

were stripped of honours, to which their claims were as well founded as their Roman brother, who became, by the change, not so strictly universal as sole Bishop." (*Greg. vii.*, vol. i., p. 64.)

Say that the Christian polity remained, as history represents it to us in the fourth century, or that how it was, if that was possible, to revert to such a state, would politicians have less trouble with 1,800 centres of power than they have with one? Instead of one, with traditionary rules, the trammels of treaties and engagements, public opinion to consult and manage, the responsibility of great interests, and the guarantee for his behaviour in his temporal possessions, there would be a legion of ecclesiastics, each bishop with his following, each independent of the others, each with his own views, each with extraordinary powers, each with the risk of misusing them, all over Christendom. It would be the Anglican theory, made real. It would be an ecclesiastical communism; and, if it did not benefit religion, at least it would not benefit the civil power. Take a small illustration:—what interruption at this time to Parliamentary proceedings, does a small zealous party occasion, which its enemies call a "mere handful of clergy;" and why? Because its members are responsible for what they do to God alone and to their conscience as His voice. Even suppose it was only here or there that episcopal autonomy was vigorous; yet consider what zeal is kindled by local interests, and national spirit. One John of Tuam, with a Pope's full apostolic powers, would be a greater trial to successive ministries than an Ecumenical Bishop at Rome. Parliament understands this well, for it exclaims against the Sacerdotal principle. Here, for a second reason, if our Divine Master has given those great powers to the Church, which ancient Christianity testifies, we see why His Providence has also provided that the exercise of them should be concentrated in one see.

But, anyhow, the progress of concentration was not the work of the Pope; it was brought about by the changes of times and the vicissitudes of nations. It was not his fault that the Vandals swept away the African sees, and the Saracens those of Syria and Asia Minor, or that Constantinople and its dependencies became the creatures of Imperialism, or that France, England, and Germany would obey none but the author of their own Christianity, or that clergy and people at a distance were obstinate in sheltering themselves under the majesty of Rome, against their own fierce kings and nobles, or imperious bishops, even to the imposing forgeries on the world and on the Pope, in justification of their proceedings. All this will be fact, whether the Popes were ambitious or not; and still it will be fact that the issue of that great change was a great benefit to the whole of Europe. No one but a Master, who was a thousand bishops in himself at once, could have tamed and controlled, as the Pope did, the great and little tyrants of the middle age.

3. This is generally confessed now, even by Protestant historians, viz., that the concentration of ecclesiastical power in those centuries was simply necessary for the civilization of Europe. Of course it does not follow that the benefits rendered then to the European