d. 1134), founded the canons regular of Prémontré (near Laon in France) or Premonstratensian canons. The Rule, drawn up by Norbert's followers, was based mainly on the Rule of St. Augustine, but was influenced by other systems. At least some education was required of candidates, and progress in knowledge was a prerequisite to ordination to the priesthood. The Rule, moreover, emphasized the service which Premonstratensian canons were to render the parish churches in their neighborhoods. In short, Premonstratensian houses were centers of missionary activity dedicated to raising the morale of local clergy.

Thus by the middle years of the twelfth century the church had been transformed from an institution struggling to preserve its integrity against the centrifugal forces of an imperfectly civilized feudal society into an organization of authority capable of exerting an influence of its own. Clerical morale had been measurably raised. A marked increase in the number and quality of schools was beginning to have a salutary effect on the training of the clergy. Lay society, too, had changed. The days of turbulence and chronic insecurity were over. A spacious period of positive achievement was opening, and to the story of the church in this happier age we now turn.
CHAPTER III

The Church

in the High Middle Ages

THE twelfth and thirteenth centuries are sometimes designated the “high Middle Ages” because in that period what we have come to regard as mediaeval civilization reached a climax. It was a time of diminishing feudalism and more competent government, of commerce and towns, of money and credit, of increasing and freer agriculture, of learning and art.\(^1\) The area affected by western European civilization in 1300 was considerably larger than in the year 1000. Mediaeval feudal society was dynamic, and thousands of knights, merchants, peasants, and missionaries pushed the frontiers outward or passed overseas to found settlements in the Levant. The problems this expanding mediaeval civilization presented to the church were many and varied, but the church was better equipped to meet them. Much as contemporary kingdoms perfected new systems of administration, so the church improved its instrument of government. This structure has been called, not inaptly, the papal monarchy.

Ecclesiastical Government: The Papal Monarchy

The mediaeval papal monarchy is the elaboration in government of the primitive doctrine that the bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, chief of the apostles, was supreme in the church. Since early feudal conditions had made the exercise of papal supremacy difficult and sometimes almost impossible, the restoration of this supremacy was, as has been remarked, an important objective of the eleventh-century reformers. There is an additional factor. The mediaeval revival of government, both ecclesiastical and secular, owed much to the concurrent study of law. The university of Bologna, which emerged during the later years of the twelfth century, was noted for its teaching of Roman civil law. Together with other institutions in different parts of Europe, it also emphasized church law, or canon law as it is called.

This canon law was to the constitution of the church what civil law was to secular government. It defined the rights, duties, and powers of all ecclesiastical persons, of all ecclesiastical institutions, and of laymen in their relations with these. It was, therefore, the law administered in all ecclesiastical courts from those of the bishops up to that of the pope. Further, the jurisdiction of canon law was wider in the Middle Ages than has been the case in more recent times. All cases involving ecclesiastical persons—and this would include men in minor orders and students at ecclesiastical institutions, in short all "clerks"—and all cases of a religious nature or cases involving sacraments, oaths, usury, and the like were heard in ecclesiastical courts.

Canon law was primarily based on the Bible, the writings of the early church fathers, and the decrees of councils and
popes. What happened in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was the systematizing of the church's law. Sometime between 1139 and 1141, for example, Gratian published a treatise or code of canon law, the *Concordantia discordantium canonum* or *Harmony of Discordant Canons*. Moreover, the process commenced here was developed further in the thirteenth century as certain popes added and authorized new collections or decretals. All these emphasized the role of the papacy as the fountainhead of ecclesiastical law.

It is not altogether surprising, therefore, that whereas most of the popes in the century or more preceding 1150 were monks and associated with a reform which in its origins was monastic, those after 1150 were mainly canon lawyers. Their contribution to the church's constitution reflects their legal training. Moreover, since certain of these distinguished pontiffs are best known for their controversies with kings and emperors, their efforts in behalf of ecclesiastical government are often overlooked. Alexander III (1159–1181), for example, with the help of the Lombard cities successfully opposed the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa (1152–1190). He also summoned the important Third Lateran Council of 1179. Similarly, Innocent III (1198–1216) tends to be known more for his dealing with several contemporary rulers than for his achievements in ecclesiastical affairs. His accomplishments in this latter field, however, were of the greatest importance, particularly in his efforts to reform the church, to combat heresy, and to promote the crusade. The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, to which further reference will presently be made, was undoubtedly his most significant achievement. Gregory IX (1227–1241) and Innocent IV (1243–1254), the principal opponents of the Holy Roman
Emperor Frederick II, were also great churchmen. Gregory IX issued a collection of decretals which further amplified the body of canon law. Innocent IV sent out the first missionary-ambassadors to the Mongols and thus inaugurated an important contact between Europe and the Far East which endured for about a century.

Because Innocent III was perhaps the most distinguished of all the mediaeval popes, it has become almost a tradition to single out his pontificate for a study of mediaeval ecclesiastical government at its best. On the whole, the tradition is justified; and in the following pages this great pontiff’s name will appear frequently. A certain caution, however, is required in thus emphasizing Innocent III’s achievements. First, he was hardly a typical pope. A young man—he was only thirty-seven on his accession—he was educated at Paris and Bologna and was a skilled theologian as well as canonist. Second, owing doubtless to his prominence, he remains a somewhat controversial figure. At first glance his career seems in marked contrast to that of Gregory VII. A determination to promote ecclesiastical reform led Gregory into the realm of political action. Innocent, the lawyer, on the other hand, seems more at home in the political arena. In truth he was, for his training and his special abilities made him so. But this aspect of Innocent’s character should not obscure his priestly qualities or the fact that he subscribed to the same fundamental purposes which had motivated Gregory. There is ample evidence, in his voluminous correspondence and in such treatises as De contemptu mundi, of a genuine religious spirit. Things spiritual, the supernatural life, came first. Like Gregory, Innocent was a reformer with a high ideal of what the church should be. Close to his heart, too, was the crusade, the recovery of the Holy Places in
Palestine which Gregory had also dreamed of winning.

By the time of Innocent, canon lawyers described the church as a "perfect society," by which they meant that it possessed all the necessary attributes of government. In the exercise of ecclesiastical authority, canon lawyers also distinguished between the power of order and the power of jurisdiction. The former had to do with the sacraments, and in this respect the pope differed in no way from any other bishop. The latter, the power of jurisdiction, embodied government, and to the pope as head of the church was entrusted the "fullness of power." To use modern terminology, he wielded supreme executive, legislative, and judicial authority within the sphere of ecclesiastical government.

To assist him in governing the church, the pope had a curia or court much as any mediaeval king had his curia regis. The papal curia was composed of the cardinals. These, it will be remembered, were the cardinal or principal bishops, priests, and deacons of the city of Rome who in 1059 were designated a body to elect the pope. They were appointed by the pope and in the thirteenth century might number fifty-two if the roster was full. Actually, an average of under thirty seems to have been usual. In 1179 the cardinals were officially organized into a legal corporation, called a "college," with specified duties and perquisites. At the same time the cardinal priests and deacons were permitted actively to participate in papal elections, not merely to approve the choice of the cardinal bishops as had been the case since 1059. Cardinals might be, and indeed often were, of non-Italian origin, but they all resided at Rome. Not until the later Middle Ages did the familiar modern practice originate whereby a cardinal may reside permanently abroad. They were, therefore, clergy of the city of Rome, and their
principal function as cardinals was government. In the performance of their duties the cardinals were assisted by a number of secretaries, clerks, notaries, auditors, and the like.

A meeting of the pope with all the cardinals was called a consistory. Innocent III held consistories two or three times a week. But Innocent, it must be remembered, was a comparatively young man of immense energy who felt it his duty to hear personally as many cases as was humanly possible. In later decades, full consistories were reserved for special occasions, and the routine administrative business was relegated to separate bureaus or tribunals. This departmentalization of the papal curia was in line with similar measures taken by contemporary secular governments. In each case it represented an advance in the technique of administration.

Not all the curial departments which eventually developed were distinct in the thirteenth century, but those which were will serve as examples of this important governmental process. First in importance was the papal chancery where correspondence was handled. Since the papacy, unlike most secular administrations, had jurisdiction over a tremendous area, the amount of business conducted by letter was enormous. A glance at the registers of any twelfth- or thirteenth-century pope will reveal the scope of papal administration. Moreover, even a brief perusal of the titles of letters sent and received will disclose that, despite the grave crises which history records, the routine of government continued with amazing attention to detail. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that this painstaking consideration of individual cases was as important to successful papal government as the more spectacular struggles with kings and emperors.

The chancery developed many procedures worth noting
here. The most important matters were dealt with in documents called greater bulls, from the Latin *bulla* or seal; others were settled in lesser bulls and ordinary letters. Forgery was not uncommon. Chancery experts could detect false documents. To prevent recurrences, great attention was paid to the form of papal charters, the seal, even the points or dots around the seal, and the characteristic Latin style.

The papal financial bureau, the *camera*, was headed by a cardinal-chamberlain (*camerarius*). A particularly distinguished cardinal-chamberlain, who was destined to become Innocent III's successor as Honorius III (1216–1227), drew up in 1192 a *Liber censuum* which contained a list of revenues due the Holy See from its estates and feudal possessions. Revenue from the papal states provided far from sufficient support for this expanding institution. Equally insufficient were other payments such as Peter's pence, which was paid irregularly from certain countries in northern Europe. Most of the papal income came from taxes levied on bishops and other ecclesiastics and from fees exacted at the *curia*. The system never seemed adequate, a fact which goes far to explain the financial worries of the papacy in the later Middle Ages. It should be added, however, that modern economic historians have generally regarded the papal revenue system as a remarkable instrument for its time and a significant contribution to the development of financial administration.

Broadly speaking, most routine curial activity was judicial. By Innocent's time the amount of legal business handled at Rome was enormous, for as a consequence of centralization, the papal *curia* was at once a court of first instance and a court of appeal. Appeals to Rome from local ecclesiastical courts increased tremendously during the high Middle Ages, so much so, in fact, that Innocent III laid down certain con-
ditions under which appeals were to be permitted. Gradually the volume of business forced specialization within the *curia*, and certain separate curial tribunals or courts made an initial appearance in the thirteenth century. This development, however, was to become more clear later. In the sixteenth century the entire *curia* was reorganized into the Congregations which still function. The foundations were laid in the Middle Ages, and important elements were distinct in the thirteenth century.

*The Papal Curia and the Church at Large*

The success of the papal monarchy as a government depended largely on the relations between the *curia* and the bishops. From the time of Gregory VII popes had repeatedly contested with secular rulers the matter of episcopal elections. The investiture controversy resulted in a partial victory for the church, but lay influence in elections and even direct appointment of prelates continued. Convinced that this situation endangered hierarchical efficiency and impeded ecclesiastical policies, successive popes established various precedents for their own intervention in elections. By means of such precedents the popes established the right to intervene in all cases of translation, deposition, and illegal election. Moreover, Rome habitually confirmed the choice of all archbishops and of many bishops and abbots. The Holy See was also by the end of the thirteenth century making "provision" for, that is, appointing, lesser ecclesiastical benefices in an increasing number of instances.

One of the more common cases calling for papal intervention was the disputed election. Perhaps the most celebrated example was the case of Canterbury under King John (1199–1216). It may be recalled that after the Canterbury
electors had made their choice the king, who had given his license to elect, forced a second election. Both nominees appealed to Rome, whereupon Innocent III declared both elections invalid and obtained from those electors present in Rome an assent to his own candidate, Stephen Langton. It was some years, however, before King John capitulated.

Bishops, once elected, were held responsible to the Holy See in various ways; and archbishops were required to receive the pallium, a woolen scarf, the symbol of office, from the pope. All bishops had to make periodic visits to Rome, and all might be obliged to attend a general council. Papal legates, usually cardinals, vested with full powers were frequently sent out by the pope, and judge-delegates were appointed to hear certain causes locally. By the mid-thirteenth century certain categories of cases, notably heresy, were specifically reserved to the pope and hence removed from episcopal courts. There were, too, the many appeals from bishops' courts to the curia.

Occasionally, when some great issue demanded, the pope summoned a general council. Most bishops and abbots were expected to attend, and representatives of lay rulers often appeared as well. Thus a general council could be a kind of western European assembly. One of the greatest of these gatherings, the Fourth Lateran Council held under Innocent III in 1215, will serve as an illustration. There were present 412 bishops, 800 abbots and priors, and various lay delegates. Committees had so ably prepared the agenda in advance that it required only three weeks for the delegates to complete their work.

The assembled fathers began with a declaration of faith which was largely prompted by the heresies then prevalent,

especially Catharism then raging in southern France. There was also a re-emphasis on certain traditional doctrines, and there was the famous provision defining the miracle of the Mass as a "transubstantiation" of the bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood. The doctrine was of primitive origin, but the use of the term "transubstantiation" reflects the progress of theological studies and the demand for precise terminology. Heresy was considered, and the council adopted provisions for handling this problem that foreshadowed the Inquisition.

Innocent's avowed aim to purify the church and complete the work begun in the eleventh century is well illustrated in a series of reform canons. Moreover, a study of these provisions will reveal the vast number and variety of problems which a medieval pope faced, as well as the need for unceasing vigilance in maintaining discipline. It will be possible to mention only a few of the most important here. It is noteworthy, for example, that thenceforth clerics were not to dress in a manner or engage in activities calculated to scandalize their calling. A list of occupations absolutely prohibited included the blessing of ordeals. As a consequence that ancient practice gradually died out. Fees for sacraments and for other similar purposes were also forbidden. Bishops were enjoined to preach regularly and to maintain schools for the education of their clergy. Moreover, if scandals persisted among the diocesan clergy, the bishop was himself to be disciplined. A number of canons dealt with the regular clergy and their relations with the bishops. All orders were to hold periodic meetings of abbots.

One celebrated canon has affected the lives of Roman Catholics to this day. Under pain of excommunication, each

* For Catharism, see pp. 63–65.
person must receive the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist at least once a year. Presumably the regulation indicates that many were avoiding this irreducible minimum of observance. Indeed, it is worth noting that, so far as can be determined, reception of the sacraments by the laity was far less frequent in the Middle Ages than had been the custom in the primitive church or than is now the custom in modern times.

Many other canons were enacted, but these may give some idea of how such a council operated and the situations with which it dealt. It should be observed further that there was discussion of current political matters, such as the disposition of the lands of the count of Toulouse, the succession to the imperial throne, and Stephen Langton’s support of the English barons against King John, now reconciled to the church. There remains the question whether the reforms were carried out. It is a difficult question to answer and would require detailed study of every diocese in Christendom. Later complaints would seem to indicate that not all bishops shared Innocent III’s zeal. Nor were all dioceses able to sustain their efforts. It does appear, however, that despite some weaknesses the level of ecclesiastical morale was considerably higher in 1250 than in 1050. This the church had accomplished in two centuries of perseverance. Councils such as the Fourth Lateran played no small part in this accomplishment.

In concluding this discussion of the relations between the curia and the church at large it may be appropriate to add a word about the ecclesiastical penalty known as the interdict. Interdict is a kind of “territorial excommunication.” A given area is deprived of most of the sacraments as a disciplinary
measure in extremely grave circumstances. Like excommunication, the interdict was imposed rarely. Since it affected many people, it was more serious than the excommunication of a single person. It was used, for example, by Pope Innocent III against both France and England with the purpose of bringing popular pressure to bear on King Philip Augustus and King John. The former eventually reinstated his wife, Ingebourg, whom he had formerly repudiated; the latter finally accepted Innocent’s candidate for the see of Canterbury, Stephen Langton.

In the case of the interdict placed upon England in 1208, the clergy were given a number of detailed instructions governing their conduct and their relations with the laity. “The altars of the churches were to be stripped. . . . Infants were to be baptized in their homes . . . with all due solemnity,” but marriages were not to be contracted, and no priest was to be present at the burial of the dead. He might, however, “while the body remained at home, without cross or holy water, privately commend the soul of the departed. . . . Whoever shall seek confession may have it whenever he wishes, and legitimate testimony be given, but without eucharist or extreme unction.”

Priests were also instructed to assemble people before a cross set up out of doors “on Sundays and special feasts and diligently preach patience and obedience, because Christ was made obedient to the Father. . . . And let the priests say prayers most devoutly for the peace of the church and for the lord king that our Lord Jesus Christ may lead his steps in the way of salvation. . . . Let prayers be said for the living and for the dead as is customary on bended knees and let the people be most earnestly urged to pray day and
night so that the absence of masses may be remedied by vigils and supplications.”

*The Friars*

Innocent III was a busy pope, and although a deeply religious man, he was not particularly sympathetic to extremes of devotion or novel practices. Moreover, a canon of the Fourth Lateran Council provided that there should be no additional religious orders. On one occasion he was visited by a poorly clad, barefoot pilgrim who requested authorization for himself and a small band of followers dedicated to the systematic pursuit of apostolic poverty. Innocent, absorbed in the multifarious cares of his office, was at first inclined to refuse categorically. But something in his visitor’s manner impressed him. Instead, he told the pilgrim to return the following day.

There is a story, memorialized in a painting by the Italian artist Giotto (d. 1336), which relates that during the night the pope dreamed that the church of St. John Lateran was about to fall and the same barefooted pilgrim came and supported the building with his shoulder. Innocent, in any case, was too discerning not to realize that devoted men leading Christlike lives might shame others into better conduct. Accordingly he gave a verbal sanction to his visitor’s request.

The man whose way of life thus obtained pontifical authorization was Francis of Assisi (b. 1181, d. 1226). Son of a well-to-do Italian merchant, he had renounced his inheritance, family, and friends to embrace, in the most literal sense, a life of poverty. Only by being poor, he felt, could he truly follow Christ or reach the hearts and souls of His

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poor. But this life was not to be sad and morbid. Francis had been a gay young blade in the society of his native town. He was no less gay as a friar. He took great joy in the society of the companions who joined him, and in addition he even loved bird and beast. Justly famous is his Sermon to the Birds. “Children” of all ages can thank him for constructing the first Christmas crib. And there is something of contemporary chivalry in Francis’ attitude toward his “Lady Poverty.” But really to understand Francis the student had best consult the pages of that remarkable book, The Little Flowers of St. Francis, a collection of the sayings and doings of the saint and his early companions.

In 1223, Pope Honorius III finally sanctioned the rule for the new order. Although the official title was the Order of Friars Minor (Latin, frater; French, frère), members soon became known as Franciscans or, from their habit or costume, as Gray Friars. Not only were Franciscans to have no personal possessions whatever, but not even their order was to own property. Rather they were to rely on the charity of the faithful; hence the term “mendicant” or “begging” friars. They soon attained great popularity especially in the congested towns. In fact, as monasticism was associated with the agrarian life of the earlier Middle Ages, so the friars should be thought of in connection with towns. They were not, however, social reformers in the modern sense of that term. Neither Francis nor his followers had any thought of remaking society. Their ideal was religious, to save the souls of the poor and to reach them by breaking down the barrier which wealth and official position so often raised.

After St. Francis’ death, when the order had expanded all over Europe and even to Asia, it was found impracticable to keep the Rule in all its original strictness. As a result, prop-
property for convents was usually held in trust for the friars by some lay person. Although St. Francis had never taken major orders, many of his followers became priests. Many, too, became scholars and taught at universities. The philosopher St. Bonaventure (b. 1221, d. 1274) and that somewhat outspoken mathematician, linguist, and all-round scholar, Roger Bacon (d. 1294), were both Franciscans. Surpassing other religious orders, Franciscans numbered nearly 100,000 by 1500.

About the time that St. Francis was embarking on his new life, a Spanish canon, named Dominic (b. 1170, d. 1221), undertook with his superior, Bishop Diego of Osma, a preaching mission among the heretics of Languedoc. Out of this grew a society of clerics devoted to preaching and teaching, for Dominic believed that through proper instruction heretics might be reconciled and the faithful strengthened. Like Francis, Dominic went to Rome and received papal authorization. His Rule, an elaboration and extension of the Augustinian Rule for canons, is a remarkable piece of legislation. Each convent under an elected prior is subject to the periodically elected master-general. The system of representation from the various priories to the general chapter of the order may even have influenced contemporary practices in secular government. Dominicans, officially called Friars Preachers, had to be trained, and this training which began in the schools of the order could continue at a university. As might be expected of an order which emphasized study, there have been many celebrated Dominican scholars, of whom Albertus Magnus (d. 1280) and St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) stand out in the thirteenth century. Poverty was a feature of the Dominican life, although it was not the primary ideal that it was for the Franciscans.
Moreover, every observance, for example the chanting of the divine office, was curtailed if a particular mission so required. Because they wore a black cape over a white garment, Dominicans were known as Black Friars.

The example of the Franciscans and Dominicans was followed by others, among them the Carmelites and the Augustinians. In all cases the Rule enjoined some activity outside the cloister or convent. Hence there arose a distinction between friars and monks. Both are of the regular clergy and live under a rule. But the friars are dedicated to an active rather than a cloistered life.

**Heresy**

Heresy has been a perennial concern of ecclesiastical government. Broadly speaking, there are always two related problems: first, the doctrinal matter of the particular heresy and, second, the disciplinary measures to be taken against heretics. With regard to the first it must be remembered that heresy is not mere criticism of clerical shortcomings. It is a deliberate dissent from the doctrine or beliefs of the church. It involves, therefore, the intellect as well as the will, reason as well as faith. This dissent, it should further be understood, had to come from one who had known the faith. No Jew or Moslem, unless he had been converted and had accepted the church’s authority, could be regarded as a heretic. Such people might be subjected to restrictive regulations, might even be the victims of popular intolerance, but they did not fall under the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts set up to try heresy cases.

As we have observed, a primary concern in the matter of heresy has been to clarify doctrine. The Nicene Creed, from two councils (Nicaea, 325, and Constantinople, 381), is
a case in point. It embodies the classic definition of the doctrine of the Trinity, a definition called forth to combat the several conflicting doctrines of the Trinity then being propagated. Many other examples could be cited during the long course of church history. The major heresies, therefore, have invariably called forth positive and sometimes detailed definitions of doctrines questioned as well as negative condemnation of error. Moreover, it has been the constant conviction of the church that in such clarification divine guidance would protect it from error.

The discipline of heretics is an altogether different problem, and in the course of its history the church has dealt with the matter in various ways. Invariably the means adopted to deal with heretics reflect the temper of the age, and it requires serious mental effort for the modern student to understand the mediaeval attitude. In the religio-political society of those days heresy was tantamount to treason, and its persistence endangered the immortal souls of the faithful. But what is perhaps most difficult for the modern mind to grasp is the mediaeval view that, to those who had been duly baptized into the church, religious belief was not a matter of free individual choice.

In actual dealings with heretics, the church has had two major objectives: first, the conversion of the heretic and, second, the protection of the faithful. Although in the Middle Ages the secular power was ordinarily expected to assist the church in suppressing heresy, the specific means employed varied considerably. In the late twelfth and early thirteenth century there appeared in southern France a heresy which completely baffled the authorities and eventually called forth the drastic procedures collectively called the Inquisition.
This heresy was known as Albigensianism, from the town of Albi where it gained many adherents, or as Catharism.\textsuperscript{6} The latter designation follows from the fact that the leaders of the sect were known as the Perfecti or the Pure (£athari). Probably of eastern origin, Catharism bore a resemblance to ancient Manichaeism. Matter and flesh—and the propagation thereof—were held to be evil and in the domain of the devil, while only spiritual things mattered in the service of the true God. It followed, accordingly, that the organization of the church and its sacraments were anathema. But equally to be condemned were war and soldiers and judges who gave the death sentence.

The Perfect lived lives of rigorous ascetism and abstained from all flesh food. In extreme cases, doubtless under fear of imminent corporal punishment, they committed suicide. A peculiar feature of Catharism, however, and one undoubtedly responsible for its spread, was the provision whereby the ordinary believer might live a fairly normal life and simply venerate the Perfect.

By the time of Innocent III (1198–1216), Languedoc was a hotbed of Catharism. It was, in those days, a prosperous, highly cultured, even sophisticated region, and many adherents probably saw in Catharism a criticism of a locally corrupt ecclesiastical organization or, perhaps, an opportunity to appropriate church property. Indeed, Innocent frankly admitted that the southern French clergy gave ample provocation. Moreover, the ordinary means of handling heresy—

\textsuperscript{6} A somewhat smaller sect known as Waldensian, founded by Peter Waldo, began as a movement in protest against clerical corruption. When later they adopted heretical doctrines, they were condemned. Many were suppressed along with the Albigensians, but a few persisted and have survived to the present mainly in the Piedmont region.
episcopal courts, preaching, and so forth—failed, especially as various magnates either espoused Catharism or, like Count Raymond VI of Toulouse, refused to aid in apprehending heretics.

Accordingly the pope resorted to an exceptional measure, the crusade. Knights from northern France were summoned to discipline Languedoc. Those who responded were eminently successful in conquering parts of southern France. In fact, Innocent, himself aghast at the fury of the war, intervened to effect some sort of equitable settlement for Count Raymond. Heresy, however, persisted and, it will be recalled, became a major subject for discussion at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), which promulgated a declaration of faith directed principally against that evil. Even this did not solve the problem, and it remained for Gregory IX (1227–1241), and certain of his successors, to develop special tribunals for trying cases of heresy which came to be known as the Inquisition.

Presiding over such a court was a specially appointed judge or inquisitor, usually a friar. Although he was expressly instructed to assist the local bishop, the latter’s role diminished in the course of time. Thus the Inquisition was really a kind of papal tribunal operating locally.

The inquisitor’s purpose in any district where the court sat was first to determine which persons were heretics. In short, as the name implies, he was holding an inquiry or inquest. Those formally accused were neither allowed legal counsel nor permitted to know the name of the witness who had given testimony against them. This latter provision, which was later to call forth severe censure, was deemed necessary at the time to protect the witness against revenge
by the accused or his supporters; it was, however, modified
in a manner intended to protect innocent persons against
malicious denunciation by false witnesses. Anyone accused
of heresy was allowed to name personal enemies likely to
testify dishonestly against him. If by this method he suc-
cceeded in identifying any of the actual witnesses in the
case, their testimony was deleted. It was not until the mid-
thirteenth century that torture was introduced to the pro-
cedure of inquest and then only under strict regulation.

The next function of the court was to discipline those
heretics whose guilt was proven or admitted and who re-
canted. Various penances, both moderate and severe, were
given. Refusal to recant or lapse after recantation meant
death by burning, carried out by the secular authorities. The
sentence of death, it should be emphasized, was a confession
of failure; the court had not succeeded in its primary pur-
pose of converting the heretic. Only because the persistence
of heresy endangered the immortal souls of others was the
recalcitrant heretic punished; and in the thirteenth century,
it should be added, death sentences were necessary in but a
small percentage of the total cases tried.

According to modern standards of legal practice, the
papal inquisition was a grim and arbitrary tribunal. Judged
by thirteenth-century criteria, it was average. Torture, for
example, was included in the Sicilian code of the Emperor
Frederick II, usually regarded as an enlightened ruler. The
Inquisition seems not to have scandalized public opinion in
those days; and its effectiveness is attested by the disappear-
ance of Catharism in southern France. Indeed, until the later
Middle Ages it was rarely used outside of Languedoc, the
area of the Albigensian heresy.
The Church and Mediaeval Culture

The preceding discussion has described the church as an institution and considered some ways in which that institution functioned. The picture would not be complete, however, without some reference to the role of the church in the mediaeval revival of learning. Mediaeval culture—that is, art, literature, and formal learning—was not, it is true, exclusively religious. Nevertheless, the church was vitally concerned with all these matters.

In the early Middle Ages, formal learning had been divided into the traditional seven liberal arts: the trivium, which included grammar, rhetoric, and logic, and the quadrivium, which embraced arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. In the twelfth century, grammar and rhetoric provided the groundwork for a considerable skill in Latin style, poetic as well as prose, and a wide acquaintance with classical literature. In fact, twelfth-century humanism, that is to say, the love of classical literature, paved the way for its somewhat more pagan and more illustrious counterpart of the Renaissance. The general broadening and deepening of interest in this and other fields of knowledge has led to the designation "renaissance of the twelfth century." It was, indeed, a period of marked intellectual competence in various fields. Its prevailing humanism gave way to the enthusiasm for philosophy and theology which characterized the thirteenth century.

Logic and philosophy received a tremendous impetus, during the second half of the twelfth century, as a consequence of the recovery, largely through contacts with Moslem scholars, of those works of Aristotle which had not been available before. Philosophy flourished in the thir-
teenth century, and because it was associated with the schools at Paris and elsewhere, it has been called scholastic philosophy.

Logic and philosophy provided the underpinning, the indispensible instrument, for a scientific study of theology which the age regarded as the “queen of the sciences.” It was the contention of mediaeval theologians that man could by his intellect, unaided by divine revelation, demonstrate the existence of God and know something of His attributes and His relation to the created world and man. Revealed doctrine, the Trinity for example, could not, it was held, be proven. But such articles of faith must be clearly defined to guard against error, and they could be made understandable, at least in part, to man's intellect. Religious faith, therefore, by no means precluded the use of reason; and philosophy was the instrument of the rationalizing process. In short, logic, as also grammar and rhetoric, would have been considered an intensely practical subject.

Three subjects which the twentieth century might also regard as practical and which the mediaeval revival of learning furthered were mathematics, medicine, and law. Clerics as well as laymen studied all of these subjects. Robert Grosseteste (d. 1253), bishop of Lincoln and sometime chancellor of Oxford, and his celebrated pupil Roger Bacon were among the prominent mathematicians of their day. For any ecclesiastic in an administrative post, knowledge of the law, both civil and canon, was indispensable. There were innumerable dealings between churchmen and laymen, and many of the former still served as officials in government. Not only was canon law essential to ecclesiastical government; its wide jurisdiction made it a useful if not necessary adjunct to the equipment of a secular lawyer.
As the study of logic and philosophy profited by the recovery of the complete Aristotle, so law gained by the rediscovery of the Justinian Code. Early in the twelfth century a legal scholar, named Irnerius, was lecturing and making comments on the Digest at Bologna in northern Italy. The study of civil law expanded rapidly, not only at Bologna, but at other centers of learning in southern Europe. And, as was remarked above, it was in the middle of the twelfth century that Gratian produced his treatise on canon law and in the thirteenth that Gregory IX and other popes added their collections of decretals.

Learning depends on students and teachers, and toward the end of the twelfth century the rapidly increasing number of these caused the development of institutions which they called studia generalia and which we call universities. Most mediaeval universities grew out of already existing schools in the larger towns. When these schools were church schools, as most of them were, their prominence represents a passing of the primacy in learning from the regular to the secular clergy. Paris is a good example. For decades students had been attracted to the cathedral school of Notre Dame and neighboring institutions by such distinguished teachers as William of Champeaux (d. 1121), Peter Abelard (d. 1142), and others. Taking a leaf from the book of contemporary craftsmen, they formed a guild of students in arts whose "graduates" were masters. Bachelors, a term borrowed from chivalry, were those who had taken an important step or gradus (hence "degree") toward becoming masters. As numbers continued to increase, divisions were made into what the mediaeval students called "nations," a term loosely used to classify scholars from various parts of Europe. Each nation elected a representative called the
proctor, and the proctors chose a rector who headed the entire organization. Higher “faculties,” as they were called, such as canon law and theology, also formed guilds headed by “deans.” Thus the academic community at Paris became a federation of guilds. It was the term then commonly employed for guild, *universitas,* which survived and eventually replaced the earlier term *studium generale* as the accepted name for these corporate bodies of students and teachers which have survived to the present day.

It is evident that authorities both ecclesiastical and lay held this new company of scholars in high esteem, for Paris soon received privileges and exemptions from the king of France and from the papacy. In the first part of the thirteenth century it became a virtually autonomous organization, free of immediate episcopal and royal jurisdiction. Shortly, colleges which served as lodgings for students were endowed by generous benefactors. The first such foundation, the gift of Robert de Sorbon, was intended for impecunious scholars in theology. Others followed, and in the course of time colleges became places of teaching and learning as well as of residence.

What was to develop later into a college system is especially associated with the English *studia*, Oxford and Cambridge, where many of the mediaeval establishments remain to this day. Oxford, which was renowned in the thirteenth century for its mathematics, expanded from modest origins, partly as a consequence of an exodus of English scholars from Paris. Cambridge seems to have been an offshoot of Oxford. At any rate, Paris may truly be called the “mother of universities,” since the Paris *studium* was the model for many similar institutions in the northern part of Europe.

Most south European universities conformed to the model
of Bologna, which developed into a celebrated institution at about the same time as Paris. Originating, it seems, partly out of very old lay schools of rhetoric and law, partly out of the cathedral school, and partly from monastic establishments, Bologna won renown as a school of law, both civil and canon, and, later, of medicine. Moreover, it was somewhat more lay in character than was Paris and attracted more mature students, men who, in many cases, already had considerable experience and who wanted additional practical training. At Bologna, it was the students who formed the guild (*universitas*) and through this organization controlled their teachers and dictated to the town.

To follow the expansion of the university movement in the Middle Ages, would be quite impossible here. Even before 1300 what had been accomplished at Paris and Bologna was imitated widely. The English foundations have already been mentioned. About 1220 a *studium generale* developed at Salamanca in Spain. There were others in Italy, and in 1347 the Holy Roman Empire had its first university at Prague. Advanced academic training was now an accepted feature of European life and an avenue for advancement in ecclesiastical and professional careers.

*Literature and Art*

Although the church fostered education from the elementary school in parish and monastery to the university, its connection with literature is less evident. Of course, a large amount of mediaeval literature in Latin, both prose and poetry, was religious. Even the humorous and satirical verse of the *Goliardi*, a kind of informal fraternity of students who journeyed from one school to another, gives ample evidence
that the composers were trained in religion and theology. Although much of the popular literature produced in vernacular languages was not religious in spirit, it often contains religious vocabulary and references. Some of the *chansons de geste*, especially the Carolingian cycle of romances in old French of which the *Song of Roland* is the best known, are thought to have developed with the pilgrim movement. Apparently Cluny, which so actively promoted pilgrimage, exploited the Roland story in the journey to Santiago de Compostela. Early forms of the drama can also be traced back to the church, either to the "dramatization" of sections of the liturgy or to religious pageants or representations, sometimes also called miracle plays, performed or sponsored by the guilds. These few examples may serve to demonstrate some of the connections between medieval religion and literature.

The connection between art and religion in the Middle Ages is abundantly clear. Although miniaturists, goldsmiths, jewelers, sculptors, and architects worked for nobles and merchants as well as for bishops and abbots, much of the most exquisite craftsmanship went into the building and decorating of churches and the production of ecclesiastical furnishings. The art of illumination, that is, the illustration of manuscripts, usually with intricate detail requiring fine pen or brush, is a noteworthy achievement of the medieval centuries.

Sculptors and architects were in great demand by the church, especially after the tenth century. Some of the craftsmen were monks whose labors went into the adornment of their own monasteries. Others were members of masons' guilds. Although we know the names of some me-
diaeval architects and although some treatises on building and allied subjects appeared, many designers and craftsmen remain anonymous.

There is one feature of mediaeval art which expressed the religious feeling of an entire community. A mediaeval cathedral was usually begun at the instigation of a bishop, but it could be completed only with the assistance of his congregation. Masons and stoneworkers primarily, but also all craftsmen shared in the work. Many a stained glass window commemorates the guild by which it was donated. In some instances the people formed religious associations to assist in the building.

For who ever saw, who ever heard, in all the generations past, that kings, princes, mighty men of this world, puffed up with honors and riches, men and women of noble birth, should bind bridles upon their proud and swollen necks and submit them to wagons which, after the fashion of brute beasts, they dragged with their loads of wine, corn, oil, lime, stones, beams, and other things necessary to sustain life or to build churches, even to Christ's abode? *

The highly significant technical and aesthetic contributions of mediaeval architecture to the history of stone construction are not directly relevant here, but no discussion of the mediaeval church would be complete if it did not point out that a great cathedral and, on a smaller scale, even a parish church may be regarded as a summary and synthesis of mediaeval life. The religious devotion of a community, here directed by its bishop, provided the impetus. The most highly developed skills were required—mathematical knowledge, practical experience in stonework, glasscutting

and coloring, the intricate interbalancing of lead, glass, and stone, ironworking, the art of the sculptor, and, above all, a sense of design. Windows and statues reflected the world of nature, of science, and of religion. There are birds and flowers as well as grotesques, angels as well as devils, pagan philosophers as well as Christian theologians, kings and princes as well as God enthroned and surrounded by his saints.

Lest this brief excursion into mediaeval culture seem merely a digression, it may be well to emphasize that artists, scholars, and churchmen believed that society should be an integrated thing and that all human endeavor should be informed by charity—the love of God—and directed toward the attainment of man's supernatural and eternal destiny. Two masterpieces produced in the high Middle Ages pre-eminently illustrate this view of life. One was the *Summa theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), who was, as remarked earlier, a learned Dominican friar, lecturer at Paris, inspired religious poet, and exceptionally brilliant student of philosophy and theology. In various works and particularly in this monumental treatise which he appropriately entitled "the whole," Thomas drew on all the sources of knowledge available to him, Greek, Hebrew, Moslem, Christian. The result is a masterly synthesis which includes not only theology in the narrow sense, but an analysis of man and his attributes—what would today be called psychology—as well as philosophy and metaphysics. Predominantly Aristotelian in its rational underpinning, it ranks as one of the great works of the human mind.

The other masterpiece was the *Divine Comedy* of Dante Alighieri (d. 1321). Writing in the now well-developed Italian vernacular, the *dolce stil nuovo*, this most celebrated
of poets recounts a "vision" in which he is taken on a journey through Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven. The poem is an allegorical history of Dante's own soul, of his turning from misguided ways to the true faith and the virtuous life. But the poet also points a moral. In his vivid portrayal of the punishments of the damned and in the deeply philosophical and inspired passages about the souls which are saved, Dante dramatizes the hideousness of sin and the rewards of the blest.

Dante's choice of examples reflects much of his own unhappiness, his exile from his beloved Florence and his sorrow over Italy divided and at war, his sense of outrage at Philip IV's "capture" of the papacy, his abiding belief in the ideal world state. He was also a fearless critic of those clergy who disgraced the church he loved, and there was a place for sinful popes in Hell. In many ways Dante is a unique phenomenon. But his genius is clearly mediaeval and Christian.