

**THE CHURCH AND  
THE  
ROMAN EMPIRE**

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The Church and the Roman Empire by Arthur Carr

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**ARTHUR CARR**

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THE CHURCH  
AND  
THE ROMAN EMPIRE

BY THE

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## PREFACE.

THIS LITTLE VOLUME does not profess to be a Church History of the momentous period with which it deals. Its scope is limited to a particular aspect of the Ecclesiastical movement in that period. The internal questions which agitated the Church, and the great Councils in which those disputes were arranged—in other words, the dogmatic and conciliar history of the Church—must be looked for elsewhere. Here it is intended to trace in outline the relations between Christianity and the Roman Empire, and the external growth of the Church, during the fourth and fifth centuries. It was an era of change and revolution more complete and far-reaching in consequences than any which had yet befallen the civilised world. The disruption of the Roman Empire, the invasion and settlements of the Teutonic races, the reception of the Church into the political system, and its growth into a force strong enough to

remould the shattered world, form a subject of supreme interest and of great complexity.

It is clear, therefore, that in a work of this kind the leading events and personages alone can be touched upon. Its aim is to describe especially those acts which seem to have had a decisive and determining effect on the external growth of the Church. And if sometimes an undue proportion appear to be given to what are termed secular affairs, if sometimes a great statesman or a great general rather than a great bishop or theologian be the prominent figure in these pages, none the less will the subject still be ecclesiastical history. The advance of the Church in its external aspect is sometimes visibly and appropriately the work of a priest or statesman-bishop; another crisis requires the sword of a conqueror; sometimes even the tyranny of a barbarian leader remotely ends in good. The march of Constantine from Gaul to Rome, and the alliance of Theodoric and Aetius against the pagan Hun, were in a real sense ecclesiastical events; though in a different way, they bore upon the future of the Church as definitely as the decisions of the Œcumenical Councils.

The thoughts which give the impulse to acts are the key to history. And whether emperor or general or

ecclesiastic seemed for the moment to have the leading influence in affairs, all the while Christianity was the spirit which breathed into every movement and in reality shaped results.

It is with results alone that we propose to deal. But even thus limited the subject is a vast one, far surpassing the possibility of adequate treatment in a work like this. But the object will be achieved if a wider interest be awakened in this period of Church History, and fresh attention be directed to these earlier attempts to work out problems in Church and State which are still unsolved.

The chief original authorities for this period are: Eusebius, 'Ecclesiastical History' and the 'Life of Constantine'; Lactantius, 'Deaths of the Persecutors'; the ecclesiastical histories of Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret and Evagrius; the 'Misopogon' and Letters of the Emperor Julian; the histories of Zosimus, Ammianus Marcellinus, Procopius, and Priscus; the historical poems of Claudian; the works of St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Chrysostom, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, and other Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries.

Modern works which may be consulted to fill in the details of the sketch in this volume are: Gibbon,



· Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire ' ; De Brog-  
· L'Eglise et l'Empire Romain au IV<sup>e</sup> Siècle ' ; Profes  
Bright's ' History of the Church, A.D. 313-457 ' ;  
Milman, ' History of Christianity ' ; Gieseler, ' Eccle-  
siastical History ' ; Neander, ' General History of the  
Christian Religion and Church ' ; Mason's ' Diocletian '  
and the different articles relating to this period in the  
' Dictionary of Christian Biography,' edited by Dr  
William Smith and Professor Wace.

ARTHUR CARR.

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March 24, 1887.

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