copius describes her as acting with harshness, seizing on trivial pretexts persons who had offended her, stripping some of their property, throwing others into dungeons, where they were cruelly tortured or kept for years without the knowledge of their friends. The city was full of her spies, who reported to her everything said against herself or the administration. She surrounded herself with cere­monious pomp, and required all who approached to abase themselves in a manner new even to that half-Oriental court. She was an incessant and tyrannical match-maker, forcing men to accept wives and women to accept husbands at her caprice. She constituted herself the protectress of faithless wives against outraged husbands, yet professed great zeal for the moral reformation of the city, enforcing severely the laws against vice, and immuring in a “ house of repentance ” on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus five hundred courtesans whom she had swept out of the streets of the capital. How much of all this is true we have no means of determining, for it rests on the sole word of Procopius. But there are slight indications in other writers that she had a reputation for severity.

In the religious strife which distracted the empire Theodora took part with the Monophysites, and her coterie usually contained several leading prelates and monks of that party. As Justinian was a warm upholder of the decrees of Chalcedon, this difference of the royal pair excited much remark and indeed much suspicion. Many saw in it a design to penetrate the secrets of both ecelesiastical factions, and so to rule more securely. In other matters also the wife spoke and acted very differently from the husband ; but their differences do not seem to have disturbed either his affection or his confidence. The maxim in Constantinople was that the empress was a stronger and a safer friend than the emperor ; for, while he abandoned his favourites to her wrath, she stood by her protégés, and never failed to punish any one whose heedless tongue had assailed her character.

Theodora bore to Justinian no son, but one daughter,— at least it would seem that her grandson, who is twice men­tioned, was the offspring of a legitimate daughter, whose name, however, is not given. According to Procopius, she had before her marriage become the mother of a son, who when grown up returned from Arabia, revealed himself to her, and forthwith disappeared for ever ; but this is a story to be received with distrust. That her behaviour as a wife was irreproachable may be gathered from the fact that Procopius mentions only one scandal affecting it, the case of Areobindus. Even he does not seem to believe this case, for, while referring to it as a mere rumour, the only proof he gives is that, suspecting Areobindus of some offence, she had torture applied to this supposed paramour. Her health was delicate, and, though she took all possible care of it, frequently quitting the capital for the seclusion of her villas on the Asiatic shore, she died comparatively young. Theodora was small in stature and rather pale, but with a graceful figure, beautiful features, and a piercing glance. There remains in the apse of the famous church of St Vitale at Ravenna a contemporaneous mosaic portrait of her, to which the artist, notwithstanding the stiffness of the material, has succeeded in giving some character.

The above account is in substance that which historians of the last two centuries and a half have accepted and repeated regarding this famous empress. But it must be admitted to be open to serious doubts. Everything relating to the early career of Theodora, the faults of her girlhood, the charges of cruelty and insolence in her government of the empire, rest on the sole authority of the *Anecdota* of Proco­pius,—a book whose credit is shaken by its bitterness and extra­vagance. If we reject it, little is left against her, except of course that action in ecclesiastical affairs which excited the wrath of Baro­nius, who had denounced her before the *Anecdota* were published.

In favour of the picture which Procopius gives of the empress it may be argued (1) that she certainly did interfere constantly and arbitrarily in the administration of public affairs, and showed her­self therein the kind of person who would be cruel and unscrupul­ous in her choice of means, and (2) that we gather from other writers an impression that she was harsh and tyrannical, as, for instance, from the references to her in the lives of the popes in the *Liber Pontificalis* (which used to pass under the name of Anastasius, the papal librarian). Her threat to the person whom she com­manded to bring Vigilius to her was “nisi hoc feceris, per Viventem in sæcula excoriari te faciam.” Much of what we find in these lives is legendary, but they are some evidence of Theodora’s reputa­tion. Again (3) the statute *(Cod.,* v. 4, 23) which repeals the older law so far as relates to *scenicæ mulieres* is now generally attributed to Justin, and agrees with the statement of Procopius that an alteration of the law was made to legalize her marriage. There is therefore reason for holding that she was an actress, and, consider­ing what the Byzantine stage was (as appears even by the statute in question), her life cannot have been irreproachable.

Against the evidence of Procopius, with such confirmations as have been indicated, there is to be set the silence of other writers, contemporaries like Agathias and Evagrius, as well as such later historians as Theophanes, none of whom repeat the charges as to Theodora’s life before her marriage. To this consideration no great weight need be attached. It is difficult to establish any view of the controversy without a long and minute examination of the authorities, and in particular of the *Anecdota.* But the most probable conclusions seem to be—(1) that the odious details which Procopius gives, and which Gibbon did not blush to copy, deserve no more weight than would be given nowadays to the malignant scandal of disappointed courtiers under a despotic government, where scandal is all the blacker because it is propagated in secret (see Procopius) ; (2) that apparently she was an actress and a courtesan, and not improbably conspicuous in both those charac­ters ; and (3) that it is impossible to determine how far the specific charges of cruelty and oppression brought against her by Procopius deserve credence. We are not bound to accept them, for they are uncorroborated ; yet the accounts of Justinian’s government given in the *Anecdota* agree in too many respects with what we know *aliunde* to enable us to reject them altogether ; and it must be admitted that there is a certain internal consistency in the whole picture which the *Anecdota* present of the empress. About the beauty, the intellectual gifts, and the imperious will of Theodora there can be no doubt, for as to these all our authorities agree. She was evidently an extraordinary person, born to shine in any station of life.

Her fortunes have employed many pens. Among the latest serious works dealing with them may be mentioned Μ. Antonin Débidour’s *L'Impératrice Theodora: Étude Critique,* Paris, 1885, which endeavours to vindicate her from the aspersions of Procopius ; and among more imaginative writings are Sir Henry Pottinger’s interesting romance *Blue and Green* (London, Hurst and Blackett, 1879), Μ. Rhangabé’s tragedy Θεoδωpα (Leipsic, 1884), and Μ. Sardou’s play *Theodora,* produced in Paris in 1884. See also Dr F. Dahn’s *Prokopios von Cäsarea,* 1865. (J. BR. )

THEODORE of Mopsuestia, the most eminent repre­sentative of the so-called school of Antioch, the beginnings of which date from about the middle of the 3d century (see Lucian and Paul of Samosata). He was born at Antioch about the middle of the 4th century, and was a friend of Chrysostom ; in rhetoric the celebrated Libanius was his teacher. Soon, however, he attached himself to the school of the great exegete and ascetic, Diodorus, a presbyter in Antioch, and, with only a transitory period of vacillation, he ever afterwards remained faithful to the theology and ascetic discipline of this master. Under Diodorus he became a skilful exegete, and ultimately the pupil outstripped the master in Biblical learning. About 383 Theodore became a presbyter in Antioch, and began to write against Eunomius the Arian and against the christology of Apollinaris. Soon after 392 he became bishop of Mopsuestia in Cilicia (the modern Missis near Adana). As such he was held in great respect, and took part in several synods, with a reputation for orthodoxy that was never questioned. It was greatly to his advantage that in the Eastern Church the period between the years 390 and 428 was one of comparative repose. He was on friendly terms even with Cyril of Alexandria. He died in 428 or 429, towards the beginning of the Nestorian controversy.

Theodore was a very prolific writer, but, before all, an exegete. He wrote commentaries on almost every book of the Old and New Testaments, of which, however, only a small proportion is now