

### The Italian Renaissance and Popes of Avignon

influence of the Catholic Church as a potent force in the Renaissance movement.

Non-Catholic historians are fond of quoting the Latin poet's words: "*Nihil humani est mihi alienum*," and hold that it was out of this spirit—this attitude towards the world and mankind—that the Italian Renaissance was born. This is quite true, but as Guiraud points out in his admirable work, "*L'Eglise et Les Origines de la Renaissance*," the need of simplifying and generalizing—of studying man in himself rather than any man in particular—could find recognition in the classical spirit only because it already existed in the spirit of the Renaissance.

One thing is quite certain, that it was the relation of the Papal Court to the Greek Church at Constantinople and the religious controversies that took place during the fourteenth century between Avignon and Constantinople that gave an impetus to the study of the Greek Fathers, a large number of whose works were in the Papal library at Avignon. In fact, relations of friendship bound together the men of letters of Avignon and Constantinople in such manner that there was often an exchange of manuscripts between the East and West. The life of Petrarch furnishes examples of this.

From the very beginning of the Papal occu-