (see Calv. in 2 Thess. 2:3; Dan. 7:9). Moreover, when the mark by which he distinguishes Antichrist is, that he would rob God of his honour and take it to himself, he gives the leading feature which we ought to follow in searching out Antichrist; especially when pride of this description proceeds to the open devastation of the Church. Seeing then it is certain that the Roman Pontiff has impudently transferred to himself the most peculiar properties of God and Christ, there cannot be a doubt that he is the leader and standard-bearer of an impious and abominable kingdom.

26. Let the Romanists now go and oppose us with antiquity; as if, amid such a complete change in every respect, the honour of the See can continue where there is no See. Eusebius says that God, to make way for his vengeance, transferred the Church which was at Jerusalem to Pella (Euseb. Lib. 3 cap. 5). What we are told was once done may have been done repeatedly. Hence it is too absurd and ridiculous so to fix the honour of the primacy to a particular spot, so that he who is in fact the most inveterate enemy of Christ, the chief adversary of the Gospel, the greatest devastator and waster of the Church, the most cruel slayer and murderer of the saints, should be, nevertheless, regarded as the vicegerent of Christ, the successor of Peter, the first priest of the Church, merely because he occupies what was formerly the first of all sees. I do not say how great the difference is between the chancery of the Pope and well-regulated order in the Church; although this one fact might well set the question at rest. For no man of sound mind will include the episcopate in lead and bulls, much less in that administration of captions and circumscriptions, in which the spiritual government of the Pope is supposed to consist. It has therefore been elegantly said, that that vaunted Roman Church was long ago converted into a temporal court, the only thing which is now seen at Rome. I am not here speaking of the vices of individuals, but demonstrating that the Papacy itself is diametrically opposed to the ecclesiastical system.

27. But if we come to individuals, it is well known what kind of vicars of Christ we shall find. No doubt, Julius and Leo, and Clement and Paul, will be pillars of the Christian faith, the first interpreters of religion, though they knew nothing more of Christ than they had learned in the school of Lucian. But why give the names of three or four pontiffs? as if there were any doubt as to the kind of religion professed by pontiffs, with their College of Cardi-

nals, and professors, in the present day. The first head of the secret theology which is in vogue among them is, that there is no God. Another, that whatever things have been written and are taught concerning Christ are lies and imposture.¹ A third, that the doctrine of a future life and final resurrection is a mere fable. All do not think, few speak thus; I confess it. Yet it is long since this began to be the ordinary religion of pontiffs; and though the thing is notorious to all who know Rome, Roman theologians cease not to boast that by special privilege our Saviour has provided that the Pope cannot err, because it was said to Peter, “I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not” (Luke 22:32). What, pray, do they gain by their effrontery, but to let the whole world understand that they have reached the extreme of wickedness, so as neither to fear God nor regard man?

28. But let us suppose that the iniquity of these pontiffs whom I have mentioned is not known, as they have not published it either in sermons or writings, but betrayed it only at table or in their chamber, or at least within the walls of their court. But if they would have the privilege which they claim to be confirmed, they must expunge from their list of pontiffs John XXII.,² who publicly maintained that the soul is mortal, and perishes with the body till the day of resurrection. And to show you that the whole See with its chief props then utterly fell, none of the Cardinals opposed his madness, only the Faculty of Paris urged the king to insist on a recantation. The king interdicted his subjects from communion with him, unless he would immediately recant, and published his interdict in the usual way by a herald. Thus necessitated, he abjured his error. This example relieves me from the necessity of disputing further with my opponents, when they say that the Roman See and its pontiffs cannot err in the faith, from its being said to Peter, “I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.” Certainly by this shameful lapse he fell from the faith, and became a noted proof to posterity, that all are not Peters who succeed Peter in the episcopate; although the thing is too childish in itself to need an answer: for if they insist on applying everything that was said to Peter to the successors of Peter, it will follow, that they are all Satans, because our Lord once said to Peter, “Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me.” It is as easy for us to retort the latter saying as for them to adduce the former.

29. But I have no pleasure in this absurd mode of disputation, and therefore return to the point from which I digressed. To fix down Christ and the Holy Spirit and the Church to a particular spot, so that every one who presides in it, should he be a devil, must still be deemed vicegerent of Christ, and the head of the Church, because that spot was formerly the See of Peter, is not only impious and insulting to Christ, but absurd and contrary to common sense. For a long period, the Roman Pontiffs have either been altogether devoid of religion, or been its greatest enemies. The see which they occupy, therefore, no more makes them the vicars of Christ, than it makes an idol to become God, when it is placed in the temple of God (2 Thess. 2:4). Then, if manners be inquired

into, let the Popes answer for themselves, what there is in them that can make them be recognised for bishops. First, the mode of life at Rome, while they not only connive and are silent, but also tacitly approve, is altogether unworthy of bishops, whose duty it is to curb the licence of the people by the strictness of discipline. But I will not be so rigid with them as to charge them with the faults of others. But when they with their household, with almost the whole College of Cardinals, and the whole body of their clergy, are so devoted to wickedness, obscenity, uncleanness, iniquity, and crime of every description, that they resemble monsters more than men, they herein betray that they are nothing less than bishops. They need not fear that I will make a farther disclosure of their turpitude. For it is painful to wade through such filthy mire, and I must spare modest ears. But I think I have amply demonstrated what I proposed—viz. that though Rome was formerly the first of churches, she deserves not in the present day to be regarded as one of her minutest members.

30. In regard to those whom they call Cardinals, I know not how it happened that they rose so suddenly to such a height. In the age of Gregory, the name was applied to bishops only (Gregor. Lib. 2 Ep. 15, 77, 79; Ep. 6, 25). For whenever he makes mention of cardinals, he assigns them not only to the Roman Church, but to every other church, so that, in short, a Cardinal priest is nothing else than a bishop. I do not find the name among the writers of a former age. I see, however, that they were inferior to bishops, whom they now far surpass. There is a well-known passage in Augustine: “Although, in regard to terms of honour which custom has fixed in the Church, the office of bishop is greater than that of presbyter, yet in many things, Augustine is inferior to Jerome” (August. ad Hieron. Ep. 19). Here, certainly, he is not distinguishing a presbyter of the Roman Church from other presbyters, but placing all of them alike after bishops. And so strictly was this observed, that at the Council of Carthage, when two legates of the Roman See were present, one a bishop, and the other a presbyter, the latter was put in the lowest place. But not to dwell too much on ancient times, we have account of a Council held at Rome, under Gregory, at which the presbyters sit in the lowest place, and subscribe by themselves, while deacons do not subscribe at all. And, indeed, they had no office at that time, unless to be present under the bishop, and assist him in the administration of word and sacraments. So much is their lot now changed, that they have become associates of kings and Caesars. And there can be no doubt that they have grown gradually with their head, until they reached their present pinnacle of dignity. This much it seemed proper to say in passing, that my readers may understand how very widely the Roman See, as it now exists, differs from the ancient See, under which it endeavours to cloak and defend itself. But whatever they were formerly, as they have no true and legitimate office in the Church, they only retain a colour and empty mask; nay, as they are in all respects the opposite of true ministers, the thing which Gregory so often writes must, of necessity, have befallen them. His words are, “Weeping, I say, groaning, I declare it; when the sacerdotal order has fallen within, it cannot long stand without” (Gregor. Lib. 4 Ep. 55, 56; Lib. 5 Ep. 7). Nay, rather what Malachi says of such persons must be fulfilled in them: “Ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people” (Mal. 2:8, 9). I now leave all the pious to judge what the supreme pinnacle of the Roman hierarchy must be, to which the Papists, with nefarious effrontery, hesitate

1 Erasmus, in a letter to Steuchus, says, “It may be that in Germany there are persons who do not refrain from blasphemy against God, but the severest punishment is inflicted on them. But at Rome, I have with my own ears heard men belching out horrid blasphemies against Christ and his apostles, in the presence of many besides myself, and doing it with impunity!”

2 John Gerson, who lived at the time, attests that John XXII. openly denied the immortality of the soul.

not to subject the word of God itself, that word which should be venerable and holy in earth and heaven, to men and angels.