

# The Papacy And The Civil Power –

## Chapter VIII. Pope's Temporal Power

### Not Divine



Continued from [Chapter VII. The Encyclical of Pius IX..](#)

Infallibility before the late Decree.—The Pope's Temporal Power not Divine.—The Italian People.—The Government of the Papal States.—Jesuitism.—Mutilation of Books at Rome.—Union of Church and State by Constantine.—His Grant Supposititious (based primarily on surmise rather than adequate evidence.).—He did not unite with the Church of Rome.—Rome was governed by Imperial Officers.—The Apostles had no Temporal Power.

IT was asserted by Protestants generally, before the decree of papal infallibility was passed, that if that doctrine could ever obtain the approval of a general council, it would be employed to advance the favorite theory of the Jesuits, that the spiritual power of the pope includes the temporal as one of its necessary incidents, inasmuch as it belonged to the primacy of Peter, and was divinely conferred upon him. The Jesuits themselves practiced no duplicity upon this question, but openly asserted their doctrine with a confidence which would now seem to have been awakened by a perfect knowledge of their power over all the authorities of the Church, including the pope. Their boldness won them the victory, and they are now complete masters of the situation. All the energies of the Church, in so far as the pope is enabled to arouse them, are placed under their guidance; and even the venerable pontiff himself is spending the close of a long and honorable life in endeavoring to establish the doctrine they have maintained so earnestly as an essential and indispensable part of the true faith. With his vanity flattered by their caresses, and persuaded to believe that he stands in the place of God on earth, he omits no opportunity of declaring that he has been appointed by divine decree to direct and regulate all such secular affairs as pertain in any way to the Church, its faith, its discipline, and the universality of its sovereignty.

Of those within the Roman Catholic Church, who were unwilling to accept this doctrine, there were two classes: one denying the infallibility of the pope, and claiming it only for the Universal Church; and the other insisting that

if it were recognized it would confer no temporal power upon the pope, because it was not necessarily included in the spiritual, and had not been divinely established as an incident to the primacy of Peter. To this latter class, it may be fairly said, belonged a considerable portion, if not a majority, of the Roman Catholics in the United States. These had not yet felt the tremendous pressure of the Jesuit power, and honestly endeavored, by this argument, to remove what they considered to be Protestant prejudice against their Church. It was not composed entirely of laymen, but included some of the prelates and clergy, who were not yet prepared to turn over the Church to Jesuit dominion. They could not see how it was possible, if God had made the temporal an appendage to the spiritual power, that so many centuries should have elapsed without its announcement by the Church in some authoritative form. And they were encouraged in this by the highest ecclesiastical authority in the United States.

In 1848, Archbishop Kenrick, of Baltimore, prepared for the press a treatise on the Primacy, in which great learning and ability are displayed. It was published in that year, and a sixth revised edition was also published in 1867. When he comes to speak of the relations between the pope and secular affairs, he begins his first chapter on the "Patrimony of St. Peter" with this emphatic sentence:

*"The primacy is essentially a spiritual office, which has not, of divine right, any temporal appendage."*

The "small principality in Italy" over which he is sovereign is, he says, designated "the Patrimony of St. Peter," on account of its having been "attached to the pontifical office, through reverence for the Prince of the Apostles." He declares that this *"has no necessary connection with the primacy;"* and because "Catholics not living within the Roman States are not subject to the civil authority of the pope," he treated of it no further than to trace its history;(\*) and to this we shall have occasion hereafter to refer.

\*"The Primacy of the Apostolic See," by Archbishop Kenrick, sixth edition., p. 255.

He says again: "In making Peter the ruler of his kingdom, he [Christ] did *not give him dominion, or wealth, or any of the appendages of royalty.*" (*Ibid.* p. 255.) Then, going on to show that " *the -Bishop of Rome was not yet a temporal sovereign*" (*Ibid.* p. 257.) at the time of Leo the Great—the middle of the fifth century—he says also, at another place, that the power of interfering with, and regulating, the "political order" in the nations was vested in the popes "by the force of circumstances," and was not "a *divine prerogative of their office.*" (*Ibid.* p. 276.)

What Roman Catholic archbishop, or bishop, or priest, in the United States would repeat these words today? See, again, what the pope says: "The civil sovereignty of the Holy See has been given to the Roman pontiff by a singular counsel of Divine Providence;" and as "regards the relations of the Church and civil society," "all the prerogatives, and all the rights of authority

necessary to governing the Universal Church, have been received by us, in the person of the most blessed Peter, *directly from God himself.*" (Ante, chap. vi., p. 162.)

Has the faith changed? Did not Archbishop Kenrick understand what it was? Was he a heretic? But this conflict of authority is in no other way important to us than to show how the honest apprehensions of Roman Catholics in the United States were allayed before the pope's infallibility was announced, and to excite to such inquiry as will show how, in reality, the temporal power was acquired whether it is of God or man, whether it was obtained legitimately or by usurpation. Thus we shall be better prepared to understand the import of the issues which the papacy has precipitated upon us.

Archbishop Kenrick did not consider it necessary, in his work on the Primacy, to treat of the pope's temporal power in Rome, any further than to trace its history. Nor was it necessary that he should do so, in view of his denial of its divine origin. He did not consider it to be a part of the faith of the Church that he, or any body else, should believe that it was conferred by Christ upon Peter, and had come down through an unbroken line of succession to the present pope. The new order of things, however—the introduction of the new faith—gives great importance to the question; because if it be true that the temporal power of the pope, anywhere, is of divine origin, then the new faith is right and the old faith wrong; and the world may reasonably expect that, either by its own consent or the providences of God, it may yet be compelled to admit its universality. If, on the other hand, it had its origin in fraud, usurpation, and imposture, those of us to whom the charge of infidelity is now imputed may breathe more freely.

Can it be possible that the Italian people violated the law of God by the act of terminating the pope's temporal power in the Papal States? and that they have thereby cut them selves off from reasonable hopes of heaven, unless they shall restore it? Or were they justified, after the example of the United States, in throwing off the papal yoke and adopting a form of government which, although monarchical, is representative? If the former—if God did make Peter king of Rome, and Pius IX. his successor in royal authority—then no such justification can exist, revolution is offensive to God, and every government which has grown out of it must stand accursed at the bar of heaven. Arraigned, as we are, upon such a charge, both as principals and accessories, we must be allowed the privilege of the most abandoned criminal, the right to plead to the jurisdiction of his triers.

It is a common remark of the supporters of the papacy, that the civil Government of Rome and the Papal States, by the pope and his curia, was altogether paternal, that it looked carefully after the interests of the people, was most considerate of their happiness, and was, in fact, one of the best governments in the world. If this were true, it is not easy, according to any ordinary rules of reasoning, to account for the fact that Pope Pius IX. has held the temporal scepter, during all the years of his long pontificate, by an exceedingly frail and uncertain tenure. To him, as a king, there could be no strong personal objections. He is represented as kind-hearted and benevolent, and, no doubt, truthfully so. Even Gavazzi concedes as much. (Gavazzi's "Lectures and Life," p. 230.)

But these very qualities may unfit him for the duties of government, by subjecting him to the undue influence of men around him, who play upon them. Such has, undoubtedly, been the case. Antonelli, his Cardinal Secretary of State, is understood to be both ambitious and unscrupulous, just such a man as would hold the curia and all the inferior officers of government in strict subordination to his will.(\*). He would, in all probability, have little difficulty in dictating the policy and measures of the administration. If the pope has ambition, he could excite it; if he has none, he could create it. Thus we may account for their joint efforts to check the current of adverse circumstances which have, during the present pontificate, pressed upon the papacy, and rendered it necessary that the pope should be held upon his throne by French bayonets. Thus, also, may we account for the Encyclical and Syllabus, and other papal bulls and briefs, wherein the attempt is made to weld religion and politics together, and make it appear that the people, however oppressed, have no more right to resist the divine right of kings than they have to violate the ten commandments. That the papal government was oppressive has been settled by the Italian people, hitherto the most devout Roman Catholics in the world. By their act, that fact, as such, is entitled to a place in history; and that they were justified in it, as we were justified in our Revolution, a brief recital of facts will abundantly show.

\* Mr. Edmund About, a modern writer, and Gallican Catholic, thus speaks of Pius IX.:

"The character of this honest old man is made up of devotion, of good nature, of vanity, of weakness, and of obstinacy; with a spice of malice, which peeps out from time to time. He blesses with unction, and pardons with difficulty; a good priest, and an incompetent king."—*The Roman Question*, by About, p. 135.

Of Cardinal Antonelli he says: "He was born in a den of thieves."—P. 140. "He seems a minister ingrafted on a savage."—P. 147. "All classes of society hate him equally."—*Ibid*.

F. Petruccelli de la Gattina, who has continued the discussion of the questions begun by Mr. About, does not speak so favorably of the pope. He says: "The mildness of Pius IX. resembles those coverings which are put on old arm-chairs, to conceal stains and rents." — *Rome and the Papacy: its Men, Manners, and Government in the Nineteenth Century*, by F. Petruccelli de la Gattina, p. 272. He continues: "He does not elevate himself to the stature of God, but shrinks God to the stature of a poor priest, and drags him into all the follies, passions, and interests of a caste which is confounded with humanity."—P. 277.

He also condemns Antonelli in the strongest terms, by speaking of "the thefts, the villainies, the rudeness of this cardinal."—P. 275. Of the papacy, under his guidance, he says, it "is like the subterranean sewers of large cities; it carries all the filth; and where it is stopped and filters, it spreads infection and death."—P. 292.

The Papal States, during the pope's temporal dominion, were held as religious property—as "*an ecclesiastical benefice*." The people were considered as so many tenants, who occupied and enjoyed the estate on "the condition affixed

by the infallible head of the Church, for her welfare, and not their own." They possessed no civil rights whatever, in the sense in which the world holds them, but only such privileges as their sovereign, the pope, thought proper to confer upon them; and these could be changed, modified, or wholly withdrawn, at his personal discretion, or whenever the interests of the Church should require it. If the Government was a trust, held alone for the benefit of the Church, as papists allege, then the people had no right to demand of it any thing on their own account. The Government was conducted wholly without reference to them, and they were required to submit to whatsoever it did, and to all the laws proclaimed by the papacy.

Popular liberty was, therefore, unknown, and was impossible. The papacy alone was free to do as it pleased; and this was called *the freedom of the Church!* The people, having thus no voice in public affairs, were in a condition of vassalage. The Government was a revival, with slight exceptions, of the old system of feudalism, without its redeeming features. There was no change, or promise of change: every thing moved on in the old grooves which had been worn by centuries of papal absolutism. A writer who personally observed this says:

"At every appeal to alienate any part of his sacred estate, or to grant any privileges to his subjects, on the ground of their inherent rights, the pope talks of Constantine, and Pepin, and the blessed Countess Matilda, and, shaking his infallible head, doggedly thunders, "Non possumus!" (A Latin, Catholic, religious phrase that translates as "we cannot") (\*)

\* "Inner Rome," by Rev. C. M. Butler, p. 15. This book deserves extensive circulation. It presents an admirable portrait of the political, religious, and social condition of Rome, as observed by the author during a residence there of two years. I have known Dr. Butler many years, and for myself rely implicitly upon what he says. He is corroborated in his views of the civil government in the Papal States by M. About and La Gattina in their works, from which quotations have been made. Both of these have been translated from the French, and published in this country.

There was no written constitution, not even a collection of precedents, from which the citizen could learn the extent or nature of the privileges conceded to him. Whatever of fundamental law there was could be found only in the decrees, canons, and constitutions of councils, and the bulls and briefs of popes, published in a language which none but the educated nobility could understand. Ecclesiasticism absorbed all secular as well as all spiritual power. Cardinals, prelates, and priests were a privileged class, and did as they pleased.

On one occasion a priest "endeavored to induce a hackman to take him at a lower than his usual fare," and, upon his refusal to do so, he was imprisoned for several weeks. ("Inner Rome," by Rev. C. M. Butler, pp. 15, 16.) As late as 1851, Bertolotti, "Inquisitor-general of the Holy See," published a papal edict defining certain crimes to which penalties were affixed, and the duties of informers. These included "all heretics;" all guilty of any "acts from which can be inferred a compact, express or tacit, with the devil;" all who

should "hinder in any manner whatever the proceedings of the office of the Holy Inquisition;" all who published "writings against the high-priest, the sacred colleges, superiors, ecclesiastics, or against the regular orders;" all "who without license retain writings and prints which contain heresies, or the books of heretics;" and all who "have eaten, or given to others to eat, meat, eggs, *latticini* (the products of milk), on forbidden days, in contempt of the precepts of the Church."

And, as encouragement to informers, it was provided that "whoever fails to denounce the above criminals to the Holy Inquisitor and special delegate against 'heretical pravity' shall be subject to *excommunication*!" What trifling with sacred things! Under this *parental* (!) government, if a poor Italian should have written a word against a profligate priest, who might have tried to rob his home of its most precious treasure, or should have been found with a Protestant Bible in his house, or a history of the American Revolution, or the Life of Washington, or the Constitution of the United States, or the Declaration of Independence, he would have been arraigned before the "Holy Inquisitor," punished as a criminal, shut out from the Church by excommunication, and visited with the wrath of God, for violation of his divine commands! And this several centuries after the close of the Middle Ages—after the world has been lifted out of darkness into light!

The precise punishment for these several degrees of crime was not defined—almost every thing being left to the discretion of the Inquisition. Its general character, however, may be inferred from a document published in 1850 by the cardinal archbishop, cardinal bishop, and other archbishops and bishops of the Marches and of the province of Umbria. Referring to the crimes of "blasphemy, in observance of the sacred days, profanation of the churches, and violation of fasts, and immoralities," this edict fixes as penalties, according to circumstances, "excommunication, or imprisonment, or fines, or castigation, or exile, or even death." It provides that "the names of the informer and *the witnesses* shall be kept secret," so that the offender may never know who are his accusers, or have an opportunity openly to confront them, and that half the fines shall go to the informer and officers executing the law, and the other half "to the benefit of holy places." ("Inner Rome," by Rev. C. M. Butler, pp. 17–19.)

It is impossible, in the very nature of things, that such a system of government as this could have been otherwise than harsh, severe, and oppressive—the very embodiment of tyranny. Can it be possible that God designed the human family to be subject to the perpetual curse of such rule as this, and cut them off, by a divine decree, from all possibility of its removal without sin? If he did, how happens it that he has not long ago, as he did with the pursuers of the Israelites, cast the revolutionary innovators, "horse and rider, into the sea?"

In 1861, a large crowd assembled in the Corso and in Monte Citorio, and shouted "*Viva Italia! Viva Vittorio Immanuele!*" They were immediately fired upon by the papal gendarmes—one of whom was stabbed in the melee. For this a man by the name of Locatelli was arrested and tried. Although there was no evidence identifying him with the transaction, yet he was convicted and executed! Even the President of the Sacra Consulta, when he presented the

record of conviction to the pope, advised him, in view of the insufficiency of the evidence, "to exercise clemency." But "the pope, who cannot sign a sentence of death, laid over this document the *fatal black ribbon*, and Locatelli died, shouting "*Viva Italia!*" ("Inner Rome," by Rev. C. M. Butler, pp. 21–23.)

The cases of punishment by imprisonment and exile for "political crimes" are too numerous for detail, and too horrible to be recited with composure. Di. Butler mentions some of exceeding cruelty and hardship, where native Romans were banished for the suspicion of being opposed to the Papal Government. This class of criminals are specially sought after by the police who infest the country. And so odious had this papal police become in consequence of the manner in which they—broke in upon the most sacred privacy of the citizens, that "*no Roman will enter into this hated service*. No Roman would probably be trusted in it. It is made up of *foreigners of various nations*. Many of them are criminals and disbanded soldiers of Francis II. So detested are they by the Roman people that it is not considered safe for them to make arrests during the day. They are made at night, or in the early dawn." (*Ibid.*, p. 38.)

Religious toleration was unknown. English Protestants were permitted to hold their services only within the Porto del Popolo; and no Protestants whatever were allowed to do so within the walls of Rome! "Gendarmes guard the door of the English chapel to see that none of the faithful stray into those poisoned pastures." In 1862, Protestant services were performed at the house of an American lady, about twenty miles back of Rome, on the Alban Hills; and upon being discovered by the gendarmes, it was broken up! (\*)

\* All this would, undoubtedly, be right and proper to the author of the following sentiments, who contributes as much as almost any other man to mold Roman Catholic sentiment in the United States:

"The Protestant is bound to be liberal to Catholics, but Catholics cannot be liberal toward any party that rejects the Church, and must hold them to be the enemies of God, not on his own private judgment, but on the infallible authority of the Church of Christ."—*New York Tablet*, September 7th, 1872.

The informer in this case was supposed to have been a man of whom it is related that he was a poor and humble citizen, without any title, but that the pope, being once compelled to pass the night in his house, and it being derogatory to his official and personal dignity to "sleep under the roof of an untitled citizen," he made the poor fellow "a Roman noble before going to bed, and slept with a good conscience!" (Butler, pp. 209–211.)

There can be no reasonable doubt that many of these measures of severity are to be traced to the influence of the Jesuits at Rome. It is well understood that all the machinery of the Papal Government has been directed by them for a number of years; and their whole history shows that whenever they possess power, it is employed with a single object only—to advance the interests and perpetuate the debasing principles of their order.

An ex-priest, a Roman by birth, who was once curate of the Magdalene parish in Rome, professor of theology in the Roman University, and qualificator at the Inquisition, thus expresses himself:

"From the period of the Council of Trent, *Roman Catholicism has identified itself with Jesuitism*. That unscrupulous order has been known to clothe itself, when occasion required, with new forms, and to give a convenient elasticity to its favorite maxim, *that the end is every thing, and all the means to attain it are good*. But by depending on the skillful tactics of the 'Society of Jesus,' the court of Rome has been constrained to yield to its ascendancy, confide her destiny to its hands, and permit it to direct her interests; and of this control Jesuitism has availed itself in the most absolute way. It has constituted the powerful mainspring, more or less concealed, of the whole papal machinery." ("Rome, Christian and Papal," by L. D. Sanctis, D.D., p. 5.)

It should excite no surprise, therefore, in the mind of any man who does not believe that God designed mankind for perpetual bondage, that the Italian people were anxious to get rid of a government so opposed to the spirit of the age and the progress of the nineteenth century, and that they did get rid of it as soon as papal infallibility was decreed and the French troops were withdrawn. It had not about it a single element of popularity—nothing to make a Roman citizen feel that he was any thing but a serf, and nothing to stimulate him to a proper conception of his own character or that of his country. It was the last surviving vestige of the Middle Ages, and seems to have been providentially spared only that the people of Italy might be enabled to observe the contrast between it and the advancing modern nations, until they should be fully enabled to strike down all the civil appendages of the papacy. It was such a union of Church and State, and so complete a subordination of the State to the Church, as demonstrated by all its workings how impossible it was to establish any form of political freedom where it existed. It stood among the nations like the fabled upas-tree in the Javanese forests, emitting a poison which liberty could not inhale without dying. And thus, while we are able to comprehend the motives of the Italian people in desiring its overthrow, we can also understand why the Encyclical and Syllabus were issued, and why all the progressive nations were arraigned for refusing to recognize all this wrong and injustice as rightfully done in the name of religion.

And this leads us, in the regular order of our inquiries, into an examination of the real origin of the temporal power of the pope, that thereby we may be enabled to decide whether it is a divine or human power—whether it was, as Pius IX. alleges, conferred on Peter by Christ, or has been the creation of fraud, intrigue, and usurpation. History on this subject is much confused; yet the truth may be discovered, by patient investigation, through all the myths and fables which have been woven into it.

There is nothing in which ecclesiastical and secular historians better agree than that, during the times of primitive Christianity, the spiritual and temporal jurisdictions remained distinct—each exercising authority only over those matters which pertained to itself. It is difficult to account for a denial of this, except upon the ground of ignorance or mendacity. The



distinction was preserved for a number of centuries, even in relation to jurisdiction over heretics, which more immediately concerned the Church than any thing of a mere secular nature.

The most disturbing element in the early Christian Church was Arianism. This was condemned by the Council of Nice in 325, because heresy was within the spiritual jurisdiction. But the Council did not undertake to prohibit the circulation of Arian books, because that belonged to the temporal jurisdiction, and was left to Constantine, the emperor, who did it by imperial edict.

The Council of Ephesus, in 431, condemned the heresy of Nestorius, but left the circulation of his books to be prohibited by the Emperor Theodosius.

The Council of Chalcedon, in 451, condemned the Eutychians for heresy, but the Emperor Martian prohibited the circulation of their books.

The second Council of Constantinople, in 553, declared Eunomius to be a heretic, but the Emperor Arcadius suppressed his books by an imperial law.

All these councils are recognized by the Roman Church as ecumenical, and as having possessed the highest jurisdiction and authority in the Church—a fact never authoritatively impeached until the decree of papal infallibility was passed by the late Lateran Council. It will not do for a papist to say that these councils did not properly understand and define the true relations between the spiritual and the temporal power. And he presumes greatly upon the popular ignorance who asserts that they were changed until that result was produced by papal usurpations.

Many books have been written to prove the primacy of Peter in both honor and authority, as a foundation for the additional assumption that Christ, in establishing his Church, gave it an external hierarchical organization; that, of necessity, he conferred upon this organization plenary authority over all matters of faith and morals; that supremacy is involved in this authority; that, as the necessary consequence of this supremacy, all Christians must defer to and obey it; that the Church was established and organized by Peter at Rome; that he was its first bishop; and that all the subsequent bishops and popes of Rome, in the regular and unbroken line of succession, have enjoyed the same supremacy and held the same authority held by Peter. All the arguments to support these propositions are made within a circle, varying only according to the learning and ingenuity of those who make them. They all assume the same postulates and reach the same conclusions—to wit, that the Roman is the only true Church; that she alone possesses the organization instituted by Christ upon Peter, and, therefore, also the supremacy and authority conferred on him; that she alone, through her infallible pope, has the power to decide and define the faith and the nature and extent of her own authority over all nations and peoples; and, consequently, that whatever she shall decide and declare to be the law of God, in the domain of faith and morals, must be accepted and believed as such.

These propositions have theological aspects, not necessary to be discussed here; but they are grouped together because they constitute the basis of that

jurisdiction over spiritual and secular affairs by means of which the papacy has exercised its wonderful authority over the world. The thoughtful investigator cannot be expected, in the present age, to acquiesce in the justness and legitimacy of this jurisdiction, unless he shall find it conferred by the teachings and example of Christ and the apostles. And if, on the other hand, it shall appear to have grown alone out of leagues and compacts and concordats between popes and kings, and the usurpations which invariably attend them, then he will be justified in regarding it as unwarrantable and illegitimate. And if it arose out of the consent of the nations, at a time when they were threatened with annihilation, as some assert, then the nations, now existing in the enjoyment of stability and progress, cannot be denied the right to withdraw their assent from such a measure of temporary expediency, if, indeed, they are under any obligation to recognize it at all, and more especially so if it interferes with their stability and impedes their advancement.

The papacy itself has often found authority in the divine law for giving its assent, once withheld, and for withdrawing it when once given, in matters both spiritual and temporal; and if the nations of the nineteenth century, not desiring to turn back to the medieval times, shall find in its example justification for denying to those times the right to confer upon it authority to block up their pathways of progress and improvement, it ought to know that its acquiescence would be far more consistent with primitive Christianity than its present persistent and passionate resistance.

We must accept all papal testimony upon these questions with many grains of allowance, for much the most important part of it has come from the manufactory at Rome, and does not reach the dignity of proof. A distinguished Roman Catholic of Venice, and priest of one of the papal orders, has given us a timely and necessary caution on this subject. The "most learned Father Paul," referring to the extraordinary influence which the popes were enabled to acquire by means of the prohibition of books and the universal practice among them of not permitting the circulation and reading of any that did not teach obedience on the part of the people to the ecclesiastical power, says:

"But as there were already in God's Church those who made use of religion for worldly ends, so the number of them is now full. These, under a spiritual pretense, but with an ambitious end and desire of worldly wealth, would free themselves from the obedience due to the prince, and take away the love and reverence due by the people, to draw it to themselves. To bring these things to pass, they have newly invented a doctrine, which talks of nothing but ecclesiastical greatness, liberty, immunity, and of her jurisdiction. The doctrine was unheard of until about the year 1300, neither is there any book found concerning it before that time: then did they begin to write of it scatteringly in some books; but there were not above two books which treated of nothing else but this, until the year 1400, and three until the year 1500. After this time the number increased a little, but it was tolerable. After the year 1560, this doctrine began to increase in such manner that they gave over writing, as they did before, of the mysteries of the Holy Trinity, of the creation of the world, of the Incarnation of Christ, and other mysteries of the belief; and there is *nothing* printed in Italy but books in diminution

of secular authority and exaltation of the ecclesiastical, and such books are not printed by small numbers, but by thousands. Those people which have any learning *can read nothing else*; the confessors likewise know none other doctrine, nor, to be approved of, need they any other learning. Whence comes in a perverse opinion universally, that princes and magistrates are human inventions, yea, and tyrannical; that they ought only by compulsion to be obeyed; that the disobeying of laws and defrauding the public revenues do not bind one unto sin, but only to punishment; and that he that doth not pay, if he can fly from it, remains not guilty before the Divine Majesty; and contrariwise, that each beck of ecclesiastical persons, without any other thought, *ought to be taken for a divine precept, and binds the conscience*. And this doctrine, perchance, is the cause of all inconveniences which are felt in this age. There wants not in Italy pious and learned persons which hold the truth, *but they are not suffered to write, nor to print*. Something comes written from another place, but presently it is prohibited. And little thought is taken of heretical books, especially those that treat of the Articles of Faith; but if any one comes that defends the prince his temporal authority, and saith that ecclesiastical persons are also subject to public functions, and *punishable if they violate the public tranquillity*, these are condemned books, and persecuted more than others. They have gelded the books of ancient authors by new printing of them, and taken out—all which might serve for temporal authority."(\*)

\* "History of the Inquisition," by the Rev. Father Paul Servita (Sarpi): London edition, 1676; bound with his "History of the Council of Trent," pp. 874, 875.

This author wrote shortly after the death of Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, and when, as appears from his statement, the papacy had been brought completely under the influence of the doctrines of that order. He is better known as Sarpi, and his "History of the Council of Trent" has been long accepted by the learned as a work of standard authority. He lived for some years at Rome, where he enjoyed the confidence of the pope; as he did also that of Cardinal Bellarmine, the great Roman Catholic annalist. His evidence upon the subjects of which he treats is of such importance as to justify the foregoing long extract. And he is equally important authority upon another point. He also exposes the fraudulent methods employed at Rome to falsify history, as one of the means of extending and perpetuating the supremacy of the papacy over the legitimate temporal authority of the nations. He informs us that Clement VIII., who was pope from 1592 to 1605, prescribed a rule making all writers of Roman Catholic books so subservient to the papacy that their books "might be corrected and amended, not only *by taking away what is not conformable to the doctrine of Rome, butt also with adding to it*." This, he says, was "put in practice," and, by means of it, books were fraudulently mutilated to make them support ecclesiastical usurpation, when their authors designed no such meaning.

As late as the seventeenth century, the "Index Expurgatorius," printed, by authority of the pope, at Rome, contained notes of the places where many "authors ought to be canceled;" and this dishonest practice of altering the language and meaning of books was carried so far, says Father Paul, that "at

this present, in reading of a book, a man can no more find what the author's meaning was, but only *what is the Court of Rome's, who hath altered everything.*" ("History of the Inquisition," by Rev. Father Paul Servita, p. 875.)

There are very few exceptions in history to the rule, that those who possess themselves, wrongfully and unjustly, of the power to govern others, are not apt to halt long at the means of preserving it. Machiavelli has been severely censured for having taught the doctrine that "the end justifies the means;" but it should be remembered, in seeking for the proper interpretation of his motives, that his "Prince" was written, not so much for the purpose of originating new principles of action, as to exhibit the nature and operation of those that almost universally prevailed in his time; and that when he came to illustrate the effect of the doctrine that "a prudent prince cannot and ought not to keep his word, except when he can do it without injury to himself," but should play "the part of the fox," the example which served his purpose best was that furnished by the pontificate of Alexander VI., whose whole life he characterized as "a game of deception," and of whom he also said, "Oaths and protestations cost him nothing; never did a prince so often break his word or pay less regard to his engagements." (Machiavelli's "History of Florence," and other Works ("The Prince"), Bohn's ed., pp. 459, 460.)

He had before his mind the Jesuit influence upon the papacy and the princes of Europe, whose combined authority was directed to the accumulation of power in their own hands, no matter at what sacrifice by the people. It was this influence which molded the ethics of the papacy; and whether the odious principles of the Jesuits were deduced from the examples of former popes, or fixed first in the minds of those of the sixteenth century by Loyola and his disciples, is of no consequence, in view of the fact that the temporal power of the pope is shown by all impartial history to have grown out of the most stupendous system of fraud and usurpation ever known to the world.

The steps which led to it were gradual and progressive. So far from its having a divine foundation, arising out of any authority conferred by Christ upon Peter, it had its inception in the time of Constantine, to whom, more than to all others, the papacy is indebted for the origin of its most important immunities and privileges. He was the first to lay a foundation for the union of Church and State, to mingle religion and politics together; and he did this not only to increase his own power, but the influence of the Roman priesthood, in return for the assistance they rendered him when he overthrew Maxentius, the reigning Emperor of Rome. At the proper time, we shall see that the combination to effect these ends was political, not religious, and that there was no thought of its serving any other purpose until the calling of the Council of Nice, by Constantine himself, without any agency whatever on the part of Pope Sylvester, for the ostensible object of suppressing the heresy of Arius, but for the real purpose of producing a closer and more intimate union between the imperial and ecclesiastical powers.

Some of the papal writers are disposed to go behind the concessions made to the Church of Rome by Constantine, and to search for the temporal power in

the ownership of ecclesiastical property before that time. A book has lately been written in Germany—translated and published in the United States—enforcing this view by a variety of arguments.(\*)

\* "Rome and the Popes," translated from the German of Dr. Karl Brandes, by Rev. W. I. Wiseman, S. T. L., chap. xvi., p. 84.

It is here called the "Patrimony of Peter," the "supreme jurisdiction of the see of Rome;" and it is said that Ignatius referred to it as "a presidency of charity," when, as this author alleges, he assigned to the Roman Church supremacy over all the other churches. This argument, if it proves any thing, proves too much for the advocates of the temporal power; for, at the time Ignatius wrote, all the churches in Asia and Africa were the owners of ecclesiastical property, equally with that at Rome; and some of the Asiatic churches, as those at Jerusalem, Antioch, etc., had been such owners before there was any thing like an organized Christian Church known or heard of at Rome. Hence, if this ownership conferred any temporal power higher than the mere right to use and enjoy church property, the other churches possessed it in the same degree as the Roman, and no superiority could arise out of that cause. But it really proves nothing; for the plain reason that in no age of the world have civilized nations ever recognized any temporal power, in the sense of that claimed for the popes, as derived from the mere individual or corporate right to hold and enjoy property. The right to hold real property is attached, primarily, to the sovereignty, and is enjoyed by individuals or corporations by grant from it or when it is taken by force strong enough to make resistance successful. When conferred by grant or any form of concession, there is no abatement of the sovereign power, which, for all the purposes of government over both the property and its possessor, remains as before.

Nor is it true that Ignatius recognized any such supremacy in the Roman Church, as is asserted, with such apparent confidence, by this author. Fortunately, the recent publication of the writings of the "Ante-Nicene fathers" will enable any diligent inquirer to investigate these matters for himself; and thus to avoid being misled by second-hand authorities, which, as Sarpi tells us, are often culled and clipped at Rome, to make them express, not what the authors meant, but what the papacy desires. Ignatius addressed his "Epistle to the Romans" to the Church which "*presides in the place of the region of the Romans*,"(\*) thus showing that, whatever was the nature of the presidency possessed by the bishops of Rome at that time, it was limited to the region round about Rome, and did not extend into other regions.

\* "The Apostolic Fathers," published by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, p. 280. See also "The Apocryphal New Testament," published by Dewitt & Davenport, New York.

And in the same sense he saluted all the other churches to which his epistles were addressed—those at Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, Philadelphia, and Smyrna. He wrote his Epistle to the Romans while on his way to Rome from Antioch, where he was sent by Trajan to be thrown to the wild beasts. His chief object

was to notify them that he was rejoiced at the dispensation which was about to enable him "to fight with beasts at Rome;" that is, to suffer martyrdom for the cause of Christ. He said nothing from which the presidency of Peter can, by possibility, be inferred—not even by the most ingenious torture of his language. When he spoke of the authority to issue commands to the Roman Christians, he referred to Peter and Paul unitedly, and not to Peter alone; and then only for the purpose of contrasting himself with them, they being apostles and he a follower. ("The Apostolic Fathers," p. 212.)

When, elsewhere, he spoke of the obligation of obedience, he admonished each particular church addressed by him to show it to its own bishop. To the Ephesians he said, "Ye should run together in accordance with the will of *the bishop who by God's appointment rules over you.*" (*Ibid.*, p. 149.) After counseling the Magnesians to revere their "most admirable bishop," he said to them, "Be ye subject to the bishop, and to one another, as Christ to the Father, that there may be a unity according to God among you." (*Ibid.*, p. 186.) To the Trallians he said, "Be ye subject to the bishop as to the Lord." ("The Apostolic Fathers," p. 190.)

He commended to the Philadelphians their bishop, with whom he desired them to maintain union; telling them, "where the shepherd is, there do ye as sheep follow;" (*Ibid.*, pp. 233, 234.) and, further exhorting, them to unity, said, "Be ye followers of Paul, and the rest of the apostles, even as they also were of Christ;" (*Ibid.*, p. 218.) making no mention whatever of Peter, but directly excluding, almost by express words, all idea of his primacy or superiority. To the Smyrneans he said, "See that ye all follow the bishop," and "Let no man do any thing connected with the church without the bishop," and wherever he was there should they be, because "*wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church;*" (*Ibid.*, pp. 248, 249.) that is, the universal body of Christians, and not merely the Church of Rome, of whose power to govern the other churches he seems never to have had a thought.

And, in further and still more convincing proof that he did not recognize the primacy of Peter, or of the Roman Church, he begged the Romans, in his Epistle to them, to remember the Church in Syria in their prayers, since, instead of him, it then had no bishop, but only the Lord "for its shepherd;" (*Ibid.*, p. 218.) which could not have been the case if the Bishop of Rome was, as is now pretended, the shepherd of the whole flock—the universal shepherd.

And in his letter to Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, he begged him, and not the Bishop of Rome, to assemble a council, to elect a bishop for the Church at Antioch, in his place, and "to bestow on him the honor of going into Syria;" (*Ibid.*, pp. 264, 265.) which he, undoubtedly, would not have done if Rome had been the seat of episcopal primacy, and if the bishops there had possessed what is now so dogmatically and imperiously claimed for them, "the plenitude of power to feed, rule, and govern the Universal Church." ("The Vatican Council," by Manning, p. 61.) And thus we find the precise fact to be, that Ignatius is authority against, rather than for, the existence of what is now called "the patrimony of Peter;" at least, up to the year 107, which is supposed to have been the year of his martyrdom.

This same German author, in further support of his views, refers to the action of two of the pagan emperors to prove that the patrimony of Peter, or temporal power of the pope, was recognized by them as existing in the third century. He says, "Alexander Severus decided a lawsuit respecting a piece of property in favor of the Roman Church," treating it as a "corporate body;" (Brandes, p. 85.) and that "the Emperor Aurelian, though an enemy and persecutor of the Church, recognized the supremacy of the pope over all the Christians of the empire." (*Ibid.*, p. 86.) If such assertions as these were not gravely set forth as argument in a standard work of the Church, and designed, by its republication, to influence public opinion in the United States, they would scarcely be worthy of notice. As it is, they only serve to show how utterly indefensible is the claim of temporal power at the time referred to.

Although Alexander Severus was not, yet his mother was a Christian, as we learn from Origen, and his conduct toward the Christians may, in some measure, be attributed to her influence. As an exhibition of his liberality—probably induced by her—he issued an edict of toleration, prohibiting any violence against his subjects on account of their religion. ("History of the Popes," by Cormenin, vol. i., p. 35.) That the Church held property in Rome during his reign, as a recognized corporation, must be true; for Roman corporations were provided for and protected by Numa Pompilius, as early as about the fortieth year of Rome. (Plutarch, vol. i., p. 178.) When the laws of the Decemvirs—the "twelve tables," were engraved on brass and fixed up in public view, full protection was given to all these corporations; (Livy, bk. iii., ch. lvii.) including, of course, such as the Church afterward became. Therefore, the decision of so liberal a prince as Alexander Severus, merely in support of the right of the Church to hold property as a corporation, proves only two things: first, that the Christians were not persecuted during his reign; and, second, that he administered the laws with integrity and impartiality. He would, in like manner, have maintained the same right in any other corporation, as he did, in fact, in all the pagan corporations. Hence his decision amounts to nothing as an argument in favor of the temporal power of the popes. It really proves the reverse, if anything; because it serves to show that the Roman Church, instead of deciding upon its own right to property in Rome by its own hierarchical authority—as it is now pretended it has always done—was compelled, like all the other corporations of Rome, to submit it to the emperor, and to abide his decision, because he possessed the superior temporal jurisdiction of the State. The Bishop of Rome was then a subject—not in any sense a sovereign.

Nor does the papal theory derive any more or better support from what was done by the Emperor Aurelian. He was, for a while, disposed to favor the Christians, but at last, according to Lactantius, issued "bloody edicts" against them. ("History of the Catholic Church," by Noethen, p. 132; "Eccl. Hist.," by Eusebius, bk. vii., ch. xxx.)

The case of Paul of Samosata came before him to be judged — probably before he became a persecutor. The fact that he finally decided such a case—involving *heresy* in one of its aspects, which was an offense against the laws of the Church, and not against those of the empire—is perfectly

conclusive against the claim of papal supremacy at Rome at that time; that is, up to the pontificate of Felix I., between the years 270 and 275, when the case was decided. It proves, beyond any reasonable ground for controversy, that—as during the previous reign of Alexander Severus the Roman Church and its bishop were entirely subordinate to the emperor and the laws of the empire. And that this subordination extended even to ecclesiastical matters, the case adjudged by Aurelian abundantly shows, as the history of the same case also shows, that the jurisdiction of the Roman bishop was limited, as it was in the time of Ignatius, to “the place of the region of the Romans.”

Paul of Samosata was Bishop of Antioch, in Syria, and denied the divinity of Christ. For this a council was assembled at Antioch to try him, *without the agency of the Church or Bishop of Rome*—which would scarcely have been the case if the supremacy now asserted had then existed. According to Eusebius, this council was composed of bishops from Cesarea, Pontus, Tarsus, Iconium, and Jerusalem, and many presbyters and deacons (Eccl. Hist., by Eusebius, bk. vii., ch. xxviii.)—all from the Asiatic churches, and none from Rome — with Firmilian, Bishop of Cesariea, as its president. (“Eccl. Hist.,” by Du Pin, vol. i., p. 172.) Paul was convicted of heresy, but not excommunicated, in consequence of a promise that he would retract his error. Having failed, however, to do this, a second council was assembled at the same place in the year 270, which deposed Paul, and elected another bishop to succeed him, and who took possession of the see of Antioch. All these proceedings were conducted, from first to last, by the Asiatic churches, and the Roman Church had no connection whatever with them. A bishop was tried for heresy, convicted, excommunicated, and removed from office, and another elected to fill his place, by these early fathers, and yet Rome was not consulted! But Paul did not submit without some show of resistance. As he was “unwilling to leave the building of the church” that is, claimed the right to occupy the house and premises—“an appeal was taken to the Emperor Aurelian,” says Eusebius. (Eusebius, bk. vii., ch. xxx.) And why to the Emperor, and not to the Church or Bishop of Rome? The answer is simple and conclusive: because neither the Church as a corporation, nor the pope as a bishop, had any jurisdiction over temporal affairs, even to the extent of deciding upon the right of an heretical bishop to occupy church property; nor any jurisdiction to review or decide upon the proceedings of the bishops of Asia!

Both the Church of Rome and its bishop, as well as the other churches and bishops throughout the empire, were subject to the civil laws of the empire. And because of this subordination, and because both Antioch and Rome were within the empire, all the parties concerned were compelled to abide by the judgment of the emperor. “And he decided,” says Eusebius, “most equitably on the business, ordering the building to be given up to those to whom the bishops of Italy and Rome should write.” (*Ibid.*) Cormanin records his decision in somewhat different language, thus: “The prince decided that the possession of the episcopal palace pertained to those who entertained relations with the Bishop of Rome, and the other prelates of Italy, and that Pope Felix, having refused to hold communion with Paul of Samosata, he should consequently be driven from his see.” (Cormanin, vol. i., p. 46.)



These two statements, however, are substantially the same—that is, that the emperor decided in favor of those Christians at Antioch who were in fellowship, not merely with the Bishop of Rome, but with the “other prelates of Italy,” who unitedly represented the Italian churches, including that of Rome with the others. Nothing could have been more natural; for, although both Rome and Antioch were in the empire, Aurelian, a pagan prince, could, of course, have no other ideas of Christianity than such as he derived from direct and immediate intercourse with his Roman and Italian subjects. Therefore, upon the question whether or not Paul forfeited his lights as a bishop in Asia by a violation of Christian faith, he referred to them because they were in Rome and its vicinity, and decided according to their definition of orthodoxy—they occupying merely a secondary or advisory position. But to say of this, as this author does, that it was a recognition by Aurelian of “the supremacy of the pope over all the Christians of the empire,” is an assumption wholly unwarranted by the facts. The case of Paul of Samosata proves the very reverse. And the most that can be fairly said, if not all that can be said, in reference to the Church at Rome, up to the time of Aurelian, is, that it was permitted by law to hold property, as also were all other corporations and churches throughout the empire. Whatsoever temporal power was necessary to enable it to hold and enjoy this property, it possessed – no more, no less. The Bishop of Rome, as its ecclesiastical head, did not possess one single element of sovereignty.

This author, however, after attempting to prove that the temporal power existed in the times of Alexander Severus and Aurelian, seems himself persuaded that the right was a mere shadowy one; for immediately after he asserts that it was “formally recognized” by “an edict of Constantine.” (Brandes, p. 86.) Constantine did not enter Rome till the year 312, during the pontificate of Melchiades, which was about a quarter of a century after the death of Aurelian, and about three-quarters of a century after that of Alexander Severus. If, therefore, the popes possessed temporal power in the time of either of these last-named emperors, it must have been only partial and limited, or no necessity for a formal recognition of it by an imperial edict would have existed. But passing by any attempt to convict him of inconsistency by a critical review of his language, let us see whether this pretended grant of Constantine will stand the test of investigation, and whether there is any sufficient foundation for it to rest upon.

That Constantine recognized the Church at Rome as an existing ecclesiastical corporation, as some of his predecessors had done, is unquestionably true. And it is also true that he went farther than any of them in strengthening and protecting it. He is called the “*Christian Emperor*,” by way of distinction; but when we shall come, at another place, to look into the history of his connection with the Roman clergy, we shall find that his only claim to this title consists in the fact that he was the friend and patron of the ecclesiastical organization which gave him its support when he marched his army from Britain and Gaul into Italy to supplant the reigning emperor and seize upon the empire. The pretext that, on his way to Rome, as a pagan prince, he saw a flaming cross in the heavens, bearing the inscription, “Under this sign thou shalt conquer,” answered its end in a superstitious age, but is scarcely entitled to the place it has received in history. The

fact is, he cared very little for Christianity beyond the use to which he put its professors, which was to build up and secure his own power.

Although he convened the first Council of Nice, dictated the most material part of its creed, and made it the measure of orthodoxy by his imperial decree, yet he deferred his own baptism and union with the Church until just before his death, in 337, when he received baptism at the hands of an Arian and heretical bishop. He was, therefore, never a Roman Catholic at all, but, according to the present teachings of that Church, was always a heretic, and not a Christian, unless a man can possess both characters at the same time! His motives were in the main worldly; and, hence, the inference is unavoidable that what he did for the Church at Rome was done chiefly to advance his own ambition. He had the sympathy of the Roman clergy, who were quite willing to assist him in expelling Maxentius, not only because the latter was a cruel and licentious prince, but in return for the privileges he conferred upon them. And as they were most efficient and valuable aids of each other, these privileges were both important and extensive. But it can in no sense be properly said that they were to the extent of conferring upon the Bishop of Rome, as the head of the Church, any share of the temporal power, which, as all reliable history shows, he was careful to retain in his own hands, both at Rome and elsewhere throughout the empire.

By a royal decree, he commanded all his subjects to honor the Christian religion; he revoked all acts of persecution against the Christians that had been proclaimed by his predecessors; he released Christians who had been deprived of their liberty; he placed them in important posts of government at Rome; he commanded that part of the funds collected from tributary countries should be paid over to the clergy; he built and ornamented churches; and he permitted litigants to appeal to the bishops, instead of the secular courts, if they preferred it. (*Eccl. Hist.*," by Sozomen, bk. i., ch. viii., ix.; "*Eccl. Hist.*," by Socrates, bk. i., ch. iii.) Eusebius has preserved several of his edicts in reference to the Church. ("*Eccl. Hist.*," by Eusebius, bk. x., ch. v.) Not one of them, however, confers any temporal power, or recognizes any previously existing. One of them distinctly ignores all such power in the Bishop of Rome. The first commands the restoration of certain church property; the second is of like character; the third convenes a council of bishops at Rome, to preserve the unity and peace of the Church; and the fourth convenes another council for the same purpose. In these two last he provides by imperial edict for matters exclusively belonging to the Church, when, if the temporal power had belonged to the Bishop of Rome, they would have been within his sole jurisdiction.

Why should he thus act independently of ecclesiastical authority upon such a subject? Undoubtedly it must have been only on the ground of his own imperial supremacy in spiritual as well as temporal affairs. He was willing to confer honor upon the Church and emoluments upon the clergy, but determined that both the Church and the clergy should be held in subordination to the State. Otherwise, what would he, as emperor, have to do with church unity? He was not a member of the Church, according to the orthodox standard of the Roman Church, not even a Christian! Manifestly, he must have felt his superiority over all the Roman hierarchy, even in the affairs of the Church, when, in one

of his edicts, he used such language as this in reference to them:

"Hence it has happened that those very persons who ought to exhibit a brotherly and peaceful unanimity, rather disgracefully and detestably are at variance with one another, and thus give this occasion of derision to those who are without, and whose minds are averse to our most holy religion. Hence it has appeared necessary to me to provide that this matter, which ought to have ceased after the decision was issued by their own voluntary agreement, should be fully terminated by the intervention of many." (\*)

\* Eusebius, bk. x., ch. v. This extract is taken from an "epistle in which the emperor commanded another council to be held, for the purpose of removing all the *dissension of the bishops*," says Eusebius.

The expression "our most holy religion" was used here not in such a sense as signified his own personal faith, but to indicate, what all the facts prove, that as the imperial head of the State he considered himself also the imperial head of the Church. And that this was his idea—if there were otherwise any doubt about it—is shown by another edict preserved by Eusebius, wherein he expressly separates the clergy from all temporal affairs, by exempting them from all further secular service. And this is the reason he assigns: that they may not "be drawn away from the service due the divinity, but rather *may devote themselves to their proper law*, without any molestation." (Eusebius, bk. x., ch. vii.)

In so far, therefore, as the general history of Constantine's administration of public affairs is concerned, there is no contemporaneous history to show that he recognized any temporal power in the hands of the Bishop of Rome. On the contrary, the assumption that he did seems so utterly groundless as to leave no room for further discussion.

The further pretense, that by actual imperial donation he made over Rome and Italy to the popes, had its origin in the fertile brain of Pope Adrian I., who, in order to obtain important concessions from Charlemagne, doubtless considered it necessary to impress him with the belief that he would, by granting them, be following the example of Constantine. (\*)

\* "Fables Respecting the Popes of the Middle Ages," by Dr. John I. Ign. Von Dollinger, London ed., p. 118. This book was written when the author was in full fellowship with the Church of Rome.

Previous to this time, says Dr. Dollinger, "there is not a trace to be found of the donation which has since become so famous." (*Ibid.*, p. 108.) And he shows that while, from time to time, many canonists and theologians have maintained its verity, in order to found upon it "a universal dominion of the pope," yet that after Baronius, one of the most distinguished of the Church annalists, pronounced it a forgery," all these voices which had shortly before been so numerous and so loud became dumb." (*Ibid.*, p. 177.) The fact is, that no writers who have proper regard for their veracity now maintain the truthfulness of this donation of Constantine. The fraud served its

purpose during the Middle Ages, among an ignorant and superstitious population, but it no longer bears the test of intelligent scrutiny. Dean Milman calls it a "deliberate invention," a "monstrous fable," and a "forgery as clumsy as audacious." (Milman's "Latin Christianity," vol. i., p. 94.) Reichel characterizes it as "an ignorant blunder and a falsehood – a falsehood, however, let it be borne in mind, which faithfully reflects the thoughts and feelings of the age which gave it birth." (\*) To accumulate proofs upon this subject, in this inquiring age, would seem to be a work of supererogation.

\* "The See of Rome in the Middle Ages," by Reichel, London ed., p. 58. This author gives the letter of Pope Adrian I. to Charles Martel, wherein he sets forth this pretended donation, in order to win his assistance against his enemies.—*Ibid.*, note 1.

Not only is there nothing in all the concessions of Constantine from which a grant of the most limited temporal jurisdiction can be inferred, but in the edict preserved by Eusebius he excludes all idea of the kind. The clergy are set apart by it from those engaged in secular employments, and admonished to "devote themselves to their proper law"—that is, to the discharge of their ecclesiastical and priestly functions. He had, according to Sozomen, entrusted them with the most important offices under the government after he won the Roman scepter, in return for their assistance to him. But it is evident, from what he said of them, in the epistle given by Eusebius, about their disgraceful and detestable variances with each other, that he found it necessary to prohibit their further intermeddling with temporal affairs, and to take upon himself, as emperor, the assembling of a council to heal their dissensions.

It must be remembered that Constantine did not reside at Rome. At the time he took possession of the empire he passed, says Gibbon, "no more than two or three months in Rome, which he visited twice during the remainder of his life, to celebrate the solemn festivals of the tenth and of the twentieth years of his reign." (Milman's Gibbon's "Rome," vol. i., p. 485.) After relieving the city from the cruel tyranny of Maxentius, he abolished the praetorian guards, to prevent the recurrence of abuses. But "he made no innovation in the government, magistracy, and offices, and abrogated no laws except such as were useless and unjust;" restoring, as was shown by an inscription upon a public statue, "the Senate and the people of Rome to their ancient splendor." (\*)

\* "Modern History," by Dr. Fredet, p. 101. This is a work of great research, by a professor of history in St. Mary's Roman Catholic College, Baltimore.

It is evident, therefore, that, in his absence from Rome, while engaged in prosecuting his wars, he left the temporal government just as he found it, which entirely forbids the idea of any temporal authority having been conferred upon the pope. He merely tried the experiment of admitting the clergy into the magistracy, but soon repented of this. What he did in that

direction was far more calculated to excite ambition than piety, and subsequent history shows that it did lead to those corruptions which carried the Church far away from its apostolic purity.

Why Providence permitted such consequences to follow is beyond all human comprehension. We can no more fathom the mysteries in the plan of the Divine Government than we can give sensibility to a grain of sand. Life abounds in enigmas, with limitations and conditions which nothing but omnipotent wisdom could have imposed; and he who attempts to measure them by standards of human knowledge will find impediments at every step which his sagacity cannot over-leap. The naturalist may watch the germ from its first springing into life to the full maturity of the flower, and trace out all the stages of its existence with truthful accuracy; and the scientist may gather from the earth, the ocean, and the rocks, evidences of time, marked out by lines of growth, as age is marked by furrows upon the human face; but in the entire panorama of being there is everything to show—from the minutest to the grandest scenes in nature, and in the origin, growth, and downfall of governments—that God is the omnipresent sovereign, and that his providences are “past finding out.” He is everywhere present in history; yet he has given man his intelligent superiority over all other created beings, that he may work out results within the compass of his powers, for the divine honor and his own good.

That he designed, from the beginning, the ultimate triumph of virtue over vice, of truth over falsehood, and of Christian humility over ambition and selfishness, the infidel may deny with his lips, but cannot doubt in his heart. But it was no part of his infinite plan that this victory should be won in a day, a year, or a century; or his Son, when he mingled in the affairs of the world, robed in our humanity, would have thrown down all the altars of paganism and established his universal kingdom on the earth. Instead of this, He lived and ministered long enough to set an example of perfect purity to man, and left His Gospel in charge of his apostles, that its precepts might teach mankind those principles of truth, justice, morality, and charity, which nature, without revelation, does not teach.

The apostles began their work by establishing the Church, first at Jerusalem, then at Antioch, and then at other places throughout Asia, where the Jew, with or without circumcision, entered into the fold; leaving the Gentile world yet without a knowledge of the Word. From these beginnings Christianity was carried to Rome, where the foundation of a new Church was laid under the preaching of Paul, over which he watched for “two whole years” in “his own hired house.” (\*) Here it continued to exist, “without spot or blemish,” until worldly ambition crept into the flock, when Constantine tempted it by gifts of office, and money, and property, and power. Then the grand consummation of the Christian triumph was postponed. Rome had already held the pagan world in subjugation, and her bishops and clergy, tempted by the remembrance of her former greatness, were not content to rest in their career of ambition, until all the primitive churches were brought down in humiliation at their feet. When this was accomplished, stimulated and emboldened by their first success, they reached out to grasp the scepter of the world. Who can tell how much the nations have been impeded in their march

of progress by these events? But for them the world might have escaped the blight and paralysis of the Middle Ages, and have pursued an unbroken and unchecked course of advancement from the beginning of Christianity. And, instead of now lamenting the loss of all her temporal power, and mourning to see her pope sitting among shattered and fallen columns, without a crown upon his head, the Church of Rome might have held today such a place in the affections of mankind as would have made her word, in spiritual things, the universal guide of human conduct.

\* Acts xxviii., 30. Paul, though a prisoner, was not in actual confinement; and his sphere of Christian labor in Rome would not have been limited to a "hired house," if there had been a church already established there, under the ministry of Peter.

Continued in [Chapter IX. Argument of Archbishop Kenrick](#)