

zation of the radical party; and the government that has succeeded that of General MacMahon seems altogether unable to stand in the midst of warring elements. To increase further the hopes of the friends of religion, the mob has not appeared on the scene, though the Chambers are now sitting at Paris. The whole rage is now concentrated in the hearts of radical deputies and senators; and the fury of journalists and scribblers cannot succeed in rousing the rabble against bishops or Jesuits. This is the most hopeful feature of this revolution, for in all the bearings of the case it is a complete revolution. The struggle, however, is far from being over; the city of God cannot so soon obtain peace in France. Still, a great victory has been won; and all Catholics must pray that nothing comes to mar it, and prevent its fruits from being gathered in abundance after this blow inflicted on the godless party.

THE SIXTH NICENE CANON AND THE PAPACY.

Τὰ ἀρχαῖα εἶδη κρατεῖτω τὰ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ Λιβύῃ καὶ Πενταπόλει, ὥστε τὸν Ἀλεξανδρείας ἐπίσκοπον πάντων τούτων ἔχειν τὴν ἐξουσίαν. ἐπειδὴ καὶ τῷ ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ ἐπισκόπῳ τοῦτο σύνηθές ἐστιν. Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ κατὰ Ἀντιόχειαν καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις ἐπαρχίαις τὰ πρεσβεία σώζεσθαι ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις.¹

“**T**HOSE holy and venerable Fathers of Nicæa,” said St. Leo the Great,² “who, after having condemned to eternal infamy Arius and his blasphemies, enacted a series of church canons destined to have force to the end of times are not dead; for, both here at Rome and throughout the whole world they are judged to be still living in their immortal decrees.” We feel this undying influence of the three hundred and eighteen bishops just as vividly to-day, though nearly sixteen centuries have passed since they met in Bithynia, as St. Leo did fourteen hundred years ago. Of the twenty canons which they promulgated, not one has grown entirely obsolete; for the majority of them relate to things of catholic and fundamental interest, and the few which were enacted for the protection of assailed individual rights or the extirpation of local abuses have in them a germ of immortality.

Canon VI. is an instance of this latter class. The main object of the decree is to confirm the time-honored privileges of the See

¹ The rest of the canon deals with matters which do not here concern us.

² Ep. 106, ad Anatolium.

of Alexandria. From time immemorial the bishops of that city had claimed and exercised supreme jurisdiction over the churches of Egypt and the neighboring provinces. They received the appeals of the bishops from the sentence of their metropolitans; they convened and presided over provincial synods; they ordained and, if necessary, deposed bishops; in a word they were, in the phraseology of a later age, *patriarchs*. Whatever may have been the source of this authority, there is no record of its having been contested by any of the Egyptian bishops before Meletius of Lycopolis raised the standard of rebellion.

This Meletius, as we learn from Socrates,¹ having been degraded by St. Peter of Alexandria in consequence of many heavy charges, the most grievous of which was that during the persecution he had denied the faith and sacrificed, would not submit to the sentence of his superior; and not content with renouncing all allegiance to the Alexandrian See, he arrogated an equal right with the patriarch to ordain bishops and convene synods throughout Egypt. By attaching to his cause all the disaffected elements through the country, he sowed religious dissension in every parish, and soon was leader of a numerous and devoted faction, which obtained quite a formidable accession of strength by coalition with the partisans of Arius. Indeed the desire of putting an end to the Meletian schism was one of the chief motives which impelled Constantine, "with the advice of the clergy," to convoke the Nicene Council.

The great synod decreed "that the ancient order of things in Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis must be maintained, to wit, that the Bishop of Alexandria should have authority over all these provinces." And lest similar disorders might arise in Antioch or elsewhere, the Council enacted furthermore "that all the churches should keep their ancient standing."

The decree thus far is perfectly clear and reasonable; but it is not, to use St. Leo's term, *διασωλίζων*. Its importance has not survived the ravages of time. Many an age has rolled by since those brilliant luminaries of ancient Christendom—Alexandria, Antioch, Heraclea, Cæsarea, Ephesus—were extinguished. They were undoubtedly grand and princely in the day of their strength, but their greatness was of men and shared the inevitable fate of human things. Of what importance, save to the antiquary, are now those old Patriarchates with their accessories of high prerogatives, august state, and far-stretching boundaries? If it was permitted to those ancient princes of the Church to revisit these mortal scenes, their self-esteem would probably be less mortified by finding that every vestige of their patriarchdoms has been swept away, than by perceiving how

¹ Lib. i., c. 6.

wonderfully well the Church of Christ gets along without them. And upon turning their eyes Romeward and beholding the "Bishop of Old Rome" seated upon the Rock of Peter as firmly and serenely as ever, it is possible they might recall St. Leo's prophetic words: "A Church that is built upon any other foundation than that Rock which the Lord hath laid shall sooner or later come to grief."¹

This canon, therefore, owes its perennial interest to its incidentally alluding to the Roman Pontiff; for any scrap of ancient parchment upon which *his* name has been written cannot fail to interest Christians so long as the Vicar of Christ shall have friends or enemies. The importance of the document before us is greatly enhanced by the fact that it was the very first utterance by the Universal Church on the subject of the prerogatives of the Bishop of Rome. The Nicene Synod was the first of the Ecumenical councils, and was, consequently, the first occasion which offered itself to the Catholic Church of speaking in a corporate and official manner. Hence the historian and the controversialist turn eagerly to learn what the first of councils had to say about the chief of bishops.

Now if we sincerely desire to know what the Council really said, we must first of all discard translations and comments, and allow the canon to speak for itself. The endless controversies to which our canon has given rise would, in great part at least, have been avoided if this course had been pursued. Indeed, one of the main objects of this paper is to convince theological students, by an apt illustration, how necessary it is to study ecclesiastical documents in their authentic source and original dress of language. There is an impression abroad that in this day of elaborate translations there no longer exists a necessity for submitting to the drudgery of acquiring dead languages and poring over barbarous glossaries, and very many prefer the more facile method of transcribing the assertions of their predecessors to the laborious task of hewing their own inferences out of the original text. Now a translation is necessarily a poor substitute for the original; for if it were faithful and perfect in other respects, it must, like a false diamond, be lacking in weight and lustre.² Besides, whoever quotes from a translation quotes at second-hand, for a translation is nothing but the translator's expressed *opinion* of the sense of his text; and,

¹ Nec præter illam petram quam Dominus in fundamento posuit, stabilis erit ulla constructio. Ep. 104.

² What a world of wisdom is condensed into that little phrase of St. Jerome's, *Hebraica Veritas* (the Hebrew Text). And if it be permitted to look at the phrase from a different point of view, how much better it would be if we, spiritual children of Abraham, were as tenacious of the original *Veritas* as were the carnal seed of the Patriarch.

in consequence, is essentially an inference. And then, no matter how adequately the translator may have, himself, seized the meaning of his text, there will still remain room for doubt whether the words he has selected adequately embody that meaning. But what assurance have we that the version we are to rely upon is faithful? Will the fact of its being generally received as such vouch for it? Certainly not. An error, be it ever so common, is an error still; and an erroneous translation is all the more dangerous for having obtained universal currency, because one is the less inclined to suspect it.

Now applying these remarks to the subject we have taken in hand, let us put the question to prominent writers: What said the Council of Nicæa regarding the Roman Pontiff,? 1st. The Protestant historians and controversialists, with a few honorable exceptions, will reply that whereas the Bishop of Rome, from being a simple bishop, like any other, had succeeded, before the date of the Council, in imposing his authority upon the bishops in his vicinity, the Council thought it proper to permit him to retain his usurped dominion; a course which they are free to deplore, since it encouraged the "ambitious Pontiff" to persevere in his fixed design of enthraling the Christian world. Hear Calvin on the subject:

"In regard to the antiquity of the primacy of the Roman See, there is nothing in favor of its establishment more ancient than the decree of the Council of Nice, by which the first place among the Patriarchs is assigned to the Bishop of Rome, and he is enjoined to take care of the suburban churches. While the Council, in dividing between him and the other Patriarchs, assigns the proper limits of each, it certainly does not appoint him head of all, but only one of the chief."¹

2d. Now turn to those Catholic writers of the Darras and Rohrbacher stamp, who seem to think that the office of the historian is

¹ Inst., b. iv., c. 7, Edinburgh version. Dr. Alzog (vol. i., p. 664, Cincinnati edition) must have been temporarily laboring under Calvinistic influence, when he informed his astonished readers that the "precedence of rank and authority possessed by Rome was CONFIRMED by the Council of Nice (Canon VI.!)!" Not only is this assertion historically false, but it was resented centuries ago by the Roman Pontiffs. "The Nicene Synod," said Bonifacius I., "did not DARE make any enactment regarding the Bishop of Rome; well aware that no act of man could add glory to him who had received the fulness of power from the mouth of the Lord." "Adeo ut non aliquid super eum AUSA sit constituere, cum videret nihil supra meritum suum posse conferri; omnia denique huic noverat Domini sermone concessa." Ep. ad Episcopos Thessaliam. Compare Nicolaus I. ad Michaelem. "Si instituta Nicænae Synodi diligenter inspiciantur, inveniatur profecto quia Romanæ Ecclesiæ nullum eadem Synodus contulit incrementum: sed potius ex ejus forma quod Alexandriae Ecclesiæ tribueret particulariter, sumpsit exemplum."

to copy bodily the assertions of his predecessors. According to these slashing authors, the Synod declared, *totidem verbis*, that "the primacy has always resided in the Church of Rome (Canon of the Council of Nice). Let the ancient custom, then, be vigorously maintained . . . for so the Roman Bishop orders."¹

To tell the truth, I have less sympathy with the second class of unscrupulous writers than with the first. Protestant writers, when they undertake to combat the Papacy, are struggling "with the sun in their eyes." Their position is obviously disadvantageous and paradoxical, and it is not to be marvelled at if they should grow desperate. But a Catholic writer, who is full certain that Truth and Catholicism are synonyms, ought to make every endeavor to find out the truth, and when he has found it to present it to his readers unvarnished; for every victory gained by our adversaries over the indolent stragglers from our ranks is accounted as a triumph over our sacred cause.

II. Now let us approach this famous document, and translate it as we should a passage from Thucydides:

"Let the ancient usage throughout Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis be strictly adhered to, so that the Bishop of Alexandria shall have jurisdiction over all these; since this is also the custom of the Bishop of Rome. In like manner, as regards Antioch and the other provinces, let each church retain its special privileges."

Confining our attention to the clause *ἐπειδὴ . . . τούτου σὺνηθὲς ἔστιν*, let us at the outset assure ourselves that our translation faithfully represents the original. The term *σὺνηθης*, according to Hedricus, denotes *consuetus, familiaris*, and is translated by Liddell and Scott, *habitual, customary*. The phrase *σὺνηθης τινι ἔστιν* is equivalent to the well-known Latin expression *familiaire* or *consuetum est mihi: it is my custom*. It cannot be rendered, *It is the custom of others regarding me*. Hence Hefelé's rendering, "There is a similar custom for the Roman Bishop," is evidently incorrect. Da auch für den römischen Bischof ein gleiches Verhältniss besteht, Conciliengeschichte, vol. i., p. 389, new edition.

In fact, Hefelé was influenced by the old version of Dionysius the Less, who has rendered the clause thus: *Quia et Urbis Romæ Episcopo parilis mos est*. This is unsatisfactory; for there is no equivalent for *parilis* in the Greek text, and there is no equivalent in the Dionysian version for the Greek *τούτου*. The earliest Latin version—that which was read in the Council of Chalcedon—is more to the point: *Quoniam et Romano Episcopo hæc est consuetudo*; which coincides with our own. Protestant writers have also rendered the text as we have done, though naturally they strive

¹ Darras, vol. i., p. 387. Compare Rohrbacher (livre xxxi.).

afterwards to blunt the edge of it. Thus Sheppherd¹ translates it: *Since this is also the Roman Bishop's custom.* Neander:² *Since this is the custom also with the Roman Bishop.* Schaff:³ *Since this also is customary with the Bishop of Rome.* We are justified, then, in assuming that our translation is a faithful reproduction of the text;⁴ and may safely make it the basis of our further remarks.

III. After having determined with the greatest possible precision what the Council *said* about the Roman Pontiff, our next step is to investigate the *meaning*, the scope and bearing, of the words of the canon. "Let the ancient usage throughout Egypt, etc., be adhered to, so that the Alexandrian Bishop shall rule these provinces; *because this is also the Roman Bishop's custom.*" Now it is plain that Bonifacius and Nicolaus, as quoted above, were quite correct in affirming that the Synod made no enactment of any kind in regard to the Roman Pontiff. This canon neither grants new privileges to the Apostolic See, nor confirms any existing ones. For some reason or other, the Council did not think it necessary to legislate upon the Bishop of Rome. It strengthened the hands of the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, and of the Exarchs of Pontus, Asia, and Thrace. In Canon VII. it conceded a *Patriarchate of Honor* to the Bishop of the Holy City; but it did not DARE exercise, in any way, a legislative authority over the city of St. Peter.

Hence, Calvin's rhetoric evaporates like dew before the sun. The Council does not "divide between the Roman Pontiff and the other Patriarchs," but adduces the authority of the former as a *reason* for admitting the claims of the latter. But whence did Calvin derive his information about those "suburban churches" which the Pope was "enjoined to take care of?" There is no trace of this in the canon. The wily heresiarch knew well enough that he was not quoting "the decree of the Council of Nice," but Rufinus's corruption of that decree.

Rufinus wrote a History of the Church in continuation of the immortal work of Eusebius, and inserted in it a Latin translation of the Nicene Canons. But his character of rhetorician did not

¹ History of the Church of Rome, p. 63. It is about the only grain of truth I have discovered in his violent diatribe.

² Church History, vol. ii., p. 162.

³ History of the Christian Church, vol. ii., p. 275.

⁴ There is an untranslatable grace and force in the article prefixed to *Πατρις*. It breathes the deepest reverence. Observe that the article is not placed before Alexandria or Antioch, nor, as may be seen in the III. Canon of the Second Council, before Constantinople, whilst it invariably occurs before *Rome*. "Trifles light as air" oftentimes carry with them a great weight. Compare the little shibboleths *Our Saviour*, the *Blessed Virgin*, etc., which in the dialect of the modern Ephraimites become *the Saviour*, the *Virgin Mary*, etc.

permit him to give the decrees to his readers in the plain, unambitious style of the good Fathers of the Council. He was fain to embellish them and give them a high-sounding, antithetical form. The result of his lucubration upon our canon is the following sententious effusion: "Et ut apud Alexandriam, et in Urbe Roma vetusta consuetudo servetur, ut vel ille Egypti, vel hic Suburbicarum Ecclesiarum sollicitudinem gerat."¹

Now this "translation" ought to be brushed aside as undeserving of notice, and it is pitiable to see how much time and pains have been wasted by eminent scholars upon the barren task of determining what Rufinus meant by his "suburban churches." What did he mean by his whole translation? Did he understand it himself? As every one knows, Rufinus was the prince of bunglers. He was notoriously ignorant, and just as rash and stubborn as he was unskilful. His knowledge of the Greek was scanty, having been picked up without system or teacher. As for his Latin, the above specimen convinces us that he richly deserved St. Jerome's contemptuous criticisms.² It must be remembered, moreover, that shortly before writing his history he had been excommunicated for heresy by Pope Anastasius. Hence, we cannot expect to be assisted by Rufinus in our investigation of this subject. Let us return to the text.

The kernel of the difficulty is the demonstrative *τοῦτο*, *this*. "*This* is the custom of the Roman Bishop." What does *this* refer to? "Let the Bishop of Alexandria retain his ancient sway over these three provinces, for *this* is also the Roman Bishop's custom." According to Bellarmine and others, *τοῦτο* refers to the Patriarchate of Alexandria, and is to be expounded thus: "Let the Bishop of Alexandria continue to govern these provinces, because this is also the Roman Pontiff's custom; that is, because the Roman Pontiff, prior to any synodical enactment, has repeatedly recognized the Alexandrian Bishop's authority over this tract of country."³

¹ Hist. Eccl., lib. i., c. 6. For the benefit of those readers who may find it an arduous task to follow our sublime author through the upper air, I shall attempt a translation, though in the process much of the Rufinian froth must go to waste. The Synod decrees also (the rhetorician expects his readers to supply this) "that as well at Alexandria as in the city of Rome the ancient custom be preserved, that either the former (probably he means the Bishop of Alexandria) shall bear the solicitude of Egypt, or the latter (most likely the Pope) of the suburban churches."

² The saint has exhausted his copious vocabulary of vituperation upon his unfortunate adversary. He compliments his style as *slovenly, barbarous, unintelligible, solecistic*. "Such is thy skill in the Greek and the Latin, that when thou speakest in Greek the Greeks take thee for a Latin, and when thou speakest Latin, the Latins take thee for a Greek." Apologia adv. Rufinum.

³ Vera expositio est, Alexandrinum debere gubernare illas provincias, quia Romanus Episcopus ita consuevit; idest, quia Romanus Episcopus ante omnem Conciliorum

This exposition is unpalatable to the adversaries of Roman supremacy; hence they offer us a different interpretation. They make *τὸυτο* refer to patriarchates in general and expound the sentence as follows: "Let Alexandria have jurisdiction over these provinces, because the Roman Bishop has also a Patriarchate." "It illustrates the sort of power by referring to a similar power exercised by the Roman prelate in his province."¹

IV. Although this second exposition might strike the reader at first sight as being *possibly* correct, yet I trust I shall be able to prove that it is inadmissible; and that Bellarmine's is the only unexceptionable interpretation.

Let me, at the risk of being tedious, state, first of all, my understanding of the passage. The supremacy of the Bishop of Alexandria had been contested by the Meletian bishops. They had asked him, if not in words at least in facts, upon what warrant he based his claim to rule over and depose his fellow-bishops. If he had a title let him produce it. Now the Alexandrian prelate had no written document of any kind to produce. The Council of Nicæa, therefore, came to his assistance, by decreeing that the Patriarch's² authority must be respected, and that for two reasons: 1st, because it was *ἀρχαία*, *immemorial*, *aboriginal*; and 2d, because it was sanctioned by constant recognition on the part of the Roman Pontiff. Two very good reasons.

1st. The first argument in favor of this interpretation is drawn from the grammatical structure of the text. (*a*) Take the pronoun *τὸυτο* and see what it obviously refers to. Surely to this subject in hand, to wit, the ancient privileges and boundaries of the Alexandrian Patriarchate. It seems impossible, without quibbling, to refer the *τὸυτο* to anything else. The only objection which can be urged against this is the *καί*, *also*. What is the use of the *καί* in this interpretation? This objection is readily answered. The *καί* introduces a new and stronger reason why the Patriarch's authority should be respected. "Let the custom prevail, not only because

definitionem consuevit permittere Episcopo Alexandrino regimen Egypti, Libyæ et Pentapolis; sive consuevit per Alexandrinum Episcopum illas provincias gubernare. Bellarmine De Rom. Pont., lib. ii., c. xiii. He says there is no other plausible interpretation.

¹ Sheppherd ubi supra. "Since this also is customary with the Bishop of Rome (that is, not in Egypt, but with reference to his own diocese)." This is Schaff's clumsy paraphrase of the clause.

Many Catholic writers of eminence have interpreted the canon in this sense, but for the most part, they were interpreting, not the text, but the Dionysian version; and Dionysius was, no doubt, biased by the *Prisca*, which had adopted the gloss of Rufinus. The *Prisca* may be found in the Ballerini edition of St. Leo's works, vol. iii., p. 498.

² The word *Patriarch* is of later origin, but must serve in default of an equivalent.

it is ancient, but *especially* because it has Roman usage in its favor;” or, “Since even the Roman Bishop constantly recognizes it.” (b) The word *συνθησις*, *customary*, is intelligible in our interpretation, but in the alternative it becomes absurd. “It is customary with the Bishop of Rome to recognize the Bishop of Alexandria as Patriarch,” is clear and sensible; but, “It is customary with the Bishop of Rome to be a Patriarch,” is devoid of sense.

2d. A second argument in support of our interpretation is elicited by considering the logical sequence of the passage. “This is the Roman Bishop’s custom,” is the Council’s *reason* for supporting the Alexandrian claims. If it is a reason, we must reverentially presume that it is a valid one. The ancient fabric of the Patriarchate was tottering; the Nicene Fathers prop it up with this clause, which, therefore, contains a reason strong enough to sustain a Patriarchate. Now imagine Meletius demanding wherefore Lycopolis should be subject to Alexandria? If the Council be made to answer: “Because Tusculum is subject to Rome,” would it not appear a “lame and impotent conclusion?” Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis must obey the Bishop of Alexandria; because this (not Egypt, etc., but Campania and the islands) is the Roman Pontiff’s custom!¹ Besides, granting that Rome’s possessing a Patriarchate were a valid reason why Alexandria also should have one, would it be a sufficient reason why the Alexandrian Patriarchate should extend just so far and no further? If so, then the following ratiocination must be considered sound: “Let the Alexandrian Bishop have jurisdiction over *three* provinces, because the Bishop of Rome is also a patriarch.” Should any one rejoin that the reason why Alexandria happened to rule *three* provinces instead of two or four, was that this was the ancient custom, I answer that *his* reason is different from that of the Council, which tells us that “Alexandria shall rule these *three* because this is the Roman Bishop’s custom.”

Now take Bellarmine’s view of the canon. “Why shall Meletius and all the other bishops of Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis acknowledge the supremacy of the Patriarch?” Because the Bishop of Rome has time and again recognized the authority of the Alexandrian Bishop over these provinces. “Where are the documents to prove this?” asks Meletius. “Documents are not necessary,” says the canon, “custom has force of law. Has not the Bishop of Rome, ever since he sent Mark to found churches in Egypt, held the Bishop of Alexandria responsible for purity of faith and strict observance of discipline in that part of the world?”² What

¹ “Since this also is customary with the Bishop of Rome [that is, not in Egypt, but with reference to his own diocese.]”—SCHAFF, quoted above.

² When Pentapolis was devastated by the Sabellian heresy, Dionysius, Bishop of

could Meletius reply to this? If he and the Council admitted the Catholic doctrine of Papal supremacy, his mouth was closed. *Here* was a reason strong enough to sustain, not Alexandria merely, but, "in like manner, Antioch and the other great eparchies;" their authority was sanctioned by the Vicar of Christ. But if we assume that the Bishop of Rome was, in the opinion of the ancients, a simple bishop, like any other, what weight would his recognition of Alexandrian claims then carry with it? None at all. The Meletian would answer, "What care I for the favor or displeasure of a bishop a thousand miles away? What right has the Roman to recognize any one's jurisdiction in Egypt? Antioch is nearer to me than Rome, and so are Carthage and Ephesus; but the bishops of Antioch, and of Carthage, and of Ephesus know very well they have no right to meddle with things in Egypt. After having thrown off the tyrannical yoke of an Egyptian, is it probable that I shall be swayed by the opinion of a Latin?"

3d. We are now led to the threshold of a third argument, which I shall forthwith proceed to develop. The Council was evidently desirous of establishing the Patriarchates on the firmest possible foundation. Hitherto the Bishop of Alexandria or of Antioch,

As one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent, or custom.

But "old repute" can uphold a throne so long as things go smoothly; but if there be no "strength concealed" within, the throne will fall to the ground at the first touch of a skeptical hand. Now, knowing as we do, that, so far as divine right was concerned, the Bishop of Lycopolis was the peer of the Bishop of Alexandria, upon what principle of ecclesiastical law could the latter base his claim to judge and depose the former? In other words, what was the original source of that patriarchal authority which the Alexandrian wielded? Every Catholic must answer that, whereas, *per se*, the bishops are mutually independent within their proper jurisdiction, they, of divine right, have no other superior than the successor of St. Peter, and, in consequence, a bishop who shall claim any legitimate sort of precedence or authority over a fellow-bishop, must of necessity found his pretension upon the expressed or tacit consent of the Roman Pontiff. In the Catholic system, then, "Alex-

Alexandria, exercised his patriarchal authority in extinguishing the evil. He was in consequence accused at Rome by his enemies as having denied the divinity of Christ. He purged himself of the charge, and was commended by the Roman Pontiff for his zeal. This incident, preserved by Athanasius, goes to show that there was a constant flow of intercourse between the two Sees, and explains the *custom* alluded to in the canon.

andria, Antioch, and the other eparchies," were exercising prerogatives which belonged, natively, to the chair of Peter, and we are forced to the conclusion that they and the Council were as sensible of this as we are ourselves. Therefore, the clause in question can bear no other interpretation than this: "Alexandria and the other great Sees must retain their ancient sway because the Roman Pontiff wishes it." Understood in this sense the *ἐπισημ* places the archiepiscopal thrones on the firmest—and indeed the only firm—foundation. Why should we deem the Fathers of Nicaea either less "Roman" than ourselves, or less capable of comprehending their strongest argument in favor of Alexandria? Suppose a parallel case to happen in our own day and country. Suppose that, ages ago, the Roman Pontiff had dispatched to these provinces a missionary with episcopal ordination and unlimited, unwritten jurisdiction. If in course of time the throne on which "as one secure he sat upheld by old repute" should be shaken by an unruly suffragan, what might we suppose would be the ruling of a plenary Council? The Fathers would probably enact: That the authority of the Bishop of Baltimore must be respected; that it was unnecessary to apply to Rome for a formal recognition of his primacy, since the custom of the Roman Pontiff, invariably to address himself to the churches in these provinces through his medium, was an ample justification of his claim.

It may be objected that this argument would have no weight with Protestants. What of that? Are we to abandon our old standard of interpretation, our "Catholic analogy," because, forsooth, we cannot induce "those who are without" to view things from our standpoint? Let our adversaries prove that our interpretation is false; for the burden of proof is upon them.

4th. But we have a fourth argument, of which every historian must feel the force. I refer to the establishment of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. In my last argument, I took for granted that the only foundation upon which a Patriarchate could legitimately rest was the consent of the Roman Pontiff. This assertion we are able historically to make good, by observing a Patriarchate in process of crystallization.

Shortly after the date of the Nicene Council, the little town of Byzantium was by the genius of Constantine metamorphosed into Constantinople, the New Rome and Mistress of the East. With the magnitude of the city grew the importance and pretensions of its bishop, who now became the emperor's ecclesiastical adviser, the arbiter of bishops, the chief organizer of missionary expeditions, and the president of politico-ecclesiastical assemblies. A dignitary of such importance seemed to the emperor, the senate,

the metropolitan clergy, and the Eastern bishops,¹ to be deserving of the highest honor. Hence the second General Council (A.D. 381), in its third Canon, decreed that "the Bishop of Constantinople should rank in the Church next after the Bishop of Rome," giving as its reason that Constantinople was a new Rome.²

But this canon never obtained the *βεβαιώσεις και συγκαταθέσεις*—the confirmation and consent—of the Roman Bishop, without which even the Byzantine was conscious that his authority was founded on the sand. Hence, in the fourth Council, taking advantage, as St. Leo has remarked, of the prostrate position of the churches of Alexandria and Antioch,³ the Bishop of New Rome, Anatolius, made a desperate attempt to gain a more solid footing for his Patriarchate. Pope Leo, in anticipation of this, had strictly enjoined his legates "not to suffer the Nicene Decree to be violated." The Fathers of the Council, however,—some no doubt for political motives, others because they were given to understand that Leo was not so much opposed to the innovation as his legates would have them believe,—granted the Byzantine the desire of his heart. But now the more serious task remained of inducing the Pope to ratify the decision of the Council. The Council wrote to Leo, so did the Emperor, so did the Patriarch; all begging the same favor, and all acknowledging that the validity of the act depended on his confirmation. "We make known to you furthermore," wrote the Fathers of Chalcedon to the successor of St. Peter, "that we have made still another enactment which we have deemed necessary for the maintenance of good order and discipline, and we are persuaded that your Holiness will approve and *confirm* our decree. . . . We are confident you will shed upon the Church of Constantinople a ray of that Apostolic splendor which you possess, for you have ever cherished this church, and you are not at all niggardly in imparting your riches to your children. . . . Vouchsafe then, most Holy and most Blessed Father, to accept what we have done in your name, and in a friendly spirit (*ὡς οἰκεῖα τε καὶ φιλα*). For your legates have made a violent stand against it, desiring, no doubt, that this good deed should proceed, in the first instance, from your provident hand. But we, wishing to gratify the pious Christian emperors, and the illustrious Senate, and the capital of the empire, have judged that

¹ "As to the new honors conferred upon my see by the late Council, let me assure your Holiness that I am not to blame in this matter. A man am I fond of retirement and quiet; from my earliest days content with a lowly station. But my reverend clergy are very eager for the advancement of their Church, and the prelates of the vicinity encourage and abet them." Anatolius to Pope Leo. Opp. S. Leonis, Ep. 13^o.

² Τὸν μὲντοι Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἐπίσκοπον ἔχειν τὰ πρεσβεία τῆς τιμῆς μετὰ τοῦ τῆς Ῥώμης ἐπίσκοπον, διὰ τὸ εἶναι αὐτὴν νέαν Ῥώμην.

³ Dioscorus of Alexandria had been deposed, and Maximus of Antioch was a creature of Anatolius.

an Ecumenical Council was the fittest occasion for effecting this measure. Hence we have made bold to confirm the privileges of the afore-mentioned city (*θαρήρησαντες ἐκυρώσαμεν*) as if your Holiness had taken the initiative, for we know how tenderly you love your children, and we feel that in honoring the child we have honored its parent. . . . We have informed you of everything with a view of proving our sincerity, and of obtaining for our labors your *confirmation and consent*.¹

Anatolius writes to the same purpose: "The holy Synod and I have submitted this canon to your Holiness in order to obtain your assent and confirmation, which I beseech your Holiness not to withhold."²

And in a later epistle he assures the Pope that "the whole efficacy and ratification of the decree had been reserved to the authority of his Holiness."³

We have also two letters of the Emperor Marcian to Pope Leo, in which he acknowledges that the Pope's sanction is absolutely necessary to the validity of the canon.

"Since it has pleased the Synod to grant the Bishop of Constantinople the post of honor next after the Apostolic See, I pray your Holiness to give assent to this arrangement."⁴ And a few months later he writes endeavoring, with evident anxiety, to hurry on the cautious Pontiff.

"I am puzzled beyond measure to know wherefore your Holiness, although fully informed by the bishops assembled at Chalcedon of the proceedings of the Council, has not yet dispatched us *that epistle which must be read in every church, so as to reach the notice of all*. This delay has afforded an opportunity to the evil-disposed to suggest a doubt whether your Holiness would confirm the acts of the Synod. Deign, therefore, to send a letter which shall certify the churches and the faithful that the decrees of the Council have been confirmed by your Holiness. Very laudably, indeed, and with a constancy worthy of the Bishop of the Apostolic See, your Holiness has resisted the attempt which was made to disturb the ancient order of things as established by the canons. But you have, no doubt, been apprised of the active machinations of the enemies of the faith, against whom I have been unwilling to proceed because the Council's exposition of orthodox faith has not yet received your confirmation. I pray your Holiness, therefore, to send us a decretal with all possible dispatch, so that it may become manifest to all that you confirm the Synod of Chalcedon."

St. Leo readily assented to the emperor's request and ratified all the dogmatic decrees of the Council. But he and his successors

¹ Opp. S. Leonis, Ep. 98.

² Ep. 101.

³ Ep. 132.

⁴ Ep. 100.

resolutely condemned this surreptitious canon in favor of New Rome.¹ In consequence the *political* Patriarchate of Constantinople lacked ecclesiastical confirmation; and this 28th canon of Chalcedon was not admitted into the Greek synodical code until the Eastern Church had become thoroughly saturated with Byzantinism.²

Bring this analogy of a Patriarchate *in fieri* to bear upon the subject under discussion, and my former argument returns in a new shape. The Nicene Council desired to *confirm* the Patriarchate of Alexandria. Now the only way of accomplishing this was to show that the Bishop of Rome had "shed a ray of apostolic splendor upon his favored child." Therefore the clause, "Since this is the Roman Bishop's custom," must mean, "Since this is the Roman Bishop's will as expressed by custom."

5th. Another powerful argument in support of our interpretation of this sixth Nicene canon, is that the ancients saw in it a plain and formal acknowledgment by the Fathers of Nicaea of the primacy of the Apostolic See. Indeed, Pope St. Gelasius proclaims it an *invictum et singulare iudicium*. "By what process of reasoning can you persuade yourselves," he writes to the Eastern bishops, "that the rights of the other Sees will be respected, if due reverence be not paid to the supreme See of Blessed Peter,—that See which has ever been the support and bulwark of all sacerdotal dignity, and to which the *unique and irrefragable testimony* of the three hundred and eighteen Fathers acknowledges immemorial veneration."³ Hence, if we believe Gelasius, the Roman Pontiff's name was made use of by the Nicene Fathers to serve as a *support and bulwark* for the privileges enjoyed by "Alexandria, Antioch, and the other eparchies." The Emperors Theodosius and Valentinian also give expression to this widespread sentiment in their celebrated edict on the subject of the primacy of the Apostolic See. The civil power, they argue, must recognize the Bishop of Rome as Head of the Church, 1st, because he is the successor of St. Peter, the Chief of Bishops; 2d, because of the dignity of his city; and 3d, because his supremacy has been confirmed by the sacred council.⁴ Now the "sacred council," so far as we know,

¹ *Consensiones episcoporum. . . in irritum mittimus, et per auctoritatem beati Petri apostoli generali prorsus definitione cassamus.*—St. Leo to Pulcheria, Ep. 105.

² There is grave reason to suspect that the Acts of Chalcedon have been tampered with by the schismatical Greeks. But since this cannot be fully demonstrated, there is no use of making the charge. Even as the documents stand, they furnish abundant evidence of the unquestioned supremacy of the Bishops of Rome.

³ "Qua ratione vel consequentia aliis sedibus deferendum est, si primæ Beati Petri sedi antiqua et vetusta reverentia non defertur, per quam omnium sacerdotum dignitas semper est roborata atque firmata, trecentorumque decem et octo Patrum invicto et singulari iudicio vetustissimus iudicatus est honor." Apud Natal. Alexand.

⁴ "Cum igitur sedis apostolicæ primatum sancti Petri meritum, qui princeps est

had no other occasion of introducing the subject of Roman supremacy than this Alexandrian question, and to this sixth canon, therefore, as all admit, the Emperors were alluding. True, it may be objected that the Emperors' argument is based not upon the original text, but on the old Latin version, which contained the famous *additamentum*: "Quod Ecclesia Romana semper habuit Primatum." (The Bishop of Rome has ever been Head of the Church.)¹ It seems quite probable that such was the case, for the edict emanated immediately from the Western Emperor, and at the suggestion of St. Leo. But we cannot suppose, for a moment, that it was the Pope, or any of his clergy, who drew up the document, because the Roman Church would have vehemently denied that any synod did or could *confirm* its primacy. A score of years before, Bonifacius, in the epistle already quoted from, had expressed the views of the Apostolic See upon the attitude of the Nicene Council regarding the prerogatives of the Roman Pontiff. "Non aliquid super eum *ausa* est constituere." It follows, that the Latin version had passed the critical examination of the imperial lawyers, who would have been quick to detect an interpolation in the document, had there been one. But they took the *additamentum* for what it really was,—a title; and their understanding of the clause, *Episcopo Romano hæc est consuetudo*, was the same as the original translator's, the same as Pope Gelasius's, the same as Bellarmine's. It has, of course, been insinuated by hostile

episcopalis coronæ, et Romanæ dignitas civitatis, sacræ etiam synodi firmarit auctoritas," etc. Opp. S. Leonis, Ballerini, ep. xi.

¹ This variation is found in all the ante-Dionysian versions, as may be seen by consulting the Ballerini-Quesnel edition of St. Leo's works, vol. 3. Were this the proper place, it would be an instructive and amusing occupation to trace the process of corruption which our canon underwent as it passed through the hands of the successive editors. The *additamentum* was, doubtless, in the first instance, the title selected by the earliest Roman translator. Next, in the *Antiquissima*, the *Quod* was dropped. Then the following editors, thinking it necessary that each canon should have an appropriate title, and believing that the sixth had none, added the words: "De Primatu Ecclesiæ Romanæ." The editor of the *Prisca*, to make confusion worse confused, introduced the Rufinian jargon into the text, making the canon read thus: "De Primatu Ecclesiæ Romanæ vel aliarum civitatum Episcopis. Antiqui moris est ut urbis Romæ episcopus habeat principatum, ut suburbicaria loca, et omnem provinciam suam, sollicitudine gubernet. Quæ vero apud Aegyptum sunt, Alexandriae episcopus omnium habeat sollicitudinem," etc. It is important to remember that the only version received by, or emanating from, the Roman Church, was that read by the Pope's legate at Chalcedon. The others were executed without Roman co-operation, by irresponsible parties in various parts of the West. These interpolations, therefore, can with no more semblance of justice be fathered upon the Roman Pontiffs,—as several Protestant writers have done,—than they can be upon the Nicene Council, as some Catholic authors have sought to do. To the Catholic who expresses indignation at Calvin's attempt to substitute Rufinus for the Council, and to the Protestant who is equally indignant at what I have termed the Darras-Rohrbacher substitution of a Latin version for the original canon, I can heartily exclaim, *Plus ego!*

writers, though somewhat timorously, that the Latin variation was a deliberate interpolation by the Romans with a view of extolling their chief; nay, some have even laid the blame of it upon the "ambitious Popes" themselves. I do not propose to enter largely into the uninvestigable question of determining the *intentions* of people who lived and died ages ago. The Bishops of Rome have ever been distinguished for scrupulous attention to the genuineness of their documents. From the earliest ages, the fact of a text proceeding *ex scriniis Ecclesie Romanæ*, was the best witness to its accuracy. The version of our canon which was read by Parchasinus at Chalcedon, is a faithful reproduction of the original. The words *Quod, Romana*, etc., cannot be called an interpolation, because they were not *inter*; they were *ante*; which is equivalent to saying, they were the title prefixed to the canon in the Roman Codex.¹

Now, therefore, the inference drawn from the text by the Latin translator was, that it acknowledged the primacy of the Apostolic See. This is all that we can expect to find in this title, and it is all that we seek to find in it. I have no doubt but the author of the translation considered himself justified in giving the canons what he judged to be the most appropriate headings, for the original had none. And what more felicitous heading than this could a Latin have selected? It was pithy and contained the very soul of the decree. "Let Alexandria, Antioch, and the other great Sees retain their privileges, because this is the Roman Bishop's custom." To a Latin, the particular privileges of the Eastern churches were a matter of slight moment. The only interesting feature of the canon to him, was that the Bishop of Rome's authority had been made the common basis and foundation of the various prerogatives of the individual churches. Is it not a strong confirmation of our own interpretation to know that it coincides with that of the contemporaries of the Council?

Dr. Schaff contends that this "interpolation" was rejected by the Greeks at Chalcedon. The only foundation for this assertion is that in the acts of the IVth Council, it is stated that upon the legate's reading the Nicene Canon as it stood in his codex, Constantine, the Greek secretary, read the same canon without the interpolation from the codex preserved in Constantinople. This

¹ "Trecentorum decem et octo Patrum Canon sextus; Quod Ecclesia Romana semper habuit Primatum; Teneat autem et Aegyptus, ut Episcopus Alexandriae omnium habeat potestatem, quoniam et Romano Episcopo hæc est consuetudo. Similiter autem," etc., ap. Nat. Alex., Sæc. iv., Prop. ii., Dissert. xx. The canon proper begins manifestly with *Teneat. Aegyptus* probably represented to a Latin mind that large extent of territory which the Orientals divided into Egypt proper, Libya and Cyrenaica.

is a feeble basis to build such an argument upon. For, first, Baluzius, Ballerini, and Hefelé contend that this repetition is not to be found in the manuscripts prior to Photius. But, secondly, if Constantine had read the canon again, for the grave purpose of denouncing a Roman forgery, or of resisting Roman encroachments, he would not have contented himself with a quiet re-reading of the canon. If, therefore, he read it at all, it must have been for the sake of preserving the verbal accuracy of the decree, which cannot but have suffered by the process of a double translation, from Greek into Latin, and from the Latin again into the Greek. Indeed this incident of the Council of Chalcedon does but strengthen our argument; for we now may add that the Greeks themselves admitted that the canon of Nicaea acknowledged the supremacy of the Pope. The question then before the Fathers was whether Constantinople should have a Patriarchate. The Pope's legate maintained that the Nicene Canon forbade any change to be made in the relative standing of the churches. The clergy of Constantinople adduced the III^d Canon of the Second Council, which conceded to their master the post of honor next after the Bishop of Rome. "After the debate," Dr. Schaff tells us, "the imperial commissioners thus summed up the result: From the whole discussion, and from what has been brought forward on either side, we acknowledge that the primacy over all (*πρὸ πάντων τὰ πρωτεία*), and the most eminent rank (*καὶ τὴν ἐξαιρητὸν τιμὴν*) are to continue with the Archbishop of old Rome; but that also the Archbishop of New Rome should enjoy the same precedence of honor (*τὰ πρεσβεΐα τῆς τιμῆς*)."

I should be happy to see Dr. Schaff make good his point against Hefelé, as it would add new strength to my statement that the ancients understood this sixth Nicene canon to be a clear acknowledgment of the primacy of the Apostolic See.

V. These five arguments—drawn respectively from the grammatical structure of the sentence, from the logical sequence of ideas, from Catholic analogy, from comparison with the process of formation of the Byzantine Patriarchate, and from the authority of the ancients—seem to me an overwhelmingly abundant confirmation of our understanding of the canon before us. True, a very formidable array of mighty names can be marshalled against us; but the number of these will be decimated by considering how few of the eminent authors who have interpreted the canon in a different sense from ours had consulted the original text. We are not inquiring in this paper whether our interpretation be the most obvious one on the basis of the Dionysian version. We started out with asserting the right of investigating the document for ourselves, which, surely, is the most direct method of ascertaining the truth. With Dionysius we are not concerned. His version may

have represented to himself the idea which we have extracted from the Greek ; in fact, Bellarmine and Baronius have interpreted his translation as we have interpreted the original. But, as was stated at the outset, not every translator who has seized the true sense of his text embodies that sense clearly in the words he selects. This has probably been the misfortune of Dionysius in the present instance.

As an appendix to our discussion, I beg leave to suggest to those who still cling to the idea that in the clause, "Since this is also the Roman Bishop's custom," the Council meant, "Since it is also the Roman Bishop's custom to be a Patriarch," that there is a grave difficulty inherent in this interpretation. To be frank, I do not believe that, in the age of the Nicene Council, the Pope was a Patriarch. When was his patriarchate founded? What were its boundaries? What special prerogatives did the Pope claim or exercise in virtue of this adventitious dignity? The chief office of the ancient patriarchs was to ordain, judge, and depose bishops and metropolitans, and to convoke and preside over synods. The Bishop of Alexandria had been, from time immemorial, every inch a patriarch throughout his vast domain. The Bishop of Antioch enjoyed a similar authority throughout the great diocese of Oriens. Their jurisdiction was *immediate* and *ordinary*, and there is no difficulty in defining its nature and the limits within which it was exercised. If, therefore, the Council had "illustrated the sort of power," which it accorded to the Bishop of Alexandria, "by referring to a similar power exercised by the" Bishop of Antioch, then the term of comparison would be clearly intelligible; because both were patriarchs, with pretty much the same sort of power and the same extent of territory. But who has ever defined satisfactorily the limits and nature of Rome's patriarchal sway? Protestant writers have circumscribed this "Roman Patriarchate," some within the radius of a hundred miles, others within the confines of the urban vicariate.¹ Catholic writers are more generous, and make the "Patriarch of Rome" a donation of the entire Western World. But, on both sides, there is difficulty; for the Protestants have to explain how it is we find the Pope exercising great authority beyond the boundaries in which they have hemmed him; whilst the Catholics have to explain how it is that the Roman Pontiffs are not found to have ordained Bishops in Milan, or presided over synods in Carthage. In both cases the patriarchal robes they have made for the Pope do not fit him; the first is entirely too small, the second too large. And as neither party will abandon its unproved assumption, that the Pope was, in the technical sense of the

¹ Southern and Central Italy and the adjacent islands.

word, a patriarch, the Protéstants have to fall back upon the easy doctrine of Papal aggression, and the Catholic controversialists are obliged to contend that "the Pope had authority over the whole West, but did not exercise it equally in all places." Surely the Pope had authority over East and West, as Head of the Church; but when we ask what particular part of the Church he exercised that authority, in immediately performing in person the routine work, it will not do to make distinctions between the having, and the exercising, of authority. The Egyptian Bishops at Chalcedon protested that "nothing could be done by a Bishop of their country without the consent of the Patriarch of Alexandria." Can anything similar to this be said of the early Western Church? Not by any means. The various provinces of Europe and Africa were governed by their bishops and metropolitans, and whenever the Pope stepped in it was as the successor of St. Peter, "to whom the care of the whole vineyard had been intrusted." The notion, then, that the Bishops of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, like Jupiter and his two brothers, had divided the world among them, was not conceived at that early day, but was the offspring of schismatical brains in Constantinople. The Patriarchates did not enter into the original constitution of the Church, which existed before them, and has survived them. That interpretation of our canon, therefore, which is adopted generally by Protestants and admitted by several Catholic writers, is founded in error. The Council cannot have illustrated the powers confirmed to the Patriarch of Alexandria by referring to a similar exercise of power by the "Roman Patriarch," because this latter personage had no existence. Whatever powers the Bishop of Rome exercised beyond the narrow boundaries of his little province—which certainly did not constitute a patriarchate—he exercised in virtue of his "primacy over all." It ought not to be overlooked, moreover, that the Popes intervened more frequently in the East than they did in the West, because in that turbulent quarter of the globe it more frequently happened that knots were to be cut worthy of the Vicar of Christ. But whenever the emergency called for Papal intervention, the Roman Pontiffs did not pause to consider in what patriarchate their authority was needed. A fuller elucidation of this point is foreign to our present purpose.

I hope that my readers will not consider that my investigation of this subject has been excessively minute. Should they be inclined to think so, let them take up any of the heterodox historians who have treated of Papal supremacy, and see how prominently this Nicene Canon figures in their pet theory of the gradual aggrandizement of the Bishop of Rome. To that theory it is essential to assume that at the epoch of the Council of Nicaea the au-

thority of the Roman Pontiff was circumscribed by very narrow limits. Unless Protestants make good this assertion, no force of rhetoric can avail to establish their system.

Never mind, then, their voluminous rhetoric; shake this one column and their oratorical edifice will tumble upon their heads. When the Bishop of Rome first met the assembled Universal Church, was he considered a "Bishop like any other?" Was he a metropolitan "enjoined to take care of suburban churches?" or a patriarch with "proper limits assigned" him by an unsuspecting council? If I have been even moderately successful in my efforts, I have demonstrated that the Vicar of Christ at his first emerging from the gloomy atmosphere of the Catacombs into the free open sunlight, had already attained the full measure of his greatness.

THE LAWS OF THE CHURCH WITH REGARD TO SECRET SOCIETIES.

WHAT laws has the Church enacted against secret societies? Why does she inflict so severe penalties on their members? What societies incur her condemnation? These are the questions which it is proposed briefly to answer in this article, guided by the best authorities on the subject.

I.

First, then, *what laws has the Church enacted against secret societies?* As far back as 1738 Pope Clement XII. excommunicated the Freemasons: this excommunication was renewed in 1751 by Benedict XIV., in 1821 by Pius VII., and in 1826 by Leo XII. But the weightiest authority on the subject is the Papal Constitution "Apostolicæ Sedis," promulgated by His Holiness Pius IX. on October 12th, A.D. 1869. By this most important document the Supreme Pontiff, just when the Vatican Council began its labors, proclaimed to the Catholic world the censures, "*latæ sententiæ*," which were to remain in vigor, and the exact limits assigned to each, while he abolished by the same Constitution all former censures not therein renewed. Of the excommunications which are there stated as remaining in force, there are four classes. Of the first the absolution is in a *special manner* reserved to the Supreme Pontiff; of the second class, absolution is *usually* reserved to the same; of the third class, it is reserved to the bishops; and of the fourth, absolution is not reserved, but allowed to every ordinary