

We have thus imperfectly reviewed the story of the various councils. We might scarcely admit, with the saintly Gregory Nazianzen, that no good result can ever flow from an assembly of bishops. Nicea taught a lesson of comparative moderation. The genius and the honesty of the two Gregories relieved the dullness of the synod of Constantinople. Ephesus has become notorious for the vigorous orthodoxy of Cyril. Chalcedon was moderate and independent. Yet it is worthy of notice that the purest as well as the wisest of the sacred synods was the first; that its members, chastened in poverty and persecution, still retained something of the Apostolic dignity and grace; and that the Christian world, still free and self respecting, had not yet been forced to look with disappointment and shame upon the ambition and the vain pretensions of its spiritual chiefs.

