

cause between the Pope and his adversaries and accusers. Leo III.'s innocence was proved and proclaimed, but, although peace was now fully restored, Charles remained in Rome to keep Christmas. On the great day of the Feast, he went, attired as a Roman patrician, to hear mass in the basilica of S. Peter. After the reading of the Gospel, the Pope, leaving his throne, stood by Charles, who was kneeling in prayer near the high altar, and set a diadem upon his head. The act of coronation was instantly followed by the acclamation of the Roman People assembled in the basilica; *Karolo Augusto, a Deo coronato, magno et pacifico Imperatori, vita et victoria*. "To Charles, the Augustus, crowned of God, the great and peace-making Emperor, be life and victory!"

On the side of the Roman Pontiff and the Roman People, the event had been carefully prepared. On the side of Charles, the most probable theory represents it as unexpected at the moment of its occurrence, though previously discussed as a possibility, and consented to.

In the coronation and unction of Charles as Roman Emperor there was no thought implied of returning to the state of affairs which had terminated in A.D. 476—viz. : an administrative division of the one Empire between two Emperors. Leo III. and those who acted with him sought "to make Old Rome again the civil as well as the ecclesiastical capital of the Empire that bore her name."* They professed to be "legitimately filling up the place of the deposed Constantine the Sixth, the people of the imperial city exercising their ancient right of choice, their bishop his right of consecration."*¹ There was, however, no precedent which would fit Leo's action. The nearest instance that could be cited was perhaps the function of the *interrex* in the ancient Kingdom of Rome.*² But it is improbable that this was present to the mind of the Pope. Still, there

*Bryce; *Holy Roman Empire*, p. 63 (ed. of 1904).

*¹Ibidem.

*²Pelham, *Outlines of Roman History*, pp. 21-22.