

# THE PAPACY AND MODERN TIMES

## PROLOGUE

THE VATICAN AND THE ROMAN FATHER  
(ÆNEID, ix., 449)

Two thousand years ago, in round numbers, the Italian city called Rome had brought under its sway all those peoples, civilised or barbarian, who dwelt between the Euphrates and the Atlantic, south of Rhine and Danube, and north of the African deserts. This great confederation was known as the Roman Empire. Its ruler held at once the supreme civil power and the control of religion. He bore as a title in the secular State the name of Cæsar; as chief priest that of Pontifex Maximus. So had events determined after the battle of Actium (31 B.C.), when the old Republic was changed into an absolute monarchy (though disguised by keeping the popular designations), the head of which was Augustus, grand-nephew of that Julius whom Shakespeare extols as "the foremost man of