At the end of the eleventh century, it was the English nobles who were the closest followers of the Conqueror and were honoured by the monarchy with particular responsibilities and privileges but they did not enjoy any particular personal law. Before the Common Law, they were freeholders. Freeholders who held no military tenure, whether farmers or townspeople, could be summoned to service with the fyrd in case of national emergency and formed part of the county court and juries; they formed a numerous and compact element in society; they were called socagers in memory of the soamen. Those who held a military tenure "a fief of arms" owed host service of forty days according to Continental usage. The need for several thousand warriors well equipped and ready at the first sign of danger had led to the imposition of compulsory service (servicium debitum) on the barons and bishops, each of whom had to supply from ten to thirty knights, sometimes sixty or even a hundred. The primary military tenures, created by the king himself, were those of the great tenants in chief. They, in turn, established, in their holdings, mesne fiefs of arms to maintain a certain number of knights. This number often exceeded the quota which the king demanded for host service, for private war was not unknown in England and the barons needed warriors.

In this way, the extremely important class of knights was formed which fairly quickly freed themselves from the responsibility of military service in person but remained the leading figures in the English counties and were one day to represent the country in the House of Commons.

For a long time it has been maintained that the class of barons was composed of those knights who held military fiefs directly of the king but we must finally discredit the theory. Tenure per baroniam had not necessarily a military character and, at least in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, there were barons who did not hold directly of the king. The barons seem to have originated from the men in whom William the Conqueror had confidence and to whom he

---

1. DXXXII, 1, 408–9.
2. DXXXII, 1, 201 ff.; DXXXVII, 1, 676–7, 815.
3. This problem has been finally settled by Round, DLXXXV, 235 ff., the same author, DLXXXVI, 108 ff., and DLXXXIII, 1, 250–1, etc. See my study, DXXXVII, 1, 814–823.
4. Five thousand, DLXXXV, 284–5, 292.
5. DXXXII, 1, 411–12.
entrusted public duties or, to a greater or less degree, judiciary powers. The most important among them, the *majores* (such as the Montgomeries, Beaumonts, Lacy, Bigots, Giffards, Varennes, Mandevilles, Briouses, Mortimers, and the brothers and relatives of the king), were powerful lords well endowed with possessions, dignities, and privileges but they also played a part in the government of England. It was they who provided the sheriffs, the chief officers of the court, and, above all, the counts.

The dignity of count was hereditary, but it was conferred on each holder of the title by the king who entrusted to him "the sword of the count". Until the death of the prudent William the Conqueror the number of English counts was very small; later they were frequently the leaders of the baronial opposition, but, even so, they were very different from the great counts of France, sovereigns in their own territories like those of Blois, Anjou, Flanders, Toulouse or even a Count of Boulogne or Armagnac. In the first place, they held a royal office and though it was an honorary one they often combined it with that of sheriff, in which case they administered the county in the name of the king; secondly, the manors on whose revenues they were dependent were almost always scattered and their demesne rarely coincided with their county.

The fact that in general there were no large compact fiefs in England has attracted some attention and the credit for this very wise dispersion has been given to the political genius of William. It was obviously in accordance with the royal interests, but, in many cases, it simply arose from the fact that a certain follower of the Conqueror had received *en bloc* the property of an Anglo-Saxon lord and that it was already dispersed. A careful study of Domesday does not justify us in attributing to the Conqueror a deliberate and consistent policy in distributing holdings. We should add that the dispersion of property was in the Middle Ages a rule so general that princes and powerful nobles of the period spent

1 DLXXI, 161–199; CDLXXXIV, 75.
2 DCCCLXXVII, i, 457, ff. We must make an exception for the Palatine counts in the frontier regions (Durham, Chester, Lancaster), who were sovereign in their domains; CXL, 51 ff.
3 See Round’s studies: DLXXX, 333; DLXXI, 421–2; DLXXXXII, 277; cf. DCCCLXVI, 805; CCLXXXV, pref., p. v.
4 Particularly in Normandy; cf. DCL, 49 ff.
a great deal of their time in trying to draw together the parts of their demesne.

Mingled with the free lay tenures were the alms tenures (*en frank almoine*) so called because the possessions of the Church were freed in theory from all temporal services and only paid their benefactor by their prayers. The most characteristic feature of this tenure is that it was only subject to ecclesiastical tribunals.1

William the Conqueror had introduced far reaching modifications into the existence of the Church of England.2

He was distrustful of the native clergy and contemptuous of their abilities and, as a general policy, installed Normans as bishops and abbots. His appointments were made in a high handed manner and his disregard for freedom of election constituted an ominous and dangerous precedent. His son, William Rufus, was to show no scruples about simony. The Conqueror, however, was austere and devout and his desire was only to purify the English Church in which he had the assistance of one of the greatest prelates of the age, the Italian Lanfranc, Abbot of St. Étienne de Caen, whom he made Archbishop of Canterbury. Under his guidance he applied the ideas of Gregory VII in relation to ecclesiastical jurisdictions and put an end to the confusion of powers which existed in the Anglo-Saxon period. Church tribunals were established to give judgment according to Canon Law in all causes which were subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, because of the people concerned or the issues involved.3

So far from isolating the English clergy in its own tasks, this important reform gave it a position of first rate social importance. The development of the study of Canon and Roman Law trained the clergy, teaching them to give their thought a logical direction, and formed a class of jurists who applied their intelligence equally to problems of the Common Law. The shapeless mass of native custom with its traces of Norman influences was illuminated and codified by them

1 *DcXxii* 1, 246 ff. According to calculations on the basis of Domesday, the English Church was endowed with manors bringing in a total of £19,200, while the landed income of the 170 baronies amounted to £20,350.

2 On all that follows, see *DcXxvii* 1, 246 ff.; *Cxxxi* 79 ff.; *DcXviii* chaps. i–vi.

3 Most probably from April, 1072. See *Lxxix* iii, 274–5; *DcLxix* 399–400.
and found its expression in the Common Law. Above all, the Church, led by the powerful Archbishop of Canterbury, who was normally the Crown's chief adviser, continued to occupy a political position of prime importance, to furnish administrators, and to give practical direction to the discussions of the Court, whatever its particular interest or constitution. It possessed everything which the world of laymen lacked as the basis for a political society; its life was systematically organized, it had established methods for the election of representatives, for the conduct of meetings, for preserving written records of discussion, for the formulation of decisions. As in France, it was destined to be the tutor.

As a result of the power of the Norman kings, however, it was not so consistent an ally as the French Church was to the Capets, but occasionally figured among the opposition. Beyond the petty personal ambitions which inspired the barons, the Archbishop of Canterbury was concerned to maintain his independence as Primate against a monarchy that was often tyrannical. He was the leader of the spiritual life of the nation and in direct communication with the leader of Christendom. This responsibility developed the idea of opposition on matters of principle and soon the greater part of the higher English clergy adopted the same idea of their duties. In the period we have been considering, the only definite example we can mention of their resistance to the king in the full meetings of the Curia is the incident of Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury. Rufus, a soldier of extreme coarseness, had no understanding of the character or motives of the theologian and was unwise enough to become involved in a quarrel with him. As he had not yet decided to recognize Urban as pope, he forbade Anselm to make the customary journey to Rome to receive the pallium and Anselm refused to obey. The matter was raised at the Magnum Concilium, which met at the royal castle of Rockingham in 1095. The king and some of his personal friends remained in a room while the tenants in chief, lay and ecclesiastical, and the other people summoned met in the chapel. The bishops were those whom the Conqueror and his son had appointed and therefore, owing all to the monarchy, they hesitated at this issue. William de Saint Calais, Bishop of
Durham, ran backwards and forwards between the royal presence and the chapel, seeking some means of securing the submission of the Primate. Anselm was accused "of having made Urban, Bishop of Ostia, pope in the kingdom of England without the authorization of the king". At the end of the first day's sessions, the Bishop of Durham called on him "to reinvest the king with the Imperial dignity he had robbed him of" and Anselm declared that he would only answer at the Court of Rome. Next day the bishops maintained their servile attitude and William de Saint Calais spoke of banishing Anselm from the kingdom. But the barons had at last realized that they must not let the king humiliate a tenant in chief, and the irritation which the brutal despotism of the king had caused them suddenly crystallized round the primate's wrongs and they declared in his favour. The king, in a furious temper, threatened them. "No one can be loyal to me who chooses to support him." They replied "He is not our Lord but our Archbishop; the direction of religion in this kingdom is in his hands and no one has suggested that he is not discharging his responsibilities". The king took fright and yielded the point, but he opened a new quarrel on a question of taxation and Anselm went into exile.¹

On the 2nd August, 1100, William Rufus was killed by an assassin and Henry I (Beaufleure) unexpectedly succeeded to the crown.² His first concern was to conciliate the clergy and on 5th August, when he was hastily crowned before his elder brother Robert, Duke of Normandy, could enforce his rights, he agreed to take the oath of the Anglo-Saxon kings and recalled Anselm. He wrote to him, "Elected with the consent of God, by the clergy and people of England and already in your absence (though I could not wish it) consecrated king, I require you as my father and father of all the English people to come as quickly as possible to advise and guide me. . . ." It is true that William Rufus on his accession had made the same promises and addressed the same protestations to Lanfranc. It is equally true that Henry was almost immediately to enter into a new conflict with Anselm who had returned from Rome with ideas more uncompromising

¹ DCXIII, chap. v; CXLIV, 23, and the note.
² XVI, intro., p. vii ff. On the reign of Henry I, see DCXXVII, i, 371-388; DCXVIII, chap. vi; CXL, chap. vi-viii; CXXXVI, chap. iv.
than ever, but their long disagreement, which ended in compromise, was not marred by the brutal violence of the investiture controversy between the Empire and the Holy See. The attitude of Henry I, like that of William the Conqueror and, at a later date, Henry II, created a tradition of religious policy for the medieval English monarchy. The king wished to remain master but he sought to rely on the clergy rather than to tame it and allow it to become a political force.

To illustrate the stage of the development of English monarchy at the beginning of the twelfth century we could not find a better conclusion to our chapter than an analysis of the manifesto which Henry Beauclerc published on the same day, the 8th of August, when he suddenly succeeded to the throne. It has been called “the first Charter of English liberties”, one of those formulas which distort historical truth. We will steer clear of titles and look at the text.

This famous charter is only signed by three bishops and half a dozen canons.\(^1\) It begins with general guarantees to the Church whose independence both material and spiritual had been destroyed by William Rufus. Henry I undertook never to take advantage of the death of a bishop or abbot to sell the lands of the bishopric or abbey. William had used the same despotic power in the case of the lay baronage. Henry promised not to resume the possessions of barons dying intestate, not to marry widows and heirs by force, and not to demand excessive fines and reliefs. It has been argued that this charter was simply a contract between the king and the feudal magnates of England.\(^2\) It is true that Henry reserves his rights of “forest”\(^3\) which, we can well imagine, was a concession snatched from the barons by negotiation but the charter is addressed “to all his faithful subjects” and he promises the people of England that “the law of King Edward” i.e. custom, for which the barons had no respect, should be maintained. In his statement of motives, which is completely in accordance with the theories of the Church

---

\(^1\) According to the texts of it which we possess, it is subscribed by three bishops, with a variant for the name of one of them, by the counts of Warwick and Northampton, and by four or six barons. One text edited by Liebermann, however, adds: “... and many others.” (\textit{CDXI}, 40–1. \textit{LXXXIV}, 1, 321–3, and iii, 282; \textit{DLXII}, 321–331.)

\(^2\) This is the opinion of G. B. Adams, \textit{CXLIV}, 27.

\(^3\) See Bk. Two, Chap. II, § IV, below.
on the duties of kings, he says that "the kingdom has been oppressed by unjust exactions" but that he is bound by his subjection to God and love of his subjects. Above all, there is no sign of any exchange of promises between kings and barons, no guarantees of execution are specified. In our opinion, the declaration was primarily inspired by the three or four bishops who were with him at the time and both the idea and the form of this venerable precedent were due to the Church.

The characteristic of the so-called "Charters of English Liberties" of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is already clearly marked—it is not the expression of constitutional formulas but a renunciation of the abuses of the preceding reign. Even the Great Charter itself will have this significance when properly appreciated.

We can see also, in Henry's manifesto, that the native population has not been forgotten and that the Norman kings considered it good policy to place some dependence on them.

This was another service that the Church had rendered to the Norman monarchy. From the first days of the new order, it had worked for a fusion of conquerors and conquered into a society in which were only Christians. In similar fashion, across the Channel also, it was building a homogeneous society.\(^1\) So far, however, from seeking unity for the benefit of the monarchy, the nation only found unity and its clear manifestation in reaction against the excesses of royal power. Its achievement, either on this side of the Channel or the other, was not the work of a day.

\(^1\) DII, 68-74.
CHAPTER IV

THE CAPETIAN MONARCHY AND ITS DOMAINAL POLICY
(1060-1152)

I

THE KINGS OF FRANCE AND THEIR ADVISERS

While the Anglo-Norman monarchy was being evolved and struggling for control of all power in the tumult of conquest and civil wars, the Capetian dynasty was succeeding in losing the nominal prestige and the general powers which it had inherited from the Carolingians. The century which elapsed between the accession of Philip I (1060) and the death of Louis VII and the foundation of the Angevin Empire was one of great events, great conflicts, and great innovations. The Capetian monarchs took little or no part in them and could merely watch their development either owing to weakness or because they had to fight, even in the Île de France, against brigandage.

The valour and energy vainly expended by Philip's father, Henry I (1081-1060), show clearly that the winds were unfavourable and that it was no time to make for the open sea. The unbelievable apathy of Philip I who reigned forty-eight years (1060-1108) put the monarchy back a long way. A fat man, gluttonous and sensual, he soon lost any fitness in the pleasures of feasting and debauch. Sufficiently intelligent to bear full responsibility for his inertia, he has been described by Orderic Vital and the author of the Miracles de Saint Benoît as "lazy and incompetent in war...dulled by his masses of flesh and too occupied in eating and sleeping to fight". After repudiating his wife, Bertha of Holland, he had a companion worthy of his attentions in Bertrade de Montfort whom he carried away from her husband Fulk of Anjou; a bishop celebrated their marriage and in the course

1 DCCX, 47 ff.; CXLIV, 161 ff.
2 CXCVII, 32 ff. passim; CXXIV, 213-18.
of a good dinner she was able to reconcile her two husbands. For the rest of his reign, Philip was dominated by this astute and cynical woman to such an extent that, to please her, he made the vain request that the King of England should retain in captivity the son of his first marriage, Louis the Fat, and then the rumour gained currency that Bertrade was trying to poison her stepson. Philip, however, appeared to have no intention of breaking the tradition of association in the throne and feeling himself growing more and more incompetent he relinquished part of his power to his heir at least after 1101 and the latter undertook several great attacks on the robber barons. Louis was afflicted with the same disease of fatness as his father and mother, Bertha; in the later years of his personal reign (1108–1137) he was frequently reduced to inactivity but until almost the end of his life he showed remarkable energy as a warrior. This human giant with a pale complexion had some attractive qualities. He was gallant, genial, and somewhat ingenuous even, as his adviser Suger admits, being rated as "simple" by some. In his premature old age, he appears to have considered that he had let many opportunities slip. At least he had some realization of his duties as a king and bestowed many valuable sword blows. His son, Louis VII, whom he associated on the throne in 1181, did not possess his active character and very quickly fell under the domination of priests; his long reign (1187–1180) bears no sign of a statesman's direction.

These three men as a result of their weakness or the simplicity of their intellect were subject to the influence of those around them—their wives, the barons and prelates who thronged the Court, and the minor officers equally with the most important.

The queen was "queen by the Grace of God" crowned and consecrated and shared the prerogatives of monarchy. We have already seen the dominating position held by a Bertrade, and Adelaide de Maurienne played a similar role. She could boast of giving Louis VI a family of nine children and, after the death of her husband, she fought with Suger for a short time for a position of power. Eleanor of Aquitaine would

---

1 The question is obscure. Cf. Luchaire, CDXLIX, 19 ff., 45 ff.; CDXLIV, intro., p. xxi et seq. and app. iii.; and Fléchon, CXCVII, 78 ff.
2 CDXLIV, p. xi ff.; CDXLV, 311 ff.; CXCV, 219 ff.
3 CXXXV, 9. 4 CXXXV, 123.
5 CCCLIII, 4–5.
probably have played an equally important part in our history had she remained the wife of Louis VII. The influence of these three queens was clearly of considerable importance. What part was played by Baldwin of Flanders to whom Henry I had entrusted the guardianship of Philip? ¹ He appears to have used the regency merely for his personal advantage. We know very little of most of the highly born people who appeared at Court but we can state that they watched with very ill grace the establishment of the influence of councillors originating from the lesser nobility or of plebian stock. Even Suger, himself, was not entirely protected against these intrigues and jealousy.

Suger, who was of plebian origin, is the only outstanding personality among the royal advisers of the period. He has won a well earned celebrity in French history—although it is difficult to reconstruct all the stages in his career as adviser to Louis VI and VII—in spite of the possibility of frequent wrong estimations of his character.² He was primarily a churchman, devoted to the monarchy because he saw it as the champion of the Church.

If he became devoted to Louis VI it was because he saw that, even before his accession, he was reviving traditions that had lapsed into oblivion. “Illustrious and courageous defender of his father’s kingdom,” writes Suger in his Vie de Louis le Gros. “He looked after the needs of the churches, guarded the security of priests, working men and the poor, duties which for a long time no one had discharged.” After the death of Philip I, Louis the Fat could not renounce his habit of defending the churches, of looking after the poor and unfortunate and giving his attention to the preservation of peace and the defence of the realm.³ This is the reason why Suger, who had been elected Abbot of Saint Denis, 1122, put his very considerable administrative ability at the disposal of the Crown about this time when it began to recognize the responsibilities of its coronation oath. He was only small and frail but he had a concise and practical mind and was untiring. He divided his time between his abbey, which he

¹ The question of the regency from the eleventh to the twelfth century has been cleared up by M. F. Oliver-Martin. See CDLXIII, 12 ff. CDXIV; DCCXXVII, 52 ff.; CDXLIV, p. lvii ff.; CDXLVI, 20 ff. The act in which the king calls Suger “my friend and faithful counsellor”, dates only from 1124. CDXLIV, n. 548. Cf. CDXIV, 20. ² CDXXV, 9 and 41.
reformed and enriched, providing it with a magnificent basilica, and politics. At both St. Denis and the Court he showed keen attention to his work and a spirit of equity and moderation. He was devoted to the ideal of Christian unity and shrunk from the fanatical reforming zeal of St. Bernard, only turning to asceticism very late in his career. For the same reason he could only envisage war against brigands or pagans. He maintained friendly relations with Henry I, Beaucerc, for whom he had a profound admiration, and even hoped to reconcile Louis VII with Thibaud of Champagne of whom he should have been extremely suspicious. When Louis VII set out for the Holy Land he left the regency principally in the hands of this monk of obscure birth. This was Suger's opportunity to show his value (1147–9).

He administered the royal demesne most carefully, forwarded the necessary resources to his master, built up reserves, and maintained public order. These long absences in the East were a source of considerable danger to the monarchy. When Louis returned he found the old Abbot of St. Denis overburdened with the responsibility. He had been forced to put down the king's own brother who had been pushed towards the throne by dissatisfied elements. Only shortly afterwards he died (13th January, 1151). In his last letter to the king he wrote "Love the Church of God, care for the fatherless and widows. This is my advice to you". He was only repeating the Church's regular admonitions to the monarchy. New complications were about to arise with which Suger's pupil was to find himself unable to cope.

The close relationship of the Abbot of St. Denis with two kings and the accession to the regency of this monk of doubtful origin had excited more jealousy than surprise. Ecclesiastical dignities offered to the villain's son the opportunity of exercising an influence of primary importance in politics. In the Middle Ages it was the means by which mental ability took its due. The new factor, or rather the one we must consider as new, is the administrative and governmental importance assumed by the "Palais", i.e. the retinue and servants of the king. This and the freeing of the demesne are the principal characteristics of the history of the French monarchy in the period we are studying.

1 CXXIV, 281.
The eleventh century Capetians, including Philip I during the first part of his reign, lived like the Carolingians surrounded by clergy and household officials, calling the chief nobles and bishops together at frequent intervals to take their advice and settle cases with their assistance. Personally I can find no grounds for the belief that the household officials who represented institutions of Merovingian origin had disappeared by the time of Hugh Capet and Robert in spite of the silence of the texts which are so inadequate that they are no evidence. If we find the chief ministers among the witnesses to the charters of Henry I we have little ground for believing that his predecessors in the interval had lacked their assistance. He needed the services of a seneschal, a constable, and a butler to arrange the royal progresses, administer the royal household, prepare accommodation, and take charge of supplies; a chamberlain and staff to look after the royal chamber and the other institutions attached to it containing his clothes, furs, arms, jewels, and the treasure which was always kept near his person; a chancellor and his clerks to draft, seal, and dispatch letters and charters; chaplains for his religious services. These personal servants were able to play a decisive role on certain occasions as we have seen, but towards the middle of the reign of Philip I a change began which was of considerable advantage to them. Full meetings of the Council became less frequent and the permanent members of the palace became almost exclusively responsible for political decisions, royal grants of privilege, and the determination of legal proceedings. They became the signatories and witnesses of royal charters; after 1085 the counts' signatures grew less regular and finally disappeared while those of the simple knights of the palace increased; the signatures of the great officers—seneschal, constable, butler, chamberlain—were, until that date, scattered among the others, but now they formed a separate group. Finally, in two acts of 1106 and 1107, they appear alone, preceded by the formula which was to have an historic importance, "In the presence of those of

1 CXXXII, bk. ii, chap. i.
2 See CXXX, p. 15; Fliche, CXXXII, 118, 119-120, conjectures that "under Hugh Capet and Robert the Pious the chancellor alone existed." Plater, DXXI, 147, is unwilling to commit himself.
3 List of chief officers in CXXX, p. cxxxvi ff., and in CXXXIV, app. v.
our household whose names and signs are appended below . . .”

The chancellor's signature, which even at this date was often missing, became more and more frequent and a regular feature of formal enactments of the twelfth and thirteenth century. This change in royal diplomatic is clear evidence of an abrupt departure from the political ideas of the Carolingians.

II

Political Constriction: the Liberation of the Demesne

How are we to interpret this development and what were its causes? We have been told “the monarchy was consolidating itself”. That is apparent but it is equally clear that it had drifted into its position and not arrived as a result of a definite decision. We can hardly number the somnolent Philip I among those who plan a programme and proceed to put it into execution. He allowed his life to pass indifferently and let slip the occasions when he could have gathered the dukes and counts to his assistance. The most natural occasions at that period were those of war. In the early part of his reign, particularly in 1071, Philip did not fail to exact host service. The only meeting during his reign, at which any considerable number of counts was present, was in 1077 at the time when William the Conqueror, after his vain attempt to establish a suzerainty over Brittany (siege of Dol, October, 1076), was forced to capitulate and make his peace with Philip. The Count of Poitiers, in particular, went to considerable inconvenience to be present at this meeting at Orleans and seemed prepared to support the king against William the Conqueror but subsequently Philip made no further effort to put himself at the head of the nobility in an effort to disperse the Anglo-Norman danger, although he could easily have taken advantage of the intrigues and ambition of Robert Curthose, the Conqueror's son, the brother of William Rufus and Henry I. Philip and his son, Louis the Fat, lost the best possible opportunity of separating Normandy and England. Philip thoroughly understood the policy to be

1 ON, p. xxxvi ff.; DXI, 106-7.
adopted but it demanded careful negotiations, stimulating the
distrust of the counts of Flanders and Anjou, to build up
a feudal coalition against this Anglo-Norman king whose
pretensions were so disquieting. The apathy of the king was
too great to tackle these tasks.1

On almost every occasion he showed the same carelessness in
matters of internal politics. He did not even demand that
his major vassals should do homage. Royal justice was only
exercised in the demesne or when one of the parties concerned
were domiciled in it. He could have done good service to
the cause of public peace by giving his support, as William
did, to the efforts of the Holy See to win respect for the Truce
of God and the Peace of God but he gave the matter no atten-
tion.2 We need not say that his legislative work, like that of
his predecessors, was nil. Of the 172 authentic charters which
are the sum of his extant enactments, 170 are entirely concerned
with questions of routine—grants to churches or settling
questions concerning them. Only one records a changed
obedience of the baronage to the Crown.3 No one came to court
and, as a consequence, his retinue monopolized the position of
adviser to the Crown. We have been told that this evolution
was favourable to the interests of king and kingdom but I
have not been convinced of it. In a period when the full
consequences of the French feudal regime, which was still
undefined and in process of formation in the time of Hugh
and Robert the Pious, were appearing in hereditary fiefs4
and the independence of feudal governors, the king could only
re-establish his authority by forming the closest links with
his vassals and taking every advantage of his supreme
position as suzerain. Barely a century later the Crown itself
realized this. On one point alone Philip displayed some
foresight; he gave some attention to extending the demesne
and succeeded in his object stimulated by his need of money.
His scanty resources do not justify the scandals of his conduct
but they explain4 them in part. He stands convicted,

1 CXXXII, 299 ff.
2 CXXXII, 166 ff., 248 ff., 499 ff.
3 The king freed a serf belonging to Fulk Count of Anjou, at his request
in 1069 (CIII. n. xii, p. 118), cf. the acts of Robert the Pious in DXXI, p. lxii-
lxxvi, and Henry I, CXXX.
4 Hereditary fiefs are presented as a general phenomenon in the systematic
little treaty written between 1095 and 1136, which begins the famous Lombard
section of Libri Feudorum 1, i. The Libri are published at the end of the
older edition of the Corpus Juris Civilis.
literally, of brigandage and shamelessly accepted simony as customary.

He indulged in such doubtful practices without hesitation but he realized that an adequate landed income was more dependable. He brought off some lucky annexations which proved as important politically as financially. He took advantage of the family quarrels which were dividing his barons to gain the cession of the Gatinais in 1068 and Corbie in 1071. The Gatinais formed a corridor between two fragments of the royal demesne, the districts around Sens and Orleans, and Corbie was an invaluable position on the Somme. After the death of his father-in-law, Raoul de Vermandois (1074), he seized the French Vexin which added the course of the Epte to the demesne as the Franco-Norman border. We should note that all these conquests were made before he reached the age of thirty; in the latter part of his reign the only accession was the sale, by a noble who wanted money to go to the Holy Land, of Bourges and his "septaine", i.e. his judiciary district. In this way the monarch acquired an enclaves to the south of the Loire. On the other hand, after his vain attempt to capture the castle of Puisset, he allowed the chateaux of Hugh de Puisset, Bouchard de Montmorency, the savage Thomas de Marle, and others, to subject churches, abbeys, towns, and the countryside to a reign of terror. The monarchy abandoned its position as protector.

The real achievement of Louis VI from the time when he was associated on the throne was to answer the appeals of the oppressed inhabitants of the royal demesne. For thirty-four years (1101–1135) he fought courageously against the brigands of the Ile de France, the Laonnais, the Orléansais, and even sometimes the Bourbonnais and Auvergne. He burnt or destroyed their keeps; he freed the bishoprics and abbeys, offered the peasants some security, re-established communications between Paris and the Loire, consolidated the demesne by confiscation or purchase and the construction of royal fortresses. He could not do more, his father'sinheritance was too clumsy and he had not sufficient ability. He did not appreciate the importance of the social and economic movement which was developing at that time. The

---

1 DL, 177–190.  
2 CDXLIV, p. lxv ff.  
3 CDXLV, 138 ff.; CDXXVII, 70 ff.  
4 CDXLV, p. lxvii ff.; CDXLV, 314 ff.
first revolutions in the towns took place in the reign of his father who paid them no attention. In his relations with the communal movement, he adopted a policy of immediate profits; the legend that he was responsible for the emancipation of the bourgeoisie has for a long time been discredited.\footnote{CDXLV, vol. ii, 117 ff.; CDXLIV, 328–9.}

In general he lived in his demesne fully occupied in the struggle against the squires, driven to defend even the great offices of his court against the encroachments of the minor nobility. The major barons did not attend the infrequent formal meetings which the king summoned; only the prelates who willingly accepted royal authority attended.\footnote{XLV, 24 ff., 151–3; CDXLIV, pp. xcv–ciii.} It is true that Louis succeeded in securing recognition of a count of his choice, William Clito, by the Flemish nobility after the assassination of Count Charles the Good and was able to punish those responsible, but his man was badly chosen and his intervention ended in a humiliation made inevitable by the drunken brutality of William Clito. The townsmen of Bruges, in revolt against William, were summoned by Louis VI to submit. They wrote to remind him “that the king of France has no right in this election of a count of Flanders” and he was obliged to recognize Thierry d’Alsace\footnote{CDXLIV, p. xliii ff.} the candidate of the Flemish people. Louis had endeavoured to establish William Clito, who was a nephew of Henry Beaucerle, King of England, as Duke of Normandy but Henry was stronger than his opponents in every respect and the decisive battle of Brémulè (1119) was a disaster.\footnote{CDXLIV, pp. cxiv–cxvi.} The only occasion when Louis the Fat was able to appear as King of France answering the menace of invasion at the head of his baronage was a very fleeting one but it must not be forgotten. In 1124 the King of Germany, Henry V, felt that he had found an opportunity to take his revenge for the exceedingly valuable support that Louis had given to the Pope. He summoned Louis who was at war with Theobold, Count of Blois, to make peace with his vassal to which, according to an English raconteur of historical anecdotes, Walter Map, Louis VI replied “Bah German!” The German summoned his feudal army and announced his attention of destroying Rheims. The king paid a visit to St. Denis to place on the altar the oriflamme which he was
entitled to bear as Count of Vexin and a vassal of the abbey
and he presented to St. Denis the profits of the fair of
Lendit.

At Rheims there gathered around him all the forces which
the nobles clerical and lay had had time to mobilize; the
Count of Blois himself had conformed to feudal rules and
sent troops. Henry V accepted the result as a foregone
conclusion and did not advance beyond Metz.1 Obviously,
in such circumstances, the King of France was a suzerain
entitled to the service of all his vassals but it is interesting
to note that he could count on it in fact if the kingdom was
threatened and that there remained some feelings of unity.
The mobilization of the host in 1124 is one of those events
which shows us that history is more complex and exhaustive
than a historian can realize or depict. That was merely an
isolated episode but nevertheless the reign of Louis closed with
an appearance of diplomatic triumph which actually had
fatal consequences. On the death of William X, Duke or
Count of Aquitaine, his daughter and heiress, Eleanor,
with the assent of the clergy of Aquitaine, married the heir
to the throne who on 1st August of the same year succeeded
his father as Louis VII.2 His seal shows him as a crowned
king with his sceptre in his hand and on the counter seal
he is represented as a duke with baronial insignia mounted
on a galloping horse; Aquitaine remained a principality.
It was not to maintain its independence for long but it was the
King of England who benefited. For the effective annexation
of Aquitaine, the monarchy had to accomplish a hard task.
It had to destroy the feudal aristocracy of Poitou which
separated them and expel the English from France. Louis VII
was not equal to such a task.

III

Gregorian Reform: The Popes in France

To gain a correct idea of what the Capetian monarchy
was in this period, we must deal also with its attitude to the
problem of religion and to the sudden emergence of an
important new power, the restored Papacy.

1 LXXXII, 917, n. 391; CDXLIV, n. 843, 849, 858; CDLXXI, 273–9;
CDLXXX, 238 f. 2 OCCLVIII, 1–16.
Severely shaken, in the tenth century, by the Norman invasions and the disorder and violence of a time of stress, the Church had succeeded, in the eleventh century, in reconstituting its material prosperity. The magnificent outcrop of Romanesque architecture is a witness which has retained nearly all its force until the present day. The lay nobility and the kings—even a Philip I—loaded the French Church with gifts and privileges for fear of Hell. But when Philip ascended the throne, it had scarcely begun the repair of its moral ruins. The evil was general throughout Christendom and sprang everywhere from the same social and political causes. The disappearance of the Carolingian Empire had brought no new freedom to the Church. In Germany it had been suffering from Imperial oppression since the days of Otto the Great.

In France and in every country where the power of the monarchy was disintegrating, the lay princes—kings, dukes, and counts—were imposing their feudal suzerainty on abbots and bishops, particularly the latter. The right of election was destroyed by the nomination of official candidates and the insignia of abbey and bishoprics were conferred on the friends or relations of the prince or even on those who had brought his benevolence. In France, Philip I followed the example of his father, Henry I, and indulged in simony without shame and his wife, Bertrade, paid her creditors by selling bishoprics to the highest bidders. Yves de Chartres relates in a letter how the Abbot of Bourgueil repaired to court to receive the bishopric of Orleans which Bertrade had promised him but on arrival she had granted it to someone else who had been prepared to bid for it. "And when the abbot complained to the king about the treatment he had received, he replied 'Wait till we have made what we can out of him and then demand his expulsion and I will do as you wish'."

The result was that abbey, bishopric, and even archbishoprics were to a large extent in the hands of prelates who had the morals of a dissolute squirearchy. In the reign

---

1 OCXLIX, 222 ff., 319 ff., 390 ff.; OXXI, i, 16 ff.
2 On the first Capetians, and particularly Henry I: DCIII, vol. xii, 258 ff.; OCXLIX, 346, 439; OXXI, i, 29, 105.
3 OXXII, 400 ff.; for elections of the abbots, 460 ff.; DCII, 271 ff.
4 LXII, 98-9.
of Philip I, the Bishop of Beauvais was an illiterate debauchee, the son of Philip's seneschal; Engeran, Bishop of Laon, took the dogmas of the Church as texts for witticisms; the Abbot of Saint Medard de Soissons, Pons, embezzled the property of the abbey; Yves, Abbot of St. Denis, had the people who protested about his orgies tortured; Manasses, Archbishop of Rheims, lived a life of coarse brutality, devoting more attention to hunting and brigandage than to the sacraments; Raoul II, Archbishop of Tours, was notorious for his original code of morals and the younger clergy composed songs on his relations with John his archdeacon whom he succeeded in promoting to a bishopric.¹ These notorious prelates in turn sold the ecclesiastical preferments of which they could dispose and there was no thought of demanding from curates or monks a chastity which they did not practise themselves. Simony and nicholaism² were ripe throughout the Church and the charge of being married was the least deplorable accusation which the more puritanical could levy against the country clergy. Pierre Damien has described the monastic sodomy of the eleventh century in his Livre de Gomorrhe with the precise detail which he felt essential to any successful attempt to root out such a common vice.³

However, a forceful current of reform which had monastic origins was already beginning to stir the world of the Church and cleanse it.⁴ The order of Cluny which was one of the authors of this renaissance ⁵ was at the height of its prosperity during the reign of Philip I and the foundation of other orders with an extremely strict rule was developing. The most famous was that of Citeaux (1074) which was to make Saint Bernard immortal. The institutions of monasticism, founded on a communal life and a strict discipline, began to penetrate among the secular clergy who began to form colleges and establish themselves in the cathedrals under a regulated collective existence.⁶ Finally, from the pontificates of

¹ CXXVII, 342–3, 417, 436, 441, 491–2.
² On the origin of the words which implies “licensed fornication”, see CXXXI, i, 21, n. 2.
³ LXXXII, 160–190; cf. CXXXI, i, 175–264.
⁴ This movement has been fully described by Fliche, CXXXII, i, 39 ff.
⁵ The classic work on Cluny in the tenth and eleventh centuries is DXCI. The part of Cluny in the Reforms, a subject of heated controversy, seems to be fairly estimated in CXLIII, 374–5.
⁶ CXXII, 431 ff.
Leo IX (1049–1054) and, even more important, Gregory VII (1073–1085), the Holy See, emerging from the decadence in which it was sinking, as we have seen, in the time of Hugh Capet, took over the leadership of the religious revolution. The Papacy considered, not without good reason, that the interference of the laity in the nomination of bishops was the principal source of the evil and that it was intolerable that a lay prince should “invest” the elected candidate: the investiture controversy had begun.

History has been justified in making Gregory VII the protagonist in this conflict but it has for a long time distorted his stature. He has been portrayed as an ambitious man greedy for power, a politician, an elaborator of theories of theocracy. Scholars of the present generation have restored him and his work to true proportions. He was neither an inventive genius nor a strict logician but a high souled believer convinced of the divine mission of the Holy See and determined to reform the Church, a man of consistent and practical character. He relied continually on precedent and tradition which he strengthened by commissioning the preparation of full collections of material on canonical history. Led astray by the ingenious theories of Peter Damien who urged the Holy See to rely on the temporal princes to govern the Church, he tried to reach agreement with them. In fact, he remained on good terms with William the Conqueror because, for all his tyranny, no one could complain of the bishops he chose but he could not work with either the Emperor, Henry IV, or the King of France, Philip I, whom he distrusted. Following an act of brigandage by the latter (he had caused a company of Italian merchants to be robbed), Gregory wrote on 10th September, 1074, to the French bishops that the cause of the decadence of the kingdom was the king himself. He was a “tyrant”, that is to say a prince unworthy of his office; “he has defiled his whole reign with infamy and crime, he has encouraged his people in evil by the example of his deeds and morals.”

---

1 CCLXI, i, 129 ff.
2 See particularly the interesting but prejudiced work of Doellinger, CCLXII.
3 The chief works are those of Paul Fournier, W. M. Peitz, and Fliehe. See the bibliography in CCLXI, ii, 429 ff.
4 CVIII, 180–1.
The faults which he discovered in France and Germany soon led Gregory to the codification of the theories which he found in the Bulls of his predecessors and the False Decretals concerning the divine power of the Papacy. He formulated them very briefly as early as 1075 in twenty-seven articles which became famous under the title of the Dictatus papae 1 in which were made clear, for the first time, all the consequences of premises, which had, for a long time, been accepted. The Roman Church had been established by the only God and is infallible; the Pope can invalidate any decision and is subject to the judgment of no one. Without consulting a synod, he has full power to depose or absolve a bishop; he administers the Church and judges important cases. All princes kiss his feet in homage and, at his word, they are open to accusation by their subjects whom he can absolve from an oath of fidelity made to the unjust. He has the power of deposition over the Emperor.

In 1076–7 the Emperor Henry IV anticipated Gregory VII in a battle of depositions and thus the Pope was gradually driven towards the abandonment of the doctrine of the Divine Right of Monarchy. In 1081, forced to extremes, he cast off the traditional reserve which gave monarchy a sacred character and, after long consideration, published his opinions. At this moment a German army was marching into Italy to enthrone an antipope and he wrote to the Bishop of Metz:

..."who doesn't know that kings and generals (duces) originate among those who, unmindful of God, are driven by blind passion and intolerable presumption to lord it over other men their equals by force of arrogance, treachery, murder—in a word by every crime at the instigation of the Prince of this world—the Devil?" 2

Gregory's historical declaration was superficial and informal but it had, at least, the merit of striking an important blow at the principles of the Divine Right of Kings which the Church had generally considered justifiable or, more or less,

---

1 1076, 201–8. On the canonical collections commissioned by Gregory VII as proofs for his "dictatus", see, in particular, CCXVIII and CCXIX. We have not been able to take advantage of volume ii of the Histoire des Collections canoniques en Occident, by P. Fournier and G. Le Bras, which has just been published.

2 15th March, 1081; CVIII, 552. On this letter, see CCIX, 94–8; CCXII, ii, 369 ff.; and an article by Cauchie in the Revue d'Histoire ecc., v, 1904, 588–597.
necesary to maintain. Gregory's eyes were opened by the brutal usurpation which threatened him and the mists of the scholastic theories of monarchy were blown aside.

It was not inevitable that this disillusionment should provoke the formulation of theocratic doctrines. Scholars have asked whether he was seeking to establish a political control over Christendom, a temporal monarchy of the pontificate, to which lay princes would be bound by homage, but the question was not one that really concerned him. His aim had been to stamp out simony and purify clerical morals. Everything else was subordinate to that.

The execution of his reforms led him, however, to a much more active intervention in the affairs of the Christian monarchies than his predecessors had attempted. He saw, from experience, that the Holy See could not rely on the temporal princes alone to cure such far reaching abuses or even wait for the active co-operation of the metropolitan archbishops who were often indifferent to reform. He came to the conclusion that it must maintain a direct supervision over bishops and monasteries, reserving or hearing on appeal the most important cases in the ecclesiastical courts.¹ The Holy See thus accepted an immense burden of daily administration. Personally inadequate to direct the moral and religious life of Christendom, Gregory transformed the legation which before his time had been only a temporary mission into a regular instrument of pontifical power.² The permanent legation was to have a considerable importance in the political history of Western Europe in the Middle Ages.

So, in the period during which Philip I, Louis VI, and Louis VII were reigning in France, the Holy See was re-establishing its authority. It found only one remedy for the abuses which kings tolerated or even profited by—the despotic government of the Church—and to this it added the claim to impose taxation. The Pope demanded the payment of Peter's Pence once more. We have already seen that almost all the royal dignity which the Capetians could boast was due to the French Church and the material and moral support it gave to the doctrine of the divine origin of monarchical power which Gregory VII was rejecting. The Pope assumed

¹ COQUEL, 476 ff.
² COQUEL, ii, 112 ff., 210 ff.; CXXXVIII, 83-84; DLXXV, 5 ff.
the role, therefore, of a foreign king who was invading France and divesting the king of his prestige and his means of action alike.

It would have been possible for a St. Louis to have resisted the Holy See because he would have had the support of all those who contributed to the formation of public opinion but Philip I, who knocked down the mitre to the highest bidder and threw into prison a bishop who showed some independence, had no basis for a struggle against a Gregory VII or an Urban II and he did not trouble to establish one. He was sunk in a cynical indifference from which he was roused only by debauchery or vulgar intrigues, and he seemed to look for nothing except to gain time and disarm his opponents by his very inertia. As soon as he was installed on the papal throne Gregory talked of deposing him and his marriage with Bertrade embroiled him with the Papacy for twelve years (1092–1104). During that period even the servility of the bishops could not prevent his being excommunicated three times. The popes, harassed by their opponents, developed, at this time, the habit of coming frequently to France and making fairly long stays there during which they took over the direction of important matters like the organization of the Crusade and the application of the Truce of God (Urban II at the Council of Clermont, 1095). Nothing betrayed the degradation of the monarchy more clearly than its silence and impotence at such times.

It was thus possible to realize the principal tasks of religious reform in France—the destruction of simony and nichiolaism—during the long reign of Philip I, by the measures on which Gregory VII had decided, without any serious resistance by the House of Capet to the encroachment of the Holy See and its representatives. Hugh de Die, who was appointed legate in France and Burgundy on the 16th March, 1074, sought not only to reform the morals but to direct the whole religious life of the country and it was necessary on occasion for Gregory VII to moderate his energy, for his haughty tyranny was provoking anger and bad feeling. We know him chiefly through an extraordinary letter which

---

1 There is full detail and many references for what follows in OXGII, bk. iv. Cf. CXXXIX; OXXVIII, chaps. xv, xxii to xxvi.

2 DLXXXV.
the clergy of Cambrai wrote to those of Rheims in 1078 about "certain imposters", Hugh de Die and Hugh de Langres. These "Romans" were continually summoning councils, excommunicating the metropolitan, changing the bishops, interfering in everything and were even guilty of working to diminish the dignity of the crown. By the end of Gregory's pontificate, Hugh de Die was at the same time legate, Archbishop of Lyons, and Primate of the provinces of Tours, Rouen, and Sens. The old-established primacy of the Archbishop of Sens over the Gauls and Germany was thus destroyed for the benefit of a prelate whose metropolitan see was in imperial territory. Urban II took over the policy of Gregory VII and succeeded in finally disintegrating the primacy of Sens.

The energy of Gregory VII and Urban II and their legates guaranteed the triumph of their ideas in France. The authority of bishops and archbishops, and "Gallican liberties" were threatened but simony, the source of the evils of the Church, had been almost entirely wiped out. To speak only of the royal bishoprics in the eleventh century, the Capetians had themselves nominated or even imposed their candidate; they invested him with the ring and the cross and authorized his consecration. By the end of the reign of Philip I, however, we can consider the investiture problem as settled in France. The king left to the chapters the election of the bishop, no longer "conferred the bishopric" with the ring and cross but invested the bishop elect with his regalian rights, demanding only an oath of fidelity. This was the obvious solution which the bishop Yves de Chartres applauded. The King of France retained considerable powers, the right to authorize the election and even to postpone it for some long time, the right to enjoy the regale and to confirm the election. In fact, the kings continued to interfere but the scandals of the reigns of Henry I and Philip I did not reappear. The Crown had given way to the Holy See.

Even had Louis VI any desire to work for the return of the old practices, it would have been risking his throne to

3 Our interpretation will be very different from that of Luchaire, COXLIV, intro., chap. vi and vii; COXLVII, particularly i, 264 ff., interesting but hagiographical.
embroil himself with the Holy See and the reformers. Threatened even in his own demesne by feudal brigandage, he was more dependent than anyone on the material and financial resources of the Church and the goodwill of Rome and in fact he was assisted and even encouraged in his role as warrior by the Church and the papal legate. The tyrannical pretensions of the Emperor Henry V made good relations between Louis the Fat and the popes much easier, for they relied on him.

Four out of five visited France or stayed there either to find refuge from the threats of the Emperor, to negotiate with his ambassadors, or to hold councils and triumph over an antipope. We have seen how consistently Louis VI met the threats of Henry V; on several occasions he showed himself equally capable of defending royal interests against the Pope and winning concessions, but he was involved in the struggle between reformers and anti-reformers in the sphere of monarchical influence. The mistakes with which he has been charged were not always the result of "necessities of state" but were, too often, due to his failure to take a firm attitude towards his entourage.

The Church of France in the time of Louis VI was leading a more stormy life than ever. Abuse, excommunication, quarrels, and exile were regular weapons. Admittedly this was no new feature, for, throughout the Middle Ages, the differences of churchmen were as violent as those of the more extreme political parties of to-day but the zeal of the new apostle of reform, St. Bernard, gave conflicts both of doctrine and person an impassioned vehemence. Not only was the famous Abbot of Clairvaux able, in a very few years, to cover France with Cistercian monasteries subject to the harshest discipline but his extraordinary, almost diseased, energy affected every sphere of religious life in France and beyond. His prestige and determination were often valuable to the cause of Christian peace but through psalms and panegyrists we can discern a passionate and dogmatic character, hasty to attack and condemn, the temperament of the excited mystic. His interference in every matter of faith and discipline caused considerable anger even in the Roman Curia.

Louis VI did not allow St. Bernard, who had little influence at court, to become viceroy but he often paid attention to
the reformers. He loaded the new orders with possessions, showing particular favour to the great theological school which was founded in his reign, the community of St. Victor de Paris. We see him forcing the monks to accept the rule of Cluny, the priests to abjure their concubines. He could have anticipated the policy, which St. Louis adopted at a later date, of defending the interests of religion which stood, at that period, for spiritual interests and at the same time defending his own interests as king and judge if necessary, but (without speaking of Suger who was a moderate who tried to avoid such questions) he was dependent on officers and a chancery drawn from the clergy who were anxious to assure their own benefit. In listening to them, he threw away the advantages of the prestige to which his personal honesty and candour entitled him.

His chancellor, Étienne de Garland, was probably the instigator of the church scandals in which the monarchy became involved. Long before the great prelates of the Renaissance, this amazing adventurer brazenly accumulated benefices and offices and indulged in the most flagrant nepotism. He was Archdeacon of Notre Dame de Paris, Dean of St. Geneviève de Paris, Dean of Saint Samson and Saint Avit d'Orleans and, finally, Dean of the cathedral of Orleans. Louis VI allowed himself to be dominated by him and, in spite of the disfavour in which the queen and higher clergy held him, he managed to secure two of the five chief offices of the Crown—those of chancellor and seneschal. He was responsible, thus, at the same time, for the administration and the army while one of his brothers held another major office as butler. The reformers had prevented his becoming a bishop and he began a merciless attack on them. The brutality with which Louis VI treated the most famous of his prelates like Yves de Chartres, the Archbishop of Tours, Hildebert de Lavardin, and the Bishop of Paris, Étienne de Senlis, must be attributed to Étienne de Garland.

1 The most characteristic of the somewhat rare instances of direct intervention by Louis VI is the Charter of Confirmation of the liberties of Saint Cornelle de Compiègne (DDXLIV, n. 632); the king forbade priests to maintain concubines, but clerks who were not in orders were left free.

2 See the invectives of Yves de Chartres and Saint Bernard against him (H. P., vol. xv, 110, 547), and the letter of Yves de Chartres to Étienne de Garland, p. 186.
and his friends. A palace revolution \(^1\) interrupted his career for five years and threw him into opposition (1127–1132) but his influence over Louis VI was so great that the king pardoned him and reinstalled him as chancellor. His hand is clearly to be seen in the two tragedies which stained the end of the reign; in 1138, two reforming prelates, Archambaud, sub-Dean of Sainte Croix d’Orléans, and Thomas, Prior of Saint Victor of Paris, were assassinated, the first by retainers of the Archdeacon Jean, clerk of Étienne de Garland, and the second by vassals of Étienne. The royal Court did all it could to shield the guilty \(^8\) and this infamous epilogue marks the end of the relations between Louis VI and the Church.

Louis VII himself was rated as an opponent of religious reform at the beginning of his reign.\(^9\) He dismissed Étienne de Garland but his Chancellor Cahour was equally insatiable and Louis VII was no stronger than his father. In addition, the young queen, Eleanor, who was merry and sensual, hated the austerity of the reformers. Cahour sought to secure installation as Archbishop of Bourges although a candidate had been elected by the canons with the approval of the Holy See. Thibaud of Champagne, a friend of the reformers, who had grounds for complaint at the king’s treatment, joined in the quarrel which became serious and far reaching (1141–4).\(^4\) An interdict was placed on the royal demesne. During an expedition of pillage and destruction into Champagne led by Louis VII, the tragedy of Vitry occurred. The church of Vitry was caught in the fire and hundreds of refugees perished there (January–March 1143). The young king was stricken with horror at his deed and received a nervous shock which seems to have transformed him. He could not bear the remorse for any long time. The insistent approaches of St. Bernard helped to break down his resistance and he submitted. From that time we can note the declining political influence of Eleanor; for the rest of his life, Louis was under the domination of priests and the Holy See. At Christmas, 1145, he took the Cross and the kingdom was more than ever subject to the two international authorities of the

\(^1\) He thought that without consulting the king he could transfer his office of seneschal to his son-in-law.

\(^2\) See the texts in CXLIV, n. 505, 506, 518, 519, 531, 546.

\(^3\) CXLVIII, 17–54.

\(^4\) CXLVIII, 28–38; CXLI, ii, 344 ff.; DXXVII, ii, 188 ff.
pope and Saint Bernard. They arranged the details of the Crusade which Louis had decided to make and it was with the consent of our lord the pope that Louis, "after consulting archbishops, bishops, and the chief nobles," entrusted to Suger "the responsibility for the administration of the kingdom." The result of all this was that during a century that was of decisive importance in the relations of Church and Monarchy and for religious life in Western Europe, the Capetians had no constructive or consistent policy but were generally swayed by their own greed or that of the people around them. In spite of vacillations and setbacks, the Holy See and the reforming clergy had a plan which they realized not without involving the status and machinery of the Capetian monarchy. It was they, often in opposition to the Crown, who preserved the moral heritage of Christianity in France.

In the period when the Normans were mastering Sicily and England, when the progress of the Feudal System and the growing importance of the bourgeoisie demanded a new policy, the Capetian monarchy confined its efforts to a few acquisitions of territory and police measures which it carried out with difficulty within its demesne. In the period of religious reforms and the investiture controversy, the period when the major dogmas of Christianity were being debated in France and Beranger of Tours, Roscelin de Compiègne, and Abelard were being condemned or exiled, when France was being covered with cathedrals and the first epics in the native language were being evolved along the pilgrim routes, the intellectual and moral influence of the Capetians was almost negligible. The important events which were taking place passed almost without comment; the chief intellects of the kingdom were the priests who regarded the dynasty as merely a weapon in intrigues of high policy. An urgent crisis was already brewing which would demand a king of supreme ability.

1 Letter of Suger, 1149; OXXXXIV, 256.
BOOK TWO

THE ANGEVIN EMPIRE AND THE CAPETIAN MONARCHY