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THE LATIN CHURCH OF NORTH AFRICA IN THE AGE OF TERTULLIAN AND CYPRIAN.

A thesis  
presented to the faculty of  
Concordia Seminary,  
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by

Luther V. Stephan

in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree  
of

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THE LATIN CHURCH OF NORTH AFRICA IN THE AGE OF TERTULLIAN AND CYPRIAN.

Proud Carthage, capital of North Africa, once mistress of the western Mediterranean, is no more. Her walls are shattered, her temples in ruin, and the beautiful remains of her culture buried beneath the sands of the desert. Plowed under by Scipio, cursed by Roman law and wrath, she rose again from her ashes to heights as glorious as before. History, however, repeated herself here, as often. She soon fell victim to the bloody sword of the Vandals, later of the Moslems, and today, where once her mighty pillars stood and her brave navigators plied their care and sold their curious wares, there broods over its doleful ruins a "mournful and solitary silence".

Travellers of today hear much of the history of North Africa. Passing through the blue Mediterranean along the coast line, or standing on the shore at Marseilles France taking a breath of the warm desert air as it blows over from the coast of Carthage, or, especially men of adventure, setting foot on the present-day French colony of Tunis, hear again and again of its famous generals. They hear of the illustrious family of Barca which gave its native city great Hamilcar, his more famous son Hannibal, and his illustrious brother-in-law, Hasdrubal. And they hear of the fourteen or fifteen other leaders who bear the name of Hannibal in Carthaginian history and perhaps of four more Hasdrubals, of Cato, who, stern Roman that he was, closed his every address with the threat, "Ceterum, censeo, Carthaginem esse delendam", and of her world-renowned Phoenician navigators. They hear of the elder and younger Scipio, the latter especially its celebrated conqueror and destroyer. And they hear about the history of the three Punic Wars

which lasted for 118 years, of their beginning in Sicily, their long duration, and their eventful termination in the glorious defeat of Carthage and Hannibal, one of the world's most famous generals.

That is not all Carthage has to offer. She has legends, beautiful legends, for the embellishment of her eventful history. There is its queen, immortalized by the poet Virgil in his "Aeneid", famous Dido. She is said to have been the princess of Sidon, the coast city of the Phoenicians and nearly related to Ahab's notorious and godless queen, Jezebel, who introduced the Phoenician worship of Baal and Astarte into the temple of the Israelites. At one time, long before the founding of Rome, she migrated to Carthage, founded the city called Kirjath-Hadeskath, or New Town. In the process of time this name was corrupted into Carthage.

Interesting is this all, as well as instructive. Students of history as well as soldiers of fortune and leisurely travellers, no doubt, relish the stories. But the history of North Africa is, with all this, incomplete. It wants its most glorious record, the record of its heroic church leaders. Of these one rarely, if ever, learns from the lips of the African guides or natives, or even on the school bench and from most text-books. Christian literature has very little material to offer of this once flourishing church. Mention, however, must be made of the fact that the Roman Catholic Church remembered the country and its famous heroes of the early church by holding its customary Eucharistic Congress at Carthage in the year 1930. Though like Hannibal and Scipio, the paths of the church leaders' glory in this place has led to the grave, their work was Christ's work, and their blessed memory deserves a far more glorious recognition than any public praise can ever bestow upon the leaders of

Carthaginian secular history. It appears strange to the average school boy, studying the history of North Africa, to learn that there ever was a large Christian church that flourished along its coastline for centuries. The wars fought with Rome seem to usurp all the attention as well as time to the sore neglect of the famous wars which the Christian church fought with Roman corruption, Greek debauchery, and sin in high places, in short, the church's wars against Satan and the powers of the underworld. These strifes were hard, bold, stern, bravely fought and bravely won, with fightings and fears within and without.

After friendly Augustus lifted Scipio's curse and the city of Carthage was rebuilt, the people, though true to their inherited fierce and energetic characteristics, turned their attention from warfare to things religious. Almost overnight a Christian church sprang up on its soil. Though we hear nothing of the Christian church there until about the year 198 A.D., yet, at that date we read that there is a well organized church in the city of Dido. The account reads almost like a miraculous story. This same church, though tossed about by many trials and wounded by various heresies and schisms, continued to grow and bloom for nearly five long centuries. And it gave to the world three of the ablest Church Fathers Latin church history has to mention, the famous African triumvirate, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine. The latter two are canonized in the Roman Catholic Church as Saints.

Here, on the fertile plains of North Africa, among the many thousands of its Romans, Phoenicians, Libyans, Jews, and Moors, there were true Christian congregations, true clergymen, and true Christian services. Here were men of noble character, filled with a zeal for

Christ. Here were men who worshipped and prayed to the same God to whom we pray, revered the same Trinity, gathered together on Sunday in Christ's name for public prayer and edification, for Christian instruction, and the hearing of sermons. Here were men who lead a truly godly life in the face of fierce opposition, even persecution by Rome, men, who, though deprived of their property and wrested of their cherished and loved ones, tortured with nameless tortures, yet, sang praises to God, respected his law, and, out of faith, did honor to the name of the Redeemer, before whom all knees both in heaven and on earth should bow. And here were men who learned from the same Bible we have to this day by the pure grace of God, memorized the same Creed, were baptized into the same baptism into which we are baptized, partook frequently of the same Eucharist, were confirmed in the faith, fell from the faith and were brought into the fold of Christ, found comfort in time of sickness and distress in the same gospel, led a moral and god-fearing life, and for their honored dead, established Christian burials in place of Roman cremation. There can be no doubt that in this now deserted place there lie thousands in the dust of the earth who will on Resurrection morn be taken into the arms of their Savior, into the bosom of Abraham.

And because of all this, because of the wonderful Christian church that flourished so long on the northern shore of the "dark continent", because of the great leaders it gave to ecclesiastical history, the many martyred heroes of faith, the fine literature it has left behind for our edification, and the many grand lessons it has so freely to offer, we purpose to study in some detail this church. We shall confine ourselves in our investigation to the age of its two first great leaders, Tertullian and Cyprian, noting in particular



the church in its various phases, its history, teachings, usages, organization, customs, form of worship, and life. The scope of this limited paper prohibits any discussion of the church as it existed under its grandest son, St. Augustine.

We shall attempt to present <sup>in outline</sup> practically all that concerned itself with or was in any way affected by this church during this period. The treatment of the various chapter heads makes no claim to exhaustiveness; each caption could bear appreciable detail were this thesis to assume the proportions of a book.

## I. HISTORY.

### 1) The Secular History of Carthage.

The Phoenicians, the commercialists of the ancient world, the English, so to say, of pre-Christian days, were the first to found the colony of Carthage on the northernmost coast of Africa. This event antedated the birth of our Savior some 800 years. When the children of Israel had divided themselves into two camps, during the parallel existence of its twofold kingdom, when she was reckoned as one of the powers among the great nations of the earth, and had reached the greatest extent of its borders under godless Jeroboam II., about 100 years before Sargon was destined to carry off the best of the Northern Tribe into exile, into colonization, the navigators of the Mediterranean, the Phoenicians, were establishing a foothold in the fertile plains of North Africa. The ancient city of Carthage was made their chief point of contact because of the friendly harbor it afforded their sturdy ships. This same city was later destined to become the mother of a very fruitful Christian church, a church rich in the production of immortal heroes, a church rich in faith,

ripe in Christian knowledge, rich in the production of Christian literature and good example, rich in godly influence, Christian positivism, stability, firmness, and the courage of conviction for the truth, yes, one that can boast of three of the foremost church fathers in the entire Christian church, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine, the latter of whom towering above the others like a mighty oak over the clinging vine which it protects and upholds.

The Phoenicians, the chief inhabitants of the city of Carthage at the first, were an off-shoot of the Canaanites, one of the nations which God had condemned 1,500 years before the birth of Christ. (Amos 1,9; Joel 3,4-8). And because of the, one might say, fierceness of their religion, <sup>Waterman holds that</sup> the church of Carthage was at the first a bad one. It was a matter of heredity. For centuries the Phoenician influence pervaded along the coastline, and as they were masters of commerce and navigation, they were masters of cruelty and inhumanity. Christianity did not go farther inland to conquer the Libyan race which was of a better stock. The cruel rites which the Phoenician religion demanded amaze the civilized world through the centuries. It was very akin to that of the Ammonites and Syrians, as well as other godless neighbors of the Israelites. "They brought with them, says Archbishop Benson in his "Cyprian", worships which had the fascinations of orgy, cruelty, and secrecy, worships ever deadliest to the religions of revelation". ( Waterman, "Ten Epochs of Church History", Vol.2, p. 281). Their chief gods were the Syrian Baal and Astaroth or Astarte, all three of which referred to the same god, but underwent changes at the hands of the various nations that worshipped them. In general, they represented the masculine and feminine powers of nature. In Phoenicia the common name for this god was Moloch, immortalized in Milton's

"Paradise Lost". To ~~passify~~ pacify the specific demands and anger of this terrible god, in whose hands lay their destiny, they were wont to sacrifice children. Infants were burned alive in the arms of this ruthless, bloody deity. Especially in days of distress was this custom carried out, II Kings 3,26f. Astaroth, the moon goddess, the Diana of the Romans, was similarly worshipped. The worship of Baal, and the sun-god, and Astaroth was also connected with licentiousness and debauchery in its grossest sense. The gross sensuality, the sins of adultery practiced by the Phoenicians were similar to that<sup>off</sup> carried on by the Cannites, and against which the prophets of the Old Testament raised their voices so mightily. A third deity of the city, the "King of the City, "Melech-Kirjath", was the tutelary god of the place. There is no known temple for his worship at Carthage. These particular gods were favored for the satisfaction of the grossest and fiercest passions, and their brutalizing effects existed for ages in the land. "Punic faith had been for generations a byword for treachery". (Waterman, l.c., p.281). The Phoenician people were known as a faithless and cunning people. It was a general saying that there may be some good people among them, but not many. Far into the Christian period the brutal practices were performed. "Children were openly sacrificed in Africa to Saturn as lately as the proconsul Tiberian, who exposed to public gaze the priests expended on the sacred trees overshadowing their temple --- as the soldiers of our country still can testify who did that very work for the proconsul. And even now that sacred crime continues to be done in secret". (Tertullian, Apology, 9.).

It is no small wonder, then, that the Christians of the primitive church at Carthage were many of them weak in the faith. They had a

heretage that was diametrically opposed to the concepts of Christianity. They had to fight at great odds with the world and with their inherited notions of religion. With this knowledge we can in a degree condone the action of the many "lapsi" during the Decian persecution, and of those who followed their heathen fellowmen to the arena or dressed in their ostentatious garb. Tertullian, the first great worker in their midst, had a real battle to fight, both against the outside world and against those in the fold. Think how hard he writes against the Christians who cater to the dress and customs of the heathen in his "On the Apparel of Women", and "On the Shows". The system of Montanism, which later found such a strong foothold in North Africa, was a development in direct opposition to the loose practices of the people in general. However, there were also many very good and pious Christians in that church. We think particularly of the martyred saints, Perpetua and Felicitas, and of Tertullian himself. The number of the martyred heroes of this church will never be numbered; there were thousands of them. And that again is an indication of the fact that there those in the church whose Christianity was of a high calibre. "Some saints, indeed, it had, but the average of its religious life was low". (Waterman, l.c.p. 282).

Because of their great navigation enterprises, the Phoenicians were the tradesmen of the world in ancient times. They were on that account also wealthy. They had mercenaries to fight their battles and hired slaves to row their boats. Little danger threatened them from neighboring cities; they were powerful enough to keep them in subjection. The "Suffetes", the name given in the Old Testament by Israel to a judge, a ruler, were the chief magistrates of the city. There were two of them, each of them appointed for life. A council of

100 men were only a small part of that larger body called the senate. This council had various duties since it was a busy people it had to govern. Navigation enterprises were carried out from Carthage in the course of time as they formerly were from Tyre and Sidon. Later the struggle between Rome and Carthage in the famous Punic Wars surpassed all things in interest and occupied the attention and time of her best men. These wars were varied land and sea enterprises. Military genius and glorious heroism was displayed in many battles in Italy, in Sicily, in North Africa, and on the Mediterranean. Rome cruelly fought for conquest; Carthage hopelessly for existence. Though it had been successful for many years against its foes on land and sea, it met a formidable enemy in Rome. Its most famous general, Hannibal, was destined to be bested by the inferior Scipio Africanus, the younger. During the <sup>Second</sup> ~~third~~ Punic War, when Hannibal led his army over the Alps into Italy, hoping to conquer the Italian cities and arouse them against Rome and thus add to his strength, he was disappointed at every turn. He was victorious in every battle until he was ready to attack Rome, but he was without allies, the only hope of his defence. ~~No~~ Italian city would join him. After many more years of hard work, he found himself in great trouble. Carthage, his home city, was in grave danger. He had to return to Africa immediately to defend his people against Rome. Here for the first time, however, he found himself overmatched in contending for the safety of Carthage upon African soil. The city of Carthage, said to have had about 700,000 inhabitants at this time, was destroyed by the younger Scipio in the year 146 B.C. The city was completely demolished, and to appease his wrath, Scipio ploughed over the ruins in an effort to bury them forever beneath the sands. A curse was pronounced upon any one who

attempted to rebuild it. The survivors were dispersed or sold as slaves. Thus the the Punic Wars, which began in the year 264 B.C. and ended in 146 B.C., came to an end with the destruction of Carthage and the strength of North Africa.

Nineteen years before the birth of Christ Augustus Caesar founded a colony at the site of Carthage and established a military post for his powerful army. And during the Christian <sup>era</sup> rule, under his peaceful and happy sway, Carthage came once more to its former glory. Out of its ruins it rose to a rich and prosperous city. With its neighboring villages it became a great commonwealth all to the glory of her conqueror Rome. Its magnificent aqueducts, the amphitheater, and the vast cemetery all point to its regained glory and importance. In point of population it was inferior to Rome only. By degrees the entire country of North Africa became subject to Roman rule. Until the fall of Rome itself in the fifth century, Carthage was subject to her first conqueror. Rome esteemed it as one of her most valuable possessions and therefore curried its favor. It supplied the indolent Romans with the things they needed to survive and with luxuries.

Nature wore a cheerful aspect in the northern part of Africa. Greek myths placed the Garden of the Hesperides on the slopes of Mt. Atlas. The land sloped naturally in broad natural terraces from the mountains, rich in depths of good soil, watered by various rivers, well wooded valleys, and a fine climate for so southern a land. The climate is said to have been tempered by the snows of the Atlas. The heat was not oppressive. However, the southern heat always does produce a languor, and this was apparent among its people. The common sirocco from the desert with its fine grains of sand inevitably aggravated the temperament of the people. Because of these favorable

climatical conditions, Carthage became the granary for Rome and all Italy. As Alexandria with the products of the rich Nile valley and its busy Jewish commercialists furnished the world with one-third of its corn, so also North Africa. This flourishing situation accounts for the general wealth of the people, the large and elegant cities, and the many villages. The corn growing lands were especially in the north and northwest. The mountain sides were bedecked with cedar and other trees used for building purposes. The palm, the orange, the olive, and other fruits thrived well. In the fourth century Carthage was the chief center for Italy's oil. The Romans used it in the preparations of their baths. This oil was inferior, however, to that of Spain and Italy itself because of the lack of skill in its preparation. The rose and other sweet-scented shrubs were so plentiful that odors were distilled. The landscape freely bore the fig, the grapevine, and the tender flowers of the oleander. The Carthaginians were popularly known as agriculturists; their skill in the cultivation of the soil was respected by the Romans. When once a city was demolished, a book on agriculture written by an African was carefully preserved and brought to Italy. The principal exports of Numidia and Mauritania, neighboring provinces of Africa (present-day Tunis), were horses and oxen, cattle. The part which Carthage played in the development of the world's history especially in the third century is difficult to estimate. The Arabs already designated it as the "Isle of the West". They were wont to call it thus because it appears to jut out from the continent proper, bounded on the north by the Mediterranean, on the south and east by the Sahara Desert, and on the west by the Atlantic Ocean. It seems to lean towards Europe, as if it were a part of that fruitful land, and not attached to barrenness of the desert to the south.

The city of Carthage itself was beautiful. After its reconstruction it partly favored Roman, partly Eastern customs. The world in general admired its white walls and houses shining on the beautiful blue Mediterranean. For many centuries the city was rich in temples, public buildings, gardens, palm trees, a magnificent amphitheater, an aqueduct, and all kinds of amusements and attractions.

The aborigines of Northern Africa were the Libyans who are little mentioned. Their race is still existing in the small tribes of the present-day Berbers. In later times the chief inhabitants of the land were the Berbers and the Moors on the one hand, and the Phoenicians and Europeans (the Latins and Greeks) on the other. Of all these nations, the men of the mountains, the plain, and the seacoast were all of different characteristics. There were also many Jews in the land, especially in Carthage. Tertullian had many a difficulty with them and wrote a book "Against the Jews" as a result of Jewish hatred manifested against the Christians. Dr. Donaldson is of the opinion that this Jewish animosity was a gradual development. He writes: "Though at first they seem to have lived on good terms with the Christian community after the destruction of Jerusalem -- this is implied in the use of the common cemeteries -- by Tertullian's time they had shown themselves as elsewhere its most bitter opponents. Thus we read in the "Apology", "all outside the church are her enemies, and especially the Jews on account of their jealousy of us". (Donaldson, "Church Life and Thought in North Africa A.D. 200", p. 105).

"Ethnographically, the aborigines of North Africa are to be distinguished most sharply from the Blacks of the south and also from the Egyptians on the east, They appear near Tangier as Amazigh, in the Sahara as Imoshagh, as Maxzes at the foundation of Carthage, and as Mexices in the Roman period. But, however marked may have been



their characteristics in the early days, they are hardly to be distinguished now from the many and various stocks with which they have intermingled. The origin of the generic name Afer and the term Africa is unknown; all one can say is that it is the name applied to the inhabitants of the continent lying over against Sicily, especially to the Phoenicians. Libyans is a name applied to the easterly tribes coming in contact with Egypt. Numidians (Nomades) is a name associated most with king Masinissa. The name Mauri is the term restricted mostly to the inhabitants of the western portion of the sea-board, the Gaetulians lying to the south of Mauri. Berber is the generic term applied originally on their arrival by the Arabs to the northern tribes, and now includes all of non-Arabic descent, among whom may be mentioned especially the Kabyles. The Berber language has survived even to the present day. On the other hand, the Phoenicians, who from Carthage dominated North Africa for some 600 years, have left no public document extant after the time of Tiberias, though their language was in use until the end of the fourth century. It is Latin which takes the place of Punic as the official tongue, and not Greek." ( Donaldson, l.c.p. 8).

## 2) A Biography of Tertullian.

A history of the North African Church would be incomplete without a biography of Tertullian. His influence on the development, even founding, of the church at Carthage and its environs is of such importance, and the effects of his teachings and principles are so far-reaching and imprinted on the character of the whole church in its later years, that we feel constrained to add the record of his life. The chief factors which affected the building of his church as well as the great deeds which he accomplished

during his long life shall be mentioned in passing only; the history of the church proper and the historical events which are concerned with the development of the church will be treated with some detail under the following chapters.

Tertullian's full name was Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus. He is the father of Latin theology and of Latin church language. As he was the first author to use the Latin tongue in writing for the church he had to "invent" many of his terms and expressions. The Roman theologians, though at first thought it would appear so, were not the first to employ the Latin language in defence of the church; Rome at the first - perhaps until the middle of the third century - was Greek in point of language.

Little is known of Tertullian's life. Most of the information is gleaned from his own writings and the references of Jerome, who classifies him as one of the greatest men of antiquity. His work in his particular field is overshadowed by the illustrious Augustine only. As did both Paul and Luther, he impressed his individuality and strong character in his writings. We see the man in his style. His books <sup>reflect</sup> ~~emanate~~ his character which was very strong, virile, and deep rooted in the faith. He, so to say, threw himself into that which he was writing. The quotations in the following chapters from his writings will give amply examples of this great man's style.

Tertullian was born between the years 150 and 160 of heathen parents at Carthage. The fact that he speaks of the looseness of his youth and of his early attendance at the shows of the heathen lead critics to this conclusion. His father served as a captain in the Roman army in proconsular Africa. In his youth Tertullian received a liberal Graeco-Roman education. He had great natural abilities in

his youth. His works show an acquaintance with history, poetry, eloquence, and philosophy, the latter of which he frequently refers to in his lengthy arguments against the heretics and schismatics. As a student he majored in the study of law for he seems to have had a good forensic education. His judicial information stood him in good stead in his later years. Before his conversion he practiced law and was considered a good attorney. It seems that he was not converted to Christianity until later in life, perhaps not until his thirtieth or fortieth year. Towards the end of the second century he saw the light of faith and embraced Christianity with all the power and energy that was in him. Some students place his conversion in the year 192 at Carthage, others at Rome. The occasion of his conversion is unknown. It is interesting to note that Tertullian did not lose his fiery and energetic nature - so typical of the Africans - after he became a Christian. He harnessed these natural characteristics of his birth and country and used them in combating the enemies of the church. The gospel message impressed him deeply. As a result of his conversion he struck out on a new path of life; he sought to do mission work, to bring others to that wonderful knowledge to which he so graciously had come. He now forsook his licentious living and sought a very strict moral life. He was married, but childless, and like Luther, left the world an enviable example of a Christian home and family-life. His letter to his wife is sufficient proof for this fact. That wonderful gem wherein he describes the blessings of true Christian home we submit later. Soon after his embracing the true faith he entered the ministry, and never, according to Jerome, rose above the rank of a presbyter. It is unknown whether he was ordained into the ministry at Rome or Carthage. It is certain,

however, that he spent some time in Rome. Between the years 199 and 203 he joined hands with the sect of the Montanists and soon himself became a leader of that party in North Africa. In subscribing to the principles of this new movement in the church he remained orthodox, though very puritanic and exceptionally rigorous in his morals. We shall later append a fuller description of the Montanists. It is the general opinion of the historians that Tertullian entered the ranks of the Montanists because he suffered insults at the hands of the Roman clergy. He had attacked the Roman clergy because of their apparent looseness and laxity in moral life. Later he fought the catholics or psychicals with great vehemence, who in turn heaped contumely upon his head. So stern was he in his Montanistic views that he regarded the more lax catholics as heretics. However, in doctrine Tertullian always was a catholic believer; his only distinction from Rome centered about the discipline of life. Until his very end he was a strong defender of the catholic faith, and from his facile pen we have extant some of the finest polemics against the Gnostics and similar heretics of that day. He died in senility between the years 220 and 240. Jerome reports that he lived to be a very old man. His followers were known as "Tertullianists" until the age of Augustine. And the Carthaginian school of theology which he founded dominated Latin theology for centuries. The fire, the energy of Tertullian is representative of his church. Its leaders were marked by sternness of character and bold positivism, They were men of firm convictions and clung to them bravely. Cyprian died at variance with Rome on the question of heretical baptism and papal authority, and Augustine, though a leader in the Catholic Church, became also the father of evangelical Protestantism thru his Anti-Pelagianistic and Anti-

Donatistic writings, and today is revered by Catholics and Protestants as well.

Tertullian had a restless nature and a virile character. He was a rare genius, fantastic, keen, earnest, yet wanting in clarity. But we can understand the roughness of his expression because of the new language he used in an attempt to express Greek thoughts. In general, Tertullian had a sublime contempt for the world, its sciences and arts. In his writings he centers his theology about sin and grace which was also the battleground of Paul. Later the cool-minded and logical Augustine was to develop these principles more extensively and with greater clarity. Tertullian is fearless of his heathen opponents; he assails all his adversaries with as little regard of person as did Luther.

With the beginning of his work as a Christian we first hear of the Christian church at Carthage, then already a large congregation. This same church, of which he is the first father, and which he so heroically led through many strifes, grew under the blessings of God until at the time of Augustine the church numbered 460 dioceses. The Donatists alone could assemble a council of 270 bishops at Carthage <sup>before</sup> Augustine's day. In the year 258, soon after the death of Tertullian, Cyprian assembled a synod of 87 bishops. However, this land was not to have the light of the gospel always. In the year 439 the barbarous Vandals captured the city of Carthage, causing much harm to the church, and in the year 647 the church was destroyed completely, never to rise again, <sup>but</sup> at the bloody hands of the Mohammedans, who replaced the Christian cross with the crescent. ✓

### 3) A Biography of Cyprian.

As of Tertullian, the life of Cyprian also

deserves ~~(to be mentioned.)~~ He carried on the noble work which Tertullian began, and his great influence on the character and theology of the church was felt for centuries. (In this chapter, as in the preceding, the history of the church in his age will be referred to in bare outline; a detailed account will be found later.)<sup>skip</sup>

Cyprian's full name was Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus. He was born about 200 or earlier. His parents were a noble, wealthy, heathen family of Carthage. He himself became a bishop and a martyr of the church. In the middle of the third century he was no doubt the leading figure in the catholic church. "Jerome tells us that he stood in high repute as a teacher of rhetoric. He was at all events a man of commanding literary, rhetorical, and legal culture, and of eminent administrative ability, which afterwards proved of great service to him in the episcopal office." (Schaff, "History of the Christian Church", Vol. 2, p. 843). In a ripe, mature age he still indulged in the pleasures of this world. Since he was wealthy, he lived a life of splendor, but he was also subject to the vices and immorality of his day, so common in the heathen world generally. These facts are made known to us by his confessions. Like Tertullian, he put faith in dreams and visions when a Christian, and he had some, it is said, shortly before his martyrdom.

Cyprian first tasted of the gospel from the mouth of a worthy presbyter in his own house, named Caecilius. At his death, Caecilius's wife and children were committed to the care of Cyprian. Because he was induced to search the Scriptures, he did so "to see if those things were so". He showed natural opposition to Christianity at the first. It was a real struggle with the flesh and with the "roaring lion that goeth about" for this aging rhetorician, but by the grace of God

he eventually enrolled in a catechumen class, embraced Christianity with a full heart, sold his estate giving the money to the poor, vowed the vow of chastity, and was baptized in 245 or 246. He then received the name of Caecilius as an act of appreciation to his spiritual father. As is true of many converts, Cyprian now became more zealous in the work of the church than most others who had believing parents. In ~~retire~~<sup>seclusion</sup> he devoted his time towards pondering the great truths of the Bible with which he had so lately been acquainted. The church fathers and teachers also occupied much of his attention. Jerome reports that Tertullian was his favorite father whom he daily called for with the words, "Da mihi magistrum". His close study of this his great predecessor left its indelible marks upon the student. Tertullian's influence is everywhere noticeable, in his life, in his conduct towards the heretics, and in his writings. His tracts on prayer and patience show a marked resemblance to those of Tertullian.

His influence was soon felt outside his own circles. His friends recognized in him a leader of men. They therefore took him into their care and asked him to lead them in their fight against the strifes of the heretics and the schismatics. Only two years after his baptism he was made a bishop of the Carthaginian church, in spite of ~~his~~ his protest, by a general acclamation of the people. Carthage was now the head of all North African clergy; his position was a responsible one. It was a worthy choice, however. God was calling him, as is shown by the blessed work which he performed in ten brief years as head of the church in Carthage. God gave him ample wisdom, fidelity, and energy, so necessary in the office which he represented, to carry on his noble work. About him the entire catholic organization

revolved; he became, so to say, its dictator.

Valerian's persecution stopped the active hand of Carthage's leader forever. He was taken from the midst of those among whom he worked and for whom<sup>he</sup> suffered since his conversion already by the persecution of Decius, some years before the Valerian persecution, but his life was saved. In exile he escaped the bloody intentions of the heathen persecutors. He was in banishment for 11 months. From his place of confinement he directed the affairs of his church. Many difficulties confronted him upon his return. As a result of the persecution, many had lapsed into heathendom again. However, when their leader returned from exile, they asked for permission to return again into the fold. Many refused to grant this permission. Tertullian had written against it; but Cyprian showed great diplomacy in his dealings with them. He was wise in his actions as well as firm in his insistence upon true repentance. The task was no easy one for the bishop. Resistance to the many who fell was dangerous; they had the favor of the "confessors" and others in the church. More of the "lapsi" will be said in a later chapter. Cyprian did not escape the Valerian persecution. He was captured, tried, and condemned to be beheaded. He heard the words of his condemnation with joy and exclaimed: "Thanks be to God". This was in keeping with the spirit of the heroes of the time, that desire for martyrdom by which they thought to do honor to the name of Christ. Waterman gives this fine description of Cyprian's execution: "In the grounds of the Villa was a piece of grass land surrounded by steep wooded slopes. There the condemned man was led. The crowd filled the natural amphitheater to repletion, and some even climbed the trees to get a better view of the final scene. If there were many heathen present who regarded the prisoner



a foe of the gods, there were many Christians also, and some of these strewed handkerchiefs and napkins at his feet, hoping to have them back, made precious with stains of martyr blood. The bishop removed his cloak, and knelt, and prayed. Then he rose, and would have spoken to the people, but no words came. He had expected confidently some great inspiration at this time, some last words of surpassing value. It is a great proof of his faithful waiting upon God, that he, so rich in thought, so fluent in expression, could so suppress himself as to receive that strange providence. God had no word for him to say."

(Waterman, l.c.p. 418). The field in which he was executed is called Ager Sexti. Over the spot of his death and burial two chaplets were erected. His anniversary was long remembered and observed -- September 14, 258.

All in all, Cyprian was a large-hearted and singularly loveable man. He could easily forget the insults of former days and friends. His great attachment to his people is manifested by the fact that after he became their leader they rebought and returned to him the field (the finest pleasure grounds in Carthage) which he sold soon after his conversion for the benefit of the poor. He did his duty with faithfulness and dispatch. Even under difficulties his church and its care was his greatest concern. In banishment he carried on a large correspondence to direct its affairs. "He could truly say, that although absent in the body, yet in the spirit, he was constantly present with his flock, and by council and act, endeavored to guide them according to the precepts of the Lord. The letters which were sent from his retirement by means of certain ecclesiastics, through whom he maintained a constant correspondence with his people, show how truly he could say this of himself". (Neander, "History of the Christian Religion and Church", Vol. 1, p. 134). How kindly does he not speak to

those prisoners confined in the mines when he says: "In the mines the body is refreshed not by beds and pillows, but by the comforts and joys of Christ. Your limbs wearied with labor, recline upon the earth, but with Christ it is no punishment to lie there. --- Your bread is scanty; but man lives not by bread alone, but by every word of God. You are in want of clothing to defend you from the cold; but he who has put on Christ is provided with clothing and ornament enough. Even in the fact, my dearest brethren, that you cannot now celebrate the communion of the Lord's Supper, your faith may still be conscious of no want; you celebrate the most glorious communion; you send God the costliest offering, since the holy scriptures declare, that to God the most acceptable sacrifice is a broken and a contrite heart". (Neander, l.c. p. 138).

In character, Cyprian was similar to Peter. He was a man of great power and executive ability. He, like his master, was a strong character. No doubt, in most any field of endeavor, he would have been a leader. He was a statesman as well as an administrator. He was a born ruler of men. Through his influence he accomplished things. As Tertullian directed most of his attacks against the heretics of his day, Cyprian fought chiefly the schismatics. But he later in life also displayed that great fighting spirit of his self-chosen master, Tertullian, and attacked Rome on her policy of baptism. He stood strongly for the independence of the episcopate which he considered the successor of the apostleship. He recognized the primacy of Rome only insofar as Peter's selection represented the unity of the church. His tract on the "Unity of the Church" is one of his best known. Strange to say, his writings are used by the Catholic Church in support of the primacy of Peter and by Protestants in denial of the same. It was no pride on

his part that led him to keep his independence on matters of the episcopacy and baptism. "It were a great injustice to attribute his high churchly principles to pride and ambition, though temptations of this spirit unquestionably beset a prominent position like his. Such principles are entirely compatible with sincere, personal humility before God." (Schaff, l.c. p. 846).

Perhaps one of the grandest demonstrations of his loveable character and leadership is shown us by his action during the famine in Carthage. While thousands were dying, and the people lay unburied on the streets, with contagion and pestilence threatening the entire city, he gathered his flock together and roused them with a stirring address to gather money and food stuffs for the poor and sick, and to bury the dead. This act received the commendation of the heathen world. Always considerate for his people, he writes from banishment: "Although absent in the body, I was not wanting either in spirit or in act, or in my advice, so as to fail in any benefit that I could offer my brethren by my council, according to the Lord's precepts in anything that my poor abilities enabled me". (Cyprian, Epistle 14). As a whole, Cyprian lived a life of rigid discipline. Later he was more moderate in some of his moral precepts in accommodation to the spirit of the times. He warned against the Christians' participation in the Roman games and other heathen amusement, as did Tertullian. Because of his strict morals, his life was somewhat ascetic. He nowhere, however, mentions Montanism; he evidently did not join its ranks. In fine, Cyprian was a man of eminent self-sacrifice, and eminent self-will, a true Christian who longed for the church triumphant and the reign of Christ.

Such is the life record of these two great leaders in the early Latin Church. Theirs was an active, busy life, and the opposi-

tion that confronted their humble efforts on part of the heathen world were often discouraging. It was a world of decay and immorality that the Christian church had to fight. At <sup>his</sup> their time the life force of the old countries was exhausted. Both in the east and in the west, in Gaul, Rome, Africa, as well as Greece, Syria, and Egypt the strength and pristine glory of the nations of the earth was on the decline. The original power of their various religions was no longer observed with the fidelity that characterized their forebears. The outer forms of their religion was still alive, but the inward faith was dead. The ceremonials were performed mostly to please the mob. Many counterfeit religions arose, superstitions, and mystical cults, such as the Cult of Mythra, of Isis, and later the sect of the Manichaeans. The only schools of philosophy then alive were the Platonic and Alexandrian. The great universal problems agitated by Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Zeno, Heraclitus, Pythagoras, and Democritus were no longer studied by eager students of philosophy. The entire system of philosophy, which for centuries occupied the attention of the world's best men, was on the decline; it concerned itself with lesser problems. Under Roman immorality and Greek subjugation it dwindled into a cavil against Christianity or a hopeless compromise of the Christian mysteries. Later, Under Lucretius, the Roman poet, it saw its hopeless end in a justification of a Christless materialism, so welcomed by the licentious populace of Rome that cried daily for nothing but bread and the games. The history of philosophy had repeated itself. The materialistic doctrines of the French philosophy, who carried the favor of King Louis XIV.'s court, led to the French Revolution. The materialism of the German philosopher's developed into German socialism and that into Russian bolshevism, a system that outlawed Christianity!

The situation was different in the Christian world when these great men began their labors. Of course, the church suffered much at the hands of the godless world, but it was making gradual headway and gaining a foothold. In spite of, or one might say, because of the many persecutions and the bitter opposition the Christians had to endure, the church grew, and, by the grace of God, spread to the far corners of the globe. By the third century the entire known world was acquainted with the Christian church which at the first it regarded as a mere sect of the Jews. Tertullian reports that the church had come as far as Britain, but critics are inclined to believe that this is exaggeration. Nevertheless, it was making itself known, it was advertising its principles by word and example, and by the year first quarter of the fourth century it was a fully recognized religion, a "religio licita", and counted the Emperor Constantine in its ranks.

There was abundant Christian literature even before Tertullian and Cyprian produced their voluminous writings. It had been enriched by the Epistle of Clement, the Epistles of Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Tatian, Polycarp, the Didache of the Apostles, the Epistle of Barnabas, The Sheperd of Hermas, and a few minor writings. The theology of the church had received a new impetus from the establishment of the rival schools of Alexandria and Antioch. The great catechetical school was founded by Pantaenus, and the teachings of Clement of Alexandria were spreading everywhere. Origen was at this time a mere boy in the city of Alexandria, in the shadow of the school that bears its name and which he was destined to develop with his allegorical interpretations. Chrysostom and Fortunatus, the greatest preachers the early church saw, were not as yet born. The apologetic writings of Justin and Quadratus were now fairly well known. And the important cities of

the Mediterranean world were becoming Christianized; they were developing definite dioceses. Jerusalem was recoving part of its influence which it lost as a result of the Roman persecutions and Jewish war. Antioch, the first station of the Apostle of the <sup>U</sup>entiles, Paul, grew into a strong congregation; Rome, enhanced by the traditions of Peter and its important location in the Roman political world, gained a supremacy over the other churches by the end of the second century; Ephesus, the field in which Paul labored for more than two and one-half years, and where the orator Apollos carried on the work which Paul began, became famous for the many churches it established and for the third church council held there; and also Alexandria, supposed to have been founded by the ~~ape~~ Evangelist Mark, became a center of Christianity in later years, and brought Christ crucified down far into the Nile valley, even to the borders of Abyssinia.

Persecutions were the common lot of the Christian churches throughout the world for centuries. Besides the Jewish local persecutions, the Christians to <sup>perhaps</sup> ~~all~~ appearances had to bear the opposition of Rome itself already during the Neronian persecution in the year 64 A.D. throughout the Christian world. After the second century severe persecutions broke out everywhere. The third persecution saw the death of Symeon of Jerusalem. The fourth, in the year 166, took the lives of Justin and Polycarp. In 177 was witnessed the beautiful death of the martyrs in Gaul in the cities of Lyons (Lugdunum) and Vienna. Irenaeus himself was martyred in 202, as also Pantaenus. The persecutions which at the first were somewhat light and localized, became fierce and general. The Decian persecution during the life of Cyprian was a war for extermination. The Christians were no longer considered a separate sect of the Jews; they were identified as "Christiani", the

haters of the human race. Everywhere they were spoken against.

After the defeat of the pseudo-Messiah, Bar Chochba, in the year 135 by Emperor <sup>Hadrian</sup>ardian, and the erection of the city Aelia Capitolina on the former site of Jerusalem, the proselyting power of the Jews was so weak it no longer presented a problem; the Christian church which grew and flourished in spite of this destruction of Jewish power was now seen to be something else than a mere sect. It was a ~~separ~~ separate body with principles of its own received from God, the <sup>F</sup>ather.

By the close of the second century the Christians were a strong body on the face of the then known world. They were, however, scattered over the Roman Empire, and thus could constitute no unified power. The great "Pax Romana" which was ushered in at the reign of Caesar Augustus together with the acceptance of the Greek tongue by most civilized nations after the conquests of Alexander the Great were the chief factors which favored the rapid spread of Christianity. A common language and a common peace ~~very~~ of utmost importance for the spread of the Christian truths. Even the Jews in the diaspora spoke the Greek language in the west, as much as they cherished the traditions and memories of their homeland. "Making all allowances, I accept the conjecture of some reputable authorities that there were 2,000,000 of Christians in the bounds of the Roman Empire at the close of the second century". (The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol.3, p. 58). This fact is testified to by Tertullian himself when he writes: "The outcry is that the state is filled with Christians -- that they are in the fields, in the citadels, in the islands". (Tert. Apol.1). Some authorities quote the following table as an estimate of the number of Christians in the first four centuries: The first century: 500,000; the second century: 2,000,000; the third century: 5,000,000; and the fourth cent-

ury: 10,000,000. Tertullian, chiding the heathen oppressors, writes in confirmation of the large number of Christians in the third century: "We are but of yesterday, and have filled every place among you -- cities, islands, fortresses, towns, market-places, the very camp, tribes, companies, palace, senate, forum -- we have left nothing to you but the temples of your gods".(Tert. Apol.37). And the same author writes in a previous chapter concerning their vast numbers:" Scattered abroad, a race of wanderers, exiles from their own land and clime, they roam over the whole world, without even a human or heavenly king, not even possessing the stranger's right to set so much as a single footstep in their native country. The sacred writers, withal, in giving previous warning to these things, all with equal clearness ever declare that, in the last days of the world, God would, out of every nation, and people, and country, choose for Himself more faithful worshippers, upon whom He would bestow His grace, and that indeed in ampler measure, in keeping with the enlarged capacities of a nobler dispensation." (Tert. Apol. 21).

At this time, then, when the eastern church through the medium of the Greek language was coming into great prominence, when its mission activities were extending into the outlying borders of the world, when its theologians were battling about the doctrine of God, formulating theses for their Trinitarian controversies, and developing their two great theological schools at Alexandria and Antioch, from which later the theology of the church was to receive its definite form and become systematized, Tertullian was busy establishing a new church on the shores of the north African coast and Cyprian very active like his master with pen and word in the development of this same church. Unlike their eastern brethren, they both used Latin.



A detailed history of the church which these fathers built together with its doctrines, organization and discipline, worship, liturgy, art, and life is given under special headings in the <sup>later</sup> following chapters.

#### 4) The Writings of Tertullian and Cyprian.

It has been said that there is scarcely any one writer since the days of the Apostles whose works are so important in the right understanding <sup>of</sup> the early church as those of Tertullian. They are especially valuable to the historian for the light which they shed on surrounding obscurity. In his writings are also found the germs of sentiments which later pervaded the Catholic Church, e.g., the teaching of purgatory, of prayers for the dead, ~~and so forth.~~ <sup>and so forth.</sup> ~~of the vicarious baptism of the dead and so forth.~~ Because of their importance, we shall quote profusely from his works.

Tertullian was an adept at two languages. His Greek writings are no longer extant; of his Latin works there remain 36 books and treatises. He developed an extraordinary literary activity in the first quarter of the third century, though some fine books came from his pen already before the turn of the century. Most of his works are short, though the scope is wide; he touches upon almost every field of religious life and doctrine. His style is the man. It is forceful, rhetorical, and often sarcastic. Each utterance of his is like a cavalry charge. His sentences are filled with meaning. "Abrupt and impetuous, eloquent and stern, his sentences follow one another with the sweeping, rushing force of a storm. The very exceptions which occur do but prove the rule.--- His acuteness, power, eloquence, and causticity are concentrated for the time being upon a single principle; and whatever will illustrate it, prove it,

and drive it home is drawn upon into his service, often regardless of its fitness." (Dictionary of Christian Biographies, Vol.4, pp.863-864).

He was the first church father to write in the Latin language. Though his productions were at first rough and crude, they served a good purpose. In order to express Greek theological terms he often had to create words. "Theology owes practically to him such words (among others) as Trinitas, satisfactio, sacramentum, substantia, persona, liberum arbitrium, transferred (some of them) from the Latin law courts to take their definite place in the language of Latin divinity". (Dictionary of Christian Biographies, Vol.4, p. 863).

His works are generally grouped into three classes: the apologetic, polemic, and anti-heretical. Dr. Schaff adds a fourth, the Montanistic papers. Prominent in the first group is his "Apologeticus". "It is unquestionably one of the most beautiful monuments of the heroic age of the early church". (Schaff, l.c.p.828). It is one of the first pleas for religious liberty, and ranks high among the earlier Greek apologetical writings. He asks for simple justice from the world and demands that the civil government respect and tolerate the Christian church. "The cause of truth and justice never found a more eloquent and fearless defender in the very face of despotic power, and the blazing fires of persecution, than the author of this book." (Schaff, l.c.p.829). A supplement to this tract is the treatise "On the Testimony of the Soul". Herein Tertullian offers his readers a positive argument for Christianity. The soul of man and the Christian religion have a harmony with is pre-established. The soul naturally favors the doctrines of Christ. In its nature the soul is not foreign to Christianity. The second group of Tertullian's writings concern themselves with the refutation of the heretical doctrines of the

11.

Gnostics. To this group especially belongs his "On the Prescription of Heretics". He appeals mightily to the Scriptures to defeat the errors of all heretics. He holds that the rightful heretage of the church is the holy Bible. The principal heretics whom he attacks are the Gnostics, the Valentinians, and Marcion. His five books against Marcion is his largest work and was written in 208. The tracts "On Baptism", "On the Faith of Christ", "On the Resurrection of the Faith", "Against Hermogenes", and "Against Praxeas" deal with definite errors in the church and outside the same. The third group, or his practical works throw light on the moral life of the early church. Here especially are listed his tracts "On Prayer", "On Penance", and "On Patience".

These are but a few of the many writings of Tertullian. A complete list of his works will be seen in the Appendix. There is no doubt that these writings served the Christian church a wonderful purpose and helped to cement it together. Without them we would be in the dark regarding the history of the church in his age. "His books are the chief measure of his effect upon the history of his age". (Waterman, l.c.p.283). The praises of Tertullian are sung well nigh by every critic and historian, both because of the noble man himself and because of his noble writings. Perhaps one of the most unique tributes comes from the pen of Dr. Donaldson who writes: "If some should question his right to be classed among the Saints, yet the great services he has rendered to Christianity, his manly sincerity, and the earnest intensity of his convictions, should go far to entitle him to such a position". (Donaldson, l.c.p.41).

Though not quite so prolific as Tertullian, Cyprian produced many valuable writings. He shows less originality, fertility of thought, and rigor of <sup>expression</sup> thought than his master, but he has more flights of ora-

tory, more elegance of style, more moderation in thought and expression, and therefore more clarity. He is clearer in the exposition of doctrines especially because he did not, as Tertullian, have to coin phrases and words in the Latin. He used the language which Tertullian had made popular in the church. By profession Cyprian was a rhetorician, and, therefore, we can expect several oratorical passages. Examples of his style are given throughout the following chapters in various quotations. His works, too, are divided into three parts:

1) His practical works. These are his most important writings. They relate chiefly to questions on church government and discipline. Here especially belongs his tract on the "Unity of the Church", which is considered by many his best work. In it he manifests a high-churchly spirit. It is termed the "Magna Charta" of the old Catholic Church. Of a practical nature are also his 81 epistles to various bishops, clergymen, churches of Africa, Rome etc., etc. His correspondence, which is voluminous, gives one a graphic picture of his pastoral work showing the true shepherd <sup>l</sup>working among his flock.

2) His moral works. To this group especially belong his tracts "On the Grace of God", "On the Lord's Prayer", "On Morality", and "On Martyrdom", and several minor exhortatory works.

3) His apologetic works. These are the least important of his productions. His "De Idolorum Vanitate" and "Testimonia adversus Judaeos" are written against the heathen and Jews respectively.

A more complete list of his works will be appended in the Appendix.

#### 5) Other Workers.

Commodian: This clergyman was probably a resident of North Africa. He studied the Old Testament and was converted to

the Christian faith. He wrote a vulgar latinity which was quite characteristic of the North African writers. He is an important character in the history, if not in the theology, of the early church. In the doctrine of Christology Commodian was a Patripassian, and leaned towards chiliasm. He wrote two poems, one of them over 1200 verses in length written in an effort to convert Jews and heathen. "The most important part in the second poem is the conclusion. It contains a fuller description of Antichrist than the first poem. The author expects that the end of the world will soon come with the seventh persecution; the Goths will conquer Rome and redeem the Christians; but then Nero will appear as the heathen Antichrist, reconquer Rome, and rage against the Christians three years and one-half; he will be conquered in turn by the Jewish and real Antichrist from the east, who after the defeat of Nero and the burning of Rome will return to Judaea, perform false miracles, and be worshipped by the Jews". Schaff, l.c. p. 855-856). Later Christ was to appear and set up His kingdom which was to be a reign of glory. No doubt, he received his notions about the three and one-half weeks from the prophecy of Daniel, Dan. 9, 24-27.

Arnobius: As also Tertullian and Cyprian, Arnobius was converted in old age. As a heathen he was a strong enemy of Christianity. He lived in Sicca, on the Numidian border, to the southwest of Carthage, during the last part of the third century. Nothing definite is known of his subsequent life and death. He is not mentioned in Tertullian or Cyprian. Jerome is the only ancient writer who refers to him. He wrote an apology of Christianity in seven books about 303 A.D. The two first are of an apologetic nature, the other five being polemical. The writer showed a great familiarity with the Greek and Roman mythology. He quotes many authors, but in his pre-Christian days, is

ignorant of the Bible. In his Christian writings he quotes from the New Testament; he is silent on the Old Testament. He exposes the immorality and evil of the heathen. Though he has some familiarity with the history of Christ, he knows nothing of the history of Israel. His faith was the correct one; he showed salvation in none other than Christ. He had and taught the true doctrine of God, the infinite Creator of all things. Of man he taught that he has a free will, but he did not cling to the immortality of the soul save as a special gift from God. Hell was real to him, as also the resurrection of the body. In general he only approached the true orthodoxy of the catholic church. Perhaps his late conversion and his ignorance of the Old Testament accounted much for this fact. In spirit, however, he was honest, and his purpose was sincere. In him there is much African latinity. "He uttered his testimony boldly in the face of the last and most cruel persecution, and it is not unlikely that he himself was one of its victims". (Schaff, l.c.p.861). In his opposition to Christianity before his conversion he was feared. He was so well known that when he offered himself to the Christians at Sicca as a convert, the people feared him as they did Paul at Jerusalem.

Minucius Felix: Of Minucius Felix we know little or nothing. His writing "Octavius" belongs to the time of Tertullian. It is difficult to assign a place and date for it. There can be no doubt that it has a close connection to the church of North Africa, and, therefore, it deserves our attention. The book shows one how apt a defender of the truth Minucius Felix might have been had he devoted his life to the role of an apologist. Dr. Donaldson states that Jerome alludes to him several times. The "Octavius" is the only work of his extant. There are little touches throughout the book which indicate an African

origin, points out Dr. Donaldson. The author is, for example, familiar with the deities of Africa. "His style shows imitation of the African writers Fronto, Florus, and Apuleius: while the parallelism with the "Apogeticum" of Tertullian make it necessary to suppose one of three things: either (1) Tertullian borrowed from Min. Felix: or (2) Min. Felix borrowed from Tertullian: or (3) both used a common source. Of these three alternatives for many reasons (2) seems the most probable; and so the argument of the author's close connection with Africa is strengthened". (Donaldson, l.c.p.175).

The "Octavius" has much that pertains to morals. "While intentionally leaving in the background the deeper contents of Christianity, he justifies it as the higher truth of the heathen knowledge, and as the higher morality of life. His apologetic representation of the morals of the Christians enables us to recognize among them what was commonly recognized among them as Christian." (Luthardt, "History of Ethics, p.194-195). He shows that rigorous morals were upheld by the Christians. They were forbidden to eat blood, to marry more than once, or to accept places of honor among the heathen. Martyrdom was considered a beautiful spectacle.

Mention might here be made of Lactantius (died 330 at Treves) who, according to Jerome, was a disciple of the African Arnobius, though a native of Italy. Because of his beautiful Latin, he is called the "Christian Cicero".

#### 6) The Various Persecutions which Affected North Africa.

Towards the close of the second century there seems to have been no end to local persecutions. There were many martyrs in those days; heroes of the faith paid for their faith with their life daily. In the third century

36.

Emperor Septimius Severus, perhaps driven by the excesses of Montanistic Christianity, decided once for all to stop the spread of Christianity and Judaism. Under his reign there were violent persecutions in Egypt and northern Africa. There occurred at this time some of the most daring, most heroic deaths in all martyrdom. In Carthage two brave women, Perpetua and Felicitas, together with three young men went to the place of execution with coolness and heroic faith.<sup>3</sup> They were glad to suffer for the cause of Christ. At a public festival they were cast to the wild beasts. The story is given in detail in a later chapter.

The same state of affairs continued under Marcus Aurelius, 211-217. He, however, passed no law against the Christians. The fact that a general persecution took place in North Africa under Severus is proof for the assumption that the Christian church was quite strong there already before the end of the second century.

These persecutions were not always carried out according to the law of the Emperor; often mob rule terrorized the Christians. Tertullian testifies: "How often, too, the hostile mob, paying no regard for you, takes the law into its own hand, and assails us with stones and flames." (Tert. Apol. 37.).

Some years later under the Emperor Decian, 249-251, another general persecution broke out in all parts of the Roman Empire. He, as also Septimius Severus, once more resolved to wipe out the Christians religion from the face of the earth. He was a good Roman and an energetic ruler. His suspicion of the Christians led to hatred. In the year 250 he issued an edict to all the governors of the provinces to reestablish the pagan religion, which was now on the decline, under the severest penalties. This ushered in the severest and most



universal persecution so far. It was probably the first one which covered the entire empire. In order to make apostates of the Christians the Roman masters resorted to threats, exile, tortures etc. Many of the weak Christians fell from the faith and even sacrificed to the heathen gods. More is said of these under a later heading. Hundreds, however, rushed to prison and sought the martyr's crown. There was, in fact, a craze for martyrdom in those days, as also in the days of Polycarp. They were of the opinion that with a martyr's death they pleased the Lord and gained for themselves a greater degree of eternal bliss. Especially the leaders in the churches suffered. Many fled to places of concealment for the benefit of the church, as in the case of bishop Cyprian. During his absence he regulated the affairs of his church by means of correspondence. It was his opinion that in times of persecution one ought to yield and flee. This he himself taught and practiced, contrary to the Montanistic views of Tertullian, who in his "De Fuga Persecutione" strongly speaks against flight in times of persecution.

During the reign of Gallus, 251-253, the persecution began anew at the instigation of the Goths and because of the famine. The dire calamity and the pestilence that resulted from it was blamed on the Christians, who in turn were persecuted.

The Emperor Valerian, 253-260, was at the first mild to the sect of Christians. Later he suddenly altered his views, perhaps at the suggestion of friends, banished the Christian leaders, and forbade the Christian worship. Under his persecution the noblest martyrs were Cyprian and the bishop Sixtus II. of Rome. After this bloody persecution there followed approximately forty years of peace during which time the Christian church prospered and grew materially and spiritually. In the year 303 began the most severe persecution under Diocletian.

## 7) The Bible in North Africa.

In the year 180 A.D. the Scillium martyrs in reply to the question put to them, "What have you in your box"? said: "The Books and Epistles of Paul the Just", or, according to another version, "The Books of the Gospels, and the Epistles of the Apostle Saint Paul". For that reason we can assume, thinks Dr. Donaldson, that as early as 180 A.D. considerable portions of the New Testament particularly were in circulation among the Christians of North Africa. Of the 27 Books in the New Testament, 20 were known to have been generally received. Those concerning which there was some doubt were : Hebrews, James, Second Peter, Second and Third John, Jude, and Revelation. The text was Latin, for Latin was the language spoken by Speratus, the spokesman for the martyrs before the tribunal of the Emperor. Greek could not have been the language of the text; the Greek version of the book which records the account of the Scillium martyrs is a translation of the Latin original, as Dr. Donaldson points out. In his "Prescription against Heretics" Tertullian acclaims the high antiquity of the Old Testament, thence to its majesty and charm. "We find Tertullian quoting from every book in the Bible in Latin with the exception of Ruth and Esther in the Old Testament, 2 S. Peter and 3 S. John in the New Testament: it does not follow that quotations when repeated are identically the same; and they often differ materially from the more or less stereotyped Vulgate of S. Jerome's time. They often also differ from the version followed by Cyprian 30 or 40 years after Tertullian's time". (Donaldson, l.c. p. 179-180). Dr. Donaldson offers three possible explanations for the Latin version of the Bible at this time: 1) Tertullian offered and translated the passages as he needed them from the original; 2) he used an authorized version; 3) he used unauthorized versions of various books and sometimes of

more than one translation of the same text. Donaldson adds in conclusion; "There seems reason to think that (1) and (2) are both true". (Donaldson, l.c.p.180).

Though it seems probable that Christianity was introduced into North Africa from the east, either from Judaea itself or from the island of Cyrene, yet the growth of the church was largely dependent upon the support of the Romans in Italy. However, we know that the church at Rome remained almost wholly Greek until far into the third century. Therefore, the possibility that Carthage received her Latin version from Rome is excluded. No Latin version of the Bible was necessary in Rome, neither would it have arisen at the first in a land where Greek was spoken in the services and Greek was used by the church leaders in their writings. Until Pope Victor the Roman bishops bore Greek names. It is highly probable, therefore, that the *Vetus Latina*, or the miss-named "Itala" had its origin in North Africa, the land in which Latin was used in the church for the first time and in church literature first by Tertullian. Says Dr. Donaldson: "There seems no alternative to the theory that they were produced as needed by local scholars in North Africa itself. Even Tertullian may have been among the translators; and so North Africa has laid all Europe and civilisation under a lasting debt by giving us the first Latin translation of the greater part of the divine library". (Donaldson, l.c.p.180-181). Only fragments of the "Itala" are now extant.

Donaldson observes that while Tertullian used different versions of the same passage at times, he also corrects the Latin from the Greek. Thus, even in his day the germs of literary criticism were already apparent and cropping out.

An interesting observation is made by a study of the translations

used by both Tertullian and Cyprian of the same passages. "A comparison of Tertullian's quotations with those made by Cyprian leads us to the conclusion that a plurality of Latin versions was current in North Africa before the middle of the third century, and that their source was independent of the text adopted by Jerome in the Vulgate". (Donaldson, l.c.p.181). But as far as the Apocrapha <sup>are</sup> is concerned, this does not apply, for Jerome made no separate translation of it. The version which is used in the Vulgate is the same as that of Cyprian's. It is, therefore, North African in origin. For these reasons we have good reason to believe that a Latin version of Latin versions of the Bible were in use in North Africa about the year 200, and that the translations of the original text, of which Tertullian saw the beginning and Cyprian the end, were made on African soil, possibly in the city of Carthage.

The collection of Biblical books which the Scillium martyrs had in their box may as well point to the use of or, at least, the formation of a canon. The controversy about the New Testament canon broke out with the Marcion controversy. He accepted as canonical the Gospel of Luke and ten of Paul's Epistles only. There is perhaps nothing so fascinating as the rapid formation and acceptance of the New Testament canon. It took time, and patience, and industry. Much time passed before the Romans had read the Letter to the Galatians or the Galatians had read the Letter to the Romans, or before the Letter to Titus in Crete and to Timothy in Ephesus had circulated among the Christian churches, so that they could be gathered and be accepted by all Christendom together with the four Gospels. It was no easy task to send these letters about in those days from the Euxine to the Nile, and from Paul to Numidia. The guiding hand of the Lord regulated the formation of the New Testament canon.

### 8) The Provinces.

We have no definite information about the size or number of provinces in northern Africa in the third century. Besides Proconsular Africa itself in which Carthage was located, mention is made by Cyprian also of the kingdoms of Mauretania and Numidia. He reports that bishops had come from these places to a synod convened in Carthage. The entire area of proconsular North Africa was about 2,000 <sup>miles</sup> ~~miles~~ long and about 300 miles on the average in breadth between the sea and the desert. The continent of Africa derives its name from the province of Africa which today corresponds to Tunis, the French colony. In the year 37 it was decided to call the land from Hippo (Bona) eastward to Cyrene Africa. It was then placed under a proconsular, thus its longer name, Proconsular Africa. The western provinces were placed under a Roman soldiery. Large camps were constructed and many military roads were built. The country thus had a rapid development.

Bingham quotes <sup>the</sup> ~~for~~ following number of cities which were known to have existed in the provinces of North Africa at the time of Augustine. We give them ~~for~~ the sake of comparison. The numbers given by Bingham are contested by others. Many add four or five more to most of the provinces mentioned. They follow: 1) Proconsular Africa - cities: 104; 2) Numidia: 142; 3) Byzacena: 131; 4) Mauritania Sitifensis: 46; 5) Mauritania <sup>C</sup>assariensis and Tingitana: 134; 6) Tripolis: 5. We dare not imagine that all these cities existed at the same time. There were never more than 500 at one time in the six provinces.

The exact extent of the church in North Africa during the third century is unknown. There were thousands of Christians, however, in the church of Cyprian. In 258 A.D. he could gather 87 bishops from the provinces of Africa Proconsularis, Numidia, and Mauritania.

## II. DOCTRINES.

### 1) The Holy Trinity.

To Tertullian belongs the credit of having found the terminology for the doctrine of the holy Trinity, that fundamental doctrine to faith, life, and salvation. He taught in all its purity that the Trinity consisted of three distinct persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, of whom, through whom, and in whom all things consist, and that these three are One Holy God, though, as he erroneously taught, subordinate. In this wise Tertullian writes to Gyrrian Praxeas:" Now, observe that my assertion is that the Father is One, and the Son One, and that they are distinct from each other. --- It is not by way of diversity that the Son differs from the Father, but by distribution; it is not by division that He is different, but by distinction; because the Father is not the same as the Son, since they differ one from the other in the mode of their being. For the Father is the entire substance, but the Son is a derivation and portion of the whole, as He Himself acknowledges: "My Father is greater than I".(John 14,28). -- Thus the Father is distinct from the Son, being greater than the Son, inasmuch as He who begets is one, and He who is begotten is another. -- He says, "I will pray the Father, and He will send you another Comforter -- even the Spirit of truth", John 14,16, thus making the Paraclete distinct from Himself, even as we say that the Son is also distinct from the Father; so that He showed a third degree in the Paraclete, as we believe the second degree is in the Son, by reason of the order observed in the Economy". (Tert. Against Praxeas,9). Though we cannot condone Tertullian for this incorrect subordination idea, it is perhaps accountable to his late conversion and long study of philosophy that led him to this speculative, phil-

osophical teaching of the holy Trinity.

This same doctrine of the Trinity found its confirmation in the baptism formula then in use and in the rule of faith or creed. It was implied in the apostolic blessing.

God the Father:

All the creeds used in the ancient church began with a confession of the Father as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. This is also the faith of the North African Christians as can be noted from the creed in use among them. (Prescription Against the Heretics, 13- Tertullian). This truth is also brought to light in Tertullian's words: "The object of our worship is the One God, He who by His commanding word, His arranging wisdom, His mighty power, brought forth from nothing this entire mass of our world, with all its array of elements, bodies, spirits, for the glory of His majesty; whence also the Greek have bestowed upon it the name of *ἑὸς μὸς*. The eye cannot see Him, though He is spiritually visible. He is incomprehensible, though in grace He is manifested. He is beyond our utmost thought, though our faculties conceive of Him; He is therefore equally real and great." (Tert. Apol. 17). He goes on to point out that God's works are so great that strike one with awe and reverence as well as afford untold enjoyment for all Christians. This God is the only One recognized; all others are fictions of the mind. Such is and always has been the true teaching of the Christian Church.

Tertullian shows advanced Christian thought on the doctrine of God as a supreme Being in his anti-heretical works. In part he states: "God will never be hidden, God will never fail mankind; He will always be recognized, always perceived and wishes seen when man wishes. God has made all that we are, and all in which we are, a witness of Himself. Thus He proves Himself God, and the one God by His being known to all; since another must first be proved." (Tert. from Schaff, l.c.p. 539)

The attributes of God are stressed by Tertullian. God was so real to him he even ascribed corporeality to Him. Tertullian advocated the latter opinion in view of the fact that the Alexandrians during this period denied the material in God, stressing His spirituality. However, Schaff holds that we are not to take the word "corporeality" literally in Tertullian. He may have meant something different from that which at the first suggests itself. Perhaps he meant the concrete personality of God in speaking of His corporeality. In his battle with Marcion, Tertullian cites the various qualities of God. "God is the great supreme, existing in eternity, unbegotten, unmade, without beginning, and without end." (Tert. Against Marcion, I.3). He then points out at great length and in excessive detail that God is One, that he cannot be hidden, that he is known to the soul, yes, the dowry of the soul. All creation shows us our God; He is known to us from nature. He has made all, the mountains as well as the spiders web. God is also the highest good. "Was die menschliche Schwache von Gott bestimmt sagen kann, das sage ich aus, und das allgemeine Bewusstsein wird mir zusagen! -- Gott ist die hoechste Groesse, die in der Ewigkeit gegrundet, ungeboren, ungeschaffen, ohne Anfang, ohne Ende ist". (Tert. from Rinn, "Dogmengeschichtliches Lesebuch", p.44-45). That God exists is shown us by nature itself. "Unsers Gottes Existenz laesst sich nur dadurch erweisen, dass er diese Welt geschaffen hat". (Rinn, l.c.p.45). The Christian church as a whole at this time and always upheld the doctrine of God's omnipotence, omnipresence, justice, eternity, and preservation. These great thoughts are traceable to the words of God Himself before Moses, Exod. 34,6,7, from whence Jewish theology derives its "De Deo". Tertullian was especially strong in his affirmation of these facts because of the opposition he received



from the polytheism of the pagans and the dualism of the Gnostics, who taught the Demiurge and that matter (huly) is coeternal with God.

Jesus Christ:

The Messiahship of Christ has always been the foundation of the Christian church. The denial of it is equivalent to heresy. The redemptive work of Christ is the center of Christian thought; the Christian world is concentrated on it. The believer is always conscious of the fact that Christ is God, the Messiah promised by the patriarchs and sages of old. Without this fundamental truth the church falls.

Christ was the center of theological thought also in North Africa in the days of Tertullian and Cyprian. His blessed name is found predominantly in the formula for baptism, in the creed, in the prayers used, in the writings of the fathers, and in the daily and weekly worship of the Christians.

The deity of Christ is attested to by Tertullian when he states: "Thus Christ is Spirit of Spirit, and God of God, as light is kindled of light.--- So too, that which has come forth out of God is at once God, and the Son of God, and the <sup>two</sup> ~~one~~ are one." (Tert. Apol.21).

The same writer continues to show that Christ Jesus was born in a supernatural way, that He has the attributes of the Creator, and that He suffered and died. His second coming, resurrection, and sitting at the right hand of power in heaven are likewise attested <sup>to</sup> in the creed.

The deity of Christ has been the battle-ground for the Christian church throughout the ages. Because it constitutes the alpha and omega of Christian theology, many controversies have been fought against it by heretics and the like. Especially the Gnostics and the Ebionites who insisted on accepting the humanity of Christ only (as present-day modernists and ~~some~~ rationalists urge), led the attack against

Tertullian and Cyprian. However, Tertullian cannot escape the charge of subordinationism in his teaching of Christology. He decidedly and unmistakably calls the Father the whole of the divine substance and the Son only a part of it, as was seen in the foregoing chapter (Tert. Against Praxeas, 9). In this same chapter Tertullian resorts to various illustrations to prove his assumptions on subordination. As the ray of the sun is secondary to the sun itself, so also the Son of God to the Father. Dr. Schaff observes in this connection: "We should not take figurative language too strictly, and must remember that Tertullian was especially interested in distinguishing the Father from the Son in opposition to the Patripassian Praxeas. In other respects he did the church Christology material service." (Schaff, l.c.p.555).

Just as by His incarnation, Tertullian gave witness to the pre-existence of Jesus. "He propounds the threefold hypostatical existence of the Son (filiatio): 1) The pre-existent, eternal, immanence of the Son to the Father; they being as inseparable as reason and word in man, who was created in the image of God, and hence in a measure reflects His being; 2) the coming forth of the Son with the Father for the purpose of the creation; 3) the manifestation of the world to the Son by the incarnation." (Schaff, l.c.p.555). These thoughts are propounded especially in Tertullian's "Against Praxeas" chapter 5. Everywhere, however, the idea of inferiority is brought out in the relation of Christ to the Father. Most students score the first Latin father on that point, though Dr. Neander attempts to find the explanation for it all when he argues: "To Tertullian, accustomed to familiarize the material notions of the divine essence, the same difficulties, would not present themselves here, as revolted the philosophical mind of Origen. He could quite clearly conceive by the aid of his

material notions of emanation, how the Godhead might cause to proceed from its own essence of being possessed of the same substance only in an inferior degree and standing in the same relation to the former as a ray of light to the sun. He asserted, therefore, the doctrine of one divine essence, shared in a certain gradation of three persons, most intimately connected. The Son, so far as He concerns the divine essence, is not numerically distinct from the Father; the same essence of God being also in the Son; but He differs in degree, being a smaller portion of the common mass of the divine essence. Thus the prevailing view of the Western Church came to this: one divine essence of the Father and Son; but, at the same time, subordination in the relation of the Son to the Father." (Neander, l.c.p.605).

The humanity of Christ is affirmed by Tertullian repeatedly in his "On the Flesh of Christ", where he speaks of Christ's miraculous birth and sinless flesh. He wrote this book in defence of the Christian doctrine against various heretics who denied the natural birth and corporeality of Jesus. Marcion especially is refuted. Him he accuses "of making Christ who is all truth, a half lie, and by the denial of His flesh resolving all the work of His flesh, His sufferings, and His death, into an empty show, and subverting the whole scheme of redemption." (Schaff, l.c.p.557).

The church had the queer notion at this time that the body of Christ before the exaltation was homely. This opinion was based on a false interpretation of Is.53,2,3;52,14, and Ps.22. Tertullian voices this thought in his "Against the Jews, and "On the Flesh of Christ" repeatedly. It is odd that these fathers of the early church should have advocated this view. Physical deformity was incompatible with Old Testament priesthood. Many were the rules which constituted

perfection or fitness for the priesthood. The passage in Isaiah refers to the divine suffering on the cross, and has nothing to do with the physical features of Christ's body. It portrays the awfulness of God who suffered for man as a Man. Christ Jesus was indeed uncomely in this condition during the state of His humiliation, but, by Himself, apart from His sufferings, Christ was, <sup>no doubt, of</sup> crowned with unfading beauty and glory. As the eternal Son of God His beauty surpasses all earthly comeliness; He is perfection itself. Schaff states that the earlier views of the Christians as depicted in the various pictures of Christ disagree with this opinion of Tertullian's.

Though the doctrine of the two natures in Christ was brought into the arena of theological debate much later in the Eutychian and Nestorian controversies, the truth of Scripture concerning this doctrine is upheld by Tertullian as well as the entire North African church. Tertullian writes: "The nature of the two substances displayed Him as Man and God, - in one respect born, in the other unborn; in one respect fleshly, in the other spiritual; in one sense weak, in the other exceeding strong; in one sense dying, in the other living. This property of the two states -- the divine and the human -- is distinctly asserted with equal truth of both natures alike, with the same belief both in respect of the Spirit, and of the flesh". (Tert. "On the Flesh of Christ", 5). Though, according to Schaff, Origen is the first to use the term "Godman", Tertullian, writing against the heresy of Praxeas, says: "The truth is, we find that He is expressly set forth as both God and Man". (Tert. "Against Praxeas", 27). In the same chapter he dwells on the fact that Jesus must be compounded of two substances, of flesh and spirit; however, not in the sense of a mixture, for that would destroy both natures, and Christ then were no longer God nor Man.

Christ is fully God and fully Man, possessing the full nature of each personality, the divine and the human. "Certainly, in all respects as the Son of God and the Son of Man, being God and Man, differing no doubt according to each substance in its own especial property, inas much as the word is nothing else but God and the flesh nothing else but Man." (Tert. Ag. Prax. 27). Were Christ a compounding of two natures in the sense of a mixture, He actually were neither. He then would be a third substance, very different from either. And then we would no longer have a true Godman, as Tertullian also states; "If, however, it was only a "tertium quid", some composite essence formed out of the Two Substances, like the "electrum" (which we have mentioned), there would be no distinct proofs apparent of either nature". (Tert. Ag. Prax. 27).

The North African Church and especially Tertullian placed strong emphasis on the teaching of the Logos. There was an especial teaching of the Logos, the eternal Word in the early church. "Auf die Ausbildung der christlichen Lehre im Abendland hat Tertullian den groessten Einfluss ausgeuebt durch seine Lehre vom Logos und vom dem geschichtlichen Christus. Hier hat er im Anschluss an apologetische und kleinasiatische Traditionen die fuer die Folgezeit massgebenden Formeln geschaffen". (Rinn. l. c. p. 48).

In his lectures on dogma Dr. Rinn quotes Tertullian to prove that the Logos or Son of God was taught to be of temporal existence, that He did not always exist together with the Father. He writes: "Gott ist auch Vater, auch Richter, ohne jedoch darum, weil er immer Gott ist, auch bestaendig Vater und Richter zu sein. Denn er konnte weder Vater sein vor dem Sohne, noch Richter vor der Suende. Es gab eine Zeit wo es fuer ihn keine Sohn und keine Suende gab, wodurch er

zum Richter und Vater haette werden koennen". (Rinn, l.c.p.48). This same word emanates from the Father, as is proved by the words: "Dass dieser (der Geist) aus Gott hervorgebracht und durch hervorbringen erzeugt sei, darueber sind wir belehrt worden. Dem Gott ist ein Geist. Und wenn der Strahl aus der Sonne hervorgeht, so ist er ein Teil von dem Ganzen, aber die Sonne wird doch in dem Strahl sein, weil er ein Sonnenstrahl ist." (Rinn, l.c. p.49 from Tert).

It was also the teaching of Tertullian that Christ would some day give back to the Father His power over all things. He writes to Praxeas: "It (the Monarchy) remains to firm and stable in its own state, notwithstanding the introduction into it of the Trinity, that the Son actually has to restore it to the Father entire (I Cor.15,24), --- We thus see that the Son is no obstacle to the Monarchy, although it is now administered by the Son; because with the Son it is still in its own state, and with its own state will be restored to the Father. No one, therefore, will impair it, on account of admitting the Son (to it), since it is certain that it has been committed to Him by the Father, and by and by has to be delivered again up by Him to the Father". (Tert. Ag. Prax.4).

This early church had the correct doctrine concerning the work of Christ. We quote from Franks: "Cf. esp. Adv. Marc. III.8, where Tertullian says that if the flesh of Christ is taken to be a lie, His sufferings will not deserve faith." He goes on: "Therefore, is the whole work of Christ overthrown. The death of Christ, the whole import and blessing of the Christian name, is denied." (Franks, "A History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ", p.102). The same author continues to show that Tertullian had no definite conception or formula of his own regarding the death of Christ. His case

was parallel with that of Irenaeus who regarded Christianity as a new law of Christ, and even more than that. Says Franks: "Not only does he agree with the Apostolic Fathers, the Greek Apologists, and Irenaeus in regarding Christianity as a new law of Christ; but as was natural to one who before his conversion had been a "juris peritus", he has made the idea of the new law more strictly legal and more dominant than it is among the Greeks." (Franks, l.c.p.102).

In Tertullian there is also the beginning made of that great systematized doctrine of sin and grace, so prominent in the Western Church later. Franks asserts: "Tertullian has systematized his legal view of the relation of the Christian to God by the use of the important terms merit (meritum) and satisfaction (satisfactio), both of which, together with their cognates, are common in Roman jurisprudence. Here first we touch the beginnings of the great Western systematization of the doctrine of grace and merit, the counterpart of which is to be found in the theology of the East". (Franks, l.c.p.103).

As a whole, Tertullian and Cyprian were correct in their teaching on the various church doctrines. But when they began to speculate and introduce their own philosophical ideas, they fell from the truth. (Dr. Luther gives this opinion: "Tertullian und Cyprian sind bisweilen irre gegangen und haben weidlich gestrauchelt, wo sie von dem Artikel von Christo abgegangen sind". (Luther, Index Vol. p.1773 from Vol. 8,629).)

#### The Holy Spirit:

"The doctrine of the Holy Spirit was far less developed, and, until the middle of the fourth century, was never a subject of special controversy". (Schaff, l.c.p.560). In the creed quoted by Tertullian, only one out of nine articles are devoted to the Holy Spirit. It seems the early fathers have wavering or uncertain ideas

of the Spirit, though they were especially blessed by His divine power. Theirs was in a high degree the holy and comforting influence and power of the Paraclete. They were not far removed from the age of the Apostles when spiritual gifts were predominant in the Christian church. Though there was no definite formula on the teaching of the Paraclete, He was believed to be a distinct Person; He was not the same as the Logos. He was a unity in Himself; He was one distinct Person in the Godhead. Tertullian writes in affirmation of this fact: "And so the connection of the Father and the Son, and the Son in the Paraclete, produces three coherent, one to the other. And these three are one thing (unum), not one person (unus); as it is said, "I and the Father are One (unum)", and in regard to unity of substance, not in regard to singularity of number". (Tert. Ag. Prax. 8). Especially in the Montanistic system which Tertullian later adopted was the teaching of the Holy Spirit predominant. In the rule of faith Tertullian shows that the church taught that the Spirit was sent by the Son. Here also Tertullian's Montanistic conceptions cropped out, though he never claimed he have received special revelations from the Spirit. As in the case of the Son, Tertullian also subordinated the Spirit to the Father. That fact was already apparent in the foregoing chapter on the "Holy Trinity". The same thought is expressed by the great Montanist in his "Against Praxeas", stating: "Where there is a second, there are two; and where there is a third, there are three. For the Spirit is third from God and the Son, just as the fruit growing from the shrub is third from the root, and the river growing from the spring is third from the stream, and the point of the ray is third from the sun." (Donaldson l.c.p.122, from Tert.).

It would appear that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was more strongly emphasized in these days than it is at the present time.



The Paraclete was regarded as the leader in the spiritual affairs of the church; His messages were especially sought and cherished. The early Christian church thus found comfort and strength in its strifes with heathen opposition. Writes R. Birch Hoyle: "At this point we see most clearly the august offices of the Paraclete and His pervading ethical power. "The Holy Spirit from heaven is the determiner of discipline itself"(De Pudic..11). It is His purpose "in the way of discipline to lead the church to a higher perfection. What then is the Paraclete's administrative office but this: the direction of discipline, the revelation of Scripture, the reformation of the intellect, the advancement toward the "better things"? (Cp. Hebrews 11,40; 12,24; De Virg. Vel. 1)." (Hoyle, in "The Biblical Review", April 1931). The same author then shows that Tertullian taught a higher degree of spirituality in those who received prophecies from the Holy Spirit. He states: "He goes on to maintain that "the recognition of charismata entitles the Montanists to be deservedly called "psiritual" (De Monogamia 1), and reproaches the Catholics for having "rejected the prophecies of the Holy Spirit" and, "by not receiving the Paraclete, having opposed the Montanists ( De Corona 1; De Fuga 1)." (Hoyle, in "The Biblical Review", Apr.1931).

Tertullian was very much inclined to give psiritual leadership to those who were especially led by the Spirit. "Persons animated by the Paraclete by facing martyrdom, are, in Tertullian's opinion, the real leaders and guides of the church, and not the weak-kneed officials who "are equipped for flight from city to city, pastors who are lions in peace time, timid deer in battle (De Corona 1)." (Hoyle, "The Biblical Review", Apr.1931). And, as Tertullian thought the end of the world was soon to come since this was the "latter age"

predicted in the Old Testament, the messages of the Spirit were alone to be investigated for leadership in the divine truth. Hoyle expresses this thought when he writes: "The present period of time, to Tertullian, was the 'end of ages'. 'Now, through the Paraclete, the church is settled into maturity. He will be, after Christ, the only One to be called and revered as Master, for He speaks not for Himself, but what is commanded by Christ. He is the only Prelate, because He alone succeeds Christ. They who receive Him set truth before custom.'" (De Virg. Vel.1)". (Hoyle, in "The Biblical Review". Apr.1931).

Even separation from the main body of the church is justified by the voice of the Paraclete. The "physics" who are the same as those called "carnal" by Paul, raise controversy against the Holy Spirit. "Tertullian justifies separation from the main body of the church, the "physics", at the recognition and defense of the Paraclete" (De Jejun.1; Adv. Prax.1.)." (Hoyle, in "The Biblical Review", Ap.1931).

Thus, throughout his doctrinal writings, Tertullian strongly reiterates the fact that obedience to the new prophecy demands the rejection of the hierarchy of the church catholic; that the Paraclete stands before any tradition or custom of the early church; that a rigorous moral life is entailed in the guiding principles of the Paraclete whose disciplinary measures change the ethical conduct of one's life as respects chastity, single marriage, fasting, willingness to endure martyrdom, and charity offerings. But more will be given on these topics later.

We find this emphasis on the revelations of the Spirit in this age since it was considered, especially by Tertullian, as the new age of the Spirit. "Tertullian was of the opinion that this outburst of prophecy in His time was the fulfillment of the Lord's promise to send the

the Paraclete after His ascension (John 16,12f.). "The reason why the Lord sent the Paraclete was, that, since human mediocrity was unable to take in all things at once, discipline should little by little be directed and ordained and carried to perfection by the Vicar of the Lord, the Holy Spirit" (De Virg. Vel.1)". (Hoyle, in "The Biblical Review", April 1931).

Pentecost, according to the great Montanist, was not the full descent of the Spirit. The entire "new age" was one of the Spirit. The Paraclete was believed to be particularly active now in the establishment of His new church here on earth. In "De Anima" chapter 9 Tertullian speaks at great length of a certain sister who during the services "conversed with angels and sometimes with the Lord". She was reputed to have seen and heard "mysterious communications". After the people were dismissed from the service, she reported to the leaders what she had seen and heard in her visions. And all this is indicative of the emphasis laid on the study of the Paraclete and His marvellous revelations in the age of Tertullian, or during the first half of the third century.

We, as believers in the true church, know that there is no more need of more revelations of the Spirit; Christ was told us of the love of the Father and pointed out the only way to salvation. Christ, it is true, is still the Head of His church, and the Holy Spirit its spiritual leader, guiding men in the truth as set forth in the Bible. If we have the feeling of a new revelation, we are to "try the spirits, whether they be of God" (1 John 4,1). However, the stern temper of the North African Church is an embracing antidote to the laxity of morals, the ease of divorces, and the craze for luxury and pleasure in its sensuous forms at the present day. We sorely need the Paraclete's presence.

## 2) The Angels.

Tertullian frequently alludes to the spirits, both good and bad. In his treatise on baptism he shows that the waters received their healings powers from the angels who were sent by the Father. The good angels are pictured as the messengers of God; the bad as the cohorts of Satan. The particular duty of the good angels is the guardianship over man; they watch over our souls and record the evil we do. Says Tertullian: "For at the very time the devil is working havoc in the church, do you doubt that the angels are looking down from above, and mark every man, who speaks and who listens to the blaspheming word, who lends his tongue and who lends his ears to the service of Satan against God?" (Tert. On the Shows, 27).

The general opinion of the Christian church was that the angels were spirits. This teaching is not unique to the faith of the Christians. Even the heathen believe in spirits. Plato admits them, as do also all magic dealers and the various sacred books of the orient.

Tertullian refers to the fall of the evil angels who were corrupted by their own freewill, and from whom sprang a race of demons. Satan is their chief. They are the real source of evils and disasters in the world. "Their great business is the ruin of mankind. So from the very first spiritual wickedness sought our destruction. They inflict accordingly upon our bodies, diseases and other grievous calamities, while by violent assaults they hurry the soul into sudden and extraordinary excesses. Their marvelous subtleness and tenuity give them access to both parts of our body." (Tert. Apol. 22).

## 3) Man.

The Biblical account of the creation of man was believed by the North African church as is apparent from the creed and all the writings of the early fathers. The story of the fall of man, his se-

duction by the Serpent, and ultimate expulsion from the Garden of Eden, is alluded to repeatedly. Though the Pelagian controversy with its philosophical speculations on the nature of the soul and its corrupt teachings on the merits of man in the fifth century first brought out to its fullest extent the universality of the fall as well as the origin of the soul, the germs of these teachings are found in Tertullian's "De Anima". The Montanist was the first to teach the traducianism of the soul, a belief still cherished by the true Christian church and especially preferred to creationism in our own Lutheran Church. In chapter 22 of his "De Anima" he expressly states that the soul of every man is "evolved out of one (archetypal soul)". All the souls that are born into the world are not created by God individually, but derive their origin from the soul of Adam which God created on the sixth day by breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. Even the soul of Eve, chapter 36, was not created apart from Adam's. He points out that her soul was, so to say, a portion of her husband's. To quote Tertullian: "God's "afflatus" would have animated her too, if there had not been in the woman a transmission <sup>from</sup> of the man Adam of his soul as well as of his flesh". Other arguments of his in the same treatise point to the fact that the creation of God was completed on the sixth day; therefore, there is no more creation performed by Him. God now rests and preserves the world. The soul of Adam was so created that it would have the power of reproducing itself in its descendants. Schaff states in this connection that most Western divines followed Tertullian. Traducianism is especially liked by most theologians for it explains somewhat the original state of sin in which man is born. It also opposes the creationistic views of the heathen philosopher Aristotle, who held that the souls of man were created by the direct

agency of God. However, that view destroys the organic unity of the soul and the body. Tertullian well says: " We indeed maintain that both are conceived, and formed, perfectly simultaneously, as well as born together (Tertullian speaks of the soul and the body); and that not a moment's interval occurs in their conception so that a prior place can be assigned to either." (Tert."De Anima",27). Were there a separate creation for either such a state of affairs as described above were hardly possible. That sin is inherited from one person to the next is compatible with the fact that there is some good remaining in man." Auch in den Schlechtesten ist noch etwas Gutes, in dem Besten einiges Boese. --- Die Seele hat ihren besonderen Grundlagen und Mittel ohne eigentuemliche Beschaffenheit zu foerdern, naemlich, die Unsterblichkeit, die Vernunftigkeit, die Wahrnehmung, das Erkemtnisvermoegen, Freiheit des Willens --- Alles dieses ist der Seels mit der Geburt verliehen, aber derselbe, die sie von Anfang an beneidet hat, der verdunkelt diese Vorsuege auch jetzt und verdirbt sie". (Rinn,l.c.p.54-55).

In this connection Tertullian also brought out the doctrine of original sin in a plain and explicit form perhaps for the first time. "He adopted, out of the previous doctrine of the church, the idea, that the first man, as he was created by God, possessed all the faculties necessary to reveal the image of God, through his moral nature; but that these faculties lay still in a dormant undeveloped state. Their development depended on man's free will".(Neander,l.c.p.614). The same author continues to show that Tertullian was of the opinion that the first parents were so created that by fellowship with God they could have become transfigured and thus more divine. But by the first sin, which was a refusal to accept the will of God, man separated himself from God and took on him the sinful nature. Since this event

sin is propagated in all men, for the first parents had in them the germ of all mankind; their soul was the source of all human souls. However, man is not unalterably sinful; the grace of God can still unite with the evil that is in him. And this grace can make man a child of God through faith in the blood of Christ. Writes Tertullian: "Es fragt sich, ob das, was wir Naturwissenschaften genannt haben, veränderlich ist, Wenn es so ist ( das ein guter Baum nicht schlechte Früchte und ein schlechter Baum nicht gute Früchte bringen kann, und niemand von Dornen Feigen und Disteln Trauben ernten kann) dann wird Gott dem Abraham nicht aus Steinen Kinder erwecken können, das Otterngeschlechte keine Früchte der Basse bringen, und der Apostel hat geirrt, wenn er schreibt: Auch wir waren einst Kinder des Zorns.--- Das wird die Macht der göttlichen Gnade sein die sicherlich stärker ist als die Natur." (Rinn.l.c.p.55). Yet, Tertullian did not teach that the divine influence had such a power as to completely overwhelm the resistance of freewill, reducing it to a passive object. "For Tertullian, according to the context, is only intending to prove, that grace, through its inworking agency on the corrupted nature, could, by virtue of the freewill, impart to it a higher power than dwells in itself, and thus transform it to something else; and we are bound in justice to accept that interpretation, which best accords with other explanations that Tertullian gives". (Neander,l.c.p.619).

"To the Gnostic doctrine concerning the different fundamental principles of human nature, according to which they maintain that a hyllic or material nature could never be converted into a pneumatic or spiritual one, -- to this doctrine Tertullian opposed the almighty power of grace and the mutability of human will". (Neander,l.c.p.618).

In general, Tertullian taught that the soul of man was corporeal,

that it grows with the growth of the body, was corrupted by sin, but that it is regenerated by the water and the Spirit in baptism. These views are all voiced repeatedly in the "De Anima", and especially in chapter 22 when he says: "The soul, then, we define to be sprung from the breath of God, immortal, possessing body, having form, simple in its substance, intelligent, in its own nature, developing its powers in various ways, free in its determinations, subject to the changes of accident, in its various faculties mutable, rationally supreme, endowed with an instinct of presentiment, evolved out of one (archetypal soul)". (Tert. "De Anima", 22).

#### 4) Freewill.

Tertullian discusses the doctrine of freewill in connection with his discussion on the soul. In his "De Anima" he refutes the erroneous views of Marcion and Hermogenes at great length and <sup>with</sup> abundant repetition. He expressly states that the will of man is free, that freedom is an innate property of the soul. This thought is referred to in his discussion on the soul, in the quotation quoted above, "De Anima" 22. General freedom of action is there ascribed to the soul. Dr. Rinn quotes Tertullian also to prove the freedom of the will with the words: "Frei finde ich den Menschen von Gott geschaffen, mit eigenem Willen und der Macht der Selbstbestimmung und ich merke kein andres Bild und Gleichnis Gottes an ihm als das, welches diesen Zustand mit sich bringt.--- Gott befiehlt, droht, und ermahnt, nur weil der Mensch den freien Willen hat zu gehorchen oder das Gebot zu verachten" (Rinn.l.c.p.47). Thereby also he shows that grace is not irresistible.

#### 5) The Holy Eucharist.

Under the leadership of the first two fathers the Latin Church of North Africa experienced no controversy on the



doctrines of the Eucharist. Not until many centuries had passed did the Christian church wrangle about the celebration of this divine rite. Analysis and reflection gradually changed the ideas of theologians. The fifteenth century and the succeeding ages after Luther perhaps saw the hardest fought controversies on the doctrine of the Eucharist.

The general names with which Tertullian refers to the Lord's Supper are "the act of thanksgiving", the "supper of God", or "the banquet of the Lord". Much discussion has resulted from the fact that he called or made the words of institution, "Hoc est corpus meum" equivalent to "Figura corporis mei". (Tert. Adv. Marc. III, 19). There are those who find in this expression a teaching of symbolism, the criterion of Reformed theology. Theologians of Calvinistic theology use the "figura" of Tertullian in substantiation of their belief that the Lord's body is not really present in the bread and wine, but that the elements in the Holy Supper are mere symbols, figures of the true body and blood of our Lord. However, this ancient battleground of theology, on which Melancthon fell and for which reason Luther separated from Zwingli at famous Marburg, was not meant to be contested by the Montanist. He merely used this statement "figura" in opposition to Marcion's deism. He was writing against Marcion at the time he used the word "figura". In place of teaching symbolism, Tertullian, by using the Latin word "figura", intended to emphasize the reality of the body of Christ in the Eucharist. Dr. Luther has various statements in support of this interpretation. They follow: "Tertullian gebraucht das Wort "figura" nach rechter Art der lateinischen Sprache, das heisst, eine Form oder Gestalt "mathematice", das lang, dick, breit, rund, etc. ist". (Luther, 857). Again he writes: Tertullian fight wider Marcion und will, das Christus einen rechten

natuerlichen Leib gehabt habe, nicht ein eitel Ding, Schemen oder Gespenst". (Luther, 20,854). In the same column he adds: "Tertullian schliesst wider Marcion: es konnte Christi Leib nicht im Brot sein, und Brots Gestalt fassen, wenns nicht ein rechter, wahrhaftiger Leib waere". (Luther, 20,854). Dr. Schaff holds that the expression of Tertullian is very near the interpretation of Oecolampadius who put the figure in the predicate, to which Luther already remarked correctly: "Es ist klar, dass Tertullian das Wort "figura" nicht verstehe nach Oecolampads Weise fuer ein Gleichnis oder Zeichen, sondern fuer eine Gestalt des Leibs Christi". (Luther, 20,588f). (Note: All these references from Luther's works were taken from the Index Volume, s.v. "Tertullian"). From the entire context it is apparent that the African father meant to convey the view as shown by Luther. Thus Waterman also agrees with Luther when he states: "Plainly Tertullian holds with Irenaeus and Justin that the consecrated bread is made to be a true Body of our Lord Jesus Christ". (Waterman, l.c.p.275-6).

#### The Eucharist as a Sacrifice:

The germ of the Catholic idea of a sin-offering in the Lord's Supper is found in the writings of the African Fathers. The language they use indicates the idea of a sacrifice in connection with the Eucharist celebration. Writes Dr. Schaff: "The African Fathers in the third century --- are the first to approach on this point the later Roman Catholic idea of sin-offering". (Schaff, l.c.p.246). Throughout the writings of Tertullian and Cyprian the word "sacrificium", first coined by Tertullian for church language, is employed to describe the Eucharist. "Cyprian speaks of "celebrating the Lord's sacrifice" (sacrificium dominicum; cf. also hostia dominica (De Unitate Eccl.17), of "offering", not only the cup, but

"the Lord's Blood", and once of "sacrificing". --- There is no idea of repetition of the sacrifice of the Cross. For, side by side, with phrases which speak of "offering the blood of Christ", Cyprian speaks of offering the cup in commemoration of His passion." (Hastings "Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge and Ethics", p.551, Vol.5). Such terms as these were the beginning of the Roman Catholic doctrine of repetition of Christ's sacrifice in the Mass. Later Augustine used the same expression, but he merely meant a sacrifice in the sense of a commemoration of the Cross.

In the North African Church the bread and the wine, the elements used in the celebration of the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, were mixed as a type of the union of the natures in Christ. Writes Cyprian in affirmation of this custom: "For if any one offer wine alone, the blood of Christ is dissociated from us; but if the water be alone, the people are dissociated from Christ; but when both are mingled and are joined with one another by a close union, there is completed a spiritual and heavenly sacrament. Thus the cup of the Lord is not indeed water alone, unless each be mingled with the other". (Cyprian, Epistle 62). We glean from this remark that both elements were offered to all the partakers of the Holy Supper; the wine was not withheld from the laity, as is done in the Roman Catholic Church. Dr. Donaldson indicates that Tertullian taught the same doctrine and custom in his "Against Marcion", chapter 19.

The Eucharist was celebrated in the morning. "We take also in the congregation, before daybreak, and from the hands of none but the presidents, the sacraments of the Eucharist". (Tert. "The Chaplet", 3). Dr. Donaldson remarks in this connection: "The custom of celebrating the Eucharist in the early morning of the first day of the week was

probably due to two causes: 1) That it might be a weekly memorial of the Lord's Resurrection --- and (2) to avoid exciting undue attention and public notice". (Donaldson, l.c.p.72). However, this very secrecy of the Christians aroused the suspicion of the heathen. It is because they did things in private that false rumors were soon circulated concerning them. The Romans wickedly asserted that the Christians had the heinous custom of slaying infants during the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Later, when the agape and the Eucharist were divided and celebrated as two distinct acts of worship, the heathen scoffers spread the same falsehood concerning the Agape. Moreover, they even taught that after the Thyestean banquet of the Christians there followed darkness, a dog being tied to a lamp and overturning it in his attempts to reach bits of flesh and scraps offered him. Thereupon, they said, followed incest and nameless horrors. Dr. Donaldson is of the opinion that the heathen idea of ascribing Thyestean orgies to the Christians resulted from the fact that they were told the Christians partook of the blessed body and blood of our Lord during the celebration of the Eucharist.

The elements of the Lord's Supper were treated with the utmost care. "If any drop from the chalice or crumb of consecrated bread fall to the ground, it is a cause of great anxiety to us," Tertullian tells the heathen world. (Tert. "On the Crown", 3).

An important part of the ceremony was the kiss of peace. This pious service some would omit partly as savoring of ostentation, partly as being incompatible with the days of fasting. But the Montanist protests vigorously: "What prayer is complete if divorced from the holy kiss? who when offering service to the Lord is hindered by peace? what sacrifice at the altar is there from which one retired without

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the peace? whatever be the prayer, will it not be made more acceptable by our offering the command that we are "not to appear unto men to fast"? (Matt.6.16). (Tert."On the Crown" 8).

The purpose of the Supper is shown us by the words of Cyprian when he states: "In which very sacrament our people are shown to be made one, so that in like manner, as many grains collected and ground, and mixed together in one mass, make one bread; so in Christ, who is the heavenly bread, we may know that there is one body, with which our members are joined and united". (Cyprian, Epist.62). It is from this very truth that we Christians at the present day derive the word "communion", indicating the fellowship and "oneness" of the Christian body.

As said before, the Eucharist and the Agape were one single celebration in the early church before the beginning of the third century. In Tertullian's day they were divided. The Eucharist was celebrated in the morning (Tert. "The Chaplet", 3 quoted above), whereas the Agape, the love-feast, derived from an ancient heathen form of banquet, was held in the night time. Tertullian verifies this fact and gives a complete description of the Agape in the following words: "Our feast explains itself by its name. The Greeks call it "dilectio", affection".----- As it is an act of religious service, it permits no wiliness of immodesty. The participants before reclining, taste first of prayer to God. As much is eaten as satisfies the cravings of hunger; as much is drunk as befits the chaste. They say that it is enough, as those who remember that even during the night they have to worship God; they talk as those who know that the Lord is one of their auditors. After manual ablution and the bringing in of light, each is asked to stand forth and sing, as he can, a hymn to God, either one from the Holy Scriptures, or one of his own composing, - a proof of the

measure of drinking. As the feast commences with prayer, so with prayer it is closed. We go from it, not like troops of mischief-doers, nor bands of vagabonds, nor to break out in licentious acts, but to have as much care of our modesty and chastity as if we had been at a school of virtue rather than at a banquet." (Tert. Apol.39). In such admirable words Tertullian defends the Christian practice of the agapial banquet against the heathen insults and mockery. Dr. Schaff states that after the fourth century the Agape disappeared from the rites of Christian worship. In agreement with this passage from the pen of Tertullian, the Hastings Encyclopedia states: "We read here of preliminary prayers, sitting at meat, handwashing, lighting of lamps, psalms, and hymns, prayer and dismissal." (Hastings l.c.p.170, Vol.1). The Agape, then, is not the same as the Eucharist. These quotations show that it is something distinct.

#### The Celebration of the Eucharist:

Dr. Schaff correctly states that we are not warranted in tracing the full liturgical service of this period. There was a certain freedom and simplicity. In the "Didache" are the oldest Eucharistic prayers. Without a doubt, they were in use in the days of Tertullian and Cyprian in North Africa. In chapters nine and ten are listed the two prayers: 1) The thanksgiving (Eucharist proper), commonly ending with the hymn of the Cherubims, the trishagion, Isaiah 6,3; 2) The prayer of consecration and the invocation of the Holy Spirit. A third prayer or series of prayers was in the form of intercessions for all classes of people. Their length and order was not uniform. Schaff shows that the prayers were read, not spoken. Just as the congregations of the Jews in the synagogues and in the Temple responded to the minister with a loud

Amen, so also the Christian assembly. "The "Sursum corda" also, as an incitement to devotion, with the response, "Habemus ad Dominum", appears at least as early as Cyprian's time, who expressly alludes to it, and in the ancient liturgies."(Schaff,l.c.p.238).

The elements, which were bread and wine, were placed in the hand, not in the mouth, as is the custom in our Lutheran Church. From Tertullian's remark:"We also take, in the congregation, before day-break, and from the hand of none but the presidents, the sacrament of the Eucharist,"(Tert. The Chap.3), we infer that, whereas baptism could have been administered by a laymen or sub-deacon, the Eucharist could be distributed by the highest clergyman, or president,only. Dr. Schaff points out that the Supper was celebrated "amid the singing of psalms by the congregation (Psalm 34, with the words, "The body of Christ", "The blood of Christ", "The cup of life" to each of which the congregation responded with the loud Amen. The whole congregation thus received the elements, standing in the act. Thanksgiving and benediction concluded the service". ( Schaff,l.c.p.238-9). There was no withholding of the wine from the laity, as was before intimated. At the first the elements were taken daily. "In the Church of North Africa, the daily enjoyment of the communion continued to be held necessary; since it was considered to be the daily bond of union the betwixt the Lord and the church, the daily means of strength, life, and of salvation unto the Christians." (Neander,l.c.332). The Roman Catholic Church today offers the bread to the communicants only. Neander traces the origin of this false custom to the practice of the early Christians at Carthage. He writes: "When the daily service and celebration of the Lord's Supper ceased, the only means left was, to take home a portion of the consecrated bread, which, in this case of necessity,

was to be substituted for the whole communion -- the first trace of the practice, introduced through error and abuse, of receiving the Lord's Supper under one kind".(Neander, l.c.p.332). Dr. Schaff holds the same view. It is interesting to note that the "eformed Churches still maintain the old custom of standing during the celebration of the Eucharist. The Catholics knelt some time later, and they were followed by the Anglicans and Lutherans. The Presbyterians have the unique custom of sitting during the Lord's Supper.

#### 6) Holy Baptism.

Tertullian has written a special treatise on the doctrine of baptism. The Hastings Encyclopedia states that the Montanist was written more on baptism than any previous authority.

In the ancient church baptism was universally regarded as a sacrament of the new birth, of the regeneration of the soul. Baptism meant generally the admission into the ancient Christian church. All adults were previously instructed in the fundamentals of the church. It was insisted, especially by Tertullian, (De Baptismo, 18), that they be able to ask for salvation before taking of it. It was absolutely necessary that true repentance be found and conversion before one could be baptized. "Tertullian evidently means (referring to De Baptismo 18), that children should be led to Christ by instructing them in Christianity; but that they should not receive baptism until, after having been sufficiently instructed, they are led from personal conviction and from personal choice, to seek for it with sincere longing of the heart.... It seems, in fact, according to the principles laid down by him, that he could not conceive of any efficacy whatever residing in baptism, without the conscious participation and individual faith of the person baptized." (Neander, l.c.p.312-3). Out of baptism, the new man was



to come forth and arise to live unto grace. The effect of baptism is told by Tertu Schaff when he writes: "When the soul comes to faith, and becomes transformed through regeneratinn by water and power from above, it discovers, after the veil of corruption is taken away, its whole light. It is necessary unto the fellowshipp of the Holy Spirit; and the soul which unites itself to the Holy Spirit, is followed by the body". (Schaff, l.c.p.253).

The water received its consecrating powers from the hovering of the Spirit in the beginning of the world, according to Tertullian, who writes: " All waters, therefore, in virtue of the pristine privilege of their origin do, after invocation of God, attain the sanctifying power of sanctification." (Tert. De Bapt.4). He continues by pointing out that the Holy Spirit supervenes from heaven, as He did in the beginning over the waters, giving them the power of sanctification. The true Montanist gives the rather allegorical interpretation of baptism when he writes: "But we little fishes, after the example of our ΙΧΘΥΣ Jesus Christ, are born in water, nor have we safety in any other way, than by permanently abiding in water; so that most monstrous creature, who had no right to teach even sound doctrine, knew full well how to kill the little fishes, by taking them from the water."(Tert. De B̄apt.1). The word ΙΧΘΥΣ was frequently in use by the early Christians. It was an allegorical representation of Christ meaning "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior". But more of this word later!

The baptism vow was one for life; it was not temporary. It was very sacred to God. If it was broken a most serious sin was committed. Sincere repentance was needed to avoid excommunication. More stress was laid on this vow then than is today. The repentance also had to be of a more tangible and evident nature. (Cf. Tert. Bapt.10)

In his "De Poenitentia" Tertullian shows that baptism is necessary for salvation. An exception was made in the case of a martyr's death, which was regarded as a baptism of blood.

Baptism was often called a mystery or a sacrament. "Hence Tertullian frequently calls it "signaculum fidei", the signature of our faith". (Bingham, "Christian Antiquities", Vol.3, p. 407).

Baptism was not to be given to the living for the dead. In fact, the idea was fought by the North African Church. Writes Bingham: "Tertullian brings the same charge against the Marcionites, comparing their practice to the heathen lustrations for the dead upon the kalends of February.--- But, he tells them, "they did in vain allege the apostle's authority for this practice, as if he had argued from it for the truth and confirmation of the resurrection." (Bingham, l.c.p.452). Though Tertullian speaks of a baptism for the dead, Bingham offers this solution: "Baptism for the dead is an elliptical expression for "being baptized(for) unto the faith", or "belief of the resurrection of the body". And so I think Tertullian is to be understood, when he says, in opposition to the error of the Marcionites, that "to be baptized for the dead" is to be "baptized for the body", which is declared to be dead by baptism". (Bingham, l.c.p. 453-4).

The energumens, or persons possessed with an evil spirit, were admitted to baptism. Among other things Cyprian speaks of this fact in his sixty-ninth letter, of which Bingham says: "From this discourse of Cyprian (Epist, 69) we learn, that not only energumens, in the time of extremity, were admitted to baptism; but that baptism in such cases, was many times a peculiar benefit to them". (Bingham, l.c.p.487). There were those to whom baptism was refused, however. They are listed by Bingham who writes: "At the time of Cyprian, not only

public actors, but private teachers and masters of this scandalous art, were debarred the communion of the church". (Bingham, l.c.p.492).

There were sponsors in those days, as we have them now. Tertullian in his "De Baptismo" chapter 18 refers to them. There we learn that they were to answer in baptism all the questions for the baptized one, and were to be the guardians of the spiritual life of the newly baptized in the future.

In the early church baptism was usually done by immersion. The entire body was dipped under water to represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Thus also, our own dying unto sins was represented. In writing against the Marcionites, Tertullian states that their baptism was in conformity with the true church, for it was done by immersion in the name of the Trinity. The clothes of the person baptized was doffed. But aspersion or sprinkling was also allowed and regarded as a true and valid baptism. Writes Cyprian: "If any one supposes that they have obtained nothing because they have been merely sprinkled with the water of salvation, they must not be so deceived themselves, as to think that they ought therefore to be baptized over again, in case they recover from their sickness." (Cyprian, Epist. 76). "Some learned persons think that Tertullian alludes to the allowance of sprinkling in extraordinary cases; when speaking of man's pretending to be baptized without true repentance, he says: "No man would grant such false penitents so much as one aspersion of water." (Bingham, l.c.p.604). He continues to say: "They not only administer baptism by aspersion immersion under water, but also repeated this three times. Tertullian speaks of it as a ceremony generally used in his time: "We dip not once, but three times, at the naming of every person in the Trinity." (Bingham, l.c.p.605).

As is evident from his first Epistle, Cyprian regarded baptism as a kind of exorcism in a strong form. He speaks of it as being able to drive out the devil as also the Red Sea drowned the Egyptians. By baptism, then, there was wrought a thorough change of character.

#### Infant Baptism:

Tertullian was the only opponent of infant baptism among the church fathers, says Dr. Schaff (Vol.2,p.261). Tertullian continually advised, though he did not prohibit, infant baptism. He writes: "According to the circumstances and disposition, and even age, of each individual, the delay of baptism is preferable; principally in the case of little children." (Tert. On Bapt.18). He goes on to show that infant baptism thrusts the sponsors into too great dangers. The one baptized may not remain faithful or they themselves may eventually fail to fulfill the promises they swore. Since he contended that baptism washed one clean from the sins committed before baptism only, he recommended the postponement of the sacrament. Sins committed after baptism could be washed away only by penitential sacrifices, by good works, alms givings, and prayers. This thought is especially brought out in Tertullian's "On Penance". In his treatise on baptism Tertullian tells the unmarried especially that they should postpone baptism until the time when they think they will no longer be able to become guilty of the seven mortal sins. That is also his advise to the healthy children; but to the sickly child he advises immediate baptism, since baptism was an indispensable thing for the forgiveness of sins. The longer one postponed baptism the more blessings one received from it when it was finally received. As a result of this teaching many put off their baptism unto their death-bed. Constantine is said to have done the latter.

13.

Cyprian differed entirely from his Master on this score.

It seems that Tertullian had no lasting influence in the matter of infant baptism. In the days of Cyprian, baptism was done on the second and third day of the child. He writes to a fellow clergyman: "And therefore, dearest brother, this was our opinion in council, that by us no one ought to be hindered from baptism and from the grace of God, who is merciful and kind and loving to all; which, since it is observed and maintained in respect of all, we think is even more observed in respect of infants and newly-born from our help, and from the divine mercy, that immediately, on the beginning of their birth, lamenting and weeping, they do nothing else but entreat." (Cyprian, Epist. 58). Schaff (l.c.p. 261) states that a council in Carthage in the year 253 decided for the earlier time for baptism, thought it did not condemn the delay. His idea of the almost magical effect of baptism together with its absolute necessity led him to hasten rather than baptism delay. Infants, to Cyprian, were on a level in matters of faith with adults. He expressly states that infants have the "same equality of the divine gift" as other people. (Cyprian, Epist. 58). To Tertullian, on the <sup>one</sup> other hand, baptism was so sacred, that one would rather shrink from receiving it; to Cyprian, on the other, it was so precious, that one should not lose a moment's time in accepting its blessings.

#### Heretical Baptism:

In the third century, during the days of Cyprian, heretical baptism was the subject of a violent controversy. It finally became so strong, that it involved the authority of the Roman See. The points of the dispute were two: The Romans charged that the validity of baptism depended on the proper administration of the same as instituted by Christ. The formula of baptism in the name of the

Holy Trinity gave all validity to the act. The subjective character of the officiating priest or person did not matter; his faith did not detract from the effect of baptism. Cyprian, however, was strongly opposed to this idea of heretical baptism. He called it a mock-baptism, and demanded all those who came into his fold to be rebaptized, or, rather, to be baptized, for he did not wish to use the term "rebaptize". He consistently pointed out an inconsistency in the argument of the Roman bishop Stephen on heretical baptism. He stated that if heretical baptism possessed an objective validity, then the confirmation of the same must have objective validity. Of the seventh council held at Carthage under his bishopric he writes: "According to evangelical and apostolic testimony, heretics, who are called adversaries of Christ and Antichrists, when they come to the church, must be baptized with the one baptism of the church, that they may be made of adversaries, friends, and of Antichrists, Christians." This is the view of Cyprian, and is agreed to by the 87 bishops who assembled with him in 258.

The heretics cannot have the true baptism, "since we and the heretics have not one God, not one Lord, not one church, nor one faith, nor even one spirit, nor one body" (Cyprian, Epist. 74). He continues to show that there is absolutely nothing in common with the true church and the heretics; therefore, their baptism is invalid. In the same chapter we read: "Heretics cannot have the true Christ. If not true Christ, then also not God and the Holy Ghost. They are against the faith of Christ. -- An heretics may not lawfully ordain nor lay on hands, so neither may be baptize, nor do anything holily or spiritually, since he is an alien from spiritual and deifying sanctity."

Baptism, then is valid when administered in the true church only. By true church connection Cyprian meant "the subjective connection with

the true church by faith and the disposition of the heart". (Neander, l.c. p. 322). Neander continues to point out that Cyprian took it for granted that the officiating priest himself, by virtue of his faith, must be an organ of the Holy Spirit, and enabled by the magical influence of his priestly office, duly to perform the priestly acts, to communicate for example, to the water, its spiritual, sanctifying power. But, the question arises, who is to look into the heart of the officiating priest and know or ascertain whether he is a true believer?

Dr. Schaff gives the right reason for the stand taken by Cyprian against the Roman See. He writes: "His position here was due to his high-churchly exclusiveness and his horror of schism. As the one catholic church is the sole depository of all grace, there can be no forgiveness of sins, no regeneration or communication of the Spirit, no salvation, and, therefore, no valid sacraments out of her bosom." (Schaff, l.c.p.262). By "catholic church", it must be remembered, Cyprian did not refer to the Roman Catholic Church as such, but to the Christian church in general.

Pope Stephen, 253-257, stood for the opposite ground on the tradition of custom and led the attack against Cyprian on the Roman side. Of him Dr. Schaff well says: "He offered no argument, but he spoke with the consciousness of authority, and followed a catholic instinct". (Schaff, l.c.p.263). Stephen's letters are no longer extant. We must learn of his position from the writings of Cyprian and his contemporaries. It is apparent that he contended for the validity of baptism alone dependent upon the institution words of Christ. The officiating priest and his own subjective faith did not come into consideration. Of him Cyprian writes: "Why has the bitter obstinacy of our brother Stephen broken forth to such an extent, as to contend that sons are born to God from the baptism of Marcion; moreover, of Valentinus and

Apelles, and of others who blaspheme against God the "ather; and to say that remission is granted in the name of Jesus Christ where blasphemy is uttered against the "ather and against Christ the Lord God?" (Cyprian, Epist. 73,7). Though Cyprian was strongly opposed to this view of Stephen's, and even considered his opponents as followers of the Antichrist or betrayers of Christ, he kept up the closest fellowship with Stephen. He regarded their stand as a great mistake, but did not think it proper to separate on that account; schism was a horrible thought to him. The result of it all was the suppression of Cyprian's stand after 100 years when another African Council accepted formally that stand of the Roman church.

The uniqueness of the controversy is involved in the fact that the North African Church forbade even the baptism of schismatics, besides that of heretics. Waterman says of this: "Doubtless they got some support from the confusion in the use of the words "heresy" and "heretic", which meant "sect" and "sectarian" in the early church". (Waterman, l.c. p. 405-6). The correct stand, the Biblical teaching and the teaching, therefore, of our Lutheran Church, is this: We accept the baptism of all denominations or persons who have the true belief in the Holy Trinity, i.e., who teach the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost as one Holy God, but three distinct Persons. Those who teach other<sup>wise</sup> than this have no valid baptism. Cyprian was correct in rejecting the baptism of the Marcionites and Valentinians etc., for they did not accept the deity of Christ, nor had they the correct doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Rome was too liberal in her views. In the Christian church on earth there is only one baptism as Cyprian rightly shows: "There is one baptism, which is appointed in the catholic church, and that by this those are not rebaptized, but baptized by us, who at any time come from the



adulterous and unhallowed water to be washed and sanctified by the truth of the saving water." (Cyprian, Epist. 72, 1). The great student of Tertullian grows quite oratorical in his contest with Stephen, stating: "Does he give glory to God, who communicates with the baptism of Marcion? Does he give glory to God who judges that remission of sins is granted among those who blaspheme God? Does he give glory to God who affirms that sons are born to God without of an adulterer and an harlot? Does he give glory to God who does not hold the unity and the truth that arose from the divine law, but maintains heresies against the church? --- If glory is thus given to God, if the fear and the discipline of God is thus preserved by ourselves up to captivity, let us deliver to the devil the ordination of the gospel, the appointment of Christ, the majesty of Christ; let the sacraments of the divine warfare be loosed; let the standards of the heavenly camps be betrayed; and let the church succumb and yield to heretics, light to darkness, faith to perfidy, hope to despair, reason to error, immortality to death, love to hatred, truth to falsehood, Christ to Antichrist." (Cyp. Epist. 73).

Women were not permitted to baptize, according to Tertullian, who writes: "It is not permitted unto women to speak in the church, and so neither to teach, not to baptize, nor to celebrate the Eucharist, nor to claim for themselves the performance of any man's duties, far less sacerdotal functions. (Tert. "On the Veil. of Virg". from Donaldson, l.c.p. 63).

#### The Celebration of Baptism:

In general the early church universally followed the rule of Christ in baptizing in the name of the Trinity with running water. We read in the Didache: "Concerning baptism, baptize thus: Having first rehearsed all these things, baptize in the name of

the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost", in running water; 2. But if thou hast no running water, and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. 3. But if thou hast neither, pour water three times on the head "in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." (The Didache, Lake Edition, Vol. 2, pp. 319-321). The usual procedure of the baptized was as follows: There was first of all an exhortation to prayer, fasting, the repentance of past sins, and an admonition for a righteous life. Then the person was led to the place of water (later a font for this very purpose) and received a waterbath, being thus regenerated in the name of the Holy Trinity. Thus also the baptized became partakers of the forgiveness of sins. Before the actual baptism, the candidate was asked to renounce the devil and the pomp of his angels, to give himself wholly to God, and to confess the Trinity. A catechetical instruction during the age of Tertullian of perhaps two years or more preceded the act of baptism. Under Cyprian, who introduced infant baptism again, of course, this was impossible. Tertullian bears witness to this fact when he writes: "When entering the water, we make profession of the Christian faith in the words of its rule: we bear public testimony that we have renounced the devil, his pomp, and his angels." (Tert. "On the Shows", 4).

The confession of the Trinity by the baptised one is followed by an appropriate prayer of the minister or president. Then the candidate was baptized in three successive immersions in which the deacons and deaconesses assisted. "The immersion consisted of thrice dipping the head of the candidate who stood nude in the water". (Schaffl. c.p. 248). In the Nicene age the baptistries of the various churches were built for immersion. The oriental churches all adhere to this custom. The Didache allows pouring in case of a water scarcity only; immersion

was the common thing. Various pictures in the catacombs of Rome show a clergyman performing baptism by pouring water on the head of the candidate. Schaff thinks that these pictures date from approximately the second century. The trine immersion is also referred to by Tertullian in his "De Corona", 3, 6c.

Many minor usages were also in use already at this early age. There was the signing of the cross over the forehead and the breast of the baptized in token that he was redeemed by Christ the crucified; milk and honey was given as a sign of sonship with God; and an unction was given the baptized member immediately after coming from the water. Tertullian records these usages in his church with the words: "Not that in the water we obtain the Holy Spirit, but in the water, (under the witness of) the angel, we are cleansed and prepared for the Holy host. In this case also a type has preceded. ---- After this when we have issued from the font, we are thoroughly anointed with the blessed unction, --- a practice derived from the old discipline, wherein on entering the priesthood, men were wont to be anointed with oil from a horn, even since Aaron was anointed by Moses. --- Thus too in our case, the unction rubs carnally (that is, on the body), but profits spiritually. In the next place, the hand is laid on us, invoking and inviting the Holy Spirit through benediction. Then over our cleansed and blessed bodies willingly descends from the Father that Holiest Spirit. (Devi. 2, 3-4, 7, 8).

The ancient ritualists, Bingham shows, speak of an unction before baptism, used by way of preparation for baptism. But there is no mention of such an unction in Tertullian in spite of "De Baptismo" 7. "Though Tertullian speaks of an unction among the ceremonies of baptism, yet, as Baillet rightly observes, " it was not this unction preceding baptism, but the unction which followed after it in confirmation, accompanied with

the imposition of hands, which belongs to another subject." (Bingham, l.c. pp.572-3). He adds: "Whence I think <sup>1</sup>aille's conjecture very just and reasonable, that the unction preceding baptism, is of a later date, and was not as yet adopted among the ceremonies of baptism at the time of <sup>†</sup>ertullian ". (Bingham, l.c.p.573). After the unction the white robe or chrisom, was thrown over the body. This was a token that the new church member has been thoroughly washed of his sins.

Schaff indicates that after the council of <sup>†</sup>arthage in the year 256 exorcism was a regular part of the baptismal ceremony. It always preceded the immersion. It would seem that it was repeated during the preliminary catechetical instructions. This custom originated because of the surroundings. The people in those days had vivid ideas of the evil spirits and of the devil. "These demons, as we may infer from passages in Justin, Minucius Felix, <sup>†</sup>ertullian, and others, were believed to traverse the air, to wander over the earth, to deceive and torment the race, to take possession of men, to encourage sacrifices, to lurk in statues, to speak through oracles, to direct the flights of birds, to work the illusions of enchantments, of necromancy, to delude, to incite persecution against Christianity, and, infact, to sustain the whole fabric of heathenism with all its errors and vices. But even these evil spirits were subject to the powerful name of Jesus. Tertullian openly challenges the pagan adversaries to bring demoniacs before the tribunals, and affirms that the spirits which possessed them, would bear witness to the truth of Christianity." (Schaff, l.c.p.252).

Baptism could be administered at any time, but preferably at <sup>†</sup>aster and during the <sup>†</sup>entecost season (from <sup>†</sup>aster to <sup>†</sup>entecost). Writes the Montanist: "Every day is the Lord's: every hour, every time, is apt for baptism. If there is a differency in the solemnity, dis-

inction there is none in grace". <sup>(Jert. De Bapt. 11).</sup> He previously states the Easter and Pentecost are the preferred seasons. Epiphany also was a special time for the performance of baptism. For a week after the ceremony the new converts wore white garments in token of their purity. This custom is still carried out in the case of girls on their confirmation day who wear white dresses in token of their forgiveness through the Lord's Supper then received for the first time.

### 7) The Doctrine of Good Works.

The North African Church generally believed that God was rewarded of all merit. God accepted good works, and He therefore also rewarded them. A good deed had God as its debtor. Thus Cyprian: "How more could He stimulate the works of our righteousness and mercy, than by saying that whatever is given to the needy and poor is given to Himself, and by saying that He is aggrieved unless the needy and poor be supplied? So that he who in the church is not moved by consideration for his brother, may yet be moved by contemplation of Christ". True it is, all service to God is meretorious, but, Franks observes, "in a stricter sense only non-obligatory works are meretorious. God has ordained a sphere of liberty (licentia), in order to give an opportunity for such supererogatory works. To this class belong patience, acts of voluntary penance, above all, fasting, virginity, and martyrdom. All of these Tertullian mentions in his "On Fasting", "On Monogamy", and "To the Martyrs". His successor Cyprian writes: "The Lord commands and prescribes nothing more frequently than that we should devote ourselves to almsgiving, and not depend on earthly possessions, but rather lay up heavenly treasures." (Cyprian, Epist. "On Works and Alms, 7). The bishop lived up to this command when he became a Christian by selling his property and giving the money to the needy. He adds in

the same chapter: "In fine, <sup>he</sup> calls those the children of Abraham whom <sup>he</sup> sees to be laborious and nourishing the poor."

Good works could never atone for the sins of others. Says Franks: "But <sup>Tertullian</sup> says: " Let it suffice the martyr to have cleansed his own sins --- Who has paid the debt of others by his own, except the Son of God?" (Franks, l.c.p. 105).

Franks then raises the interesting question: "Does <sup>Tertullian</sup> regard "poenitentia"(satisfactio) primarily as a meretorious work availing to pay the debt of sin, or rather as the nature of punishment, and a paying in the way for sin? The view of Schultz is that "satisfactio" is primarily to be regarded as a sub-species of merit. In the first place he appeals to the use of the term in Roman Law. "Satisfactio" is here in the stricter sense that transaction by which one man meets another otherwise than by "solvere", the legal claim of another, especially one that has arisen through damage done to him. Its sphere is that of obligations, "satisfactio" the discharge of it by some other method agreeable to the claimant. In this usage "satisfactio" has no inner connection with the idea of punishment, but has affinity rather with "solvere".--- In this sense, again, however, the word has no inner connection with "poena". Merits are supererogatory works, which win reward from God. Where, however, a debt is occasioned by a post-baptismal sin, they avail first to cancel the debt, and, then, <sup>if</sup> there is any excess, to win reward. This view has been widely accepted, and is no doubt on the whole correct." (Franks, l.c.p. 106)

Cyprian thus taught the necessity of good works when he wrote: "For he labors thus because he believes --- because he knows that whatever is foretold by God's word is true, and that the Holy Scripture cannot lie -- that unfruitful, that is, unproductive men, are cut off, and cast into the fire, but that the merciful are called unto the kingdom."

(Cyprian, "On Works and Alms", 7). Throughout their practical writings, both Tertullian and Cyprian rouse their flock to acts of good works. Fasting and almsgiving seem especially to be advocated and performed.

### 8) Repentance.

The emotional element in Tertullian is very prominent. He dwells on the necessity of true repentance especially in his "De Poenitentia". Repentance without true amendment of one's ways is no sincere repentance. he holds, when stating: "But where there is no fear, in like manner there is no amendment; where there is no amendment, repentance is necessarily vain; for it lacks the fruit of which God sowed it, that is, man's salvation." (Tert. "On Repentance", 1).

Repentance is good for all kinds of sins. In chapter four of the same treatise he says: "That repentance, o sinner, do you so hasten to, as a shipwrecked man, the protection of some plank". --- For indeed it is not the fact that it is good that binds us to obey, but the fact that God has enjoined it".

In the North African Church prevailed the peculiar teaching of "exomologesis", a kind of penance in the extreme form. Tertullian explains: "Exomologesis is a discipline for man's prostration and humiliation enjoining a demeanor calculated to move mercy". (Tert. On Rep. 9).

He continues to show that it commands the penitent to lie in sackcloth and ashes, to cover their bodies with mourning, to give the body over to groanings and weeping, and to make loud cries unto God. These things were done to make the repentance greater and more sincere. So also Cyprian who asserts: "Let us turn to the Lord with our whole heart, and, expressing our repentance for our sin and true grief, let us entreat God's mercy. Let our soul lie low before Him. Let our mourning atone to Him. --- Let us appease His wrath and indignation with fastings,

with weeping, with mourning, as He Himself admonishes." (Cyprian, "On the 'apsed", 29). Nevertheless, in spite of this teaching, there was a distinction made between the outward form and the true divine forgiveness, the "opus operatum" and the true divine hand of grace. We glean this information from the remark of Tertullian: "The less quarter you give yourself, the more (believe me) God will give you". (Tert. On Rep. 9).

The sins which were committed after baptism were forgiven by these acts of penance. Writes Rinn: "Es sollte uns verdriesen zum zweiten Mal zu suendigen, aber nicht, zum zweiten Mal Busse zu tun. Du wirst dich gegen den Herrn dankbar erweisen, wenn du das, was er dir anbietet, nicht verschaemest. Du wirst ihn beleidigen, aber was er dir anbietet, das musst du nicht verschaemen, denn du kannst doch mit ihm nicht ausgesprochen werden, du hast einen, dem du Genugtuung leisten kannst, und der sie gern annimmt!" (Rinn l.c.p. 56) (from Tert.).

It is the opinion of most students of history that the later doctrine of penance in the Roman Catholic Church developed from the emphasis on penance in the third century and thereafter. Tertullian is the originator of the seven mortal sins which to this day are mentioned in the creeds of the Roman Church. The seven which Tertullian speaks of are: "Murder, idolatry, theft, apostasy, blasphemy, fornication, adultery;" If any one became guilty of these he ceased to be a son of God. The Roman Catholics have well developed their system of penance with three distinct parts which they make, namely, "contritio", "confessio", and "satisfactio". How much simpler is the correct Biblical and Lutheran stand which teaching asks for sorrow for one's sin and faith in the stonement of Christ. Luther, who first recognized the value of philological study, rightly rendered *meta noisite* of the N.T.



with "Busse" (repentance), and not as Jerome, "Poenitentiam agite, i.e., "do penance".

### 9) The Christian Church.

The North African Church correctly taught that Christ is the Head of the church here on earth, just as Paul teaches, Eph.1,22:"And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church".

There is a passage, however, in Tertullian's "An Exhortation to Chastity" which is much quoted and much misunderstood. It reads:" But where three are, there is a church, albeit they be laics" (laymen). (Tert. An Exhort. to Chas. 7). Waterman holds that the Montanist here taught that any three laymen haply met any place in the wide world may administer all the sacraments and enjoy the full rights of an established local congregation, even excommunication. However, he acknowledges that this teaching is unique in the theology of the first three centuries. We deny that such is the stand of the North African father. By his remark he merely intended to point out that in the absence of the clergy, the laymen have the right to perform the Christian functions of the congregation, including the administration of the sacraments. He did not wish to ascribe the full rights of an organized congregation to three laymen who are thrown together by fortune, even though they be of the same faith. Such a teaching reminds us of the incorrect doctrine advocated by the Wisconsin Synod, who hold that laymen or any group of Christians of our same faith, if, say, met on board a ship, may execute the full powers of a local congregation. True it is, all Christians are laymen-priests, as Tertullian already affirms, but if they would perform the functions of a recognized congregation, they must be organized as such. Two or three Christians

may gather together for worship, and God will be "in the midst of them", but that does not entitle them to the privileges of an empowered church. Such is also the essence of the remark: "Three women may claim the Savior's promise when lawfully met together for social devotions, not can it be denied that they have a share in the priesthood of the "peculiar people". So too even of three pious children. But it does not follow that they are a church for all purposes,--preaching, celebrating sacraments, ordaining, and the like." (American Edition of the <sup>Ante-</sup>Nicene Fathers, Vol.3,p.58). In conformity with his remark in "De Exhortatione" Tertullian taught the universal priesthood of all believers repeatedly throughout his writings.

Watermann points out that Cyprian is guilty of two radical errors on the doctrine of the church; 1) The Christian church cannot be divided. He substantiates his claim by quoting Cyprian's statement "outside the church there is no salvation". <sup>(64,6,8).</sup> True it is, the bishop of Carthage did make remarks like this and many to its effect, but, it must be remembered, by the term church he did not mean the Roman Catholic Church, but the Christian catholic church in general. Later the Roman Catholics took over this phrase as their own and to this day, referring to their own organized church body, teach "extra ecclesiam nulla salus". The Christian church as such may be divided, though not advisedly, yet, in fact. At the present day we have many church bodies of different denominations in the Christian church. Though they do not all have the full light of the gospel, they are, at least in doctrine, Christian. The second error ascribed to Cyprian by Dr. Watermann involves the personal unworthiness of a minister who destroys the divine effectual action of the priesthood. He writes: "Nor does the Lord grant grace to any through the prayers and supplications

to any one who has himself done violence to the Lord." (Waterman, l.c.p.39)  
 Our Lutheran doctrine maintains that the worthiness or unworthiness of the officiating minister does not effect the act he performs.

#### 10) The Millennium.

In the church in North Africa there was a belief, as also in the other churches at the time, in the visible reign of Christ in glory here on earth together with His risen saints for a period of one thousand years. Dr. Schaff states: "Tertullian was an enthusiastic chiliast, and pointed not only to the Apocalypse, but also to the predictions of the Montanists". (Schaff, l.c.p.618). The Montanists had the distinct doctrine that Christ's visible reign of glory here on earth, revealed to them through the power of the Holy Ghost, would center about Pepuza in Phrygia, and not at Jerusalem. In spreading this belief they ran into excesses and most foolish deductions. The African Montanist himself states: "Of the heavenly kingdom this is the process. After its thousand years are over, within which period is completed the resurrection of the saints, who rise sooner or later according to their deserts, there will ensue the destruction of the world, and the conflagration of all things at the judgment; we shall then be changed in a moment to the substance of angels -- as so be removed into that kingdom of heaven". (Tert. Adv. Marc.3,23). In the same chapter he states that the reign will be similar to "a heavenly Jerusalem let down from heaven". Dr. Schaff states that Tertullian discussed the subject at great length in a separate work "De Spe Fidelium", but the writing is no longer extant. From his remarks on the millennium it is apparent that Tertullian was a prechiliast. Those who called themselves pre-chiliasts believed that the resurrection would take place before the reign of the thousand years or at its inception.

## 11) The Intermediate State.

According to the doctrine of the Montanist Tertullian, those who had been thoroughly cleansed by the bloody baptism of martyrdom were to be raised immediately, if not to heaven, at least to an exalted state of blessedness. All others were to pass through an intermediate stage in order to be cleansed and freed from the stains which still remained cleaving to them. They, then, according to the measure of their attainments would sooner or later participate in the millennial reign of Christ here on earth and be taken later with Him into heaven together with the martyrs. This thought is repeatedly advocated by the presbyter of Carthage, especially in his work "On the Resurrection of the Flesh", chapter 43.

The following is in outline the scheme of the different states of the dead in the after life as set forth by the North African fathers: 1) Hades, or Abraham's bosom; 2) Paradise which, though also in Hades, was in an upper region. It was a better stage of bliss than Hades. In it the souls of the martyrs awaited the resurrection morn. By the example of Lazarus Tertullian points out that the souls of the saved in Hades were unconscious. The above locations are often interchanged by the Montanist; it is often uncertain which location he refers to.

## 12) Future Punishment.

That there is a hell, a place of eternal torment for the wicked, and a heaven, a place of everlasting life and bliss for the righteous believers, was always a doctrine firmly maintained by the Christian church. Everlasting punishment was taught by the African fathers for the unrighteous. "That last day of judgment, with its everlasting issues; that day unlooked for by the nations, the theme of their derision, when the world hoary with age, and all its many products

shall be consumed in one great flame." (Tert. 'On the Shows', 30).

Dr. Schaff indicates that The Montanist teaches the same doctrine in his "Apology", chapter 45, and his "De 'estimonium Animae", chapter 4. Cyprian teaches that the fear of hell fire is the only ground for the fear of death to any one, (Epistle 8,2).

That there is an everlasting hell with a painful fire is the correct Biblical doctrine, as is seen from the description of our Lord, Matt. 24 and from that of Paul, <sup>II. Thess. 1, 8.</sup> ~~I Cor. 3, 13.~~

For the damned, Tertullian taught an eternal hell, or "gehenna, as he terms it. This was prepared for the devil and the evil angels; the blessed lived eternally in the heaven of heavens, where, in the presence of God, there was eternal happiness.

### 13) Montanism.

All the ascetic, rigoristic, and chiliastic elements of the ancient church combined in the system called Montanism. This new doctrine had its home in Asia Minor. It was founded by a certain Montanus about the year 157. He was an unpolished priest of Cybele, with no special talents of any kind, though he burned with a fanatical zeal. He thought that he was the inspired advocate of the Paraclete. In the last times of distress, he thought, God was calling him to reveal more of the divine will of God. With the death of Polycarp under the Antonines, two prophetesses, Priscilla and Maximilla, joined Montanus, preaching the coming age of the Holy Spirit, and the millennium at Pepuza, not Jerusalem, with the visible reign of Christ. Pepuza was a small village in Phrygia. The followers of Montanus called themselves the spiritual Christians in distinction from the "psychicals" or psychic Christians. The new system caused the first synods in the church during the apostolic age. It was condemned

as originating from the devil by the church of Asia Minor soon after it began to spread. Clement of Alexandria was a famous opponent of the new sect. False rumors were circulated about the three advocates of Montanism. Immorality and infant suicide were two of the severe charges brought against it.

Montanism found sympathy in North Africa "as the Punic national character leaned naturally towards gloomy and rigorous ascerbity". (Schaff, l.c.p.420). Its noblest defender and convert was Tertullian. Some think that he became acquainted with this new system of doctrine and life while yet in Rome. The fiery and rigoristic orator was converted in the year 201 or 202. He bravely defended the principles as set forth by Montanus, though he never formally seceded from the catholic church. "He was not excommunicated". (Schaff, l.c.p.420). At the time Tertullian accepted the creed of Montanism it was not a departure from the faith, but a morbid overstraining of the practical morality and discipline of the early church. In a word, it was a puritanic opposition to Gnosticism, then running rampant in Asia Minor. It was not a rival, but a continuation of the catholic church in the mind of Tertullian. When he took over its precepts Montanism was little more than a name. The Dictionary of Christian Biography well states that Tertullian would have been a Montanist had no Montanus ever lived. Schaff adds here the interesting comment: "It is singular that Cyprian, who with his high-church tendencies and abhorrence of schism, was a daily reader of Tertullian, makes no allusion to Montanism." (Schaff, l.c.p. 420-1). Cyprian was never called a Montanist.

In doctrine, the Montanism of Tertullian agreed to all the essential "loci" of the catholic church. Tertullian himself was thoroughly orthodox in the light of the theology of his day. Though he diff-

ered on the doctrine of infant baptism, this was not as yet ~~fer-~~<sup>uni-</sup>  
~~re-~~<sup>re-</sup>ally accepted in the catholic church. Yet, the delay of baptism  
pushed the reform of discipline and wrought a higher perfection and a  
deeper understanding of the Bible. <sup>One of the</sup> Ideas which Tertullian had from  
the Roman church was the forced continuance of miracles and miraculous  
gifts of the apostolic church among its leaders, especially the con-  
tinuance of prophecy. But the catholic church mistrusted the prophecy  
emanating from the transmarine church since "they proceeded not  
from the regular clergy, but in great part from unauthorized laymen  
and fanatical women", as Dr. Schaff puts it. Tertullian deviated from  
the orthodox church on the point of universal priesthood. The catho-  
lic church of his time taught the special priesthood of the leaders  
only. He taught the millennium, the visible return and reign of  
Christ for one thousand years, as was discussed before. The chief  
sign of Montanism was its emphasis on a stern, rigorous life. This  
also was the strong point of Tertullian, especially in his Montanistic  
writings. He fought with all the might of his soul the looseness and  
immorality of the heathen world. His principles often bordered on  
asceticism. His "On the Apparel of Women" and "On Monogamy" bear out  
this fact. At times he forbade things not evil in themselves.

This same movement has been repeated in the history of the church.  
We need but think of the Donatists, with whom Augustine had to contend,  
the Novatianists, and the Anabaptists of England, of the Quakers,  
the Pietists, and even the Methodists.

The followers of Tertullian's Montanism were called "Tertullian-  
ists" in North Africa and are active until the sixth century, though  
some scholars maintain that Montanism lasted 200 years only.

#### 14) Heresies which Troubled the Church of Tertullian and Cyprian.

It is almost impossible to ascertain the actual number of heresies in the ancient world. They are found in practically every part of the church, in Egypt, in Syria, in Asia Minor, Gaul, and Rome. In France (Gaul) the heretics were fought by Irenaeus, in Africa by Tertullian and Cyprian (principally the former), and later by Augustine. The Montanist's books against Marcion, against Valentinus, and his famous "Prescription against the heretics" deserve special mention. These works were especially useful in suppressing the inroads made upon the Christian church by the various bodies of heretics. He writes of heresies in general: "Indeed heresies are instigated by philosophy. From this source come the aeons, and I know not what infinite forms, and the trinity of man in the system of Valentinus, who was of Plato's school". (Tert. Presc. ag. the Heret. 7). What he says of Marcion is true of all the heretics in general. He scores the errors of the Marcion school thus: "Marcion openly and expressly used the knife, not the pen, since he made such an excision of the Scriptures as suited his own subject-matter.-- He took away more and added more, by removing the proper meaning of every particular word, and adding fantastic arrangements of things which have no real existence". (Tert. Presc. ag. Heret. 38). Likewise, he complains that among the heretics it is doubtful who is a catechumen and who a full "believer". There was no "disciplina arcani" in the schools of the heretics. Their members were considered perfect before they were full-fledged. In the true catholic church all new comers were well instructed in the fundamentals of the truth as contained in the Bible. Ordinations, Tertullian laments, were carelessly done among them. One day a heretic was a clergyman, another in some secular employment. Today one was a bishop or deacon, tomorrow another took his place!



In his work "Against all Heresies" Tertullian mentions sundry heresies which had some bearing on the church of his time. We shall in the following give a resume of the chief heresies and their particular schools which affected the North African Church in the third century.

Gnosticism:

The Judaism of the Ebionites was defeated in the apostolic age. Far more wide-spread than this first of heresies was Gnosticism, in essence a paganized Christianity. It is an attempt to understand the doctrine of Christianity through the powers of reason with an admixture of philosophic speculations. Perhaps this was one of the strongest and bitterest heresies with which the Christian church had to fight. But in spite of fierce opposition within and without, the church grew. Opposition made its ramparts strong.

True "gnosis", a Greek word meaning "knowledge", is used in the New Testament in a good sense. It designates the true knowledge of God. But by this new system of doctrine it is used in an evil sense, since it claims to set up knowledge above faith alone. Even the letters of Paul use this word in that sense, I Cor.8,1 and I Tim.6,20. This false wisdom, pride, is referred to when speaking of the "gnosis" of the Gnostics. The system arose in the days of Paul, as is evident from his later Epistles, and prevailed in the Christian church and out of it for centuries. Its chief claims were higher knowledge and the expansion or explanation of Christianity. In its vagaries and speculations it included Christianity, though it manifested a contempt for the lower Christians. They were the real spirituals of the church. Says the Concordia Cyclopedia: "Gnosticism is the most stupendous and the most fantastic form of religious syncretism known to history. Oriental mysticism and Greek philosophy, Buddhistic nihilism and Platonic idealism,

Zoroastrianism dualism and Alexandrian Judaism, Babylonian cosmology and Greek mythology, and other elements together with Christian ideas are thrown into the crucible and, as it were, chemically compounded." (Concordia Cyclopædia, p.291).

Gnosticism had various problems to solve, such as the nature of the Deity, the antithesis between God and matter, the creation of the material world, the origin of evil, etc. There were many systems of Gnosticism. The salient features of them all will be treated only. Common in all the Gnostic systems is the eternal opposition or hatred between God and matter. The Demiurge, or the Creator, was an inferior Deity, and Christ was never man, but merely seems to be such. To them God was a pure abstraction, ineffable and incomprehensible. From him emanate divine potencies, called aeons, such as mind, reason, wisdom, truth, which in their turn beget other aeons. The aeons combined constituted the "Pleroma" or the ideal world of light. The "Pleroma" was opposed to the "Kenoma", the Void, the everlasting, unorganized matter or material world. The latter was considered as eternally evil and thus opposed to the "Pleroma" and God. A myth was resorted to, to bridge the gulf between the two. "Sophia", or wisdom, one of the lowest aeons, penetrated the veil of the First Cause and fell as a spark of light into the outer chaos. This union gave birth to the Demiurge, who, in turn, transformed the chaos into the material and organized world. The Demiurge, which was ignorant of the "Pleroma", thought herself the Supreme Being, and it is thus identified with the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Redemption consist in restoring again the cosmic harmony disturbed by the apostasy of "Sophia". That is accomplished by Christ, the most perfect aeon, who appears in the semblance of a human being, since he can have no actual contact with matter.

Christ is our Savior in that He teaches man the true Gnostic wisdom. This "wisdom" the true spirituals alone can receive. The "psychicals" cannot rise to the heights of the "spirituals" and must content themselves with faith, while the "hylics" are slaves of matter and associates of Satan doomed to final destruction at the end of time.

Marcion and his School:

Marcion, a son of the bishop of Pontus, was the most dangerous of the Gnostics. He was of a rough and eccentric character. Because of his heretical teachings, Tertullian says of his birthplace: "Nothing, however, in Pontus is so barbarous and sad as the fact that Marcion was born there, fouler than any Scythian, more roving than the wagon-life of the Samaritan, --- colder than its winter, more brittle than its ice, more deceitful than the <sup>I</sup>ster, more craggy than the <sup>C</sup>aucasus. --- Marcion is more savage than the wild beasts of the barbarous region. -- Verily, O Euxine, thou hast produced a monster more credible to philosophy than to Christianity". (Tert. Adv. Marc. I, 1).

Marcion rejected the paganizing and mythological elements of the other Gnostics, but he roughly fought the new revelations of Christianity. They stood opposed, he said, to the other revelations of the Old <sup>T</sup>estament; the old and the new covenants were irreconcilable. His fanatical zeal led to a phantom-like regard of Christianity. In his travels he spread his false notions and gained many converts. Tertullian reports that he applied for communion to the catholic church before his death, but he died before this could be performed. He was excommunicated repeatedly from the true church. Dr. Schaff gives a summary of Marcion's doctrine in the following: "Marcion supposed two or three primal forces (<sup>ἄρχαί</sup> ), the good of a gracious God (<sup>Θεὸς ἄγαθός</sup> ), whom Christ first made known; the evil matter (<sup>ἕλη</sup> ), ruled by the devil,

to which heathenism belongs; and the righteous world-maker ( $\delta\eta\mu\iota\omicron\upsilon\rho\gamma\acute{o}\varsigma$   $\delta\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota\omicron\varsigma$ ), who is the finite, imperfect, angry Jehovah of the Jews". (Schaff, l.c.p.484).

In his attempt to reconcile the God of the Old Testament whom he considered too harsh, <sup>with the God of the N.T.</sup> he rejected all the books of the Old Testament. If there were passages which did not fit into his system he distorted them until they did! Matt.5,17 he interpreted: "I am come not to fulfill the law and the prophets, but to destroy them"! By way of accommodation he called himself the "messiah. The New Testament <sup>messages</sup> which seem to fulfill the Old are all illusions. As a result, he formed a canon of his own. He accepted only 11 books of the New Testament, an abridged account of Luke and ten of Paul's Epistles. However, he taught a strict ascetic discipline. Schaff shows that this system of doctrine spread to Italy, Egypt, North Africa, Cyprus, Syria, and Asia Minor. His chief representatives were Propo, Lucanus, and Apelles. Remnants of his teachings remained until the tenth century.

#### Valentinus:

The system of Valentinus was the best known and the most influential of the Gnostic systems. Valentinus founded a large school and spread his false notions especially in the western church. He lived about the year 150. Some think that he was part Jew and part Egyptian. "Tertullian reports that, perhaps from his own conjecture, he broke with the orthodox church from disappointed ambition, not being made a bishop". (Schaff, l.c.p.473). He was the first of the Gnostics to teach in Rome. He was excommunicated and died about 160.

The principles of his theology were founded on oriental mysticism, Greek philosophy, and Christian truth. These he juggled together, placed them in a boiling caldron, and molded his peculiar system of doctrine.

He knew his Bible facts well, and was thus the more able to combat and destroy them with his inventions. In his exegesis he combined mythology and pantheism. His creation story is highly mythological. The fact that Biblical terms occur in it makes it weird. The fall of man and the redemption of Christ take place first in heaven and later here on earth, according to his "Bible". He personifies the terms Logos, Wisdom, Abyss, Truth, Church etc. In Christ, he held, there are three redeeming persons. Later he divided them into two branches. His system was headed by Heracleon, Ptolomy, Marcos, Bardesanes, and Harmonius.

Apelles:

Apelles began as an ardent disciple of Marcion. Later he broke away and found his own school. Tertullian makes several allusions to his teachings in his "Against Marcion" and "Against all Heresies". He did not regard the Demiurge as the true God but merely as an angel of superior rank. Tertullian exposes him and ridicules his teachings mercilessly.

Hermogenes:

This heretic was a painter, no doubt of idols, and lived in Carthage. It appears he lived at the time of Tertullian. He at the first interested himself in metaphysical questions. He held, later in his system, that God and matter were opposed to each other. Both are eternal. His heresy is especially known as the African. Tertullian was able to attack it at close quarters. The Montanist was fearless in his face to face battle with his neighbor heretic.

Praxeas:

Praxeas suffered imprisonment in Asia Minor for his faith. In the days of Pope Victor he came to Rome in order to condemn Montanism. He was successful in obtaining its formal condemnation, but at the same

time he spread another heresy of his own, He held that the unity of God was so close that the Father and the Son were one; he denied in essence the three persons of the Trinity. Sabellius is the best-known of his disciples. He became the leader of Sabellianism in later years.

Besides the actual errors of these various men, Tertullian is constantly refuting the false notions of men in regard to baptism, the soul, the Person of Christ, and Christian morality.

### III. ORGANIZATION AND DISCIPLINE.

#### 1) Church Government.

Though the actual governing of the church in this early age was comparatively simple, it was, nevertheless, efficient and thoroughly Christian. Where each had learned his lesson well and where God was feared by all, the mechanism of the congregational affairs ran smoothly. Tertullian gives us a fine description of the government of his church in his "Apology", stating at some length: "We are a body knit together as such by a common religious profession, by unity of discipline and by the bond of the common hope. We meet together as an assembly and congregation, that, offering up prayer to God as if with united force, we may wrestle with Him in our united supplications. This violence God delights in. We pray, too, for the emperors, for their ministers and for all in authority, for the welfare of the world, for the prevalence of peace, for the delay of the final consummation. We assemble to read our sacred writings, if any peculiarities of the times makes either forewarning or reminiscence necessary. However, it be in that respect, with the sacred words we

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nourish our faith, we animate our hope, we make our confidence more stedfast; and no less by incalcations of God's precepts we confirm good habits. In the same place also exhortations are made, rebukes and sacred censures are administered. For with a great gravity is the work of judging carried on among us, as befits those who feel assured that they are in the sight of God; and you have the most notable example of judgment when any one has sinned so grievously as to require his severance from us in prayer, in the congregation and in all sacred intercourse. The tried men of our elders preside over us, obtaining that honor not by purchase, but by established character. There is no buying and selling of any sort in the things of God. Though we have our treasure chest, it is not made up of purchase-money, as of a religion that has its price. On the monthly day, if he likes, each puts in a small donation; but only if it be his pleasure, and only if he be able; for there is no compulsion, all is voluntary. These gifts are, as it were, piety's deposit fund. For they are not taken thence and spent on feasts, and drinking-bouts, and eating-houses, but to support and bury poor people, to supply the wants and needs of destitute boys, and girls, and parents, and of old persons confined now to the house; so, too, as have suffered shipwreck; and if there hap en to be any in the mines, or banished to the islands, or shut up in the prisons, for nothing but their fidelity to the cause of God's church, they become the nurslings of their confession. (1. r. 4. 39).

## 2) The Clergy and Laity.

Tertullian is the first in his day to give directly and expressly sacerdotal claims to the ministry. At the same time he strongly upheld the universal priesthood of all believers.

The glorious truth set forth so clearly in I Pet. 2, 9 and mightily defended by our own Dr. Walther, was also recognized by this early faithful presbyter. He writes: "Are not even we laics priests? It is written: "A kingdom also, and the priests to God the Father, hath He made us." It is the authority of the church and the honor which has acquired sanctity through the joint session of the order which has established the difference between the Order and the laity. According, where there is no joint session of the ecclesiastical order, you offer and baptize, and are priests alone for yourself." (Tert. Ex. to Chas. 7). Therein, as it were, Tertullian gives the full rights of the ministry to the laity. The authority of men has made the distinction of the church orders. Tertullian, without a doubt, does not here wish to indicate that he believes in a human arrangement of the ministry, that the clergy is not of divine origin, but merely states in a strong way that all Christians have the office of the keys, as was given to Peter by our Lord. Cyprian gives more honor and claims to the ~~clergy~~ <sup>priests</sup> than does his Master. He offers all the privileges, duties, and responsibilities in the church to the Christian ministry which is of the Aaronic priesthood as arranged by God in the Old Testament and continued down through the ages to the time of the destruction of the Temple of Herod. He repeatedly refers to the clergy with the high title of "sacerdotium".

R. "During the third century it became customary to apply the term "priest" directly and exclusively to the Christian ministry, especially the bishops". (Schaff, l.c. p. 126-7). Thus it came to have a different designation and was distinguished from the "laity". And "thus the term "clergy" which first signified the lot by which office was assigned (Acts 1, 17, 25), then the office itself, then the persons holding that office, was transferred from the Christians generally to the ministers



exclusively". (Schaff, l.c.p.127). Obviously the term "laymen" is derived from the Greek word  $\lambda \alpha \omicron \iota \varsigma$ , "plebs", common people. In the third century they consisted of two classes: 1) The baptized and communicant members; 2) The catechumens preparing for baptism and confirmation.

With the recognition of the clergy as a separate body and an exalted class there were also movements to separate them from the social relationships of the common people. Singleness of ~~marriage~~ <sup>life</sup>, though not as yet demanded, was preferred and advocated; it was considered more chaste not to be married. Celibacy for the clergy was enforced by the Roman Catholics later under its more influential popes. "Tertullian, Gregory of Nyssa, and other distinguished church teachers lived in wedlock, though theoretically preferring the unmarried state". (Schaff, l.c.p.128). But more of this under the chapter of "Marriage".

During the third century the laymen had the right to teach in the church meetings. "The fourth general council at Chalcedon (451) prohibited laymen from teaching in the presence of clergymen and without their consent; implying, at the same time, that with such permission the thing could be done". (Schaff, l.c.p.130). Then too, we may deduce from this fact that teaching by the laymen was done previously and without permission. Even some of the leaders of the church were laymen in, perhaps, a higher sense. Tertullian, one of its outstanding leaders, was a presbyter only.

As a whole, the laity had no small voice in the governing of the church. If any one was baptized he had a share in the regulation of the church affairs. Writes Cyprian <sup>to the laity</sup> in confirmation of this fact: "In ordinations of the clergy, brethren, we usually consult you beforehand, and weigh the character and deserts of individuals, with the general advice". (Cyprian, Epist.32). If one was guilty of a grievous sin, he

was relegated to the ranks of a penitent had deprived of suffrage. The recognized laity even had a voice in the choice of and rejection of their clergymen, according to Cyprian, who states: "The bishop Cornelius was ordained in the catholic church by the judgment of God, and by the suffrages of the clergy and people". (Cyp. Epist. 66).

#### Church Orders:

In the Apostolic Church the presbyters and the bishops referred to by the sacred writers were on a level; there was no distinction made in the relation of their powers. The terms "bishop" and "presbyter", and "elders" are used interchangeably, especially in the first chapter of the Epistle of Paul to Titus. However, after the Apostolic Church underwent a change, we have: 1) A distinction between <sup>bishops</sup> clergy and presbyters; 2) A distinction of the clergy from the laity; 3) A multiplication of church offices.

It is uncertain just how the change between the bishop and the presbyter came about. Neander is of the opinion that it arose out of the pressure of the times. A bishop was originally a member in the college of presbyters; but for distinction and honor he was elected as overseer. His character and learning made him outstanding; therefore, he received an exalted position. At the close of the second century by Tertullian the names are used synonymously; he calls all the presiding officers in the community "Seniores", "the elsewhere in the writings of this father the distinction between clergy and presbyter is already decidedly drawn. In many respects, Tertullian may be considered as standing on the boundary line of an old and new era in the Christian church". (Neander, l.c.p. 192). However, it must be said, and many scholars agree, that the germs of the great distinction are found in Tertullian's writings. He is inclined at times to make the distinction.

Besides the distinction of the episcopate and the presbyterate, there is also the diaconate and the readership. In his 64th Epistle Cyprian puts the deacons under the bishops. Whereas the bishops were chosen by God Himself from the beginning of the church, the deacons were chosen by the apostles. Tertullian (Against the Heretics, 41) mentions the readers or the "lectores" whose duty it was to read the Bible to the assembled community. We find at this early date no reference to the acolytes, who waited on the bishops while they were discharging their official duties; to the exorcistae, who prayed for those who were supposed to be possessed with an evil spirit; and to the ostiary, or the janitors of the church.

In the execution of the ministerial functions, the first three orders were chief, and were given the honor. Only in their absence did the laity have right of offering the sacraments and the like. Writes Tertullian: "Besides these, even laymen have the right (of baptizing); for what is equally received, can be equally given. Unless bishops, or priests, or deacons, be on the spot, other disciples are called, i.e., to the work". (Tert. On Bapt. 17). When Tertullian speaks of the "presidents" of the church, he has reference to the bishops.

We know the names of but two bishops during the time of Tertullian. Cyprian, however, mentions some 87 at one council in 258. Dr. Donaldson says of Tertullian's time: "Of the many African bishops who must have been Tertullian's contemporaries, the names of only two survive: viz. Optatus, who is mentioned in the Passion of S. Perpetua, and Agrippinus, who is mentioned by Cyprian as presiding over a council of the African Church about the rebaptism of heretics "very many years before his time". (Donaldson. l.c. p. 52). The latter expression points back to the age of Tertullian undoubtedly.

3) Synods.

The synods of the church, of which we hear so much about during the life-time of Cyprian, were open to the public. The laity which attended at times made its influence felt. For the great synod on the "Lapsi" Cyprian convened the clergy, the confessors, and the laity in good standing. The synods in his days were provincial; they were not confined to the single province of Africa or Proconsular Africa, as it was also called.

No infallibility was ascribed to the decisions of the councils. No universal validity was laid to their decisions. They were all moral and personal in nature. "Even Cyprian emphatically states and asserts absolute independence for each bishop in his own diocese" (Schaff, l.c.p.178). Later, when the hierarchical spirit developed, and the republicanism of it all left, the people appear in the synods as secretaries or delegates of bishops; they no longer have a share in the proceedings.

Dr. Neander has this fine comment on the provincial nature of these early synods: "To the middle of the third century, the annual provincial synods appear to have been universal,-- if we may judge from the fact, that, we find them observed at the same time in parts of the church so widely remote from each other and Northern Africa and Cappadocia. These provincial synods might, beyond a doubt, have proved eminently salutary in unfolding and purifying the Christian and church life, and indeed did prove so in many respects. In these common deliberations, the views of different denominations individuals might mutually correct each other's errors and supply each other's defects, wants, abuses and necessary reforms might be discussed more easily and under more different points of view; and the communicated experience of each member made available to all." (Neander, l.c.p.207). It is strange that Tert-

William nowhere speaks of a synod in Northern Africa. If he did, he is unclear in the matter. It seems, though, that they developed under the leadership of Cyprian.

The relation of these synods to the Great General Councils is brought out by Dr. Garrison when he writes: "It was not yet the time for the great General Councils; Nice was not convened until nearly 70 years after Cyprian; but <sup>from</sup> the beginning of his episcopate he had recognized the full significance of the council, and so constantly had he called his brethren of North Africa for decision and deliberation, that the use of the council was virtually established on its proper basis by his administration. Councils had always been an essential element in the working of the church, but he first developed their full effectiveness and influence; and when the Universal Council came, the church had already learned (mainly from Cyprian) to recognize in them, the right and sufficient means whereby the bishops, in their several jurisdictions, were enabled to be as they should be, independent of one another, and yet the unity of the church, as one divine whole be maintained by the Council, the common voice of all." Garrison, "The History and Teaching of the Early Church", p.90-91).

During the days of Cyprian the bishops customarily met once a year to discuss clerical and congregational affairs. We have distinct references to the councils held in the years 251, 252, 255, and 258.

#### 4) Cyprianic Episcopacy.

As late as the third century the presbyters had their own college of councillors by the side of the bishops. They were an influential power. In matters of importance the bishops had to confer with them. They, together with the bishops, constituted the highest authority in the church. A bishop even of Cyprian's power did not

disregard the opinions and influence of the presbyters. "When Cyprian the bishop of Carthage was separated from his community by his flight from persecution, if he had business to transact relating to the interests of the church he immediately communicated it to his presbyters remaining behind in Carthage, and excused himself to them whenever he was obliged to decide any matter without their assistance." (Neander, l.c. p. 192). In the course of time the bishops, due largely to the influence and authority of Cyprian, gradually won a distinction over that of the presbyters. But it was a hard battle; the presbyters would not at first yield to the stronger rule of the bishops. "These struggles between the presbyterial and the episcopal systems belong among the most important phenomena connected with the process of the development of church life in the third century". (Neander, l.c. p. 192-3).

It was Cyprian's strong teaching throughout his bishopric that the office of the bishop was a continuation of the apostleship created by Christ, and that each bishop in his particular diocese was an independent authority, responsible to no one but God. He writes to the "Lapsi": "Our Lord, whose precepts and admonitions we ought to observe, describing the honor of a bishop and the order of His church, speaks in the Gospel, and says to Peter: "I say unto thee, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16, 18, 19). Thence, through the changes of times and successions, the ordering of the bishops and the plan of the Church flow onwards; so that the Church is founded upon the bishops, and every act of the Church is controlled by these same rulers." (Cyp. Ep. 26).

Dr. Garrison is of the opinion that the succession of the bishops from the Apostles was taught throughout the church at this time. It was not an idea of Cyprian's only. He asserts: "An universal episcopacy, handed down from the Apostles, in which each bishop has an independent authority, but under responsibility to God, and the voice of the church as an organic whole expressed through its councils, was undoubtedly the belief of Cyprian and the entire catholic church of his age". (Garrison, l.c.p.91). In his letter to Cornelius, Epistle 54, Cyprian shows from numerous passages of the Old Testament that the bishopric is representative of the priesthood in ancient times and that it has the power and authority which God first gave to Aaron and his successors. From the many examples of obedience to the priests in the Old Testament Cyprian deduces that all heresies arise in the church at the present time from the disobedience of men to the bishops or priests now over the church. "For neither have heresies arisen, nor have schisms originated from any other source than from this, that God's priest is to be obeyed; nor do they consider that there is one person for the time priest in the church, and for the time judge in the stead of Christ; whom, if, according to divine teaching, the whole fraternity should obey, no one would stir up anything against the college of priests; no one, after the divine judgment, after the suffrage of the people, after the consent of the co-bishops, would make himself a judge, not now of the bishop, but of God." (Cyp.Epist.54). It is also clear from the fact that Cyprian here speaks of "co-bishops", that he teaches a mutual independence among them. This same truth is directly taught when he writes to Antonianus: "While the bond of concord remains, and the undivided Sacrament of the catholic church endures, every bishop bishop disposes and directs his own acts, and will have to give an

account of his purposes to the L<sup>U</sup>rd". (Cyp.Epist. 51). To God alone, then, was the bishop responsible; there was no subserviency to a pope. There was no bishop of bishops; they were co-equal. He himself proves this fact when he says: "For neither does any one of us set himself up as a bishop of bishops, nor by tyrannical terror does any complete his colleague to the necessity of obedience; since every bishop, according to the allowance of his liberty and power, has his own proper right and judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he himself can judge another." (Cyp. "The Sev. Counc. of Car. under Cyp.", 1). One might call a man of the position and authority of Cyprian a "primus inter pares"; he was by no means a pope in North Africa! The bishop in his own diocese was the indispensable bond of Christian brotherhood, as Cyprian repeatedly stresses. The episcopate, so to say, was the cornerstone of the church edifice. Christ established it and the entire unity of the church was dependent upon it.

The ordinations of the bishops was to take place in the presence of all the bishops in the province and in public. Cyprian advises: "For the proper celebration of ordinations all the neighboring bishops of the same province should assemble with that people for which a prelate is ordained. And the bishop should be chosen in the presence of the people, who have most fully known the life of each one, and have looked into the doings of each one as respects his habitual conduct". (Cyp. Epist. 67). It is interesting to note from this remark that then also it was taught that proper ordinations were to occur before the congregation to which one was called and not in the presence of the church in which one was reared, or, in the "home congregation".

In spite of this teaching, Cyprian stood close to the presbyters and did nothing without their advice, as was indicated before.



Sacerdotalism:

Tertullian was the first to assert sacerdotal claims to the bishopric in any extent. But he always modified his remarks by asserting the universal priesthood of all believers. In his "De Baptismo", as was shown above, he clearly taught that all laymen were priests. Cyprian made use of this fact. He so to say, got the hint from Tertullian and developed it. He gave it a new coloring and dressed it in a Jewish form. The terms "sacerdotium" and "sacerdotilis" in reference to the clergy are repeatedly employed by him. His chief argument is based on passages from the Old Testament; but his exegesis of these passages is that of the novice. His arguments are beside the point. He speaks as though we Christians of the New Covenant are still living under the old dispensation. Again and again - especially in his 54th Epistle - he stresses that the duties and responsibilities of the Aaronic priesthood applied also to the bishops of the Christian Church. It is to be regretted that such a tendency is found in Cyprian. There is nothing like it, asserts Dr. Garrison, since the beginning of Christianity. Much harm was done the church by this doctrine. It later developed into the Roman Catholic doctrine of a sacrificial priesthood, a priesthood that drinks the wine of the Eucharist for the people! Though we cannot condone this error in the doctrine of Cyprian, it is no doubt accountable to his late conversion. True it is, there are weeds and good herbs in the writings of the Fathers. It is for us to pick out the herbs and leave the weeds. God has overruled all this for the good. He has given us Luther and the Reformation whereby the primitive doctrine of the church in all its glory was again brought to light. We Lutherans strongly oppose the sacerdotal nature of our ministry. Christ has offered Himself as a sacrifice once for all on the cross.

### 5) Catholic Unity.

Men gradually began to ascribe prominence to Rome. Most of the western churches regarded Rome as their mother church. Though Carthage may have received the light of the gospel from the Christians on the island of Cyrene, it looked up to Rome because of its close proximity and prominence in the apostolic church. Tertullian already speaks of the glory of Rome: "How happy is its church on which the apostles poured forth all their doctrine along with their blood! where Peter endures a passion like his Lord's! where Paul wins his crown in a death like John's! where the apostle was plunged first unhurt into burning oil, and thence remitted to his island exile! See what she has learned, what taught, what fellowship has had with even our churches in Africa". (Tert. Presc. of Heret. 36). Since men were in the habit of regarding Peter as the founder of the church at Rome - tradition had it so - and, since Rome was the capital of the world at the time, the church gradually began to regard the "cathedra Petri" as representative of catholic unity and authority. It was the church; its dictates were supreme, authoritative in the minds of other men. "Without doubt this idea was still very obscure and vague; but a false principle once established, the more vague the notion, the more room would be left for introducing new meanings and exacting new inferences. In the minds of the Roman bishops, this idea seems early to have obtained a more fixed and definite shape.--- Far back we observe already in the Roman bishops traces of their assumption, that to them, as successors of the Apostle Peter, belonged a peculiar and ultimate authority in ecclesiastical disputes; that the "cathedra Petri" must take precedence over all other apostolic churches, as the source of apostolic tradition. Such an assumption was shown by the Roman bishop

Victor, when, about the year 190, he excommunicated the churches of Asia Minor on account of some trifling dispute relation to mere externals. In the Montanistic writings of Tertullian we find indications showing that the Roman bishops issued peremptory edicts on ecclesiastical matters endeavored <sup>in</sup> to make themselves considered the bishops of bishops,-- "episcopos episcoporum"; and were in the habit of appealing to the authority of their "antecessores". (Neander, l.c.p.214).

( Though to this day the Roman Catholic Church finds its strong proof for the primacy of the pope in Matt. 16, 18, 19, Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, found a different and far better interpretation in the passage. The Lord in giving the keys of the church to Peter meant to establish the pure unity of the catholic church here upon earth. He writes to this effect: " And although to all the Apostles, after His resurrection, He gives an equal power, and says, "As the Father has sent me, even so send I you : Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whoseever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted unto them, and whoseever ye retain, they shall be retained." (John 20, 21), yet, that He might set forth unity, He arranged by His authority the origin of that unity, as beginning from one. Assuredly, the rest of the Apostles were the same as was Peter, endowed with a like partnership of honor and power; but the beginning proceeds from unity." (Cyprian, "On the Unity of the Church", 4). )

He continues by showing that there are many rays, but one light, many branches to a tree, but one strength based on the power of the roots, and many springs which build up one stream; thus also is the church. There is unity in it. Over it spreads one light from on high. In his "Prescription against the Heretics" Tertullian also shows that Peter received the full knowledge from the Lord and that he was given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. But, no truth was either hid from

St. John. In fact, all the Apostles were given the same truth. St. Peter is not superior to St. Paul in teaching and so forth. (cf. Ch.22). And it is because of this fact that Dr. Neander makes the fine remark: "This church could with as little propriety be called the "cathedra Petri," as the "cathedra Pauli". Irenaeus and Tertullian seem to be aware, indeed, that Peter and Paul were its founders, that they gave it a bishop and honored it by their martyrdom. But that the Roman church held a prominence as the "cathedra Petri" over all the other apostolic churches they still remain ignorant". (Neander, l.c.p.213). (Though Cyprian ascribed to the Roman Church the representation of unity in the catholic church, he did not give it apostolic authority in determining all matters of church controversy. On the contrary, he maintained with firmness and energy the independent right of the individual bishops to manage the varied affairs of their churches according to their own principles, as we have before indicated. It is true that Cyprian teaches that outside the church there is no salvation (On the Unity of the Church, 6), yet, he nowhere says that outside the Roman Church there is no salvation. By church, Cyprian referred to the true catholic Christian church, and not specifically to Rome. Rome is not authoritative, far less infallible. "Cyprian plainly denied the supremacy of Roman jurisdiction and the existence of an infallible tribunal for the settlement of doctrinal controversies, and protested against identifying the church in general with the church at Rome." (Schaff, l.c.p.174).) As is shown by our dogmatists and exegetes, the Roman Catholic interpretation of Matt.16,18,19 rests on Catholic pride and fallacy. After continued stressing of this point there developed this bugaboo of the ages, Roman supremacy. This, in turn, led to supreme hierarchy and their infamous "Extra ecclesiam Romanam nulla salus".

Thereby they hopelessly confused the spiritual holy Christian church which is invisible with the external organization.

In his "De Unitate Ecclesiae" Cyprian most forcibly developed the doctrine of church unity and universality. Dr. Schaff calls him the champion of church unity and states that he "would have made a better pope than any pope before Leo I." (Schaff. l. c. p. 172).

Rome continually appealed to tradition in support of their false notion of leadership; Tertullian, however, in attacking the heretics, knows of no better authority than the Scriptures. That is the authority. He writes: "Our appeal must therefore must therefore be made to the Scriptures.--- For wherever it shall be manifest that the true Christian rule shall be, there will likewise be the true Scriptures and expositions thereof, and all the Christian traditions". (Tert. P. resc. ag. Heret. 1). And he proceeds to do as he stated above. The Bible is his final proof; there he finds his decision. In his "Prescription against the Heretics" he dwells on this fact especially in chapters 13, 14, 17, and 19. In his battle with the heretics he does not refer to Roman authority or supremacy for a decision in church matters. "Clearly, had Tertullian known anything of this last dogma of Latin Novelty (the dogma of infallibility), he would not have taken the trouble to write this treatise. He would have said to heretics, We can neither discuss Scripture nor Antiquity with you. Rome is the touchstone of dogma, and to its bishop we refer you". (The Ant-Nicene Fathers, <sup>1/4</sup>p. 266).

Though Pope Stephen opposed Cyprian most vigorously, the Carthaginian bishop nevertheless addressed him as a brother and colleague. That fact already shows the equality of the two men; Cyprian did not consider himself under the Roman bishop. In the Council of 258 when over 87 bishops assembled in Carthage, Cyprian told them,

after repeated wranglings with the pope, that they must decide church matters as they personally saw fit, and not give all heed to the words of the Roman bishop. No one has the right to make himself a bishop of bishop, as does the bishop of Rome. (Cyp.-Epist. Sev. Coun. of Car.). He then proceeds to attacked pope Stephen on the ground that he was introducing innovations and was separating himself from church unity which was taught the church by Christ, Matt.16,18,19. Firmilianus, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia aided Cyprian and opposed the views of Stephan. When Stephen deposed two bishops in Spain as a result of a controversy, "the North African communities were applied to for their opinion. The North African Synod at Carthage, in whose name Cyprian replied, did not hesitate ~~that~~ to declare that the decision of the Roman bishop was without force, and strongly charged the Spanish churches not to suffer the two unworthy bishops to continue in office". (Neander, l.c.p.217).

Cyprian does not show deep respect for the so-called pope at Rome. In his 73ed Epistle he clearly speaks of Stephen's error and his unskilful writing, lack of foresight, and good judgment. If the pope were considered infallible, would the bishop of the transmarine church dare so speak? We cannot conceive of a present-day ecclesiastic in the Roman hierarchy addressing the Pope in such a tone. In his 66ed Epistle Cyprian uses a "you ought" in writing to Stephen. He demands action from him and tells him just what is right to do in certain church matters. Even Firmilian speaks disparagingly of Stephen. He writes: "Certainly, Stephen has not done anything deserving of kindness and thanks". (Cyp. Epist. 74). The Cappadocian bishop thought so much of Cyprian (not of the Roman "pope") that, he writes in the 74th Epistle, out of great respect for the decisions of Cyprian, he memorized his writings. From these facts it is clear that there existed a spiritual unity between

the churches of Asia Minor and North Africa. In this same Epistle it appears that Stephen went so low as to call Cyprian a "false Christ" and "a false Apostle and a deceitful worker".

Cyprian never gave the title of "pope" to the Roman bishop. "The correspondence of Cyprian shows no trace of the recognition by the African Church of the exclusive right of the bishop of Rome to the title. Indeed, in a petition to Boniface, Bishop of Carthage, A.D. 525, the monks there address him as "Christi reverendus Pontifex". (Hastings, l.c.p. 855, Vol.2). If Cyprian does speak of the "pope" in Rome, he is using sarcasm which originated in Africa. Waterman writes: "Papa" which the church might have translated by "Father", but has chosen to render as "Pope", seems to have been an African title in its origin.---Tertullian in his "De Pudicitia" (13) calls some bishop "benedictus papa", but even if, which is very doubtful, he meant the Roman bishop, he was using an African, not a Roman title.--- Cyprian's Roman correspondents address him as "blessed pope", the "benedictus papa" of Tertullian's sneer, but never speak of their own bishop so. The first Roman bishop to have the title is Marcellinus, 296-304." (Waterman, l.c.p.369). Dr. Garrison shows that the term "Pontifex maximus", used by Cyprian perhaps of the Roman bishop is equal to our "Great Mogul". It was a term used at this time and for two centuries after of the Roman Emperor.

#### 6) The Penitents.

The ancient church and especially the church under Tertullian was distinguished for its strict discipline. The measures of discipline had two intentions: 1) to uphold the purity and dignity of the church; and 2) to preach to the offender. Extreme punishment was excommunication. This act excluded one from the congregation of the faithful; such an one had no rights in the church. The sacraments

were not administered for the excommunicated, neither had they a voice in the proceedings of the church meetings. They were, however, permitted to attend the catechetical instructions as penitents. In his "De Pudicitia" (19) Tertullian dwells on them shortly. Before readmittance, a penitent had to pass through the grades of all the catechumens, and prove their repentance by special works of faith: prayer, fasting, almsgiving, etc., etc. The chief thing was true contrition of the heart. There were four classes of penitents in the ancient church. Whether or no they so existed in the North African Church we are do not know. They are listed for the sake of completeness. 1) The Weepers, who lay before the church doors and implored the clergy for restoration in the garments of mourning; 2) The Hearers, who attended the catechumen lessons and were regarded as catechumenates; 3) The Knelters, who attended the public prayers, but knelt all the while; and the (4) Standers, <sup>who,</sup> took part in the entire worship, but were excluded from the communion. The course of penance was usually fixed at three or four years. It, however, could be shortened or extended to the day of death.

After the fulfillment of this probation came the restoration. "The penitent made a public confession of sin, received absolution by the laying on of hands from the minister, the precatory or optative benediction, was again greeted by the congregation with the brotherly kiss, and admitted to the celebration of communion. For the ministry alone he was forever disqualified". (Schaff, l.c.p.190). Later there arose a difference in regard to the acceptance of the penitents. There were two parties: 1) The North African and the Spanish church which, defended by the Montanists, and later by the Donatists, insisted that it was wrong to restore one who was guilty of a mortal sin, especially if he denied Christ. If the church did so, it would lose its characteristic holiness; 2) Absolution and communion should not be refused to



any one on the death bed. This was a serious problem in the early days, particularly after the Decian persecution when thousands had denied their faith in the face of death and now, especially after Cyprian's return from exile, demanded restoration.

In Rome there was a ~~lack~~<sup>laxness</sup> in disciplinary methods from the beginning. Therefore Tertullian attacks the Roman clergy so fiercely. "But here we perceive, also, how the looser practice in regard to penance was connected with the interest of the hierarchy. It favored the power of the priesthood, which claimed for itself the power of absolution.-- No wonder the church of Rome, in this point, as in others, triumphed at last over all opposition." (Schaff, l.c.p.192).

#### 7) The Lapsed.

The church in North Africa was in a bad way after the Decian persecution. Thousands of those who had denied their faith or even worshipped heathen idols during the persecution, appealed to the clergy for readmittance when the relentless hand of the Roman Emperor was lifted. Cyprian was unwilling at the first to admit them, following in his Master's footsteps. But the pressure was too great. He saw that measures of restoration had to be employed. He maintained strictly that the church must be governed by law at all costs; legal authority is the only rule in the church, not personal feelings or the sudden desires of the confessors. "Repentance pure and sincere was the only way back into the fold of the church. Urging the lapsed to sorrow and contrition of heart, he writes: "Why do your deaf ears not hear the salutary precepts with which we earn you? Why do your blind eyes not see the way of repentance which we point out, Why does your stricken and alienated mind not perceive the lively remedies which we both learn and teach from the heavenly Scriptures.-- Some are punished in the

meantime, that others may be corrected. The forerunners of a few are the example of all." (Cyp. "On the Lapsed", 23). In the same treatise, chapter 35, he addresses the lapsed with warm words to repent and to acknowledge the gravity of their sins. God, he points out, is always merciful to forgive. "He who repents of his errors shall make the saddened church glad and shall deserve a crown of the Lord.

Cyprian necessarily had to insist on the need of true repentance because many of the lapsed sought entrance into the church by other means. Thousands were issued "libelli pacis" daily by the confessors. Tertullian already alludes to them. These "libelli" were small pamphlets which gave the lapsed the permission of a "Confessor", one who had been in prison for his faith but was again released, to reenter the church. The lapsed presented these "libelli" at the doors of the churches and insisted on forgiveness by right of the confessor's power. "When Cyprian evinced the less disposition to comply with their impetuous demands, in proportion to the want which they portrayed of true contrition and humility, he made himself extremely unpopular by his resistance. On two sides he appeared in an unfavorable light, on the side of his severity against the lapsed, and his lack of reverence for the confessors." (Neuhäuser, l.c.p.229).

Those, who, during the persecution, had offered sacrifice to the heathen gods were known as "Thurificati"; those who had obtained a certificate from the Roman persecutors implying a complete disavowal of Christianity were called "Libellatici".

Had Cyprian complied to the demands of the lapsed, the church would have lost its power and influence. "It needs no explanation to show the innumerable, disastrous evils which result from such utter destruction of all the safeguards and barriers both of morals and govern-

ment. And yet, so blind was the devotion of the mass of the people to the Holy Confessors, that only a man of Cyprian's consummate ability could have guided the church safely through such a perilous straight."

(Garrison, L.c.p. 86).

### 8) Church Schisms.

During the third century there were four schisms in the church, two at Rome, one in Egypt, and one in North Africa. We shall treat the latter only as it has a direct bearing on the history of the times.

#### The Schism of Felicissimus:

When Cyprian was elected bishop of Carthage soon after his conversion (about two years), there were those who protested. As a result a schism arose which lasted for many years. The breach in the church was headed by the presbyter Novatus and supported by Felicissimus, a deacon. In his 49th Epistle Cyprian charges Novatus with gross cruelties. Without the knowledge of the chosen bishop, Felicissimus was ordained as bishop of Carthage perhaps by foreign bishops. Later another bishop by the name of Fortunatus was chosen. The Decian persecution which soon ensued discontinued the strife. But after the persecution the thing received fresh nourishment. The question of discipline now came to the foreground. During the persecution many Christians had lapsed into heathendom and denied their faith openly. Cyprian at first dealt harshly with them, refusing them admittance into the fold of the church; but, because of their large numbers, and because of the peculiar circumstances, he was forced to alter his views and become more lenient with them. Cyprian was also charged with cowardice in fleeing from his church during the persecution. That act was against the principles of his master, who in his "De Fuga Persecu-

"tione" strongly speaks against flight. The church of Novatus and Felicissimus was a safe guard for all the lapsed; it favored the practice of the "libelli" of peace-bills offered the lapsed by the confessors. While in exile Cyprian had ordered a collection of the churches and a visitation of the same, but Felicissimus refused to comply with his command. After his return, Cyprian held a council in Carthage. Felicissimus and Novatus were condemned. Cyprian's episcopal authority was thereby strengthened.

#### IV. CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

##### 1) Places of Worship.

The divine worship of the Christians was very simple at the first, as might be expected, in contrast to the heathen display and ostentation in their many celebrations. There was a gradual development to the grand services which characterized the Nicene Age. Dr. Schaff asserts that Tertullian and Cyprian are the richest sources for information on the Christian worship of the post-apostolic age. Without their works we would know little of this <sup>period</sup> age.

Until the end of the second century worship was conducted in private houses, as was done during the apostolic age especially, in desert places, and at the graves of martyred saints. It was but natural for the Christians to choose places as they did for divine services. They were too poor to erect churches; persecution, the fear of desecration, the character of their faith, the desire for silence and solitude drove them to secret abodes. The house best suited for the love-feast and for worship was an oblong dining-hall - always present in the average heathen dwelling. Often a niche was used for such purpose.

An elevated seat was used for the reading of the Scriptures and preaching; a simple table served as a sort of altar for the administration of the Sacrament. "The first traces of special houses of worship occur in Tertullian who speaks of going to church". (Schaff, l.c.p.199).

After the middle of the third century, beginning with the toleration era of Gallienus in 260 and lasting until the year 303, churches were built in great earnestness. Dr. Schaff holds it is for this reason that the historian Eusebius mentions the destruction of so many churches during the persecution of Diocletian which raged in the church beginning with the year 303. At the beginning of the fourth century Rome had more than forty churches.

## 2) The Lord's Day.

The observance of Sunday as a special day of worship goes back to the apostolic age. It was held in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ. The designation is found already in the New Testament, Matt. 28,1; Mark 16,2; Luke, 24,1; John 21,1; Acts 20,7; I Cor. 16,2 and especially Rev. 1,10: *ἡ ἡμέρα κυριακή*. The custom of worshipping on Sunday was followed by Christians everywhere. There was no change of developments according to fancy in the different localities. The Lord's Day is highly spoken of by both Tertullian and Cyprian. On this day there was to be no fasts; in prayer the people were to stand, not kneel, as on other days. But more of that later. The Didache speaks of Sunday as "The Lord's Day of the Lord". It was not considered a law of the New Covenant that this particular day was to be held holy, as was the Jewish Sabbath in the Old Testament. "The fathers did not regard the Christian Sunday as a continuation of, but as a substitute for, the Jewish Sabbath, and based it not so much on

the fourth commandment, and the primitive rest of God in creation, to which the commandment expressly refers, as to the apostolic tradition. There was a disposition to disparage the Jewish law in the zeal to prove the independent originality of Christian institutions." (Schaff, l.c.p.202-3). Indicating the reason why Sunday was chosen as the day for Christian worship. Tertullian calls it the "day of the Lord's Resurrection" (On Prayer, 23). As the Jewish Sabbath indicated the rest of God on the seventh day and the final rest of all believers in heaven, the Lord's Day in the New Testament pointed to the final rest of the Christians from sin and the eternal rest in the presence of God.

### 3) The Festivals.

In the third century the Church in North Africa commemorated two particular events in the history of the Christian church, the Resurrection of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It seems the festival of Epiphany was not as yet celebrated.

In reality there were two festive seasons: Passover, in commemoration of the suffering and death of Christ, and Pentecost, commemorating the Resurrection and exaltation of Christ. Passover, from the term "Pascha" was used to designate the Easter season. The Christian Passover, of course, grew out of the Jewish Passover, in commemoration of its deliverance from the angel of death in Egypt. In the New Testament, however, the Passover, being interchangeably used for the Lenten season or for Easter Day, had special reference to the Resurrection of the Lord. The festival of Pentecost began at Easter and extended up to the day of the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Apostles. This was a period of fifty days; therefore the name Pentecost, from the Greek term *πεντηκοστή*, meaning fifty. In his "De Baptismo" (19) Tertullian shows that he understood Pentecost as referring to the space of fifty

days intervening between Easter and the Day of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Each day during this period was a sort of Sunday, celebrated with daily worship. There was standing in the prayers and no fasting, as on regular Sundays otherwise. (Tert. On Pray. 23). Later this joyous festival of the church was limited to Ascension, forty days after the Resurrection, the fiftieth day being Pentecost proper.

#### 4) The Order of Public Worship.

In general it might be said that no exact account of the form of worship used during the third century in North Africa is any longer extant. So Dr. Donaldson who says: "We have practically no trace left of the form of service used in the North African Church". (Donaldson, l.c.p.92).

On Sunday, the day appointed by the Christians for divine worship, the congregation assembled, sang responsively a song to Christ; then they pledged themselves to an oath not to do any evil thing, steal, rob, commit adultery, break their word, etc. At evening they again came together to eat a meal in unison known as the agape.

Justin Martyr, Dr. Schaff records, lists the different parts of the divine worship as it was celebrated in his day. We quote it here for the sake of comparison. No doubt much of it was used in the days of Tertullian and Cyprian. He records: On Sunday all the Christians in the cities and villages met together for worship. There was at the first reading done from the Gospels and the Prophets, whereupon the president gave an exhortatory sermon. After that the bread with the wine was brought forward. The president offered prayer and thanks to God for the Sacrament, and the congregation responded with a loud Amen. Thereupon the consecrated elements were distributed to each one. The deacons later carried them to the houses of those that were sick.

The wealthy gave contributions to the church as they were able and willing. This money went to the support of the poor, the widows, the orphans, the prisoners, and strangers. No doubt, Schaff adds, all these acts come down from the Apostolic age. Tertullian mentions several parts expressly in his "Apology" (39). There he refers to the assembly of the congregation, the initial prayer for the church, the Emperor, and the good of the land, the reading of the sacred Scriptures, the censuring and rebukes made to individuals, and the collection that was lifted for the poor and needy.

Little is known of the daily worship of these early Christians. The hours of three, six, and nine were designated as the hours of prayer for all those who had leisure at this time to worship. These particular hours were chosen, not in keeping with the Jewish form of daily prayers, but in commemoration of the the nailing of Christ to the cross, the great darkness, and His death at three in the afternoon, or the ninth hour. Usually the prayers consisted in the recital of a group of psalms. (Tert. "On Prayer" and Cyprian "The Lord's Prayer".)

##### 5) The Rule of Faith.

Besides the Bible itself the fathers frequently refer to the "rule of faith", the *κανὼν τῆς πίστεως* or *τῆς ἀληθείας*. This consisted of the common faith of the church as it was handed down from Christ through the bishops who retained it in the churches, especially at Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Rome, and Corinth. It was the creed of the Christians, a summary of their belief, as served as a bulwark against the onslaughts of heresy and heathen insult. At the first there was no prescribed formula no "regula fidei" binding together all the churches. Each of the leading provinces had its own creed. As a result there was a variety of them, yet a substantial agree-



ment between them all. They all were expressive of the great gospel truths; they showed no marked discrepancies. Some of them, however, were more complete than others. "Tertullian could say that the "regula fidei" was "una omnino, sola immobilis, et irreformabilis." (Schaff, l.c.p. 530). The Western forms (Gallican, Italian, and the North African) were shorter and more simple than the Eastern. The Montanist gives us a fine summary of the rule of faith used in his day in his "Prescription against the Heretics". It follows: "Now with regard to this rule of faith --- that we may from this point acknowledge what it is what we defend -- it is, you must know, that which prescribes the belief that there is one only God, and that He is none other than the Creator of the world, who produced all things out of nothing, through His own word, first of all sent forth; that His word is called His Son, and, under the name of God, was seen in "diverse manners" by the patriarchs, heard at all times in the prophets, at last brought down by the Spirit and power of the Father into the Virgin Mary, was made flesh, in her womb, and being born of her, went forth as Jesus Christ; thenceforth He preached the new law and the new promise of the kingdom of heaven, worked miracles; having been crucified, He rose again the third day; (then) having ascended into the heavens, He sat at the right hand of the Father; sent instead of Himself the power of the Holy Ghost to lead such as believe; will come with glory to take the saints to the enjoyments of everlasting life and of the heavenly promises, and to condemn the wicked to everlasting fire, after the resurrection of both these classes shall have happened, together with the restoration of their flesh". (Tert. Presc. ag. Heret. 13). The same writer repeats this creed in his "On the Veiling of Virgins", but in a shorter form.

## 6) The "Disciplina Arcani".

From the middle of the second to the close of the fifth century the common service was divided into the "Missa Catechumenorum" and the "Missa Fidelium". Dr. Schaff points out that the Acts of the Council in Carthage in 398 first use the term "missa". Tertullian is the earliest witness to the regular and strictly upheld division. In attacking the heretics he complains: "To begin with, it is doubtful who is a catechumen, and who a believer; they have all access alike, they hear alike, they pray alike -- even heathens, if any such happen to come among them." (Tert. Presc. ag. Heret. 41). Evidently, we can infer that the "Missa Catechumenorum" and the "Missa Fidelium" was in vogue in the days of Tertullian already in North Africa. In the service for the catechumens it was customary to have a Scripture reading, a sermon of an exhortatory nature, prayers, and songs. This service was open to members in good standing only; those who wished to become full members of the church at the end of their instruction. The penitents, those guilty of some grievous sin, had to take this entire course once more as a corrective measure. At the close of this service the doors were closed and all the catechumens were forced to leave the assembly. Thereupon, in the "Missa Fidelium", the Lord's Supper was observed.

### Catechetical Instruction:

The catechumen was a very important person in the ancient church. The instruction of catechumens and the order of catechists, the instructors, dates from approximately the apostolic age. Generally the instructors were presbyters and deacons. In the case of adults this instruction always preceded baptism. In the case of infant baptism, of course, it could not. In general it may be rightly affirmed that this system was the foundation of the Christian church and its progress; it surpassed in many ways our modern system

of instruction, especially that offered adults outside the parochial school system. When a catechumen was graduated he had a fine knowledge of the Bible and was able to combat the errors of the heretics and the heathen. Since they were not as yet full members, they were not permitted to attend the Eucharistic service. "They embraced people of all ranks, ages, and grades of culture, even philodophers, statesmen, rhetoricians,-- Justin, Athanagoras, Clement, of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, who all embraced Christianity in their adult years." (Schaff, l.c.p. 256).

The duration of the instruction was from two to three years. It could also be shortened according to the circumstances.

Bingham gives a fine survey of the subjects of instruction offered in the catechetical schools in the post-apostolic age. No doubt most, if not all of the subjects and customs there recorded were in use in the church of Tertullian and Cyprian. The instruction usually began with the doctrine of repentance, the remission of sins, the necessity of good works, and the nature and use of baptism where they were taught how to renounce the devil. Thereupon followed an explanation of the articles of the creed (some added the nature and immortality of the soul and an account of the canonical books of the Bible). The catechumens were allowed to read some portions of the Bible. In some of the schools even the Apocryphal Books were read for the purpose of instilling the moral precepts therein contained. Frequent examinations were given in text proficiency. Bingham states they were often repeated before baptism.

There was also the custom of a twenty day exercism before the day of baptism. This was common in both the early Greek and Latin schools. It was known as the fire of exorcism; it purged the soul. Exorcisms consisted of nothing more than prayers taken from the Bible for the purpose of breaking the dominion of Satan in the new converts.

Before the day of confirmation and baptism they all were taught how to answer questions and how to conduct themselves on their appearance before the congregation. "The catechumens at the time that they were exorcised made their actual renunciation of the devil, and then were taught the creed". (Bingham, l.c.p. 285). This occurred shortly before Palm Sunday, the day of their baptism and confirmation. Until the very end the name of the Trinity, the actual words of the creed, and the mystery of the word etc., were kept from the catechumens. On the Friday before Palm Sunday, customarily, occurred the "traditum symboli", or the teaching of the actual words of the rule of faith. Before this time they were merely taught the essence of the creed. On Palm Sunday occurred the "reditum symboli", or the recitation of the creed for the first time to the congregation. The girls wore their white dresses for one week after the day of confirmation.

There was a renunciation of the devil before the day of confirmation and at the baptism. "Tertullian means the same thing when he says, that "this renunciation was made twice: first in the church, under the hands of the bishop; and then again, when they came to the water to be baptized." (Bingham, l.c.p. 285).

#### The Catechumens:

This term comes from the Greek word  $\kappa\alpha\tau\eta\chi\acute{\iota}\omega$ , <sup>to shout down</sup> or  $\kappa\alpha\tau\eta\chi\eta\rho\iota\varsigma$ . In general it signifies the instruction that is given in the rudiments of Christianity. "Hence the catechumens had also the name of "novitiosi, et tirones Dei", new soldiers of God, as we find in Tertullian and St. Austin. (Bingham, l.c.p. 257). At times they were also called "audientes"; however, this term more definitely designated those who were allowed to listen to sermons only, but not of the prayers of the church. Many helpers were needed to teach these pupils. A thorough indoctrination was insisted upon before admittance into the church.

Confirmation:

Originally connected with baptism, the rite of confirmation gradually became a separate institution. No doubt, as Schaff, thinks, the change took place about the third century, for, he states, Cyprian is the first to refer to it as a distinct act. Undoubtedly, the ceremony of infant baptism was the reason for the separation. The rite was performed by the imposition of hands, the anointing of the body with balsam-oil (chrism), together with the sign of the cross. The actual ceremony took place sometime between the anointing and the giving of the Eucharist which occurred last and was considered the consummation of the act, as the Hastings Encyclopedia records.

Only the bishops were authorized to confirm. "This notion had been formed as early as the middle of the third century. The bishops were under the necessity, therefore, of occasionally going through their dioceses, in order to administer to those who had been baptized by their subordinates, the country presbyters, the rite which was afterward denominated confirmation." (Neander, l.c.p. 316).

7) Christian Art.The Cross:

The oldest symbol in the Christian church is the cross. It is the sign of the redemption of Christ on Calvary's Hill. Later, the sign of the cross was used in most of the affairs of life, in bathing, in eating, on rising etc. Writes the Montanist: "At every forward step and movement, at every going in and out, and when we put on our clothes and shoes, when we bathe, when we sit at table, when we light the lamps, on couch, on seat, in all the ordinary actions of daily life, we trace upon the forehead the sign." (Tert. The Chap.3). In this fashion it was in use all over the Christian church at this time. Tertullian during his lifetime had to make a firm defence of the Christians against

the pagan charge of idol worship (staurolatría), or cross worship, more properly. (Tert. Apol.16). In the same Book (12) Tertullian shows that the Christians had a very low opinion of images; they were, in fact, forbidden in the Christian home. He tells the heathen why they as Christians refuse to do homage to the images with the strong words: "O impious words! O blasphemous reproaches! Gnash your teeth upon us,-- foam with undimmed rage against us, if we refuse our homage to statues, and fligid images, the very counterpart of their dead originals, with which owls and mice and spiders are so well acquainted, does it not merit praise instead of penalty, that we have rejected what we have come to see is error?" (Tert. Apol.12).

In the early centuries there was no prayer to the cross, but to that which it signified. From his "On the Crown" it is clear (chapter 3) that Tertullian regarded the sign of the cross as a protection against all kinds of danger.

There was one famous allegorical representation in the North African Church, the use of the Greek ICHTHYS, or fish, as a designation of Christ. The various letters of this Greek word were taken to mean *Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ*, Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior. "The anagrammatic or hieroglyphic use of the Greek ICHTHYS and the Latin Piscis-Christus belonged to the *Disciplina Arcani*; and was a testimony of the ancient church to the faith in Christ's person as the Son of God, and His work as Savior of the world." (Schaff, l.c.p. 280).

Dr. Schaff states that there were many pictures of the Virgin Mary in use during the second century. Perhaps archaeology has still to uncover some of these in use in the days of Tertullian and Cyprian.

The Hastings Encyclopedia shows that as far as an altar was concerned, Tertullian used the word "altare" in his "On Chastity", 10.

## V. CHRISTIAN LIFE CONTRASTED WITH PAGAN LIFE.

### L) Moral Corruption in the Roman Empire.

At the opening of the Christian era Roman civilization had reached its zenith, and pagan religion was at its height. It was the age of Augustus, synonymous with the golden age of literature. Rome was now the capital of the world. From the firths of Scotland to the cataracts of the Nile and from the Euphrates on the east to the Atlantic on the west, Caesar Augustus ruled with a mighty hand. His was the world with none to dispute it. Every nation, every people, every tribe, bowed before his throne in humble obedience. The battle-axe and the sword had been laid aside, for no one dared now to raise his hand against the Roman universal law. A profound peace, therefore, obtained throughout the world; the famous "Pax Romana" gave prosperity and contentment to all. All maritime piracy was now practically wiped out and robbers along the great Roman highways were fought by the police force of the Emperor. Life and property was generally secure. Travelling was greatly facilitated; many military roads and some canals were constructed throughout the Mediterranean world. Armies for the maintenance of peace could move about with considerable ease and rapidity; messages and political personages were able to cross the Great Sea in a remarkably short time. The Mediterranean became a sea for travel, for commerce, and for pleasure. The various proconsuls and governors of Roman provinces thought little of visiting distant lands or the Roman capital frequently. Agriculture was now greatly improved and industry developed. Temples, theaters, aqueducts, public baths, and other grand buildings bedecked and adorned most every large city. There were many institutions of learning. Two

languages with a current literature prevailed in the world, Greek in the east and Latin in the west. There was a book trade of no small importance. Publishing houses could edit a book for some eighty cents. The better homes had libraries. In the smaller dwellings literature was not scarce. The poets of the Augustine age were gladly read. Slaves were employed to take down dictation. There was a stenographic system as efficient as present-day methods whereby books could be multiplied with remarkable rapidity. Economical ly the people were in a happy way; they were prosperous and happy. Tertullian bears witness to the good times during his lifetime, stating to his countrymen: "Men of Carthage, ever princes of Africa, enobled by ancient memories, blessed with modern facilities, I rejoice that times are so prosperous with you, that you have leisure to spend and pleasure to find in criticizing dress. These are the "piping time of peace" and plenty. Blessings rain from the Empire and from the sky. Still, you too of old time wore your garments --- your tunics --- of another shape." (Tert. "On the Pallium", 1). One might say there was virtually an over-production of produce and fruits from all parts of the world. Minerals and precious stones were plentiful; the Roman mines were operated daily by captive slaves. Dr. Schaff holds that the period from Nerva to Marcus Aurelius, an age of 84 years, was the most prosperous period in the history of the world.

Such was Rome externally in the first Christian centuries. But morally, spiritually, it was rotten to the core. Though rich in all material blessings of this world, though schooled in the culture and sciences of her predecessors, the Roman Empire ushered in <sup>an</sup> <sub>A</sub> age of the most cruel brutality the world has ever seen. Without excuse, without reason, men, in all this prosperity, became brutes in the full



sense of the term. Morality, though degenerating before this, was now at its lowest ebb. The vice of every nation under the sun "had its day" in Rome. "Gibbon says (111,112):"The capital attracted all the vices of the world. The intemperance of the Goths, the cunning of the Greeks, the savage obstinacy of the Egyptians and Jews, the servile temper of the Asiatics, the effeminate prostitution of the Syrians" all were commingled in this various multitude. It was an age, too, of luxury and extravagance of living which we, with all our conceptions of millionaires and expenditure can hardly reproduce even in imagination. It was a time, also, of high art, at least, if art consists, as some appear to think, in painting in all that can enflame the passions, and suggest evil to the mind, instead of that which seeks to give expression to the true, the pure, and noble as essential elements of beauty. Art was seen everywhere; walls were alive with pictures - outside as well as in - the floor as often as the ceiling." (Garrison, l.c.p.70).

Slaves, thousands of them, groaned under the pressure of this cruel race of godless men. When a nation had been subdued, the best of the survivors were taken to the capital and converted into heartless gladiators. The moral aspect of slavery throughout the world was most serious. Slavery, in fact, proved in the end one of the causes for the downfall of Rome. After Rome had completed its conquests, and there no longer remained a strong power over which to exercise its domination, slavery supplied this lack. Especially in Rome, the slaves assisted their masters in immorality. Many of them, especially the young boys became the objects of their masters' passions. Naturally enough, this conduct was a most baneful influence on the right education of the youth. He thus learned to be corrupt from the very beginning.

The cry of the Roman citizen was "panem et circenses". If he

had bread to eat, his only concern was the arena, the circus, and the theater. Perhaps some of the most brutal crimes that have ever been committed were done in the Roman arenas. Since the Christians were considered as the enemies of the human race, they had no rights; their life was taken freely in many persecutions. They were thrown before the wild beasts in the arena, the lions from Numedia and the tigers from India, to the delight of the spectators. The arena and the theater were not the first pure institutions. The games held there were originally festivals of the gods, but they had now degenerated into houses of vice, into breeding houses of sin, a crying disgrace to the world. In the golden days of Greece, Sophocles and Aeschylus wrote plays and dramas to be enacted in them. They also served as a sort of gymnasium for the moral and physical development of manhood. However, the populace <sup>now</sup> went there to see cheap comedies, brutal tragedies, magnificent pageantry, display, tremendous expenditures, wild music, a frivolous and merciless taking of life, and sinful dances. All this tended to lessen the standard of morality, low as it was. Even naval battles were enacted in the arena at Rome with inconsiderate taking of innocent life. The gladiators who fought in the mock-battles were slaves, and slaves were regarded as clay. The only noble men were Romans! There were horse races, chariot races, hunts of wild beasts, military displays, and athletic games for the amusement of the people. Large crowds came at the break of day, careless of sunshine or rain, and stayed until the evening. In the absence of sufficient light, the Christians, under Nero, were suspended from poles and burned in the arena. At times there were over 400,000 present in one day. All the day long they held their attention, strained their eyes, on the victory of certain horses or the blood of helpless gladiators. Often the happiness

of the city depended on the success of a horse race. Most brutal of all were the gladiatorial fights between individuals. This was usually a fight to the finish. Murder thus became a fine art. The heroism of men depended upon the ease with which he could kill his fellow slaves. Even Cyprian complains: "If you cast your eye upon the cities, you behold an assembly of men, presenting a more melancholy sight than any solitude. A combat of gladiators is in preparation, that blood may appease the lust of cruel eyes. A man is killed for the amusement of his fellow-men; murder is turned into an art, and crime, not only perpetrated, but taught as a profession." (Cyprian, from Neander, l.c.p. 263).

The Roman citizenship developed a real thirst for blood. Myriads died for the sheer curiosity of the spectators. Once, at the inauguration of Flavian there were from five to nine thousand beasts slain in one day. Many Christians were also thrown before the wild beasts of the jungles. Already Caesar Augustus had set a bad example for his successors upon the throne. Nero drove the thing to excess with great liberality. He was so liberal that, it is said, the public forgave his many vices. They even wished his return from death in 67 A.D. "Trajan amused Rome for 123 days by exhibiting 10,000 captives in mutual slaughter. pp Pompey introduced combats of men with wild beasts; it gave more excitement. - - There were even female gladiators, especially under Nero and Domitian.--- That the gladiatorial games continued for centuries with scarcely a protest, is one of the most startling facts in moral history." (Angus, "The Environment of Early Christianity", p.43).

The wealth of Rome brought luxury and gluttony. The slaves did the labor of the land. Their <sup>rich</sup> ~~lives~~ ~~was~~ an easy life. Enormous feasts were made at banquets which were frequent. Delicate foods were prepared for their hungry stomachs after the games at the arena. They ate peacocks

from Samos, oysters from Tarentum, dates from Egypt, and nuts from Spain. Using a feather to lighten their stomach, they ate again with appetite; then they used the feather on their throat again to stimulate the appetite and empty the stomach.

The full citizens enjoyed a great wealth of jewels taken from the mines throughout the empire. Tertullian in his "On the Apparel of Women" bears record of their luxurious dress. There were special servants for each method of improving one's dress and appearance. There were servants for the setting of false teeth, the smoothing of wrinkles, the painting of the face and the eyebrows, the care of the clothes, and the dress of the hair.

With all this luxury there went an unnatural sensuality. Pederastia, already condemned by Paul, Romans 1,26,27, was copied from the Greeks and became quite general among the Romans in the second century. Important men were subject to it; Julius Caesar, Antonius, Hadrian, Trajan, and many of the Latin poets. It was so debasing and vile as to reject all excuse. It encouraged celibacy and the general disintegration of the marriage bond. Character was thereby weakened, and thus also the weakening of political Rome. To this vice must also be added the frequency of suicide, gambling in the games, stupid private and public extravagance, the licence of the Florilia with its races of nude courtesans, lewd pictures, and suggestive decorations.

The national army no longer had the strength of its pristine glory. It consisted of the rudest citizens and barbarians from Gaul and far-away Asia. Leaders in the militia often usurped the throne. Emperors became nothing more than military despots in later years. Patriotism was extinct. In its place was suspicion, avarice, greed, pride, bribery, insolence, crime, and murder. In speaking of Rome as an

Empire, Dr. Schaff writes: " There is scarcely an age in the history of the world in which so many and so hideous vices disgraced the throne. The pagan historians of Rome have branded and immortalized the vices and crimes of the Caesars: the misanthropy, cruelty, and voluptuousness of Tiberius; the ferocious madness of Gaius Caligula, who had men tortured, beheaded, or sawed in pieces for his amusement, who seriously meditated the butchery of the whole senate, raised his horse to the dignity of a consul and priest, and crawled under the bed in a storm; the bottomless vileness of Nero, "the inventor of crime", who poisoned or murdered his preceptors Burrhus and Seneca, his half-brother and brother-in-law Britannicus, his mother Agrippina, his wife Octavia, his mistress Poppaea, who in sheer wantonness set fire to Rome, and then burnt innocent Christians for it on torches in his gardens, figuring himself as a charioteer in the infernal spectacle; the swinish gluttony of Vitellius, who consumed millions of money in mere eating; the refined wickedness of Domitian, who, more cat than a tiger, amused himself most with the torments of the dying and with catching flies; the shameless revelry of Commodus with his hundreds of concubines, and ferocious passion for butchering men and beasts in the arena; the mad villiany of Caligula, who raised the lowest men to the highest dignities, dressed himself in women's clothes, married a dissolute boy like himself, in short, inverted all the laws of nature and decency, until at last he was butchered with his mother by the soldiers and thrown into the muddy Tiber". (Schaff, l.c. pp. 316-7).

Later, monsters of this sort were deified. They were honored with the name of "Deus Noster". Their wives also, many of whom were equally as cruel as their husbands, were later, after their death, worshipped and placed on the roster of their myriads of other gods. Truly, the worm of corruption was gnawing away the vitals of fair Rome.

In their outspoken hatred for the Christians generally, the pagans treated them unfairly; they did not hear their case according to strict law procedure. Tertullian complains that in the case of a heathen before the courts, care was taken in the matter, questions were asked, and attempts were made to get proof for assertions made. But, he adds, "Nothing is done like this in our case.--- Instead, we find that even inquiry in regard to our case is forbidden". (Tert. Apol. 2). The very name "Christiani" was a dread, a vulgar term, hated by all, (Apol. 3). As a result of this abhorrence the Christians had to experience insults and unjust treatments. The law was disregarded when a charge was brought against them, writes Tertullian in his Apology for the Christian religion. In part his words follow: "Now first, when you sternly lay it down in your sentences, "It is not lawful for you to exist, and with unhesitating rigor you enjoin this to be carried out, you exhibit the violence and unjust domination of mere tyranny, if you deny the thing to be lawful simply on the ground that you wish it to be unlawful, not because it ought to be." (Tert. Apol. 4).

Because the Christians went about their work in secrecy, because they met together for worship in secluded houses or desert places, and because they celebrated the Lord's Supper under cover, the pagans regarded their actions as mysterious and soon told weird tales about them. They were charged with incest and gross immorality in the agape, as Tertullian records: "Monsters of wickedness, we are accused of observing the holy rite in which we kill a little child and then eat it; in which, after the feast, we practice incest, the dogs -- our pimps, forsooth, overturning the lights, and getting us the shamelessness of darkness for our impious lusts." (Tert. Apol. 4).

Shameful stories were told about the true Christian worship; the Christian God was accounted as an ass's head. Writes the fiery

African; "For like some others, you are under the delusion that our god is an ass's head. Cornelius Tacitus first puts this notion into the people's minds." (Tert. Apol. 16). The reason for this belief among the heathen is ascribed to a tale told in connection with the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt. When they, the Israelites, were expelled, not released, from the Nile valley because they were a leprous people, and were on their way to the wilderness, they found no water. In their quest for some they followed several asses who luckily led them to a pool. Ever since that event the Jews venerated the head of the ass. Since the Christians derived their theology from the ancient Jews, their god was classified with the Jewish god! Since the Christians had the custom of turning to the east in prayer (Apol.16), they were also accused by some of worshipping the sun.

Whenever a serious calamity befell a city or whole nation, Tertullian laments, the Christians, innocent as they were, received the blame. "If the Tiber rises as high as the city walls, if the Nile does not send its waters up over the fields, if the heavens give no rain, if there is an earthquake, if there is famine, or pestilence, straightway the cry is, "Away with the Christians to the lion". (Tert. Apol.40).

Perhaps Rome's most serious objection to the sect of Christians was their refusal to worship their deified Caesars. If Rome insisted on one thing throughout the Empire, it was Caesar worship. That was made the test of loyalty; it was the criterion for true citizenship. In this manner the Empire was strengthened. With worship centralized in the Emperor, the power of Rome was increased throughout its borders. Of course, the Christian conscience could not submit to this demand. It revolted against the idea persistently, as Tertullian shows throughout his "Apology". As a result, the Christians were charged with

disloyalty to the government. Of all the rival religions which prevailed in the Mediterranean world at this time, e.g., the cult of Isis and the cult of Mithra (and later the Manichaeans), Caesar worship seems to have been the most persistent and the most dangerous. The entire government of Rome revolted against opposition to its demands. By resisting Caesar worship the Christians were resisting the world. It is for that reason that opposition and persecution was so fierce against the worshippers of the true God.

## 2) The Heathen Family:

As far as marriage was concerned, monogamy was the rule in the East as well as in the West. But that rule did not in any measure exclude promiscuous intercourse. Concubinage, a sort of secondary marriage, was common, and divorce was looked upon lightly. Men easily obtained divorces from their wives and vice versa. "Seneca tells us of women who marked their chronology by the names of their husbands rather than by the consuls." (Angus, l.c.p.46). Abortion, a sin done in secret today, was openly practiced in Rome. It was a matter of discretion with them, not of sin. The means of doing so were in everyday use. "The motives of abortion were poverty in the lower classes, and in the higher sensuality, and the desire for indulgence or the avoidance of pain or fear of disfigurement". (Angus, l.c.p.47). With all their lack of true Christian knowledge and faith, it is little wonder that such action was so lightly considered, that abortion was not regarded as murder in the first degree.

Prostitution and adultery was common under the "Imperium". Women had no power to prohibit men's passion in this direction. They usually did not care to do so. Many women were equally guilty as the men.



Adultery was punished (not concubinage) only because it interfered with men's property. A wife was regarded as the property of man. This sexual corruption prevailed among the lowest as well as the highest classes. Both men and women had their slaves as hired prostitutes. Though the men had the right to stop their wives from falling to this sin, they were themselves usually so immoral, they did not interfere. The women, as stated before, had to submit to and endure the licentiousness of their husbands; no law prohibited it. During the reign of Augustus the Vestal Virgins were no longer true to their vow; they were a lie to their name. Schaff records that Junenal calls a chaste woman a "rara avis in terris".

Another evil that obtained throughout the Empire was the tyrannical treatment of the children on the part of the parents. The child was considered the property of its father and could be used for utilitarian purposes. The father had the right to punish his children or even kill them without the interference of any law of Rome. Children were considered necessary only in so far as the upkeep of the population and the supply of soldiers was concerned. They were a state concern. Because of this attitude, childlessness was popular in the first Christian centuries. "Augustus in vain offered considerable advantages to a father of three children, showing that this number in a family was rare". (Angus, l.c.p.47). With all this cruelty there was connected the practice of exposure of the sickly and poor or weak children. Foundlings were common in Rome. The parents really thought this was a reasonable thing to do. Usually the foundlings grew up to become slaves or gladiators to die before the people in infamous butchery. Often they were thrown into the Tiber. At the time of the Empire Rome was bloody with this cruel crime. Christianity was the only remedy and rescue for all this inhumanity; all others failed.

That, in rough outline, is the status of affairs in the Roman world during the first centuries. It was far different in the Christian community and home. There the light of the gospel lent its divine influence. Morality was on a much higher plane.

### 3) Christian Morality.

Christianity was necessarily brave from the outset. It had a hard battle to fight with Satan and the underworld. Though it was the only hope for the nations living in sin, though it was the only religion which could, with its regenerative powers, could give lasting hope to those who everywhere had sunk into debauchery and licentiousness, it was resisted with all the might of men's soul in most every place it was preached. But the example of a peerless Christ led these early Christians on to noble victories in spite of opposition on all sides. In submission it conquered, not with the power of the sword. With peace it went about its work and won men into the fold by the "still small voice". It had virtue, love, hope, and meekness together with poverty, an advance guard at the first. By its example of suffering and deaths it taught others and inspired its own brethren. The pragmatic test confirmed its stand. It firmly believed that those who remain faithful unto the very end would receive a crown of life. Bravely did it fight the good fight of faith to a bitter end, but with a reward in heaven. The Ante-Nicene age, and particularly the age we are treating, was full of courage and heroism. There was a love for martyrdom, for a death like the Lord's. The morning of the resurrection Day was constantly before the eyes of the martyrs. They lived for Christ here below and longed for His presence up above. Communism was practiced in all its noblest ways; alms were given, the sick were cared for, as well as the widows, orphans, and the poor.

The Montanist of Carthage forcefully shows that Christianity has no pleasure in the wickedness of the pagans. The joy of the Christians is found, not in licentious living, not in brutal exhibitions, in the satisfaction of carnal delights, not in drunkenness, but in the thought of complete pardon for sins and in the peace of God. The fact, the realization that one has free forgiveness from God and His abiding, loving presence all the time, is a source of true happiness. Such thoughts as these are expressed by Tertullian in his defence of Christianity, the "Apology", and in his treatise "On the Shows", (especially 29). True godliness is not to be thought of as gloominess, as severe austerity, as unhappiness. No Christian is to wear a long-drawn chin. Far from it! Christianity is the true fountain of all joy and happiness; the sensuous pleasures of the ungodly in the end produce the greatest unhappiness and misery. That inner satisfaction, that knowledge, that in spite of all the many sins one has committed during his life-time, there is free forgiveness in Christ who laid down His life for us while we were yet sinners, is far different from the pleasures of this passing world which, at the first, taste sweet, but in the end turn to gall. Christian joy is that serenity of feeling, that calmness of life and soul which lends true beauty to the character and expresses itself in happiness of life. It shows itself by love which in turn produces happiness and loveliness, making one's life a true benediction. In contrast to the gloomy and lonely end of the heathen, the close of the Christian's life grows greater and greater with true goodness, beaming with Christian love, as the setting sun on a summer's evening grows greater and fuller before it is swallowed up by the night.

The Christians were ever conscious of the fact that they were but pilgrims here below. They took joy in "otherworldliness", though, not

to a fault. The first father in Carthage said of them: "She knows that she is a subjoiner on earth, and that among strangers she naturally finds foes; and more than this, that her origin, her dwelling-place, her hope, her recompence, her honors, are above." (Tert. Apol. 1.).

When one became a Christian, a change came over his life. His morals were bettered. The profligate youth became sober and gentle; the wóntán maid, a pious girl. Even the heathen noticed the change and said, "They have become Christians". The Montanist (Apology 3) brings this truth as a proof to the pagans of the good that Christianity is doing the world in general. They may receive the bitter hatred of the Romans and be persecuted and killed, yet, that will not stop their mouths from telling of the glory of Christ and His precious gospel. By persecution the church grows larger and stronger. The Christians persistence to the very end is proof of its truthfulness. Writes Tertullian: "The oftener we are mown down by you, the more in number we grow; the blood of the Christians is seed". (Tert. Apol. 50).

One of the grandest virtues of the Christian, Tertullian states, is patience. God alone is the source of this true blessing. He writes: "So amply sufficient a Depositary of patience is God. If it be a wrong which you deposit in His care, He is an Avenger; if a loss, He is a Restorer; if pain, He is a Healer; if death, He is a Reviver. What honor is granted to patience, to have God as her Debtor! And not without reason; for she keeps all her decrees; she has to do with all His mandates. She fortifies faith; is the pilot of peace; assists charity; establishes humility; waits long for repentance; sets her seal on confession; rules the flesh; preserves the spirit; bridles the tongue; tramples temptation under foot; drives away scandals; gives their crowning grace to martyrdoms; consoles the poor; teaches the rich moderation; overstrains not the weak; exhausts not the strong; is the

delight of the believer; invites the "gentile; commends the servant to his lord, and his lord to God; adorns the woman; makes man approved; is loved in childhood; praised in youth; looked up to in age; is beautiful in either sex, in every time of life." (Tert. "On Patience",15).

Christianity did not have hindrances to fight in the outside world. Inside the fold there were difficulties that presented serious problems. The heathen world was very attractive to the converts; therefore, Christianity had to fight the weakness of the flesh perhaps in a greater degree than was later necessary. Before one was fully accepted as a member of the Christian faith, he had to renounce the joys of the heathen and reject the attractions it had to offer. Of course, this was a problem, and often led to failure. "Whoever in the primitive days would be a Christians, must break loose from his hitherto favorite inclinations, and be ready to give up anything for his faith, Tertul'ian says, that more were deterred from embracing Christianity by unwillingness to forfeit their pleasures, than by the fear of hazarding their life." (Neander, l.c.p. 72 from Tert. On the Spect.2). There were also many simple-minded Christians who accepted everything that was laid before them. Others, again, were indifferent. A third class continually presented arguments pro and con for the heathen games and lustful attractions. That was their very bread of life. As a result, others were led to doubts and had to seek guidance continually from their pastors. "Many and varied were the points upon which the flock looked to their pastors for guidance:- prayer, baptism, repentance, and the discipline connected with them; woman's dress and woman's life, married or unmarried; pleasures, amusements, how far lawful or unlawful -- all were matters upon which direction was desirable." (Dict. of Chr. Biog. Vol.4,p.828). From the list of Tertullian's writings we know that these questions were ably answered, frankly and terse.

In his "Apology" (47) the African Montanist also shows that in preaching the law to the heathen, they often suffered rebukes. If they preached hell, the heathen had their pyriphlegethon, a river of flame in the regions of the dead; they, therefore, did not care to hear of a new "river of flame". If paradise was held up to them, they had their Elysian fields.

#### 4) The Christian Attitude Toward Roman Corruption.

Sacrifice to the many Roman gods was particularly horrible to the Christian church. The congregations in North Africa firmly resisted Rome's demands to pray to idols. Tertullian tells us why when he writes: "We do not offer sacrifice for others for the same reason that we do not for ourselves -- namely, that your gods are not at all the objects of our worship. We are accused of sacrilege and treason. This is the chief ground of the charge against us -- nay, it is the sum-total of our offending.--- We do not worship you gods, because we know that there are no such beings. -- Only if your gods were truly so, would there be any obligation to render divine homage to them." (Tert. Apol. 10). In the same book (16) Tertullian holds their gods up to ridicule and chides them for their silly beliefs. They themselves, he shows, state that Jupiter is of human origin; he, then, is no god! Their entire religion speaks of no "god-maker", yet they have and receive new gods continually. The universe was once created, furnished, and supplied with all good things. "There is nothing waiting for Saturn and his race to do. Men will make fools of themselves if they refuse to believe that from the very first rain poured down from the sky, and stars gleamed, and light shone, and thunders roared". It shows the absence of all good reason to elect humanity to divinity. Yet, the pagans deify the vilest criminal

He proceeds to ask them why they do not deify the "good" heathen, e.g., Socrates, for his wisdom, Polycrates, for good fortune, Croesus, for his wealth, Cato, Scipio, and Pompey. Then, scoring the cruelties and wickedness of the Roman gods, he adds (14): "Things like these should not be made public if they are true; and if false, they should not be fabricated among people professing a great respect for religion."

In chapter 35 he indicates that the Christians did not take part in the various festivals of their heathen fellowmen. They did not cover their doorposts with the laurel wreath nor intrude upon the day with lamps, as was the custom of the pagans on various festivals. The shows of the heathen were strictly forbidden by the church. The Montanist writes: "We renounce all your spectacles, as strongly as we renounce all the matters originating them, which we know were conceived by superstition, when we give up the very things which are the basis of their representations. Among us, nothing is ever said, or seen, or heard, which has anything in common with the madness of the circus, the immodesty of the theater, the atrocities of the arena, the useless exercises of the wrestling-ground". (Tert. Apol.38).

The shows originated from idolatry. For that very reason they are to be avoided. They herald the glory of Bacchus, of Neptune, and Mars. The arena itself is chiefly consecrated to the god of the sun, and in <sup>its</sup> whose midst the sun-temple is erected. Its image shines forth from the temple summit. (Tert. On the Shows,5). Passionate excitement is unbecoming of the Christians. Since this is found in the spectacles of the arena, Christians are to keep from them. Tertullian describes the mobs with the words: "See the people coming to it already under strong emotion, already tumultuous, already passion blind, already agitated by their bets." (Tert. On the Shows,16). In chapter 18 he speaks of the

"foolish racing and throwing feats, and yet more foolish leapings." Later he calls the wrestlers' art "a devil's thing".

By attending the shows (24) one broke the baptismal pledge, and, therefore, (25) Tertullian exhorts: "For how monstrous it is to go from God's church to the devil's -- from the sky to the ~~stye~~ <sup>eye</sup>, as they say; to raise your hands to God, and then to weary them in the applause of the actor; out of the mouth from which you uttered Amen over the Holy Thing, to give witness to a gladiator's fervor; to cry "forever" to any one else but God and Christ." (Tert. On the Shows, 25). The Montanist (26) practically frightens the Christians from attending the shows by relating the tale that a certain woman who was a Christian went to the shows and came back possessed, and of another who in her sleep saw a linen cloth after visiting the theater. She also ~~saw~~ <sup>heard</sup> the actor's name in the cloth mentioned with strong disapproval. Five days later she was dead.

Contrary to Biblical and Lutheran doctrine, Tertullian taught that it was wrong for a Christian to participate in warfare for the defence of his homeland. The Montanist argues: "Shall he forsooth keep watch-service for others more than for Christ, or shall he do it on the Lord's Day, when he does not even do it for Christ Himself? And shall he keep guard before the temples which he has renounced. And shall he take a meal where the Apostle has forbidden him? And shall he diligently protect by night those whom in the daytime he has put to flight by his exorcisms, leaning and standing on the spear the while with which Christ's side was pierced?" (Tert. The Chap. 1). In these words Tertullian shows himself the true Montanist; it is a typical argument of his Montanistic days. He sings the praises of a certain soldier who refused crown for victory in warfare in the same chapter, stating:



" At once he put away the heavy cloak, his disburdening commenced; he loosed from his foot the military shoe, beginning to stand on holy ground, he gave up the sword, which was not necessary either for the protection of our Lord; from his hand likewise dropped the laurel crown; and now, purple-clad, with the hope of his own blood, shod with the preparation of the gospel, completely equipped with the Apostle's armour, and crowned more white than the white crown of martyrdom, he awaits in prison the largess of Christ. " (Tert. The Cahp.1).

### 5) Christian Marriage.

Marriage was considered sacred in the Christian church from the beginning. It was held up as a divine union between man and wife for the promotion of happiness, the exercise of virtue, the restraint of undue passions, and for the establishment of home-life, which is the foundation of the nation. Tertullian gives us a fine description of the blessedness of marriage, especially that of two Christians. It follows: " What kind of yoke is that of two believers, partakers of one hope, one desire, one discipline, one and the same service? Both are brethren, both are fellow-servants, no difference in the spirit or the flesh, nay, they are really "two in one flesh". Where the flesh is one, one is the spirit too. Together they pray, together prostrate themselves, together perform their fasts; mutually teaching, mutually exhorting, mutually sustaining. Equally they are both found in the church of God, equally at the banquet of God, equally in straits, in persecutions, in refreshments. Neither hides ought from the other ; neither shuns the other; neither is troublesome to the other. The sick is visited, the indigent is relieved; alms are given without danger of ensuing torment; sacrifices attended with scruple; daily diligence discharged without impediment; there is no

steady sighing, no trembling greeting, no mute benediction. Between the two echo psalms and hymns; and they mutually challenge each other which shall better chant to the Lord. Such things, when Christ hears and sees, He joys. To these He sends His own peace." (Tert. "To his Wife," II. 8).

Dr. Schaff shows that, according to "On Monogamy" 11 and "On Chastity" 4, Tertullian taught marriage as a religious act, though not properly a sacrament. It was sealed by the offering of holy communion in the presence of the congregation. The nuptial ring as a symbol of the union was retained from the Jewish ceremonial custom, though other things of the Jews were discarded. The catacombs show men and women joining hands in token of the marriage vow.

Monogamy alone was permissible, as also Scriptures teach, Gen. 2,24 and Matt. 19,5. Writes Tertullian: "We do not indeed forbid the union of man and woman, blessed by God as the seminary of the human race, and devised for the replenishment of the human race earth and the furnishing of the world, and, therefore, permitted, yet singly. For Adam was the one husband of Eve, and Eve his one wife, one woman, one rib". (Tert. "To his Wife," 2).

Though marriage was regarded highly, celibacy was considered preferable. The Montanist writes: "There is no place at all where we read that nuptials are prohibited; of course, on the ground that they are a "good thing". What, however, is better than this good, we learn from the apostle, who perm'ts marrying indeed, but prefers abstinence". (Tert. The Chap. 3). Waterman holds that "Tertullian began advocating widowhood as superior to second marriage in "Ad Uxorem", and thence in an ascending scale in the writings: "On the Exhortation to Chastity", "On Single Marriage", and "On Modesty". (Waterman, l.c.p. 301).

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The same idea is entertained by Cyprian in his "De Habitu Virginum". In his customary language he calls those unmarried the "flowers of the church".

Mixed marriages were condemned by the voice and authority of the church. Tertullian classed such marriages with adultery. He writes: "If we look deeply into his meanings, and interpret them, second marriage will have to be termed no other than a species of fornication." (Tert. Exhor. to Chast. 9). With the Apostle he argues that celibacy is preferable at this time. In that event, then, second marriage is surely not pleasing to God. It is not expedient, he argues. By <sup>cont</sup> ~~cont~~ <sup>st</sup> ~~st~~ <sup>it</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>ence</sup> ~~ence~~ one can practice a better life of sanctity. What is poverty for the flesh is gain for the spirit. Though there were mixed marriages in Paul's days, that fact does not legalize them. Mixed marriages, <sup>he held,</sup> are against the ordinance of God. Paul advises no dissolving of mixed marriages which were made before the individuals were converted to Christianity. In the daily affairs of life untold difficulties arise from mixed marriages. If a Christian wife attends the paschal festivals the entire night, her heathen husband naturally suspects her of evil. On Sundays he will not go with her to church but will defame the day in her presence. She cannot offer hospitality to the stranger; the heathen home was closed to foreigners or travellers. Moreover, she would have to attend the heathen festivals and club meetings with her husband, places <sup>t</sup> which the church forbids her to go. The Montanist finally asks: "What will her husband sing to her, or she to her husband? From the tavern, I suppose, she who sups with God, will hear something! From hell, what mention of God arises? What invocation of Christ?" (Tert. The Chap. 6). Dr. Schaff indicates that Cyprian <sup>calls</sup> marriage with unbelievers a prostitution of the members of Christ.

Second-marriage was frowned upon by the church in North Africa. It was permitted by God's indulgence, but it should always give way to God's discipline, argues the Montanist. The exaltation of celibacy wrought this aversion to repeated marriage. This was particularly true in the case of widows. The death of the husband was a call to a life of abstinence and "true chastity." "Therefore, when through the will of God, the husband is deceased, the marriage likewise, by the will of God, deceases. Why should you restore what God has put an end to? Why do you, by repeating the servitude of matrimony, spurn the liberty which is offered you?" (Tert. "To his Wife," 7). The same author advises his wife never to remarry in the even of his early death. However, he outlived her by many years. Only Montanistic tendencies could have led Tertullian to make such demands upon his people as these. He had no true Scriptural grounds for refusing second-marriage to his people.

#### 6) Prayers.

The realistic Africans agreed with one voice that prayer was necessary for a true spiritual Christian life. They taught that prayer was the soul of the Christian life and character. One's entire life should be a life of prayer. Prayer in North Africa was daily and very frequent. It was regarded as the Christian's strong bulwark against the enemies of the soul. As today in Christian homes, prayers were made at meal times. At every turn of activity during the day the Christians prayed, as was shown before under the heading "Christian art". The sign of the cross with prayerful thoughts accompanied them throughout the day and far into the night. In his treatise on prayer Tertullian adds the remark: "But withal, it becomes believers not to take food, and not to go to the bath, before interposing a prayer.-- You will not dismiss a brother who has entered your house

without prayer." (Tert. On pray.25). During his exile Cyprian exhorted his flock to common prayer. It was customary to pray for the church and for the heathen in the common and private prayers of the church. Writes Tertullian: "Without ceasing for all our emperors we offer prayer. We pray for life prolonged; for security to the empire; for protection to the imperial house; for brave armies; a faithful senate, a virtuous people, the world, at least, whatever, as man or Caesar, an emperor would wish." (Tert. Apol. 30).

The customary posture during prayers was sitting, as the Montanist shows in his book on prayer (16). The hands were usually elevated (17). During the joyous Pentecost season and on Sundays the congregation stood while praying. From other remarks it seems that kneeling was also done during prayer in the church. As far as the time of prayer was concerned, Tertullian says, "Nothing at all has been prescribed, except "to pray at every time and every place". However, (25) he writes that the hours of three, six, and nine are more solemn than the other hours. To show true humiliation the voice was subdued (17). Dr. Schaff holds that there were special forms of prayers in use at this time. "The familiar "expectore" and the "sine monitore" of Tertullian prove nothing against this". (Schaff, l.c.p.378). The Lord's Prayer was in general use. Tertullian gives a detailed interpretation of it clause for clause in his treatise "On Prayer". Dr. Schaff shows that, as the creed, so also the Lord's Prayer was restricted to the communicants. This is explained by the fact that the fourth petition was taken as referring to the Eucharist.

The great African Montanist gives us a fine description of prayer at the close of his treatise on the same. It is considered a gem. He exults: "It supplies the suffering, and the feeling, and the grieving with endurance; it amplifies grace by virtue, that faith may know what

she obtains from the Lord, understands what, for God's sake, she suffers.--- The prayer of the righteousness averts all God's anger, keeps bivouac on behalf of personal enemies, makes supplication on behalf of persecutors. Is it a wonder if it knows how to extort the rains from the heavens -- (prayer), which was once able to procure its fires? Prayer is alone that which vanquishes God. But Christ has willed that it be operative for no evil: He has conferred on it all its virtue in the cause of good. And so it knows nothing save how to recall the souls of the departed from the very path of death, to transform the weak, to restore the sick, to purge the possessed, to open prison-bars, to loose the bonds of the innocent. Likewise, it washes away faults, repels temptations, extinguishes persecutions, consoles the faint-spirited, cheers the high-spirited, escorts travellers, appeases waves, makes robbers stand aghast, nourishes the poor, governs the rich, upraises the fallen, arrests the falling, confirms the standing. Prayer is the wall of faith: her arms and missiles against the foe who keeps watch over us on all sides. And, so never walk we unarmed. By day we be mindful of station; by night, of vigil. Under the arms of prayer guard we the standard of our General; await we in prayer the angel's trump. The angels likewise all pray; every creature prays; cattle and wild beasts pray and bend their knees; and when they issue from their layers and lairs, they look up heavenward with no idle mouth, making their breath vibrate after their own manner. Nay, the birds too, rising out of the nest, upraise themselves heavenward, and, instead of hands, expand the cross of their wings, and say somewhat to seem like prayer. What more then, touching the office of prayer? Even the Lord Himself prayed; to whom be honor and virtue unto the ages of ages." (Tert. On Pray. 29).

Prayers for the Dead:

In the North African Church, Tertullian writes, "As often as the anniversary comes around, we make offerings for the dead as birthday honors." (Tert. The Chap. 3). There was a great veneration for the martyrs. "Prof. Swete in an exhaustive article on the subjects of prayer for the dead in the first four centuries calls attention to the fact that the Church in North Africa was the first community, as far as we know, which preferred the Eucharist for the benefit of the departed." This may have been due in the first instance to Montanistic influences, but it soon became general at Carthage. "(Donaldson, l.c.p. 87). The widow offered sacrifice and prayer for the soul of her departed husband. The Montanist writes: "Indeed, she prays for his soul, and requests refreshment for him meanwhile, and fellowship for him in the first resurrection; and she offers sacrifice on the anniversary of his falling asleep. For, unless she does these deeds, she has in the true sense divorced him, as far as in her lies." (Tert. On Monog. 10). So also Arnobius: "At the end of the third century that African Arnobius speaks of the Christian churches (conventicula) in which peace and pardon were asked for all -- for those still living and for those freed from the bond of the bodies." (Adv. Gentes, 4, 36). (Hastings, l.c.p. 21, Vol. 10).

A general summary of the commemoration ceremony for the martyred saints is given by Hastings in the words: "The people assembled at the place of his torture or at his grave, generally on the anniversary of <sup>the</sup> eve of his death, held an agape, and then, in the church, celebrated his heroic faith by an address." (Hastings, l.c.p. 718, Vol. 3).

No doubt the Roman Catholic custom of Mass anniversaries and their incorrect teaching of purgatory originated from this early Christian custom of prayers for the dead and martyr anniversaries.

### 7) Fasting.

The Jewish custom, especially predominant among the Pharisees, of holding certain fasts, also prevailed in the first centuries in the Christian church. On these days the pious would devote their thoughts to heavenly things, would not do work, and partake of no food, so as not to be distracted by earthly things. They felt that it provoked a deeper consecration. Tertullian mentions the custom in his "On Fasting," 15. His Montanistic writings are replete with exhortations<sup>ts</sup> and glorifications of the Christian fast. Wednesdays and Fridays were chosen as half-day fasts in commemoration of the passion and crucifixion of Christ. The Jewish custom of fasting on Mondays and Thursdays was disbanded, for we read in the Didache: "Let not your fasts be with hypocrites, for they fast on Mondays and Thursdays, but do you fast on Wednesdays and Fridays." (Lake Edition, p.321).

Tertullian mentions the "xerophagy" frequently. Waterman explains: "Some devoted persons added to their fasts a "xerophagy", a dry food diet, which meant that when they did come to eat anything, they would still swallow no water, no milk, no broth, no! no even fruit juice to moisten their dry lips". (Waterman, l.c.p. 300). The adults also fasted before communion. "The first writer who alludes to this custom is Tertullian ( ad uxor. 2,5: "quod secreto ante cibum gustes",--- cf. also (de Urat.19); but there is no hint that it was a novelty in his day." (Hastings, l.c.Vol. 5, p. 768).

### 8) Ascetic Tendencies.

The germs of asceticism appear in the Montanistic writings of Tertullian. Though it is true that the Christians did not at the early date separate themselves from the world and lead a secluded life of recluse in the desert, yet, as Dr. Neander



well states, there were many in the bosom of the church who led a quiet life, who labored with their hands for sustenance, never married, set aside special days for self-examination and devotion, and did all for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ. They were known as abstinents or continentes. That there was so separation from the world by these continentes is told by Tertullian, who in his "Apology" states that they were not Brahmans, or Gymnosophists who dwell in the woods, but fellowcitizens and dwellers with others. He writes: "So we sojourn with you in the world, abjuring neither forum, nor shambles, nor bath, nor booth, nor workshop, nor inn, nor weekly market, nor any other place of commerce.-- in the various arts we make public property of our works for your benefit". (Tert. Apol. 42).

This pious life later became corrupted with some. As was to be expected, there were those who were hypocritical in so doing. Writes Neander: "This falsely conceived opposition to the world had already become the mask for the worldly temper, which would affect the appearance of holiness, or sought to gain an easier life at the expense of the church. Cyprian had to write a tract of admonition and warning against the showy dress and display which had crept in among the rich virgins at Carthage, who had consecrated themselves to God." (L.c.p.277).

### 9) Charity.

In general, the spirit of Christian charity was followed in the North African Church. The fathers make continued reference to it, praising it as a blessed work for Christ and His church. As we have before indicated, the services closed with the charity collection. The agape also was closely connected with the distribution of charity. Monceaux, Dr. Donaldson reports, regarded the whole development of the Christian organized church as a "vast mutual aid society".

The church also came to the aid of their poverty stricken countrymen. Their charity did not extend to their own brethren only. At one time the Berber tribes pressed in from the mountains on the south and carried away a multitude of Christians for ransom into captivity. They were brought back by ransom money collected by Cyprian. The sixty-six bishops of the third council at Carthage added a small collection, Waterman reports. At this time the bishop of Carthage was able to send 100,000 sesterces to the eight parishes suffering by the deprivation of the Berber tribes. This amount of money was equal to about \$4,000.00 in our American money.

In 252 Carthage suffered from a most terrible plague. The people died like flies from a sort of malignant typhoid fever. Waterman says; "It was of a pestilential power difficult for the modern reader to conceive. --- It appeared first from Ethiopia in 250, and raged up and down the Roman Empire for some 20 years." (L.c.p. 394). The plague took a great toll of lives all over the world. There were horrible scenes and horrible deaths. Rome is reported to have seen 5,000 deaths in one day. Alexandria lost half of its population. It visited well nigh every house. Where life was spared it left prostration, deafness, and blindness. The rich fled to all parts of the empire to escape it; the thieves plundered and pillaged their homes in their absence. In the larger cities the sick were thrown into the streets to die there. As a result a panic broke out in Carthage. However, Cyprian came to the rescue at this hour. He called his flock together and "delivered such an address as would have converted the whole heathen population, if they could have heard it. At least, so thought the deacon Pontius". (Waterman, l.c.p. 364). A sort of Red Cross was organized immediately to nurse the sick, to care for the homeless, and, above all, to bury the dead. Great success attended Cyprian's efforts. For this deed he

received the commendation of the heathen world. In his tract "On Work and Almsdeeds" Cyrrian exhorts his members to charity. In his 35<sup>th</sup> letter he states: "I request that you will diligently take care of the widows, of the sick, and of all the poor. Moreover, you may supply the expenses for strangers, if any should be indigent from my own fortune which I left with Rogatianus." The bishop wrote this letter to his flock during his absence in exile. "He himself lived up to his preachings; when converted to the Christian faith, he sold his property and gave the money to the poor. Brotherly love in North Africa was on a high plane. How far different was it from the manifest hatred and disregard of all fellow-beings among the heathen Romans!

#### 10) Decency of Dress.

Tertullian, in true Monastic fashion, repeatedly warns against all display in dress such as the heathen women show in the temples and on the streets. In his "On the Apparel of Women", book one, he uses strong words in denouncing the least ostentation of dress, though in book two of the same title he somewhat modifies his statements. To the women of Carthage and the vicinity he writes: "Not merely must the pageantry of fictitious and elaborate beauty be rejected by you; but that of even natural grace, as equally dangerous to the glances of the (beholder's) eyes". (Tert. On App. of Wo. II., 3). Likewise in chapter 5 he states: "How unworthily the Christian name to wear a fictitious face, (you), to whom simplicity in every form is enjoined! --- to lie in your appearance, (you), to whom (lying) with the tongue is not lawful -- to seek after that of another's, (you), to whom is delivered the (precept) of your mein, (you), who make modesty your study". In the same treatise (7) he chides the women for dressing their hair extravagantly and coloring it. "What service,

again, does all the labor spent in arranging the hair render to salvation? Why is no rest allowed to your hair, which must now be bound, now loosed, nor cultivated, not thinned out? Some are anxious to force their hair into curls, some let it hang loose and flying; not with good simplicity; besides which you affix I know not what enormities of subtle and textile perukes". Tertullian also bemoans the fact that the Christian women wore gems and precious robes for the mere sake of ostentation. In place of diamonds and the onyx stone he holds that it would be far more proper to bedeck oneself with coal and iron; these products of the earth are at least serviceable to man!

The veiling of the virgins was a burning question in Carthage during Tertullian's days. Here was the problem: The Christian women appeared veiled everywhere, in church and on the street. The veil described their status. However, the Christian virgins had a choice of three things, to appear veiled everywhere, to be veiled in the streets only, but unveiled in the church, or to appear unveiled everywhere. The latter of these was the oldest and local custom. Tertullian in his "On the Veiling of Virgins" strongly stood for the first custom.

Men also were not exempt from the chiding of the Montanist. He rebukes them for plucking out their beard too closely, for cutting it too short, for shaving round about the mouth, for disguising their gray hairs with dyes, fixing each individual hair with a womanly pigment, smoothing the whole body with powder, and for gazing too long into the mirror. Such decorum, he says, is not modesty and is dispensing to God. In conclusion he utters the true Montanistic statement: "Do you go forth to meet them already arrayed in the cosmetics and ornaments of the prophets and apostles; drawing your whiteness from simplicity, your ruddy hue from modesty; painting your eyes with bash-

fulness, and your mouth with silence; implanting in your ears the words of God, fitting on your necks the yoke of Christ. Submit your head to your husbands, and you will be enough adorned. Busy your hands with spinning; keep your feet at home; and you will "Please" better than by arraying yourselves in gold. Cloth yourselves with the silk of uprightness, the fine linen of holiness, the purple of modesty. Thus painted you will have God as your lover." (Tert. On the App. of Wo. 13).

### 11) The North African Martyrs.

The North African Church is famous for its heroic martyrs. The martyrdom of Cyprian has already been mentioned. Following is an account of the martyrdom of the twelve inhabitants of Scillium and of Perpetua and Felicitas.

#### The Scillitan Martyrs:

In the year 177 the Emperor Marcus Aurelius issued two edicts. The first one concerned the punishment of those who troubled the state with new religions. The second was a command to condemn to death any one who avowed himself to be a Christian. In this same year the terrible persecutions took place in Lyons and Vienne in southern Gaul. In the first year of the reign of Commodus, the successor of Marcus Aurelius, there is a record of heroic martyrdom in North Africa. It seems that seven men and five women from Scillium, a town of Proconsular Africa, were martyred on the 17th of July, 180 at Carthage for clinging to the very end to their confession of faith. In the "Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs" their names are recorded. Dr. Donaldson holds that this booklet was first written in the Latin language and later translated into the Greek. If the Latin truly has a priority to the Greek version, then, he states: "In this vivid narrative

of the faithfulness even to the death of these North African Christians 20 years before the close of the second century of the Christian era, we have the oldest Christian document of Christian Africa, and the earliest specimen of ecclesiastical Latin. "(Donaldson, l.c.p. 125).

He adds the interesting comment: "It is true that Pope Victor, whose Pontificate at Rome probably belongs to the years 189-198 or 199, is called by S. Jerome the earliest Christian writer of Latin. But not a word written by him survives.-- From the "Liber Pontificalis" we learn that he was a native of Africa." (Donaldson, l.c.p. 125-6).

The scene for the trial of the Scillitan martyrs is laid in Carthage in the chamber of the proconsulate, who is Saturnius. He it is who commences the interrogation. He tells them that if they recant their errors and accept the pagan belief they will be given freedom. Speratus, the spokesman for the martyrs, states that they have nothing whatsoever to recant. They, he says, are faithful citizens and are guilty of no breach of the law. When the proconsulate saw that he could have no success with the firm Speratus, he proceeded to influence to others. But he failed to persuade them. The men as well as the women remained firm in the faith. Thereupon a respite of 30 days was granted them. Rome hoped that they would recant in the meantime. However, at the end of the allotted time they affirmed that they would ever remain ~~firm~~ <sup>free</sup> Christians. It was a simple reply with no ostentation or remorse. The confession was that of a pure conscience. With constant prayer they looked to God for help in this hour of trial. They were condemned to die by the sword as a result of their ~~firm~~ <sup>bold</sup> faith. The verdict was received with joy. They knew that a baptism of blood would be theirs. This story is only illustrative of the heroism manifested by thousands of martyrs in the early days in North Africa.

The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas:

We learn from Spartianus that when Septimius Severus was in Palestine in the year 202 he issued an edict forbidding under severe penalties the admission of proselytes to the Jewish religion. He made the same edict apply to the Christians. The effect of this repressive act was felt by the following spring in North Africa. Here Minucius Timinianus was proconsul of the province, but he died before his term of office had expired and was succeeded by Hilarianus. There is an allusion to this same Hilarian in Tertullian "Ad Scaepulam" III., under whose rule the populace were represented as clamouring for the suppression of the cemeteries, which afforded legal status to the Christian community as a population recognized by the law. It is no doubt owing to this popular disfavor, stimulated by the Emperor's adverse edicts, that a party of five Christians, three men and two women, were exposed to the wild beasts in the amphitheater of Carthage on March 7th, 203.

Those involved in this famous martyrdom were two young catechumens, Revocatus and his fellow-servant Felicitas, Saturninus and Secundulus, and chief of all, Perpetua, a lady of noble birth, liberally educated, married, living with her father and mother, having an infant son in her arms. When Perpetua's father learned of his daughter's imprisonment, he pleadingly tried to make her recant and deny the faith. But she staunchly refused. Her faith was too great. Later she was baptized with the prison-partners and awaited peacefully her death sentence. In a vision she is said to have learned that her martyrdom was soon to take place. At this time her father again beseeched her. But she comforted him instead. Openly and frankly she vowed herself to be a Christian .

All the prisoners are condemned to the wild beasts after they repeatedly refused to recant and deny their faith. A third time Perpetua's father pleaded with her for her sake and that of her child, but to no avail. She stated that she <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ not in her own power but in that of God. In another vision she fights with an Egyptian and conquers him. As a result of her victory she receives a reward.

Secundalus died in prison. Felicitas gave birth to a child while yet in prison in the eighth month of her pregnancy. A certain sister brought up the child ~~her~~ <sup>as</sup> her own daughter.

On the day of the martyrdom they were all led from the prison into the amphitheater. They refused to be decked in profane garments. We read: "Perpetua is first led in. She is tossed and falls on her loins; and when she saw her tunic drawn from her side, she draw it over as a veil from her middle, rather mindful of her modesty than her suffering. Then she was called for again, and bound up her dishevelled hair, lest she should appear to be mourning in her glory. So she rose up and when she saw Felicitas crushed, she approached and gave her her hand, and lifted her up. And both of them stood together; and the brutality of the populace being appeased they were recalled to the Sanavivarian gate". ("The Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas", 6). Saturus who was wounded by a leopard, exhorted the soldier who came to pierce his side. When the prisoners saw his wounds they, mindful of the second baptism, cried, "Saved and washed, saved and washed". The others then gave each other the holy kiss of peace and were slain with the sword. "But Perpetua, that she might taste some pain, being pierced between the ribs, cried out loudly, and she herself placed the wavering right hand of the youthful gladiator to her throat. So the "Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas", <sup>(6) which concludes:</sup> adding, "Possibly such a woman could not have been slain



unless she herself had willed it, because she was feared by the impure spirit."

There was a definite desire for martyrdom among the early Christians. As this is also evident in other climes, it grew almost to a passion in North Africa. Cyprian repeatedly exhorts the prisoners to remain constant and heralds the glory of the martyr's death, Epistle 8. The same thoughts are dwelt on in his treatise "On Martyrdom" addressed to Fortunatus. The Christians firmly believed that they did Christ true honor by accepting a death like unto his, and that thereby they earned for themselves a higher degree of bliss in the heaven above. Tertullian in his "Ad Martyras", comforting the martyrs, says: "The world has the greater darkness, blinding men's hearts. The world imposes the more grievous fetters, binding men's very souls. The world breathes out the worst impurities - human lusts. The world contains the larger number of criminals, even the whole human race. -- Let us drop the name of prison; let us call it a place of retirement. Though the body is shut in, the the flesh in confined, all things are open to the spirit." (Tert. To the "art. 2).

Describing the nature of the sufferings the martyrs were forced to endure, Tertullian writes: "The martyr pines in prison under the cruellest privations of light, in banishment <sup>from</sup> the world, amidst squalor, filth, and noisome food, without freedom <sup>in</sup> sleep, for he is bound on its very pallet and mangled in his bed of straw; when at length before the public view he is racked by every kind of torture that can be devised." (Tert. On the Resurr. of the Fle. 8).

The death of a martyr was considered a second baptism with merits equal and above that of the first baptism. Writes the Montanist: "We have indeed likewise a second baptism font (itself withal one with the

former) of blood, to wit; concerning which the Lord said, "I have to be baptized with a baptism", when He had been baptized already. For He had come "by means of water and blood" just as John has written; that He might be baptized by the water, glorified by the blood; to make us likewise called by the water, chosen by blood." (Tert. On "Bapt. 16)

Persecution, argues Tertullian comes from God. Even in the face of death, one is not to flee from it; God thereby seeks to try men's faith. He writes: "Then, it is evident from whom persecution proceeds, we are able at once to satisfy your doubts, and to decide from these introductory remarks alone, that men should not flee in it." (Tert. "On Flight in Persecution," 4). In this opinion the true Montanist appears; it is typical of Tertullian's stern nature. Cyprian, we know, did not follow his master's advice. He went into exile during the Decian persecution .

Such is in bold outline the status of the Christian church in North Africa in the age of Tertullian and Cyprian. Many are the lessons which it has to offer us. Its stalwart confession of the true faith in the face of death, its abhorrence for the immoral life of the heathen, its rejection of all heretical doctrines in the Christian church, and its insistence on thorough instruction in the Christian fundamentals together with a clean life that is acceptable and pleasing to Christ through ceaseless prayer and worship, are some of the noble gifts which this church has bestowed upon posterity. Without a doubt, the glory of this church is accountable largely to the heroic leadership of its faithful fathers whom God sent to lead it through the trials of the first centuries. Their glorious deeds shine to this day like beacon lights in the Christian Church throughout the world.

APPENDIX.1) Archaeological Discoveries.

Archaeological discoveries have shown Carthage to be a very religious city. The spade has revealed in the city three isolated but contiguous temples. The central one is dedicated to Jupiter Optimus and Maximus. The others are devoted to the worship of Juno, the patron goddess of Carthage, and Minerva. "As late as the fifth century Salvian complains that there were many who professed Christianity and yet preferred the worship of Juno Coelestis to that of Christ -- even in her day of ruin her temple remained majestic". (Dict. of Chr. Biog. Vol.4, p. 863).

Relics of different ages and many civilizations are found in the city. Writes Cobern: "Church history, as shown by Christian basilicas; Roman colonial life, architecture, and art over a long period; the culture and cults of Phoenician Carthage, and the remainders of still earlier Egyptian control -- all are found there. The mosaics are among the most complete and beautiful found anywhere, even in Pompeii and Herculaneum and illustrate Roman conceptions of life.

Christian remains -- as the Basilica of St. Cyprian with mosaics (carrying faces of Sts. Felicitas and Perpetua, martyrs of Carthage) -- discovered beneath Arab tombs; Roman cisterns and dwellings; Byzantine deposits; and Punic tombs, all are found there in remarkable profusion in successive strata. "(Cobern, "The New Archaeological Discoveries", p. 703 (appendix).

The author continues to show that of special interest to Biblical scholars are the temples of Tanit and Baal-Ammon. Both temples go back to the terrible rites of infant sacrifice. The upper levels of strata have furnished objects of Vandal, Byzantine, Roman, and Christian

ian origin. Over 200 Christian lamps have been uncovered, two crosses of bronze, a stone tomb bearing the names of martyrs, four great basilicas, eleven other churches, and an amphitheater. In the Punic levels are the Tanit remains and the Punic tombs. Here are found the most lamps, pottery, jewels or emeralds, rubies, vases, and altar-shaped votive stones with names of the dedicants.

Only a small part of the city has been uncovered. Difficulties are arising for the excavators there because of the high cost of the soil. The land is rapidly being purchased for the purpose of constructing seashore resorts. Expensive villas are being erected. The purchase price for the ground is therefore so tremendous it makes archaeological work almost prohibitive. Excavations have just begun at Utica, Gobern states. The ground is on a large tract of ground owned by French counts. That fact makes excavation work more feasible. The area for hundreds of miles south of Carthage is still unexcavated. Today airplanes are being used to do the work of the archaeologist in North Africa.

## 2) The Works of Tertullian.

A table of the Montanist's works as arranged by Dr. Kaye in the "Ante-Nicene Fathers," (III) follows:

### 1. Premontanist (probably).

- 1) De Poenitentia.
- 2) De Oratione.
- 3) De Baptismo.
- 4) Ad Uxorem i.
- 5) Ad Uxorem ii.
- 6) Ad Martyres.
- 7) De Patientia.
- 8) Adv. Judaeos.
- 9) De Praescr. Haeret.

### 2. Montanist (certainly).

- 10) Adv. Marc. i.
- 11) Adv. Marc. ii.
- 12) De Anima.
- 13) Adv. Marc. iii.
- 14) Adv. Marc. iv.

- 15) De Carne Christi.
- 16) De Resurrectione Carnis.
- 17) Adv. Marc. v.
- 18) Adv. Praxeam.
- 19) Scorpiace.
- 20) De Corone Militis.
- 21) De Virginibus Velandis.
- 22) De Exhortione Castitatis.
- 23) De Fuga in Persecutione.
- 24) De Monogamia.
- 25) De Jejuniis.
- 26) De Pudicitia.

3. Montanist (probably).

- 27) Adv. Valentinianos.
- 28) Ad Scapulam.
- 29) De Spectaculis.
- 30) De Idololatria.
- 31) De Cultu Feminarum i.
- 32) De Cultu Feminarum ii.

4. Works respecting which nothing certain can be pronounced.

- 33) Apologeticus.
- 34) Ad Nationes, i.
- 35) Ad Nationes, ii.
- 36) De Testimonio Animae.
- 37) De Pallio.
- 38) Adv. Hermogenem.

Besides these works various religious poems have been ascribed to Tertullian, as also "The Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas".

3) The Works of Cyprian.

The works of Cyprian which treat of the moral, apologetical, and practical aspect of life are usually classified as follows:

- 1) The 82 Epistles of Cyprian.
- 2) The 12 Treatises of Cyprian.
- 3) The Seventh Council of Carthage under Cyprian. Many anonymous treatises are also attributed to Cyprian.

4) The Modern Division of North Africa.

At the present day North Africa is divided into the states of Morocco, corresponding to the ancient Mauratania Tingitana, Algeria, corresponding to the ancient Mauratania Caesariensis, and Tunis, corresponding to the ancient Africa Proconsularis. A brief account of these three lands follows.

a) Morocco.

Protectorate of France washed by the waters of the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean, with vague inland limits, describes modern Morocco. It was conquered by the Arabs in the 8th century, and Christians were sold as slaves as late as 1800. Its government is an absolute autocracy under a sultan. His power, however, is more or less limited by religious influences. The climate is warm and the costal soil fertile, though the southern section suffers from droughts. The type of cultivation is very primitive. Tropical and subtropical fruits are the principal ~~fruits~~<sup>products</sup>. Goatskins are an important export and manufacturers of leather, silk, jewelry are of some value. The inhabitants are chiefly Berbers and Arabs of mixed blood. The estimated area is 219,000 square miles and there are two capitals, Fez in the north and Morocco in the south. Tangier is the chief city on the sea.

b) Algeria.

Algeria is a French possession lying on the Mediterranean Sea. The aboriginal inhabitants are Numidians. It was successfully subdued by the Romans, Vandals, and Turks, and was warred against, successfully, by the United States in 1815 for its piratical activities. It is an exceedingly mountainous country, traversed by the lofty Atlas Range and desert land prevailing to the south. The climate is mild and healthful, except in the marshy regions. The country contains numerous salt lakes. The chief industry of North Africa is agriculture, of which the orange, date, citron, pomegranate, almond, fig, cereals, and potatoes are the chief products. The fauna and flora are typical of Mediterranean countries, and tender plants like the rose and geranium bloom all winter. The fisheries are valuable and minerals and livestock form an important source of income. North Africa has 2,000

miles of railway and 10,000 miles of telegraph and telephone wires. Algiers is the capital and leading seaport. Other important cities are Oran and Constantine. All legislation is by the French government, and it is executed by an appointed governor-general.

c) Tunisia.

Tunisia is an ancient Roman province which was later successfully invaded by French, Spanish, and Turkish forces. Under the Turkish governors, the beys, piracy flourished. It is now a protectorate of France with the government administered by a French Resident-General. Agriculture - prosecuted mainly on the fertile oases - is the chief occupation. The products are fruits, grapes, olives, and nuts. The fish catch is of considerable value, and woolens, soap, and leather are the principal manufactures. The present-day natives are mostly Berbers and Arabs. Under the protectorate of France commerce has increased, having an annual total of about \$45,000,000. The area is 50,000 square miles. Tunis is the capital and also the largest city in North Africa (excepting Egypt). The French have built 1,260 miles of railway and nearly 3,000 miles of telegraph lines.

5) Modern Missionary Activity in North Africa.

In the Barbary State, Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria, and Morocco, there is a population of over 14 million. The inhabitants are almost solidly Moslem. Mission work in this land has been desparately hard due to the wild nature of the country, long entrenched Mohammedanism, and the proposition of France and Italy fighting for control. In 1881 a Protestant society began a mission station in Algeria, but it had little success. At the present time two hundred missionaries are working under the control of thir-

teen agencies, the North Africa Mission doing the most work. Visible results have been painfully small and the vast hinterland must in the main still be considered as an unoccupied mission field.

A sad and humiliating example of the miscarriage of a missionary project is furnished by the Gordon College at Khertum. Founded with funds contributed by Christians in England to provide a missionary institution in memory of the noble General Gordon, the college has, through a compromising policy of the British authorities, been turned into a center of Moslem influence and teaching.

THE END.



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