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THE CHRONOLOGY OF BEDE'S *HISTORIA ECCLESIASTICA* AND THE COUNCILS OF 679-680.

I.

IN considering difficulties about dates in the latter part of the seventh century it may be taken for granted that Bede, the greatest master of chronology in the Middle Ages, did not make mistakes. If he went wrong, it would be in consequence of imperfect information as to the time when a particular king succeeded to his throne or matters of that sort. We may presume that his Indictions are correct, and his years of the Incarnation are nearly always computed by himself. But at the outset we are confronted by a difference of opinion as to what kind of Indiction was used in the texts of the Acts of Councils which Bede inserts in his history.

The oldest mode of reckoning the Indiction was the Greek one beginning with September 1; but in Bede's time the starting-point is found shifted to the 24th of that month. These two are the only forms of the Indiction with which we have to concern ourselves. It has, however, been often asserted that the so-called Pontifical Indiction—which I prefer to distinguish as the Roman Indiction—beginning on December 25 or January 1 has also to be taken into account. This is the more important because in Haddan and Stubbs's edition of the Councils the Roman Indiction is sometimes admitted as an alternative, and even as a preferable alternative, to the others. It is necessary, therefore, to give reasons for excluding it.

According to Franz Rühl<sup>1</sup> this Indiction of the New Year has been noticed as early as the sixth and seventh centuries; it would be more correct to say that evidence for its use has been cited from about the middle of the sixth century until A. D. 619, for it does not appear again until the ninth century. Rühl says that this reckoning of the Indiction was adopted by Dionysius Exiguus. This is not so. Dionysius deals with the Indiction only in his *Argumenta Paschalia*, chapter ii,<sup>2</sup> where he gives the familiar rule for computing it. But he says nothing about the day on which it began, for this was irrelevant to the subject of his tract, the chronological elements connected with Easter. There are, however, undoubtedly some inscriptions at Rome which seem to imply

<sup>1</sup> *Chronologie des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit* p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> *Migne P. L.* lxxvii 499.

a New Year's Indiction. The most famous example is an epitaph to one Theodorus and his son Theodoracius in the church of St Cecilia, of which an engraving is given by Antonio Maria Lapi.<sup>1</sup> The date of their interment is recorded as follows :

DEPOSITUSQUIN  
TADECIMAM̄AUGUSTIIND̄SEPTIMAET̄FILIUSEIUSTHEODORACIQUII  
BIXIT̄M̄VIIDEPOSITUSIDUSOCTORISIM̄FP̄DD̄NN̄PISSIMISAUḠHERACLI  
OANNONONOF̄CEIUSDEM̄N̄ANNOOCTABOATQ̄HERACLIOCONS  
TANTINONOVOFILIOIPSIUSANNOSEPTIMOINDICTSEPTIMA

Lapi proposed to emend the last word into *octavo* ; Clinton<sup>2</sup> thought that *idus octorisi* (for *idibus Octobribus*) was a blunder for *ii. K. Septembris*. The former correction is probably right ; the engraver having accidentally repeated the *septimo* just before, or else having been supplied with a text of the inscription in which the word was written indistinctly in numerals VIII<sup>a</sup>. De Rossi,<sup>3</sup> however, accepts the epitaph as definite proof of the use of the Roman Indiction, though elsewhere he draws attention to the frequency of errors in numerals in inscriptions of about this date.<sup>4</sup>

This is the only example of it which is free from ambiguity. In others cited by Gaetano Marini<sup>5</sup> an uncertainty arises from the employment of the Post-Consular date. Mommsen,<sup>6</sup> writing with reference to the time immediately preceding that to which these inscriptions belong, remarks that the dates on Christian inscriptions do not always agree with the official Post-Consular year : the masons must as a rule have trusted to memory for their dates, or else have used lists at hand which had not received the latest revision. Besides this, it should be added that the apparent use of the Roman Indiction has been in some cases inferred from inscriptions of which the dates are in fact compatible with the Greek style. There are indeed some specimens at Lyons which may possibly, as De Rossi thinks,<sup>7</sup> bear witness to the employment of the Roman Indiction ; but it is not clear that the ambiguity in these instances is not due to an error in the calculus of Victorius which was current in Gaul. The specimens are so few, and most of them so doubtful, that they do not appear to furnish any sufficient evidence for the belief that in the sixth or seventh century the Indiction was reckoned from the New Year. Private persons may conceivably have

<sup>1</sup> *Dissertatio ad Severae Martyris Monumentum*, Palermo, 1734, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Fasti Romani* iii 165.

<sup>3</sup> *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae* i (1857-1861), proleg. p. c.

<sup>4</sup> P. 502 ; cf. proleg. p. xlviii.

<sup>5</sup> *Papiri Diplomatici* pp. 260, 308.

<sup>6</sup> 'Ostgothische Studien' i in *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* xiv (1889) 237 f.

<sup>7</sup> Proleg. p. xlviii.

adjusted the beginning of the Indiction to that of the civil year ; but to grant this is very different from supposing that this alteration was permitted in the official Acts of Councils.

In dealing, therefore, with the chronological data supplied by Bede, we may leave the Roman Indiction altogether out of account. We have a choice only between the Indictions beginning on the 1st and the 24th September, the Greek and the Caesarean. Now there is, as we shall see, good reason for holding that it was the Greek Indiction which was in use in the time of Archbishop Theodore, even as it continued to be the only one employed in the Papal chancery down to 1087. The Caesarean Indiction is first mentioned by Bede himself, in a treatise which he wrote in 725. He speaks of it without comment, as the accepted reckoning, but it seems most likely that it was his own invention designed to bring the Indiction into accord with the autumnal equinox.

The importance of establishing the type of Indiction in use becomes evident when we remember that the Indiction was the one stable element in the date of a document. The *annus Domini* was a recent importation. It was not intended to provide an era for historical purposes ; its object was merely to serve as a reference in Easter tables. Naturally therefore it was taken as running on the same lines as the Indiction ; and as the Indiction began four months before what we call the current year, so was the Year of Grace reckoned. The acceptance of this principle for the period with which we are concerned will, I believe, produce harmony between a number of dates which are regarded as discrepant. It will also have the result of fixing a good many events a year earlier than they are placed by modern scholars, though not always by their predecessors in the seventeenth century.

Next to the Indiction the most stable chronological elements in the History of Bede appear to be the Regnal Years, primarily of the Northumbrian kings but hardly less definitely of the kings of Kent. The Year of Grace has only indirect value for the purpose of determining dates. It was no part of the chronological tradition but was added by means of calculation. It does not therefore stand on the same footing as a date transcribed from an older text. Moreover, the Year of Grace and the Regnal Year began at different periods, and it was inevitable that in reckoning the former from the latter an error should frequently creep in. I write these words for instance in the 9th year of King George V, but that year began on May 10, 1918 ; the first four months of the calendar year belong to his 8th year. The common opinion is that these Years of Grace are Bede's own calculations, but Pagi's suggestion<sup>1</sup> that some of them were added by transcribers is worthy of notice.

<sup>1</sup> *Crit. in Baronii Annales* (ed. Lucca, 1742) xi 609.

In order to test the positions I have laid down, I may avail myself of a summary of chronological difficulties brought together by Mr Plummer in a note to the *Historia Ecclesiastica* iv 5.<sup>1</sup>

1. Bede names February 15, 670, as the date of the death of Oswy, *qui est annus secundus ex quo Britanniam venit Theodorus*. Mr Plummer comments, 'February 15, 670, is within the first year of Theodore's arrival, seeing that he did not reach England until May, 669'. But in strictness there is no discrepancy. Bede does not say that a full year had elapsed, but merely that 670 was the second year after that in which Theodore reached England.

2. Mr Plummer cites book v 24, where 'Bede says distinctly that the Council of Hertford was held on September 24, 673, in the third year of Egfrid. But if Egfrid's accession was in February 670, this would be his fourth year.' The mentions of the regnal year and of the month come in fact from book iv 5; book v 24 gives only the Year of Grace. Now in the former reference Bede says that the Council was held in the first Indiction, and this began in September 672. Mr Plummer writes, 'If Theodore (like Bede himself) used the Caesarean Indiction, this day, September 24, 673, was the very first day of the first Indiction'.<sup>2</sup> It was not: September 24, 673, whether the Indiction be Greek or Caesarean, was in the second Indiction. Since then Bede reckons September 24 in the first Indiction as falling within the year 673, it follows that he began his year with the Indiction. This date for the Council of Hertford, September 24, 672, corresponds with Egfrid's third year.<sup>3</sup>

3. 'In c. 12 Bede says that the comet of August 678 was in Egfrid's eighth year; but August 678 is in the ninth year from February 670.' The comet was a famous phenomenon, but it was observed not in 678 but in 676. It appeared at the time of the election of Pope Donus, who was ordained on November 2, 676. About this date no doubt is possible: the entries in the *Liber Pontificalis* are contemporaneous and the records of the duration of each Pontificate are precisely stated. More than this, Bede's account of the comet was manifestly written with the description in the *Lives of the Popes* before him:

<sup>1</sup> *Opera Historica* ii 211.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii 212.

<sup>3</sup> The correct date was pointed out by Mr Alfred Anscombe, in the *Athenaeum*, no. 3804 p. 380 (September 22, 1900). He also amended the years of death of King Edwin and of Paulinus in the same way as I have done. These results were at once accepted by Sir James Ramsay: *ibid.* no. 3810 p. 579 (November 3, 1900). [Since this paper was written I have noticed that the true date of the Council of Hertford was given by Bruno Krusch in the *Neues Archiv* ix 160, so long ago as 1884.]

## LIBER PONTIFICALIS LXXX 3.

Hic dum esset electus, per Augusto mense, apparuit stella a parte orientis a gallo canto usque mane per menses tres, cuius radia coelos penetravit.

## BEDE iv 12.

Apparuit mense Augusto stella quae dicitur cometa; et tribus mensibus permanens, matutinis horis oriebatur, excelsam radiantis flammae quasi columnam praeferens.

That the year given in the Liber Pontificalis is correct is proved by other evidence. A comet was observed in China at a time corresponding to the autumn of A. D. 676. It appeared in the East in the morning. On September 4 it was near the head of Gemini, and on November 1 it was no longer seen. Pingré,<sup>1</sup> from whom I learn these particulars, says that it might have been visible in Europe some days earlier. It should be mentioned that Pingré's dates are in disaccord with those given in the more modern work on the subject by John Williams,<sup>2</sup> where the comet is said to have been observed from July 7 to September 3. But this discrepancy, as Mr E. B. Knobel has pointed out,<sup>3</sup> is due to the fact that Williams forgot that the year 676 had an intercalary month beginning on March 20.<sup>4</sup> The month in which the comet appeared began on August 15. Consequently, Pingré's chronology is correct. The identity of the comet seen by the Chinese in 676 with that mentioned by the Papal biographer and by Bede is beyond dispute; and we need not take refuge in Pagi's argument that, since Donus's pontificate lasted one year, five months, and ten days from November 2, 676, the only August which it included was in 677 and that this therefore must have been the year of the comet.<sup>5</sup> Still less will it do to speak with Mr Plummer of 'the comet of August 678'.

Nor is it even certain that Bede assigned it to this year. The next preceding year mentioned in the same chapter is 676, and in the summary at the end of the History<sup>6</sup> the number DCLXXVIII appears to have been altered from DCLXXVII in the Moore MS which is regarded as the best authority for the text. Besides this, the year is given as 677 in a manuscript of the ninth or tenth century formerly at St Maximin's at Treves, from which Pierre François Chifflet printed the History in 1681.<sup>7</sup> It is also recorded under this year by Florence of Worcester

<sup>1</sup> *Cométographie*, 1783, i 332 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Observations of Comets from B. C. 611 to A. D. 1640*, 1871, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> 'On the Astronomical Observations recorded in the Nihongi,' published in the *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society* lxxvi (1906) 72.

<sup>4</sup> See W. Bramsen 'Japanese Chronology and Calendars' in the supplement to the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* xxxvii (1910) p. 53. The rule for the intercalations is explained on pp. 18 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Crit. in Baronii Ann.* xi 608 b.

<sup>6</sup> *H. E.* v 24.

<sup>7</sup> *Bedae Presbyteri et Fredegarii Scholastici Concordia* pp. 210, 313. Chifflet discusses the date in an appended dissertation 'de Annis Dagoberti', p. 392. The

and a number of later chroniclers. Unless, therefore, Bede made a bad chronological mistake, which is unlikely, it is plain that the year given in most of his manuscripts is erroneous and that the reading 677 is the correct one. Reckoning that year from the Indiction of September 1, his date included almost the whole of the time during which the comet was visible. It was also the year in the course of which the eighth year of Egfrid began, though this did not in fact begin until the following February. We must remember that if Bede wrote *anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXXVII, qui est annus imperii regis Ecgfridi VIII*, he was bound to be inexact in one of his numerals, unless the king chanced to come to the throne on the first day of the year. Bede, I take it, described the comet on the basis of the Liber Pontificalis and prefixed the *annus Domini* according to his mode of reckoning the year, from September to September; having then supplied the year as 677, he not unnaturally equated it with the eighth year of Egfrid. If this explanation be rejected, the alternative is to suppose that Bede's information was incorrect and that he really understood the comet to have been seen in the autumn of 677 instead of 676.

4. Mr Plummer proceeds: 'In c. 17 Bede says that the Council of Hatfield, which was held September 17, 680, was in the tenth year of Egfrid; but September 680 is in the eleventh year from February 670.' Now the Acts of this Council, set out by Bede, have an extremely precise date: in the 10th year of Egfrid, the 15th of the calends of October, in the 8th Indiction, the 6th year of Ethelred king of the Mercians, the 17th of Aldwulf king of the East Anglians, and the 7th of Lothair king of the Kentishmen. Bede has not here inserted the year of the Incarnation, but in the summary (v 24) he places the Council under 680. The 8th Indiction, however, ran from September 679-680, and if the Greek Indiction was used the Council was held in 679. Mr Plummer says<sup>1</sup> that 680 'agrees best with the regnal years of the kings mentioned'. These years must therefore be examined. Now 679 is in the 10th year from the date assigned by Bede to the accession of Egfrid; it is in the 7th year of Lothair, whose accession in the summer of 673<sup>2</sup> is not disputed. The date when Aldwulf came to the throne is inferred only from the regnal year in the document which we are discussing. The 6th year of Ethelred of Mercia calls for closer enquiry.

There is no doubt that Bede in his summary (v 24) enters the death of Wulfhere and the accession of Ethelred under 675, that is, as I have

Trèves manuscript passed in turn to the College of Clermont, to the libraries of Meerman and of Sir Thomas Phillipps, and ultimately to Berlin, where it is now Cod. Phillipps. 133.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii 231.

<sup>2</sup> *H. E.* iv 5.

argued, in the year beginning in September 674. If those events took place near the beginning of that period, then a Council held on September 17, 679, might fall with Ethelred's sixth year. It has been attempted to fix the year 675 as that of the death of Wulfhere by citing the statement that he reigned seventeen years<sup>1</sup> and presuming that these years are reckoned from 658. But this date is only obtained by inference from another which is not secure. *Completis autem tribus annis post interfectionem Pendan regis* Wulfhere was raised to the throne.<sup>2</sup> But when was Penda killed? The battle of the Winwaed was fought on November 15 in the 13th year of Oswy. We have then to find out when Oswy became king. Bede says that Bishop Paulinus died on October 10, 644, in Oswy's 2nd year.<sup>3</sup> This date, according to the mode of computation which we have seen established in other examples, means October 643. Hence Oswy became king in 642 or towards the end of 641,<sup>4</sup> and the battle of the Winwaed in his 13th year was fought in November 654. Three years afterwards, that is in 657, Wulfhere was made king; and seventeen years later, in 674, he died and was succeeded by Ethelred. Ethelred's sixth year therefore ran from 679 to 680.

If it be objected that the year in which I place the death of Bishop Paulinus disagrees with the recorded length of his pontificate, *x et VIII annos, menses duos, dies XXI*, where it is admitted that, since Paulinus was consecrated on Sunday July 21, 625,<sup>5</sup> the days should be xx, I reply that there is no more violence in subtracting one from the years than in adding one to the days: the information which Bede received was inexact, and a number like *uiiii*, when the *i* was not dotted, was constantly liable to be miswritten.

5. 'Again,' says Mr Plummer, 'in c. 26 Bede says that Egfrid was slain in May 685, in the fifteenth year of his reign; but if he came to the throne in February 670, this would be his sixteenth year.' This is perfectly true. Egfrid died on May 20,<sup>6</sup> 685, which, as the Ulster Annals correctly state, was a Saturday. But the Ulster Annals also record the date as *anno xu regni sui consummata* [sic], which may mean a short time after the completion of his fifteenth year. Either then Bede was for once in error, or, as I would rather believe, *xu* is a slip in transcription for *xvi*.

6. 'Further, in iii 14, *ad init.*, Bede says that Oswy, coming to the

<sup>1</sup> *H. E.* iii 24 *sub fn.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* iii 14.

<sup>4</sup> The acceptance of this date removes the difficulty which Mr Plummer noted as to the death of Paulinus (vol. ii 162) that it 'falls in Oswy's third year'.

<sup>5</sup> *H. E.* ii 9.

<sup>6</sup> Mr Plummer in his margin, i 267, like Moberly before him, has inadvertently translated *die xiii Kalendarum Iuniarum*, 'May 21'.



throne in August 642, held it *per annos uiginti octo*. But if he died in February 670 he only reigned twenty-seven years and a half.' In order to arrive at the date of Oswy's accession we have again to go back to the death of Edwin, which Bede places on October 12, 633,<sup>1</sup> that is 632. His successor Oswald reigned nine years, i. e. until 641, when he was slain at the battle of Maserfield on August 5; so that Bede's words *quo completo annorum curriculo*<sup>2</sup> are not quite exact. Now we have seen already that October 10, 643, was reckoned to fall in Oswy's 2nd year; it must therefore be presumed that in the confusion following the defeat at Maserfield some time elapsed before Oswy was able to secure the throne, and his accession may be dated soon after November 15, 641. This would make the reckoning of his twenty-eight years of reign correct.

Mr Plummer concludes his careful statement of the evidence by saying, 'All these independent indications seem to shew that . . . Bede or his copyists have written 670 for 671; and that Oswy's death and Egfrid's accession ought to be placed in 671.'<sup>3</sup> To me, on the contrary, the dates supplied by the Indictions and by the comet of 676 appear decisive in favour of the date as it stands. In support of this I may turn to the chronology of Benedict Biscop in connexion with the history of the two monasteries about which Bede was specially well informed. Wearmouth was founded in the 2nd Indiction and the 4th year of Egfrid, between September 673 and February 674; Jarrow was founded eight years later. The anonymous author of the *Lives of the Abbots*, whose statement is followed by Bede, says that Benedict ruled Wearmouth for eight years by himself and Jarrow for another eight (*alios totidem*) by the means of Ceolfrid; in the first four of which he had Eosterwine as his helper at Wearmouth, in the next three Sigfrid, and in the last Ceolfrid.<sup>4</sup> Bede adds the figures together and says that Benedict ruled the monastery for sixteen years. But it is manifest that we have to do with round numbers; for Eosterwine died on March 7, Sigfrid on August 22, and Benedict on January 12. The one precise and indisputable date in this course of years is furnished by the appointment of Ceolfrid as abbot of both monasteries on May 13 in the 3rd year of Aldfrid in the 15th Indiction.<sup>5</sup> Whatever form of Indiction we adopt, this can only mean A. D. 688. Sigfrid's death followed on

<sup>1</sup> *H. E.* ii 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* iii 9.

<sup>3</sup> Mr Plummer cites in confirmation the brief Annals of Fulda printed in the *Monum. Germ. Hist. Script.* ii 237 and iii 116\*. These are not really helpful. The one, which dates Egfrid's accession 671, places the eclipse of 1 May 664 under 663 and makes St Colman die in 664 instead of 666. The other is printed in parallel columns with a St Emmeram MS at Munich which makes Egfrid succeed in 670.

<sup>4</sup> Anon. *Hist. Abbat.* § 18, in *Redae Off. Hist.* i 394; *Bede Hist. Abbat.* § 14, *ibid.* p. 379.

<sup>5</sup> Anon. *Hist. Abbat.* § 17.

August 22, and Benedict's on January 12, that is, in 689. Reckoning therefore from the autumn or winter of 673-674, the first eight years end in 681-682. Then Eosterwine was appointed, and he died on March 7 in his fourth year,<sup>1</sup> that is, in 685. Sigfrid, who succeeded, held the abbacy for three years (in fact, nearly three years and a half), dying in August 688. The last year is necessarily a short one, ending in January 689. Mr Plummer, on the contrary, calculating a full sixteen years from the foundation of Wearmouth, which he places in 674, inclines to remove Benedict's death to 690 and make Ceolfrid's appointment, regardless of the Indiction, fall in 689.<sup>2</sup> This, he points out, is supported by the statement of the anonymous biographer that Ceolfrid ruled the two houses for 27 years,<sup>3</sup> for he certainly resigned on June 4, 716. But this number is a manifest slip, which Bede, with the text before him, silently corrected into 28.<sup>4</sup> With the exception of this single number there is no discrepancy between the chronology of the two Lives, and Benedict's death may be fixed without hesitation in January 689.

It has been thought that light might be thrown on the supposed difficulty by examining the liturgical rites which were performed at the time of Benedict's death. Mention is made of the recitation of Psalm lxxxii (lxxxiii). Mr Plummer writes, 'In the Roman use the Psalm *Deus quis similis* occurs at matins on Friday; in the Benedictine use, which would be that of Wearmouth, it occurs at matins on Thursday. January 12 was not a Thursday or a Friday in either 689 or 690, though it was a Thursday in 691.'<sup>5</sup> I do not think this argument can be pressed. Bede tells us that when Benedict was dying the brethren assembled in the church and spent the night in devotion: *insomnes orationibus et psalmis transigunt umbras noctis*. Then after mentioning the abbot's death, he resumes: *Namque fratres ad ecclesiam principio noctis concurrentes, psalterium ex ordine decantantes, ad octogesimum tunc et secundum cantando pervenerant psalmum, qui habet in capite, Deus quis similis erit tibi?* The monks, it would appear, had been engaged in the recitation of the entire Psalter and had reached Psalm lxxxii when Benedict died. In like manner, when St Wilfrid was dying, the brethren *in choro die noctuque indesinenter Psalmos canentes et cum fletu miscentes usque dum in Psalmo centesimo tertio ad versiculum illum pervenerunt in quo dicitur, Emitte spiritum tuum, et creabuntur, et renovabis faciem terrae. Tunc sanctus pontifex noster emisit spiritum suum*.<sup>6</sup> The practice of such a recitation at a deathbed is found in Archbishop Lanfranc's constitutions for Canterbury.<sup>7</sup> These constitutions were

<sup>1</sup> Anon. Hist. Abbat. § 13.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii 364.

<sup>3</sup> Anon. Hist. Abbat. § 19.

<sup>4</sup> Bede Hist. Abbat. § 15.

<sup>5</sup> Vol. ii 364.

<sup>6</sup> Vit. Wilfridi 64.

<sup>7</sup> Cap. xxiii, in Migne P.L. cl 508 ff.

indeed of foreign origin, having been introduced from Bec<sup>1</sup>; but in this particular they seem to represent a long current monastic custom, of which Bede and Eddius give examples in the passages quoted above.

## II

The comet of the autumn of 676 enables us to fix the time when Wilfrid left England to prosecute his first appeal to Rome. Bede<sup>2</sup> says that he departed in the same year, that is, in the twelvemonth following September 676. According to Eddius<sup>3</sup> the battle of the Trent was fought just a year afterwards; and this was in the 9th year of King Egfrid, who began to reign in February 670 and whose 9th year therefore ran from February 678 to February 679. Consequently Wilfrid went abroad between February and September 677. He spent the winter in the Netherlands, and in the following spring resumed his journey. But he was wont to be a leisurely traveller. On the present occasion he stopped for a time with the Austrasian king Dagobert II, whom he had assisted some years before to recover his throne; and he was also entertained by the Lombard king Perctarit,<sup>4</sup> who had himself spent a period of exile in Frankland.<sup>5</sup> He reached Rome to find a new Pope, Agatho, in office, and an English envoy present with letters from Archbishop Theodore. A synod was then convened, and Wilfrid's appeal was heard. Eddius sets out the parts of the proceedings which concerned this business,<sup>6</sup> but he gives no dates. Only in a different connexion he mentions that Wilfrid took part in a Roman synod against the heretics, manifestly the Monothelites, on Tuesday in Easter week.<sup>7</sup> He made, indeed, a long stay at Rome after his appeal was settled,<sup>8</sup> and then returned homeward. When he passed through Gaul he found that King Dagobert was dead, and Dagobert was murdered on December 23, 679.<sup>9</sup> We thus get the outside limits of Wilfrid's peregrination from about the middle of 677 to 680. In order to arrange the events within these limits it is necessary to inquire into the antecedents of the Sixth General Council held at Constantinople in November 680.

1. As early as August 12, 678, the Emperor Constantine Pogonatus

<sup>1</sup> See J. Armitage Robinson, in the *Journal of Theological Studies* x (1909) 375-388.

<sup>2</sup> *H. E.* iv 12.

<sup>3</sup> *V. Wilfr.* 24. It is not impossible, however, that Pagi is right in understanding Eddius to mean merely the same day of the year, not necessarily in the next year: *Crit. in Baronii Ann.* xi 610b.

<sup>4</sup> Eddius 28.

<sup>5</sup> Paul. Diac. *Hist. Langob.* v 2, 33.

<sup>6</sup> *V. Wilfr.* 29-32.

<sup>7</sup> c. 53.

<sup>8</sup> 'Transactis ibi multis diebus', c. 33.

<sup>9</sup> See the texts cited by M. L. Levillain 'La Succession d'Austrasie au VII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in the *Revue Historique* cxii (1913) 86 note 6.

had addressed a letter to Pope Donus asking him to send representatives.<sup>1</sup> But Donus was then already dead, and his successor Agatho had been elected in June. The new pope, it seems, at once exerted himself to procure official declarations of adhesion to the Catholic faith. To England he sent John, the archchanter of St Peter's, who was instructed to ascertain the opinion of the English Church and to report it to Rome. John therefore attended the synod of Hatfield, which is expressly said to have been called for this purpose, and took his report with him abroad; but he died on the way in Gaul, and the Acts of the synod<sup>2</sup> were taken on to Rome by other hands. It necessarily follows that the synod of Hatfield was held on September 17, 679, not 680. I have already contended for the earlier year simply from an examination of the chronological data presented by the Acts as recorded by Bede.<sup>3</sup> The course of events indicated by it appears to me to place the conclusion beyond doubt; for it would be manifestly absurd to assemble a synod in England in the middle of September with a view to its resolutions being reported to Rome and then sent on to Constantinople for presentation at a Council in the following November. The Roman envoys were already at Constantinople a week before the day when (on this assumption) the Hatfield synod met.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, almost all modern writers, with the exception of Baronius,<sup>5</sup> agree in placing that synod on September 17, 680. The alteration was made by Pagi on the ground that Pope Agatho's bull for Peterborough was confirmed by King Ethelred in a document which bears the subscriptions both of Wilfrid and of John *Romanus legatus*,<sup>6</sup> and was presented at the synod of Hatfield; Wilfrid could not have been back in England until 680, and as John was present at Hatfield the synod must have been in that year. Pagi saw that the document was open to suspicion, but believed it had a genuine basis.<sup>7</sup> But apart from the fact that Wilfrid certainly did not return to England until 681, the document is so glaring a forgery that we need not further consider it. It is in fact an improved version of one of a series of entries which were inserted in the Peterborough text of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, including the forged charters of King Wulfhere and Popes Vitalian and Agatho. The first and third of these are stated in that text to have been found in the old wall at Peterborough in 963, and

<sup>1</sup> *Mansi Concil.* xi 195 ff.

<sup>2</sup> 'Exemplum catholicae fidei Anglorum', Bede *H. E.* iv 18.

<sup>3</sup> Above, pp. 29 f.

<sup>4</sup> See the Emperor's sacra of September 10, 680, in *Mansi* xi 202 l.

<sup>5</sup> *Ann.* xi 623 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Haddan and Stubbs, iii 156.

<sup>7</sup> *Critica in Baronii Ann.* xi 623-625.

the manuscript in which they appear was not written until the twelfth century. But although the foundation of Pagi's argument has been unanimously rejected by scholars, his date has been upheld on the supposition that the Indiction is reckoned not in the old way from September 1, but from September 24. Until, however, any evidence is produced to shew that the latter form of Indiction was used before Bede's time, I must maintain that the Greek Indiction of September 1 is here used.

2. The opinion, then, of the English Church having been declared on September 17, 679, it was transmitted, as we have seen, to Rome; and there, as Eddius tells us,<sup>1</sup> Wilfrid subscribed a declaration of faith together with a hundred and twenty-five bishops on Tuesday in Easter week, plainly March 27, 680, in preparation for the great Council of the following November. The letter which bears these subscriptions is included in the Acts of the Council, and for reasons which will appear later it is desirable to quote the names at length. It is evident, though the fact has not, I think, been observed, that the subscriptions were written in five columns. Such an arrangement, though not common, may be found in Anglo-Saxon charters which unquestionably derived their forms from Italian models. In the Roman letter the first, second, and fourth columns are headed by bishops of Roman sees; the third by the bishop of Milan and his suffragans; and the fifth is reserved for the bishop of Ravenna and his suffragans. The bishops are ordered regularly under provinces, and only in two instances (Crescens of Vivonia and Mauricius of Tibur) have names been inserted altogether out of place. But no provinces are named in the cases of the sees immediately dependent upon Rome, Milan, and Ravenna, and it is not easy to explain why the province of Tuscia is uniformly mentioned in column 4, though it is omitted after the names occupying the lower part of column 3. The list is of remarkable interest as furnishing a Directory, not very far from complete, of the Italian bishoprics in 680, and as giving a large number of names otherwise unknown.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *V. Wilfr.* 53.

<sup>2</sup> I print the list from Mansi xi 298-315. The subscriptions are given both in Greek and Latin. I have followed the Latin, occasionally emending, in square brackets, from the Greek. I omit the word *episcopus* and the formulæ connected with it throughout, and I abbreviate in other ways.

## [I]

- Agatho episcopus sanctae Dei  
catholicae atque apostolicae eccle-  
siae urbis Romae  
Andreas s. Ostiensis eccl.  
Agnellus s. eccl. Tarracinensis pro-  
vinciae Campaniae  
Agnellus s. Fundanae eccl. prov.  
Camp.  
5 Adeodatus s. Formianae<sup>1</sup> eccl. prov.  
Camp.  
Petrus s. Cumanae eccl. prov. Camp.  
Agnellus s. eccl. Misenatis prov.  
Camp.  
Gaudiosus s. Puteolanae eccl. prov.  
Camp.  
Stephanus s. Locrensis eccl. [prov.  
Calabriae<sup>2</sup>]  
10 Agnellus s. Neapolitanae eccl. prov.  
Camp.  
Aureli[an]us s. Nolanae eccl. prov.  
Camp.  
Barbatus s. Beneventanae eccl. prov.  
Camp.  
Decorosus s. eccl. Capuanae prov.  
Camp.  
Iulianus s. Consentinae eccl. prov.  
Brutiorum  
15 Ioannes s. Hydruntinae eccl. prov.  
Brut.<sup>3</sup>  
Germanus s. Tarentinae eccl. prov.  
Calabriae  
Theophanes s. Thurinae eccl. prov.  
Calabriae  
Petrus s. Crotonensis eccl. prov.  
Brutiorum  
Paulus s. Scylletiensis eccl. prov.  
Brut.  
20 Georgius s. Taurianae eccl. prov.  
Calabr.  
Theodorus s. Tropeianae eccl. prov.  
Calabr.  
Abundantius Tempsanae eccl. prov.  
Brut.  
Hyacinthus s. Surrentinae eccl. prov.  
Camp.  
Placentius s. Veliternensis eccl. prov.  
Camp.

## [II]

- 25 Iuvenalis s. Albanensis eccl.  
Vitus s. eccl. Silvae candidae  
Paulus s. Nomentanae eccl.  
Ioannes s. eccl. Portuensis  
Stephanus s. Praenestinae eccl.  
30 Felix s. Spoletanae eccl.  
Honestus s. Esinatis<sup>4</sup> eccl.  
Felix s. Camerinae eccl.  
Florus s. Fulginatis eccl.  
Decentius s. Foroflaminensis eccl.  
35 Ioannes s. Nursinae eccl.  
Felix s. eccl. Asculanensis  
Hadrianus s. Reatinae eccl.  
Florus s. Furconiensis eccl.  
Clarentius s. eccl. Balnensis  
40 Crescens<sup>5</sup> s. eccl. Vibonensis [prov.  
Calabr.]  
Theodosius s. eccl. Syracusanae prov.  
Sicil.  
Benedictus s. eccl. Messanensis prov.  
Sic.  
Ioannes s. eccl. Thermitanae prov.  
Sic.  
Ioannes s. eccl. Mylanae prov. Sic.  
45 Petrus s. eccl. Tauromenitanae prov.  
Sic.  
Iulianus s. eccl. Catanensis prov. Sic.  
Georgius s. eccl. Trioclitanae prov. Sic.  
Georgius s. Agrigentinae eccl. prov.  
Sic.  
Adeodatus s. eccl. Leucorum legatus  
venerabilis synodi per Galliarum  
provincias constitutae  
50 Wilfridus s. eccl. Eboracenaе insulae  
Britanniae legatus venerabilis synodi  
per Britanniam constitutae  
Mauricius s. Tiburtinae eccl.  
Felix Arelatensis eccl. legatus vena-  
bilis synodi per Galliarum provincias  
constitutae  
Taurinus diaconus s. eccl. Telonensis  
legatus venerabilis synodi per  
Galliarum provincias constitutae

<sup>1</sup> i. e. *Firmana*.<sup>2</sup> For *Brutiorum*.<sup>3</sup> For *Calabriae*.<sup>4</sup> From Aesium (mod. Iesi).<sup>5</sup> Κρέσης, Lat. *Orestes*, but *Crescis* in Cotton MS.<sup>6</sup> *Vadensis* in Cotton MS.<sup>7</sup> Probably a mistake for *Soranae*.<sup>8</sup> For *Vicentiana*.<sup>9</sup> In this and the two following sees I take the names from the Greek: the Latin has *Paduanae*, *Pataviniae*, and *Allinensis*. The first probably designates not Padua but Pedena.<sup>10</sup> Greek Φαλάρεως; Lat. *Salernitanae* vel *Sarnensis*.<sup>11</sup> v. l. *Caesenatis*; Greek Σαρωνάτης. The see is Sarsina.<sup>12</sup> Greek Βικωβεντίνης, that is, Ferrara.

## [III]

- Mansuetus s. Mediolanensis eccl.  
 55 Ioannes s. eccl. Bergomatis  
 Donatus s. eccl. Laudensis  
 Anastasius s. eccl. Ticinensis  
 Valentinus s. eccl. Aquensis  
 Desiderius s. eccl. Cremonensis  
 60 Gratianus s. eccl. Novariensis  
 Desiderius s. eccl. Eporediensis  
 Ioannes s. eccl. Genuensis  
 Deuseddit s. eccl. Brixianensis  
 Audacis s. eccl. Dertonensis  
 65 Benenatus s. eccl. Astensis  
 Benedictus s. eccl. Valvensis<sup>6</sup>  
 Bonus s. eccl. Albiganensis  
 Theodorus s. eccl. Vercellensis  
 Rusticus s. eccl. Taurinatis  
 70 Ioannes s. eccl. Vintimiliensis  
 Severus s. eccl. Lunensis  
 Eleutherius s. eccl. Lucensis  
 Maurianus s. eccl. Pisanæ  
 Serenus s. eccl. Populoniensis  
 75 Reparatus s. eccl. Florentinae  
 Valerianus s. eccl. Rosellensis  
 Cyprianus s. eccl. Aretinae  
 Vitalianus s. eccl. Senensis  
 Marcianus s. eccl. Volaterranae  
 80 Mauricius s. eccl. Suanensis  
 Agnellus s. eccl. Vulsiniensis  
 Theodorus s. eccl. Clusinae  
 Custoditus s. eccl. [Valentinocastri]

## [IV]

- Vitalianus s. eccl. Tusculanensis  
 85 Mauricius s. eccl. Anagninae  
 Saturninus s. eccl. Aletrinae  
 Valerianus s. eccl. Rosanae<sup>7</sup> eccl.  
 Gaudiosus s. eccl. Signinae  
 Agatho s. eccl. Aquileiensis  
 prov. Iстриæ  
 90 Cyriacus s. eccl. Polensis  
 Iстриæ  
 Aurelianus s. eccl. Parentinae  
 prov. Iстриæ  
 Ursinus s. eccl. Cenetensis  
 prov. Iстриæ  
 Andreas s. eccl. Veientanae<sup>8</sup>  
 prov. Iстриæ  
 Gaudentius s. eccl. Tergestinae  
 prov. Iстриæ  
 95 Benenatus s. eccl. Opitergiensis  
 prov. Iстриæ  
 Ursinianus s. eccl. Patavinae<sup>9</sup>  
 prov. Iстриæ  
 Paulus s. eccl. Altinensis  
 prov. Iстриæ  
 Paulus s. eccl. Ariminensis  
 prov. Pentapolis  
 Beatus s. eccl. Pisarenensis  
 prov. Pentapolis  
 100 Dominicus s. eccl. Fanensis  
 eccl. prov. Pentapolis  
 Hadrianus s. eccl. Numanatis  
 prov. Pentapolis  
 Ioannes s. eccl. Auximatis  
 prov. Pentapolis  
 Ioannes s. eccl. Anconitanae  
 prov. Pentapolis  
 Benenatus s. eccl. Perusinae  
 prov. Tusciae  
 105 Bonifacius s. eccl. Tudertinae  
 prov. Tusciae  
 Exhilaratus s. eccl. Metuarensis  
 prov. Tusciae  
 Amator s. eccl. Bleranae  
 prov. Tusciae  
 Gratosus s. eccl. Sutrinae  
 prov. Tusciae  
 Theodorus s. eccl. Nepesinae  
 prov. Tusciae  
 110 Ioannes s. eccl. Falaritanae<sup>10</sup>  
 prov. Tusciae  
 Theodorus s. eccl. Amerianae  
 prov. Tusciae  
 Barbatianus s. eccl. Polymartiensis  
 prov. Tusciae  
 Deuseddit s. eccl. Narniensis  
 prov. Tusciae

## [V]

- Theodorus s. eccl. Ravennatis  
 115 Stephanus s. eccl. Saranatis<sup>11</sup>  
 Barbatus s. eccl. Corneliensis  
 Victor s. eccl. Bononiensis  
 Florus s. eccl. Cesenatis  
 Vitalis s. eccl. Faventinae  
 120 Iustinus s. eccl. Fidentinensis<sup>12</sup>  
 Vincentius s. eccl. Livienensis  
 Placentius s. eccl. Placentinae  
 Mauricius s. eccl. Regiensis  
 Petrus s. eccl. Mutinensis  
 125 Gratosus s. eccl. Parmensis  
 Magnus s. eccl. Pupilsensis

3. The Acts of a Roman synod held in October 679 were printed by Sir Henry Spelman in 1639<sup>1</sup> from a manuscript of which no trace now remains. It is not to be found among Joscelyn's transcripts in the British Museum; nor is there any indication of it in Dr Macray's Report for the Historical Manuscripts Commission on the Gurney collection at Keswick Hall, Norfolk,<sup>2</sup> which contains fourteen volumes of Spelman's papers. We have, therefore, only Spelman's printed text to go upon, and from this it is apparent that his original was a late and blundering copy. John Johnson, who translated the *Laws and Canons of the Church of England* in 1720, truly remarked, 'Never any synod, or consistory, met with a more ignorant transcriber of its acts, than he was who wrote the copy published by Sir H. Spelman.'<sup>3</sup> There are features in the document which raise the suspicion that it was produced, together with a number of admitted forgeries, in order to support Archbishop Lanfranc's claim to the primacy of Canterbury. On the other hand, it includes an element which I cannot but believe to be genuine in its enumeration of the bishops who attended the synod. 'The names of the Bishops,' as Haddan and Stubbs pointed out,<sup>4</sup> 'with the single exception of George of Catania, are consistent with the signatures attached to the letter' which we have spoken of above. This one exception need not cause difficulty, for it can hardly be doubted<sup>5</sup> that the copyist has carelessly thrown two Sicilian bishops into one, and written *Georgio Catanensi* instead of *Georgio Triocalitano, Iuliano Catanensi*, who appear side by side in the Roman letter (nos. 46, 47). The question then arises, Can Spelman's document have been forged with the help of the Roman letter? Twelve years ago, in the hope of obtaining an answer, I examined the Cottonian MS Claudius B. v fo. 30-31, which contains the Acts of the Sixth General Council. The manuscript is assigned to the tenth century, and is supposed to have come to England as a present from Otto the Great; it was long preserved at the abbey of Bath. The order of the subscriptions agrees almost entirely with that given in Mansi's edition of the Councils. Now it appeared to me incredible that a forger should have selected eighteen names<sup>6</sup> (I assume the one emendation suggested

<sup>1</sup> *Concilia* i 158-160.

<sup>2</sup> Twelfth Report, Appendix ix (1891) 116-164.

<sup>3</sup> p. 100, note d, in the edition by John Baron, 1850. The Latin text has been amended by a succession of editors, whose corrections have been silently accepted by Haddan and Stubbs.

<sup>4</sup> *Councils* iii 135 note b.

<sup>5</sup> This suggestion is due to Dr Levison.

<sup>6</sup> It will be noticed that eleven of the eighteen held sees in the vicinity of Rome. One came from Calabria, five from Sicily, and one (who, Eddius tells us, c. 28, accompanied Wilfrid) from Toul, 'ecclesia Leucorum'. Dr Levison thinks that the



above) out of this list and arranged them in the following order: nos. 40, 2, 25, 51, 110, 42, 41, 112, 27, 28, 109, 26, 88, 48, 24, 46, 47, and 49. I inferred, therefore, that Spelman's document in its opening paragraph was derived from an independent and genuine source. The acceptance of this paragraph may reasonably be held to include the protocol which gives the date in full. Unluckily the dates it records are mutually incompatible, and we have to adopt the least violent correction of them that we can find. If we accept the Imperial year as correct and emend the Indiction VII into VIII, we obtain the date October 679, which is on all grounds the probable one. The Post-Consular date (x for XI) and the years of the Imperial colleagues (XXII for XXI) must be neglected. But when I had satisfied myself that Spelman's document contained a genuine beginning, I found myself unable to reconcile this with the manifest fabrication which appears in the course of the text.

The solution of the problem has since been satisfactorily accomplished by Dr Wilhelm Levison, of Bonn, in a paper on *Die Akten der Römischen Synode von 679* which appeared in 1912.<sup>1</sup> By an acute analysis of the text he showed that only the last part of the document, beginning with the eighth clause,<sup>2</sup> is an unmistakable product of the factory from which Lanfranc's evidence for the primacy of Canterbury issued. The earlier part may be most of it genuine—Dr Levison goes further on this side than I should myself be disposed to go—but, what is of chief importance for my present purpose, he appears to me to have proved that the initial protocol is in truth the opening of the genuine Acts of the synod from which Eddius excerpted the clauses which dealt with Wilfrid's appeal. Eddius, as has been mentioned above, says that the synod which heard Wilfrid was attended by more than fifty bishops and priests and was held at the Lateran:<sup>3</sup> our document gives the same place, and the number as fifty-three.<sup>4</sup> The first speech of Pope Agatho begins both in Eddius and in Spelman's text in the same terms, though the composer of the latter has interpolated some words in it from Bede and has altered the end of it. I suspect he has played more tricks with the document than Dr Levison will allow; but I am persuaded that we have here the genuine framework of the instrument of which Eddius supplies

order in Spelman's document is that of the bishops' seniority in consecration, and this is favoured by the prominent place taken in the proceedings by the bishop of Vivonia, whose name stands first in the enumeration.

<sup>1</sup> *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* xxxiii (Kanonistische Abteilung ii) 249-282.

<sup>2</sup> In Haddan and Stubbs, iii 133 middle. Dr Levison, contrary to the accepted usage, includes the protocol in his numbering of the clauses.

<sup>3</sup> Cap. 29.

<sup>4</sup> This is assuming the one emendation proposed above.

some of the contents, and that the two Councils distinguished by Haddan and Stubbs as the one 'in the cause of the English Church [irrespective of Wilfrid, although after he had reached Rome]';<sup>1</sup> and the other 'to decide upon Wilfrid's appeal',<sup>2</sup> are really parts of a single council, though the former can only be accepted with a liberal use of the obelus. We can assign it to the definite date of October 679, and we have the list of bishops and priests who were actually present.

REGINALD L. POOLE.

### AN UNRECORDED READING OF THE LEICESTER CODEX.

IN a recent visit to Leicester I availed myself of an opportunity to inspect the Leicester Codex (69). And among other passages I turned to Rev. ii 13. The reader will be helped if, for the present purpose, he consults this JOURNAL for April 1904, in which Dr M. R. James, in his valuable article on 'The Scribe of the Leicester Codex', furnishes a facsimile of the writing of Emmanuel of Constantinople, whom Dr James, in my humble opinion, rightly identifies with the scribe of 69. The recumbent *epsilon* of the Leicester MS is characteristically represented by the Greek writing in Dr James's facsimile. The *epsilon* is written lying on its back and is like our own cursive *u*. It may easily be distinguished from *alpha*, which is written like our cursive *a*. *Alpha*, so far as I examined 69, in practically every case, is completely formed.

I was somewhat surprised to find that, while Tregelles and other collators had left notes in the margin about the second syllable of *αυτας*, Rev. ii 13, no one had observed what, to my eyes, is the indisputable reading in the final syllable, namely *epsilon* and not *alpha*. Mr Payne, of the Town Clerk's office, kindly allowed me to use the MS in his room. Distrusting my own unsupported eyesight, I was glad to find that he agreed with me as to the entire difference of the letter in question from any occurrence of *alpha* in the context, and in the entire resemblance of the *epsilon*—as I will now call it—to the other occurrences of that letter.

Persons who have used the MS have frequently been guilty of writing over the text and making notes either in the text or in the margin. And I think the second syllable of *αυτας* has been tampered with. But there is absolutely no trace of interference with the third syllable.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iii 131.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. iii 136.