

all to live in troublous times. St. Leo I, or the Great, succeeding St. Sixtus III, began his Pontificate on Sept. 1, 439. At this time the West especially suffered from the repeated inroads of the barbarians. Africa was in the hands of Genseric. Spain and Gaul were invaded by the Suevi, the Goths, Alani, Burgundians and Franks. Attila, having ravaged Illyria, Pannonia, and Thrace, turned back upon the West, sending terror before him, and leaving general devastation and ruin behind. There were Arians, Manicheans, Priscillianists, Pelagians and Nestorians warring against Christianity and Civilization. Ascending the throne, and casting a glance over the world, Leo found matter enough to awaken all his care and zeal. He was a Pontiff specially prepared by God for the times. In him every quality of the great man was united with the deep humility and eminent virtues which make the saints. He was equal to the task before him; began it immediately, and with tireless activity continued it. To the heretics he gave first attention; restored the churches ravaged by the Arian Vandals; severely punished the horrible abominations committed by the Manicheans in their mysteries; and required all persons suspected of Pelagianism to give an open and written abjuration of the heresy. While thus engaged with old heresies, Eutyches, a Religious, in combating the heresy of Nestorius, which divided the Persons in Jesus Christ, fell into an error no less repugnant to the Doctrine of the Incarnation, asserting that there was but one Nature in Our Lord—the Divinity. He was arraigned before a Particular Council at Constantinople in 448, and condemned, deposed, and excommunicated, all of which acts St. Leo approved. Eutyches refused to submit, and found a protector in Dioscorus, Bishop of Alexandria. The Emperor, Theodosius, being friendly to the latter, called a Council to debate the question. At this Council, which is known in history as the *Latrocinale of Ephesus*, the Papal Legates were given only second place, contrary to all precedent and canon law. The Emperor ordered the Fathers to absolve Eutyches. St. Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, and others protested against this. Armed troops surrounded the church, and

threatened violence, and from threats came to blows and wounds. The absolution of Eutyches was pronounced, a sentence of deposition passed against those Bishops who had dissented, and even one of excommunication against the Pope himself. But Leo, of course, condemned all the acts of the *Latrocinale*, and declared all its sentences null and void. Theodosius died in 450, and was succeeded by Marcian, a truly good Emperor, who really desired the pacification of the Church. A general Council was convened at Chalcedon, on October 8, 451, under the presidency of the Papal Legates, at which a Profession of Faith was drawn up in opposition to Eutychianism. Whilst St. Leo thus brought back peace and unity of Faith in the East, he had checked in the West the devastating course of the King of the Huns, Attila, the "*Mower of Men*," the "*Scourge of God*." Crossing the Rhine at the head of five hundred thousand barbarians, Attila pushed on through the provinces of Gaul. This was in 451. At Troyes he was met by the holy Bishop Lupus, and induced to spare that city. The prayers of St. Genevieve saved Paris. On the plains of Chalons, near Orleans, the first armed resistance was offered to this "*Scourge*" by the combined armies of Rome, under Aëtius, and Theodoric, King of the Visigoths. Attila, defeated in this bloody battle, recrossed the Rhine in flight, but only to re-appear in the following year more formidable than ever. He carried fire and sword across rivers, over hills and plains, and through cities, until he reached Mantua, near the Capital, where he halted. All human means of resistance had failed, and the last hour of the Empire seemed at hand. But Leo, the "*Guardian of the Lord's Vineyard*," succeeded in warding off the threatened ruin. As the Ambassador of Heaven, a herald of peace, he presented himself before Attila. The barbarian was awed by the majestic bearing of the Pontiff, and conquered by his heavenly speech,—the Sword surrendered to the Gospel—the Hun retired from Italy. Two years later, in 455, came the Vandals under Genseric, at the beck of Eudoxia, widow of the murdered Emperor Valentinian. His murderer and successor, Max-