

This is a history of the Ostrogoths, Theodoric and the Arian heresy

## Ostrogoths

The Ostrogoths were one of the two chief tribes of the Goths, a Germanic people. Their traditions relate that the Goths originally lived on both sides of the Baltic Sea, in Scandinavia and on the Continent. Their oldest habitations recorded in history were situated on the right bank of the Vistula. They left these, all or in part, about the middle of the second century, and settled near the Black Sea, between the Don and Danube.

Thence they emerged frequently to attack and pillage the cities of Greece and Asia Minor, and fought continuously with the Romans and the neighbouring Germanic tribes. The emperor Decius fell in battle with them in 251. Crossing the Danube into Thracia in 269 they were defeated by Claudius. Aurelian drove them back across the Danube and gave them Dacia. After that, the Ostrogoths were east of the River Dniester, and the Visigoths to the west. During the reign of Constantine they again attempted to cross the Danube but were repulsed. During the years 350-75 the Goths were united under the leadership of Ermanaric, the Ostrogoth.

In 375 they were conquered by the Huns. Some escaped into the Crimea, where they retained their language up to the sixteenth century; the mass of the people, however, remained in their own lands and paid tribute to the Huns; but were otherwise fairly independent and elected their own kings. When the empire of the Huns collapsed after the death of [Attila](#) (453), the Ostrogoths regained independence. Their old lands between the Don and Danube, however, they had to surrender to the Huns, while they obtained Pannonia from the Romans.

Theodoric, the Amaling, who was their king from 474 or 475, fought with the Byzantine emperor Zeno at various times, although he obtained peaceful

relations during most of his reign. He endeavoured to secure permanent domiciles for his people. In 488 he started for Italy, aided and abetted by Zeno. Theodoric defeated Odoacer, who reigned as king in Italy, and founded in 493 the great Ostrogothic Empire, which included Italy, Sicily, Dalmatia, Upper Rhaetia, and later on Provence, with the capital Ravenna, and which stood under Byzantine suzerainty. Theodoric dreamed of an amalgamation of the Teutons and the Romans, of a Germanic state, in which the Ostrogoths were to dominate. He succeeded in establishing law and order in his lands; Roman art and literature flourished. He was tolerant towards the Catholic Church and did not interfere in dogmatic matters. He remained as neutral as possible towards the pope, though he exercised a preponderant influence in the affairs of the papacy.

He and his people were Arians and Theodoric considered himself as protector and chief representative of the sect. His successor did not possess the necessary vigour and ability to continue this work. His daughter Amalasintha succeeded him in 526, first as regent for her son Athalaric, and after the latter's death, in 534, as queen. She was assassinated by her cousin Theodahad, the rightful heir to the throne. The Byzantine emperor Justinian now made himself her avenger and declared war upon the Ostrogoths. His general Belisarius captured Naples in 536. In place of the incompetent Theodahad, the Goths chose Witichas as king, but he also proved to be an incapable general. Belisarius succeeded in entering Ravenna in 539 and in taking Witichas prisoner. After his recall in 540, the Goths reconquered Italy under their new king Totila. In 544 Belisarius appeared once more and the war was continued with varying success. In 551 Narses became commander-in-chief in place of Belisarius, and in the following year he defeated Totila at Taginae in the Apennines. Totila was killed in the battle. The survivors of the Ostrogoths chose Teja as their king, but were practically annihilated in the battle near Mount Vesuvius in 553, after a desperate struggle in which Teja was killed. Their last fortress fell in 555, after which the Ostrogoths disappear. The few survivors mingled with other peoples and nations; some were romanized in Italy, and others wandered north where

they disappeared among the various Germanic tribes. Italy became a Byzantine province.

BRADLEY, *The Goths* (London, 1898); DAHN, *Die Könige der Germanen*, II-IV (Würzburg, 1861-66); MANSO, *Geschichte des ostgotischen Reichs in Italien* (Breslau, 1824); HODGKIN, *Italy and her invaders*, III, IV (London, 1885); HARTMANN, *Das italienische Königreich* (Gotha, 1897); WIETERSHEIM, *Geschichte der Völkerwanderung*, I, II (Leipzig, 1880, 81).

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## Theodoric the Great

King of the Ostrogoths, born A.D. 454 (?); died 26 August, 526. He was an illegitimate son of Theodimir, of the royal Ostrogothic family of Amali. When eight years old Theodoric was brought as a hostage to the Court of Constantinople. Here he learned to comprehend the education given by ancient civilization. At eighteen he was allowed to return home and became the leader of a great horde of his countrymen, whose increasing numbers drove them to seek new lands.

As King of the Ostrogoths he was sometimes an ally, sometimes an enemy, of the emperors. The inconsistencies of his policy may probably be explained by his having as rival another Theodoric, called Strabo (squint-eyed), who was able to influence the Court of Constantinople against him. When Strabo died in 481, Theodoric the Great received from the Emperor Zeno the titles of *patricius* and *magister militum* and in 484 was appointed consul.

Theodoric was now compelled to set out with his own people to conquer new territory. The course to be pursued was suggested by the Emperor Zeno. The Ostrogoths were to expel the usurper Odoacer, and thus the emperor thought to be rid of dangerous neighbours.

In 488 Theodoric started on the march with his own people and a large number of Rugians. In 489 he defeated Odoacer on the Nonsa, later at Verona, and in 490 on the Adige. He then besieged him in Ravenna and forced him to surrender in 493. Theodoric promised Odoacer both life and freedom, but murdered him at a banquet fearing perhaps that he might revolt again.

Theodoric's mastery of Italy being thus established, he at once showed his appreciation of the ancient culture and political organization of the Empire, claiming to be its vicegerent and restorer in Western Europe. His efforts in this capacity were faithfully seconded by his minister Cassiodorus. Proud of his Gothic nationality, Theodoric, unlike the earlier barbarian emperors, believed it possible to reconcile Roman and Germanic interests. His people seemed to him equal to the Romans in antiquity of descent and military renown, and he realized that his power rested solely on Gothic prowess. Apparently his kingdom was a continuation of the Roman Empire; in reality his policy was in direct and fundamental contradiction to the Roman conception, by which all national individuality was to be lost in the State as a whole. This theory of government which sought to suppress nationalities was opposed by Theodoric: he had a profound respect for national independence, and had repeatedly taken up arms to maintain it.

Among his many schemes was a great project to combine in one harmonious system, around the shores of the Mediterranean, all the conflicting barbarian nations, and for this reason he repeatedly aided the Frankish king Clovis against the Alamanni and Visigoths. He based his authority to carry out this wide policy not on his office as vicegerent of the Eastern Emperor, but, as he said, on the *leges gentium*. The precise degree of his dependence on the Byzantine Empire is not known: he certainly recognized its suzerainty and desired to maintain friendly relations with Constantinople. Still, the "Variæ" of Cassiodorus, a

collection of documents of the reign of Theodoric, shows that he firmly believed the Western Empire to be continued in his person. The many intermarriages between his family and the royal families of other Germanic kingdoms were undoubtedly intended to prepare the way for the predominance of his dynasty in the West. Yet his supremacy was a divided one: to the Goths he was the king; to the Romans the patrician. Both nations were ruled by their own laws. The *Edictum Theodorici* of 512 was intended to introduce some degree of uniformity into the criminal law. All Theodoric's decrees, including this code, were in their language very conciliatory towards the Romans: the Roman population was to consider Gothic supremacy the guarantee of its security and prosperity.

In reality Theodoric's reign appeared to bring once more a Golden Age to the sorely-tryed peninsula. Experts in well-boring were brought from Africa to help restore the cultivation of the waterless country where the woods had been cut down; and swamps were drained. Books of magic and theatres were forbidden, edicts were issued for the protection of ancient monuments. Roman literature once more flourished in Italy: its most brilliant representative was Boethius, who was able to combine the lofty ideals of Christianity with the dignity of the ancient philosophy.

While tolerating the Catholic Church, Theodoric considered himself the protector of Arianism; accordingly he sought to intervene diplomatically in favour of the Arians who were being persecuted by Justinian I. Nevertheless he allowed complete freedom to the Catholic Church, at least so far as dogma was concerned, though he considered himself entitled to appoint a pope, or to act as arbitrator in the schism between Symmachus and Laurentius, and in general to bring any ecclesiastic to judgment. This same king who had come to Italy as the emperor's representative should not, at the end of his reign, have used such barbarous cruelty in suppressing that Roman national revolt against Gothic rule in which the opposition of the Roman Church to Arianism led the pope,

Constantinople, and the educated laity to unite. The Senate in its judicial capacity was ordered to try those implicated in this conspiracy, and Boethius and his aged father-in-law, the Senator Symmachus, were condemned to death.

Theodoric succumbed to the effects of the bitter conviction that his conciliatory policy had failed, and from that time his health declined. He was buried in the truly regal tomb at Ravenna. At a later date excessive zeal prompted the disinterment of the Arian king, but he continues to live in a wonderful legend, which assumes many forms, as the warrior king of the heroic age of the German people. On stormy nights the peasants still whisper of Dietrich of Berne, as they call Theodoric, riding through the air with his wild followers.

## Arianism

Arianism was a heresy which arose in the fourth century, and denied the Divinity of Jesus Christ.

First among the doctrinal disputes which troubled Christians after Constantine had recognized the Church in A.D. 313, and the parent of many more during some three centuries, Arianism occupies a large place in ecclesiastical history. It is not a modern form of unbelief, and therefore will appear strange in modern eyes.

But we shall better grasp its meaning if we term it an Eastern attempt to rationalize the creed by stripping it of mystery so far as the relation of Christ to God was concerned. In the New Testament and in Church teaching Jesus of Nazareth appears as the Son of God. This name He took to Himself (Matthew 11:27; John 10:36), while the Fourth Gospel declares Him to be the Word (Logos), Who in the beginning was with God and was God, by Whom all things were made. A similar doctrine is laid down by St. Paul, in his undoubtedly

genuine Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians. It is reiterated in the Letters of Ignatius, and accounts for Pliny's observation that Christians in their assemblies chanted a hymn to Christ as God. But the question how the Son was related to the Father (Himself acknowledged on all hands to be the one Supreme Deity), gave rise, between the years A.D. 60 and 200, to a number of Theosophic systems, called generally Gnosticism, and having for their authors Basilides, Valentinus, Tatian, and other Greek speculators.

Though all of these visited Rome, they had no following in the West, which remained free from controversies of an abstract nature, and was faithful to the creed of its baptism. Intellectual centres were chiefly Alexandria and Antioch, Egyptian or Syrian, and speculation was carried on in Greek. The Roman Church held steadfastly by tradition. Under these circumstances, when Gnostic schools had passed away with their "conjugations" of Divine powers, and "emanations" from the Supreme unknowable God (the "Deep" and the "Silence") all speculation was thrown into the form of an inquiry touching the "likeness" of the Son to His Father and "sameness" of His Essence. Catholics had always maintained that Christ was truly the Son, and truly God. They worshipped Him with divine honours; they would never consent to separate Him, in idea or reality, from the Father, Whose Word, Reason, Mind, He was, and in Whose Heart He abode from eternity. But the technical terms of doctrine were not fully defined; and even in Greek words like essence (*ousia*), substance (*hypostasis*), nature (*physis*), person (*hypostaton*) bore a variety of meanings drawn from the pre-Christian sects of philosophers, which could not but entail misunderstandings until they were cleared up. The adaptation of a vocabulary employed by Plato and Aristotle to Christian truth was a matter of time; it could not be done in a day; and when accomplished for the Greek it had to be undertaken for the Latin, which did not lend itself readily to necessary yet subtle distinctions. That disputes should spring up even among the orthodox who all held one faith, was inevitable. And of these wranglings the rationalist would take advantage in order

to substitute for the ancient creed his own inventions. The drift of all he advanced was this: to deny that in any true sense God could have a Son; as Mohammed tersely said afterwards, "God neither begets, nor is He begotten" (Koran, 112). We have learned to call that denial Unitarianism. It was the ultimate scope of Arian opposition to what Christians had always believed. But the Arian, though he did not come straight down from the Gnostic, pursued a line of argument and taught a view which the speculations of the Gnostic had made familiar. He described the Son as a second, or inferior God, standing midway between the First Cause and creatures; as Himself made out of nothing, yet as making all things else; as existing before the worlds of the ages; and as arrayed in all divine perfections except the one which was their stay and foundation. God alone was without beginning, unoriginate; the Son was originated, and once had not existed. For all that has origin must begin to be.

Such is the genuine doctrine of Arius. Using Greek terms, it denies that the Son is of one essence, nature, or substance with God; He is not consubstantial (*homoousios*) with the Father, and therefore not like Him, or equal in dignity, or co-eternal, or within the real sphere of Deity. The Logos which St. John exalts is an attribute, Reason, belonging to the Divine nature, not a person distinct from another, and therefore is a Son merely in figure of speech. These consequences follow upon the principle which Arius maintains in his letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia, that the Son "is no part of the Ingenerate." Hence the Arian sectaries who reasoned logically were styled Anomoeans: they said that the Son was "unlike" the Father. And they defined God as simply the Unoriginate. They are also termed the Exucontians (*ex ouk onton*), because they held the creation of the Son to be out of nothing.

But a view so unlike tradition found little favour; it required softening or palliation, even at the cost of logic; and the school which supplanted Arianism from an early date affirmed the likeness, either without adjunct, or in all things, or in substance,



of the Son to the Father, while denying His co-equal dignity and co-eternal existence. These men of the Via Media were named Semi-Arians. They approached, in strict argument, to the heretical extreme; but many of them held the orthodox faith, however inconsistently; their difficulties turned upon language or local prejudice, and no small number submitted at length to Catholic teaching.

The Semi-Arians attempted for years to invent a compromise between irreconcilable views, and their shifting creeds, tumultuous councils, and worldly devices tell us how mixed and motley a crowd was collected under their banner. The point to be kept in remembrance is that, while they affirmed the Word of God to be everlasting, they imagined Him as having become the Son to create the worlds and redeem mankind. Among the ante-Nicene writers, a certain ambiguity of expression may be detected, outside the school of Alexandria, touching this last head of doctrine. While Catholic teachers held the Monarchia, viz. that there was only one God; and the Trinity, that this Absolute One existed in three distinct subsistences; and the Circuminsession, that Father, Word, and Spirit could not be separated, in fact or in thought, from one another; yet an opening was left for discussion as regarded the term "Son," and the period of His "generation" (*genesis*). Five ante-Nicene Fathers are especially quoted: Athenagoras, Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch, Hippolytus, and Novatian, whose language appears to involve a peculiar notion of Sonship, as though It did not come into being or were not perfect until the dawn of creation. To these may be added Tertullian and Methodius. Cardinal Newman held that their view, which is found clearly in Tertullian, of the Son existing after the Word, is connected as an antecedent with Arianism. Petavius construed the same expressions in a reprehensible sense; but the Anglican Bishop Bull defended them as orthodox, not without difficulty. Even if metaphorical, such language might give shelter to unfair disputants; but we are not answerable for the slips of teachers who failed to perceive all the consequences of doctrinal truths really held by them. From these doubtful theorizings Rome and Alexandria kept aloof. Origen himself,

whose unadvised speculations were charged with the guilt of Arianism, and who employed terms like "the second God," concerning the Logos, which were never adopted by the Church -- this very Origen taught the eternal Sonship of the Word, and was not a Semi-Arian. To him the Logos, the Son, and Jesus of Nazareth were one ever-subsisting Divine Person, begotten of the Father, and, in this way, "subordinate" to the source of His being. He comes forth from God as the creative Word, and so is a ministering Agent, or, from a different point of view, is the First-born of creation. Dionysius of Alexandria (260) was even denounced at Rome for calling the Son a work or creature of God; but he explained himself to the pope on orthodox principles, and confessed the Homoousian Creed.

Paul of Samosata, who was contemporary with Dionysius, and Bishop of Antioch, may be judged the true ancestor of those heresies which relegated Christ beyond the Divine sphere, whatever epithets of deity they allowed Him. The man Jesus, said Paul, was distinct from the Logos, and, in Milton's later language, by merit was made the Son of God. The Supreme is one in Person as in Essence. Three councils held at Antioch (264-268, or 269) condemned and excommunicated the Samosatene. But these Fathers would not accept the Homoousian formula, dreading lest it be taken to signify one material or abstract substance, according to the usage of the heathen philosophies. Associated with Paul, and for years cut off from the Catholic communion, we find the well-known Lucian, who edited the Septuagint and became at last a martyr. From this learned man the school of Antioch drew its inspiration. Eusebius the historian, Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Arius himself, all came under Lucian's influence. Not, therefore, to Egypt and its mystical teaching, but to Syria, where Aristotle flourished with his logic and its tendency to Rationalism, should we look for the home of an aberration which had it finally triumphed, would have anticipated Islam, reducing the Eternal Son to the rank of a prophet, and thus undoing the Christian revelation.

Arius, a Libyan by descent, brought up at Antioch and a school-fellow of Eusebius, afterwards Bishop of Nicomedia, took part (306) in the obscure Meletian schism, was made presbyter of the church called "Baucalis," at Alexandria, and opposed the Sabellians, themselves committed to a view of the Trinity which denied all real distinctions in the Supreme. Epiphanius describes the heresiarch as tall, grave, and winning; no aspersion on his moral character has been sustained; but there is some possibility of personal differences having led to his quarrel with the patriarch Alexander whom, in public synod, he accused of teaching that the Son was identical with the Father (319). The actual circumstances of this dispute are obscure; but Alexander condemned Arius in a great assembly, and the latter found a refuge with Eusebius, the Church historian, at Caesarea. Political or party motives embittered the strife. Many bishops of Asia Minor and Syria took up the defence of their "fellow-Lucianist," as Arius did not hesitate to call himself. Synods in Palestine and Bithynia were opposed to synods in Egypt. During several years the argument raged; but when, by his defeat of Licinius (324), Constantine became master of the Roman world, he determined on restoring ecclesiastical order in the East, as already in the West he had undertaken to put down the Donatists at the Council of Arles. Arius, in a letter to the Nicomedian prelate, had boldly rejected the Catholic faith. But Constantine, tutored by this worldly-minded man, sent from Nicomedia to Alexander a famous letter, in which he treated the controversy as an idle dispute about words and enlarged on the blessings of peace. The emperor, we should call to mind, was only a catechumen, imperfectly acquainted with Greek, much more incompetent in theology, and yet ambitious to exercise over the Catholic Church a dominion resembling that which, as Pontifex Maximus, he wielded over the pagan worship. From this Byzantine conception (labelled in modern terms Erastianism) we must derive the calamities which during many hundreds of years set their mark on the development of Christian dogma. Alexander could not give way in a matter so vitally important. Arius and his supporters would not yield. A council was, therefore, assembled in Nicaea, in Bithynia, which has ever been

counted the first ecumenical, and which held its sittings from the middle of June, 325. (See FIRST COUNCIL OF NICAEA). It is commonly said that Hosius of Cordova presided. The Pope, St. Silvester, was represented by his legates, and 318 Fathers attended, almost all from the East. Unfortunately, the acts of the Council are not preserved. The emperor, who was present, paid religious deference to a gathering which displayed the authority of Christian teaching in a manner so remarkable. From the first it was evident that Arius could not reckon upon a large number of patrons among the bishops. Alexander was accompanied by his youthful deacon, the ever-memorable Athanasius who engaged in discussion with the heresiarch himself, and from that moment became the leader of the Catholics during well-nigh fifty years. The Fathers appealed to tradition against the innovators, and were passionately orthodox; while a letter was received from Eusebius of Nicomedia, declaring openly that he would never allow Christ to be of one substance with God. This avowal suggested a means of discriminating between true believers and all those who, under that pretext, did not hold the Faith handed down. A creed was drawn up on behalf of the Arian party by Eusebius of Caesarea in which every term of honour and dignity, except the oneness of substance, was attributed to Our Lord. Clearly, then, no other test save the Homousion would prove a match for the subtle ambiguities of language that, then as always, were eagerly adopted by dissidents from the mind of the Church. A formula had been discovered which would serve as a test, though not simply to be found in Scripture, yet summing up the doctrine of St. John, St. Paul, and Christ Himself, "I and the Father are one". Heresy, as St. Ambrose remarks, had furnished from its own scabbard a weapon to cut off its head. The "consubstantial" was accepted, only thirteen bishops dissenting, and these were speedily reduced to seven. Hosius drew out the conciliar statements, to which anathemas were subjoined against those who should affirm that the Son once did not exist, or that before He was begotten He was not, or that He was made out of nothing, or that He was of a different substance or essence from the Father, or was created or changeable. Every

bishop made this declaration except six, of whom four at length gave way. Eusebius of Nicomedia withdrew his opposition to the Nicene term, but would not sign the condemnation of Arius. By the emperor, who considered heresy as rebellion, the alternative proposed was subscription or banishment; and, on political grounds, the Bishop of Nicomedia was exiled not long after the council, involving Arius in his ruin. The heresiarch and his followers underwent their sentence in Illyria. But these incidents, which might seem to close the chapter, proved a beginning of strife, and led on to the most complicated proceedings of which we read in the fourth century. While the plain Arian creed was defended by few, those political prelates who sided with Eusebius carried on a double warfare against the term "consubstantial", and its champion, Athanasius. This greatest of the Eastern Fathers had succeeded Alexander in the Egyptian patriarchate (326). He was not more than thirty years of age; but his published writings, antecedent to the Council, display, in thought and precision, a mastery of the issues involved which no Catholic teacher could surpass. His unblemished life, considerate temper, and loyalty to his friends made him by no means easy to attack. But the wiles of Eusebius, who in 328 recovered Constantine's favour, were seconded by Asiatic intrigues, and a period of Arian reaction set in. Eustathius of Antioch was deposed on a charge of Sabellianism (331), and the Emperor sent his command that Athanasius should receive Arius back into communion. The saint firmly declined. In 325 the heresiarch was absolved by two councils, at Tyre and Jerusalem, the former of which deposed Athanasius on false and shameful grounds of personal misconduct. He was banished to Trier, and his sojourn of eighteen months in those parts cemented Alexandria more closely to Rome and the Catholic West. Meanwhile, Constantia, the Emperor's sister, had recommended Arius, whom she thought an injured man, to Constantine's leniency. Her dying words affected him, and he recalled the Lybian, extracted from him a solemn adhesion to the Nicene faith, and ordered Alexander, Bishop of the Imperial City, to give him Communion in his own church (336). Arius openly triumphed; but as he went about in parade, the evening

before this event was to take place, he expired from a sudden disorder, which Catholics could not help regarding as a judgment of heaven, due to the bishop's prayers. His death, however, did not stay the plague. Constantine now favoured none but Arians; he was baptized in his last moments by the shifty prelate of Nicomedia; and he bequeathed to his three sons (337) an empire torn by dissensions which his ignorance and weakness had aggravated.

Constantius, who nominally governed the East, was himself the puppet of his empress and the palace-ministers. He obeyed the Eusebian faction; his spiritual director, Valens, Bishop of Mursa, did what in him lay to infect Italy and the West with Arian dogmas. The term "like in substance", *Homoiousion*, which had been employed merely to get rid of the Nicene formula, became a watchword. But as many as fourteen councils, held between 341 and 360, in which every shade of heretical subterfuge found expression, bore decisive witness to the need and efficacy of the Catholic touchstone which they all rejected. About 340, an Alexandrian gathering had defended its archbishop in an epistle to Pope Julius. On the death of Constantine, and by the influence of that emperor's son and namesake, he had been restored to his people. But the young prince passed away, and in 341 the celebrated Antiochene Council of the Dedication a second time degraded Athanasius, who now took refuge in Rome. There he spent three years. Gibbon quotes and adopts "a judicious observation" of Wetstein which deserves to be kept always in mind. From the fourth century onwards, remarks the German scholar, when the Eastern Churches were almost equally divided in eloquence and ability between contending sections, that party which sought to overcome made its appearance in the Vatican, cultivated the Papal majesty, conquered and established the orthodox creed by the help of the Latin bishops. Therefore it was that Athanasius repaired to Rome. A stranger, Gregory, usurped his place. The Roman Council proclaimed his innocence. In 343, Constans, who ruled over the West from Illyria to Britain, summoned the bishops to meet at Sardica in Pannonia. Ninety-four Latin, seventy Greek or Eastern, prelates began the debates; but they could not come to terms, and the Asiatics

withdrew, holding a separate and hostile session at Philippopolis in Thrace. It has been justly said that the Council of Sardica reveals the first symptoms of discord which, later on, produced the unhappy schism of East and West. But to the Latins this meeting, which allowed of appeals to Pope Julius, or the Roman Church, seemed an epilogue which completed the Nicene legislation, and to this effect it was quoted by Innocent I in his correspondence with the bishops of Africa.

Having won over Constans, who warmly took up his cause, the invincible Athanasius received from his Oriental and Semi-Arian sovereign three letters commanding, and at length entreating his return to Alexandria (349). The factious bishops, Ursacius and Valens, retracted their charges against him in the hands of Pope Julius; and as he travelled home, by way of Thrace, Asia Minor, and Syria, the crowd of court-prelates did him abject homage. These men veered with every wind. Some, like Eusebius of Caesarea, held a Platonizing doctrine which they would not give up, though they declined the Arian blasphemies. But many were time-servers, indifferent to dogma. And a new party had arisen, the strict and pious Homoiousians, not friends of Athanasius, nor willing to subscribe to the Nicene terms, yet slowly drawing nearer to the true creed and finally accepting it. In the councils which now follow these good men play their part. However, when Constans died (350), and his Semi-Arian brother was left supreme, the persecution of Athanasius redoubled in violence. By a series of intrigues the Western bishops were persuaded to cast him off at Arles, Milan, Ariminum. It was concerning this last council (359) that St. Jerome wrote, "the whole world groaned and marvelled to find itself Arian". For the Latin bishops were driven by threats and chicanery to sign concessions which at no time represented their genuine views. Councils were so frequent that their dates are still matter of controversy. Personal issues disguised the dogmatic importance of a struggle which had gone on for thirty years. The Pope of the day, Liberius, brave at first, undoubtedly orthodox, but torn from his see and banished to the dreary solitude

of Thrace, signed a creed, in tone Semi-Arian (compiled chiefly from one of Sirmium), renounced Athanasius, but made a stand against the so-called "Homoean" formulae of Ariminum. This new party was led by Acacius of Caesarea, an aspiring churchman who maintained that he, and not St. Cyril of Jerusalem, was metropolitan over Palestine. The Homoeans, a sort of Protestants, would have no terms employed which were not found in Scripture, and thus evaded signing the "Consubstantial". A more extreme set, the "Anomoeans", followed Aetius, were directed by Eunomius, held meetings at Antioch and Sirmium, declared the Son to be "unlike" the Father, and made themselves powerful in the last years of Constantius within the palace. George of Cappadocia persecuted the Alexandrian Catholics. Athanasius retired into the desert among the solitaries. Hosius had been compelled by torture to subscribe a fashionable creed. When the vacillating Emperor died (361), Julian, known as the Apostate, suffered all alike to return home who had been exiled on account of religion. A momentous gathering, over which Athanasius presided, in 362, at Alexandria, united the orthodox Semi-Arians with himself and the West. Four years afterwards fifty-nine Macedonian, i.e., hitherto anti-Nicene, prelates gave in their submission to Pope Liberius. But the Emperor Valens, a fierce heretic, still laid the Church waste.

However, the long battle was now turning decidedly in favour of Catholic tradition. Western bishops, like Hilary of Poitiers and Eusebius of Vercellae banished to Asia for holding the Nicene faith, were acting in unison with St. Basil, the two St. Gregories [of Nyssa and Nazianzus --*Ed.*], and the reconciled Semi-Arians. As an intellectual movement the heresy had spent its force. Theodosius, a Spaniard and a Catholic, governed the whole Empire. Athanasius died in 373; but his cause triumphed at Constantinople, long an Arian city, first by the preaching of St. Gregory Nazianzen, then in the Second General Council (381), at the opening of which Meletius of Antioch presided. This saintly man had been estranged from the Nicene champions during a long schism; but he made peace



with Athanasius, and now, in company of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, represented a moderate influence which won the day. No deputies appeared from the West. Meletius died almost immediately. St. Gregory Nazianzen, who took his place, very soon resigned. A creed embodying the Nicene was drawn up by St. Gregory of Nyssa, but it is not the one that is chanted at Mass, the latter being due, it is said, to St. Epiphanius and the Church of Jerusalem. The Council became ecumenical by acceptance of the Pope and the ever-orthodox Westerns. From this moment Arianism in all its forms lost its place within the Empire. Its developments among the barbarians were political rather than doctrinal. Ulphilas (311-388), who translated the Scriptures into Maeso-Gothic, taught the Goths across the Danube an Homoean theology; Arian kingdoms arose in Spain, Africa, Italy. The Gepidae, Heruli, Vandals, Alans, and Lombards received a system which they were as little capable of understanding as they were of defending, and the Catholic bishops, the monks, the sword of Clovis, the action of the Papacy, made an end of it before the eighth century. In the form which it took under Arius, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Eunomius, it has never been revived. Individuals, among them are Milton and Sir Isaac Newton, were perhaps tainted with it. But the Socinian tendency out of which Unitarian doctrines have grown owes nothing to the school of Antioch or the councils which opposed Nicaea. Neither has any Arian leader stood forth in history with a character of heroic proportions. In the whole story there is but one single hero -- the undaunted Athanasius -- whose mind was equal to the problems, as his great spirit to the vicissitudes, a question on which the future of Christianity depended.

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