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— Neil Godfrey - November 2023

- Turmel, Joseph (1859-1943) Auteur du texte. *Histoire Du Dogme De La Papauté. I, Des Origines À La Fin Du IVe Siècle*. Paris: Librairie Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1908.

## CHAPTER THREE

### History of the Papacy from Victor to Saint Cyprian

In the years following the middle of the first century, around 157, St. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, made the trip to Rome. He came to speak with St. Anicet, the bishop of that city, in order to settle certain differences of opinion by mutual agreement. One, the only one we know of, had to do with the Passover. While Rome, and with it not only the West but also a significant part of the East, celebrated the feast of Easter on the Sunday following the 14th of Nisan, and considered it as a remembrance of the Savior's resurrection, the churches of the province of Asia and some others placed the Passover, which for them was the feast of the passion of the divine Redeemer, on the same day of the 14th of Nisan. The bishop of Smyrna tried to persuade the bishop of Rome to adopt the Asian rite, which was based on the apostle John and the Gospel, but he came up against an irrevocably fixed custom. The bishop of Rome, for his part, tried in vain to impose the common custom on his venerable guest. When it was recognized, on both sides, that it was impossible to reach an agreement on the ground of rites, they were content with the union of hearts. Anicet invited Polycarp to make the Eucharistic consecration in the assembly of the faithful. Each of them promised to remain in communion with the churches outside his usage, and Anicet, faithful to the custom of his predecessors, continued to send the Eucharist to the bishops who were not of his observance 1.

1. Harnack (die Chronologie, I, 380 and 721) places Polycarp's journey to Rome in 154. This is because he puts the death of this bishop at the date of February 155. As it is more probable that this last event took place in 166 (see Annales de philosophie chrétienne, October 1904, p. 29), one can move the journey back after 154, and

chronology seems to require that it be moved back. See Chapman, *Revue bédic - tine*, 1902, p. 28 and 149.

2. Not all of Asia Minor, nor even all of the diocese of Asia, but proconsular Asia, the ancient kingdom of Pergamon, of which Ephesus was the capital, and also some neighboring provinces. - See Gorini, *Defense of the Church*, I, ch. U, § 12; De Smedt, *Dissertationes Selectæ* p. 53; Hefele, *History of the Councils*, trans. of Farnborough, i, 149.

1. Letter of St. Irenaeus to Pope Victor, in Eusebius, *Hist, eccl*, v, 24, 11.

But this transaction was not a solution. This one came forty years later, and it marks one of the greatest dates in the history of the papacy. It was in the last years of the second century (around 191) 2. The divergence of which the celebration of the Passover was the object was increasing and was throwing the East into turmoil, especially in the churches which, being on the limit of the two observances, did not know to which one they belonged 1. In one city the faithful were rejoicing while in the next they were still practicing penance. Was this not a shocking sight? And then, the Quartodecians, whose Passover coincided with that of the Jews, were led by necessity to give in their feast - which was not linked to the memory of the resurrection 2 - a more or less large place to the Jewish rites. Could one give free rein to such a dangerous practice? Victor, who at that time governed the Church of Rome, resolved to remedy the situation. First, he gathered his clergy around him and had them subscribe to the condemnation of the quartodecimnn system. He then sent the decision of the Council of Rome to the bishops of the principal seats of the Christian world, inviting them to communicate it to the churches of their respective provinces, and he threatened to deprive of the communion of the Roman church all those who would persist in celebrating the 14th of Nisan.

2. Harnack, *Die Chronologie*, i, p. 322 and 381. Tillemont, III, *Saint Victor*, art. 3, moves the date back to the year 196.

1. This is what happened at Laodicea, after the death of the bishop Sagaris. In order to restore harmony in this divided church, Meliton wrote a book on the date of the Passover, of which Eusebius (iv, 26, 2) has preserved a fragment and which maintained the Quartodeciman tradition.

2. In the Quartodeciman system, Passover was not and could not be the feast of the resurrection, it was the feast either of the passion or of the institution of the Eucharist. It had undoubtedly been originally the feast of the paschal lamb; but it had had to erase, more or less, the Judaic imprint which marked it primitively. See: Daniel, *de la Discipline des quartodecimans*, art. 2, in *Recueil de divers ouvrages*, III, p. 475 (Paris, 1724); Duchesne, *Revue des Questions historiques*, July, 1880.

1. These threats are attested by Polycrates in the Letter to Victor which is reported below.

At his request 2, various councils met in Palestine, Pontus, Osroene and the province of Asia. The bishops of Achaia gathered at Corinth. Irenaeus deliberated in Lyons with the bishops of the country. 3 All these councils decided that the feast of Easter should be celebrated on Sunday, and rejected the opposite custom,4 all except one: the Council of Asia. There, the Quartodeciman custom was defended with the same energy that Polycarp had once displayed against Anicetus, and the bishop of Ephesus, Polycrates, wrote the following letter to Victor in the name of the bishops of his province 1 :

2. We have proof of Victor's intervention only for the Council of Ephesus. In the letter which we are about to read, Polycrates declares, in fact; that he assembled 'his council at Victor's request: οίς υμεις ήξιώσατε μετακληθήναι ύπ' έμοϋ. But it is clear that what took place for proconsular Asia also took place for the other countries.

3. Eusebius (v, 23) speaks of the των κατά Γαλλίαν παροικιών ας Είρεναίος παροιών έπεσκόπει. In the Episcopal Fastes of Vancienne Gaul, i, 41, Bishop Duchesne explains that the παροικια were not dioceses but parishes of a single diocese In VHistoire ancienne de VEglise, i, 254, 290, he seems to abandon this opinion, against which Harnack objected (Mission und Ausbreitung i, 383; ii, 226) that the παροικία is uu diocese.

4. Eusebius v, 23.

1. Eusebius, v, 24.

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"It is we who have the true day, the authentic day, without advance or delay. It is in Asia that those great lights 2 are extinguished, which will rise again on the day when the Lord comes from heaven, full of glory and majesty, to give life to the saints. I speak of Philip, one of the twelve, who is buried at Hierapolis with two of his virgin daughters, and whose other daughter, who had received the Holy Spirit, lies at Ephesus. I speak of John, who rested on the Lord's breast, exercised the pontificate, wore the golden blade, was a martyr and a doctor, and breathed his last in Ephesus. I speak of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna and martyr; of Thraséas, bishop of Euménie, who rests in Smyrna, where he suffered martyrdom. Do I need to recall the bishop of Laodicea, Sagaris, who was martyred in that city? Do I need to recall Papirius and the eunuch Meliton, who, after having governed his life according to the rule of the Holy Spirit, awaits in Saides the day of the coming of the Lord who will resurrect him? All these men celebrated Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon, as prescribed by the Gospel. They followed the rule of faith, without allowing themselves any innovation. I too, Polycrates, the last of you, follow the tradition of my parents, some of whom were my teachers. There have been seven bishops in my family; I am the eighth. All my relatives have always celebrated Passover on the day when the Jews stop using leaven. I, my brothers, who have been in the Lord for sixty-five years, who have conversed with the brethren of the whole world, who have read the Scriptures from one end to the other, remain insensitive to the attempts that are made to frighten me. I know that greater

men than myself have said: "It is better to obey God than men... I could also name the bishops who are with me and whom I have gathered together as you have asked me to do 2. If I were to give their names, one would see that the number is considerable. All of them, having gathered around my frail person, have approved my letter. They have realized that it is not in vain that I wear white hair, and that I have always conducted myself according to the maxims of Jesus Christ.

1. Ούππύρομαι ἐπὶ τοῖς καταπλησσομένοις. Here is the evidence of the threats of excommunication.
2. ἤξιώσατε. The church of Smyrna writes to the church of Philomelium (Martyrium Polycarpi, 20), "You have asked (ἤξιώσατε . Clement (ad Cor., li, 1; he, 5; lv, 5) uses this verb to designate the act of prayer. Puller, The primitive saints and the see of Rome, p. 15.

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Polycrates was a man of tradition, who gave the first place in his soul to memories. Victor was a man of government, for whom the interest of the Church, or what seemed to him such, took precedence. Without letting himself be stopped by the considerations of the old bishop of Ephesus, he thought he had to pass from threats to execution, and he separated from his community all the partisans of the quartodeciman observance.

1. After having reported the letter of Polycrates, Eusebius says (v, 24, 9) that the bishop of Rome, Victor, endeavored to separate from the common unity all the churches of Asia and of the neighboring provinces as having sentiments contrary to the faith; that he denounced all these bishops by letters; and that he declared them excluded from the unity of the Church. Here is his text: ὁ μὲν τῆς Ῥωμαίων προεστὼς Βίκτωρ ἀθρώως τῆς Ἀσίας πάσης ἅμα ταῖς ὁμόροις ἐκκλησίαις τὰς παροικίας ἀποτέμνειν, ὡσαν ἑτεροδοξούσας, τῆς κοινῆς ἐνώσεως πειράται, καὶ στηλιτεύει γὰρ διὰ γραμμάτων, ἀκοινωνήτους πάντας ἄρδην τοὺς κοινῆς τοὺς πειρήτησε ἀνακηρύττων ἀδελφοὺς. - Note: a) the Asian bishops are denounced (στηλιτεύει) b) they are declared absolutely separated from communion (ἀκοινωνήτους... ἄρδην... ἀνακηρύττων); c) in Victor's intention, this excommunication should separate them not only from the communion of Rome, but from the communion of the whole Church (ἀποτέμνειν . . τῆς κοινῆς ἐνώσεως); d) this excommunication is motivated by the heterodoxy of the accused (ὡσαν ἑτεροδοξούσας); e) the excommunication, which was actually carried out, nevertheless remained in the state of a trial (πειράται), for reasons we shall see.

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But then, on various sides, vehement protests arose. The very people who were postponing the feast of Easter to Sunday found it excessive to break the unity of the Church for a matter of liturgy, and they judged Victor's conduct severely 2. Among the letters which the bishop of Rome received at that time, that of St. Irenaeus has come down to us. Here is the language used by the bishop of Lyon 3 :

2. Eusebius, (v, 24, 3) speaks of the letters written then by the bishops as πληκτικώτερον καθαπτομένων.

3. Eusebius, v, 24, 10.

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"There is here not only a question of day, but also a question of fasting. Some fast only one day, others two, others more. There are even those who prolong their fast for fifty hours<sup>1</sup>. And this diversity does not date from our time; it goes back to our predecessors, who allowed ignorance and simplicity to introduce customs from which we have learned. Nevertheless, they lived in peace with each other, as we do ourselves. The divergence in the fasts thus resulted in highlighting the unity of the faith. The presbyters who, before Soter, governed the church of which you are the head, namely Anicetus, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphore and Sixtus, did not practice the rite of the 14th of nisan and did not let it be practiced around them. But when members of churches where the Quartodeciman observance was in force came to see them, they lived in good relations with them, although the celebration of the 14th of Nisan, in a milieu that did not know this feast, could not fail to surprise. No one was rejected for this practice. Moreover, your predecessors sent the Eucharist to the presbyters of the churches of the Quartodeciman rite, which was foreign to them. Blessed Polycarp came to Rome under Anicetus. They had some disputes to settle, but they immediately kissed each other and quickly moved on to the question of the Passover. Anicetus, in fact, could not induce Polycarpe to abandon an observance which he had always practiced following John, the disciple of Our Lord, and the other apostles with whom he had lived. Polycarpe, on his "side, found Anicetus unwavering in his determination to follow the custom of his predecessors. They broke up, under these conditions, with each other. To honor Polycarp, Anicetus allowed him to celebrate the Eucharist in the congregation of the faithful, and they parted in peace, each remaining in communion with those of the opposite rite to his own.

1. The meaning of these last words is uncertain and has provoked various hypotheses. See Hefele, *Histoire des conciles*, trans. of Farnborough. i, 143.

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Not content with raising his voice to Victor and making him hear the language of a courageous and independent conscience, Irenaeus worked to create a movement of opinion in the Church. He wrote letters to many bishops to rally them to his feelings. His propaganda was effective. Victor backed down in the face of the formidable opposition that the episcopate made to his decree of excommunication. He restored to the quartodecimans the benefit of communion which he had for a moment taken away from them; or, if he did not give in himself, his successors compromised. This, at least, is what we can conclude from a text by Firmilian of Caesarea who, sixty years later, recounted that the question of the Passover had not caused any damage to the union of the churches. <sup>1</sup> Moreover, it seems that the churches of Asia soon gave up their particular custom and came to an agreement with the rest of the Christian world.<sup>1</sup>

1. In St. Cyprian, ep. lxxv, 6: c Eos autem qui Romæ sunt non ea in omnibus observare... scire quis etiam inde polest quod circa celebrandos dies Paschæ... videat osse apud illos aliquas diversitates... nec tamen propter hoc ab Ecclesie catholice pace atque unitate aliquando discessum est." See Tillemont, ni, Saint Victor, art. 6; De Smedt, *Dissertationes selectæ*, p. 77. The testimony of Anatole, on which these two authors rely, is apocryphal (Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchL Litteratur*, ii, 193), but one must consider as decisive the authority of Firmi" lien which they invoke. Also I cannot understand Sohm's writing [*Kirchenrecht*, p. 383]: "Trotzdem ist der Ausschluss der vorderasiatischen Gemeinde von der Kirchengemeinschaft bei Bestand geblieben." The truth is that the bishops, led by St. Irenaeus, persisted in remaining in communion with Asia Minor. Victor, seeing that he was not followed, had to withdraw his decree; if he did not withdraw it, his successor did. This is the explanation of the *παιραται* of Eusebius.

1. Duchesne [*Revue des Questions historiques*, 1880, 2, p. 22] rejects the common opinion according to which the quarlodeciman question was definitively decided at Nicea. According to him, quartodecimal observance had disappeared before the beginning of the fourth century, and the Council of Nicaea dealt with the Easter feast from a diiferent point of view. See also the *Bulletin critique*, 1882, p. 307.

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The matter of the Passover occupies an important place in the history of theology, and it has often been questioned to obtain lessons. Already, in the ninth century, Pope Nicholas, in confrontation with Photius, proved, by the example of Polycrates and other bishops of Proconsular Asia, that the Orientals had always been moved by a spirit of independence and pride, and that they had always been impatient with the yoke of Rome.<sup>1</sup> But it is especially from the XVII century onwards that the names of Victor, Polycrates and Irenaeus were used to fuel controversies. Protestants and Gallicans competed in their eagerness to draw conclusions from the Easter quarrel that were not very favorable, either to the primacy of the pope or to his superiority over the councils. Calvin was pleased to point out the attitude of St. Irenaeus.<sup>2</sup> Mark Antony of Dominis, not content to make the same observation, endeavored to restrict the scope of the act performed by Victor, and he explained that by launching his ephemeral excommunication, the bishop of Rome had withdrawn the four decimal places from his communion, but not from the communion of the universal Church, or even that he had cut himself off from the communion of the other bishops.<sup>1</sup> Dapin saw clearly, in the course of this affair, the proof that one did not recognize then to the pope the right to impose his will to the other churches in the disciplinary questions.<sup>2</sup> And, if Bossuet expressed himself with more reserve, he nevertheless had the heart to note that Victor and Polycrates both believed they were dealing with a question touching the faith; that Polycrates remained indifferent to the threats of the pope; and that the bishops, having now in their communion the quartodecians excommunicated by Rome, rendered useless the enterprise of the apostolic see.<sup>3</sup>

1. Ep. xcvi, P. Z., exix, 1033: c Hos (Asianos) præsul meritis et nomine Victor a communione collegii separavit. At illi omnes cum nonnullis ecclesiarum præsulibus, non solum huic manus minime præbuerunt, verum etiam pertinaciae redarguerunt." See also the letter of St. Columba! to St. Gregory (P. A., lxxx, 261): < Dixit hoc olim et Victor episcopus; sed nemo Orientalium suum recepit commentum."

2. Institution of the Christian Religion, iv, 7, 7: c There follow the corrections or censures of which, as the Roman bishops used towards others, so they suffered that others used towards them. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, aspratically rebuked Victor, bishop of Rome, because, for a small thing, he had issued a large and pernicious contention in the Church, and he obeyed Tad-monition without question. This liberty lasted a long time between the holy bishops to admonish fraternally the bishops of Rome, "

1. De republica ecclesiastica, i, 8, 3 : t Irenscus quoque contra euindem Victorem acius insurrexit, retuditque precipitera hominis et non secundum scientiam zelum... et ipse igitur se ei opposuit viriliter, nec consequenter in Victore papatum ullum agnovit, t - ibid, v. 12, 60 : c Hæc enim excommunicatio mere negativa fuit ac reipsn nihil aliud nisi propriæ communicationis negatio : qua ratione infra videbimus etiam episcopum posse a sua plebe excommunicari, nempe populo se subtrahente ab episcopi sui communione. >

2. De antiqua Ecclesia disciplina, dissert. II. cap. ii.

3. Defensio declarationis, ix, 23 : \* Id quod Eusebius de conatu dixit, eo referendum videtur quod res effectum caluerit... Neque dicant rem levem fuisse, quæque "d fidem per- liuere non videretur. Omnino enim Victor excommunicabat asianas vicinasque ecclesia", heterodoxa, hoc est, ut erudite Valesius vertit, contraria recte fidei sentientes.

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For their part, the theologians devoted to the Holy See did not remain defenseless. After having shown in the excommunication launched by Victor a proof, among many others, of the primacy of the pope, Bellarmine explained that Saint Irenæus did not dispute the pope's power of excommunication, but that he only reproached him for making an inappropriate use of it. He added moreover that Victor, while launching his decree, was inspired by considerations whose gravity escaped the "holy bishop of Lyon, and that the Council of Nicea gave him reason, since it condemned the quartodecimans 1. Cardinal du Perron, supplementing Bellarmine's observations, drew attention to the scriptural arguments brought by Polycrates. He concluded that the bishop of Ephesus thought he was dealing with a question decided by the word of God, and that otherwise he would not have believed himself authorized to resist it. 2 Others, like Constant<sup>3</sup> and Zaccaria<sup>4</sup> pointed out that the many councils relating to "the Passover had been assembled at the instigation of Victor. Others, like Ballerini,<sup>5</sup> noted that the measure taken by the apostolic see with regard to the Asiatic bishops was of a purely disciplinary nature, and that the attitude of St. Irenæus was therefore not very disturbing. Others, finally, affirmed that Victor had limited himself to making threats without following them up 1. And this last opinion, of Gallican origin, was readily used by recent apologists, sometimes as a certainty, sometimes as a hypothesis.

1. De romano pontifice, ii, 20.
2. Itepliqc to the reply of the king of Great Britain, î, 44.
3. Epistolæ romanorum pontificum, 41.
4. Antifebronius (trans. fr.), ni, 380.
5. Vindiciæ auctoritatis pontificie, vin, 6.

1. Valois, Note on Eusebius, v, 24; Noël Alexandre, in liistor. ecclesiast. sæculi, ii, dissert. V, 5; Zaccaria, toc. cit. - See de Smedt, loc. c'it, p. 63.

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For us, who have just seen the texts pass before our eyes, the commentaries of the theologians, without ceasing to be useful, have however only a historical interest and our thought goes elsewhere. The decrees of Victor mark the second intervention of Rome in the affairs of the other churches, at least the second of which history has kept the memory, because the decisions of Soter and Eleutherus, in the question of Montanism, are known to us only by fragile inductions 2. But what a difference between the Letter to the Corinthians of 95 and the measures taken by Victor! At the end of the first century, it was the whole Roman Church which was acting in an authoritative way; it was the Church which sent the letter to the Christians of Corinth; and Clement, who wrote this famous piece, was not in any way discovered. At the end of the first century, we find in front of us, no longer churches, but bishops. It is a bishop who writes, and it is to bishops that he addresses himself. Undoubtedly, Victor, to give his judgment a more imposing solemnity, makes it sign by his clergy, and presents himself surrounded by a Roman council 1. But it is well him which had the initiative of this council and which dictated its decisions to him, because Saint Irénée only attacks him and rejects on him only the responsibility for the measures adopted by the council. This is a first contrast. There is another. In the Letter to the Corinthians, the Roman Church behaves, in the words of the Church of Corinth, like a reasonable and wise sister speaking to a dizzy sister. She gives good advice supported by serious reasons, she formulates maxims; but she does not impose any order, she does not command. Victor, on the contrary, does not fear to impose his will. He asks the bishops of the great sees to assemble councils. He requires that these councils pronounce against the quartodeciman system. He threatened to deprive the refractory of his communion, and he put his threat into execution. It will be objected that, in spite of all his energy, Victor failed, that he had to withdraw his decree of excommunication, or that this unfortunate decree fell of its own accord before the attitude of the bishops who refused to take it into account. This is true: and it proves that the pope did not find around him the feelings of dependence and submission on which he counted. It is a spectacle that we will encounter later still. But, at least, it cannot be denied that Victor was conscious of being the organ of the unity of the Church, and that he drew from this consciousness the right to impose on the entire episcopate his will as laws. This conclusion has been drawn by men who are not suspected of dogmatic prejudice. Was it not Renan who said, speaking of the Easter controversy, that "the Papacy was already born and well born"? Yes, the excommunication launched by Victor is the act of a pope. And, since such an act had not yet occurred, we can say that the Easter question was the baptism of the papacy.



2. Bardenhewer, Geschichte des alikirchl. Liiteratur, i, 528.

t. The Synodicus says that there were fourteen bishops at the council of Rome held by Victor, but his testimony is without authority. Eusebius (V, 23) seems rather to say - without being quite clear - that the council was composed only of the Roman clergy. What is certain is that Polycrates' reply was addressed to Victor and to the church of Rome.

1. Marcus Aurelius, p. 201.

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In the space of time which goes from the death of Victor (199) to the episcopate of Saint Cyprian, the apostolic see was occupied successively by Zephyrinus, Callistus, Urban, Pontian, Anterius, Fabian and Cornelius, who replaced Fabian only after an interregnum of fourteen months (January 20, 250 to March 251). But, of Zéphyrin who governed the Roman church during twenty years (199-218), of Urban whose reign lasted seven years (223-230). Of Anterius, who occupied the apostolic chair for only a little more than a month (November 21, 235, January 3, 236), we know nothing or almost nothing 2; the same can be said of Pontian (230-235), of whom we know only that he adhered by a council or, as Saint Jerome says, by his senate, to the condemnation brought against Origen in Alexandria 1. Our attention is therefore concentrated on Calliste, Fabian, Cornelius and the vacancy which followed the martyrdom of Fabian.

2. There is no need to speak here of the perplexities caused to Zephyrinus by the theological disputes which broke out during his pontificate and to which he brought no solution. Let us simply say that the author of the Phiiosophoumena, ix, 11, presents him as an ignorant and greedy man of whom one made what one wanted with gifts.

1. Saint Jerome, Ep.t xxxiii, 4 : " Damnatus a Demetrio episcopo, exceplis Palestinæ et Arabiæ et Phoenicis atque Achaiæ sacerdotibus. In danialioncm ejus consentit orbis. Roma ipsa contra liunc cogit senatum."

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Pope Callistus is depicted in the darkest colors by the author of the Phiiosophoumena 2. According to this writer, Callistus would have had a deeply scurrilous blade, and he would have risen from his primitive condition of slave to the episcopate only after having committed crimes of common right. Today it is generally agreed that the account of the Phiiosophoumena makes the election of Callistus to the pontificate inexplicable; that it is the work of an exalted adversary, whose passion has clouded his judgement; that, without inventing the facts out of thin air, he disguises them by slandering the intentions. We conclude that a sorting is necessary between the acts which are put before us and the calumnious imputations in which they are framed 3. This sorting accomplished leaves us in front of the following elements :

2. *Philosophoumena*, ix, 12.

3. De Smedt, loc. cii., 190; Duchesne, *Histoire ancienne de l'Église*, i, 294 ff, who use the work of Doelinger and Rossi. See their references.

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Callistus, Christian slave of the Christian Carpophore, obtains, thanks to the community of religion, the confidence of his master who entrusts him with a large sum of money. Unhappy in his speculations, he is reduced to flee to escape the anger of Carpophore. He goes to the port, climbs on a departing boat, then, seeing himself pursued, he throws himself into the sea. But he is picked up by the sailors and brought back to his master who condemns him to turn the millstone. After a certain time, Carpophore, learning by the other Christians that his slave has debts to recover, releases him. Callistus, who had Jews among his debtors, entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and asked the assembled congregation for justice. For all answer, the Jews beat him and brought him before the tribunal of the prefect Fuscianus, to whom they denounced him as a Christian who had come to the synagogue to disturb the worship. The prefect believes them on word, in spite of the intervention of Carpophorus who runs to declare that his slave is not Christian; and Callistus, beforehand beaten with rods, is sent in the mines of Sardinia. Some time later, benefiting from the gracious intervention of Marcia, the concubine of Commodus, who worked to deliver Christians, he returned to Rome and, his title of confessor giving him access to the ranks of the clergy, he obtained from Pope Victor an ecclesiastical post in Antium, with the right to a monthly payment. The successor of Victor, Zephyrinus, makes him come near him and entrusts him, at the same time as the administration of a cemetery, the government of the Roman clergy. Then, all-powerful adviser of the old pope who sees only by him, Callistus is, in fact, the head of the Roman church until the day when, called to succeed to Zéphyrin, he becomes the head of it by right.

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According to the author of the *Philosophoumena*, the reign of Callistus would have been disastrous for the dogma and for the morals. On the dogmatic ground, the successor of Zephyrinus would have taught a modalism incompatible with the distinction of the divine persons, and with regard to which the Son is no more than the human nature of Christ. On the moral ground, he would have overthrown the penitential discipline, by taking for himself the power to reconcile adulterers with the Church; he would, moreover, have overthrown the clerical discipline, by exempting the guilty bishops from the penalty of deposition, by authorizing even marriage in the ecclesiastical state. It would be easy to show that Callistus showed a remarkable practical sense in the solution which he brought to the problem of the divine persons; that he followed the councils of prudence by softening the discipline in force of his time; that he possessed, in a word, in an eminent degree, the qualities which make the man of government. But it is the pope and not the bishop or the theologian who must concern us here.

1. In this point of view, the author of the *Philosophoumena* offers us a precious information. We have just said that he reproaches Callistus for having opened the door of orders to men married several times, for having even authorized marriage in the ecclesiastical state. Here is his text:

"In his time, bishops, priests and deacons who were bigamous or even trigamous were, for the first time, admitted to orders. Those who wanted to marry after receiving orders could do so without being deposed, under the pretext that they had not sinned. Callistus applied to them the words of the apostle: "Who are you to judge the servant of another?"

1. On the altitude of Callistus in the penitential question see Turmel, *Histoire de la théologie positive*, i, 141; Funk, *das 1aditigenzedict des Papstes Kallistes* in *Theologische Quartalschrift*, 1906, p. 541; Yacandard. *Tertullian et les trois péchés irrémissibles* in *Revue du clergé français*, (., (1907), p. 113,

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Let us notice the contents of this indictment. It is well Callistus who is made responsible for the reversal of the ancient discipline. It is well because he allowed it, that bigamists received the orders, that the marriage itself came to be added the exercise of the ecclesiastical functions. If he had wanted, such excesses would never have taken place. Now these excesses did not occur only in Rome; they were not only committed by the priests and deacons of that city; they were also committed by bishops. Responsible for the conduct of the bishops, Callistus is therefore their leader; his jurisdiction does not stop at the limits of his church, it extends to other churches, it gives him the power to depose bishops. Here is what the author of the *Philosophoumena* 1 teaches us.

1. Sohm, *Kirchenrecht*, p. 389 and Harnak, *Dogmengeschichte* 3, i, 449.

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Should we go further? Should we say that, in his famous "peremptory edict" so violently attacked by Tertullian, Callistus founded the rights of the papacy on the text *Super hanc petram*? It was believed sometimes, but wrongly. No doubt Callistus, in his edict on penance, used the *Super hanc petram... tibi dabo claves*; but he only asked for the power to forgive sins. And, unless we say that he attributed this power to himself, we must conclude that he made use of the text of Saint Matthew as a bishop and not as a pope, that he used it to establish the right of all bishops over consciences, and not to establish his own pre-eminence over the other bishops. However, one has reason to believe that, fans of the *Tu es Petrus*, he claimed the title of successor of Peter: it is, in any case, what the epithet of *Apostolicos* 1 that Tertullian gives him suggests. One can even think that he prepared the classical thesis, by pointing out the particular links which attached his church to Saint Peter 2.

2. Tertullian continues him in these terms (*De pudicitia*, 21): < De tua nunc sententia quæro unde hoc jus usurpes. Si quia dixerit Petro Dominus: "super hanc petram ædificabo Ecclesiam meam, tibi dedi claves regni caelestis", vel "quæ- cumque alligaveris, vel solveris in terra, erunt alligata vel soluta in caelis", idcirco praesumis et ad te derivasse solvendi et alligandi potestatem, id est ad omnem ecclesiam Petri propinquam, qualis es evertens atque commutans manifestam Domini intentionem

personaliter hoc Petro conferentem! " - The reproaches of Tertullian can be summarized as follows: "The text of Matthew, xvi, 18, which applies exclusively to the apostle St. Peter, and which is his personal property, you have applied to yourself by applying it to every church connected with Peter." This allows us to reconstruct Callistus' reasoning. It must have been as follows: "Peter received from the Lord the power to bind and loose. This power has passed to all the churches which are connected with Peter and, therefore, above all to the church of Rome which was founded by Peter. Since the church of Rome has the power to forgive sins, I, the representative of this church, also have this power.

1. De pudic, 21.

2. Without doubt, all the churches are linked to Saint Peter, but the Church of Rome is more closely linked to him, since it was founded by him. Whether Callistus made this observation or not, his edict suggested it.

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But if Callistus did not give the papacy its scriptural basis, he at least exercised the rights of the papacy within a radius that included perhaps all of Italy. He proclaimed his pre-eminence over the bishops of his neighborhood. And there is little risk of being mistaken in looking for an allusion to his attitude in the ironic formulas of "great pontiff", "bishop of bishops", by means of which Tertullian designates him<sup>3</sup>. He even legislated about bishops. We know this from the author of the *Philosophoumena*, who summarizes one of his decrees in this way: "He decided that a bishop should not be deposed, even when he had sinned mortally."<sup>1</sup>

3. De pudic, i.

1. *Philosophoumena*, ix, 12.

87

Fabian, the fourth successor of Callistus (January 10, 236, January 20, 250) received, according to Eusebius, a letter from Origen, in which the famous Alexandrian doctor defended his attacked orthodoxy<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, he wrote a letter against the bishop of Lambesus, Privat, which Saint Cyprian describes as very severe<sup>3</sup>. However, since Origen presented his defense to several other bishops, the letter received by the bishop of Rome remains without much significance, and simply proves that the church of the capital of the world was considered as one of the principal Christian centers, which is not surprising. A similar judgment must be made of the condemnation of Privatus, which was simply an act of adherence to the sentence passed against the heretic by a council of Carthage. If one were to believe Saint Gregory of Tours, the reign of Fabian would have been marked by an event of considerable importance for our country. We read in the *History of the Franks* that, under the consulship of Decius and Gratus, several bishops received the mission to evangelize the Gauls. Gatian was sent to Tours, Trophimus to Arles, Paul to Narbonne, Saturnin to Toulouse, Dionysius to Paris, Austremonius

to Clermont, Martial to Limoges 1. And, in another place, the holy bishop of Tours tells us that Gatian as well as Austremonius were sent by Rome. 2 We know, for example, that the church of Arles and probably also that of Toulouse existed before 250 A.D. On the other hand, the churches of Tours and Clermont have a later origin than the middle of the second century. The sending of seven bishops by Fabian is therefore a legend 3. What is perhaps not is the intervention of Rome in the evangelization of Gaul. It is possible that, in the second half of the 11th century, the popes sent bishops to our country, either to implant the Christian faith there, or rather to organize Christian communities already formed, and to ensure to the faithful without pastors the exercise of their worship. This would explain the sudden development of ecclesiastical organization in Gaul from 250 onwards. It is also possible that the church in Africa was founded or organized towards the end of the second century by envoys of the apostolic see. This is perhaps suggested by a text of St. Cyprian, who calls the Roman church "the principal church. 1 And we find in these facts, if they are real, the spirit which dictated, from the year 95, the letter of Clement to the Corinthians. Rome considers herself responsible for souls in all of Christendom; she believes she is fulfilling a duty by giving to the Christian communities what they lack, by correcting in them what is defective; she extends her solicitude to the entire people of the faithful 2.

2. Hist. eccl, vi, 36, 4. See also St. Jerome, ep. xxxiv, 10.

3. Cyprian, ep. lix, 10.

1. Historia Franca, i, 28.

2. De gloria confessorum, 30.

3. Duchesne. The origin of the episcopal dioceses in ancient Gaul (Bulletin et Mémoires... 1889, p. 398); Id, Fastes épiscopaux de l'ancienne Gaule, i, 47. Harnack (Mission 2, i, 398) is more sceptical.

1. The word "principalis" often contains the idea of chronological priority (see Du Cange, Glossarium). It is in this sense that Tertullian (De præscr., 31) opposes the < principalitatem veritatis to the "posteritatem mendacitatis". We have reason to believe that St. Cyprian alludes to the foundation by Rome of the Church of Africa when he designates the Roman Church as [Ep. lix, 14) : " ecclesiam principalem unde unitas sacerdotalis exorta est ". IVoter also the word of Tertullian (Præscript., 36): i Horna, unde nobis quoque auctoritas præsto est." See Puller, The primitive Saints and the see of Home, pp. 51 and 445; Monceaux, Histoire littéraire de VAfrique chrétienne, i, 4 ff. Harnack (Mission 2 h, 237) and Duchesne (Histoire ancienne de l'Église, i, 392) are more reserved. Bishop Duchesne does not attach any value to the texts collected by Monceaux.

2. According to the Liber pontificalis, Fabian divided Rome into seven ecclesiastical regions. See Duchesne, Liber pontificalis, i, 148; Grisar, Histoire de Rome et des papes au moyen âge, i, 136; Harnack, Mission 2, ii, 211.

The same spectacle is presented to us during the interregnum of 250. Fabian had just inaugurated by his death the persecution of Decius (January 20) and the imperial hatred, which pursued especially the bishops, did not allow that one gave him a successor 1. The college of Roman priests and deacons took the place of the martyred pontiff, and temporarily governed the church deprived of its bishop. It soon had the opportunity to exercise its authority. A few days after the death of Fabian, one learned in Rome, by a cleric returned from Africa, that the bishop of Carthage, Cyprian, had cowardly abandoned his flock to escape the persecution. Immediately the Roman clergy wrote to the clergy of Carthage the following letter, in which one will notice, with the imperative tone which it deploys, the feeling of responsibility from which it is inspired 2.

1. St. Cyprian, Ep. lv, 9.

2. On this point of history, see Harnack, die Briefe des roemischen Klerus aus der Zeit der Sedisvacanz im Jahre 250, in Theologische Abhandlungen Weizsäcker gewidmet, p. 20 ff.

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"The subdeacon Crementius, whom a special affair has brought here from Carthage, has just informed us that the blessed Pope Cyprian has gone into hiding. Being an important personage 3, he was undoubtedly right to flee, at a time when God is allowing this combat which his servants have to wage against the adversary, under the gaze of angels and men, reserving for himself the crowning of the victor and the infliction on the vanquished of the sentence which he has made known to us beforehand. In these conditions, we who find ourselves the leaders, have the duty to watch over the flock instead of the shepherds. And, if we are negligent, we will be told what was once said to the negligent leaders that we did not look for the lost sheep, that we did not bring back the one that was lost, that we did not care for the one that was limping, that our only concern was to feed ourselves with the milk of our sheep and to clothe ourselves with their wool The Lord said: "I am the good shepherd, I lay down my life for my sheep; but the hireling, to whom the sheep do not belong, flees as soon as he sees the wolf, and he abandons his sheep and the wolf tears them apart. He also said to Simon, "Do you love me? When Simon answered, "I love you," he said, "Feed my sheep." We know that this command was carried out immediately and that the other disciples did the same. Beloved brothers, do not be hirelings, but good shepherds. Know that you are exposing yourselves to grave danger if you do not exhort your brethren to remain steadfast in the faith, if you do not preserve them from the abyss of idolatry where the brotherhood would find its complete ruin. It is not only with words that we exhort you. Several of our members who are visiting you will tell you that, with God's help, we have been working hard and that we will continue to do so in spite of the perils that the world threatens us with. Putting the fear of God and eternal punishment above the fear of men and temporary suffering, we do not abandon our brothers and sisters, but urge them to remain firm in their faith... Those who have fallen... we have separated them, but we do not abandon them. We exhort them to do penance, in the hope that they will find forgiveness with the one who can give it. We know that if we abandon them, they will become worse.

3. "Cum sit persona insignis". A little further on (n. 2) the letter returns to the "insignia personae" which the fear of men has caused to fall.

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"You see then, brothers, that you must do this. Those who have fallen, you must by your exhortations restore their courage, so that if they are arrested again, they may confess the faith and recant. We also place before you the other duties which are incumbent upon you. If those who have succumbed to temptation fall ill, do penance and desire communion, they must be helped. Widows, the sick, prisoners and exiles must be administered to. Neither should the sick catechumens fail to be helped. As for the bodies of the martyrs and others, those who are responsible for burying them are in great danger if they do not do so... May God, who grants everything to those who hope in him, let each one of us accomplish his task! Receive the salvation of your imprisoned brethren, of the priests and of the whole Church, which watches over all those who call upon the name of the Lord 1. We ask you, who have the zeal of God, to take advantage of all the opportunities that will arise, to spread copies of this letter, or even, without waiting for the opportunities, to have copies carried by messengers, so that the brethren may remain steadfast and unwavering in the faith 1. We desire, dearest brethren, that you may always be in good health."

1. c Salutant vos fratres qui sunt in vinculis et presbyteri et tota ecclesia, quæ et ipsa cum summa sollicitudine excubat pro omnibus qui invocant nomen Domini. t>

1. Note this distribution that the Roman clergy request for their letter.

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St. Cyprian, to whom this letter was transmitted through indirect channels, at first saw nothing but impertinence in the approach of the Roman priests, who were disposing of his church as if it were a disinherited possession and entrusting its government to his clergy. Without deigning to explain and justify his conduct, he sent back to his point of departure the piece which we have just read, accompanying it with haughty and incisive observations 2. But he soon had to change his attitude. He who, from the depths of his retreat, watched over his church with maternal solicitude and, in letters full of wisdom, gave souls the direction they needed, soon encountered a formidable obstacle among the lapsi. These cowardly Christians, who had been expelled from communion, demanded to be immediately and unconditionally reintegrated into the assembly of the faithful. As timid as they had been in front of the judges, they were as bold in front of the bishop's representatives. They were no longer making requests, but summonses, all the more imperious because they were supported by imprudent confessors, from whom they had asked for "peace" and who had granted it to them. Feeling powerless to stand up to the lapses on his own, the bishop of Carthage sought help from the same Roman clergy who had just dispossessed him of his church without further ado. He therefore sent, towards June 250, a second letter to Rome 4. But this one was no longer in the tone of the first. It began with an apology. First of all, Cyprian explained to the priests of Rome that in hiding he had been

inspired, not by the suggestions of cowardice, but by the desire to be useful to souls; that from his retreat he had not ceased to direct his people by an intense epistolary trade. And, as proof of his sincerity, he placed before the eyes of his judges copies of thirteen letters written by him since the beginning of the persecution, and addressed to Carthage through faithful messengers. The bishop of Carthage then turned to the difficulties he was facing and spoke of the demands of the lapses. He declared that he had allowed penitent lapses in danger of death to be admitted to communion, but that he had prescribed, apart from this case, to wait for the end of the persecution to decide on their account. At the same time as he explained the solutions he had arrived at, he gave reasons for them: "I did not set myself up rashly as a legislator," he said, "I wanted to show respect for the martyrs and prevent disorder. Moreover, having read in the letter from you, addressed to our clergy by the subdeacon Crementine, that the lapsi penitents should be helped if they fell ill, I thought I had to comply with your decision.<sup>1</sup> As for the others, I have decided that, until my return, nothing should change for them, even for those who have received letters of peace from the martyrs. When the Lord has restored security to us and allowed the leaders to gather, we will give definitive solutions, not without agreeing with you."

2. Ep, ix, 2; "I have a letter which contains neither signature nor address and whose writing, contents, and paper itself are suspect. Fearing a forgery, I have sent you the document itself; you will see if it is indeed the one you gave to the subdeacon Crementius...".

1. Ep. XX.

1. standum putavi et cum vestra sententia

2. "Communicato etiam vobiscum consilio".

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Would this letter, whose insinuating turn must have cost St. Cyprian's self-esteem so much, have succeeded on its own in destroying the prejudices to which its author was subject? It was impossible to know. While it was on its way to Rome, another letter, this one from the eternal city, was on its way to Africa<sup>3</sup>. It was the Roman clergy who, this time again, systematically ignoring the bishop of Carthage, wrote to their priests to remind them of the rigors of evangelical discipline and to warn them against the danger of excessive indulgence of the lapses. In order to conceal the offensiveness of a correspondence in which he was regarded as an insignificant quantity, St. Cyprian tried to see in the Roman letter only its content, i.e., the lesson in discipline which it contained. He therefore wrote again to the priests of Rome to thank them for the moral support which his own leadership found in their teachings, and he did not forget to take advantage of this opportunity to confide to them, once again, the embarrassment which the threatening claims of the lapsi were causing him. <sup>1</sup> The reply which the two almost imploring letters from the bishop of Carthage requested was not long in coming.<sup>2</sup> St. Cyprian was soon able to send to his people and have a letter from Rome published throughout Africa. He even had two to show, because new confidences earned him a new reply. It is true that these two writings gave full approval to Cyprian's conduct - and this is what made them valuable in his



eyes - but they were not afraid to add orders to the approval. The following sentence which we find there cannot fail to attract attention, when we remember that it was addressed by priests to a bishop: "You, brother, do not cease to calm the lapses and to present to those who are mistaken the remedy of the truth.<sup>1</sup> And the Roman clergy are inspired by the feeling of solicitude which had once dictated to Clement the Letter to the Corinthians, when he said to St. Cyprian: "As regards Privatus of Lambesus, you have done well to communicate this painful matter to us: it is indeed appropriate that we all take care of the body of the universal Church, whose members are distributed among the various provinces<sup>2</sup> .

3. This letter has not come down to us, but it is attested by St Cyprian. Ejj). xxvii, 4 : " *Opportune vero supervenerunt litterae vestrae quas accepi ad clerum factas... , prius quam venerint ad vos litterae quas vobis proxime misi.*"

1. Ep. XXVII.

2. Among the letters of St. Cyprian, ep. xxx and xxxvi. St. Cyprian, in sending the first to his clergy, asks that copies be taken and circulated in Africa (ep., xxxn).

1. Ep. xxxvi, 3 : " *Tu lamcn, frater, nuraquam pro tua caritate désistas lapsorum animos temperare... "*

2- Ep. xxxvi, 4.

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However, was the Church of Rome, which distributed advice and lessons wherever the need was felt, guaranteed against divisions, revolts, and excesses? Experience was to teach it otherwise. In the course of the year 251, the vacancy which had lasted since January of the previous year came to an end and Fabian had a successor in the person of Cornelius. The new pope was elected and received the episcopate in the presence of sixteen foreign bishops<sup>3</sup>. His right to the government of the Roman church was therefore unquestionable. Yet it was contested. No sooner had Cornelius been elected than an opponent, Novatian, rose up against him, had himself conferred the episcopate by three bishops of Ilalia, and proclaimed himself the true successor of Fabian. Rome thus had two bishops, contrary to the rule that there should be only one pastor in each church. Cornelius informed the bishops of the principal sees of his election. But Novatian did the same and worked, moreover, by his emissaries, to tarnish the reputation of Cornelius. How to get out of there? Fortunately the conflict was more formidable in appearance than in reality. Novatian counted in Rome only a relatively restricted number of partisans; it is true that, among them, were confessors. Outside Rome, he had hardly any other support than the bishop of Antioch. This was little to fight against Cornelius, who had the sympathies of the majority of the Christian people in Rome, and whose election was approved both in Carthage and in Alexandria. Cornelius excommunicated the three bishops who had consecrated Novatian, and replaced them with prelates devoted to his cause. At the request of Saint Cyprian<sup>1</sup>, the Roman confessors, who had supported the division, made amends and separated from Novatian. Their defection led to the defection of the little people who had trusted them in the schism, as a result of the prestige which was attached to their name. The order, one

moment disturbed, was restored. Of this ephemeral incident, some letters remained to us of which one especially deserves to retain our attention, because of the information which it delivers to us. It was written by Cornelius to the bishop of Antioch, Fabius, to detach him from the party of Novatian. It followed, Eusebius tells us, a Roman council at which sixty bishops as well as many more priests and deacons had taken part, and at which Cornelius' opponent had been condemned. Here is what we read there 1 :

3. Information supplied by Saint Cyprian who says, speaking of Cornelius (ep. iv, 24): "episcopo in ecclesia a sedecim coepiscopis facto. He says a little earlier (n. 10): < Factus est episcopus a plurimis collegis nostris qui tunc 10 urbe Roma aderant."

1. *Æp.*, xlv, 1: "... ut ad catholicæ ecclesiæ unitatem scissi corporis membra componerent." See also ep., xlvi." Cornelius has handed down to us the formula of their recantation (in St. Cyprian, ep., xlix, 2): "Nos Cornelium episcopum sanctissimæ catholicæ ecclesiæ electum... scimus... nec enim ignoramus unum Deum esse et unum Christum esse Dominum... unum sanctum spiritum. unum episcopum in catholica esse debere," These last words must be translated: "There must be only one bishop per Catholic community", or "in each Catholic church". To see *di. ns* in *catholica* as the equivalent of what we call the Catholic Church would be to give this formula a meaning which it cannot have here, since it was used in a circumstance where it was a question of choosing between two candidates for an episcopal see. It would even be to give it a heretical meaning, since one would thus end up saying that there is only one bishop in the whole Church.

1. In Eusebius, vi, 43.

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"Suddenly, dear brother, Novatian changed in a surprising way. This excellent man, who, according to the fearsome oaths he had taken, had no desire for the episcopate, appeared one fine day transformed into a bishop. And when this doctor, this defender of ecclesiastical discipline, wanted to conquer the episcopate that God had refused him, he used two wretches, whom he sent to a corner of Italy to surprise the good faith of three simple and narrow-minded bishops. These, who were made to believe that they were needed in Rome to put an end to the disturbance of the spirits, came... When they were taken of drink, Novatian forced them to give him a semblance of imposition of hands: it was at the tenth hour... One of these bishops soon returned to the church, crying for his sin. Touched by the prayers of the people, I admitted him to lay communion. I also gave the other two bishops successors whom I sent to their posts. This defender of the Gospel did not know that the Catholic Church should have only one bishop, but he knew - and how could he not know? - that there were forty-six priests, seven deacons, as many subdeacons, forty-two acolytes, fifty-two exorcists, readers and porters, more than fifteen hundred widows, infirm and destitute to whom divine goodness provided food. And yet this imposing assembly... not to mention the very great and innumerable people, could not turn him away from his audacious project and bring him back to the church."

Eusebius adds that at the end of his letter Cornelius had drawn up a list of the bishops present at the council as well as those absent who had joined it. This list gave the name of each bishop and the name of his see.

101

The letter of Cornelius to Fabius provided the historians with invaluable indications. They have noticed that in the middle of the third century, the Roman church was feeding with its own money fifteen hundred widows, invalids and poor people; and, by bringing this figure closer to the information given by Saint John Chrysostom on the church of Antioch which, out of one hundred thousand members, counted three thousand poor people, they have come to the conclusion that the fifteen hundred poor people of which Cornelius speaks suppose a community of about fifty thousand faithful <sup>1</sup>. They noticed that sixty bishops came from the various points of Italy, to line up around Cornelius to judge Novatian; that others, retained at home, adhered to the sentence of the council; and they concluded, that around 250, Italy possessed a hundred bishoprics <sup>2</sup>. They noticed finally that the Roman church included, at the time of Cornelius, forty-six priests, and they concluded that there were then in Rome forty-six places of worship <sup>3</sup>. For us, what must strike our attention above all is the authority of the bishop of Rome. On a word from him, sixty Italian bishops gather and condemn Novatian. He drives out of their seats the guilty prelates who have ordained his adversary and he appoints their successors as he pleases. He institutes the bishops, he deposes them, he convenes them in council. He is the master of the episcopate of Italy <sup>1</sup>. Already, thirty years before, the Philo-sophoumena had given us an impression of this nature; the letter of Cornelius specifies and completes their information. In the middle of the third century, the bishop of Rome exerts a considerable ascendancy around him. And one understands the word of the emperor Decius who, according to Saint Cyprian, would have preferred to see a competitor in Rome rather than a bishop there.<sup>2</sup>

1. Renan (Marc-Àurèle, p. 451) speaks of thirty or forty thousand faithful; Harnack (Mission 2, ii, 211) also gives this figure but as a minimum. Before them Doellinger (Hippolyt und Kallist, p. 124) opines for fifty thousand. The term of comparison is provided by the homilies of St. John Chrysostom, in Maiihlxxxv and lxvi, 3.

2. Harnack, Mission, n, 213.

3. Harnack, Mission 2tuJ 212. St. Optat, ii, 4, says that around the year 300, there were forty basilicas in Rome and even more. This observation has long been made; see P. L. iii, 743.

1. Sohm, Kirchenrechi, p. 389; Harnack, Mission, p. 212.

2. Ep. lv. 9.