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which Charlemagne had begun. Now the Holy Roman empire never again included France but it did include, it included theoretically all of Europe, so France was always an entity by itself outside. But the emperor, if they had simply gotten an emperor for Germany and made a union with Germany, that would have been one thing, but there was the feeling, the idea, that all Europe was one empire and it should have one leader, one emperor, and who could properly crown the head of the secular part of Europe but the head of the religious part? And so for the sake of consolidating his own powers, against other rulers and increasing his own position as emperor, the emperor claimed to seek to have a power in the Bishop of Rome which would be a support to their own power, and the new emperors of Germany who were really simply German emperors but called themselves emperors of the Holy Roman empire, began the practice, which continued through many centuries, of going to Rome to be crowned as emperors

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go down there and expect the Bishop of Rome to, as he had crowned Charlemagne, as he was head of the spiritual power, he would crown them, but the trouble was, when they got down there they found that the bishops of Rome were a pretty disreputable lot, they were men of very low character and little personal power, but that didn't prevent them from using big language and talking in Rome about how all of Christendom must be subject to them, and quoting the words of Nicolas I when actually they had control over maybe a quarter or a third of Italy and no more power beyond that at all, and they, themselves, about half of them at this time were killed--murdered or poisoned. They had different Roman factions constantly fighting back and forth for a period there of a century and a half, but during the last half century of the century and a half the emperors were trying to change the situation at Rome so that there would be a man there of respectable character who could hold up a claim to be the spiritual leader of Europe and who could support the claim of the emperor to be the secular leader. Well,