

THE ORIGIN OF THE GREAT SCHISM OF THE WEST.

1. "Le Grand Schisme d'Occident d'après les documents contemporains déposées aux archives secrètes du Vatican : par M. l'abbé Louis Gayet, chapelain de Saint Louis des Francais. Tomes I.-II., Les Origines." Florence and Berlin, 1889.
2. "Conciliengeschichte nach den Quellen bearbeitet : von Carl Joseph von Hefelé : Band VI. ; zweite vermehrte und verbesserte Auflage, besorgt von Dr. Alois Knöpfler. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1890.

**B**ENEDICT XIV. does not hesitate in his work on the "Canonization of the Saints"<sup>1</sup> to attach to the Popes who resided in Avignon during the deplorable schism of the West the stigma of *Pseudo-pontificum Avinionensium*. Had the great Lambertini thus pronounced in his capacity of Head of the Church speaking *ex cathedra*, we should acquiesce very cheerfully in a judgment which is historically probable; and we should conclude with Palma (c. 32) and the body of Italian historians, that "there is no longer any doubt that Urban VI. was legitimately elected," and that "unquestionably the line of lawful Pontiffs has been continued through him and his successors." But since Benedict XIV. wrote his immortal work as a private theologian, his views on the controversy are worth no more than are the arguments with which he enforces them; and in our humble opinion his arguments tell rather against him. For, first, if Martin V. had regarded Bonifacius IX. or John XXIII. as lawful Popes he would scarcely have proceeded *ad cautelam* to a third canonization of St. Bridget; and, second, if Pius II., at a period considerably later, had been as certain about the lawful succession as Benedict professes to be, why should he have pronounced it providential that the canonization of St. Catharine of Siena had been postponed until the re-establishment of peace?

"The darkness is now dispelled," says Lambertini,<sup>2</sup> but what "clear light" has newly arisen to dispel it? What facts relating to the tumultuous scenes enacted in Rome in April, 1378, was he, or are we possessed of which were not equally and far more vividly and more painfully present to the perplexed minds of the

<sup>1</sup> Book i., c. 9, n. 10.

<sup>2</sup> "Depulsa temporum caligine, in clara luce hodie positum est, legitimum jus Pontificatus penes Urbanum VI. ejusque successores Bonifacium IX. Innocentium VII., etc., stetit." Ubi supra.

Fathers of Constance and of the doctors and canonists of the fifteenth century? As well might we say that our countrymen four hundred years from now will be in better condition than we are to pass judgment upon the contested election of Messrs. Tilden and Hayes. All that can fairly be concluded is that as time has rolled on the Italians have grown bolder and are become more and more disposed to condone and extenuate the outrageous violence concededly done by their ancestors to a sacred college composed mainly of French cardinals; and in their admiration for the old watchword, "*Romano lo volemo o Italiano*," they pass lightly over the gross illegalities committed in order to secure its triumph.

Gibbon, with his habitual "philosopher's smile," suggests that the "ordinal numbers of the popes seem to decide the question against Clement VII. and Benedict XIII."<sup>1</sup> In other words, those Popes who in after times selected the name of Urban, or Innocent, or Gregory, or even Alexander, respected the titles of the Roman and Pisan contestants, whereas the Clements and the Benedicts ignored the existence of the Popes of Avignon. But the circumstance, while it proves (that which is otherwise perfectly certain) that the Italians have consistently adhered to their first choice, Urban VI. does not constitute a dogmatic fact which can modify the state of the controversy. The catalogue of the Popes is not an official document of the Catholic Church. As Gayet justly observes, St. Leo IX. ought, properly speaking, to be called Leo VIII., for the Leo VIII. of the list was notoriously an anti-Pope. For a similar reason Boniface VIII. ought to have been called Boniface VII. (or more likely Boniface VI.).<sup>2</sup> This argument, therefore, carries no weight, nor can it have any influence upon a critical mind in forming an opinion on the question. At the time of the Council of Constance the three competitors were equally regarded as *doubtful Popes*, and *de jure* such they will most probably ever remain. The anxiety of Italian writers to snatch at hasty phrases like that of Benedict XIV. and to appeal to the vague *sensus ecclesiæ*, instead of standing firmly upon the evidence of history betrays a nervous trepidation as to the clear justice of their cause.

Indeed, to us (an American Catholic who can feel no sympathy with either Frenchmen or Italians in their petty national jealousies) it has always seemed that the weakest point in the armor of the Italians is their insisting that we should rule out of court the sworn depositions of the cardinal electors, and look upon an entire sacred college as made up of unprincipled and unscrupulous

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<sup>1</sup> C. 70

<sup>2</sup> Gayet, p. xvii.

hypocrites, perjurers and villains. We may surely be pardoned if we pronounce that such a conclusion is revolting alike to our loyal Catholic faith and to our belief in the substantial integrity of human nature. Among them all, ward-politicians, mobs, cardinals and Papal candidates, they made a pretty mess of it, and they came as near to destroying the Church of God as it is possible for human agency to come. But give them all their due. They were all deeply in earnest. There were many sides to the question, and each party was thoroughly sincere in looking exclusively and narrow-mindedly only at *one* side. The Romans had registered a vow in heaven that the Bishop of Rome should be a Roman "*o almanco Italiano.*" The sacred college was equally resolved not to submit to the dictation of an Italian mob. Urban, when elected *taliter qualiter* and enthroned, determined, in spite of his unstable foothold, that he would show himself from the very first day every inch a Pope. Such being the respective dispositions of the interested parties, what wonder is it that there ensued a "*schisma omnium schismatum, quæ ante fuerunt, pessimum et subtilissimum?*" Let us content ourselves with reproaching them all that they were not solicitous to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. But let us regard them, not as fiends, but as human beings, encompassed indeed with human weaknesses, but actuated throughout by the motives which are wont to appeal to human nature. Had not all the actors in the lamentable tragedy been so deadly in earnest the dissension might have been healed in a very short time. The turbulent conclave of 1378 was but child's play in point of confusion and disorder, if compared with many another in the preceding history of Papal elections. That which gave to this particular election its fatal distinction was the international interest which it excited. The long residence of the Popes in Avignon (so foolishly styled by many their Babylonish captivity) had vastly enhanced the dignity of the Papacy by disentangling it from the shackles of a degraded and decayed municipality and by divulging the great secret that the city of Rome was of slight importance when compared with the Church of God.<sup>1</sup> The "Bishop of Rome," "the Primate of Italy," the "Patriarch of the West," the "Head of the Church," had for upwards of seventy years got along wonderfully well without the "Eternal City;" but Rome had meanwhile become a veritable Ichabod,—her glory had departed. It was not her chief misfortune that she had shrunk to the humble proportions of a provincial town; that her basilicas stood roofless;

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Tacitus. *Histor. Lib. I., c. 4.* "Evulgato imperii arcano posse principem alibi quam Romæ fieri."

and that her ancient monuments had become the lairs of wild beasts and of wilder brigands. It was a far keener humiliation that Christendom was now disenchanted respecting the eternity and indestructibility of her charms, and looked on at her frenzied and Rienzied attempts to resuscitate the defunct Mistress of the World with amusement rather than pity. This utter degradation and desolation of the capital of Christendom was the just and long-delayed retribution for the ungovernable fury and intolerable petulance of its inhabitants who seemed to grow more and more barbarous as the ages went on. A careful and minute study of the dates of papal documents has enabled Gayet to show that of the two hundred and four years which elapsed between A.D. 1100 and A.D. 1304, the year previous to the election of the first Pope of Avignon, the Supreme Pontiffs had been in intermittent exile from their See for a period aggregating one hundred and twenty-two years, that is, forty years in excess of the total space of time they had spent during those two centuries in Rome. Nor did they finally abandon the city of St. Peter with the deliberate purpose not to return. When Clement V., after several migrations, established himself in Avignon, this town did not belong to the Holy See, and the Pope remained until death the guest of the Dominicans. When the septuagenarian Bishop of Avignon was chosen as Clement's successor in the Papacy, it was but natural that he should continue to reside in his humble episcopal residence, where, as John XXII. he gained immortal renown by his towering genius, his indefatigable energy and his crotchety pugnaciousness. It was only the third of the Avignonese Pontiffs, Benedict XII., who, after making an ineffectual attempt to find a lodgment in Italy, finally ordered the erection of a new pontifical palace on the banks of the Rhone. The "captivity" of the Holy See might seem to be settled beyond redemption when the next Pope, Clement VI. purchased the sovereignty of Avignon from Queen Joan of Naples at the very time, A.D., 1348, when Rienzi was playing his mad pranks on the shores of the Tiber.

Thus, we see, it took the Popes upwards of forty years to become acclimated in Avignon, and, strange to say, they began forthwith to pave the way for a return to their ancient capital. In 1353, Pope Innocent VI. despatched the great warrior-statesman, Cardinal Albornoz, into Italy with legatine powers and a small army, with the view to the restoration of order and of the Papal authority throughout the ruined patrimony of the Church. This gigantic task engaged the vigor and abilities of the legate during the nine remaining years of Innocent's pontificate. In the conclave of 1362, Albornoz modestly declined the proffered tiara; and delivered up to the new Vicar of Christ a wagon-load of keys of the towns and

fortresses which he had re-conquered by his address or by force of arms. Blessed Urban V. immediately formed the design of returning to Rome; announced his intention to the Christian world in 1366; and in spite of the strenuous opposition of Charles V. of France and the murmurs of his doubting and reluctant cardinals, embarked at Marseilles on May 19, 1367. The unbounded and unbridled enthusiasm of his first reception by the Italians was soon succeeded by the usual street-brawls and faction fights, in one of which the Pope and his cardinals narrowly escaped with their lives, and in all of which they felt that the apostolic dignity was insulted and outraged. After a three years' sojourn in different parts of his dominion, Blessed Urban determined that he should endure it no longer; and, in spite of the earnest warnings of St. Bridget, he returned to Avignon and died the death of the just, December 19, 1370.

One would have supposed that this humiliating failure of a wise and saintly Pope would have effectually deterred his successors from again entrusting their personal safety and their pontifical dignity to the tender mercies of an Italian mob. Yet the very next Pontiff, Gregory XI., conceived the heroic resolution to repeat the perilous attempt. What were the considerations which influenced him? The Italian writers supply him with one set of motives, the French writers with another. Fortunate Pope Gregory! Both nations represent thee to have been a young man of sincere piety and stainless integrity. Would that the chattering tongue of gossip had dealt as lightly with the characters of all the members of thy august dynasty! And yet, what charge advanced by Italians or Protestants against the Popes of Avignon is better established than this; that Clement VI., the purchaser of Avignon, made thee a cardinal at the absurdly premature age of eighteen and loaded thee down with an accumulation of succulent benefices, simply because thou wast his nephew!

Cardinal Pierre Roger, the Italians tell us, was a man infinitely above the intellectual and moral level of his colleagues. So conspicuous were his merits that he received the unanimous votes of the Sacred College on the very first day of the conclave.<sup>1</sup> Roger, deploring the degradation of the Papacy and the widowhood of Rome, had made a secret vow that, in case he should be the choice of the cardinals, he would at any cost re-establish the Holy See near the tomb of the Apostle. As Gregory XI., however, he allowed this vow to slumber long in his bosom. Indeed, his first great official act was probably the most misguided and disastrous

<sup>1</sup> We have never been able satisfactorily to reconcile the phenomenon that the "wicked" Cardinals of Avignon almost invariably selected most excellent Popes with the great law of nature that *omne animal creat simile sibi*.

to the Church of any which has ever emanated from a Vicar of Christ; for he elevated to the Cardinalate those eighteen Frenchmen who are responsible for the Great Schism. After six years of Pontificate he was roused from his lethargy by the fervent exhortations (enforced by prophecies, revelations and miracles) of St. Catharine of Siena; and on September 13, 1376, after surmounting very formidable obstacles, he discharged his personal vow and his prime official duty by bidding, and forcing his unwilling Court to bid, Avignon an eternal farewell.

The writers of the opposite party while admitting that the words and miracles of the saintly Florentine virgin exercised a great influence upon the mind of Pope Gregory, draw our attention to the following considerations. First, it can scarcely be true that the Pope definitively abandoned Avignon; for he left behind him his Chancellor, the Cardinal of Pampeluna, and five other cardinals, viz.: Albano, Boulogne, Nîmes, Mende and St. Martial. Why did he thus imitate the prudent Jacob in dividing his flock, unless he harbored a strong presentiment that his sojourn in Rome, like that of his predecessor would be brief and stormy?<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, although ten years is a very short period in the life of a civilized nation, yet ten years used to be amply sufficient to transform the ever-varying features of Mediæval Italy. In the year 1376 the Italy of 1366 existed no longer. The work of Albornoz was completely undone. The old tyrants, the old communes, the old factions were again in the ascendant. The provinces of the Papal states had one after another renounced their allegiance and were leagued with Florence in a bitter warfare against the legates of the Pontiff. Rome was wavering as to its political course, but had finally determined either to force the Holy Father to take up his residence in the city of St. Peter or elect a new spiritual chief-tain. Pope Gregory was informed of the disposition of the Romans by the missives of his legate, the Cardinal of St. Peter, and still more impressively by a solemn embassy sent by the senate and people of Rome, whose spokesman, Luke Savelli, "exhorted, conjured and finally summoned" the Vicar of Christ to transfer the Papal court to its proper seat. That the Romans were deeply in earnest there could be no doubt. Their choice of an anti-Pope had been made; it was the powerful Abbot of Monte

<sup>1</sup> When Urban VI. summoned the commandant of Castle St. Angelo to surrender that fortress, the latter refused, alleging that Gregory "injunxit mihi sub pena excommunicationis et perditionis ac maledictionis suæ, nulli deberem assignare castrum sine consensu cardinalium degentium ultra montes." See his deposition ap. Gayet, I., P. J., 167. If this valiant warrior is not lying, his testimony is an interesting revelation of Pope Gregory's mental attitude; and affords a satisfactory explanation of the Pope's action in leaving his chancellor and one-fourth of the Sacred College out of the reach of the Romans.

Cassino ; and he had accepted the dubious honor, saying : " I am a Roman citizen, and place myself at the disposal of my countrymen."<sup>1</sup>

Pope Gregory's journey to Rome was undertaken, therefore, in the estimation of Gallic writers, under far sadder auspices than that of Blessed Urban. He entered upon it with a heavy heart, compelled by dire necessity, and with the view to avert that very schism which his premature resolution made all the more disastrous and incurable. Had the Romans carried out their nefarious plan, the schism would have been circumscribed within the tottering walls of their city, and their anti-Pope would soon have wended his way to the feet of the lawful Pontiff to seek forgiveness in sackcloth and ashes. By imprudently putting himself and a majority of the Sacred College, in the power of the Roman populace, Gregory XI. became the unconscious author of evils which he lived long enough to foresee and deplore, but not long enough to prevent.

How easy it is to build historical theories, and to give useless advice to dead kings and Popes !

Pope Gregory, evidently, did not place excessive confidence in St. Catharine's political prophecy, that " his rebellious lambs would hasten to his paternal lap." He sent forward, to secure himself a foothold, an army of Bretons, estimated by different writers as between 6000 and 14,000 men, under the command of Cardinal Robert of Geneva, who was destined to figure subsequently as Clement VII.

The Holy Father arrived in Marseilles on the 22d of September, 1376, and found in waiting the squadrons of the Genoese, the Pisans, and of Queen Joan of Naples. Embarking on October 2d, he succeeded, after a very tempestuous voyage which wrecked many of his ships, in making the port of Genoa on the 18th. Detained by contrary winds, he persisted in his journey, and celebrated the feast of Christmas in Corneto, where he was met by the ambassadors of the Romans, and presented with a document assuring him the full and absolute dominion of his capital. Continuing his voyage by sea, he sailed up the Tiber and arrived in Rome, January 17, 1377. Mediæval rhetoric confesses itself unequal to the task of describing the glories of that day ; the magnificence of the pageantry ; the blare of the trumpets, drowned by the louder acclamations of a countless multitude ; the interminable procession

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<sup>1</sup> " Haec autem concepta malitia non latuit, quando per eorum ambaxiatores abati Cassinensi eorum concivi fuerit nunciatum ; si papatum, in casu quo per clerum et populum romanum sibi daretur, vellet accipere. Qui ultra se offerens respondit : Se civem romanum esse et illud velle quod ipsi vellent."—Deposition of Petr. Rostaing, ap. Gayet, I. P., G., 157 ; quoted also by Gibbon from Baluze.

of bishops and clergy, of magistrates, barons, guilds, and confraternities, all decked in their gayest ornaments of silk and gold. "Never had Rome witnessed a more solemn spectacle, never had she so great a reason to rejoice."<sup>1</sup>

But this honeymoon of the long-widowed city was of short duration. Life was intolerably monotonous to the barons and populace of those days unless seasoned with frequent revolutions.<sup>2</sup>

The Romans speedily forgot, or regretted, their pledge to acknowledge the "full and absolute dominion" of the Pope; and whilst the Papal representative, the Senator, was the nominal executive of the city, the real power was vested in the popular Bannerets.<sup>3</sup>

Pope Gregory, who had devoted the early years of his Pontificate to the noble task of establishing harmony among the great nations of Europe, soon wearied of the undignified and barren labor of endeavoring to keep order in a city of thirty thousand unruly inhabitants, and he sighed for the quiet of Avignon all the more ardently because he felt that the painful and remorseless disease, the stone, from which he was suffering, must soon carry him to an untimely grave. Upon the approach of summer he expressed a desire to exchange the sweltering city for the purer air of Anagni; but we are informed by a Spanish prelate, then present in the Papal court,<sup>4</sup> he could obtain this favor from the Romans only by promising solemnly that he would, *infallibiliter et protinus*, return to the city in the autumn. Return he did, on the 18th of October, and the Romans having heard a rumor that he had it in contemplation to go back to Avignon, resolved they would never again trust him outside of their gates. They were soon relieved of this solicitude by the alarming condition of Gregory's health. In the beginning of the fatal year, 1378, it became apparent to every one that his days were numbered.

What were thy thoughts, O venerable Pontiff, as thou layest, writhing with pain upon thy death-bed? Wast thou sensible how many weighty interests were depending from the slender thread of thy feeble life? Didst thou regard thy premature death as a divine judgment upon thee? if so, what had been thy fault? Here enter again the contending gossips of French and Italians, who have

<sup>1</sup> Capecelatro, Storia di S. Catarina, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup> "Ma questo sereno non durò molto. Troppo in secoli tali erano avezzi i baroni e i popoli tutti alle rivoluzioni."—Muratori, Annali d' Italia. Anno 1377.

<sup>3</sup> These Bannerets (Lat., *bandarenenses* or *banderarii*, Ital., *bandaresti*), who played so prominent a part in the conclave of 1378, were the twelve *caporioni*, or chiefs of quarters. "Hi banderarii proprio sermone a vexillis, quæ ante se gerebant, dicebantur, a quibus singulorum curiæ internoscebantur."—Ap. Du Cange sub voce.

<sup>4</sup> Eymeric, inquisitor of Aragon.



sought to make capital for their cause even out of the lamentable death of this Pope, the most disastrous occurrence recorded in church history.

"When he was drawing towards his end," says the Bishop of Rieti, "and all hope of life and recovery was abandoned, he himself recognized that his untimely death was a Divine infliction; forasmuch as he had resolved to abandon his proper See." So runs the Italian version.

Now hear the other side. Gerson, to point his moral that we should not be over-credulous in listening to prophecies and revelations, adduces the instance of Pope Gregory, "who learned this lesson when it was too late. For when he was on his death-bed he held in his hands the sacred Body of Christ, and admonished the assistants to beware of those, men or women, who, upon pretext of religion, wove visions out of their own heads. 'I myself,' said he, 'led astray by such persons against my better judgment, have brought the Church into imminent danger of schism, unless her merciful Spouse, Jesus, shall guard over her.'"<sup>1</sup>

We do not wish our readers to attach the slightest historical importance to either of these conflicting reports of Pope Gregory's dying sentiments. They are samples of that Plutarchian system of weaving history out of unauthenticated anecdotes, which makes fascinating reading for women and children. It is the method usually adopted by the enemies of the Church, and has been a very effective weapon in the hands of veteran heretics. A far more trustworthy revelation of Gregory's anxieties and forebodings is afforded by the bull which he promulgated the eighth day before his death for the regulation of the approaching conclave. In this document he annuls the ordinances of his predecessors regarding the mode of holding a papal election, and permits his cardinals to choose the time and place, at the discretion of the majority of those present at court, even against the will of the minority. He exhorts them to lose no time in providing the Church of God with a worthy Pastor. It is impossible to read this extraordinary decree,

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<sup>1</sup> Dum in extremis ageret, jamque de vita et sanitate quodam modo desperaret ipse recognovit se Dei judicio idcirco morte præveniri quoniam sedem propriam relinquere determinaverat." Quoted by Gayet, i., 27, from Baluze, to whose work on the Popes of Avignon we have been unable to obtain access. We take this opportunity to express our regret that our American libraries, overcrowded as they are with modern compilations, are so defective in providing the historical student with that which he chiefly desires, the original documents of the story.

<sup>2</sup> "Hic positus in extremis, habens in manibus sacrum Christi corpus, protestatus est coram omnibus ut caverent ab hominibus, sive viris sive mulieribus sub specie religionis loquentibus visiones sui capitis; quia per tales ipse seductus, dimisso rationabili consilio, traxerat se et Ecclesiam ad discrimen schismatis imminens, nisi misericors provideret sponsus Jesus." We quote the text (not having Gerson's treatise) from Capecelatro *Storia di S. Catarina*, p. 313.

which abolished the two-third's rule and the nine days' delay for the arrival of absent Cardinals, and allowed the Sacred College to select any location for the conclave, *within or without the city*, without being convinced that the dying Pontiff foresaw very clearly what a violent storm was impending. What no one foresaw, however, and what frustrated Pope Gregory's wise precautions, was the suddenness with which the storm broke out. He had fondly imagined he should survive until the autumn; before that time he should have removed his court either to Avignon or Anagni. Unfortunately, he was carried off by death on the evening of March 27th, leaving his cardinals without a programme, and without much cohesion in the midst of an organized and determined population. He was the last Frenchman who has sat in the chair of St. Peter.

Gregory's remains were not yet cold when it became patent that the magistrates, the clergy and populace of Rome had resolved upon and formulated a programme which they were bent upon carrying through at any price. The next Pope must be a Roman or, at least, an Italian. This resolution, thrown into the shape of a watchword, greeted the cardinals at every turn. It was uttered by the officers of the city with ever-increasing energy and ever-decreasing reverence; it was bellowed by the vulgar on the public squares, with significant allusions to their knives and axes; it was taken up finally by piping women and lisping infants. At first the Sacred College strove to present a bold front to this popular movement. Convening the bannerets and other city officials, the cardinals exhorted them to allay the excitement of their fellow-citizens.

It was the office of the Sacred College, they said, to select a proper Shepherd for the Church, and it should be left perfectly free and untrammelled. The cardinals could give no pledges as to nationality, for such pledges would be null and void, and the result might be disastrous. Let the Romans have patience, and they should find that the cardinals would discharge their duty in a satisfactory manner. This evasive answer only served to redouble the commotion of the Romans, and the excitement grew to a white heat, when it was reported that the French Camerlengo of the Pope, whose office it was to provide for the security of the conclave, had, in his mistrust of the Romans, dispatched secretly for the Cardinal of Geneva's Breton troops to reinforce the feeble garrison of the castle. It was only by great good fortune that the Camerlengo escaped the fury of the Romans, and found shelter behind the walls of St. Angelo, from which he never emerged until after the coronation of Urban. The next move of the bannerets was to secure all the gates and bridges of the city, nominally to guard

against the hostile Florentines, but in reality to prevent the departure of the cardinals. They also issued a proclamation commanding all the nobles to quit the city. The reason of this ordinance becomes clear when we remember that the Count of Fondi soon became the chief support of the seceding cardinals. The bondage of the Sacred College was complete when the bannerets introduced into the city several thousand mountaineers, armed to the teeth, who patrolled the streets, shouting out night and day: "*Romano lo volemo o Italiano.*"

A circumstance which brought the cardinals to the verge of despair was that, situated as they were, they were unable to unite their suffrages upon any one candidate. The sixteen cardinals who were to elect the new Pope were divided, as to extraction, into the following groups: Ten were Frenchmen, viz., the cardinals popularly known (for one reason or another) as *Limoges, Aigre-feuille, Marmoutiers, St. Angelo, St. Eustachius, Vernhio, Glandèves, Bretagne, Viviers* and *Poitiers*; four were Italians: *St. Peter, Florence, Milan* and *Orsini*; one was a Spaniard: *Pedro de Luna*; and, finally, one, Cardinal *Robert of Geneva*, might be considered, owing to the peculiar situation of his native town, as a German, a Frenchman or an Italian. The French were overwhelmingly in the majority, but there was an intestine discord which left them helpless. One-half of their number were from Pope Gregory's province of Limoges, and, as the Limousins had worn the tiara, and enjoyed a preponderating influence during the last four pontificates, it was the universal opinion, even among Frenchmen, that it was time to put an end to the Limousin dynasty. No other French cardinal seems to have had any following. It was natural, under the circumstances, that the cardinals should scan their Italian colleagues, but, unfortunately, there were fatal objections against each of these. The Cardinal of St. Peter was superannuated (if we believe Froissart, he was a hundred years old); the Cardinals of Milan and Florence were natives of cities then at war with the Holy See; Orsini was too young, and was, moreover, the scion of a Roman house prominently involved in all Roman disturbances and intrigues. There remained only the Cardinals of Geneva and Luna, upon the first of whom the unanimous vote of the Sacred College afterwards centred at Fondi. But Geneva was rendered ineligible by the fact that he was bitterly hated by the Romans on account of the excesses which had been committed by his Breton soldiery; and Luna (afterwards Benedict XIII.) was a young man who, as yet, possessed no influence. The cardinals, therefore, were all at sea, and, if left to themselves, might have voted and quarrelled for months before reaching a conclusion. They were not in condition to avail themselves of Pope Gregory's concessions, or, in-

deed, to take any resolute step, and they resigned themselves to drift with the tide.

When the nine days' obsequies of the deceased Pontiff were terminated, and the time arrived for entering the conclave, they drew back, and requested a respite of twenty-four hours, hoping vainly that the crowd of uncouth mountaineers would scatter to their homes. This exhibition of weakness only aggravated their situation. The mob became more aggressive and boisterous. When, at length, on the evening of Wednesday, April 7th, the terrified cardinals betook themselves to the Vatican to enter the conclave, it was with great difficulty they forced their way through the dense throng assembled on the piazza of St. Peter's, and each elector was greeted, at sight, with the old cry: "Death or an Italian"! There was no mistaking the earnestness of the populace, and not a cardinal who entered the sacred enclosure had any prospect of issuing alive unless he obeyed the mandate of the Romans. One cardinal, Glandèves, took the precaution, before leaving his residence, to draw up, before a notary and witnesses, his protest against the violence exercised upon him, and his declaration that he regarded the coming election as illegal and void.

Fearing that the popular demonstration which they had permitted, if not organized, might be insufficient to sway the minds of the cardinals, the bannerets forced their way into the sacred precinct of the conclave, and admonished the Sacred College that unless the people were satisfied, there was no knowing how the affair would terminate. The cardinals replied, with dignity, that they could give no premature pledges without vitiating the election; let the magistrates impress upon the people the conviction that their unruly conduct might have the very opposite result to that which the Romans desired; let the people disband and return to their homes.

The people were in no humor for disbanding. A large portion of them had no homes in Rome, and bivouacked on the square. Towards midnight the mob grew hungry and thirsty, and they made an onslaught on the Pontifical cellar. Torrents of good wine were poured down their throats; rivers of it, we are told, ran flowing to the Tiber. All night long, through the corridors of the Vatican, rang the cries of a drunken mob: "Death to the French!" "Give us an Italian Pope!" We can yield a ready credence to the affirmation of the poor cardinals that, when the little bell tinkled in the conclave the next morning, they arose from weary and sleepless beds.

They arose to set about performing the most awfully responsible duty which Almighty God has entrusted to the agency of man. Assembling in their little chapel, they assisted at a Mass of

the Holy Ghost, and a second Mass of the feria. Then the Cardinal of Florence, who, in his capacity of Bishop of Porto, was the prior of the Sacred College, began to address his colleagues. But scarcely had he begun to speak when his voice was drowned by the bells of St. Peter's and the great bell of the Capitol, ringing the ominous alarm, one stroke of which was still able to bring together "above twenty thousand men."<sup>1</sup> The drunken mob lying about and within the Vatican sprang to their feet; and they were soon reinforced by the populace pouring in from all quarters of the city. Whether drunk or sober, whether respectable citizens or vile outcasts, the cry of the Italians was still the same: "We must have a Roman or at least an Italian Pope!" Several prelates then present in the Vatican, have testified that the cry was accompanied with menaces of death.<sup>2</sup>

Up to this point there has been but slight difficulty in disentangling the truth from the enormous mass of perverted and exaggerated testimony so laboriously gathered together by Gayet. But just here, where the tragedy rushes on to its sudden catastrophe, we are involved in gross darkness. That the violence of the mob grew more and more aggressive, until finally the populace broke into the conclave and dispersed the Sacred College, is undeniable. That, at the end of the deplorable scene, the archbishop of Bari emerged as Pope Urban VI., is equally clear. All the intermediate stages of the affair will probably never be known. We shall be obliged to take one of two sets of contradictory statements, and become Urbanists or Clementists; or else, we must imitate those who, despairing of being able to learn the truth, remained neutral. It is easy for the historian, at this late date, to declare his neutrality; but all those from whose testimony we are to learn the facts of the case were, necessarily, partisans. The Urbanists maintain, that the cardinals were exposed to no danger of life or limb until *after* the election of Urban; that they had agreed upon him before entering the conclave; that their trepidation was owing to the fact that by electing him they had disobeyed the mandate of the people who were clamoring for a *Roman*, whereas, the cardinals had chosen a man who was, in reality, more nearly allied with

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<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, chapter 70.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, the Bishop of Assisi heard the mob yelling: "Per Deum crucifixum in conclavi habemus istos ultramontanos, et nisi romanum faciant vel ytalicum omnes conderemus pro frusta."

Another witness heard the following cry: "Messere le Cardinali, Romano lo volemo o almanco Italiano, se no toti quanti serete cisi, per Bacco!"

Still another: "Despachate vos, per carno de Dyo, no vulhati mori."

These depositions are interesting specimens of mediæval grammar and orthography. Evidently the era of the renaissance had not yet begun. See further testimony, ap. Gayet., i, 271.

France than with Italy.<sup>1</sup> The Urbanists are not unanimous in explaining why the Romans broke into the conclave. Some of them attribute it to their anger against the foreign cardinals for having elected an Italian instead of a Roman; others to a misunderstanding between the name of *Bari* and that of an obnoxious French official, John de Bar; still others maintain that they forced their way in for the sake of congratulating the Cardinal of St. Peter whom they erroneously supposed to have been elected. Their main contention, however, is that the pressure from without had no influence upon the choice of Urban, who had been freely elected before any disturbance occurred. They further maintain, that Urban's election was freed from any possible taint by the subsequent conduct of the cardinals, who voluntarily returned the next day, assured the new Pope that his election had been canonical, enthroned him, crowned him, notified their colleagues at Avignon that everything had proceeded orderly, bade the nations obey him, and by word and deed acknowledged him for their lawful sovereign during the space of three months. Their secession, say the Urbanists, was due to their dislike of Pope Urban's efforts to reform them.

Every one of these statements has been vigorously repelled by the cardinals, and, on their oath, pronounced to be false. The Clementist version of the story may be summed up as follows: The cardinals had entered the conclave fully resolved to resist the pressure of the mob and to elect some member of their college. The Roman magistrates would not allow the conclave to be walled up as prescribed by custom; and it was only after much persuasion that the cardinals succeeded in having the door secured by a wooden beam. They had not yet begun the election when the alarm was rung by the bells of the Capitol and St. Peter's, followed closely by the deafening shouts and the dire menaces of the mob. The bannerets approached the two prelates who stood on guard at the door of the conclave, and begged them to inform the Sacred College of the determined attitude of the multitude, who, they said, were now beyond control. The two prelates conveyed the desired information to the Sacred College, with the admonition to lose no time in assuring the Romans that their demand would be granted. After a hasty deliberation the cardinals decided that further resistance was useless. They deputed three of their number to go to the door of the conclave and give the desired pledge. Taking advantage of the momentary calm thus procured they proceeded to discuss the possible candidates. The Italian cardinals

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<sup>1</sup> Urban was of Neapolitan extraction, and was, therefore, the subject of Queen Joan, who was of French descent. Moreover, he had spent the better part of his life at the court of Avignon, and was favorably known to the cardinals by the ability with which he had filled the office of vice-chancellor of the Holy See.

declined to accept a nomination under the circumstances. Orsini refused to be coerced into voting at all. He suggested they should make an illusory election of some Franciscan monk, and, under cover of this stratagem, flee the city with their fictitious appointee, put the poor monk in prison, and reassemble in some spot where they should be safe from coercion. To the older heads this proposition of the young Roman appeared too radical. They deemed it preferable to select a candidate to whom they could consistently adhere unto the end.

It was incumbent on the Cardinal of Florence, as dean of the Sacred College, to make a beginning. "Since the pledge which has been extorted from us by the Romans," said he, "limits our choice to an Italian, I nominate the Cardinal of St. Peter." Next followed the Cardinal of Limoges: "The Cardinal of St. Peter," he said, "is too old and infirm to bear the burden of the Pontificate. My Lords of Milan and Florence have declined the dignity. Orsini is young and inexperienced. I, therefore, give my vote in favor of Bartholomew Prignano, Archbishop of Bari, *ut sit verus Papa.*" Aigrefeuille and the other Limousins followed in the footsteps of their chief. Bretagne strove to turn the flowing tide by suggesting some Italian Cardinal; but finally revised his vote, and agreed to the election of Bari. "I," said St. Angelo, "consent *taliter qualiter*; for I am acting under compulsion, and I hold that this election is invalid." "For my part," said Orsini, "I refuse to vote until the Romans mend their manners. However, I will not resist the decision of the majority." It was ultimately agreed that Bari should receive the unanimous vote of the Sacred College: they should notify him, proclaim him, and then make their escape to some safe place where they could re-elect him canonically.

This succinct narrative of the proceedings in conclave, which it has taken you, good reader, only two minutes to peruse, has been extracted by us out of an enormous mass of depositions. We are not certain, even now, that we have stated things as they really happened.

We have judged, however, that the most trustworthy account of the proceedings of the cardinals in conclave is that contained in the *Casus* drawn up in Tivoli by the Italian cardinals in July, 1378, when they were deliberating as to the course which they were in conscience obliged to pursue. They had not yet abandoned Pope Urban; but it was apparent that the more they reflected on the scenes they had witnessed the deeper grew their sense of the indignities inflicted upon the Sacred College. Let us return to the conclave.

The Archbishop of Bari was elected before noon of Thursday, April 8th. Nothing further remained for the cardinals to do than

to proclaim the result to the people. Yet they shrank from making the announcement. What had they any longer to fear? say the Urbanists. If they had chosen Bari, as they afterwards professed, solely under the influence of terror inspired by an armed mob, why did they not hasten to placate that mob by proclaiming the nominee? This embarrassing question was put to the cardinals a score of times by their adversaries; and our opinion as to the legality of Urban's election will be mainly determined by the amount of credit which we shall bestow on their answers. Those answers may be summed up as follows: They aver that when they acquiesced in the election of Bari they honestly supposed they had hit upon a happy expedient which would at the same time conciliate the threatening rioters and enable themselves to retire with some relic of dignity. The populace had clamored for a Roman or Italian. To have chosen a Roman partisan, such as the Abbot of Monte Cassino, would have been an ignominious surrender of their freedom. They fancied they manifested a great deal of spirit by yielding only half way and selecting a prelate whose reputation for probity gave them every reason to expect that he would not found any pretensions to the papacy on proceedings so clearly invalid. But to the dismay of the cardinals they discovered that the insolence of the mob was growing apace. A deputation of bannerets summoned them once more to the door of the conclave, and, after reproaching them with their tardiness, made known to them that the Roman people would not be satisfied with a mere Italian; they had concluded, upon reflection, that only the election of a Roman would secure the permanent re-establishment of the papal court in their city.<sup>1</sup>

The cardinals, after rebuking the turbulence of the populace bade the magistrates disperse the multitude. "We promise you," they added, "that by to-morrow morning you shall have a Roman or Italian Pope." Meantime they slipped a note into the hand of the guardian of the conclave, in which they requested the immediate presence of the Archbishop of Bari and of several other Italian prelates. Bari, suspecting the true motive of his summons, took the precaution, before proceeding to the Vatican, to secure his personal effects; for it was one of the refined customs of the mediæval Romans to loot the house of each Pope-elect. When he arrived in the palace, he was, we are told, extremely shocked by the sights which met his gaze. The Vatican, surrounded and

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<sup>1</sup> It is admitted by both parties that the Romans modified their watchword so as to exclude any but a Roman. The Urbanists maintain this was done *before* the election of Prignano; their adversaries are just as positive that it was only *subsequently* to that event. We can more readily understand of what vital importance this contention is to either side than we can decide which party is telling the truth.



invaded by drunken rioters, resembled the disorderly camp of Goths or Vandals rather than the peaceful home of the Vicar of Christ. "He himself," says the Cardinal of Florence, "confessed to us with his own mouth in Tivoli, and in the presence of witnesses, that an election thus held could possess no legal value."

Meanwhile the cardinals, having taken their dinner, re-assembled in the little chapel of the conclave to discuss whether they should announce the result immediately, or wait until the following day. One of them suggested that they should re-elect Bari *ad cautelam*. This proposition was rejected by others on the ground that the pressure upon the Sacred College still continued. Their deliberations were soon broken off by the impatience of the people, who, having somehow learned that the elect was not to be a Roman, began to pound upon the door of the conclave, shrieking: *Romano lo volemo!* Whilst the cardinals were looking about for some means of egress the door fell with a crash; and in rushed an excited multitude, brandishing their swords and shouting, *Romano! Romano!* The cardinals fled for shelter into cells and closets; but were soon brought back unceremoniously into the chapel. There is no telling how the affair would have ended had not some one (it is uncertain whether a cardinal or an attendant) cried out: "A Roman *has* been chosen, the Cardinal of St. Peter; but he will not accept." A shout of triumph rang through the palace. Forgetting the other members of the Sacred College, the Romans rushed upon the poor, gouty old man; threw the pontifical mantle about him; placed the mitre on his head; carried him bodily to the altar of the chapel; and, in spite of his protestations that "he was not the Pope, the Archbishop of Bari was Pope," they persisted in paying him homage.

The other Cardinals, taking advantage of this unforeseen diversion of their tormentors, "stood not upon the order of their going," but, some without hat or cape, some donning the first hood which came to hand, effected their escape. Had they taken the precaution, before dispersing, to fix upon a rendezvous in some safe place, where they could proceed instantly to a new election, we presume they would have retained the sympathy and allegiance of the Christian world. But just then, the thought uppermost in their minds was to provide for their personal safety. "If I am to be canonized," said one of them, "I prefer the category of the Confessors to that of the Martyrs." Four succeeded in escaping from the city. Geneva fled to Zagorolo; Orsini and St. Eustachius to the Orsini stronghold of Vicovaro; St. Angelo retired to Ardea. Six others, viz., Limoges, Aigrefeuille, Poitiers, Viviers, Bretagne, and Vernhio, disguised as pilgrims, clerics, or laymen, gained admittance into Castle St. Angelo. The Cardinal of St. Peter remained in the

Vatican. The others locked themselves within their dwellings. Such was the posture of affairs when the darkness fell upon what the Cardinal of Geneva quaintly termed "la plus orde journée qui fut faict, passés sont deux cents ans." It was, indeed, a dismal day; and the passions then aroused were not allayed until the youngest actors in the lamentable tragedy had passed from this earth to stand before the judgment seat of Christ!

The Archbishop of Bari spent the night of Thursday, April 8th, in the pontifical apartment of the Vatican. He rose the next morning, a Pope unproclaimed, unenthroned, with no one authorized to proclaim or enthrone him. What you or we should have done in his position, or what he, himself, would have done had he possessed the experience which he subsequently acquired at a great cost,—these are very irrelevant questions. Whatever may have been his defects, lack of intrepidity was never attributed to him. The evening before, when the mob were bent on installing the Cardinal of St. Peter, and greeted the name of Bari with "Death to him!" he was urged by his friends to resign (an Urbanist bishop tells the story): "Resign!" he had answered, "No! not though a thousand swords were pointed at my throat."

A circumstance which had considerably ameliorated his situation was, that the Bannerets of Rome, having been apprised by the Cardinal of St. Peter that Bari had been elected, had, in a solemn assembly in the Capitol, deigned to acknowledge him, and had forced the mob to do likewise. At an early hour on Friday morning, the officials of the city came to the Vatican to present their compliments to the new Vicar of Christ. Bari declined their homage as premature. Until he had been placed upon the throne by the cardinal-electors, "absolutely nothing had been accomplished." According to the cardinals, this was a broad hint thrown out to the bannerets that they should compel the members of the Sacred College to make their appearance. Certain it is, that the bannerets were very active and persistent in their efforts to induce the cardinals to repair to the Vatican. First, they visited the five cardinals who had, on the previous evening, returned to their dwellings, viz., Florence, Milan, Marmoutier, Glandève, and Luna. These were brought, one by one, with more or less persuasion, if not coercion. It is highly improbable that five individuals, isolated in a hostile city, and ignorant alike of the fate and of the intentions of their colleagues, should have offered any great show of resistance. We should be more pleased to learn how they conducted themselves when they were united in the presence of Bari; and how they advised him, as being his official counselors. But, unfortunately, these are things we shall never be able to make out with certainty; not through the defect, but through

the abundance of depositions, directly contradictory and irreconcilable.

In the chief Urbanist document, relating the incidents of the election, it is stated that these five cardinals came to the palace of their own accord; congratulated the archbishop very warmly on his elevation to the papacy; assured him that he had been freely and canonically elected; and begged him to invite the remaining cardinals to take part in the ceremony of enthroning him. "The Pope-elect in order to enlighten his conscience, and to ascertain clearly and firmly how the matter stood, interrogated the five cardinals, both singly and collectively, whether he had, in very deed, been sincerely, purely, freely, and canonically elected; for, said he, unless my election has been free and canonical, I will not accept. The aforesaid Cardinals, each and several, answered that never had Roman Pontiff been so freely and canonically elected; they begged him, for God's sake, not to refuse or delay his consent; some of them furthermore admonished him that he could not decline without committing a grievous sin, for it would be exceedingly difficult for the Sacred College to reassemble, or to agree upon another candidate.<sup>1</sup>

This statement is clear and positive. But equally clear and positive is Florence's denial of every assertion contained in it. When the Spanish ambassadors in their cross-examination of this cardinal questioned him as to this passage of Urban's *factum*, he replied as follows:

"I answer that on the aforesaid morning I went to the palace *on the requisition of the city officials*, as I have already stated; and that the other Cardinals came one at a time in obedience, I believe, to similar requisitions. As to the remaining affirmations contained in the interrogatory, they are, so far as they concern me, unquestionably false and devoid of truth; as concerns my colleagues, they are likewise false, so far as I could see and hear. I am certain that I never said one word of all that is therein attributed to me; and I observed that each cardinal, as he arrived, held very few words with the archbishop. I did, however, hear the latter urge the Romans to go, or send for the cardinals who were still in the castle; his words were, 'Unless they come nothing is accomplished.' I say and affirm that we held no meeting on that occasion; neither did he make mention to us, nor we to him, of any of the alleged topics."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Raynaldi, an. 1378, c. 90.

<sup>2</sup> In order to blunt the edge of Florence's testimony, the new editor of Hefelé, Dr. Knöpfler (who, being a German, is naturally an Urbanist), maintains: 1st. That the main assertions of Urban's *Factum* are expressly conceded by the *Casus* of the Italian cardinals. 2d. That Florence himself, in a letter to a friend written on April 14th

It was now after mid-day, and only six cardinals had presented themselves in the Vatican. The key of the situation was in the hands of the six cardinals who were behind the thick walls of St. Angelo. The whole morning had been wasted in apparently fruitless parleys between them and the messengers of Bari. About noon, however, the cardinals in the castle had so far yielded as to transmit to their colleagues in the Vatican a written document authorizing the latter to proclaim and enthrone the archbishop. This exhibition of weakness emboldened the archbishop to make a final assault upon their obstinacy. He made use, for this purpose, of the senator and bannerets of the city. What were they to say? According to the Urbanists, they were to apologize to the cardinals for the violence of the populace on the preceding evening, and to assure them that, as the Roman people were now satisfied with the Pope-elect, the Sacred College had no further reason to fear. According to the Clementists, they were to intimidate the six by representing to them that the walls of the castle were a weak protection against the fury of an entire nation, and by reminding them that, even if their own persons were secure, their families and their property were at the mercy of the Romans.

Take your choice of contradictory statements, as usual, beloved readers. Having set both sides before you, we leave you perfectly free. Whatever considerations influenced their movements, the six rode out of the castle about vesper-time; and, simultaneously with their cavalcade, out rides the last remnant of sympathy with them from our soul. They had declined the crown of martyrdom; we certainly shall not regard them as Confessors, or *men*. Their scarlet robes may remind *them* of their insulted dignity; they do not convey to *us* any suggestion of Roman or Christian fortitude.

The rest of the story is easily told. Twelve of the sixteen electors re-assembled in the little chapel of the conclave. They summoned the Archbishop of Bari, and announced to him that he was the choice of the Sacred College. He accepted. They asked him the name by which he should be known. He answered, *Urban*. Whilst the other cardinals paid him homage and chanted the *Te Deum*, Cardinal Vernhio from a window of the palace made the customary proclamation to the multitude: "I announce to you tidings of great joy. We have a Supreme Pontiff, Urban VI."

The four fugitives, when they learned that Urban was seated on the throne of St. Peter, returned to the city and took part in the solemn ceremony of his coronation, and in the procession to the

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(only five days later) acknowledged the validity of Urban's election, and lauded the new Pope to the skies. But the learned doctor is hardly ingenuous. For 1st. The Italian Cardinals do not *admit* the fact; they give it as *ipse dicit* and *dicit quod*. 2d. Florence denied on oath that he ever wrote the letter in question.

Lateran. Letters were dispatched by Urban to all the Christian states announcing his election, and by the cardinals to their brethren in Avignon, purporting, "that in choosing the Archbishop of Bari they had beyond doubt acted under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost." It is admitted, alike by his friends and his enemies, that had Urban possessed, or retained, a moderate amount of prudence or common sense, he could easily have staunched the recent wounds inflicted upon the dignity of the Sacred College. But, unfortunately, he was an example (neither the first nor the last) of an efficient subaltern transformed by force of circumstances into an incompetent leader. A church historian has aptly applied to him the epigram in which Tacitus sums up his estimate of Galba, *omnium consensu capax imperii nisi imperasset*.<sup>1</sup>

Not twenty-four hours had elapsed after he was crowned with the tiara (it was the very day on which the cardinals wrote their conciliatory letter to Avignon) before Urban gravely offended his court by proclaiming, in public consistory, that every bishop then residing in Rome was a perjurer, and false to his diocese. This mock-heroic utterance was the more absurd because, in all probability, the "reformer" had never entered the gates of his own Bari. The general sentiment of his audience was voiced by the Spanish bishop of Pampeluna, whom Gregory had retained with him as his canonist. "I will not endure," he cried out, "to be called a perjurer. I am here not for my pleasure, but in the interest of Holy Church." Now, surely it was a bad state of affairs, and cried for reform (and, indeed, has since been reformed), that the Pope's canonist and his vice-chancellor should draw their support from dioceses which they personally neglected. But it was the height of folly to impute to individuals the fault of a system. Had Pampeluna, Bari, and the rest, gone to reside in their respective cities, who would have been left to attend to the work of the Holy See? If, on the other hand, they resigned their episcopal livings, what revenue was a mediæval Pope possessed of with which to support them?

Theodoric of Niem (Urban's adherent and secretary) from whom we have learned the foregoing incident, gives us many similar specimens of this Pope's crude efforts at reform. Another well-known (no doubt necessary, but very obnoxious) institution of the papacy in those ages, was that of the Collectors of Dues to the Apostolic Chamber. One of these collectors returned to Rome in the early days of Pope Urban with a sum of money which he had gathered. Imagine the poor man's surprise, when the Pope greeted him with the salutation: "Thy money go with thee into perdition!" It is hardly necessary to add, that before long Urban

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<sup>1</sup> Baron Henrion, l. 46.

collected his dues with as much exactness as any of his predecessors. We refrain from going through the whole list of his eccentricities, as they are rehearsed with sorrow by his friends; how he commanded his cardinals to content themselves with a single dish at each meal; how he openly reviled them as simonists in taking fees from princes; how he bade one of them hold his tongue; threatened to strike another; called a third a chatterbox, and a fourth a fool.<sup>1</sup>

The explosion came when, in public consistory, he accused the Cardinal of Amiens (who had recently returned from an embassy to Tuscany) of being a prevaricator, a taker of bribes, and a traitor. The affronted cardinal immediately sprang to his feet: "*Barensis, mentiris!*" he exclaimed. This vigorous retort produced the effect of an electric shock; it precipitated the suspended elements of bitterness. It was far more than the expression of his personal feelings. It was the formal opening of the Great Schism of the West. This Benedictine monk, John de la Grange, Cardinal of Amiens, was recognized, by friend and foe, as the master-spirit of the storm.<sup>2</sup>

The subsequent stages of the melancholy history—how the Transalpine cardinals seceded to Anagni, and called to their defence the Breton troops, and issued their manifesto to the Christian world; how Urban sought, when it was too late, to coax them back, and how the three Italian cardinals (the Cardinal of St. Peter died in September) wavered for months between both parties; how the cardinals summoned Urban to lay down his "usurped" dignity, and on his refusal declared him a sacrilegious intruder, and proceeded to the election of Clement VII.; how Christendom, having vainly endeavored to avert the impending tempest, was divided between the two Obediences—all this is too deeply engraven on the minds of our readers to need recounting.

But why have we gone rummaging among the documents drawn by scholars "out of the secret archives of the Vatican," to dish up old scandals that were well forgotten? One reason (written on the very face of our article) has been that we might correct the biassed statements of our ordinary text-books, the authors of which have copied each other's account of the quarrel, and the main fountain of whose information on the subject is the very partial narrative of Raynaldi. This distinguished author compiled his

<sup>1</sup> To any one who is familiar with the course of Urban's administration, and who remembers how violently he strove to win a kingdom for his worthless nephew, Francis, and how he condoned the scandalous behavior of this young scapgrace, it sounds ludicrous to hear Urban VI. pronounced a reformer.

<sup>2</sup> Si Cardinalis Ambianensis non fuisset, nil fuisset de istis novitatibus, sighs the chief advocate of Urban. Ap. Raynaldi, an. 1378, n. 45.

narrative from a careful study of the original documents preserved in the Vatican; and we cannot impeach his honesty for having given credence to Italian in preference to Transalpine witnesses. A partisan writer will invariably do likewise. A commission, made up of Democrats and Republicans, will always return a seven-by-eight verdict. A Tory will believe a policeman's testimony any day rather than a Home Ruler's. The learned world owes a debt of gratitude to the able chaplain of St. Louis's Church, in Rome, for publishing these documents; and though we regret that he has felt called upon to become a partisan on the other side (probably for the sake of forcing a hearing), he has almost converted us to the belief that a cloud rests on the title of Urban VI.; and we are half-inclined to echo the sentiment of the old German writer, whom he quotes: *ab isto Urbano VI. usque ad Martinum V. nescio quis fuit Papa.* We trust that writers will discontinue to speak of Clement VII. and Benedict XIII. as *anti-Popes*, or apply to the Church which produced St. Vincent Ferrer the epithet of *schismatical*.

But our chief concern is to convince our readers with how great wisdom Holy Church is extremely careful to guard the complete freedom of the papal elections. It is no great harm to be optimistic and to believe that the recurrence of the great calamity which threatened the very existence of the Church in the fourteenth century is now improbable. But we must remember that thunderstorms very frequently break over our heads with but scant forewarnings. What American citizen imagined that the year 1876, which opened so auspiciously and progressed so brilliantly, would close amidst doubt and terrors? At a time when the Vicar of Christ is proclaiming to the world that his position in Rome is becoming daily more and more unbearable, it is well to let it be known that the Catholic world is in no temper to condone any insults offered to the Sacred College by howling mobs or intriguing bannerets.

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EDITORIAL NOTE: Though the "Great Schism of the West" is healed, the historical schism of contending national writers about it will probably be never healed. As there can be no historical ecumenical council, it is only fair to leave both sides to the private judgment of our readers. The following is, however, the judgment of one who was one of the greatest church historians of our day, the lately deceased Cardinal Hergenröther: "But all these tumults were not of the kind to interfere with the freedom of election; in fact, in the afternoon twelve cardinals held a second election altogether free, when the choice again fell on the Archbishop of Bari. Order was soon restored; the election was

solemnly proclaimed on April 9th, and on the 10th the enthronization took place in the Church of St. Peter, while on Easter Sunday (18th of April) the coronation was solemnized.

"The new Pope, Urban VI., received general recognition. All the cardinals there assembled attended at his coronation, assisted him at the ecclesiastical feasts, requested spiritual favors at his hands and wrote an account of what had passed to their colleagues in Avignon, with the assurance that perfect freedom and unanimity had prevailed. The six cardinals who had been left in Avignon also acknowledged him as Pope and ordered the commandant of the Castle of St. Angelo to deliver up the keys to him, as the former Pope had made this surrendering of the keys of that fortress dependent on their consent. Moreover, Urban's escutcheon was exposed at Avignon and homage done to it." (Church History, Vol. II., p. 35.)

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#### THE LATIN VULGATE CIVILIZING WESTERN EUROPE.

**I**T is impossible to study, without admiration, the ways of Providence in employing the Latin Vulgate, not only in the regeneration but in the civilization of Western Europe. These results blend together, indeed, so that to a great extent many, looking only at the religious side, lose sight entirely of the secular consequences. Yet, the more the subject is investigated, the deeper becomes the conviction in the mind as to the immense service rendered by the Latin Vulgate in introducing civilization, learning, science, and the arts, among the ruder tribes of the north and east, and the nations in central-east and southeast Europe, which had already made some advances, and, in time, extending the salutary influence throughout the world.

The Greek Church never showed great missionary spirit, or sent its priests to the nations on the north and northeast in order to win them to Christ. Its strength was wasted and its faith weakened by subtle heresies, and the struggle to repress them. The Church was too much absorbed by internal trials to carry out the great command to teach the nations. It nationalized even what it did. If Ulfilas went forth to convert his fellow Goths, he did not carry the Greek language. Both he and St. John Chrysostom had the Liturgy rendered into Gothic, and Ulfilas translated the Scrip-