

DR. JALLAND'S BOOK ON THE PAPACY¹

II. SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS.

WE may now turn to some particular problems in which we feel more at home. In the fourth chapter we are given a lucid account of the events that led up to the Edict of Milan, but it raises one regret that Professor H. Grégoire of Brussels has not yet published his work on Constantine the Great, which was announced a few years ago. But there is a study published by the same author about 1930 in a Belgian review not widely known (information can be found in the *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*), where regarding Constantine's policy he expresses views that alter in many ways the whole aspect of the problem and which Church historians would do well to study carefully.

The explanation of how the emperor came to the decision of convoking an Oecumenical Council makes plausible reading, but the author has evidently missed my study on the authority of the State in the Oecumenical Councils in the translation which appeared in 1934 in the 'Christian East.' There he would have found indications that would have facilitated his own researches and helped him to get a better understanding of the whole problem of Constantine, the Council of Nicea, the presidency of the Council and the squaring of historical facts with the theological conclusions on the papal primacy. Constantine simply borrowed the conciliar procedure from the proceedings of the senatorial sittings. Just as the Emperor presided in person or by deputy over the sessions of the Senate, led the debates and appointed their subjects, so he acted at the Councils, which were run like an ecclesiastical senate; but as the Emperor took no part in the senatorial voting, so he abstained from voting with the bishops and he abode by their decisions.

The Popes' representatives never presided at the sittings, not even at the Council of 787, as the author seems inclined to believe (p. 374). At this Council, the debates were led by the Patriarch Tarasius, who deputised for the emperor—the boy Constantine V—and acted in his name. The Empress Irene, the promoter of the Council, could not preside personally, as it was not considered to be a lady's business to attend a Council. But the papal envoys oc-

¹ *The Church and the Papacy—A Historical Study.* By Trevor Gervase Jalland, D.D. (S.P.C.K.; 25s.). For the first part of this review cf. BLACKFRIARS, January, 1945.

cupied the seat of the *princeps senatus*, were the first to vote and the first to sign the Acts. This precedence saved the principle of the primacy and is in perfect consonance with historical facts.

The whole problem will be set in a better light as soon as the many Greek treatises on the General Councils are published, but, so far, they have remained almost unknown even to experts, though their theological importance should be obvious. I have examined about fifty of the manuscripts and give some results of the examination in my book *The Photian Schism—History and Legend*, which has been ready for publication since 1940 and is still waiting for a publisher. When my findings are known (they even throw light on the case of Honorius), the author will be in a position to complete his own researches on the subject and add some interesting pages to what he has to say on the authority of the papacy in the Eastern Church.

In my book on Photius, he will also come across a new aspect of the part played by monasticism in the Iconoclastic movement and of the importance of this struggle in the evolution of the Eastern Church in the eighth and ninth centuries. We very much welcome the reference in Dr. Jalland's book (p.369) to the links between monophysism, monothelism and iconoclasm, but on this problem the author would have found some illuminating pages in Ostrogorsky's book, *Zur Geschichte des Bilderstreites* (1929, Breslau). On E. J. Martin's *History of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, which is the author's main authority on the subject, the judicious remarks in the *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* (1931) are well worth reading.

The description of the events that followed the Council of Nicea is made conscientiously and will be read with interest by Church historians of this period. It is more like a historical treatise and makes heavy reading. Its multiplicity of details will not facilitate the reader's task of following the thread of the main theme, which is the position of the papacy in the Church.

The position of the Emperor in the first centuries of Church evolution is treated with comprehension; but the problem is more complex than it looks at first sight and I am not so sure that we should rest content for ever with the generally accepted thesis of so glaring a caesaropapism in the Eastern Church. It is true that there did exist a strong tendency, so marked during the reigns of the first Christian emperors, to dominate the Church as completely as they dominated the State. But it is no less true that the Eastern Church did fight gallantly for her rights and that she deserves more respect for what she achieved in the course of a long struggle than what we in the West have been willing to dole out to her. I have

the impression that the eastern Fathers tried from the very outset to limit the emperor's share in Church affairs and treated the emperor as an 'oecumenical deacon' whose function it was to assist the bishops, to provide the wherewithal for the upkeep of the Church and to supervise the administration of ecclesiastical interests—the role of the deacons in the primitive Church. We may assume up to a point that those emperors who favoured a heretical creed were not so much laying down the law in doctrinal matters as carrying out the decisions of heretical bishops. It is a very complicated problem which I hope to treat more fully in the future. In any case, we have no right to speak of caesaropapism in the Eastern Church after the liquidation of iconoclasm and we cannot take it for granted, as has been done so far, that the right to decide on doctrinal matters 'belonged to the sovereign, or in other words, to the State a view which for many centuries was to become dominant in the East' (p.218).

I am glad to state that some problems of canon law receive excellent treatment at the hands of Dr. Jalland; and this is particularly true of the thorny problem of the use of the Nicene canons and the canons of Sardica in Rome and Byzantium. His account of the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals is likewise a well-balanced summary of the whole question—an achievement in a matter so difficult. The decisions of Sardica are subjected to a very thorough examination, though the date of this important synod is not given. There is also an interesting suggestion on page 315 on the use of the title of oecumenical patriarch attributed to Acacius. The treatment of Pope Hormisdas's case (p.341) is surprising, for I fail to understand the words—'If Hormisdas failed for the time being, it was chiefly because the eastern churches had been misled into a confusion of the things of Caesar with the things of God.' My impression is that his contemporaries had a somewhat different opinion about him. His condemnation was even included in the profession of faith which the popes had to sign after their election, (according to Jalland, page 352) after the reign of Pelagius I. Amann has clearly stated in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* what we are to think of the relations of this case with infallibility, and, in judging it, greater consideration should be given to contemporary opinion. If Hormisdas did not force the issue and Honorius went too far, it was due to their anxiety to save the Church's unity.

We should have liked to hear more of the *professio fidei* prescribed for the popes before their coronation, for as the author rightly points out, it has its importance in the evolution of the papal claims. I am also of opinion that the usage was abolished by Gregory VII. though

it remained in practice in Rome till under Leo IX. and his immediate successors. As I have pointed out elsewhere, we can date the latest edition of the *professio* from Leo IX's time. Another point that might have been better stressed by the author is the importance of the jurisdiction over Illyricum in the differences between the Popes and the Patriarchs of Constantinople, for it is a crucial issue in the history of the first schism between East and West under Photius².

The chapter on the papacy and medieval Christendom is certainly the least satisfactory in the whole book. No doubt, a field so wide, which had to be touched upon, could not be treated fully within such a limited space. There exists an imposing bibliography on the single question of Charlemagne—but was he really the greatest monarch in history (p.375)? More recent research seems to have shed some of the older enthusiasm. The foundation of the German-Roman Empire by Otto is another such problem, and so is the evolution of canon law at this important period. And there was undoubtedly a sort of 'germanisation' of the Western Church, and not until we study the development of this period from this point of view shall we be able to understand the popes' opposition as representing the old Roman tradition, the clash between the Imperium and the Sacerdotium, the growth of medieval canon law and other problems connected with the papacy and the Church at that time.

Dr. Jalland has tried to give us a general survey of these problems, but not so successfully as he did in the first portion of his book. The inadequacy of his quotations is especially disappointing in this part. We do not of course expect a long list of sources and books in a chapter which is not meant to be exhaustive, but in writing of the evolution of medieval canon law, it is not enough to quote only Z. N. Brooke's 'English Church and the Papacy': one expects at least a reference to P. Fournier-Le Bras, *Histoire des Collections Canoniques* (Paris, 1931-1932), for, with von Schulte, they are the greatest authorities on the question,—as well as a reference to the important publication by I. Haller, *Das Papsttum, Idee und Wirklichkeit*, (Stuttgart, 1934-1939). Though perhaps not as good as E. Caspar, Haller is a great German historian on this particular subject. Continental scholars would frown at the persistent quoting of the Cambridge Medieval History as an authority on various subjects. It is not implied that this publication is not very valuable, but most of the specialists who contributed to this great undertaking by I. B. Bury, published special treatises on the subjects

² The author would have found useful information on this matter in our book, *Les Légendes de Constantin et de Méthode vus de Byzance* (Prague; 1933).

which they summarised for the Cambridge History and it is those special works that should be utilised in a scientific study of the standard of the Bampton Lectures.

The last chapter is more inspiring, and yet the author would have done well to limit his research to the first centuries of the Church. It is the period where he is at home and such restraint would have enabled him to study some of the problems more thoroughly to our great benefit.

Our remarks are only meant as suggestions which might help Dr. Jalland in giving us some expanded views in the second edition of his important work. For such it is and its publication will mark a period in the research work within the Church of England. She is to be congratulated for having found in the younger generation of her clergy a band of scholars, well trained, well balanced, who have stood the test and are full of promise for the future—G. Dix, F. L. Cross, T. G. Jalland, and others. We can say truly that it is the great merit of Dr. Jalland's book to show fully and clearly the foundations of the papal primacy in doctrinal matters, the growth in subsequent centuries of the consciousness of its mission in Rome and the ready response to those claims from the Church in the West and in the East. In these matters, his deductions can often be taken as final. Other problems naturally await further study. It remains to be shown how the popes developed their claims in disciplinary matters and what has been the response of the Church in the West and the East. This problem urgently claims our attention and its solution may well prove a major stride towards the reunion of Christendom.

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TRUTH IN RETREAT.

I do not mean that Truth shifts. I mean that as men stretch out their hands to grasp her, she seems to them to withdraw herself: even as the fairy glow on the distant hills recedes as we draw near. Men are bashful of the truth and are eluded because of the coyness of their grasp. Moreover the truth is *expected* to shift; and that position which is static is suspected of some falsity, since at some time or other truth must have shifted thence on her travels. Thus von Martin complains in his book, *Sociology of the Renaissance*¹.

¹ *Sociology of the Renaissance*, by Alfred von Martin. (Kegan Paul; 8s. 6d.)