

~Other Speakers A-F: Ambrose:

Bishop of Milan from 374 to 397; born probably 340, at Trier, Arles, or Lyons; died 4 April, 397. He was one of the most illustrious Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and fitly chosen, together with St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Athanasius, to uphold the venerable Chair of the Prince of the Apostles in the tribune of St. Peter's at Rome.

The materials for a biography of the Saint are chiefly to be found scattered through his writings, since the "Life" written after his death by his secretary, Paulinus, at the suggestion of St. Augustine, is extremely disappointing. Ambrose was descended from an ancient Roman family, which, at an early period had embraced Christianity, and numbered among its scions both Christian martyrs and high officials of State. At the time of his birth his father, likewise named Ambrosius, was Prefect of Gallia, and as such ruled the present territories of France, Britain, and Spain, together with Tingitana in Africa. It was one of the four great prefectures of the Empire, and the highest office that could be held by a subject. Trier, Arles, and Lyons, the three principal cities of the province, contend for the honour of having given birth to the Saint. He was the youngest of three children, being preceded by a sister, Marcellina, who became a nun, and a brother Satyrus, who, upon the unexpected appointment of Ambrose to the episcopate, resigned a prefecture in order to live with him and relieve him from temporal cares. About the year 354 Ambrosius, the father, died, whereupon the family removed to Rome. The saintly and accomplished widow was greatly assisted in the religious training of her two sons by the example and admonitions of her daughter, Marcellina, who was about ten years older than Ambrose. Marcellina had already received the virginal veil from the hands of Liberius, the Roman Pontiff, and with another consecrated virgin lived in her mother's house. From her the Saint imbibed that enthusiastic love of virginity which became his distinguishing trait. His progress in secular knowledge kept equal pace with his growth in piety. It was of extreme advantage to himself and to the Church that he acquired a thorough mastery of the Greek language and literature, the lack of which is so painfully apparent in the intellectual equipment of St. Augustine and, in the succeeding age, of the great St. Leo. In all probability the Greek Schism would not have taken place had East and West continued to converse as intimately as did St. Ambrose and St. Basil. Upon the completion of his liberal education, the Saint devoted his attention to the study and practice of the law, and soon so distinguished himself by the eloquence and ability of his pleadings at the court of the praetorian prefect, Anicius Probus, that the latter took him into his council, and later obtained for him from the Emperor Valentinian the office of consular governor of Liguria and Æmilia, with residence in Milan. "Go", said the prefect, with unconscious prophecy, "conduct thyself not as a judge, but as bishop". We have no means of ascertaining how long he retained the civic government of his province; we know only that his upright and gently administration gained for him the universal love and esteem of his subjects, paving the way for that sudden revolution in his life which was soon to take place. This was the more remarkable, because the province, and especially the city of Milan, was in a state of religious chaos, owing to the persistent machinations of the Arian faction.

Bishop of Milan

Ever since the heroic Bishop Dionysius, in the year 355, had been dragged in chains to his place of exile in the distant East, the ancient chair of St. Barnabas had been occupied by the intruded Cappadocian, Auxentius, an Arian filled with bitter hatred of the Catholic Faith, ignorant of the Latin language, a wily and violent persecutor of his orthodox subjects. To the great relief of the Catholics, the death of the petty tyrant in 374 ended a bondage which had lasted nearly twenty years. The bishops of the province, dreading the inevitable tumults of a popular election, begged the Emperor Valentinian to appoint a successor by imperial edict; he, however, decided that the election must take place in the usual way. It devolved upon Ambrose, therefore, to maintain order in the city at this perilous juncture. Proceeding to the basilica in which the disunited clergy and people were assembled, he began a conciliatory discourse to the interest of peace and moderation, but was interrupted by a voice (according to Paulinus, the voice of an infant) crying, "Ambrose, Bishop". The cry was instantly repeated by the entire assembly, and Ambrose, to his surprise and dismay, was unanimously pronounced elected. Quite apart from any supernatural intervention, he was the only logical candidate, known to the Catholics as a firm believer in the Nicene Creed, unobnoxious to the Arians, as one who had kept aloof from all theological controversies. The only difficulty was that of forcing the bewildered consular to accept an office for which his previous training nowise fitted him. Strange to say, like so many other believers of that age, from a misguided reverence for the sanctity of baptism, he was still only a catechumen, and by a wise provision of the canons ineligible to the episcopate. That he was sincere in his repugnance to accepting the responsibilities of the sacred office, those only have doubted who have judged a great man by the standard of their own pettiness. Were Ambrose the worldly-minded, ambitious, and scheming individual they choose to paint him, he would have surely sought advancement in the career that lay wide open before him as a man of acknowledged ability and noble blood. It is difficult to believe that he resorted to the questionable expedients mentioned by his

biographer as practised by him with a view to undermining his reputation with the populace. At any rate his efforts were unsuccessful. Valentinian, who was proud that his favourable opinion of Ambrose had been so fully ratified by the voice of clergy and people, confirmed the election and pronounced severe penalties against all who should abet him in his attempt to conceal himself. The Saint finally acquiesced, received baptism at the hands of a Catholic bishop, and eight day later, 7 December 374, the day on which East and West annually honour his memory, after the necessary preliminary degrees was consecrated bishop.

He was now in his thirty-fifth year, and was destined to edify the Church for the comparatively long space of twenty-three active years. From the very beginning he proved himself to be that which he has ever since remained in the estimation of the Christian world, the perfect model of a Christian bishop. There is some truth underlying the exaggerated eulogy of the chastened Theodosius, as reported by Theodoret (v, 18), "I know no bishop worthy of the name, except Ambrose". In him the magnanimity of the Roman patrician was tempered by the meekness and charity of the Christian saint. His first act in the episcopate, imitated by many a saintly successor, was to divest himself of his worldly goods. His personal property he gave to the poor; he made over his landed possessions to the Church, making provision for the support of his beloved sister. The self-devotion of his brother, Satyrus, relieved him from the care of the temporalities, and enabled him to attend exclusively to his spiritual duties. In order to supply the lack of an early theological training, he devoted himself assiduously to the study of Scripture and the Fathers, with a marked preference for Origen and St. Basil, traces of whose influence are repeatedly met with in his works. With a genius truly Roman, he, like Cicero, Virgil, and other classical authors, contented himself with thoroughly digesting and casting into a Latin mould the best fruits of Greek thought. His studies were of an eminently practical nature; he learned that he might teach. In the exordium of his treatise, "De Officiis", he complains that, owing to the suddenness of his transfer from the tribunal to the pulpit, he was compelled to learn and teach simultaneously. His piety, sound judgment, and genuine Catholic instinct preserved him from error, and his fame as an eloquent expounder of Catholic doctrine soon reached the ends of the earth. His power as an orator is attested not only by the repeated eulogies, but yet more by the conversion of the skilled rhetorician Augustine. His style is that of a man who is concerned with thoughts rather than words. We cannot imagine him wasting time in turning an elegant phrase. "He was one of those", says St. Augustine, "who speak the truth, and speak it well, judiciously, pointedly, and with beauty and power of expression" (De doct. christ., iv, 21).

His Daily Life

Through the door of his chamber, wide open the livelong day, and crossed unannounced by all, of whatever estate, who had any sort of business with him, we catch a clear glimpse of his daily life. In the promiscuous throng of his visitors, the high official who seeks his advice upon some weighty affair of state is elbowed by some anxious questioner who wishes to have his doubts removed, or some repentant sinner who comes to make a secret confession of his offenses, certain that the Saint "would reveal his sins to none but God alone" (Paulinus, Vita, xxxix). He ate but sparingly, dining only on Saturdays and Sundays and festivals of the more celebrated martyrs. His long nocturnal vigils were spent in prayer, in attending to his vast correspondence, and in penning down the thoughts that had occurred to him during the day in his oft-interrupted readings. His indefatigable industry and methodical habits explain how so busy a man found time to compose so many valuable books. Every day, he tells us, he offered up the Holy Sacrifice for his people (*pro quibus ego quotidie instauro sacrificium*). Every Sunday his eloquent discourses drew immense crowds to the Basilica. One favorite topic of his was the excellence of virginity, and so successful was he in persuading maidens to adopt the religious profession that many a mother refused to permit her daughters to listen to his words. The saint was forced to refute the charge that he was depopulating the empire, by quaintly appealing to the young men as to whether any of them experienced any difficulty in finding wives. He contends, and the experience of ages sustains his contention (*De Virg.*, vii) that the population increases in direct proportion to the esteem in which virginity is held. His sermons, as was to be expected, were intensely practical, replete with pithy rules of conduct which have remained as household words among Christians. In his method of biblical interpretation all the personages of Holy Writ, from Adam down, stand out before the people as living beings, bearing each his distinct message from God for the instruction of the present generation. He did not write his sermons, but spoke them from the abundance of his heart; and from notes taken during their delivery he compiled almost all the treatises of his that are extant.

Ambrose and the Arians

It was but natural that a prelate so high-minded, so affable, so kind to the poor, so completely devoting his great gifts to the service of Christ and of humanity, should soon with the enthusiastic love of his people. Rarely, if ever, has a Christian bishop been so universally popular, in the best sense of that much abused term, as Ambrose of Milan. This popularity, conjoined with his intrepidity, was the secret of his success in routing

enthroned iniquity. The heretical Empress Justina and her barbarian advisers would many a time fain have silenced him by exile or assassination, but, like Herod in the case of the Baptist, they "feared the multitude". His heroic struggles against the aggressions of the secular power have immortalized him as the model and forerunner of future Hildebrands, Becketts, and other champions of religious liberty. The elder Valentinian died suddenly in 375, the year following the consecration of Ambrose, leaving his Arian brother Valens to scourge the East, and his oldest son, Gratian, to rule the provinces formerly presided over by Ambrosius, with no provision for the government of Italy. The army seized the reins and proclaimed emperor the son of Valentinian by his second wife, Justina, a boy four years old. Gratian good-naturally acquiesced, and assigned to his half-brother the sovereignty of Italy, Illyricum, and Africa. Justina had prudently concealed her Arian view during the lifetime of her orthodox husband, but now, abetted by a powerful and mainly Gothic faction at court, proclaimed her determination to rear her child in that heresy, and once more attempt to Arianize the West. This of necessity brought her into direct collision with the Bishop of Milan, who had quenched the last embers of Arianism in his diocese. That heresy had never been popular among the common people; it owed its artificial vitality to the intrigues of courtiers and sovereigns. As a preliminary to the impending contest, Ambrose, at the request of Gratian, who was about to lead an army to the relief of Valens, and wished to have at hand an antidote against Oriental sophistry, wrote his noble work, "De Fide ad Gratianum Augustum", afterwards expanded, and extant in five books. The first passage at arms between Ambrose and the Empress was on the occasion of an episcopal election at Sirmium, the capital of Illyricum, and at the time the residence of Justina. Notwithstanding her efforts, Ambrose was successful in securing the election of a Catholic bishop. He followed up this victory by procuring, at the Council of Aquilein, (381), over which he presided, the deposition of the only remaining Arianizing prelates of the West, Palladius and Secundianus, both Illyrians. The battle royal between Ambrose and the Empress, in the years 385,386, has been graphically described by Cardinal Newman in his "Historical Sketches". The question at issue was the surrender of one of the basilicas to the Arians for public worship. Throughout the long struggle Ambrose displayed in an eminent degree all the qualities of a great leader. His intrepidity in the moments of personal danger was equalled only by his admirable moderation; for, at certain critical stages of the drama one word from him would have hurled the Empress and her son from their throne. That word was never spoken. An enduring result of this great struggle with despotism was the rapid development during its course of the ecclesiastical chant, of which Ambrose laid the foundation. Unable to overcome the fortitude of the Bishop and the spirit of the people, the court finally desisted from its efforts. Ere long it was forced to call upon Ambrose to exert himself to save the imperilled throne.

Already he had been sent on an embassy to the court of the usurper, Maximus, who in the year 383 had defeated and slain Gratian, and now ruled in his place. Largely through his efforts an understanding had been reached between Maximus and Theodosius, whom Gratian had appointed to rule the East. It provided that Maximus should content himself with his present possessions and respect the territory of Valentinian II. Three years later Maximus determined to cross the Alps. The tyrant received Ambrose unfavourably and, on the plea, very honourable to the Saint, that he refused to hold communion with the bishops who had compassed the death of Priscillian (the first instance of capital punishment inflicted for heresy by a Christian prince) dismissed him summarily from his court. Shortly after, Maximus invaded Italy. Valentinian and his mother fled to Theodosius, who took up their cause, defeated the usurper, and put him to death. At this time Justina died, and Valentinian, by the advice of Theodosius, abjured Arianism and placed himself under the guidance of Ambrose, to whom he became sincerely attached. It was during the prolonged stay of Theodosius in the West that one of most remarkable episodes in the history of the Church took place; the public penance inflicted by the Bishop and submitted to by the Emperor. The long-received story, set afoot by the distant Theodoret, which extols the Saint's firmness at the expense of his equally pronounced virtues of prudence and meekness - that Ambrose stopped the Emperor at the porch of the church and publicly upbraided and humiliated him - is shown by modern criticism to have been greatly exaggerated. The emergency called into action every episcopal virtue. When the news reached Milan that the seditious Thessalonians had killed the Emperor's officials, Ambrose and the council of bishops, over which he happened to be presiding at the time, made an apparently successful appeal to the clemency of Theodosius. Great was their horror, when, shortly after Theodosius, yielding to the suggestions of Rufinose and other courtiers, ordered an indiscriminate massacre of the citizens, in which seven thousand perished. In order to avoid meeting the blood-stained monarch or offering up the Holy Sacrifice in his presence, and, moreover, to give him time to ponder the enormity of a deed so foreign to his character, the Saint, pleading ill-health, and sensible that he exposed himself to the charge of cowardice, retired to the country, whence he sent a noble letter "written with my own hand, that thou alone mayst read it", exhorting the Emperor to repair his crime by an exemplary penance. With "religious humility", says St. Augustine (DeCiv.Dei.,V,xxvi), Theodosius submitted; "and, being laid hold of by the discipline of the Church, did penance in such a way that the sight of his imperial loftiness prostrated made the people who were interceding for him weep more than the consciousness of offence had made them fear it when enraged". "Stripping himself of every emblem of royalty", says Ambrose in his funeral oration (c. 34), "he publicly in church bewailed his sin. That public penance, which private individuals shrink from, an Emperor was not ashamed to perform; nor was

there afterwards a day on which he did not grieve for his mistake." This plain narrative, without theatrical setting, is much more honourable both to the Bishop and his sovereign.

Last Days of Ambrose

The murder of his youthful ward, Valentinian II, which happened in Gaul, May, 393, just as Ambrose was crossing the Alps to baptize him plunged the Saint into deep affliction. His eulogy delivered at Milan is singularly tender; he courageously described him as a martyr baptized in his own blood. The usurper Eugenius was, in fact, a heathen at heart, and openly proclaimed his resolution to restore paganism. He reopened the heathen temples, and ordered the famous altar of Victory, concerning which Ambrose and the prefect Symmachus had maintained a long and determined literary contest, to be again set up in the Roman senate chamber. This triumph of paganism was of short duration. Theodosius in the spring of 391 again lead his legions into the West, and in a brief campaign defeated and slew the tyrant. Roman heathenism perished with him. The Emperor recognized the merits of the great Bishop of Milan by announcing his victory on the evening of the battle and asking him to celebrate a solemn sacrifice of thanksgiving. Theodosius did not long survive his triumph; he died at Milan a few months later (January 395) with Ambrose at his bedside and the name of Ambrose on his lips. "Even while death was dissolving his body", says the Saint, "he was more concerned about the welfare of the churches than about his personal danger". "I loved him, and am confident that the Lord will hearken to the prayer I send up for his pious soul" (In obitu Theodosii, c. 35). Only two years elapsed before a kindly death reunited these two magnanimous souls. No human frame could long endure the incessant activity of an Ambrose. One instance, recorded by his secretary, of his extraordinary capacity for work is significant. He died on Good Friday. The following day five bishops found difficulty in baptizing the crowd to which he had been accustomed to administer the sacrament unaided. When the news spread that he was seriously ill, Count Stilicho, "fearing that his death would involve the destruction of Italy", despatched an embassy, composed of the chief citizens, to implore him to pray God to prolong his days. The response of the Saint made a deep impression on St. Augustine: "I have not so lived amongst you, that I need be ashamed to live; nor do I fear to die, for we have a good Lord". For several hours before his death he lay with extended arms in imitation of his expiring Master, who also appeared to him in person. The Body of Christ was given him by the Bishop of Vercelli, and, "after swallowing It, he peacefully breathed his last". It was the fourth of April, 397. He was interred as he had desired, in his beloved basilica, by the side of the holy martyrs, Gervasius and Protasius, the discovery of whose relics, during his great struggle with Justina, had so consoled him and his faithful adherents. In the year 835 one of his successors, Angilbert II, placed the relics of the three saints in as porphyry sarcophagus under the altar, where they were found in 1864. The works of St. Ambrose were issued first from the press of Froben at Basle, 1527, under the supervision of Erasmus. A more elaborate edition was printed in Rome in the year 1580 and following. Cardinal Montalto was the chief editor until elevation to the papacy as Sixtus V. It is in five volumes and still retains a value owing to the prefixed "Life" of the Saint, composed by Baronius. Then came the excellent Maurist edition published in two volumes at Paris, in 1686 and 1690; reprinted by Migne in four volumes. The career of St. Ambrose occupies a prominent place in all histories, ecclesiastical and secular, of the fourth century. Tillemont's narrative, in the tenth volume of his "Memoirs", is particularly valuable. The question of the genuineness of the so-called eighteen Ambrosian Hymns is of secondary importance. The great merit of the Saint in the field of hymnology is that of laying the foundations and showing posterity what ample scope there existed for future development.

Writings of Saint Ambrose

The special character and value of the writings of St. Ambrose are at once tangible in the title of Doctor of the Church, which from time immemorial he has shared in the West with St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and St. Gregory. He is an official witness to the teaching of the Catholic Church in his own time and in the preceding centuries. As such his writings have been constantly invoked by popes, councils and theologians; even in his own day it was felt that few could voice so clearly the true sense of the Scriptures and the teaching of the Church (St. Augustine, *De doctrinā christi*, IV, 46, 48, 50). Ambrose is pre-eminently the ecclesiastical teacher, setting forth in a sound and edifying way, and with conscientious regularity, the deposit of faith as made known to him. He is not the philosophic scholar meditating in silence and retirement on the truths of the Christian Faith, but the strenuous administrator, bishop, and statesman, whose writings are only the mature expression of his official life and labours. Most of his writings are really homilies, spoken commentaries on the Old and New Testaments, taken down by his hearers, and afterwards reduced to their present form, though very few of these discourses have reached us exactly as they fell from the lips of the great bishop. In Ambrose the native Roman genius shines out with surpassing distinctness; he is clear, sober, practical, and aims always at persuading his hearers to act at once on the principles and arguments he has laid down, which affect nearly every phase of their religious or moral life. "He is a genuine Roman in whom the ethico-practical note is always dominant. He had neither time nor liking for philosophico-dogmatic speculations. In all his writings he follows some practical

purpose. Hence he is often content to reproduce what has been already treated, to turn over for another harvest a field already worked. He often draws abundantly from the ideas of some earlier writer, Christian or pagan, but adapts these thoughts with tact and intelligence to the larger public of his time and his people. In formal perfection his writings leave something to be desired; a fact that need not surprise us when we recall the demands on the time of such a busy man. His diction abounds in unconscious reminiscences of classical writers, Greek and Roman. He is especially conversant with the writings of Virgil. His style is in every way peculiar and personal. It is never wanting in a certain dignified reserve; when it appears more carefully studied than is usual with him, its characteristics are energetic brevity and bold originality. Those of his writings that are homiletic in origin and form betray naturally the great oratorical gifts of Ambrose; in them he rises occasionally to a noble height of poetical inspiration. His hymns are a sufficient evidence of the sure mastery that he possessed over the Latin language." (Bardenhewer, *Les pères de l'Église*, Paris, 1898, 736-737; cf. Pruner, *Die Theologie des heil. Ambrosius*, Eichstadt, 1864.) For convenience sake his extant writings may be divided into four classes: exegetical, dogmatic, ascetico-moral, and occasional. The exegetical writings, or scripture-commentaries deal with the story of Creation, the Old Testament figures of Cain and Abel, Noe, Abraham and the patriarchs, Elias, Tobias, David and the Psalms, and other subjects. Of his discourses on the New Testament only the lengthy commentary on St. Luke has reached us (*Expositio in Lucam*). He is not the author of the admirable commentary on the thirteen Epistles of St. Paul known as "Ambrosiaster". Altogether these Scripture commentaries make up more than one half of the writings of Ambrose. He delights in the allegorico-mystical interpretation of Scripture, i.e. while admitting the natural or literal sense he seeks everywhere a deeper mystic meaning that he converts into practical instruction for Christian life. In this, says St. Jerome (Ep.xli) "he was disciple of Origen, but after the modifications in that master's manner due to St. Hippolytus of Rome and St. Basil the Great". He was also influenced in this direction by the Jewish writer Philo to such an extent that the much corrupted text of the latter can often be successfully corrected from the echoes and reminiscences met with in the works of Ambrose. It is to be noted, however, that in his use of non-Christian writers the great Doctor never abandons a strictly Christian attitude (cf. Kellner, *Der heilige Ambrosius als Erklärer des Alten Testaments*, Ratisbon, 1893).

The most influential of his ascetico-moral writings is the work on the duties of Christian ecclesiastics (*De officiis ministrorum*). It is a manual of Christian morality, and in its order and disposition follows closely the homonymous work of Cicero. "Nevertheless", says Dr. Bardenhewer, "the antitheses between the philosophical morality of the pagan and the morality of the Christian ecclesiastic is acute and striking. In his exhortations, particularly, Ambrose betrays an irresistible spiritual power" (cf. R. Thamin, *Saint Ambroise et la morale chrétienne au quatrième siècle*, Paris, 1895). He wrote several works on virginity, or rather published a number of his discourses on that virtue, the most important of which is the treatise "On Virgins" addressed to his sister Marcellina, herself a virgin consecrated to the divine service. St. Jerome says (Ep. xxii) that he was the most eloquent and exhaustive of all the exponents of virginity, and his judgment expresses yet the opinion of the church. The genuineness of the touching little work "On the Fall of a Consecrated Virgin" (*De lapsu virginis consecratæ*) has been called in question, but without sufficient reason. Dom Germain Morin maintains that it is a real homily of Ambrose, but like so many more of his so-called "books", owes its actual form to some one of his auditors. His dogmatic writings deal mostly with the divinity of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost, also with the Christian sacraments. At the request of the young Emperor Gratian (375-383) he composed a defence of the true divinity of Jesus Christ against the Arians, and another on the true divinity of the Holy Ghost against the Macedonians; also a work on the Incarnation of Our Lord. His work "On Penance" was written in refutation of the rigoristic tenets of the Novatians and abounds in useful evidences of the power of the Church to forgive sins, the necessity of confession and the meritorious character of good works. A special work on Baptism (*De sacramento regenerationis*), often quoted by St. Augustine, has perished. We possess yet, however, his excellent treatise (*De Mysteriis*) on Baptism, Confirmation, and the Blessed Eucharist (P.L. XVI, 417-462), addressed to the newly baptized. Its genuineness has been called in doubt by opponents of Catholic teaching concerning the Eucharist, but without any good reason. It is highly probable that the work on the sacraments (*De Sacramentis*, *ibid.*) is identical with the preceding work; only, says Bardenhewer, "indiscreetly published by some hearer of Ambrose". Its evidences to the sacrificial character of the Mass, and to the antiquity of the Roman Canon of the Mass are too well known to need more than a mention; some of them may easily be seen in any edition of the Roman Breviary (cf. Probst, *Die Liturgie des vierten Jahrhunderts und deren Reform*, Münster, 1893, 232-239). The correspondence of Ambrose includes but a few confidential or personal letters; most of his letters are official notes, memorials on public affairs, reports of councils held, and the like. Their historical value is, however, of the first order, and they exhibit him as a Roman administrator and statesman second to none in Church or State. If his personal letters are unimportant, his remaining discourses are of a very high order. His work on the death (378) of his brother Satyrus (*De excessu fratris sui Satyri*) contains his funeral sermon on his brother, one of the earliest of Christian panegyrics and a model of the consolatory discourses that were henceforth to take the place of the cold and inept declamations of the Stoics. His funeral discourses on Valentinian II (392), and Theodosius the Great (395) are considered models of

retorical composition; (cf. Villemain, *De l'Œloquence chrŒtienne*, Paris, ed. 1891); they are also historical documents of much importance. Such, also, are his discourse against the Arian intruder, Auxentius (*Contra Auxentium de basilicis tradendis*) and his two discourses on the finding of the bodies of the Milanese martyrs Gervasius and Protasius.

Not a few works have been falsely attributed to St. Ambrose; most of them are found in the Benedictine Edition of his writings (reprinted in Migne) and are discussed in the manuals of patrology (e.g. Bardenhewer). Some of his genuine works appear to have been lost, e.g. the already mentioned work on baptism. St. Augustine (Ep. 31, 8) is loud in his praise of a (now lost) work of Ambrose written against those who asserted an intellectual dependency of Jesus Christ on Plato. It is not improbable that he is really the author of the Latin translation and paraphrase of Josephus (*De Bello Judaico*), known in the Middle Ages as Hegesippus or Egesippus, a distortion of the Greek name of the original author (Iosepos). Mommsen denies (1890) his authorship of the famous Roman law text known as the "*Lex Dei, sive Mosaicarum et Romanarum Legum Collatio*", an attempt to exhibit the law of Moses as the historical source whence Roman criminal jurisprudence drew its principal dispositions.

Editions of his Writings

The literary history of the editions of his writings is a long one and may be seen in the best lives of Ambrose. Erasmus edited them in four tomes at Basle (1527). A valuable Roman edition was brought out in 1580, in five volumes, the result of many years' labour; it was begun by Sixtus V, while yet the monk Felice Peretti. Prefixed to it is the life of St. Ambrose composed by Baronius for his *Ecclesiastical Annals*. The excellent Benedictine edition appeared at Paris (1686-90) in two folio volumes; it was twice reprinted at Venice (1748-51, and 1781-82). The latest edition of the writings of St. Ambrose is that of P.A. Ballerini (Milan, 1878) in six folio volumes; it has not rendered superfluous the Benedictine edition of du Frische and Le Nourry. Some writings of Ambrose have appeared in the Vienna series known as the "*Corpus Scriptorum Classicorum Latinorum*" (Vienna, 1897-1907). There is an English version of selected works of St. Ambrose by H. de Romestin in the tenth volume of the second series of the "*Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*" (New York, 1896). A German version of selected writings in two volumes, executed by Fr. X. Schulte, is found in the "*Bibliothek der KirchenvŒter*" (Kempten, 1871-77).