

# The Papal System – V. Christendom at the Beginning of the Seventh Century



Continued from [IV. Councils For Seven Centuries Repudiate Papal Jurisdiction](#).

The entire east, with all its great patriarchs, bishops and churches, with all its teeming population of Christians, orthodox and heterodox, was separate from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome. The pope never had any authority over a single one of these churches up till the commencement of the seventh century. And *never after that time*, unless in our days, when he has acquired limited control over an insignificant list of schismatics that would not number one percent of the pope-rejecting Christians of the east.

The Christians in France regarded him as the first bishop of the Church, because the prelate of the most renowned city of the world, but as rightly possessing no power over them. The Christians of Germany, following the Irish and British missionaries who brought them salvation, rejected the supremacy of the pontiff root and branch, and observed neither Romish customs, nor papal edicts. This was substantially the position of the Spanish church, The churches of Ireland, of the ancient Britons, and of Scotland, manfully refused every claim of the pope, and regarded his missionaries and his religion as tainted with heresy.

Nine-tenths of the Germans were pagans; all the Anglo-Saxons, except the few thousands Augustine had converted; all the Poles and Scandinavians—in short, the ancestors of most of the great nations of to-day, were steeped in heathenism, and the supremacy of the pope was confined to his own old patriarchate in Italy, and the small but hopeful mission of Augustine located in Ethelbert's kingdom of Kent.

Eminent witnesses give indisputable evidence that for ages the Church had no crowned bishop whose spiritual scepter ruled all ecclesiastics and Christians.

The inspired records unmistakably declare the absolute equality of bishops and presbyters. The leading Christians of the primitive Church taught the same doctrine;—a view of these officers which forbids the existence of any royal bishop exercising dominion over the faith and practice of the whole Church.

And when, in times a little later, bishops became the official superiors of presbyters, the equality of all bishops was held and defended by the great thinkers of the Christian fold whom all subsequent ages have revered. Showing a decided conviction that a kingly bishop, with royal attributes over Zion, had no place in the calculations of the mighty men who stood in the front rank of Christ's army during the first seven centuries after his ascension.

Let us examine the facts:

#### BISHOPS AND PRESBYTERS THE SAME OFFICERS IN THE EARLY CHURCHES.

The New Testament speaks with the greatest clearness on this question. In the Acts of the Apostles 20:17, Paul is said to have called the elders of the church at Ephesus, that is, the presbyters; and in his address to them, in the 28th verse, he says: "Take heed therefore-unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." The word "overseers" is in the original bishops (ἐπίσκοπος), so that, according to the spirit of inspiration, presbyters and bishops are the same officers. And the idea, that in Paul's time, in the city of Ephesus, there could be two or more bishops after the power and privileges of modern episcopacy, is one of those preposterous delusions which the intelligent could not readily receive.

At Ephesus the bishops were simply ordinary pastors of the church. In the Epistle to Titus, i. 5, Paul tells Titus that he had left him in Crete to ordain elders in every city (πρεσβυτέρων); and speaking of these functionaries in the 7th verse, he says: "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God" (ἐπίσκοπος), showing that in Paul's opinion the terms bishop and elder or presbyter described the same officers. Peter, in his 1st Epistle, v. 1, 2, addresses the presbyters, saying:

"The elders who are among you I exhort, who am also a co-presbyter, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ; feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight, not by constraint but willingly."

Now the words "taking the oversight" are literally episcopising (ἐπισκοπέω), acting as bishops, so that, in the judgment of Peter, elders are bishops. There is no pretext in the divine Word for another conclusion.

#### *Tertullian.*

Tertullian whose authority will ever have great weight, writing about the end of the second century, says:

*"The highest priest, who is the bishop, has the right of administering baptism. Then the presbyters and deacons, yet not without the authority of the bishop, because of the honor of the church, which being preserved, peace is preserved. Otherwise, the right even belongs to laymen."*

Now, according to this witness, the bishop is only *the highest priest*. *The honor of the church* is the only reason why he is invested with the authority of baptizing. And the honor of the church is secured in this arrangement by preserving its peace. The dignity of a bishop in Tertullian's day was

conferred, not by Christ, but by the Church, to preserve its harmony; and he is only the first presbyter, in piety and talents, or in the honor conferred by venerable years.

*Irenaeus.*

Irenaeus, a bishop of great worth, who flourished about the same time as Tertullian, says:

“But when we return again to that tradition, which is from the apostles, and which is guarded in the churches through the succession of presbyters, we provoke those who are opposed to tradition; they say, that they, existing not only from the presbyters, but also from the apostles, are more plenteously endued with wisdom.”

Here the celebrated Bishop of Lyons represents a succession of presbyters as guarding the apostolical doctrine, as the chief human protectors of the revealed treasures of heaven. And again he says:

“Therefore, it is incumbent on those who are in the church to obey the presbyters, who have their succession from the apostles, as we have shown, who, together with the succession of the episcopacy, have received the unerring gift of truth, according to the will of the Father.”

Here the presbyters have their succession from the apostles, and these same presbyters, like those of Ephesus, have the succession of the episcopacy; in the time of Irenaeus the terms bishop and presbyter were given interchangeably to the same clergyman. Irenaeus, with force and Christian kindness, entreats Victor, Bishop of Rome, as Eusebius records, not to excommunicate whole churches for a difference of opinion about the observance of Easter; in this address he says:

“And those presbyters who governed the church before Soter, and over which you now preside, I mean Anicetus and Pius, Hyginus with Telesphorus and Xystus.”

These persons, whom he calls presbyters, are popes, the predecessors of Victor in the See of Rome.

*Jerome.*

Jerome, the scholarly and popular saint and monk of the fourth century, says:

“Therefore as presbyters know that they, from the custom of the church, are subject to him who has been placed over them, so bishops know that they, more from that usage, than from the fact of the Lord’s setting it in order, are superior to presbyters, and ought to govern the church for the common welfare.”

Here the learned maker of the Vulgate declares against any divine distinction between bishops and presbyters. The custom of the Church is the sole authority for the superiority of bishops over presbyters.

Jerome in another place says:

"I hear say there is one become so peevish that he setteth deacons before priests, that is to say, before bishops; whereas the apostle plainly teaches that priests and bishops are all one."

Certainly this statement speaks with decision. And Jerome repeats it in other forms with equal clearness. He says:

"For at Alexandria, from Mark, the evangelist, to Heracles and Dionysius, bishops, the presbyters always elected one from among themselves, and having placed him in a higher rank, named him bishop, after the manner that an army chooses its general; the deacons select one from among themselves whom they know to be industrious, and him they call archdeacon."

According to this statement a bishop at Alexandria at this period belonged to no order distinct from the presbyters, he was simply a presbyter elected to the presidency of the board of presbyters.

Again Jerome says:

"Presbyter and bishop are the same; the one name describes the age of the man, the other his dignity. Hence instruction is given to Titus and Timothy about the ordination of a bishop and of a deacon; but there is absolute silence about presbyters, because *the presbyter is contained in the bishop*."

And again Jerome says:

"Hearken to another testimony in which it is very clearly established that a bishop is the same as a presbyter—(Paul says to Titus)—I have left thee in Crete that you may correct the things that are deficient, appointing presbyters through the cities, as I commanded you. If there is any one without crime, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, free from the charge of luxury, or not hypocrites; for a bishop ought to be without crime, as a steward of God."

Jerome's own opinion, and the apostle's testimony, are decisive evidence of the oneness of the office of a bishop and presbyter.

Again, says Jerome, Paul commands Timothy:

"To be unwilling to neglect the grace which is in you, which was given you by prophecy through the imposition of the hands of the presbytery."

But also Peter, in his first Epistle, says:

"Presbyters, I, your (fellow-presbyter, exhort you, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a sharer in the coming glory which is to be revealed: rule the flock of Christ and oversee it, not by compulsion but freely, as being near to God."

But, indeed, it is more strikingly expressed in the original Greek, that is, discharging the duties of bishops; from which word the name bishop is derived.

And again, commenting on Titus, Jerome says:

"For a bishop must be without crime, as it were a steward of God; a presbyter is the same as a bishop, and until by the instigation of the devil there arose divisions in religion, and it was said among the people: I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, churches were governed by a common council of the presbyters. Afterwards truly, every one reckoned those to be his whom he baptized, not Christ's. Then it was decreed over the world, that one of the presbyters should be placed over the rest, to whom the whole care of the Church should belong, and that the seeds of schisms might be taken away."

*Ambrose.*

Speaking of Paul, Ambrose says:

"Moreover, after bishop he places the ordination of the deacon. Wherefore? but that there is one ordination of the bishop and the presbyter: for each is a priest, but the bishop is the first; since every bishop is a presbyter, though every presbyter is not a bishop. For he is the bishop who is first among the presbyters."

*Augustine.*

The celebrated Bishop of Hippo says: "What is a bishop but the first priest, that is to say, the highest priest? According to the terms of honor which now the usage of the Church of Rome hath brought about, the episcopacy is superior to the presbytery." But from this statement the superior position of bishops has no divine authority, and rests simply on the usage of the Church of Rome. And in any case, according to Augustine, a bishop is only a presbyter, though he is the highest.

*Chrysostom.*

Chrysostom says:

"Between a bishop and a priest there is, in a manner, no difference."  
"The presbyters anciently were called bishops, and servants of Christ, and the bishops presbyters."

In Scotland for a long period, the bishops of the country were subject to the Abbot of Iona, who received every mark of pious deference from the heads of the churches planted by the great Columba. And as this fact rests upon the very best evidence, we have another confirmation of the doctrine that, among the early Christians, there was no difference in the orders of bishops and priests. "Even bishops obeyed the abbots of Iona, though they were but simple priests."

*Isidore.*

The celebrated Isidore, Bishop of Seville, presided at the second council, held in his episcopal city, A. p. 619, and, among other canons, it made the following:

“For although many services of the ministry are common to them with the bishops, they are aware that some are prohibited to them by new ecclesiastical rules, as the consecration of presbyters, deacons, and virgins. These are not lawful to presbyters.”

Du Pin gives a full account of this canon, but is careful to leave out the words, “*by new ecclesiastical rules.*”

In the researches of modern scholarship, men have forgotten their sectarian prejudices, and confessed their conviction that originally the names presbyter and bishop described the same ecclesiastic. Bishop Stillingfleet says:

“I believe, upon the strictest inquiry, Medina’s judgment will be found true, that Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose, Sedulius, Primasius, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, were all of Arius’ judgment as to the *identity of both name and order of bishops and presbyters in the primitive Church.*”

Archbishop Cranmer says:

“The bishops and priests were at one time, and were not two things, but one office in the beginning of Christ’s religion.”

Archbishop Usher said:

“I have declared my opinion to be, that episcopus and presbyter differ only in degree, not in order, and consequently in places where bishops cannot be had, the ordination by presbyters standeth valid.”

Opinions of this character might be multiplied in number, though in the United Church of England and Ireland, no other three names could fully equal those whose views have been quoted. The leading men of the first four and a half centuries, and some of the most distinguished Episcopalians of the great Reformation, receive the teachings of inspiration given in Acts xx. 17, 28, and declare that the terms bishop and presbyter describe the same order of clergymen. These men had a hierarchy, and this fact gives peculiar force to their testimony.

It follows that as bishops and presbyters are one, there is no scriptural ground for several bishops, or for one prelate to claim lordship over the presbyters, deacons, and churches. There is no divine location for a pontiff.

#### THE EQUALITY OF BISHOPS.

The origin of episcopacy, according to Jerome, is to be found in the factiousness of church members. “A presbyter,” says he, “is the same as a bishop, and until, by the instigation of the devil, there arose divisions in religion, and it was said among the people, ‘I am of Paul, and I am of

Apollos, and I am of Cephas,' churches were governed by a common council of the presbyters."

For the sake of securing peace and repressing anarchy in the churches, a bishop or permanent president of the College of Presbyters was appointed. As early as the end of the second century, a modified episcopacy was the common form of the government of the churches. At first, the presbyters retained many of their old rights; and, in some countries, they held most of their original privileges for a very long period. But the episcopal system very early became general and popular; just as kingly government in the state has, from the most ancient times, been the method of exercising sovereign powers to which most nations have submitted.

When episcopal government was first established in the churches, and for centuries later, the accepted theory about it was: That all bishops were equal, not in culture, not in the wealth of their respective sees, not in the honor which might be inseparably attached to some bishop at the seat of government, or in a large and opulent city, but in a general council, where the vote of every bishop had the same influence; and in the common duties of the episcopal office. The fiercest struggles were made to maintain this equality, and its assertion in manly words forms the most interesting records of the Church's history.

#### *Cyprian.*

Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, the most eloquent and cultivated ecclesiastic of the Christian Church from the days of Paul, says:

"For none of us makes himself a bishop of bishops, or by a tyrannical terror compels his colleagues to a necessity of obedience; since every bishop, according to the license of his own liberty and power, hath his own freedom, and can no more be judged by another, than he himself can judge another."

Cyprian lived before the age of general councils, when each bishop under God was master of the interests committed to his charge.

Cyprian on another occasion gave Stephen, Bishop of Rome, a severe rebuke for meddling in the affairs of two Spanish bishops, Basilides and Martialis, who had been deposed from their bishoprics for their crimes. In his 68th letter addressed to the clergy and people of Spain, he says:

"Basilides going to Rome, imposed upon our colleague, Stephen, who lived a great way off, and was ignorant of the truth of the matter; seeking unjustly to be restored to his see, from which he had been justly deposed."

Certainly Cyprian has few compliments here for the ignorant pope, and evidently writes as one who feels himself, and is regarded by others, as Stephen's equal.

He writes to Antonius on the controversy between Cornelius and Novatian, and makes this declaration to him:

"The bond of concord abiding, and the sacrament of the Catholic Church persisting undivided, every bishop disposes and directs his own acts, having to render an account of his purpose to the Lord."

Cyprian never dreamt of any bishop giving him orders, or demanding an account of his acts.

Again, in a letter to Pope Stephen himself, he says:

In which matter we neither force any one, nor give law, since every prelate hath in the administration of his church the free power of his will, having to render unto the Lord an account of his acting."

[Pope] Pius IX. would be astounded at such sentiments in a letter from one of his bishops, but Stephen was not. No other obedience was given to popes by bishops like Cyprian in Stephen's times. Cyprian writes to Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, after the same independent style.

As Du Pin translates him, he says:

"What benefit can they expect from going to Rome? If they repent of their faults they ought to understand that they must come back hither again to receive absolution for them, since it is an order established all the world over, and, indeed, but reasonable, that every one's cause should be examined where the crime was committed. Every pastor has received a *part of Jesus Christ's flock to govern*, and shall render an account of his actions to God alone. Upon this account it is not to be allowed that those persons who are under our charge should run to and fro, and sow dissensions among bishops by their temerity and artifices; but on the other hand, it is necessary for them to defend themselves in that place where they may be confronted with their accusers, and the witnesses of their crimes. Their cause has been examined, sentence has been pronounced against them, and it would be below the gravity of bishops to be justly reproached with being wavering and inconstant."

The translation is very free, amounting to a paraphrase, and it is given because Du Pin has caught the exact drift of Cyprian's indignant denunciation of appeals to Rome against an African decision. He plainly tells Cornelius throughout his lengthy letter, that he has nothing to do with Fortunatus and Felicissimus, the guilty African bishops, and that his interference could not help them. They must abide by the local decision, or have it reversed at home; as each bishop is independent.

According to Cyprian, no benefit could be obtained by an appeal to Rome. Even Du Pin is not always to be trusted. In the quotation from Cyprian's letter, he passes over four lines to reach the end of his quotation without a hint that he omits anything, and the discarded part intimates that the African decision only appeared unimportant to a few ruined and abandoned men. So that only a handful of desperate persons approved of appeals from their own bishops.

There are eighty-three letters to and from Cyprian published in his works.



These letters employ a style of address to Cyprian somewhat varying. Cyprian gives every bishop the same title, and that the simple one, Brother. He published seven epistles addressed to Cornelius, Bishop of Rome; the first one is his 41st Epistle, and it is inscribed: "Cyprianus to Cornelius, a brother, health." The other six begin in the same way. "Cornelius to Cyprian, a brother, health," is the address adopted by the Roman Bishop, as seen in the 46th Epistle of Cyprian's collection, Firmilianus addresses Cyprian in this way in the 7th Epistle, "Cyprian and other colleagues assembled in council to the number of 66, address Fidus, a brother," in the usual form; though Fidus was a very obscure and ignorant bishop. This letter is the 59th. The 67th is addressed in the same form to Stephen, Bishop of Rome. The 71st is addressed to Quintus, after the same fashion; the 73rd to Jubianus, the 74th to Pompey, and the 52nd to Antonianus. All unimportant African Bishops. The 26th is addressed to "Pope Cyprian," by Maximus and Moyses, presbyters, Nicostratus and Ruffinus, deacons, and other confessors who are with them. The 30th and 31st are addressed to "Pope Cyprian," by the presbyters and deacons of the Church of Rome.

In Cyprian's time, as he himself says, each bishop had powers in his own city equal to every other, and the Roman Bishop, while treated with respect, as the pastor of the first city in the world, had no title not given to his brethren in the episcopal office, and no jurisdiction over the churches outside of his own diocese. Cyprian was more the "Head of the Church" than any Roman pontiff in his day, as Hosius of Cordova was three-quarters of a century later. He was consulted by bishops in France and Spain; and though living in Africa, time and again, he was approached for advice by the bishops, presbyters and deacons of Rome itself.

Du Pin says of Cyprian that:

"He looked upon the Bishop of Rome as superintendent of the first church in the world. But then he was of opinion that he ought not to assume any authority over the rest of the bishops, that were his brethren, or over their churches. That every bishop was to render to God an account of his own conduct. That the episcopal authority is indivisible, and every bishop has his portion of it."

*Augustine.*

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in Africa, was the ablest man produced in the Christian Church for centuries. North Africa has laid the world under obligations for its Cyprian and its Augustine. The industry of Augustine has left the Church a superb legacy in the voluminous works to which his mighty mind gave birth. In common with all his countrymen, he denounced appeals from an African synod or bishop to any authority outside of the church of his countrymen. He very modestly denounces one of these appeals in his 162nd letter:

"Probably Melchiades, Bishop of Rome, with the transmarine bishops, his colleagues, ought not to have usurped that judgment which had been decided by seventy Africans, when Tigisitanus presided as primate. But why might he not assume it? Because the Emperor, when requested, sent

bishops to be judges, who would sit with him, and would determine whatsoever appeared just in the whole case."

In the exercise of a humility, for which Augustine is to be commended, he gently brands Melchiades as a usurper, and he tells him that seventy Africans had already settled the question.

The titles given in epistles to Augustine, and by him, show the wonderful reverence in which the Bishop of Hippo was held; and prove that, in the Christian world he had no superior.

Jerome in five letters addresses Augustine with these complimentary words: "To the lord, truly holy, and the most blessed *Pope* Augustine." Surely, the learned St. Jerome knew the proper designation of a bishop.

Augustine is equally courteous to the distinguished scholar. His letters are addressed to: "The most illustrious and most desired lord, the brother in Christ to be honored, my fellow presbyter, Jerome."

The 254th letter in Augustine's epistles is addressed: "To the lord, truly holy, and sacredly preferred by us above all things, and revered with holy joy, the most blessed Pope Augustine, by Valentinus; the servant of *thy holiness*." Certainly Augustine could desire nothing more in the way of high-sounding words of flattery.

Augustine addresses Pope Innocent: "To the lord, most happy, the brother deservedly most honored, Pope Innocent." Augustine does not pay such compliments to Innocent as he receives from Valentinus.

Augustine addresses his 94th letter to: "Hilary, the most blessed lord, a brother in the truth of Christ, worthy of veneration, and a fellow priest."

Consentius addresses his letter to: "The holy lord, and most blessed Pope Augustine."

The titles of the 270 letters in the works of St. Augustine show that no one in the Christian world was more honored than himself. From those in his collection addressed to the Roman popes, it is abundantly manifest that they were not the rulers of the churches, the masters of the spiritual affairs of Christendom; and it is just as clear that in the discharge of their episcopal duties all bishops were equal.

#### *Antioch.*

The Synod of Antioch, complaining of the behavior of Pope Julius in the affair of Athanasius, as Sozomen relates, "Did not, therefore, think it equal that they should be thought *inferiors*, because they had not so large and numerous a church."

#### The Apostolical Canons

ordain that: "The bishops of each nation should know him that is first among them, and should esteem him the head, and should do nothing considerable without his advice; as also that each one should only meddle with those affairs which concerned his own district, and the places under it, But he (the primate) should not do anything without the opinion of all, so that there may be concord."

The apostolical canons are as old as the fourth, and might reach up to the close of the second century. And, according to their testimony, the Pope of Rome had no preeminence in the government of the churches. The principal city in each country was the seat of the first bishop; but even he must act by the advice of his fellow-bishops in everything of moment, that concord may be preserved.

*The Bishop of Rome the equal of other Bishops.*

At a council held in Rome, A.D. 359, a synodical letter was adopted, and sent to the Bishops of Illyria, which began: "*Damasus* (the pope), *Valens*, and the other bishops assembled at the holy council held at Rome, to the beloved brethren, the Bishops of Illyria." Here Damasus, the pope, is only first on the list; Valens is in a position equally important; the others are evidently the peers of the two whose names are given. The pope is only *primus inter pares*, the first among equals.

*Jerome.*

Jerome says:

"Wherever a bishop may be, whether at Rome or at Eugubium, at Constantinople or at Rhegium, at Alexandria or at Thanis, he is of the same worth, and of the same priesthood; the force of wealth and lowness of poverty do not render a bishop higher or lower; for all of them are the successors of the apostles."

Again, the renowned monk and scholar condemns the whole papal system; for that scheme is destroyed by the removal of the pontiff, and there can be no proper pope without preeminent authority over the churches.

*Hilary.*

Hilary, of Arles, was a vigorous bishop, a sound thinker, a Bible reader, and a man of fearless independence. Celedonius, a bishop, had been married to a widow, and followed secular employments. For these two crimes, Hilary, in a council, deposed him. He appealed to Leo I., of Rome, and the pope restored him to his see. But neither Hilary nor the bishops of France would yield to the dictation of the pontiff. They were unaccustomed to obey such a master, and it was needful to obtain an imperial decree from Justinian, commanding, among other things, that: "Forever hereafter, neither the French bishops, nor the bishops of other provinces, shall undertake anything without the authority of the Bishop of Rome; that all that he orders shall be acknowledged for a law." Well may Du Pin say: "This edict is contrary to the canons, as also to the decrees of the council of Sardica." But it shows that

up to that time, the first half of the fifth century, the French and German churches owed no allegiance to the See of Rome.

### *Gregory I.*

Eulogius, of Alexandria, had flatteringly said to the great Gregory, "*sicut jusistis*,"—as ye ordered. Gregory replied: "That word of command I desire to be removed from my hearing, because I know who I am, and who ye are; by place ye are my brethren; in goodness, fathers. I did not, therefore, *command*, but what seemed profitable I hinted to you." Gregory was not the man to stop at giving an order where he had authority to do it, He was the first of the popes to begin his letters with the well known words, "servant of servants." But none knew better than he how to climb the slippery heights of spiritual ambition and presumption.

Writing John the Faster, he reproachfully compares him to Lucifer in his defeated ambition in heaven, "What," says he, "wilt thou say to Christ, the Head of the Universal Church, in the trial of the last judgment, who, by the appellation of Universal, dost endeavor to subject all his members to thee? Whom, I pray, dost thou mean to imitate in so perverse a word, but him who, despising the legions of angels constituted in fellowship with him, did endeavor to break forth unto the top of singularity, that he might both be subject to none, and alone be over all? Who also said, I will ascend into heaven, and will exalt my throne above the stars,—for what are thy brethren, all the bishops of the universal Church, but the stars of heaven, to whom, as yet, by this haughty word, thou deservest to prefer thyself; and to trample on their name in comparison to thee?"

On another occasion, he writes: "I confidently say that whosoever calls himself universal bishop, or desires to be so called, does in his elation *forerun Antichrist, because he proudly places himself before others.*"

It cannot be doubted that, in the estimation of Gregory and the other leading bishops of his day, that no prelate had any authority from God to be the master of his fellow-bishops; that in all fundamental matters the bishops of the Christian world were on a common platform, notwithstanding the honor conferred by the bishopric which contained the imperial residence, or the luster which surrounded bishops of extraordinary talents or unusual piety. But the time had now come when these primitive views were to be buried out of sight, and when the Roman bishops should appear as the lords of Christ's spiritual heritage, as the masters of the ministers and doctrines of the whole Church of God in nearly all Europe.

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