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THE SARDICAN CANONS, THE DECRETUM GELASIANUM, AND THE SIXTH CANON OF NICAEA

PROFESSOR EDUARD SCHWARTZ of Munich has written a very full and instructive review of Dr Turner's last *fasciculus* in the *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung*, vol. 51, in which he praises his edition of the Sardican canons as an 'Ausgabe von paradigmatischer Klarheit und Sauberkeit'. In the *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, vol. 29, the same writer examines Dr Turner's appendix in the same *fasciculus* on the Decretum Gelasianum, which he is inclined to attribute to Damasus on grounds of some subtlety but of considerable cogency. More important is a paper by Dr Schwartz, reprinted from the *Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, vol. 27, in which he explains the famous sixth canon of Nicaea in a novel way, based on a hypothetical alteration in the text. The assumption underlying the canon is, he says, the independence of the individual church under its bishop; each such church represents the *ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ*, as do all of them collectively. In fact, though he does not name St Cyprian, Dr Schwartz holds that the Nicene canon was Cyprianic in its teaching. But the three thrones of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch had come to make, on grounds of custom and tradition, certain claims to superiority; as had also, from the time of Diocletian, the bishops of capitals of the provinces into which that emperor had divided the Greek-speaking half of his empire, the most important of these claims being that of approving the election of bishops within their province. Dr Schwartz argues, partly from the Latin translations, that the sixth canon of Nicaea originally was more emphatic than in its present form in favour of the right of the metropolitans. But when an early *corpus canonum* was framed at Antioch, to which we owe it that certain councils at Gangra and other minor Asiatic centres under Antiochene influence have attained a strange immortality, the sixth Nicene canon was modified to the advantage of the patriarchal see and to the loss of metropolitans. Dr Schwartz holds that the alliance between Innocent I and his contemporary of Antioch was cemented by the acceptance at Rome of this Antiochene code, with remarkable consequences for the general history of the Church.

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