

## A Greek Word in the Liber Pontificalis.

In the Life of Pope Constantine in the Pontifical Book the following passage occurs, describing a demonstration at Rome in favour of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (vol. 1, p. 391 ed. Duchesne):

huiusque rei causa zelo fidei accensus omnis cœtus Romane urbis imaginem quod [some Mss. quam] Greci Botarea vocant sex continentem [vv. continentes, continens] sanctos et universales synodos in ecclesia beati Petri erecta est.

The difficulty is the vox nihili: Botarea [vv. Botariam, Botaream, Votarea, Botarpa), as to which Duchesne merely remarks (p. 394) 'je ne sais d'où vient ce mot étrange'.

At first sight, one would think that a series of pictures representing the six synods was put up in St. Peter's church.<sup>1)</sup> But on reflexion one sees that this is in itself unlikely; and then one observes the word *continentem* which gives the clue. The thing which was lifted up or erected was something containing the Acts of the Six Councils, — namely a coffer or chest. It is now easy to discern the correction of the corrupt botarea. We must read:

imaginem quod Greci cibotarea vocant.

Cibotarea = *κιβωτάρια*. It is wellknown that *κιβωτός* is the word used in the LXX for the ark of the covenant (*τῆς διαθήκης*) and hence it acquired a certain sacredness, and was specially used of boxes and cases in which holy relics were preserved.<sup>2)</sup> Thus in the Life of Theodore of Edessa (*Žitie* usw., ed. by Pomyalovski, 1892) c. 86 (p. 92) we read: *ἐνεγκῶν δὲ κιβωτὸν ὁ βασιλεὺς κεκαλυμμένην πάντοθεν χρυσίῳ καὶ ἐν ἐπισήμῳ τόπῳ ταύτην ἀναθεῖς κατέθετο ἐν αὐτῇ τὸν*

1) Hodgkin (Italy and her Invaders, VI 385) supposes that the *imago* with the pictures was 'something like a medieval reredos'. The right interpretation was suggested to me by my wife.

2) In Malalas p. 233 (ed. Bonn) a mystic *λίθινον κιβώτιον* is described as attached to the stèle of Seleucus at Antioch, as a charm against floods.

ξωοποιὸν σταυρὸν κτλ.<sup>1)</sup> But the most instructive passage is in Theophanes, Chronogr., A. M. 6102 (de Boor p. 298), where Heraclius sails from Africa in castellated vessels, ἔχοντα ἐν τοῖς καταρτίοις κιβώτια καὶ εἰκόνας τῆς θεομήτορος. Images of the Theotokos and coffers containing relics or sacred emblems were hung on the masts. Anastasius (*Hist. Trip.*, p. 183 ed. de Boor) renders κιβώτια by *arculae*. The important point is that κιβώτια seems to have been used, as a *vox propria*, without further definition, in this special sense. There is no difficulty in the use of *imago* to describe any consecrated work of art; and these coffers were richly decorated.

κιβώτιον is the usual diminutive form; but κιβωτάριον is correctly formed, and was in use. I have found it in *Geoponica*, 18, 21, and in the *Automata* of the Mathematician Heron, *Vett. Math.* (1693) p. 272.

J. B. Bury.

1) The use of boxes for relics (*arculae*) needs no illustration, but I may refer to the account of his visit to Constantinople by Anthony of Novgorod (*Soc. Or. Lat.*, sér. géogr., V). — The use of a κιβωτός or κιβώτιον to hold documents also requires no illustration, but I may refer to Lucian, *Tim.* 3 ἐν κιβωτίῳ φρουρῶν τὴν Ἰλιάδα.