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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.

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CHAPTER FIVE

Saint Cyprien and the Papacy during the baptismal controversy.

The origins of the conflicts are known. In Africa and almost the entire East, there was a practice of considering baptism received in a heretical sect as null, and indiscriminately baptizing all those who wished to join the Church, even if they had previously been baptized. Rome, on the other hand, recognized the immersion given by all Christian communities and simply laid hands on heretics who sought to become its children. In the year 255, some Numidian bishops, no doubt drawing on Roman practice, began to exempt new converts from the trial of immersion. This caused a scandal, and immediately eighteen of their Numidian colleagues brought the matter to the attention of the bishop of Carthage. Saint Cyprian studied the issue together with the bishops of his province, whom he regularly gathered around him, and then transmitted to his Numidian colleagues the solution of the council. 1 This solution was the solemn consecration of the African discipline. But the bishop of Carthage was not a man to be trapped in a problem of casuistry. Elevating the debates, he strove to show that the practice of reiterating baptism was linked to a higher principle and that it was part of the doctrine of the unity of the Church. He explained that the true Church, being the only one pleasing to God, was also the sole depository of heavenly favors; that only she could procure through her rites the remission of sins and the Holy Spirit because these goods were her exclusive property. In the thought of the great bishop, to ask if there can be a baptism outside the Church was to ask if God can love societies that wage war on his Church, if he can treat these societies as his Church, if there are several

Churches before God. Hence this phrase intended to remind us that the law of unity was symbolized by Saint Peter: "There is only one Holy Spirit and one Church, which Christ our Lord has put in relief from the beginning by founding it on Peter. 1 "

1. It is the letter lxx. It is written in the name of thirty-one bishops, including Saint Cyprian. We generally place this letter and the council of which it is the echo in the spring of 255. We will see that the relative chronology of several of the letters belonging to the baptismal controversy is discussed. I add that the absolute chronology of the councils also continues to give rise to controversy. It is commonly accepted that the great council, the one of which we have the *Sententiæ*, was held on September 1, 256. The second would have been held either in September 255, or, which is more probable, in the spring of 256 (Harnack, *Chronologie*, il , 356-360, and references therein). We will see further the difficulties that this chronology raises.

1. Loc. cit., 3: " Quando et baptismum unum sit et Spiritus sanctus unus et una Ecclesia a Christo Domino nostro super Petrum origine unitatis et ratione fundata. "

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If, at the time when he wrote his letter to the eighteen Numidian bishops, Saint Cyprian represented himself as opposed to the custom of Carthage as limited to a corner of Africa, he was not long in being extricated from his error. Soon, in fact, a bishop of Mauretania, Quintus 2, informed him - we among things by the allusions of the answer - that Rome itself was opposed to the reiteration of the baptism received in heresy. The news was serious. We did not forget how, during the persecution of Decius, Cyprian was happy to be able to say that he walked with Rome hand in hand. But, on the other hand, we heard him proudly declare to Cornelius, on the eve of the persecution of Gallus, that he had decided to immediately bring into the Church all repentant lapsi, and that he abandoned to the judgment of God those of his colleagues who refused to imitate his conduct. He has a high idea from the church of Rome in which he was taught to salute "the chair of Peter"; but he also has a very keen feeling of the importance of his office and the responsibility it entails. What will he do today when Rome comes to stand in the way of his most intimate convictions? If he gives in to the pope, what becomes of the dogma of the unity of the Church which, according to him, can only subsist with the reiteration of the baptism of heretics? And if he resists, what becomes of this spirit of harmony which is like the cement of which the union of the episcopal body is made?

2. Quintus wrote his letter after the council just mentioned, for Saint Cyprian added to his response a copy of letter lxx (See Ep. lxxi, 1).

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Saint Cyprian did not stop for a single moment at the idea of bending; and we will see him link more energetically than ever, as the consequence of his principle, the reiteration of heretical baptism to the dogma of the unity of the Church. But did intransigence inevitably call for a break? Didn't this conflict of ideas that we found ourselves in involve other solutions? If Carthage could not abandon the cause of truth, Rome, which was in error, could and must emerge from it. It was a first outcome. And it was in no way humiliating for Rome, because the story of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, during the conflict at Antioch, proved precisely that a superior sometimes receives useful lessons from an inferior, and that, far from being diminished by them, he honors himself by accepting them. Besides, uniformity of customs was one thing, union of hearts was another. If the bishop of Rome persisted in recognizing the baptism of heretics, he would have to answer for his conduct before God; but, just like the other bishops, he was accountable to no one on earth. We could, despite the differences, maintain the bond of harmony: it was a second outcome.

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Saint Cyprian believed he could abandon himself to these two hopes of an arrangement. We find the expression of the first in the following letter to Quintus 1:

1 .Ep. Lxxi, 1. Baronius (ad annum 258, 25) believes that the prelates, whose conduct Quintus reported to Saint Cyprian, were from Africa. Recently Ernst (Papst Stephan u der Ketzertauf streit^ 1905, p. 5) took up this opinion. But it is very unlikely that the powerful bishop of Carthage would have invited obscure colleagues from Africa to have for him the respect that Saint Peter had for Saint Paul. The phrase: "Peter... did not take counsel of pride and arrogance" clearly means that the one who presents himself as the successor of Peter must have enough humility to recognize his error. It is almost certain that, in letter lxxi, Cyprian is referring to Stephen, of whom, consequently, a letter was already circulating in Africa.

"...I do not know under the influence of what temerity some of our colleagues imagine that those who have received baptism in heresy should not be baptized again when they enter our midst. They allege that there is only one baptism. There is, in fact, only one baptism in the Catholic Church. And as the Church is one, there can be no baptism outside of it... Let custom not be objected: it must yield to reason... Peter, whom the Lord chooses first and on which he built his Church, in the discussion he had with Paul on circumcision, did not take advice from Forgeteli and arrogance. He did not claim his primacy; he did not claim to have the right to impose his orders on those who came after him; he did not despise the former persecutor of the Church that Paul had been. He listened to the voice of truth, he accepted without difficulty the reasons presented to him by Paul. He thus gave us a lesson in concord and conciliation. He taught us not to be stubborn in our feelings, but to take advantage of the observations made to us by our brothers and colleagues, when they are well-founded and legitimate... We must not defend our prejudices against all odds. ; we must abandon them wholeheartedly when we find something better and more useful. It is not a defeat that those who show us the truth inflict on us, it is a

light that they bring us. This is especially true when it is the unity of the Church that is at stake___”

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Some time later, Saint Cyprian gathered at Carthage the bishops of the two provinces of Proconsularia and Numidia. He had African discipline confirmed by them, then he informed Rome of this decision. Not daring to openly ask the pope to correct Roman custom, he took a bias; he placed before Stephen's eyes a copy of the letter to Quintus as well as the response of the first council to the bishops of Numidia. To this indirect and roundabout lesson, he added the following plea 1:

1. Ep. Lxxii. Cyprian begins his letter by presenting himself as the interpreter of a council about which letter lxxiii informs us. We learn that seventy-one bishops had gathered from the province of Africa and Numidia. We have sometimes tried to link letter lxxii to the first council. Other times we suggested moving it back after the third. His real place seems to be after I second. See Harnack, Chronology, II, 358.

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“We were obliged, dear brother, to hold a council attended by many bishops, to resolve various problems in common deliberation. Several decisions were made. There is one in particular which it is important to share with your prudence and wisdom, since it concerns very closely episcopal authority, as well as the unity and honor of the Church, all things on which the divine will has been manifested. It has been decided that those who ask to enter the Church which is one, after having received baptism in heresy or schism, must be baptized again, for the reason that it would be of no benefit to them kde receive the laying on of hands intended to procure for them the Holy Spirit, if they do not at the same time receive the Holy Spirit... That heretics do not possess baptism and that the enemies of Christ cannot profile his grace , this is what was recently established in a letter to our colleague from Mauretania, Quintus, as well as in another letter that our colleagues sent to the bishops of Numidia. I am sending you a copy of each of these writings... We bring these things to your attention, dear brother, as a testimony to the deference and friendship that we owe to each other. We believe, moreover, that the sincerity of your piety and your faith will make you accept the expression of piety and truth. There are some, we know, who refuse to modify their feelings and who keep their particular customs, without however breaking the bond of peace and concord which unites them with their colleagues. On this point, we do not want to lay down the law for anyone. Each leader is, in fact, independent in the administration of his church and reports to the Lord to whom he will be accountable 1. Be well, dearest brother. “

1. “Qua iu re nec nos vim cuiquam facimus aut legem damus, quando habeat in Ecclesia; administracione voluntatis suæ arbitrium liberum unusquisque præpositus. rationem news sui Domino redditurus. “

The bishop of Carthage had spoken. It was now up to the Pope to speak and say what reception he intended to give to the two proposals presented to him in more or less veiled terms. His decision was perfectly clear. In response to the invitation to modify Roman usage, he declared that one should not be more demanding than the heretics, who did not rebaptize apostate Catholics. He added that the baptism of the Marcionists, of the disciples of Valentinus and of Apelles themselves must be accepted as valid. And he summed up his doctrine in this famous sentence: "Whatever heresy comes to you, you must not make any innovation, but follow the tradition which is to impose the hands of converts for penance 1". As for the proposal that was made to him to maintain his practice, for which only God would one day ask him to account, and to live in peace with his colleagues, Stephen responded with a threat of excommunication 2.

1. (Si qui ergo a quacumque hæresi venient ad vos, nihil innovetur nisi quod traditura est, ut manus illis imponatur in pœnitenliam, cum ipsi hæretici proprie alterutrum ad se venientem non baptizeut, sed coramunicent tantum." This decision was transmitted to us by Saint Cyprian who relates it in his Letter to Pompeias (Ep., lxxiv, 1). Tillomont (iv, Saint Cyprian, art. 43, note) proposes to translate the nihil innovetur by: "Let nothing be renewed except this that tradition teaches us that it must be renewed, not b; baptism, but the imposition of the hands." Bossuet (Defensio. ix. 3i adopts this interpretation which is also that of Rigault. If syntax were the only thing at stake, we should, I believe, to agree with Tillomont, and to put under innovetur the idea of reiteration and not of innovation. But Saint Cyprian, as we will see, translated nihil innovetur as "let no innovation be made". However, having in his hands the entire letter of the pope, he was better able to understand it than we who only have an extract. Saint Augustine and Saint Vincent de Lérins also attributed to innovetur the meaning of innovation. However, as they borrowed their translation from Saint Cyprian. they have no authority here.

2. This threat is attested by Saint Cyprian who says in his Letter to Pompeius, 8: "... abstinendos putat". To see further.

If it is true that the planned blows were softened blows, the pain that Saint Cyprian felt on learning of this decision was to a large extent mitigated. One of his colleagues, Jubaïen, had just sent him a letter from Étienne 1. The bishop of Carthage had therefore known the pope's thoughts for some time. He knew he had to rely on extreme measures. When these measures came, he had time to prepare for them and to display the calm resignation that inflexible firmness inspires. However, a demonstration seemed necessary to him, and, for the third time, he invited the African bishops to come to Carthage to examine the question of the baptism of heretics. The first council included only proconsular prelates. At the second council, the Proconsular and Numidia came together. This time, it was the Proconsular, Numidia and Mauretania who pooled their deliberations. Eighty-four bishops responded to Cyprian's call; two,

who were kept at home, mandated a mutual friend to represent them. The assembly was held on September 1, 256. At the beginning of the session, reading was given of the correspondence that had just been exchanged on the question in dispute Jubaian and the bishop of Carthage. Cyprian then spoke and said:

1. I adopt the sentiment supported by Baronius, Pamelius, Coustant, Launoy, Maran, Rettberg, Lipsius, Ritschl, Nelke. — Ernst from whom I borrow this list (Papst Stephan, p. 23) tried to prove that, in the letter to Jubaian, Cyprian is not targeting the pope; his long plea (p. 23-39) does not stand up to impartial examination, a) Jubaian communicated to Cyprian a letter (Ixxiji, 4): “in epistula cujus exemplum ad me transmisisti”. h) The author of this letter, who is not named, condemns the reiteration of the baptism of heretics with arguments that we will soon find under the pen of Stephen, c) Saint Cyprian observes an attitude which shows that he sees in the presence of formidable opposition; he feels that he will need a lot of patience and long-suffering. 26); the opposition of a small bishop from Mauretania would certainly not have moved him to this degree. Ernst's most specious objection arises from the fact that Saint Cyprian, who, in the letter to Pompeius, is violent against the Pope, calmly discusses against the adversary pointed out by Jubaian. This is just specious. The letter to Pompeius is later than the letter to Jubaian and Cyprian who wanted to remain calm and eventually forgot his resolutions.

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“You have just heard, beloved colleagues, what our colleague Jubaïen wrote to me, to consult me on the subject of the impious as well as illicit baptism of heretics, and what I replied to him. We also read to you another letter, in which Jubaïen declares that my explanations have brought light to his soul and that he adheres to them. Each of us will now make our feelings known. We will not judge anyone; we will not separate from our communion those who do not think like us. None of us, in fact, sets himself up as bishop of bishops; none resorts to tyrannical threats to force his colleagues to obey him 1. We know that each bishop has the free will of his actions, and that no one can judge him, any more than he can judge anyone. We must therefore all await the judgment of Our Lord Jesus Christ who alone has the power to prescribe to us the government of His Church and to hold us accountable for our administration. 1 “

1. “Neque enim quisquam nostrum episcopum se episcoporum conlittuit aul tyrannico terrorc ad obsequendi necessilatem collegas suos adegit. “

1. Baronius (ann. 258, 42), Tillemont (iv, Saint Cyprian, art. x7), Maraii (Vita sancti Cypriani, 31); the Bollandists (Acta sanctorum, August, i, 117, September, xii, 480); De Smedt (Dissertationes selectæ, p. 223) and, with them, most recent authors, believe that the great council of Carthage was assembled after the arrival in Africa of the decree of Stephen and that it was a council of opposition to the Pope. They base their feelings on the sentence where Cyprian says that he does not claim to set himself up as bishop of bishops, that he does not intend to make tyrannical threats to his colleagues. They

believe that these words are aimed at Stephen and that they contain, in Cyprian's thinking, a reproach aimed at the pope. Some historians have opposed this common opinion and placed the council before the arrival of Stephen's decree, so as to remove any character of opposition to the pope. Let us limit ourselves here to naming Grisar (*Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, v (1881), 193, Bardenhewer (*Geschichte der altkirchlichen literature*, II, 401) and especially Ernst (*Papst Stephan.*, I, 39-63). According to Ernst (p. 56), Cyprian clearly intends in these words to lecture his adversaries; but the adversaries against whom he demands his freedom of thought and action are the bishops of Africa opposed to his sentiments and not the pope! As if the powerful bishop of Carthage, who, at the second council, had already seen seventy-one colleagues agree with his opinion, had to fear "the tyrannical threats" of some African bishops! Ernst, moreover, feels what his interpretation is insufficient; he also admits, not without contradicting himself, that Cyprian "perhaps" attacked "indirectly" the future decree of Rome whose content he anticipated. Despite this admission, Ernst believes he can assert that the great council of September 256 did not oppose the pope's decree. Here is how he proves his opinion (p. 42): if the council in question had been directed against the decree of Stephen, this decree would have been read in the assembly of bishops, just as the correspondence exchanged between Jubaiian and Cyprian was read; however it was not read because the minutes of the council made no mention of it. We could first respond that the decree was read but that this reading was not included in the minutes; and Ernst would have had nothing to object to that, because he himself points out to us (p. 41) a text (*Sent.*, n. 8) from which it follows that a letter, the letter from Cyprian to Stephen, was read, which the minutes do not mention. Moreover, it is probable that Saint Cyprian, while making the bishops aware of the decree before the conciliar meeting, affected not to read this document in the council itself to give the debates an appearance of calm and avoid too violent attacks. against Rome.

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When this short speech was finished, the vote was taken. Each of the 85 bishops present, including Cyprian, spoke in turn: 85 times, 87 counting the 2 votes by proxy, the baptism of the heretics was declared void and the rechristening proclaimed indispensable. The entire church of Africa sided with the bishop of Carthage. The acts of the council were then sent to Rome.

However, as resigned as he was, Saint Cyprian could not see with indifferent eyes the Bishop of Rome putting his authority at the service of a doctrine which seemed to him to alter the purity of the law. One of his colleagues, Pompeius, having expressed his desire to know the very text of the pope's response, the bishop of Carthage - as if the name of Stephen alone revived a poorly healed wound - gave free rein to his pain. He wrote to Pompeius 1:

1. Those who believe that Stephen's decree arrived at Carthage after the great council, naturally place the letter to Pompeius after that council as I have done. Those, on the contrary, who believe that the great council was a council of opposition to the decree, usually pass the letter to Pompeius before him. Their reason is that the letter makes no

mention of the council. This reason is far from decisive. To account for Cyprian's silence, it is enough to assume that Pompeius was informed of what had happened at the council and had not asked Cyprian for any information on this subject. Now this supposition is nothing but probable, especially if we admit with Benson (Cyprian, his life his times, his work, p. 358) that this Pompeius was the bishop of Sabrata who had himself represented at the council (Sentent., 83) and who had therefore been able to be informed of the events by his representative Natalis. On the other hand, it is remarkable that the bishops of the great council who exploit letters 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, do not make use of the letter to Pompeius. This fact invites us to postpone the letter to Pompeius until after the council of September 1. See Ernst, Papst Stephan., i, p. 49-51.

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“The letters of which I am sending you the attached copies, dearest brother, say everything that is necessary on the subject of the baptism of heretics. Nevertheless, in accordance with the desire you expressed to me, I am sending you a copy of the reserit with which our brother Étienne responded to our letters. After reading it, you will see more and more clearly the error of those who work to defend the cause of heretics against Christians and the Church of God. To various proud assertions, foreign to the question, incoherent, which he issued with as much ignorance as thoughtlessness, he did not fear to add the following: "Of whatever heresy comes to you , "we must not make any innovation, but follow the tradition, which is to impose the hands of converts for penance: given that the heretics themselves do not baptize those who come to them, but let them limit themselves to giving them communion. » So, whatever heresy one leaves to enter the Church, he forbids renewing baptism. In other words, he declares the baptisms of all heretics just and legitimate. And, as each heresy has its own baptism and its own sin, he accepts all baptisms, in order to gather all sins into his bosom. It prescribes not to make any innovation, to stick to tradition. As if it were innovation to focus on unity and claim the Church's monopoly on baptism! And as if the innovator was not the man who, forgetful of unity, adopts the lie and the venom of an impious baptism!... In truth, our brother Etienne offers us a beautiful tradition, a tradition of 'a great authority! He adds in the same place in his letter: “given that the heretics themselves do not baptize those who come to them, but that they limit themselves to giving them communion. » The Church of God, the bride of Christ, has reached this degree of misfortune, of being reduced to taking a model from heretics! Light asks darkness for the rule to follow in celebrating celestial rites!... While no heresy, no schism can have in its possession the sanctifying virtue of salutary baptism, our brother Etienne pushes obstinacy to the point of saying that the baptism of Marcion, that of Valentinus, that of Apelles, that of all the other blasphemers of God the Father, that all these baptisms, I say, give God children... And here, dearest brother, our pastoral office makes it our duty to examine what security of conscience will have, on the day of judgment, a bishop who approves and ratifies the baptisms of blasphemers. The Lord declares to his priests that he will curse them if they do not give glory to his name. But does he give glory to God who admits the baptism of Marcio? Does he give glory to God, who is the friend of heretics, the enemy of Christians and who believes he must excommunicate bishops who defend the doctrine of Christ and the unity of the Church 1? If this is how we give glory to God, if this is how the servants of God and his priests stand in the fear of

God and observe his commandments, let us surrender our weapons, let us pass under the empire of the demon and let us deliver the Gospel to him... It is presumption and obstinacy that cause one to remain in error, rather than accepting the truth presented by others. And it is in anticipation of this evil that blessed Paul, writing to Timothy, warns the bishop that he must not be quarrelsome, combative, but that he must show himself meek and docile. Now, to be docile, one must agree to learn. Bishops not only have to teach; they must also learn. Especially since, to teach well, you have to advance in science every day..."

1. No. 8: . abstinendos putat".

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While Saint Cyprian was writing the Letter to Pompeius, what was happening in Rome and how were the envoys responsible for presenting the acts of the third council received there? It is in Caesarea of Cappadocia that we will learn it. Inspired by the feelings of fraternity, which in his eyes were like the soul of the episcopal body, the bishop of Carthage brought to the attention of the bishops of the main sees the outcome of the baptismal controversy and the incidents which had led to it. Of all the responses he received, we only know one, the one sent to him by Saint Firmilian of Caesarea. It undoubtedly responded exactly to the state of mind of Saint Cyprian, because we have reason to believe that it was he himself who took the trouble to translate it into Latin¹. This is how the Bishop of Caesarea expresses himself:

1. Ep, Lxxv, among the letters of Saint Cyprian. We find in the Latin version which has come down to us the style of Cyprian. Also it is to Cyprian that the translation is generally attributed. Bossuet, *Defensio, prævia dissertati* (Of 70) says: "Al si Firmiliani minor esse videtur auctoritas, consensit ei Cyprianus, epeute epistolam latin-nam fecit cl ad Ecclesias edit. » Tillemont, iv, Saint Cyprien y art. 50: "The conformity of the style of this letter with that of Saint Cyprian leads us to judge that it was translated into Latin by this same saint. » Ritschl's assertion that Firmilian's letter was interpolated either by Cyprian or by one of his supporters is commonly rejected (See Harnack, *die Chronologie*, ii, 359; Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchl. Literature*, ii, 270 .)

"We have received, dear brother, the letter that our dear deacon Rogatien gave us from you, and we give the greatest thanks to God for the happiness we have in being united in spirit, while being separated body... As we are approaching winter and your envoy is in a hurry to leave, we had to respond to you in all haste. And first, with regard to Stephen's assertion that the apostles forbade repeating the baptism received in heresy and made this decision a law for posterity, you perfectly answered that no one can be crazy enough to attribute such a decision to the apostles... If we want to have proof that the Romans do not faithfully keep all the traditions and that they claim in vain the authority of the apostles, it is enough to recall that, on the question of Easter day and on several other points which interest religion, they do not follow the common observance... Yet the peace and unity of the Church have not been broken because of these discrepancies. And this is what Étienne was not afraid to do! He wasn't afraid to break up with you!..."

"I feel too righteous an indignation in the presence of the manifest madness that Étienne shows us. He, who is so proud of his episcopal seat; he, who claims to be the heir of Peter on whom the Church was built, begins to multiply the churches. He does not see that he is hiding, that he is in some way destroying the true Christian foundation, since he abandons and betrays unity. The Jews, despite the ignorance which blinds them and the enormous crime of which they are guilty, nevertheless have, according to the apostle, the zeal of God. Stephen, who boasts of having received the chair of Peter as an inheritance, has no zeal against the heretics to whom, on the contrary, he recognizes the power to give the greatest grace... Stephen is not ashamed of pretend that those who are in sin can give remission of sins..."

"But you are worse than all the heretics. Many of them, once their error recognized, come to you and ask you for the true light of the Church. You try to leave them in error. You extinguish the light of truth and you pile up the darkness, to make the night of heresy deeper... See with what clumsiness you rise against those who work to reject lies in favor of the truth... How much division you have sown in the churches of the whole world! And what gravity have you not given to your sin, by separating yourself from so many flocks! For; don't be under any illusion, it's you who separated. The true schismatic, in fact, is the one who constitutes himself an apostate by abandoning the communion of ecclesiastical unity. You imagine you have excommunicated everyone. In reality, you have only excommunicated yourself by separating yourself from everyone... Truly, Stephen takes into account the precepts of the apostle (relating to humility)!... Can we imagine more humility and leniency than there is in this man who breaks with the bishops of the whole world, who, for one reason or another, sometimes goes to war with the Orientals - you are undoubtedly aware of this - sometimes with you other Southerners. The bishops whom you sent to him, he used his patience and gentleness not even to grant them an interview. Moreover, with the charity that distinguished him, he forbade all his brothers to receive them in their homes. It is not only peace and communion that he refuses to those who come to find him, it is also shelter and hospitality. Stephen is not ashamed to take the side of heretics against the Church and to break the bond of brotherhood, in order to support these people. Furthermore, he is not ashamed to call Cyprian a false Christ, a false prophet, a seducer. He takes the lead and gives others the reproaches that he is aware of deserving, to avoid them being made to him. »

"Be well, you, as well as all the bishops of Africa, all the clerics and the entire fraternity. This is the desire of all of us; because we are happy to have friends far away whose hearts beat in unison with ours. "

Let us put aside the violent invectives which spoil this letter, and limit ourselves to collecting the facts which it reports. Firmilian attests that the bishops responsible for bringing the decisions of the Council of Carthage to Rome were not received, that the pope even ordered the faithful to refuse them hospitality¹. He adds that Stephen excommunicates all supporters of the reiteration of baptism. This assertion did not fall from his pen without his knowledge. Before recording it in writing, he weighed it, calculated it, because he made it the starting point of his fiery apostrophe: "Excidisti enim teipsum, nolite fallere... dam enim putas omnes a te abstineri posse, solum te ab omnibus abtinuisti." » It therefore seems that the Pope cut off Saint Cyprian and all those who shared his feelings from his communion. And the epithets of false Christ, false prophet, seducer that he attached to the name of the holy bishop of Carthage are not meant to weaken this impression. Yet many theologians – let's say almost all – believe they can affirm that Rome stopped on the path of rigors; that she uttered the word excommunication, but simply as a threat which she did not want to follow through on; and that, if the relations of friendship have been broken between the apostolic see and Carthage, the essential link of Catholic communion has never ceased to subsist. According to them, Firmilien saw reality through the deceptive prism of passion. Under the influence of anger, he pushed everything to black. He gratuitously put insults into the mouth of the Pope against Saint Cyprian, he confused the threat of excommunication with the excommunication itself, he outraged the evil to justify in his own eyes the excess of his words. His testimony formulated without measure is devoid of any authority¹.

1. In his letter to Pompeius, where he nevertheless says everything he has in his heart against Stephen, Saint Cyprian does not mention the affront that the pope gave to his envoys. This silence would be absolutely inexplicable if the affront had already taken place. This observation reverses the hypotheses which place, either after the first or after the second council, the misadventure of the African delegates at Rome. It was indeed the delegation of the third council, and not another, which was rejected by Stephen. This is, moreover, the common opinion (Ernst, *Papst Stephan.*, i, p. 6£, will be read with fruit on this point).

Firmilian's letter provides chronological information which dominates the entire controversy. We learn (n. 5) that it was composed in haste, because the deacon Rogatien, responsible for taking it to Carthage, was in a hurry to take the boat before winter (*regredi ad vos festiuabat et hibernum tempus urgebat*). The winter season beginning for navigation on November 11, the deacon must have returned on that date to Carthage, from where he had left carrying with him the acts of the council of September 1 and the account of the affront given by Stephen to the delegation of the same council. The question now is whether the trips from Carthage to Rome with return and from Carthage to Caesarea of Cappadocia with return can take place between September 1 and November 11. If so, we will naturally conclude that the council of September 1 was held in 256 and that Firmilian's letter was written around the end of October of the beloved memo. Otherwise, as the date of Firmilian's letter can be pushed back - this because Stephen died on August 2, 257 - we would be obliged to bring forward the council of September 1 by one year and place it had 255, which. consequently, would

force us to put the start of the controversy in the fall of 254. However, we can hardly accommodate the above-mentioned journeys between September 1 and November 11 without almost completely eliminating the inevitable stops (see Friedlaender's calculation in Ernst, pp. 74-75). We always have, it is true, the resource of supposing that the bearer of the letters did not allow himself to be stopped by the fateful date of November 11; but Firmilieu seems to say precisely the opposite, since he presents to us the deacon Rogalien in a hurry to leave before winter (*hibernum tempus urgebat*).

1. Bellarmine (*De romano pontifice*, iv, 7) only touches on the question; Baronius (*ad ann. 258*, 45 and 50) believes that Firmilian was really excommunicated, but not Cyprian; Noël Alexandre (*In sæc*, in, dissert, xii, art. 1), dissertation in order. Zaccaria (*Vanti-Febronius*, trans. fr., t. mr. 438) etc.

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We would like this plea to be as solid as it is well-intentioned, for its proofs to live up to the sentiment that inspired them. And that would perhaps be the case if Firmilien was the only one involved. That the bishop of Caesarea was duped by an exalted imagination, that he distorted and disguised the facts, is very improbable. Let us grant that it is possible. What do we gain from this hypothesis? Behind Firmilien stands the bishop of Carthage. It was Saint Cyprian himself, let us not forget, who took the trouble to translate the letter of his colleague from Cappadocia. Or, if we consider that the proof of this assertion is not sufficiently established, we cannot deny at least that the work of Latin translation was undertaken by his order and continued under his control, thus bringing to the knowledge from the West this oriental document, he adopted it, he put his signature to it. Who will believe that the holy bishop of Carthage could have become the publisher of confusions, exaggerations, and inventions which, passing through his hands, would have become real lies! No, the testimony of Firmilian, supported and countersigned by Saint Cyprian, cannot be challenged as easily as theologians think 1.

1. Tillemont (iv. *Saint Cyprien*, art, 47 and 49) is in favor of excommunication; Bossuet (*Defensio declarat.*, *prævia dissertatio*, 70) agrees to say that the question is irrelevant, and, in fact, it is such, from his point of view, because he is especially keen to compromise Saint Augustine in this matter: Mansi (*Aniinadvers.*, in dissert., xn, λ'αίαι. Alexandr.) speaks like Tillemont. De Smedt (*Dissertationes selectæ*, p. 242) also believes in excommunication.

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They do, it is true, appeal to the authority of Saint Augustine. They cite the sentence from *De baptismo*, where the doctor of Hippo relates that, despite a somewhat heated exchange of words, Saint Stephen and Saint Cyprian remained brothers and did not go as far as schism 2. Saint Augustine held well, in fact, the language attributed to him, and the opinion which teaches that the pupa did not go beyond the threats of excommunication, can, with good reason, claim

his patronage. It remains to be seen what this patronage is worth. Surprising as it may seem, Saint Augustine was less well informed than us about Thirstire of the baptismal quarrel. He knew the Letter to Jubaïen, the Letter to Pompeius and the acts of the third Council; but he did not know the letter of Firmilian 1. Now this letter, which, by its date, comes after all the other documents, surpasses them in importance, since, alone, it is subsequent to the excommunication. From which it follows that Saint Augustine is in the situation of a judge from whom the main document of the trial has escaped. His sentence is, therefore, void. It could be observed that the Bishop of Hippo approached the study of the baptismal quarrel during his disputes with the Donatists; that he was, above all, concerned to deprive these schismatics of the support of Saint Cyprian; and that this preoccupation led him to interpret certain embarrassing texts with excessive indulgence. 2 But these secondary considerations can be neglected here. Saint Augustin did not know Firmilien's letter: he was therefore unable to comment with knowledge of the facts on the outcome of the baptismal controversy. And, notwithstanding his testimony, we are authorized to conclude that the threats of excommunication launched by Stephen against Saint Cyprian and his supporters were carried out. Moreover, the excommunication of the Churches of the East is positively attested to us by Dionysius of Alexandria 1.

2. He seeks, for example, to give an orthodox meaning to the votes of some of the bishops of the great council (See Tillemont, *loc. cit.* 48). The sentence in which Cyprian condemns those who set themselves up as bishops of bishops inspires him with this reflection (*De baptismo*, m, 5): "Quid mansuetius? Quid humilior?" » \Toir De Smedt, *loc. cit.* 242.

1. In Eusebius, *Hist. eccles.*, vii, 5. Dionysius says that Stephen had declared, speaking of Helen of Tarsus and Firmilian of Caesarea, that he would no longer communicate with them, ὡς οὐδεν ἐχθίνοις κοινωνήσων. Eusebius (*seen*, 3) says that Stephen "was indignant" against Saint Cyprian. Ernst (p. 86) observes that this expression is very weak to designate an excommunication, and he sees in it a serious objection against the excommunication of Cyprian by Stephen. Eusebius' expression would perhaps not be sufficient to designate a modern excommunication; it sufficiently designates the ancient excommunication which was not fulminated by a bull or an encyclical, but which consisted in the simple suspension of relations of communion.

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Fortunately, a wise and moderate bishop was encountered, who undertook to renew the work of appeasement which Saint Irenaeus had so worthily acquitted in the question of Easter. Dionysius of Alexandria, whose name we have just read, was basically in agreement with Rome. He too did not repeat the baptism received into heresy 1. But he could not see without sadness the solidarity of the Church and the episcopal body broken by the rigorous measures to which Rome had allowed itself to be led, and he worked to repair this evil. He made a first approach to Etienne and tried to awaken feelings of conciliation in his soul. His attempt remained fruitless. Without being discouraged, he reiterated his entreaties to Sixtus II, the

successor of Stephen 2. Sixtus was a "good and peaceful" man. He abandoned the demands of Stephen and renewed the links with the churches of Africa and the East that he had found earlier. 3 Rome kept its custom, but stopped imposing it. Minds remained divided, but hearts were united. Saint Cyprian was then captive at Curubc, from where he was only to return to Carthage to suffer martyrdom. From the depths of his exile, he surely learned of the relaxation that the change of pontificate had produced in Rome 1. And it must have been a great consolation for him to be able to salute, before dying, this unit of the Church to which he had dedicated an immortal monument.

1. The assertion of Saint Jerome, who says the opposite (*De viris ill*, % 69), is contradicted by the extracts from the letters of Dionysius which Eusebius has preserved for us.

2. Eusebius, vii, 5-7; Tilleinout, iv, Saint Cyprien, art. 51.

3. The lack of success of Dionysius with Stephen results from the fact that he renewed his approaches to Sixtus II. As for this last pope, the only guarantee that we have the conciliatory measures taken by him with regard to Africa is the words of the deacon Pontius (*Vita Cypriani*, 14): "Jam de Xysto bono et pacifico sacerdote. » This "paciico" expresses or feels the esteem and recognition that only a policy of appeasement could have inspired in Pontius. It would be improbable that Sixtus would have made a difference in treatment between Africa and Asia. We are therefore authorized to think that relations were renewed between Rome and the East. Moreover, we know from Saint Basil (*Ep. lxx*) that the successor of Sixtus, Dionysius, sent help to the church of Caesarea.

1. Even exiled in Curubc, he knew after a few days of the events in Rome. This is how he received, almost without delay, the news of the martyrdom of Sixtus (See his letter *lxxx*).

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This is the moment to speak of another incident whose date, without being absolutely certain, seems to be placed during the baptismal controversy. Two Spanish bishops, Basilides and Martial, who had given in to the persecution of Decius and had even stained themselves with other crimes, had been deposed and replaced by Sabinus and Felix. After a certain time, they both went to Rome, surprised the good faith of Stephen 2, had themselves recognized by him as legitimate bishops, and, armed with the pontifical recommendation, they returned to their country with the pretension of returning to the exercise of their former functions. In this embarrassing situation, the former diocesans of Basilides and Martial resorted to the guidance of the Bishop of Carthage and asked him for advice. Saint Cyprian examined this matter in a council of thirty-seven bishops. It was decided that Basilides and Martial had made themselves unworthy of the episcopate and had, on this account, been justly deposed; that the election of Sabinus and Felix was made in accordance with the conditions required by law; that the

Spaniards should not, at any price, hand over the management of their religious interests to the guilty; and that the letters granted to Rome for their reinstatement had no legal value, since they had been obtained by fraudulent means. The bishop of Carthage transmitted these decisions to the consultants in a long letter, during which he told them 1:

2. Saint Cyprian clearly says that the Spanish bishops deceived Stephen and presented their affair to him in a false light. Mr. Saltet, who misread the texts (Reordinations, p. 32), makes Saint Cyprian say that the pope pardoned Basilides and Martial; then, on this ruinous foundation, he constructs a worthless hypothesis.

1. Ep. XXXVII. "The date of this affair is usually placed before the baptismal quarrel, and Harnack (die Chronologie, h, 348) is inclined to keep it in this place. Here are the reasons which seem to me to militate in favor of the contrary hypothesis: a) Saint Cyprian who, invited by the Gallic bishops to take charge of Marcian's affair, refused to intervene directly and limited himself to stimulating Stephen, must, for be logical with himself, follow the same course of action here and write to Étienne to remind him of his duty. We are therefore led to conclude that, if he does not write to Rome, it is because relations between Rome and Carthage are broken, b) During his letter to the Spaniards, Cyprian having the opportunity to mention Cornelius, calls it (no. 5): "Sacerdos pacificus ac justus et martyrio quoque dignatione Domini honoratus." The epithets "justus" and "martyrio... coronatus" are laudatory formulas which are understandable; but the "pacificus" has no reason to exist and is inexplicable, unless one agrees to see in it an allusion to the conduct of Stephen in the baptismal quarrel. c) We are authorized to draw the same conclusion from the place (n. 7) where Cyprian speaks of certain colleagues among whom "pacifica concordia non perseverat". I do not want to take into account two other allusions (n. 7 and 9) which may refer either to Stephen or to Spanish bishops. This date is adopted by Soden, die Cyprianische Briefsammlung (in Texte und Untersuchungen, xxv, 3) p. 31; Nelke, die Chronologie der Correspondenz Cyprians, p. 136.

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"An ordination made according to the prescriptions of the law cannot be annulled because Basilides, after having recognized his guilt, went to Rome, deceived our colleague Stephen, too far from the scene of the facts to judge with full knowledge of the facts, and undertook to be unjustly restored to an episcopate from which he had been legally stripped. Instead of thus erasing his crimes, he only increased their extent, since he added fraud and lies to the sins with which his conscience was already burdened. The culprit, in fact, is not so much the one whose negligence is exploited, as the deceiver who exploits it... You must not, beloved brothers, allow your faith to be shaken by the spectacle given by some of our colleagues, who believe they can trample divine discipline and communicate recklessly with Basilides and Martial. The threats that the Holy Spirit fulminates in the psalms against these people... teach us that the punishment will not only reach sinners, but also those who, by communicating with them, defile themselves by their contact... "

Let us pause for a moment on this letter. It does not invite the Spaniards to shed light on Stephen's religion, to submit respectful observations to him, to appeal from the poorly informed pope to the better informed pope; she orders them to purely and simply dismiss the letters from Rome as void. But we are no longer looking for proof of the independence of Saint Cyprian. We have already encountered some of them during the Félicissime schism. The baptismal controversy has provided us with others. And we haven't yet asked her for all the information she can give us. Back to her now...

For a long time, Africans and Orientals continued to subordinate the validity of baptism to the orthodoxy of the minister. Oh reads in Saint Athanasius that it is of no use to administer the baptismal rite, with the prescribed formula, if one does not have the true faith 1. Saint Basil declares that, with him, we rename the encralites, the saccophores, the apotaclites; then he adds: "If the reiteration of baptism is forbidden among you as it is among the Romans, you must conform to our discipline 1." In Africa, saint Optat teaches that the sacraments of heretics are harmed 2. And, in Jerusalem, Saint Cyril also explains that the so-called baptism given by the heretics is not a baptism 3. He had to wait until the middle of the fifth century to provide the church of Constantinople with accepting the baptism of the Arians and pneumatomas 4. However, in Africa as in the East, we entered early on the path of transactions. The schismatics were recognized as having the power to give baptism, which was denied to heretics; we accepted the baptismal rite given outside the Church, when, to the integrity of the formula, was added the orthodoxy of feelings: without completely adopting Roman theology, we abandoned the positions defended by Saint Cyprian and Firmilian. It is with this intermediate feeling that Saint Basil I stopped. It was also he who was commonly followed in Africa, from the Council of Arles in 314 2. It was reserved to Saint Augustine to instill Roman principles in his compatriots.

1. *Contra Arianos*, n, 42-43. M Saltet (*Reordinations*, P- 45-46) says that, in the Letters to Sérapion, i, 29-30, Allianase changed his mind, and the Council of Alexandria of 362 accepted baptisms as well as ordinations administered by the Arians. Both of these assertions are incorrect. In the Letters to Sérapion, i, 29-30, Athanasius speaks as in *Contra Arianos*, As for the Council of Alexandria it did not concern itself with baptisms or ordinations administered by the Arians; He only regulated your situation of the ecclesiastics who, after being ordained in the Catholic Church, had signed the Arian forms, and who asked to rejoin the Church.

1. Ep. cxcix. can. 47.

2. *De schismale donalistarum*, t, 10. Optat admits the baptism of schismatics; see v, 4.

3. *Procat.*, 7. It is the same with the Apostolic Constitutions (vi, 15) and the Canons of the Apostles (46 and 47).

4. See the seventh canon (apocryphal) of the Council of Constantinople of 381. Hefele, *Conciliengeschichte*, 1st edition, n, 26.

1. Ep. clxxxviiij, 1. This is also, it seems, the doctrine of the Council of Nicaea, because in canon 8 he receives ordination and, consequently, even more so, baptism from the Cathars (simple schismatics) while, in canon 19, he rejects the baptism of the followers of Paul of Samosata. Later, it is true, Saint Augustine (de hær., 44) and Pope Innocent I (ep. xvii, 5) explained that Paul's supporters had been condemned at Nicaea because they did not use the essential formula ; but we know the contrary from Saint Athanasius, Contra Arianos, ii, 43.

2. Canon 8 of the Council of Arles of 314 prohibits the reiteration of baptism in these terms: "De Afris quod propria lege sua.ýtuntur ut rebaptizent, placuit ut si ad Ecclesiam aliquis de hæresi venerit, interrogate eum symbolum; et si perviderint eum in Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto esse haptizatum, manus ei tantum imponatur ut accipiat Spiritum sanctum. » However, we have just seen that the African Saint Optât, fifty years after the Council of Arles, still rejected the baptism of heretics.

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It has just been said that, in the very country of Saint Cyprian, his theory of baptism was, from the fourth century, commonly abandoned. It nevertheless retained supporters: the Donatists. These sectarians, who boasted of being the only ones to constitute the true Church, also claimed to be the only ones able to give baptism; and they rejected, as null and void, the baptismal rite of the Catholics. We believe that they relied on the authority of the Bishop of Carthage, and that they were proud to present themselves as the heirs of the thought of Saint Cyprian. Without hesitation, Saint Augustine clearly declared that Cyprian was mistaken. This admission once made, he finally took to pleading extenuating circumstances. He therefore explained that a false conception of the conditions of baptism, guilty at the beginning of the fifth century, was not so in the middle of the third, and that the error of the illustrious martyr had an excuse from which the Donatists could not benefit 1:

1. Turmel, History of positive theology, p. 246.

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"If Peter could deviate from the rule of truth, which was later to be proclaimed by the Church, by forcing the pagans to Judaize, why could not Cyprian have deviated from the rule of truth on a point which, too, was to be later defined by the Church?... Such a sentence that he wrote proves that he was quite ready to abandon his feeling, as soon as the truth of the feeling was demonstrated opposite... I myself would not dare to pronounce on the validity of the baptism received in heresy, if I were not authorized to do so by the consent of the universal Church. And, certainly, Cyprien would have bowed to this consent, if the question had been, in his time, clearly decided by a plenary council. He, who praises Peter for allowing himself to be called to order by a colleague less senior than himself, would, with all the more reason, have bowed, with his provincial council, before the authority of the universe. He would have bowed before a universal council and where the bishops Carthage of Africa would have sat... But no plenary

council had yet addressed this problem... It was only later, and after the death of the bishop of Carthage, that this plenary council meets... The opponents of Cyprian limited themselves to opposing the custom, without justifying it by valid reasons... 1. "

1. De baptismo, II, 2-14.

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Saint Augustine obviously chose, among the pleas available to him for the defense of Saint Cyprian, the one he judged to be the most effective; and, if he endeavored to show that the error of the saint evoked from Carthage preceded the decision of the Council of Arles, it is undoubtedly because he saw there the most capable excuse to make impression on the Donatists. But, since the 16th century, theologians' concerns have gone in another direction. What we especially noticed in the conduct of Cyprian is not that his obstinacy in repeating baptism preceded the Council of Arles; it is that it followed the anathemas launched by the holy pope. Etienne. This resistance to orders coming from Rome, which Saint Augustine finds completely natural and which he justifies with a word, it is on it almost exclusively that attention has been concentrated, it is around it that the controversies.

What controversies? you might ask. Have any attempts been made to contest the revolt of Saint Cyprian? No ; at least not serious attempts that deserve to be discussed The revolt is. certain: agreement on this point has always been unanimous. But what was the extent of the revolt? How far did she go? This is the question on which theologians are divided. According to some, Saint Cyprian saw in the baptismal controversy only a matter of discipline without dogmatic significance; He believed that the pope, by imposing Roman usage at the expense of African usage, had acted as a liturgist and not as a doctor. According to others, on the contrary, the holy bishop of Carthage was convinced that the integrity of the faith was involved in the reiteration of baptism, that Roman usage altered the dogma, and that the decree of Stephen tended to introduce by force heresy in the Church. The two schools have continued their parallel path from the sixteenth century to the present day. Everyone has their own proofs. The first is based on the places where Saint Cyprian declares that he does not intend to impose his feelings on anyone, but that he wants to leave others the freedom that he demands for himself. The second objects that the illustrious African bishop continually links the reiteration of baptism to the dogma of the unity of the Church, that he presents it as the inevitable consequence of this dogma. She adds that, if Saint Cyprian does not impose his feelings on anyone, it is because he does not take any jurisdiction over his colleagues, especially when his adversary is the Bishop of Rome.

1. The dissertations of Missori, Molkenbuhr and Tizzani, tending to reject the authenticity of the *Sententiæ episcoporum* of the great council, of the Letter to Pompeius, and especially of the Letter to Firmilian, have obtained no success (Yoir Freppel, Saint Cyprian, xviii^o lesson).

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It is easy to guess that this second school met with strong sympathies among Protestants and Gallicans. And we can see, in *Defensio declarationis* 1, with what ardor Bossuet declared himself its disciple. The environment in which she was recruited was not designed to attract theologians devoted to the Holy See. They, for a long time, distanced themselves from her, with a sort of terror². They would have thought they were compromising themselves by giving their support to her. However, over the past quarter of a century, the situation has changed. Scholars, among whom there is nothing to suspect Gallican, much less Protestant, tendencies, have adopted the interpretation previously supported by Bossuet¹.

1. *Defensio declarationis*, ix, 4-6; *ibid* *prævia dissertatio*, 84: “ Bellarmine claims that the pope gave no definition of faith. However, he recognizes that the sovereign pontiff forbade repeating the baptism given by heretics and that he believed that the opponents deserved excommunication. When then, I ask, will we find a definition of faith, if not when we are faced with a decree sent to the whole Church, treating a point which touches the faith and demanding obedience under penalty of excommunication ? What, according to Bellarmine, did Stephen prescribe? Not to repeat the baptism given to heretics. Did he believe this baptism was invalid or valid? In the first hypothesis his precept would have been impious. He therefore assumed it to be valid and he presented this as an assured and defined truth. “

2. See Zaccaria, *Anli-Febronius*, trans. fr., iii, 423; Freppel, *Saint Cyprian*, eighteenth lesson: “ Cyprian therefore believed himself entitled not to side with Stephen in a dispute which he saw as a matter of pure discipline. concerning the fact that each bishop had the power to make regulations for his diocese. “

1. Bardonhewer (*Geschichte der altkirchlichen [Atteratur* ii, 46:a). There is no difficulty in admitting that the opinion dear to theologians is “*durchaus unzutreffend*”. Before him. de Smedt (*Dissertationes selectae*, p. 247) recognized that: “*Cyprianus hanc controversiam tractaverit lanquam saltem præcipue ad materiam fidei perlinentem, s* However, he believed he could deny that: “*explicit and distinct intenderit illam tractare tanquam rem fidei, non disciplinae* “ without explaining to us how this second assertion agrees with the first.

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It is up to the reader to decide to what conclusion the impartial examination of the texts leads an unprejudiced mind; and I would think I was insulting him by dictating to him the judgment he must pronounce in a trial of which all the documents have passed before his eyes. The only observation that I allow myself to make is that, in any hypothesis, the attitude of Saint Cyprian in the baptismal controversy denotes in him a vague feeling for the rights of primacy. This admission is obviously necessary for those who believe, with Bossuet, that, in the mind of the Bishop of Carthage, the reiteration of baptism was a dogmatic necessity. But we would be deluding ourselves if we believed we could, in one way or another, escape this consequence. Let us limit the scope of the texts as much as we like, let us restrict the conflict within the limits

of discipline, let us stick even to the threats of excommunication fulminated by Stephen; it remains true that, in the council of September 1, 256, Saint Cyprian – theologians agree – resisted a formal order from the pope and that he led the bishops of the three provinces of Africa into the resistance; it remains true that, in his Letter to Pompeius, he justified his attitude by accusing Stephen of supporting the cause of the heretics. But such acts and words are irreconcilable with the exact notion of the primacy of the pope. And let us not blame the resistance shown by the great bishop of Carthage on passion. Let us not look for the cloud that obscured in his eyes the principle of the constitution of the Church in a failure of will. This explanation, which, if it were founded, would be dishonorable for Saint Cyprian, does not bear serious examination. It is enough to compare the Letter to Pompeius with the treatise on the Unity of the Church to see that the same spirit animates these two pieces, and that one is the consequence of the other. No, to proclaim his independence in the face of orders emanating from Rome, Saint Cyprian did not need to let himself be led astray by the outbursts of passion, he only had to obey the logic of his ideas. As I said above, the dogma of the episcopate has, from the beginning, more or less completely veiled the dogma of the papacy. It is there, and not elsewhere, that we must look for the explanation of the Letter to Pompeius and the great council of Carthage.

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It would be superfluous to discuss the ecclesiological doctrine of Firmilian. His letter, from which we have just read some extracts, speaks with an eloquence which dispenses with any comment. It clearly tells us that the friend of Saint Cyprian shared his ideas on the independence of bishops and that, at Caesarea as at Carthage, the monarchical conception of the Church was held in check by the theory of federation. Let us instead take our eyes off Asia and Africa, and let us focus on Rome 1. The contrast that presents to us is as great as we can desire. With the same energy and confidence as Victor, Étienne imposes orders; he has the work of doctor and legislator throughout the entire extent of the Church. No less than Victor and Calliste, he is aware of his primacy. But, if he had limited himself to issuing prescriptions and demanding submission to his wishes, he would only have been an echo of his predecessors. This is not. We read in Firmilian's letter: "He who claims to be the heir of Peter on whom the Church was built...1. » Let us note this information: it deserves our attention. Calliste, in his famous "peremptory edict", had used the text: You are Petrus; but, as far as the quotation from Tertullian allows us to judge, he had only asked him for the episcopal right to forgive sins. Saint Cyprian, more recently, used him to prove the divine origin and the rights of the episcopate. Stephen, the first, we know from Firmilian, used the *Tues Petrus* in the service of the primacy of the pope. And this is what gives his intervention in the baptismal quarrel such capital importance. By excommunicating Africa and part of Asia, he only followed the example given by Victor; and he followed him without obtaining further success, since the extreme measure to which he allowed himself to go had to be reported by his successor. But, in appealing to the *Thou art Petrus*, he gave to the authority of the apostolic see its most famous scriptural basis; it has acquired a considerable place in the history of the dogma of the papacy.

1. Stephen has often been accused of having disregarded the necessity of the form of baptism and of having admitted all baptisms, even those which were not given in the name of the three divine persons. The reproach was made, as early as the fourteenth century, by Cardinal Fournier, later pope under the name of Benedict XII (*Responsio ad Fratricellorum objectiones* in the *Inquisitorum directorium*, ii. 17 of Éymerii). We find it later under the pen of the Protestants Marc Antoine de Dominis, Bloudel. Basnage, and even under the pen of a few Gallicans like Launoy and Dupin. The accusation articulates two main complaints based, one on the expression "t a quacumque hæresi" which c-leit·ne used, the other on the formula "i in nomiue Jesu" which he seems to have used. The Pope, they say. prescribed to receive the baptism given "a quacumque hæresi". Now we know from Saint Irenaeus (i, 21,3), from Dionysius of Alexandria (in Eusebius, yii, 9), from the author of *De rebaptismate*, xvi, that at that time many heretics did not respect the essential form of baptism. Therefore Stephen, who admitted the baptism given by all heretics, did not believe in the necessity of the invocation of the three divine persons. This is the first objection against Stephen's orthodoxy. Here is the second: on various occasions (notably, ep. lxxjii, 16, 17, 18; ep. lxxiv, 5) Saint Cyprian strives to prove that it is not enough to give baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, but that it must be given in the name of the three divine persons. If he thought he had to make this demonstration, it was obviously because he saw the truth denied by his adversary. From which we are authorized to conclude that Pope Stephen admitted baptism given simply in the name of Jesus Christ. The answer to the first objection is that the heresies which, in the third century, corrupted the form of baptism, were in tiny numbers; that Pope Stephen could, from then on, neglect them; that he actually neglected them; and that by declaring to receive baptism "a quacumque hære-ei", he implied "any heresy respecting the essential form of baptism". We respond to the second objection that baptism in the name of Jesus-Christ designates, under the pen of Cyprian and Stephen, the baptism given in the name of the three divine persons and that Cyprian does not attack in principle the baptism given in the name of Christ, but only the baptism given in the name of Christ in heresy. These answers and others presented by Ernst (p. 96-114) would call for serious reservations. Stephen's best defense is that it is very difficult for us to make a firm judgment on the doctrine of this pope of which we barely have a few lines left.

1. Ep. Lxxv, 17: " ... juste indignor ad hanc tam apertam et manifestam Stephani stultitiam, quod qui sic de episcopatus sui loco gloriatur et se successionem Petri tenere contendit super quem fundamenta Ecclesiae collocata sunt..."