The Failure of the Persecutions in the Roman Empire

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THE FAILURE OF THE PERSECUTIONS IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

THE GREAT PERSECUTION OF 303-312 HAS BEEN OFTEN DISCUSSED.* The purpose of the present article is to ask contemporary writers what kind of men, in what parts of the Roman Empire, championed the new religion, or looked kindly upon it, and why the government attacked it, both then and in the previous half-century. This was the period that had witnessed the disasters of barbarian invasions, defeat by the Persians, civil war, and economic collapse. But for the innate soundness of the central and provincial administration the Roman Empire might well have been wholly destroyed there and then. The years of restoration, however, culminating in the twenty years rule of Diocletian witnessed profound changes in men's traditional opinions. The old gods had not brought the aid expected of them, and men were turning to the new, Christian faith. By 300, Christian and non-Christian were hardening into fixed, opposing loyalties. But within the Christian camp, contemporaries were already noting the presence of deep rifts (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, VIII. i. 9). And these, in the very hour of the Church's triumph were to break out in the Donatist and Arian controversies which were to dominate its life for the next century.

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It was about the year 248 that Origen wrote his famous challenge to the Empire in the *Contra Celsum*. Christ was stronger than Caesar. The Church had survived despite all that its enemies could do against it. "The Roman Senate, the contemporary emperors, the army, the people and the relatives of believers fought against the Gospel and would have hindered it; and it would have been defeated by the combined force of so many, unless it had overcome and risen above the opposition by divine power, so that it has conquered the whole world that was conspiring against it". (*Contra Celsum*, I. 3, tr. Chadwick).[1] Origen believed in ultimate Christian victory

*See in particular, N. H. Baynes, Ch. xix in *Cambridge Ancient History*, XII, A. Manaresi, *L'Impero romano e il Cristianesimo*, Torino 1914, Ch. x, Henri Grégoire, *Les Persécutions dans l'Empire romain* (Mémoires de l'Académie royale de Belgique, Tome XLVI. i, 1951), G. E. M. de Ste Croix, "Aspects of the 'Great Persecution'," *Harvard Theological Review*, XLVII, 2, 1954, 75-113, and J. Moreau, ed. Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, Sources chrétiennes, Paris, 1958, W. Eltester, Die Krisis der Alten Welt und das Christentum", *Zeitschr. fur die Alt. Wissenchaft*, xiii, (1949), 1-19.

(*ibid.* viii. 70), and his assurance was not disturbed by the onset of the Decian persecution in the following year. More prescient than most, he had come to the conclusion that the era of partial and local pogroms against the Christians was over, and that the next conflict would be on a world scale.[2] So, he was prepared for what happened, and his comment, preserved in the Latin text of his commentary on the *Book of Joshua*, is eloquent. "Israel's enemies had attacked Joshua. Now Christ's enemies attacked the Church. The prophecy had been fulfilled in his own time. It was in vain that the Emperor and Senate forbade the name of Christ "(ut non sint Christiani)". Every city had condemned the Christians; in vain! Not only would the Christian name spread more widely and swiftly, but the Lord Jesus would crush his enemies beneath the feet of his servants.[3]

Origen's confidence was well justified. The great efforts made by Decius, Valerian, and a generation later, the Tetrarchy failed to defeat the Church. The Roman Empire did not possess the means of overthrowing an organisation whose ramifications extended from "Gaul to Osrhoene" even in the time of Pope Victor (189-198)[4], and whose adherents in 250 already numbered a sizeable proportion of the population in the provinces bordering the Mediterranean. The exile of Christian leaders to remote parts was an unwitting means of spreading the Word. Thus, the natives of the oasis of Kufra were converted by Dionysius of Alexandria and his clergy who had been exiled thither by the Prefect of Egypt, Aemilianus in 257. As Dionysius wrote, "Then for the first time was the word sown through our agency among those who had not received it".[5] Much the same happened a century later when Valens exiled monks to a still-heathen island in the Nile Delta. They cured the local priestess of a malady and converted the inhabitants![6] Christian missionary zeal was one of the obvious reasons why the Persecutions eventually failed. The conversion of Constantine comes as the climax of a long historical process. Origen himself had looked forward to a Christian Empire, and the unification of mankind under the Christian law.[7] To his disciple Eusebius of Caesarea, (died 339) this happy state of affairs had come about under the Constantinian monarchy.[8]

Origen's own career is itself a landmark. His personal contribution to the final victory of the Church was no mean one. Although his outlook combined what appear to be two conflicting principles, namely a philosophical approach to religion and life, and zeal for a martyr's death, he was able to make both serve the cause of the Church. As a Christian philosopher he sought to wed the current

interpretation of Plato to the traditional teaching of the Church. He could speak with the philosophic aristocracy of the early third century on level terms, and he lifted the Church out of the rut of Judaistic sectarianism in which it had threatened to founder in the second century. His influence among educated Greek-speaking provincials with whom he came into contact in Alexandria and Caesarea was immense. During his exile at Caesarea in Palestine, from 232, he met and converted a young Cappadocian lawyer named Gregory. The latter has left a remarkable account of his influence on him.

"Like some spark kindled within my soul, there was kindled and blazed forth my love towards Him, most desirable of all for His beauty unspeakable, the Holy Word, and towards this man, His friend and prophet. I was led to neglect all that had seemed to concern me, business, study, even my favourite law, my home and my kin, no less than those with whom I was staying. One thing only was dear to me, philosophy and its teacher, this divine man". (*Address to Origen*, ed. Metcalfe, Ch. 6.)

In the event, Gregory returned to his native Caesarea in Cappadocia in 243. He allowed himself to be consecrated bishop and remained there till his death in about 272. If it is not strictly true, as his biographer, Gregory of Nyssa[9] claimed a century later, that when he arrived there were 17 Christians and when he died there were 17 pagans, there is no doubt that he was responsible for a perceptible movement towards Christianity in Cappadocia. His missionary methods were as intelligent as anything recorded about Christian proselytism in the Ancient World. He broke the power of the traditional local priests by revealing their oracles and cures as swindles, but he replaced the local festivals with those of the martyrs, celebrated also with a good deal of jollification.[10] We thus have an interesting example of the actual transition from the pagan cult of local divinities to the Christian cult of saints and martyrs accompanying the conversion of the inhabitants.

In linking Platonism and Christianity, Origen had built on an Alexandrine tradition whose origins extended beyond the arrival of Christianity, back to Philo and even to the Jewish apologetic enshrined in *The Letter of Aristeas*. But in Asia Minor it was to prove extraordinarily fruitful for the Church. Gradually, Platonism became for the upper classes the bridge between the conflicting philosophies of Hellenism and Christianity. The process begun by Origen leads directly to the ideas and influence of Basil (his grandmother herself a convert of Gregory) and the great Cappadocians a century later.

The significance of Origen's success may be judged in the light of other possibilities. In the 240's it was not at all sure that the heir to the Platonic tradition would eventually be Greek Christianity rather than pagan neo-Platonism. As against Origen, Gregory, and Eusebius of Caesarea one can set Plotinus, Longinus, Porphyry, Iamblichos and Hierocles; and if Origen made Christianity acceptable to the court of the Severi,[11] it was Plotinus and his disciples who influenced the ideas of the rulers of the Roman world in the period from 253-300, from Gallienus to the Tetrarchy. Only gradually did these two systems of thought, similar both in ultimate aim and method but at variance regarding the Incarnation, emerge as rivals. Yet by 275 this development had taken place, and neo-Platonist leaders such as Porphyry and Hierocles, who was successively governor of Bithynia and prefect of Egypt (303-305 and 305-308), were among the most determined of the enemies of Christianity at the time of the Great Persecution.[12]

That victory ultimately went to the Church may be due in part to the other side of Origen's Christianity. Logically, Platonic contemplation of the divine and martyrdom are irreconcilable as ends. Union with God through gradual self-purification is a ladder of ascent. It demands long life, not sudden death. The next century accepted the taming of the human passions through asceticism as a substitute for martyrdom. Even Antony, though he encouraged the Egyptian confessors did not become one himself. Yet Origen realised truly enough that what had given the Christian Church its power of survival had been its followers' readiness to die for it.

The youth who had to be forcibly restrained from following his father, Leonidas, to execution in 202 was to exhort hearers in season and out of season to activities, including actual defiance of authority which would lead to martyrdom.[13] He who sought the spiritual truths hidden beneath the bare words of the Scriptural tests, applied the literal text to himself when he read *Matt.* 19.12. [14]. An intense idealism was never far below the surface. Christianity he reminded his friend Ambrosios, was a religion of martyrdom, and that singled it out as unique among the religions of mankind. "But the only people who fight for religion are 'the elect race, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, a people for God's possession'. (1 *Peter*, 2.9). The rest of mankind do not even try to make it appear that if there is persecution of religious people they intend to die for religion and to prefer death rather than deny their religion and live".[15]

He would not have disagreed with Tertullian that "the blood of

Christians is seed"; (*Apol.* 50), but he also said that "true religion was utterly impossible to one who was not a philosopher". (Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Address to Origen*, 6). It was this combination of philosophy and zeal that gave the Church its invincibility in the final conflict with the Empire.

Even so, the Decian persecution (249-251) came near to success. The main weakness of the Church in the first half of the third century was that, except perhaps in parts of Asia Minor, it was almost entirely an urban organisation. In the previous century it had been both the heir and the rival of the Jewish synagogues which were to be found in nearly every centre of any size near the coasts of the Mediterranean. Though the Church had increased its members considerably[16] during the period of practical toleration under Alexander Severus (222-235), Gordian (238-244) and Philip (244-249), the pattern of development had not changed. Penetration of the countryside had been slow. The Church was based on an urban episcopate. The persecutions it had suffered had been urban pogroms, the result of riots, as at Lyons in 177[17] or Alexandria in 248.[18] Its leaders seem to have been drawn mainly from middle-class urban provincial life. Justin, the wandering philosopher from Neapolis (Nablus) in Palestine, Marcion the ship-owner from Sinope, Theodotus the money-changer in Rome, his namesake the tanner from Byzantium, Florinus, a member of the governor's staff in the province of Asia, or Tertullian, son of a centurion in the Proconsul's guard at Carthage, these men seem to have been representative of Church or sect life in the period 150-220.

Concentration in the cities had brought stability and sound organisation. By 250 the priesthood was an attractive profession commanding a regular monthly stipend.[19] But it also rendered the Church more vulnerable to attack. When the blow fell about the end of 249, the leaders were marked men[20] who faced the alternatives of flight or arrest and execution; and their flocks, swelled by too many nominal adherents, fell away in droves.

At this stage, the authorities still had the initiative, and acts directed against the Church commanded a large measure of public support. Confessors in Carthage were mishandled by an enraged crowd (*ferociens populus*, Cyprian, *Letter* 6. 4). Trials were conducted there and in Smyrna to the accompaniment of the shouts of the mob.[21] Loyalty to the Roman Empire, expressed by an outward cult act, had become accepted as a matter of course in the provinces. Tribal and municipal centres had their *fora*, and these were often dominated by a Capitol dedicated to the Roman gods.

Such temples had continued to be built in the first decades of the third century. To this was added the view that on the safety and prosperity of the Emperor (the *Salus Augusti*) depended that of his subjects, and this in turn hung on the good-will of the gods.[22] Thus Celsus had told the Christians in 178 "even if someone tells you to take an oath by the emperor among men, that also is nothing dreadful. For earthly things have been given to him, and whatever you receive in this world you receive from him"[23] The coins in common use, exalting the "providentia" and "pax" of the emperor and his titles of "pius felix" emphasised the point.

Therefore, when in the spring of 250 Decius ordered as a "dies Imperii", that is a sort of general supplication to the gods for the safety and victory of the emperor and his house in the face of mounting threats to the State, the idea was not unfamiliar. Indeed, something similar may have taken place in 212 on the promulgation of the *Constitutio Antoniniana*.[24] It was complied with by the vast majority of the inhabitants of the Roman world, including the Christians. Their acquiescence may have been made the easier by the arguments used by the authorities both then and in the persecution of Valerian (257-259). The Christians were told that they were not being asked to give up their own religion, but simply to pay respect to the gods on whom the welfare of the Empire depended.[25] Thus, the deputy prefect of Egypt, Aemilianus told Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria at a hearing in 257. "And" he continued, "who prevents you from worshipping this god (the Christian God) also, if he be a god, along with the natural gods? For ye were bidden to worship gods, and gods whom we all know". (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vii. 11. 9). In Carthage, numerous Christians sacrificed cheerfully, and then proceeded to offer themselves for the Sacrament.[26]

Contemporaries emphasise the vast numbers of the lapsed. The Church was saved from utter ruin by a few noble examples. In Alexandria, Dionysius has left a vivid description of events (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 41, 11-13, ed. and tr. Oulton):

'On the arrival of the edict all cowered with fear. And of many of the more eminent persons, some came forward immediately through fear, others in public positions were compelled to do so by their business, and others were dragged by those around them. Called by name they approached the impure and unholy sacrifices, some pale and trembling, as if they were not for sacrificing but rather to be themselves the sacrifices and victims to the idols, so that the large crowd that stood around heaped mockery upon them, and it was evident that they were by nature cowards in everything, cowards both to die and to sacrifice. But others ran eagerly towards the altars, affirming by their forwardness that they had not been Christians even formerly; concerning whom the Lord very truly predicted that they shall hardly be saved. Of the rest, some followed one or other of these, others fled; some

were captured, and of these some went as far as bonds and imprisonment, and certain, when they had been shut up for many days, then forswore themselves even before coming into court, while others, who remained firm for a certain time under tortures, subsequently gave in.

The effective staff of this already important see was reduced to four priests who were in hiding and "secretly visited the brethren". Two others, Faustinus and Aquila "who are better known in the world, are wandering about in Egypt". (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vii. 11. 24).

In Africa, matters were, if anything, worse. Cyprian admits (*Letter* 11. 1) that the great majority of his flock had lapsed; few of his clergy stayed at their posts. The treatise *On the Lapsed*, written in 251, recounts in awe-inspiring terms the extent of the disaster. The magistrates at Carthage were so busy that they begged would-be sacrificers to return the next day (*De Lapsis* 8). In the provincial towns whole congregations apostasised, in one case led by the bishop himself. (*Letter* 59. 10). Nor are we dependent on the word of a single bishop whose own role had not been a heroic one. The whole problem of the *libelli pacis*, that is the pardons given out in quantities by surviving confessors to their friends and relatives at the end of the persecution, arose only because of the enormous numbers of those concerned. Cyprian indeed says that they were given out "by the thousand". (*Letters*, 20. 3).

In Asia Minor, the hitherto triumphant mission of Gregory in Cappadocia came to an abrupt halt. Gregory himself seems to have accepted the fact that most of his new converts would give way under the threat of persecution, and he himself fled.[27] In Smyrna, bishop Euctemon sacrificed.[28] Here, perhaps for the last time, the pagan magistrates felt really confident of their superiority. They know that the Christians "worship the crucified one", and openly laugh at the idea.[29] They also know that the Church was riddled with sects. Pionius was asked at his trial to which one he belonged.[30]

Half a century later the atmosphere has changed. Once more one looks at the contemporary accounts, this time of the Great Persecution (303-312), and the contrast is evident.

The Imperial directives indeed were carried out in the provinces without hesitation. In Africa the magistrates were kindly and fair-minded. Sometimes even, they were friends of the bishop, as is shown by evidence given by Alfius Caecilianus, Duumvir of Aptunga, at the inquiry into the conduct of Bishop Felix in 315.[31] But they were prepared to do what was asked of them. Munatius Felix, the Curator of Cirta, refused to close his enquiry until Bishop Paul and his clergy had surrendered all the Scriptures they

possessed.[32] Churches were burnt down, and the general order to sacrifice contained in the Fourth Edict in the spring of 304 was carried out.[33] Panic and apostacy in the ranks of the Christians there was too. Optatus of Milevis records two generations later how "the devil triumphed in the temples", that grey-beards, infants in arms, and indeed everyone, hastened to sacrifice.[34] An eye-witness of the events of Cirta in 303, Victor the Grammarian, tells how the first reaction of the Christians there to the Imperial edict was flight.[35] In Palestine, Eusebius describes in contrast to the heroes, that many others "gave way at the first assault"[36], and sacrificed; and at Antioch "numbers of men, women and children crowded up to the idols and sacrificed".[37] In Rome, Bishop Marcellinus apostatised.[38]

This tale of weakness is not, however, the dominant feature. Rather, examples of apostacy are used to set off what was the real character of the Christians at that time, namely their constancy and their defiance of the persecuting magistracy. Thus, the passage we have just quoted from the *Palestinian Martyrs* is followed by a description of the confessor Romanus, "who mingled with the multitude" and appeared on his own initiative before the magistrate to preach Christianity at him.[39] In Egypt defiance was carried to extraordinary lengths. Eusebius was an eyewitness of some of the events of Maximin's reign (306-313) and records as follows (*Hist. Ecc.* trans. Oulton, viii. 9. 2):

> And we ourselves also beheld, when we were at these places, many all at once in a single day, some of whom suffered decapitation, others the punishment of fire; so that the murderous axe was dulled and, worn out, was broken in pieces, while the execu ioners themselves grew utterly weary and took it in turns to succeed one another. It was then that we observed a most marvellous eagerness and a truly divine power and zeal in those who had placed their faith in the Christ of God. Thus, as soon as sentence was given against the first, some from one quarter and others from another would leap up to the tribunal before the judge and confess themselves Christians; paying no heed when faced with terrors and the varied forms of tortures, but undismayedly and boldly speaking of the piety towards the God of the universe, and with joy and laughter and gladness receiving the final sentence of death; so that they sung and sent up hymns and thanksgivings to the God of the universe even to the very last breath.

The authorities worked with energy born of desperation. Lactantius alludes to the "blind and irrational fury" of the persecutors.[40] In the East there was the feeling that this was not persecution but "war", in which one side or the other would emerge finally victorious.[41]

Once again, the pattern is repeated in North Africa. In Numidia, pagan shrines and even Imperial property were looted by Christians, and those who took part were regarded as popular heroes.[42] Their

failings, even their acts of apostacy and simony were pardoned. The spirit too, of those in prison was that this was either the gateway to Paradise or merely a temporary phase of demonic oppression before victory. Their discussions ran on what would happen after the Persecution and how the lapsed should be treated.[43] Any idea that the Emperors might be successful was evidently far from their thoughts. Their optimism and idealism reflected the spirit of many. Services went on despite the lapse of a bishop. We hear of young Christians in the African cities leaving their houses to "go and join", as they said, "the brethren who obeyed the precepts of God".[44]

Quite clearly, the intervening years had seen a change of public opinion towards the Church. There is some contemporary evidence. Cirta, the capital of Numidia, for instance, had been violently hostile towards the Christians during the persecution under Valerian. The mob hounded the two confessors Marianus and Jacobus before the magistrates.[45] In 305 the same city was the scene of a formidable Christian demonstration, ending in the election of the sub-deacon Silvanus as bishop. His most fervent supporters were described fifteen years later as the lower orders and country folk.[46] Indeed, there is no evidence in 303, except perhaps at Gaza, of people welcoming the persecuting edicts as many of the inhabitants of the Roman world had done in 250.[47] In the largely Jewish city of Dio-Caesarea in Palestine the sympathies of the inhabitants turned in favour of the Christians when the latter were put to torture.[48] Even in Diocletian's and Galerius' capital, Nicomedia, wholehearted support seems to have been lacking. Lactantius could write that God had allowed the persecution in order to bring the pagans within the community of the Church.[49]

A number of factors have long been recognised as contributing to this situation. Since 260, the date of Gallienus' restoration of Church property,[50] Christianity had been a *religio licita*. Though little has come down in the way of literature for the next forty years, it is evident that the Church had been gaining vastly in power and authority. The pagans themselves admitted that the Gospel had been preached in every corner of the inhabited world.[51] In Africa alone, the number of bishoprics seems to have doubled in the period 260-300, to a total of about 250.[52] In fact, we know that the Church made a remarkably rapid recovery from the effects of the Decian persecution. Cyprian's letters covering the period 251-258 give an unmistakable picture of vitality and assurance. New converts there were in plenty.[53] Indeed, the question of re-baptising those who had been baptised in the first place by the Novatianists would never

have arisen unless this had been the case. The finances of the Church of Carthage were flourishing and were used to ransom prisoners on the outbreak of the Kabyle revolt of 253, while the behaviour of its ministers during the plague of 252-253 gained it lasting respect.[54] The comings and goings of clergy from Carthage to Rome and distant Cappadocia, and the assembly of frequent episcopal councils, culminating in the meeting of no less than 87 African bishops on 1 Sept., 256, leaves no doubt as to the resilience of the Christians, and the strength of their organisation in Africa. Nor does Africa stand alone. It was in these years that Bishop Dionysius of Rome (259-268) sent gifts to the church of Caesarea in Asia Minor, whose munificence was remembered a century later, and was recorded by Basil.[55] What is more, he sent a private embassy to negotiate the ransom of prisoners taken by the Gothic invaders.[56] In Neo-Caesarea, Bishop Gregory's mission was resumed with even greater success, and in Alexandria, Dionysius restored the church to its former prosperity despite civil war and plague.

Then, during the period 260-300 all the evidence points to the growing together of Church and Roman society. Paul of Samosata (*flor.* 260-270) was only the first of the clerical politicians of the late Roman Empire. In 303, in Diocletian's court, Eusebius mentions Dorotheus, Peter and Gorgonas as high officials who were active Christians.[57] There were Christians or their supporters among the families of the emperors.[58] Christianity was no bar to advancement; indeed, at times the opposite may have been true.[59] There were distinguished converts like the Africans, Arnobius and Lactantius, and the former is probably quite justified in his assertion that members of the liberal professions could be numbered among those who having once despised the Word now believed.[60] The Council of Elvira in southern Spain shows that Christianity had penetrated so deeply there, that the problem was arising of Christians who held nominal pagan priesthoods, as part of their recognised obligations as members of the ruling body of their city.[61]

Lactantius however, warns us against placing too much emphasis on the influence of prominent individual Christians. Tertullian, he says roundly, "found little popularity", and Cyprian was understood "by the faithful only". "By the learned of this world, to whom his writings have by chance become known, he is commonly ridiculed". He was dubbed "Koprian" ("dung-head") and that, so far as his influence went, implies Lactantius, was that.[62]

The Great Persecution might still have succeeded but for one

important development which took place during these years. In three great territories of the Empire, Anatolia, Egypt and North Africa, the second half of the third century sees the conversion of large numbers of the country populations to Christianity. From a mainly urban movement, Christianity becomes a universal and popular one, and this decisively altered the balance between Church and paganism. Moreover, Egypt and Africa were the sources of grain and other supplies for the eastern and western halves of the Empire, and in Africa, the native population was large.[63] Here certainly, there was no depopulation in the Later Empire. The Roman Empire could not survive the loss of large provinces by invasion or successful agrarian revolt which would cut off supplies from the towns and cities. Constantine faced the spectre of famine in Rome in the first winter after the Milvian Bridge, just as Maxentius had done in 310 during the temporary loss of the African provinces to a usurper.[64] The unexpected surrender of North Africa without a blow was of immense value to his cause, and he realised it.[65]

What evidence is there for these religious changes? The course of events in all three areas is often obscure and difficult to establish, but on the whole, the story is intelligible. One finds, for instance, in each case, evidence for a decline in the popularity of the hitherto all-powerful native cults, coupled with positive indications for the extension of Christianity. For Egypt, Idris Bell has remarked that, "as we advance into the Roman period, we get the impression that even the traditional temple worship of Egypt was losing some of its vitality". Outwardly, all was the same. Sacrifices were still offered with due formality. The festivals were observed, the animal deities, such as Petsouchos the Crocodile-god still recruited their priests. But a certain formality and lifelessness was becoming apparent. Mummies were often embalmed in a perfunctory fashion, the symbolism on the mummy-cases shows that the original religious meaning of the signs was becoming lost. Hieroglyphic inscriptions degenerated, until after about 250 no more are to be found.[66] It is not perhaps surprising that one reads of deserted temples of Serapis affording shelter to monastic saints in the late third and early fourth centuries.

In Asia Minor too, the third century sees a decline in the popular religion of the countryside. Ramsay indeed believed that the old Phrygian religion had degenerated into a superstition before the century was out, and that educated men and women were therefore prepared to listen to the new Christian preaching.[67] However, cult organisations such as the Tekmoreian brotherhood flourished on the

Imperial estates around Pisidian Antioch in the late third century,[68] and one shrine at least, that of Mén at Colonia Caesarea near the same city retained its worshippers until early in the next century.[69] Indeed, the more obvious signs of collapse, such as the wholesale abondonment of temples, neglect of cults, the transfer of temple lands to the Church, and the absorption of priestly families into Christianity, did not come about until the second quarter of the fourth century.[70] Julian watched the process as a despairing eye-witness (*Letter* 89, ed. Bidez). In Africa, however, the erstwhile national deity of both Carthaginians and Berbers, Saturn (Baal-Hammon), seems to have forfeited his popularity sometime before the more Romanised cults which flourished in the cities lost theirs. No dedication to him has been found dated later than A.D. 272, and though in itself this might not be very significant, the next dated religious inscriptions in the same area (A.D. 299 and 324) are Christian.[71] There was no revival of interest in the Tetrarchy, such as the Roman gods experienced in some of the towns. At Cuicul in Mauretania, dedications in Saturn's honour were even being used as paving stones in the fourth century.[72] The cult had died out. When Constantine wrote to Miltiades of Rome in 314 concerning the Donatist schism, he appears to treat Africa as Christian, but divided between the Catholics and their opponents. Paganism became increasingly isolated as the cult of the traditional ruling groups in some of the African cities, such as Timgad and Calama.[73] It had lost contact with the people.

At the same time, the last half of the third century was not one of universal decay and despair for the native populations of the Empire as it was for the old urban middle-class.[74] In all of these three areas, for instance, new art forms based on traditional pre-Roman motives were beginning to supersede the stereotyped provincial art of the previous two centuries.[75] In Egypt, Coptic was emerging from being an important adjunct for the magician and was becoming a national Egyptian literary language.[76] None of these literary and artistic movements were connected with Christianity initially, indeed, the first example of the elaborate geometric designs typical of Berber art in the fourth century comes from a temple frieze at Timgad,[77] but Christianity provided each with a vigorous means of expression which evidently could not be found in the traditional cults. As the art historian, Gauckler, has stated, "in the domain of art as well as that of politics the triumph of the Church assures the victory of the native over the foreign".[78]

Quite apart from the evidence for the decline in the popularity of the main pagan cults, there are certain facts pointing to the actual

conversion of the rural areas to Christianity. For Egypt the testimony of Eusebius is impressive. He was, as we have seen, an eyewitness of the final ferocious stages of Maximin's persecution in 311-312. He stresses that Christians formed the majority of the population, and that while the evil spirit of idolatry was striving to keep the Egyptians in a ferment, "thousands" were deserting paganism — "and anyone who is not wholly lacking in vision can see this".[79] Fifty years before, Dionysius of Alexandria had stated that though Christianity had made some progress in the countryside there were still places near Alexandria which had not heard of the name of Christ,[80] but now "His altars were now in every town and village."[81] We know from another source that at Oxyrynchos there were two churches in the town about the year 300 and that many of the inhabitants were Christians.[82] But it was from the villages that most resistance to the persecution came. In the Thebaid for a period extending over years as Eusebius says, "sometimes more than ten, at other times above twenty persons were put to death: and at others not less than thirty, now nearer sixty, and again at other times a hundred men would be slain in a single day along with quite young children and women, being condemned to manifold punishments which followed one on the other".[83] That there really were numerous Egyptian confessors is shown by the fact that in 308 parties of more than 100 each were being sent up north to work in the mines of Palestine and Cilicia, as though there were sufficient in those of the Thebaid.[84] All efforts to crush the Church proved vain, but in the mind of the Copt, the "era of the martyrs" replaced the official "era of Diocletian".

In all this ferment of religious change, the beginnings of the monastic movement were being born; in its first stages it was entirely Coptic and rural in inspiration.[85] Antony's flight from even the primitive surroundings of his village took place about the year 270. There were monks in the prison at Alexandria when Bishop Peter quarrelled with Meletios in 307-308, and they took the latter's side.[86] As a perceptive Egyptian Neo-Platonist, Alexander of Lycopolis remarked, round about A.D. 300, Christianity had become the religion of the populace, attracted to it by its simplicity and high ethics (in contrast to the complicated dualism of the Manichees).[87] In another part of the Roman East, Edessa, the writer of the *Acta Sancti Habibi*, remarks that under Licinius there were more persecuted than persecutors![88]

For Africa, there seems to be little doubt about the rapid extension of the Church in the rural area in the latter part of the third century.

Recorded dated Christian inscriptions begin in 266.[89] The huge popularity of the cult of the martyrs in the next century, and the evil reputation achieved by the "persecutor", the *Praeses Florus*, who was governor of Numidia Militana 303-304 are relevant facts and there is evidence for the establishment of new bishoprics in the Numidian countryside, such as Tigisis, between 256 and 300. The enthusiasm aroused by Christianity among the common people was real enough. In the next century no village yet investigated has failed to yield one or more churches.[90] In Numidia too, the presbyterate was a post worth having. Victor the fuller was prepared to pay 20 folles (i.e. 20,000 nummi) for his election at Cirta in 305.[91]

Similar events were taking place in Asia Minor in the same period. Here the literary evidence has been supplemented by the archaeological. Both Eusebius and Lactantius mention the total destruction of a small unnamed Phrygian town (perhaps Eumeneia) in which all the inhabitants, including the city magistrates, were Christians.[92] In the same province, the village of Orcistus was able to gain the rank of *civitas* from Constantine about A.D. 325, among other reasons because, as it claimed "everyone was Christian".[93] Indeed, a close study of Phrygian religious inscriptions during the third century shows a steady movement towards Christianity in some of the towns, and a more violent one in the countryside. In the northern part of the province, near Dorylaeum (Eski-Sehir) a group of inscriptions dated between 249-279 leaves no doubt about the religion of those whom they commemorated.[94] They contain a ringing message "from Christians to Christians". On two, the Cross has been included in the design, and the qualities of the deceased as an ascetic and "a soldier" of Christ have been recorded.[95]

The term "soldier" brings us to the problem of theology. The rural Christianity of all three areas had much in common. It was first and foremost a religion of the martyrs and the elect, inspired by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God contained in the Bible. Thus, Athanasius wrote of Antony, that he considered "the Scriptures were enough for instruction" (*Life*, c. 16). They alone sufficed to rout the power of the demons. Antony scorned both pagan philosophers who visited him and urban theologians. To these simple minds acceptance of the Bible implied complete rejection alike of the native pagan past and the classical literary heritage.[96] So far did some of the Egyptian confessors who were converts carry this, that when they were asked their names by the governor of Palestine at Caesarea while en route to the mines of Cilicia, they refused to give them since they recalled the names of idols. Instead, they called themselves

Elijah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Samuel and Daniel (Eusebius, *Palestinian Martyrs*, 8. 1).

A similar outlook may be found in both Africa and Asia Minor. Part of the anger felt against the Betrayers (i.e. the *traditores*) was due to the fact that the Bible itself was the object of their defection. As the martyrs of Abitina asserted in 304, even to alter a single letter of Scripture was a crime, but contemptuously to throw the whole Bible into the flames at the command of heathen magistrates was an act of apostacy which merited eternal punishment. Persecution was the work of anti-Christ, and this itself was a sign that the last days were at hand, when the martyrs would enjoy their reward in Paradise and sit in judgment on their enemies.[97]

In Asia Minor the strength of the Montanist and Novatianist movements in the countryside testifies to the existence of the same puritanical view of Christianity at this period.

But theologically all this was a century out of date. In the East, the failure of the prophetic Succession and the discrediting of Montanism had opened the way for the more liberal Alexandrian tradition, the Logos theology, to become the predominant Christian idea. The conservatives protested from time to time, such as in the *Refutation of the Allegorists* by Bishop Nepos of Arsinoe (circa 260), but in vain.[98] Now however, the Church was confronted, as a result of the conversion of the countryside with a revival of the old Biblical and Millenarist Christianity in a militant and uncompromising form. While in the towns the gulf between Church and Roman society was diminishing, that between Christian and Christian was widening. The Great Persecution was to be the signal not only for conflict over Trinitarian doctrine, but between the representatives of two forms of ecclesiastical order. On the one hand, there were those who thought in terms of a universal Church with its elaborate hierarchy and strict division between layman and cleric; on the other, those who believed that the Church was the Church of the martyrs and the elect, and who regarded the safe-keeping of the sacraments, regardless of geography, as its essential duty. Meletianism in Egypt, Donatism in Africa and Novatianism in Asia Minor, all showed the latter outlook, and all represent the same primarily rural Christianity.

Why were the new Christians inspired by this puritan and apocalyptic form of Christianity?

A clue may be found in the strongly social basis of the new religion's appeal in all three parts of the Roman world. From the outset, monasticism in Egypt had a bias towards righting acknowledged

social wrongs. Flight from the world, as Athanasius pointed out, included flight from the tax collector. (*Life*, 44). The same term "anachoresis" was used to describe withdrawal in the face of secular debt and withdrawal to satisfy religious vocation. The great monasteries of the Pachomian rule that grew up in the first half of the fourth century were economic units as well as centres of prayer and ascetic practices. We may perhaps agree with K. Heussi that their very success denoted wide-spread misery in the countryside whence their recruits were drawn.[99]

In Africa also, it was a well-attested fact that the ranks of the would-be martyrs included those who found their debts to the Treasury too burdensome.[100] In the next generation the depredations of the "leaders of the saints" (*duces sanctorum*) who commanded the Circumcellion bands, demonstrated the connections between the social and religious discontents of rural Numidia.[101] The martyr's "agon" against the persecuting authorities in the first three centuries had by this time become extended to a defence against injustice in the present world.

The question may well be asked, whether the conversion of the countryfolk in the areas of which we have been speaking was in itself influenced by changing conditions in the third century. Grégoire, in his study of the persecutions, has assembled evidence to show the extent of the rise of prices during this period and the repercussions on the life of the provincials as a whole.[102] The harrassed town-dwellers, unable to support traditional fixed obligations, attempted to push them on to the countryfolk. A papyrus dated to 251 records an inquiry held by the prefect of Egypt into a complaint by peasants, that they were being forced to undertake forced labour from which an edict of Septimius Severus had exempted them. The lawyer representing the citizens replied, "Yes, that is true, but the towns were prosperous then".[103] Half a century later, Lactantius paints a grim, if biased picture of the effects on the inhabitants of Diocletian's Edict of the Maximum, following the reorganisation of the Roman provinces.[104]

A remark by the emperor Julian suggests that increase in economic hardship and the desertion of the traditional deities was more than a coincidence. Writing to Theodorus, high priest of Asia in 362 he observes that "It was the sight of their undeserved misery that led the people to despise the gods". It was not, however, "the gods who were responsible for their poverty, but rather our own insatiable greed. It was that which gave men a false idea of the gods, and in addition, was an unjust reproach against them".[105] In

contrast, he points out to Arsacius, Theodorus' colleague in Galatia, how Christian social and ascetic ideals had attracted the mass of the provincials to the faith. "Why do we not observe", he says, "that it is their benevolence to strangers, the care for the graves of the dead, and the pretended holiness of their lives that have done most to increase atheism (Christianity).[106] The fact was that the Anatolians failed to secure earthly "σωτηρια" from the traditional gods, and turned to Christianity instead. The same may have been true in Africa and Egypt as well.

Eschatological hopes of the Second Coming heralded by the final destructive efforts of Anti-Christ, bringing to the martyrs the joys of Paradise and a happy release from physical sufferings on earth, provided an inspiration to many. Sanctity, martyrdom and poverty are associated themes which recur in the puritan school of Western theologians from Tertullian to Petilian of Constantine and Commodian. Riches and sin were identified. To preserve one's wealth was to prefer Mammon to Christ. Possession of goods indeed, implied contempt for the poor.[107] Commodian, whether he wrote in the late third or early fifth century, seems to have been an exact interpreter of a mood of popular desperation which found an outlet in Christianity. In the late third century, economic and social conditions, would seem to have justified the acceptance of this theology.[108] And this movement ultimately proved too strong for the emperors.

Such are some of the underlying causes of the failure of the persecutions. Given the limited means available for repression, — even in the Decian persecution there was not the prison accommodation to house the recalcitrants[109] — and the dependence of the authorities on the good-will of the peasants for the defence and victualling of the Empire, as well as for the maintenance of communications and other services, it was impossible to destroy the Church when it had ceased to be a purely urban movement. Once the villages had been won over, final victory could not be far away. The spread of Christianity beyond the boundaries of the Empire to Armenia, moreover, made persecution absurd from the higher political and military viewpoints. This Maximin found during the winter of 311-312.

By the end of the third century, educated provincials, particularly in the East, had had long contact with Christianity. Many, as the personal stories of Gregory Thaumaturgus and others show, had been attracted to it. The Church combined monotheism, a high ethical ideal and a philosophy of history, which enabled individuals

to see their own lives within the setting of God's providence. The cults of paganism could provide some of these elements but not all together. One has only to turn to Eusebius' *Demonstratio Evangelica* or the first chapters of the Ecclesiastical History to sense the force that the Christian philosophy of history exercised on his mind. All the time, too, the cults were moving in the direction of monotheism. Towards the end of paganism all the various gods were represented as powers of the Sun-God. And from the Sun-God to Logos, expressing the creative power of God in the universe was no great step. Constantine took it. So had others before him. The Christos-Helios mosaic in the vault of Tomb M in the cemetery beneath the Vatican, is visible evidence of the fact.[110]

Among the countyfolk the Church represented two ideas which the old religion had lacked, social justice and freedom from an oppressive world. Christianity gave direction to an otherwise confused mass of economic, social and religious discontents, which had previously found vent in words, such as the Egyptian Apocalypse of the Potter[111] which was circulating in the third century, and other magical and oracle literature. The influence of Antony and his disciples ensured that the movement of protest represented by monasticism in Egypt should have a Christian form. In North Africa the puritan tradition emerges as the Donatist Church, all powerful among the densely peopled villages of Numidia and Mauretania. The successive edicts of toleration issued by Maxentius in Rome, by Galerius, Constantine and Licinius, and finally even by Maximin, set the seal on a process which had already run its course.

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NOTES

[1] See also Origen, *Contra Celsum* (ed. and tr. H. Chadwick) ii. 79 and viii. 44.

[2] Origen, *Comment. in Matth.* 24. 9, Sermo 39 (ed. Klostermann, *Griec. Christ. Schriftsteller*, p. 75). I accept the view that Origen was thinking of his own day as well in terms of eschatology.

[3] Origen, *Homil. in Jesu Nave* 9. 10 (ed. Baehrens, *Griec. Christ. Schriftsteller*, p. 356-57).

[4] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* (ed. Lawlor and Oulton), v. 23. 4.

[5] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vii. 11. 13.

[6] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 24.

[7] Origen, *Contra Celsum*, viii. 72.

[8] Eusebius, *Tricennial Oration* 3. (ed. Heikel, p. 201). Compare Constantine's view of his role as minister of a divine order for the human race, Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, ii. 28. The Almighty "starting from the British sea and the lands where the sun is ordained to set, He repulsed and scattered by His divine might the encompassing powers of evil, to the end that the human

race might be recalled to the worship of the supreme law, schooled by my helping hand, and that the most blessed faith might be increased with the Almighty as guide". (Text from A. H. M. Jones, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, v. 2, 196-200, and Ernest Barker *From Alexander to Constantine*, Oxford, 1956, 478-480).

[9] Gregory of Nyssa, *De Vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi;* ed. Migne, *Pat. Graec.* (= *PG*) 46, col. 909 C. and 954 D.

[10] *Ibid.*, col. 954 B and C. See A. Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums*, (Leipzig, 1902), 476.

[11] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 21. 3.

[12] Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* (ed. Brandt) v. 2, and 11. 15. For the view that Hierocles was the author of the heathen objections in the *Apocriticus* of Macarius Magnes, see T. W. Crafer's ed. of Macarius (Translations of Christian Literature, S.P.C.K., 1920) XV. H. Delehaye, Hierocles in Egypt, *Analecta Bollandiana*, 40, (1922) 28.

[13] *Contra Celsum*, 1. 1.

[14] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 8. 2.

[15] *Exhortation to Martyrdom* (ed. Oulton and Chadwick) 5. Compare, Josephus' assertion of the superiority of Judaism over Hellenism on the same grounds, *Contra Apionem*, (ed. Niese) 1. 8. 42.

[16] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 36. 1, Origen, *Comment. in Matthacum*, 15. 26 (Klostermann, p. 426).

[17] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* v. 1. 7.

[18] *ibid.*, vi. 41. 1 ff.

[19] Cyprian, *Letter*, (ed. Hartel) 34. 4. See Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* v. 28. 10, for the payment of 150 denarii a month to Natalius, schismatic bishop of Rome in 200, by his adherents.

[20] For instance, Dionysius of Alexandria says of himself, "when the persecution under Decius was publicly proclaimed, that selfsame hour Sabinus sent a *frumentarius* to seek me out". Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 40. 2. Fabian of Rome was seized and executed on 20 Jan. 250, see Cyprian, *Letter* (ed. Hartel) 55. 9.

[21] Cyprian, *Letter* 40, and 56. 1-2, *Acta Sancti Pionii* (ed. Krüger and Knopf) 7, 10, 11.

[22] See A. Alföldi's important study of the Decian persecution, "Zu den Christenverfolgungen in der Mitte des 3. Jahrhunderts", *Klio*, 31, 1938, 323-347.

[23] Origen, *Contra Celsum*, viii. 67.

[24] A. Alföldi, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

[25] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vii. 11. 7.

[26] Cyprian, *De Lapsis*, 15.

[27] Gregory of Nyssa, *Life*, Migne, *PG.* col. 945 D.

[28] *Acta Sancti Pionii* (ed. Knopf and Krüger, 1929), 15. 2 and 16. 1.

[29] *ibid.*, 16.5.

[30] *ibid.*, 9. 2, 19.4, and 21.4.

[31] *Acta Purgationis Felicis*, (ed. Ziwsa, *C.S.E.L.* XXVI).

[32] *Gesta apud Zenophilum* (ed. Ziwsa) pp. 187-88.

[33] The question whether or not the Fourth Edict was applied in Africa has been ably discussed by G. E. M. de Ste Croix, "Aspects of the 'Great' Persecution" *Harvard Theological Review*, lvii. 2, p. 86.

[34] Optatus of Milevis, *De Schismate Donatistarum*, (ed. Ziwsa). iii. 8.

[35] *Gesta apud Zenophilum*, p. 186.

[36] Eusebius, *Palestinian Martyrs*, 1. 3 (Lawlor and Oulton, p. 333).

[37] *ibid.*, 2. 2, p. 336-37.

[38] Indicated by mutually independent sources; Augustine, *Contra Litteras Petiliani* ii. 92. 202, (Migne, *Pat. Lat.* 43), col. 323, and *Acta Synod. Sinuessae*, Mansi, *Concilia*, i. 1250.

[39] *Mart. Pal.* 2. 2 (Lawlor and Oulton, p. 337).

[40] Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* (ed. Brandt) v. 21. 2, "caeco et irrationabili furore".

[41] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, viii, 13. 10.

[42] *Gesta apud Zenophilum* (Ziwsa, p. 193) "Nundinarius dixit. "de cupis fisci, quis illas tulit"? These had been housed in a temple of Serapis.

[43] For instance, in the prisons of Alexandria (Epiphanius, *Panarion* 68. 3 (ed. Holl. p. 142), and Carthage, *Acta Saturnini*, 18. (Migne, *Pat. Lat.* (= *P.L.*) viii, col. 701.

[44] *Acta Saturnini* 5 and 14, concerning Victoria. (*P.L.* viii, cols. 693C and 698D.)

[45] *Acta Mariani et Jacobi*, ii. 2 (ed. Knopf and Krüger) "in qua tunc maxime civitate (i.e. Cirta) gentilium caeco furore et officiis militaribus persecutionis impetus quasi fluctus saeculi tumescebant . . ." c.f. N. H. Baynes, *C.A.H.* xii., 658.

[46] *Gesta apud Zenophilum*, (ed. Ziwsa), p. 194.

[47] *Mart. Pal.* 3. 1.

[48] Eusebius, *Mart. Pal.* 8. 1.

[49] Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*. v. 21. Other examples are cited by N. H. Baynes in his chapter on the Great Persecution in the *C.A.H.*, xii. pp. 676-77.

[50] Dating, see R. Marichal, "La date des Graffiti de la Basilique de Saint-Sébastien à Rome", *La Nouvelle Clio*, v. (1958), 119.

[51] Macarius Magnes, *Apocritus*, (ed. Crafer) iv. iii (Crafer, 124).

[52] A. Harnack, *Mission*, 520.

[53] Cyprian, *Letter*, 66. 5 (Hartel, 730) "Novus credentium populus".

[54] Cyprian, *Letter*, 62. 4. (Hartel, 700) "Misimus autem sestertia centium milia nummorum". cf. N. H. Baynes, *C.A.H.* xii. 658.

[55] Basil, *Letter* 70, (ed. Courtonne, 166.).

[56] Basil, *ibid.*

[57] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, viii. 1. 4 and 6. 5; cf. B. de Gaiffier, "Palatins et Eunuques dans quelques documents hagiographiques", *Analecta Bollandiana*, 75, (1957), 17 ff.

[58] Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persec.*, 15.

[59] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* viii. 1. 4; cf. *ibid.*, vii. 32. 3.

[60] Arnobius, *Adv. Nationes* (ed. Reifferscheid), ii. 5.

[61] Canons 2 and 3 (ed. Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des Conciles*, 1907, 1. 1 pp. 231-64).

[62] Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, v. 1, 22-27.

[63] Herodian (ed. Stavenhagen) vii. 9. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* x. 5. 18. cf. the author's *The Donatist Church* (Oxford, 1952) p. 67.

[64] *Chronica minora* (ed. Mommsen, *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, 1. 148), "Maxentius Imp. ann vi . . . fames magna fuit".

[65] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* x. v. 18. (letter to Miltiades) on the spontaneous character of the surrender of North Africa.

[66] H. I. Bell, *Cults and Creeds in Greco-Roman Egypt*, (1956), p. 64.

[67] W. M. Ramsay, *Cities and Bishoprics in Phrygia*, London, (1883), 137.

[68] W. M. Ramsay, "The Tekmoreian Guest-friends, an anti-Christian Society on the Imperial estates at Pisidan Antioch" *Studies in the East Roman Provinces*, 1923, 305-77.

[69] W. M. Ramsay, "Studies in the Roman province of Galatia", *Journ. Rom. Stud.*, viii, 1918, 107-45.

[70] Julian (ed. Bidez) *Letter* 84 to Arsacius, High-Priest of Galatia.

[71] P. Massiera, "Inscriptions chrétiennes de Maurétanie Sitifienne", *Revue Africaine*, C, (1956), 325. See W. H. C. Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 84 ff.

[72] M. Leglay, "Les Stèles a Saturne de Djemila-Cuicul" *Libyca* i, (1953), 36.

[73] *CIL*, viii, 2403; Augustine, *Letter* 90, cf. L. Leschi, *Revue des Études anciennes*, L, 1948, 71 ff.

[74] For a good example of despair, Cyprian, *Ad Demetrianum* (ed. Hartel) 4 and 5.
[75] W. H. C. Frend, "The Revival of Berber Art", *Antiquity*, (1942), 342-252. On a similar movement in Asia Minor, Miss Ramsay, in *Studies in the East Roman Provinces*, 3-92.
[76] For the part played by magic in the evolution of Coptic, W. E. Crum, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, (1931), 235-287.
[77] Frend, *art. cit.*, Pl. ii.
[78] P. Gauckler, "Mosaiques Tombales d'une Chapelle des Martyrs à Thabraca", *Monuments Piot*, xiii, (1906), 225.
[79] Eusebius, *Demonstratio Evangelica*, ix. 2. 4; see also, vi. 20. 9.
[80] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vii. 11. 15.
[81] Eusebius, *Demonstr. Evangelica*, viii. 5. cf. N. H. Baynes, *C.A.H.* xii, 675.
[82] C. Schmidt. "Fragmente Einer Schrift des Märtyrerbischofs des Petrus von Alexandrien", *Texte und Untersuchungen, Neue Folge*, v. 4.
[83] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* viii. 9. 3. Schmidt, *op. cit.* 23.
[84] Eusebius, *Mar. Pal.* 8. 13. cf. H. Delehaye, "Les Martyrs d'Egypte", *Analecta Bollandiana* 40, (1922), 5-154.
[85] Athanasius, *Vita Antonii*, i. cf. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 67. 1. 3. and 6 (Hieracas and his followers).
[86] Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 67. 3. 4.
[87] Alexander of Lycopolis, *De Placitis Manichaeorum*, *P.G.* 18, col., 411.
[88] Published in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, XX, f. 91.
[89] *CIL.* viii. 8430. cf. P. Massiera, "Inscriptions chretiennes de Maurétanie Sitifienne", 329.
[90] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 84.
[91] *Gesta apud Zenophilum*, p. 194 (top).
[92] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* viii. 11. 1. Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* v. 11. 10, cf. W. M. Ramsay, *Cities and Bishoprics*, 505-508.
[93] Re-published with amendments by W. M. Calder, *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua*, vii, No. 305, with Calder's comments that "the situation it discloses did not come about in a day", p. xxxviii.
[94] J. G. C. Anderson, "Paganism and Christianity in the Upper Tembris Valley", *Studies in the East Roman Provinces*, 186 ff.
[95] W. M. Calder, "Philadelphia and Montanism", *Bull. of John Rylands Library*, 7. (1923), p. 35 and figs. 2 and 3.
[96] For Africa, see *Passio Marculi*, 1 (*P.L.* viii, 760C).
[97] *Acta Saturnini*, 18. (*P.L.* viii, 701C).
[98] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vii. 24. 3.
[99] K. Heussi, *Der Ursprung des Mönchtums*, (Tübingen), 1936, 118.
[100] Augustine, *Breviculus Collationis cum Donatistis*, iii. 13. 25. *P. L.* 43, 637.
[101] Optatus, *De Schismate Donatistarum* (ed. Ziwsa), iii. 4., p. 82.
[102] H. Grégoire, *Les Persécutions dans l'Empire romain*, (Acad. Royale de Belgique, Classe des Lettres, xlvi. 1. 1951), pp. 75 ff.
[103] Cited from Grégoire, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
[104] *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, 7 and 23.
[105] Julian, *Letter* 89b (ed. Bidez, p. 157).
[106] Julian, *Letter* 84 (ed. Bidez, p. 144).
[107] See J. P. Brisson, *Autonomisme et Christianisme dans l'Afrique romaine*. (Paris, 1958), 370-371 (texts from Tertullian and Cyprian).
[108] J. P. Brisson, *op. cit.* 394 ff.
[109] Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus P.G.* 46, col. 945C.
[110] J. M. Toynbee and J. Ward Perkins, *The Shrine of St. Peter and the Vatican Excavations*, (Longmans, 1956), Pl. 32.
[111] W. Wilcken, *Hermes*, XC, (1905), 544. ff.