

Rome in the Vatican a marble statue of a Bishop seated upon his throne, which was brought to light in the year 1551, when some excavations were being made in the Via Tiburtina. The figure is of a venerable aspect and is clad in the Greek pallium or Bishop's robe. The two sides and the back of the throne are covered with inscriptions in Greek capital letters;—the sides contain calendars for determining the day of Easter, and the back contains a catalogue of works written doubtless by the person whom the statue represents. In this catalogue we do not, it is true, find our newly discovered treatise, but we find one entitled "The Universe" which the author of our treatise says was written by himself, and which writers of the third and fourth century say was written by St. Hippolytus of Portus Romanus. By this circle of evidence we conclude that the statue is that of St. Hippolytus, and that the author of the book "Against all the Heresies" is none other than the Bishop so called of Portus Romanus.

This is a very curious and interesting treatise. It throws much light on a heretofore dark period of Church history. Little or nothing could be accurately known or even known at all of the Church during the wretched period comprised within the reigns of Commodus and Alexander Severus. Even Neander, the latest and most erudite of historians, not having seen this treatise, has little to say about that period. We have now, however, authentic statements singularly minute of the state of the Roman Church at that time. The writing is doubtless not a history, but in refuting heresies it gives an account of persons who acted a prominent part in the affairs of these times, and it relates many events which were before unknown.

Originally the treatise contained ten books, the first three are, however, wanting. A part of the *first* book has been discovered among the reputed writings of Origen to whom we have before referred. This *first* book contains a summary of the work to the end of the *fourth* book, with the latter part of which our treatise begins. From this summary we learn that the first four books contained a condensed view of the doctrines taught by the ancient Philosophers. The work as we have it, properly begins with the *fourth* book and terminates somewhat abruptly with the *tenth*, indicating that the concluding portion, probably of no great value, is also wanting. "Taken as a whole, however, these *seven* books which, more or less complete, fill the volume, are to us the most living and remarkable revelation of the strange anarchy and confusion of opinions that prevailed among the more learned and cultivated classes, through all which genuine christianity was slowly working its way."

The wild dreams of the philosophers, Oriental Jewish and Greek,—the absurd astrology and wanton science of the age,—the magical tricks and jugglery of the pagan priests and sorcerers, are the topics dwelt upon in the first *four* books. These philosophies are also spoken of as the sources of all the wretched heresies that infected the early Christian Church. We quote the following incantation which, uttered by the shrill voice of the Magician, in the dead of night, and accompanied with mysterious rites, must have produced feelings of the deepest terror and awe in the minds of the superstitious people.

"Treble Goddess Bomba come
Of earth and heaven and nether gloom,
Bearer thou of flashing light,
Walking in the depths of night.
Thou above the dead that walkest,
O'er the dismal burrows stalkest,
For the blood libation red
Athirst, sad mortals direst dread.
Gorgo, Mormo, and the moon,
Thousand formed, arise! arise!
And share our solemn sacrifice."