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ART. I.—THE ROMAN QUESTION.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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WE present to our readers in the present number of the REVIEW, a somewhat full statement of the issue between the assumptions of the Papacy in the nineteenth century and the Old Catholics, together with an extended article on the subject, by Dr. John W. Nevin. It is scarcely necessary to state that in doing so our aim is to afford an opportunity to the readers of the REVIEW to become more fully acquainted with the question at issue, and to hold up its significance and importance before the American theological public, without committing ourself to any particular theory as to the result of the contest. How the result will finally shape itself must be left for history itself to determine.

The contest is not a new one in the Roman Catholic Church. It is only bringing forward an unsolved problem which has been struggling towards solution in that Church for ages. The question of the relation between the Pope and the Council occupied the attention of the Reforming Councils of Constance and Basel, even before the Reformation. The conclusion to which they came was different from that of the late Vatican

and the conduct of the Council, is best known to your episcopal grace. That the bishops were not told openly from the beginning: 'The thing aimed at is the extirpation of the theory set up by Bossuet;' that they were not told: 'The object is to elevate the primacy as regards its power both to govern and teach,' is a grave objection.' A still graver one is the want of unanimity, regarding, as it does, a long tolerated scholastic question. When at Chalcedon a majority carried its cause over a minority, the matter at stake was the rejection of a doctrine which had never been tolerated in the Church; here, however, the matter at stake is the rejection of a doctrine \* which for a long time has been taught in many schools, and according to our conviction has in its favor the vote of the ancient Church, and of the eighth and sixteenth (of Constance) councils."

Who, looking at the matter theoretically, will deny that the genuineness and validity of the last Vatican resolution may not be controverted?

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#### ART. V.—THE OLD CATHOLIC MOVEMENT.†

BY PRESIDENT J. WILLIAMSON NEVIN, D.D.

No one can foresee as yet, with any certainty, what is to be the course and end of the new struggle for reformation, which has been called forth in the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church by the late Vatican decree of Papal Infallibility. But of the immense significance of the movement there can be no question. Even if it should prove a present failure, the idea embodied in it cannot be destroyed, and this is of such a nature that no such outward want of success can make it void or vain.

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\* Viz: that of Bossuet.

† 1. Verhandlungen des zweiten Altkatholiken Congresses zu Köln. Officielle Ausgabe Köln und Leipzig, 1872.

2. Deutscher Merkur, Organ für die katholische Reformbewegung in Auftrage der Comites zu Köln und München, herausgegeben von Franz Hirschwälder, Welt-priester.

If not in one way, still most surely then in some other way, it will accomplish God's holy pleasure, and "prosper in the thing whereunto it is sent;" and this end will be found entering profoundly into the most solemn religious and political issues of the age. In this view the movement, without regard to any outward observation to which it has yet come, is of true world-historical importance. Looking at it in all its relations and bearings, retrospective and prospective, it may be doubted if any demonstration in the past history of the Christian world deserves to be considered of greater account. It has its field of action and display thus far mainly in Germany; but it is not for this reason only of German concern. All that concerns German thought and German life, has been since the age of the Reformation, but is now more than ever of concern for the universal life of the world. Not to know this is of itself to be deficient in the proper culture of the age in which we live. The Old Catholic movement thus is all the more worthy of attention, just because it is a German movement thus far, stirring the German nationality to its inmost depths. In Italy, in France, in England, or even in our own United States, it would not mean half so much. As it is, the movement is for the world at large, and has in it a sense which pertains to the ages. It challenges accordingly the most serious regard of the thoughtful among all civilized nations. In this view it is that so much space is given to the subject in the present number of the MERCERSBURG REVIEW; and if what we now say be true, no other apology can be needed for bestowing upon it so large an amount of notice and attention.

The better part of the Roman Catholic world, it is well known, was filled with uneasy apprehension and fear, before the coming together of the Vatican Council in Rome, in the month of December, 1869. The reasons for calling the Council were not made public. They were not found in the general consciousness and will of the Roman Catholic Church. They lay as a portentous mystery, more or less, in the breast of Pius the Ninth, and in the dark policy of his Jesuit counsellors. But enough was known, through the famous *Syllabus*, through the

Pope's organ, called the "*Civiltà*," and in other ways, to make it felt widely in Europe, that the occasion was fraught with the most critical interest for the Catholic Church, and for the general peace of the world; that the coming council was to be used as an agency only to ratify and establish the foregone ultramontane conclusion of the Pope's infallibility; and that along with this then, war was to be declared at the same time, in the full spirit of medieval obscurantism, with the entire culture and civilization of the world's modern life in every other view. All through the summer of 1869, the fear of what might come to pass in this way, the feeling of an uncertain and not well defined danger in the near future, lay like the ominous sweltering sense of an approaching thunder-storm, on the soul of Catholic Christendom outside of the Italian Peninsula\*—largely in France, but most of all in Germany and Austria. The Pastoral Letter put forth by the German Bishops in joint assembly at Fulda, quoted in the preceding article of this REVIEW, *The*

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\* We find this foreboding of evil strongly expressed by the illustrious convert, J. H. Newman, in England. In one of his letters, he deplores the sad condition into which the Church was brought by an aggressive and presumptuous party; which, he says, had so managed things, that the prospect of a general Council, instead of awakening joy in the minds of good Catholics, had become for them a source only of anxiety and alarm, under the apprehension that the Council was not about to avert a great danger from the Church, but rather to bring upon it new difficulty of the most serious kind. "He is himself troubled, to think of having to defend and explain to others decisions, which, however he might be able to get along with them for himself, it would be still very hard to maintain in the face of historical facts. In other cases, the Church had defined articles of faith only when forced to it by stern and even painful necessity. Even among the best friends of the Church some are ready to give up theology altogether as a bad job, whilst others doubt the capacity of these Bishops called together from all corners of the earth to know what may be suitable for European society, or are displeased with the Holy See for lending its ear to the flatteries of a clique of Jesuits, Redemptorists and Converts. He professes himself to be all the while at a loss what to do; but in the meantime was invoking all the great teachers of the Ancient Church, St. Augustine and others, that through their intercessions the vast impending calamity might be averted. If it were actually God's will, however, that the Papal Infallibility should be decreed, then must it be His will also that the time of victory for His Church be indefinitely postponed, and so there would be nothing left for him (Dr. J. H. Newman) but to bow his head beneath this inscrutable providence." Thus characteristically the great Oratorian, the most thoroughly learned man in Catholic England. All in full antagonism of course to the much lesser light, his once devoted disciple, Archbishop Manning.

*German Bishops as Witnesses of the Truth*, is a striking testimony to the prevalence of such solicitous apprehension and concern. It was intended to operate as a breakwater to the threatening evil, and is an assurance (resented as offensive at Rome) that the Bishops of German tongue, at least, might be relied upon as pillars of the truth against all Vatican innovations. They pledge themselves solemnly to the German nation, to stand firmly in the coming Council to the three following principles. First: "That the Council should bring in no new doctrine, and no other teaching than what was already inscribed by their faith and conscience on the part of all German Catholics." Secondly: "That no general council may or can ever give the character of doctrine to what is not contained in sacred Scripture or Apostolic tradition." Thirdly: "That only the old and original Christian truth could in any case be proclaimed by the Council, if needful, in clearer light and form." That the Pope's infallibility, and the medieval monstrosity of the *Syllabus*, were articles of belief which did *not* for these good German Bishops, fall within the range and limit of these conservative principles, is abundantly plain from their other declarations given in the articles going before, as well as from the stand which they actually made against the Vatican assumptions in the Vatican Council itself. In a very sorrowful and humiliating way, they made some show of a good fight for the old faith of their own consciences, which with some of them at least was kept up to the end. What followed in the end the world no longer needs to be told. One after another they have committed upon themselves a sort of ecclesiastical *hari-kari*, and have thus done what they could to impart to the Vatican decree a character of *ex-post-facto* œcumenicity, which all the world knows never belonged to it in fact.

Any one looking into the constitution of the Council, and noting the history of its proceedings, may easily see how entirely it lacked the conditions and qualifications that are needed, in the judgment of the Catholic world itself as well as in the light of the simplest common sense, to furnish a valid representation of the mind and will of the Church in any such universal form. The

Vatican Council was neither universal, nor free, nor harmonious. There was no room in it for general discussion or common understanding. There was with it no taking whatever of the real sense and mind of the Church, whether of past ages or of the present time, with regard to the points on which it was called to pronounce judgment. Instead of this, it presents to us from first to last a barefaced endeavor to preclude inquiry, to prevent consultation, to gag free utterance both of speech and press; for all which we have substituted the miserable chicanery, trickery and wire-working of the Italian spirit in its worst form, laboring through long weeks and months of wearisome inanity to secure by diplomatic management, what there was no possibility of reaching in the way of simplicity and godly sincerity; namely, that *moral unanimity* so much talked of, without which Romanists themselves tell us no simple numerical majority can ever be sufficient to establish any article of faith. There was no such unanimity in the Vatican Council. All the unanimity that can be attributed to it (and even this as we have seen dates in part only from a later time) comes of the Pope's outward dictation enforced by his army of Italian priests. As indeed why should it be otherwise, if the Pope be infallible? Had not the council of bishops been convened to make this a dogma of the Church by œcumenical decree? And must not their decree for such purpose be itself infallible? But how could it be that, except as the Council might be in truth the mouthpiece simply of the Pope himself, the only fountain of all such infallibility among men? It is only in keeping with the new order of things, therefore, that the decree of his own autocracy and self-sufficiency was by Pio Nono submitted to the council, and engineered through the council, all in his own name, with a simple *sacro approbante concilio* tacked to it in the loosest sort of form, not for *his* credit apparently (that needed no such consenting vote), but for the credit wholly of the venerable body of episcopal subordinates and proxies, who had come together from the ends of the earth to do implicit homage to their magnificent chief in this most passively obedient way.

Mere superiority of numbers it was, from the beginning, that gave the Council the character of a machine in the hands of the Pope and his satellites, to grind into powder finally the moral superiority which lay wholly on the opposite side. Only look at the following: "The representation of the several nations and church sections in the Council may furnish instructive reflection. Frenchmen and Germans have to exercise themselves here in the virtues of humility and modesty, and to learn how little they signify in the Catholic Church, when it comes to doctrine and legislation. There is the diocese of Breslau with 1,700,000 Catholics; its Bishop has not been chosen here into a single commission; whereas the 700,000 inhabitants of the existing Church-State, are represented by 62 bishops, and in all commissions the Italians form from the half to two-thirds. For the kingdom of God, in which the least is greater than John the Baptist and all the prophets, lies confessedly between Montefiascone and Terracina, and whosoever has seen the light of the world in Sonnino or Belletri, in Ceccano, Anagni or Rieti, he has been even in the cradle predestinated *imperio regere populos*. True it has not yet succeeded with the 62 bishops of this elect land and people to establish even the most modest measure of morality in their towns and villages; whole regions and districts remain still in notorious fellowship with brigands; but about such things the council need not trouble itself. There are the arch-dioceses of Cologne with 1,400,000 Catholics, of Cambray with 1,300,000, of Paris with two million; but of the 68 Neapolitan and Sicilian bishops in the Council four alone are sufficient to nullify these prelates together with the five million Germans and French standing behind them. So the twelve million Catholics of Germany proper are represented in this Council by fourteen voices. To express the relation one might say: In church matters twenty Germans are not worth quite so much as one Italian. And should any German take it into his head, that his nation, with its numerous theological seminaries and its learned theologians, ought rightly to have some weight with the Council, he need only come here to be effectually cured of that fancy. In all Italy, with the exception of Rome, there is not a

single real theological faculty. Spain also gets along without higher theological schools, and without theology, but here in this council, nevertheless, some hundreds of Italians and Spaniards are lords, and born teachers, and dictators of faith for all the nations that belong to the Church!" *Quirinus*, Letter IX.

For a brief enumeration of some of the damaging and disabling conditions under which the council was held, the reader is referred to what is said with regard to the subject on pages 135 and 136 of the last number of the *MERCERSBURG REVIEW*, in the strong article *Conscience and the Vatican*, translated from Professor Reinkens. To this we add here another fuller and still more telling picture, which was brought out during the Council itself in a French paper, the *Moniteur Universel*, by a vigorous pen in Rome, attributed to one of the French Bishops, and which created at the time, we are told, quite a sensation in French circles. It is quoted here from the *Römische Briefe vom Concil* by *Quirinus*, Letter XXIV.

"The Council of Trent," says this French writer, "determined for itself its own order of business; for the present Council all has been different; all was prescribed beforehand, and imposed upon the fathers, by the Pope; even the secretaries and scrutators were named in advance. No initiative was allowed to the bishops; the commission of overtures was formed from the most zealous infallibilists and from members of the curia; the final decision, however, being reserved for the Pope. Those presenting overtures were not suffered to explain or defend them, so that the freedom of the bishops to make propositions was rendered altogether illusory. By the formation of the four commissions chosen from Roman lists all decisive labors are thrown into the hands of the few infallibilists whom the curia has selected for this purpose; while 700 bishops are excluded from all part in such business; among them all the Germans who signed the address from Fulda to the Pope, and the most distinguished French prelates. In general, all the bishops that were not known as decided infallibilists, have been systematically excluded from the commissions. It was quite



otherwise at Trent, where all the fathers, divided into four congregations, could take real part in the proceedings. To this is added now the monstrous disproportion of national representation; the altogether enormous and all-absorbing preponderance of the Italians, still farther strengthened by the whole troop of apostolic vicars, which, without any legal form, can be turned out from the Propaganda at any time. So it is that the Italian bishops alone are more numerous, than all the French, German, Hungarian and North American taken together, although these represent an almost three times larger population. Through the weakness of the two French Cardinals who should have taken the lead, *Bonnechose* and *Mathieu*, the attempt to unite the French bishops in a national group failed. *Bonnechose* consulting *Antonelli* on the subject got for answer: Only in groups of fifteen, or at short twenty bishops, may the French meet together. The evil of this was soon apparent. The bishops have been forced by the will of the Pope to hold their sessions in a hall, where a third part of them at least could not understand a word that was spoken; so that for example, Cardinal di Pietro after a long time declared, he had not yet actually comprehended a single address; while another Cardinal affirmed, that of all the addresses not forty words had reached him. A truly thorough investigation, a living exchange of thought and counter thought, is here out of the question. No speaker may hope to produce an effect on such an audience. Thus it happened that the first *schema*, a document of 150 pages, was spoken upon for many weeks in a general way, without its coming to a special discussion of any of the single articles, and in spite of the numerous speakers also without the bringing of any one point to a clear conclusion. The only effect was, great loss of time, much bodily weariness, and deep discouragement. If the object had been to sicken the assembly of all addresses even to loathing, it could not have been contrived better. If only the fathers might have read the discourses which they could not hear, but, alas, neither must they be read; not even at their own cost may the bishops have their overtures and speeches printed. Many in this way, from the certainty

of not being heard, have lost the power of expressing their views altogether. Vast preparations were made in the two years before the opening of the Council, amounting to stuff for ten councils; but it is only brought out for the bishops in fragments, so that there is wanting with them all insight into the consideration and meaning of single determinations. Seven hundred bishops in this way have had set before them a previously fabricated council, which like a woven pattern they are now forced to unravel again. In this work, having no means allowed them for preliminary common understanding, the body has become in large part deaf-dumb; and has got itself fairly jammed into a narrow pass, from which it can never extricate itself without an entire change in its order of business. No man is able to say how it is to be with the discussion of the single articles of the several *schemata*, and yet the Council, in issuing decrees that are to bind the world under pain of an accompanying anathema, is bound surely to weigh every word in the most careful way."

So much from this French witness. It is a graphic sketch, showing clearly the spiritual impotency of the Vatican Council for the work it was called to do, so far as all the laws of ordinary human intelligence and conscience are concerned. What shall we say then? Must we believe that these ordinary conditions of right human judgment were not needed in this case, and that their absence only served to make room the more fully for the presence of the Divine Spirit with which the Bishop of Rome claims to have been endowed for the occasion? That seems to be virtually what we are required to believe by the modern ultramontane would be task-masters of our faith. The authority of the Vatican Council had in this view nothing to do with the capacity of the body for its work: the all-sufficiency of the Pope makes that all right.

And more yet; this all-sufficiency of the Pope has nothing to do with the personal capabilities of the Pope in any other view for the exercise of his high and mighty office.\* It is a

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\* There have been Popes in past time more hard to get along with, in this view, than Pius IX. Even in his case, however, it required a very stout faith, to join

magical appendix belonging to the office itself, which all men are bound to accept as the rule and measure of their faith without regard to any conditions whatever holding in the material object of their faith otherwise considered. All hinges on the form of the faith, as an act of blind submission to the authority of him who claims to be the mouth-piece of our Lord Jesus Christ in Rome. Were he a Caiaphas or a Balaam, he must still be trusted in implicitly as being for the time the infallible high-priest and prophet of God. We mean here no caricature. The Vatican decree if we understand it, comes just to this, and nothing less than this. A hard saying, intelligence and conscience may exclaim; who can hear it? But then intelligence and conscience are roughly reminded that the unbelieving Jews (John vi. 60), used the very same language toward Christ Himself; and that the first law of the Christian kingdom is the bringing into captivity of all thought and intelligence to the obedience of Christ.

The harder the cost of faith in this view, we are told, the greater the merit and the power of faith. That indeed is the

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the conception of infallibility firmly and calmly with what seem to be the incommensurable personal qualities of the man otherwise considered. Take him in his ordinary human character, and he is represented as having been always noted for a certain frivolity of spirit joined with a self-willed impatient temper. He never had any taste for theological studies. Gregory XVI. had no confidence in him, and predicted that if he ever became pope he would ruin the Church. Originally in the interest of the Liberals, he threw himself after his flight to Gaeta into the hands of the Jesuits, who now use him as clay is used by the potter. They relieve him of the trouble of thinking. They do his science for him by proxy. Pa saglia declared that even after he had signed the decree of the *Immaculate Conception* he knew not what it meant. It is known generally in Rome, that he reads no book, but only small pamphlets and some journals. With all this he is given to free talk, in a loose, imprudent way. "For my part," said a Roman ecclesiastic to Prof. Friedrich in Rome, "I need no other argument that the Pope is not infallible than this, that I have never in all my life met with a man who was less exact with the truth, than just Pius IX." His superstition knows no bounds. He fancies himself the subject of special inspirations, which have for him the force of fixed ideas, and go farther with him at times, even in serious affairs, than any other reason. These things are drawn from Friedrich's *Tagebuch*. Now the problem is, how to think the endowment of personal infallibility into such a personality. Pius himself finds no difficulty in the matter. "When I was the Abbot Mastai," he tells us, "I believed in papal infallibility, but now as Pope Mastai I feel it." It is with him a matter of intuition.

very sense of the famous or rather infamous *sacrificio dell' intelletto*, which the military spirit of the school of Loyola has now made to be the soul of all religion in the Roman Church. It means the slaughter of the understanding, the immolation of the will, the conversion of all free personality on the part of men into the passive obedience of a corpse. And for such faith, it must be confessed, the late Vatican decree offers an admirable lesson to begin with. It is here *multum in parvo*, or rather all in a nutshell. That it goes against conscience, and delivers reason bound hand and foot over into the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines, only fits it the more to serve its own end; only makes it a more suitable engine for grinding into the souls of men the cadaverous faith of the Jesuit.

That the action of the Vatican Council, revealing to the world such a complete triumph of Ultramontaniam, should have called forth open resistance and protest in the Roman Catholic Church, is not to be considered strange. The only wonder is, considering what had place before and during the Council, that the opposition should not have been more widespread and serious than it has yet proved to be in fact. Nothing could well go farther to show the dread power of the system which has now got the Papacy fully into its hands, and whose attitude at this time amounts to a bold defiance hurled toward the powers of the world's civilization in every other form.

In France, the voices that were heard from high places against the new doctrine before the 18th of July, 1870, have since ceased to be heard. The Sorbonne and the Episcopate have together wheeled into line. The memory of Bossuet is dishonored, and the Gallican liberties are turned into reproach. How it has fared with the German Bishops, we have already seen. They recanted, all of them, their own good confession made before their going to Rome, and also during their stay in Rome; some of them not without much tribulation of spirit; and are now moving heaven and earth to oppose and put down the very truth which they themselves before confessed. And with some at least of our North American prelates (in Canada and

the United States), it is known there has been just the same tergiversation. Disgusted with the course of things in Rome, they have learned to see nevertheless, since their return, that all was right, and are now ready to insist on the infallibility of Pius IX, as no less certain for faith than the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All this is marvellous; and it is not strange that zealous Romanists see in it an argument for the œcumenicity of the late Council, a sort of divine seal openly impressed upon it by the hand of the Almighty Himself. The world has not known a larger council, nor one of apparently more overpowering force. But all depends on the nature and character of this force. Has it been of heaven or of men? Is the unity that has followed it a living unity, or is it rather the unity of death? There is room for this question: and it may be so answered that the present seeming triumph of Ultramontanism shall be construed into a sign of weakness rather than strength, a handwriting of judgment on the wall rather than a bow of promise in the cloud. This construction has been put upon it in fact by the new race of reformers which has sprung up in the German Catholic Church. They see in it only the doom of Belshazzar and the fall of Babylon.

This old Catholic Movement, as it is called, dates from the 18th of July, 1870, when the Vatican Council pronounced the infallibility of the Pope a necessary article of the Christian faith. It grew forth from the integrity of those who had previously protested against the introduction of this dogma as subversive of the ancient Catholic truth, and who now held themselves bound to stand firm to that good testimony, even when their own ecclesiastical leaders shamefully fell away from it, and when confession was seen to mean for them nothing less than martyrdom of the soul in the most serious form. As Prof. Reinkens shows with great force in the article translated for last number of this REVIEW, it was through the birth throes of *conscience*, the great question of personal spiritual responsibility over against the imposition of blind outward authority, that the new strange life made its appearance in the Catholic world; and

what served in this way to originate the movement at first, has been the true silent power of its growth ever since, as it is that also which imparts to it all its significance for the time to come.

The memorable Letter of Dr. Döllinger to the Archbishop of Munich (a new careful translation of which precedes our present article) is of special historical interest as related to this latest effort for the reformation of the Catholic Church. No man has stood higher heretofore in the confidence and admiration of his own communion; as indeed no one has been more of an ornament and credit to it in the eyes of the general Christian world. His venerable age, his vast historical learning, his exemplary Christian piety, his high position, all have contributed to make his Letter an object of universal attention. Its words have gone forth to the ends of the earth, and though very calm and quiet in themselves, have fallen upon the ears of men, like thunder; louder by far than the *brutum fulmen* of excommunication with which they were immediately followed on the head of their author from the high and mighty prelate to whom they were addressed. As related to the old Catholic Movement, this Letter of Döllinger is more than an ordinary spoken or written word; it is a grand dramatic deed, like Martin Luther's nailing of his theses on the church door in Wittenberg. He is a very different man, indeed, from Luther; but it is quite possible (under God's ordering) that this act of his, in the years hereafter, may be looked back upon as of no less world-historical meaning than the Wittenberg act itself.

Its importance in such ultimate view is not to be determined, of course, by the mere beginnings of the movement to which it belongs. These have not been of a character to overpower the judgment of the world at once in their favor. The first demonstrations made against ultramontaniam in Bavaria, have not come to as much as they seemed at first to promise. On the part of the government, especially, there has been a serious backing down of zeal, a reactionary policy tending to demoralize the course which it first affected to favor as its own. All the force of the thoroughly organized and drilled regimen of

the Jesuits (the fruit of a whole generation's previous training) making itself felt in the meantime on clergy and people, has come in to create the impression of overwhelming mass and weight on the other side. All this has led many to look upon the Old Catholic cause as a failure. Its enemies have taken pains to speak of it in this way, in a tone of insulting derision, like that of Tobiah the Ammonite in the ears of the proud Sanballat, (Nehemiah iv. 1-3.) But not these only; the friends of the movement also, in different parts of the world have been led too generally to think of it, and speak of it, with similar distrust. It has not fallen in with this or that preconceived notion of what church reformation ought to be; it has shown itself too tame, too cautious, too slow; it has not come with sufficient noise and observation. And so it is set down for a well-intentioned fiasco, a stream doomed to run itself out in the sand.

And yet we do not need surely to be told that noise and tumult are not always the demonstration of deep and lasting power. How often is silence in fact the argument of the greatest strength. The kingdom of God, it is said, cometh not with outward observation. In the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, it is "a stone cut out without hands," which nevertheless having broken in pieces the kingdoms of the world, "became itself a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." This does not prove that the Old Catholic movement is destined certainly to break down the image of the Roman Papacy in the end. But it does show this much at least, that the impatient judgments pronounced against it thus far, whether by Romans or Protestants, have in them no sort of conclusive force. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," is a prophetic word, which, if the movement should turn out to have been indeed of God, would be in no sense contradicted, but only verified and made good by what is thus objected against it as its present show of weakness.

No one seems to feel this more fully than the apostle of the movement, Dr. Döllinger himself. There is not in him a particle of the impetuosity of Ronge; nothing in him even of the

impassioned ardor of Pere Hyacinthe. The great theologian of Germany is reserved, calm, almost at times frigid. He is not disturbed by events, whether favorable or unfavorable. In conversation he speaks but little, and with simplicity. His words are distinguished always, for their force, though rarely for their eloquence. He is more passive in his conviction than active, throwing himself on the force of ideas, and quietly leaving results with God. Fault has been found with him for this; but there is that in it also which is suited to inspire respect both for the man and for his cause. On being complimented on a certain occasion for his heroic opposition to the usurpations of Rome, he replied: "I neither expect nor fear anything from that; the world congratulates me as if my position were something great; I am but as a duck thrown into the water which can do no otherwise than swim." The abuse of the ultramontane journals he allows to pass without reading; "I know the authors," he says, "and that is for me enough. They can make of me a saint or a cannibal; in neither case will they speak the truth." One having spoken to him sorrowfully of the defection of a friend who had vigorously combated the infallibility decree, his answer was: "I see that troubles you, but it does not disturb me, I am used to it. These bishops, and these theologians, who were one thing yesterday and are another thing to-day, remind one of acrobats on a tight rope, who must do all sorts of turning to preserve their equilibrium." When he heard of the final adhesion of Mgr. Maret to the Vatican dogma, he repeated the two lofty lines of Juvenal:

*Summum crede nefas animam preferre pudori,  
Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.*

A great man truly, and worthy of the cause he represents; although no one can be more sensible than he is himself, that the cause is in no sense dependent on either his own name or his own life. He is in the 75th year of his age. "I am an old man," was his language more than a year since to a friend; "I shall not live long enough to see all that is coming. But what has begun well must end well; there will be a radical reform of the Church; of that I am sure."



The work has in fact gone forward apart from the sage of Munich, and to a large degree independently of his counsel or guidance. Younger and more vigorous men, thoroughly fitted for the task by natural talent, full education, and self-sacrificing devotion, have taken hold of it, and urged it onward with what must be considered in the circumstances a truly wonderful success. It has gone far beyond Munich and Bavaria, and is felt all over Germany, and into Switzerland and Austria. Not yet as an outward whirlwind, certainly (unless we choose to take the blustering wrath of the Romanists in certain quarters for that;) but what is much better, as a powerful leaven, that may be found more effectual for its object in the end than any whirlwind however strong.

If there might have been any doubt of this living and progressive, though comparatively silent character of the work previously, the meeting of the Old Catholic Congress last September in Cologne was well suited to put an end to it. The world has seldom seen a more imposing or solemn religious convention. Such was the view taken of it by intelligent observers present on the occasion, from this country and from England, who reported at the time their highly favorable judgment through the press; and the official account of the proceedings which has since appeared, abundantly confirms their testimony. This official account is in fact a volume of nearly 250 pages, got up in the best style and with the greatest care, which with its full stenographic reports may be said to daguerreotype for the reader the entire occasion, so that it is made to pass before him in its details very much as if he had been personally present. And few books of the sort certainly, made up of business minutes, debates and speeches, may compare with it for commanding interest and solid instruction. Once introduced to its pages, no one at all awake to the present state of things in the world, can fail to follow it with more than ordinary attention to the end. It is indeed a most suggestive study for the times; for the significance of that Cologne meeting reached in fact, as the thoughtful reader is forced to feel, far beyond its own immediate occasion, far beyond the three

days of its memorable sitting, and far beyond the goodly old town of Cologne in which it was held. It took hold in truth morally on the ends of the earth, and had to do with the deep foundations of the world's life. In this respect it was œcumenical and world-historical, quite as much as the Vatican Council itself, or as the Evangelical Alliance is expected to be (the great antithesis of the Vatican,) which is to sit next September in New York. Not since the age of the Reformation at least (and perhaps not even then,) has there been a more imposing or momentous demonstration in the bosom of the Christian world, called forth by the inmost needs of the Christian world in the same broad and profound view.

The outward composition of the body was all that could be asked to make it respectable. Upwards of four hundred regular delegates took part in its business proceedings from the beginning; chosen representatives of the cause from Germany and Austria; to whom must be added quite a list of guests, as they were called, partly also from Germany and partly from Great Britain, America, France, Italy, Russia and Hungary. Among these guests figure conspicuously the Anglican bishops, Brown of Ely and Wordsworth of Lincoln, together with Whittingham of Maryland, from this country. An unusual amount of intelligence showed itself in the assembly. Besides its four business sessions, two public meetings were held in the large Gürzenich Hall, where a succession of addresses were made to vast audiences of the most stirring and telling kind. One is surprised to meet with such a constellation of new names, bursting here suddenly into view, and throwing their light far and wide over the Christian world. It is something we were not prepared to look for from the Roman Catholic life of Germany; and it goes far of itself in this view to create a strong impression in favor of the Old Catholic cause, as having been able to draw what seems to be thus the better part of that life into its service. It is no wonder that the distinguished strangers present from England and America were struck with the imposing character of the Council and its proceedings, and felt themselves constrained to speak of it with admiration and

respect. One thing it showed clearly. The Old Catholic movement in Germany was not in weak hands, and it was much more than an excitement suddenly got up and as suddenly to pass away. There was mind in it, method and power; and it was able to take care of itself, as it meant also to take care of itself, and to follow its own course, with full independence of all outside guidance or help. Dollinger was there, and was hailed on his appearance with a hearty cheer as the Nestor of the cause; but he only spoke once, briefly on a secondary point in debate, and then the vote of the body went against him.

The business of the convention had been well prepared for it with great care and labor, before it came together, by commissioners previously appointed for the purpose, in the form of general schemes which were published and in the hands of the delegates: so that they were ready to act promptly on all questions claiming their action as soon as they came forward. To this must be added a most excellent order or method of deliberation, and the advantage of such rare judgment and tact in the presiding officer, Herr Prof. von Schulte, as has been seldom met with (by the confession of all) in the conduct of such bodies. The convention in this way accomplished a great deal in a short time. There was no room in it for desultory declamation or mere buncombe talk. There was no confusion or chaos in its proceedings. All meant business; serious, public business; and of such business there was transacted an amount, that for form and quality well deserves to be a study, and that cannot fail, the more it is studied, to command attention and admiration. It is not just what outside criticism, at home or abroad, may have impatiently supposed it ought to have been; but it is only for this reason all the more worthy of regard. The promise of the work lies in what we may call its indifference to immediate, noisy or flashy results of any kind, in the breadth of its circumspection, in the depth of its penetration, in its slow caution, in its reliance upon the power of ideas, in its secure faith with regard to the future.

We cannot go here, of course, into any consideration of the

work of the Congress in its details. Our concern with it at present is under the general view simply, of the light it has served to throw on the sense of the Old Catholic movement, in the history of which it holds now so conspicuous a place.

This movement, we are told, was born of a meeting held informally in Nuremberg, not long after the Vatican decree. It came to a more formal organization afterwards, in the Munich Congress of 1872. But all was still necessarily more or less provisional and tentative in its character. The forces at work in it were as yet largely obscure, indefinite, and so of course chaotic. Could the chaos ever grow into a creation? It was easy and not unnatural to answer this question in the negative. Romanists took pleasure in speaking of it as a failure; and Protestants, in Germany and elsewhere, were very generally inclined to think of it in the same way. But the Congress of Cologne taught the world a different lesson. The movement, it appeared there, was neither dead, nor moribund, nor in a state of sleep; but was powerfully alive and awake; and more than this, gaining force and ready to pass from its first stage of chaos into its higher second stage of clear, self-conscious, intelligible order. It has been like a vision of the Church coming forth once more from the catacombs. All felt this who were in Cologne at the time of the Congress; and no one anywhere can help feeling it who has made its transactions a matter of study since.

“I bring you greeting,” says Prof. Huber, addressing the immense audience assembled in the Gürzenich Hall “from Bavaria and Munich, a greeting that betokens unbroken courage and self-sacrificing endurance for the great cause which has brought us here together. As the Old Catholics of Germany came before the nation a year ago, to declare the ideas that move them, and the end for which they strive, so is it here again to-day. When I look back over the year which has since passed, I find it a year of variable fortunes, a year of tumultuating conflict, in which many victories have been won, though not without some disappointments. Altogether, however, our success has been so great, that in the face of every

discouragement both hope and courage may well be animated for the fight which is yet to come. On the field of general public opinion our enemy is everywhere discomfited; there is no thinking man who would yield himself in faith to the decrees they have tried to force upon us from Rome. Nor is it simply with the cultivated class, or in cities that such mistrust prevails; among our plain country population also there is felt a gnawing doubt, more and more, of the Roman hierarchy. A dark suspicion has entered into the soul of our people: there is going forward in the soul of the German people just what our hierarchists fear, a movement that is shaking the whole false structure which they have sought to prop up with the decrees of the Vatican. But this negative movement is not all that is at work in the popular mind. Along with it goes another that is positive, and by which the question of true religion is brought to the front of free public discussion. The best and most earnest minds of the nation are now grappling with this subject. What the indolence of other times forgot and overlooked, is forced by the events of the present time more and more upon the world's consideration; this namely, that nihilism no less than superstition injures the being of a people in its inmost marrow. And now all these earnest minds, these deeply thoughtful spirits, which are inquiring into the principles that lie at the ground of man's existence, are for us so many allies in our work. For two years past the German nation has been put upon the study of theology, as perhaps not before since the age of the Reformation; especially in Germany is the question of the Church explored. The book of Church History is spread out before the people, and all may read in it who wish to read. We are learning to know the causes of the wrong state of things from which we now suffer; we are learning the causes of the divisions that rend the heart of Christendom. And finding that it is to the passions of men and much hasty error these mournful divisions are to be ascribed, we are all touched with a sentiment that looks actively toward reconciliation. These, my honored hearers, are the positive workings of our activity. A new, moral, earnest spirit, a spirit of placability and peace, has been

awakened, and we can trust this spirit, that it will in due time complete the work in which it has become our glorious duty to take part."

"Allow me now," the speaker goes on to say, "to turn from these general considerations to something special. I have brought you greeting from Bavaria, and you may be interested perhaps to know how it fares with our movement there. When we held our first religious service a year ago in the Gasteig Chapel, a small out-of-the-way church, it was an anxious question with us whether people enough would follow us to fill the little building; and lo! not only has the small church been constantly filled, but there has been a call for more room. It is a felt need in Munich, that the Old Catholics should have there a large church. Had our Government shown its liberality towards us more in deeds and less in words, had it granted us one of the churches which it could have given us—I speak from the fullest conviction—half Munich would be openly joined to us this day. And as it is, thousands as things are having been kept back from such open adhesion, I can proclaim it still as a truth, no less certain and sure, that neither the people of Munich nor the Bavarians belong any more to our foes. All over the country congregations are springing up. We have a flourishing one in Mehring. Another has been formed in Kempten, and from there the whole Allgäu is drawn into the compass of our activity. In Straubing, Passau, Regensburg, Simbach, Erlangen, you can find steps taken toward congregations. In Nuremberg, Fürth, Bayreuth, in all the cities of Bavaria, we are met with the same phenomenon. The entire Palatinate is overspread with our adherents. And as our friends were called last winter to the mass meeting, in Kiefersfelden, the country people of the Inn valley and of the mountains poured in by thousands to hear the word of truth. Like a cloud the movement rolled over the valley of the Inn; as lightning it passed from Kufstein to the foot of the Brenner. A flourishing congregation belongs to us here in Cologne, and from Crefeld to Constance all is in motion. In Switzerland our friends are actively at work, and though the

outward show amounts not yet to much, the course of things inwardly is full of promise. On the extreme eastern boundary of the German Empire we have congregations, served by Pastor Grunert, Professor Michelis and Dr. Wollman; and all Austria is in like manner apprehended by the Old Catholic spirit."

This is a long extract, but it serves better than anything we could present in a different way to bring into view what this Old Catholic spirit had brought to pass when it reached the epoch of its Second Congress in Cologne, and what in the circumstances this Congress was, then, for the promotion of its further progress. The spirit which was in the movement from the beginning, came now more clearly to harmony and right understanding with itself; and from that time since, it has been working steadily and widely in one direction and another toward the same general end. Its power of self-regulation and self-restraint in this view has been wonderful. Among so many acting on their own judgment, and excited with the idea of wrong and reformation, it was but natural to look for more or less irregularity, precipitation and excess. But this has not taken place. There has been no iconoclasm in the work; it has given birth as yet to no Münzer, Carlstadt or Ronge.\* Its

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\* It betrays most shallow thinking, whether among Romanists or false Protestants, to see in the Old Catholic movement a renewal simply of the "German Catholic" excitement headed by Ronge and Czersky in the year 1845. We denounced it at the time, as a scandal to Protestantism, that so many of our religious papers were ready to join hands with such a cause, as of one nature with the work of the Reformation in the 16th century. "Ronge," we then declared, "is no reformer, but a radical only, of the worst stamp. Like Luther he has indeed cast off the authority of Rome. But the resemblance of the two cases is merely in outward form. Luther was full of positive life; Ronge is negative wholly, and destitute of all faith in Christianity as a real life-revelation in the world. Luther stood in the element of the objective, and felt himself to be the passive organ only of the true and proper historical life of the Church itself; Ronge is supremely subjective, unhistorical and full of blind self-will. Luther was himself the first central, and in some sense fatal, product of the vast spiritual revolution in which he led the way; it came to the birth with deep convulsive throes, in his separate personal consciousness, before it revealed itself in the rest of the Church already ripe for the change. Ronge stands in no such relation to the inmost religious life of the age, in which he affects to play the spiritual hero." *Mystical Presence*, p. 151. All this was soon confirmed by the judgment of history. It has no application whatever to the cause of Döllinger and the Old Catholics. If ever a movement in the world was free from mere human interest, passion and self-will, showing itself the product of objective powers, and in that way truly historical, we seem to have it here.

principle is: Abide in the ship. Its great law: Organization first; then the reconstruction of true church authority; and then the doing away of disorders and abuses as the right life of the Church may require. Every step is taken with due regard to the demands of law, both canonical and civil, and with an eye to the maintenance of all church rights, regarded as belonging now to the Old Catholics in their character of being the Catholic Church in its only true and right form. "He that believeth shall not make haste," is the motto in this view, which is acting like a charm to moderate all things and keep them in the right direction.

Such is the tone of wisdom that runs remarkably through the opening address of Prof. V. Schulte, on taking the chair as President of the Cologne Congress. "We have this year," he says, "a greater and more difficult task than in the past year. Then we were still struggling for our existence; we knew not yet our position in the world; we had not got ourselves into constitution. The main point, that which in any case must appear the most vital for our movement, was on to the end of the first (Munich) Congress, completely in the dark, I mean the formation of congregations. Had the time come for it? There was room for doubt on the subject; but there was room on the other side also for the view, that the exigency had come to such a pass as to justify an advance to this great practical measure. It was resolved, accordingly, to go into the organization of congregations. We have to do now also with similar grave questions; and we must see that in dealing with them we avoid all self-contradiction, and hold ourselves steadily to the ground we have taken with good conscience and full faith from the beginning. We belong to the Catholic Church. The primary cause of our rising lay in this, that we were required to accept doctrines which were not God's word, but were only the invention of men put forward as the word of God. That was the *immediate occasion*. We have all known, however, that the true heart of Christendom has been for centuries demanding more in the way of church reform; and that the holding back of this *more* is what has produced division



in the Christian Church. We know that the oldest division had its ground, not in religious questions, but mainly in hierarchical pride. Our mission seems to mean then, that we should bend our whole strength to restore the sundered unity of the Church at large. But we must be aware that such an aim presupposes a clear perception of the dividing issues, and is not to be promoted by precipitation, or through the use of empty phrases and outward declamation. We have still other tasks. Our stand-point is: It is *not we* that have gone out of the Catholic Church; we hold fast to the Catholic faith; they have thrust us out and then declared us to be apostates. And who are *they*, that have done this? Men, of whom we must say that they *have been* bishops of the Catholic Church, regularly chosen and rightly acknowledged; but of whom we are now bound in conscience also to say, that having given in their adhesion to the new Vatican doctrine, the cause of all this rupture in the Church, they have lost for us the authority of bishops—we can obey them no longer. It was this going over of all the bishops, the entire episcopate, in *outward appearance* at least, to the Roman camp, which brought upon us the necessity that lies at the ground of our whole movement. We are in a strait (*Nothstand*) of practical life, of conscience and also of law. We have no tribunal; we cannot bring our bishops, or the bishop of Rome, to account for having introduced an innovation that tramples the church under foot. We have no œcumenical council; and being thus without resort, there is nothing left for us but to do for ourselves what church right allows, by carrying out practically the rules of this right. Our need goes still farther: not only the bishops, but the greatest part of the clergy also, the organs of the bishops, are with the new cause; and the consequence is, that in many districts and dioceses Old Catholics are cut off from the exercise of their religion. The sacraments are refused them, they are insulted in the churches, they are excommunicated from the pulpits. Such need justifies at once the provision of proper pastoral care for our congregational life. But this must be under right regulation. We have behind us the experience of a year, and the propositions

now before us aim at a more exact organization. They are in gross and whole very moderate; and I believe nothing will help our cause more than our holding fast with both firmness and moderation, to what I have now described as our true stand-point."

We have here what may be taken as the key-note, not only of all that took place at the Cologne Congress, but of all that the movement has brought to pass since. As far as we can understand it through the pages of the *Deutscher Merkur*, it seems to be following out steadily on all sides the peculiarly distinctive programme laid down for it by its leaders, with quiet but sure success, and is in a fair way of reaching in due course of time the order that is required to give it the full acting powers of a reconstructed Catholic Church. This is felt to require bishops and a general council. Only when thus organized in full, will the body be considered competent to go into the work of reforming particular abuses; the business, which so many have thought the movement should have been concerned with from the beginning, and for the neglect of which its leaders have been charged with unfitness for their task in different quarters. And only then also will the way be open for moving positively in that great work of the reintegration of Christendom, which as we have just seen Schulte (but not less Döllinger, Friedrich, Reusch, Huber, Reinkens, Michelis, Knoodt, and every one of this noble band of confessors) dares to look forward to as the highest aim of the work with which they are engaged.

But strange to say, this crowning measure of an episcopate is itself approached only in the most slow and cautious way. There is no thought evidently (as with too many of our Anglicans) of any magical potency in the office and name of bishops, as though all right church-life must start here, and this were needed first of all to authenticate and uphold our apostolic faith. There is a commission appointed (made up of seven strong names, Friedrich, Hasenclever, Maassen, Reusch, Michelis, Schulte, and Wülffing), to whom is entrusted the duty of determining when and how the business of choosing a bishop

shall go forward. We see it stated, that instead of a single bishop it is proposed now to have at once three—one for North Germany, a second for South Germany, and the third for Switzerland. But why such holding back in the matter of the episcopate? From the feeling, that however necessary it may be as the cap-stone of a complete church structure, such structure requires first of all a certain organization and consistency in itself, as it were from below upward, to make the imposition of the cap-stone entirely safe. These men are Germans after all, not Anglicans; and their freshly recent experience of bishops has been of a sort, that may well excuse them for regarding the office with a certain amount of jealousy and distrust. In any case, their bishops, as they are careful to inform the world, are not to be lords nor men of high outward estate. The office must be spiritual and not secular. The institution must return to its primitive idea.

“In proceeding to the election of a bishop,” says Prof. V. Schulte, “we need to be first of all fully clear in regard to what his relation is to be to our congregations, what power, what rights he is to possess. For this, we cannot just refer to the body of canon law and later papal bulls. The bishop must stand to us in the relation demanded by the true conception of the Christian Church. He must be a father, a shepherd; not a prince ruling us by vicariate orders with legal frigidity and unloving soul, but a father speaking the language of the heart and of Christian love.”

Prof. Michelis, on the same subject, rises into a sort of prophetic exaltation, as if he felt the choice of a bishop to be after all but a secondary circumstance in the moral grandeur of the general movement in which it was to find its place.

“I am opposed,” he says, “to fixing a time for the election of a bishop, on the principle that the basis of our whole movement, that which makes my participation in it a matter of conscience, holds for me in the conception of actual exigency and need. My inward confidence in the Catholic Church and her truth, has not suffered, from all we have passed through, so much as the very slightest change. I am often looked upon as an

idealist. I have indeed always viewed the matter in theory, as it has now become for me practical also by the infallibility decree. The truth of the Church has been for me independent always of the miserability of circumstances and men. That this miserability meets me at present in a degree, which in former times might perhaps have crushed me dead, I am ready to allow; but it cannot do that now. Not a particle of my Catholic conviction has yet been disturbed; and just this conviction it was, this Catholic conscience, that led me, without complaint, as soon as the decision of Rome took place, openly to declare in the clearest and most distinct terms my determination, to stand up for the truth of the Church against this frightful perversion. That is my principle and rule; to follow the conduct of necessity, and not to run ahead of it. So we have done the last year in the matter of congregations; and I believe our cause to be so much farther advanced at present, that the restoration of the episcopal office is becoming for us now also a similar need. But it is not such as calls for action just at once. And I know not if the right time may be for it within three months or six, or even within the term of a year. At this moment we stand before an extraordinary crisis. I believe—it is only my personal conviction indeed, but every one has to govern himself by that—I believe that the course of our whole cause, as things are now around us, is going to be altogether extraordinary. As I view the case, we have come to a crisis, a grand interior point of decision in the history of humanity, in world-history, such as has not had place probably since the birth of Christ, certainly not since the commencement of the Middle Ages. And I may be allowed, I trust, without offence, to give utterance to the uplifting thought; yes, we have felt it, how in a truly marvellous manner a higher hand moves in the history of the world. For me it is no chance, that the declaration of infallibility falls in with the conflict of Germany for her true existence. We see thus the relations of the time gathering themselves under our eyes into a crisis, which of itself makes it impossible that our cause, as some have feared, should run itself out in the sand. I have myself had no such

fear, not even for a moment. Can we then be so weak as to grow faint and weary, when we are not met at once with full success? We are on the eve, I repeat, of a grand crisis. Let us commit ourselves to the course of events. Possibly in a few months the choice of a bishop may become a necessity. Thanks to the services of the Archbishop of Utrecht, it is not that now. How soon it may come to be so depends on circumstances in the future. A premature choice, a choice made without absolute need, would be a hindrance for the work we have in hand rather than a help. We *might*, by God's grace, get a man who would be wholly after God's heart. But who is to go bail for that? It is quite as possible for us to make a mistake, and so damage heavily our own cause. It is in this way a dangerous experiment. With me, the one simple maxim of necessity is decisive; when it is absolutely a need, let the choice take place, but not sooner. My own confidence in the progress and success of our movement rests on the unshaken trust I have in the divine conduct of world-history, in the Church of Jesus Christ, and in the moral force we are bringing to bear on this conflict. But this moral force consists not at all in our having just at once a bishop, but in this rather: that with our small resources, in the heavy pressure that is now upon us, we hold out and yield not; working on in the narrow, small sphere in which we have worked thus far, with unwearied holy zeal and patience. In patience lies our strength and salvation; but the immediate choice of a bishop would seem to proceed rather from impatience, and therefore I like it not."

To some the language of Professor Michelis in regard to the world-historical momentousness of the work in which the Old Catholics are engaged may sound extravagant. But it will not seem so to those, who, looking to ideas more than to outward appearances, have taken pains to study the work in its own character, and in the light of the relations with which it is surrounded.

It is not of an accidental or sporadic nature in the progress of the world's general life. It belongs to the central stream of this life as it comes before us in Christianity; and is here in

the direct historical line of what has been for centuries the grand ruling question of the Christian Church, the problem of church reform having for its object the rectification of the disorders and miseries of the Church. It is a pitiful view of the case, which makes it to be a protest simply against the definition of the Pope's infallibility on the 18th of July, 1870, without regard to other previously existing vast abuses in the Roman Church. This is regarded only as the culmination of a system which had been at work long before, but only came now at last to the point of direct open antagonism to the whole idea of Christianity, making it necessary for the Christian conscience to save itself by equally open and full revolt. This is what is so well shown by Professor Reinkens in his popular tract *Conscience and the Vatican*. The system in question is the so-called Papal System, which grew up in the Middle Ages, basing its pretensions on notoriously false historical premises; which sundered the Western or Latin Church from the Eastern or Greek Church; which affected to comprehend in itself all powers both civil and ecclesiastical; which drew after it sore disorders and manifold abuses in the Christian world, palpable to all men; which stoutly fought off all attempts toward inward reformation, and so forced upon Europe the violent outward Protestant breach of the 16th century; which gave birth to the Society of the Jesuits, and, which has now at last yielded itself fully to their power, in what must be considered a monstrous crusade against the political freedom and the universal intelligence of the modern Christian world. The Old Catholic movement is directed against what it assumes to be the tyranny and wrong of this Papal System, exercised through ages in such vast style and now brought to its full climax in the late Vatican decree. In this view the movement is itself but the historical continuation of that opposite power in the Church, which has been all along active for its redemption from what Luther has called its Babylonish captivity, the dominion of the Papacy; though never as yet with any proper success. What the reformers before the reformation labored for; what the great councils of the 15th century struggled in vain to reach; what Protestantism in its different way undertook to bring to pass in the century following, with as

yet also only most imperfect success ; namely, deliverance of the Catholic Church from the yoke of the Papacy, without harm to the true original life of the Church, and the re-constitution of Christianity, thus, under a form making it possible to bring its most melancholy divisions to an end ; this old endeavor, the burden of the world's history for so long a time, is the same work which has now come also into the hands of these Old Catholics, and which they feel themselves commissioned of God to conduct to its triumphant end at last in a way answerable to the antichristian climax that has been reached on the other side. And if this be so, who will say that their position is not one of solemn grandeur, or that it may not have to do indeed with a crisis equal to any that has been known since the time of Christ ?

The tremendous nature of the general issue which runs through this conflict of ages, and which has now come to such a final life and death struggle as never before, we have already seen. It turns on what is for men the fundamental problem of their existence, the right practical adjustment of its individual and general sides, the principle of freedom in one direction and the principle of authority in another. We are not of those, it is well known, who worship the idea of individual liberty blindly, and see all danger for life only in the idea of outward authority and power. Freedom centering in mere selfhood, we well understand, is not true freedom, but false licentious freedom ; and by that sin the angels fell. For years we have been doing battle, from pulpit, rostrum and press, with the popular idols of private judgment and private will, and insisting on the divine right of objective government and law, against the different radical and revolutionary tendencies of the age. These tendencies are indeed dangerous, and threaten to sweep all political and religious interests into chaos. We need the true idea and power of the state, and still more the true idea and power of the church, to hold them in conservative restraint ; and just here it is, that the Roman theory finds, for minds in a certain state its most plausible argument and its most seductive attraction. But the abuse of freedom is no

reason for the destruction of freedom; and if the individual and simply subjective side of our life, thrown upon itself, tends only to evil, it is no less certain that its general and objective side, taken in the same separate way, tends also only to evil. In other words, authority is just as liable to be abused, and made ruinous to the welfare of men, as freedom. As there is a false freedom, so also is there a false authority; and a right regard to the great interests of humanity and religion requires that the one should be withstood just as much as the other.

When is it now, and how is it, that authority, being as it is of indispensable necessity for all our human life is liable to become thus false and wrong? We answer: Whenever it is dissociated from freedom, and made to stand toward men in a simply outward and mechanical relation. Authority and freedom are opposite, but not therefore contradictory conceptions; their opposition is polar; antithetic in order that it may become synthetic. Our human life includes in it both terms, in such sort that each is required to be the complement and perfection of the other. This cannot be by any outward conjunction or juxtaposition, but only through inward concretion. If the one is not thus concretely and livingly in the other, their relation ceases to be normal; and both become in fact mere formal abstractions, void of their own proper sense and power.

All dominion, power and authority among men are legitimate thus, only as they are found to be in order to personal freedom among men. This does not mean, of course, that human subjects are not to be in any case bound and coerced to what is right, beyond the free consent of their own judgment and will. Authority involves discipline (the sacrament of the rod), and freedom rests largely in the obedience of faith. But everywhere, and always, the power that is exercised over the children of men, if it is to be of a right character, must have for its object the training of its subjects to the highest ends of their existence, *through* the development in themselves of the spiritual and moral capacity which God has given them for this purpose.

The power of parents over their children in this way, is for the



emancipation of the children in the end ; as their true freedom can come effectually also only through their obedience to the power exercised over them thus for their good. Suppose in the case, however, a mere outside rule on the one side, and a mere blind automatic submission on the other, and who does not see that the family must be for those in its bosom a ministration of death rather than a ministration of life ?

What is true thus of all family government is no less true of all political government. The state is an essential mode or form of human existence, in which sovereignty is required to be exercised for the object of making all who are under it participant alike (according to their measure) of the political life belonging to the state as a whole.

And so it would seem it ought to be also with the authority of religion, especially with the authority of the Christian religion, and with the powers of the Christian church (the highest of all institutions ordained of God for making men complete in their existence), as related to the object of human culture in its universal view. Christianity, in the New Testament, claims to be in this way a principle of freedom and true humanization for men, beyond all the world had ever known before. Even the Old Testament, with all its externality, is a law of liberty and light, a discipline unto inward righteousness ; but how much more the New Testament. Here especially it is the *entrance* of God's word into the soul, that giveth understanding and makes the soul interiorly strong and free. Christ's words are "spirit and life." To follow Him, is not to walk in darkness, but to have the light of life. In so doing, it is said, "ye shall *know* the truth, and the truth shall make you *free* ;" this being the office and work of truth, and so also the only true idea of religion, that it should illuminate the understanding and inform or energize the will.

Or take the subject in a still higher view. We are taught by our Lord to pray : "Thy will be done in earth, *as it is in heaven.*" The highest conception of religion is, then, that it should be among men here below, what it is in the other world among the angels. But how is it now that the angels do the

will of God? Not in any way, most certainly, of following simply their own private judgment or impulse. Their service is bound by law; the will of God is for them an authority or rule coming from beyond themselves, just as really as it is this for the stars and planets in their courses. Of angels and stars alike it may be said: "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is *settled in heaven*. They continue this day according to Thine ordinances; for all are Thy servants." More than this; as the stars and planets are joined together in systems, *through* which then the law of nature takes effect upon them severally, so are the angels also joined together in hierarchies or heavenly polities, which mediate for them in the same way the word or law of God in its spiritual form. There are for angels thus, no less than for men here on earth, principalities and powers ordained of God for the use of general societies; which are for these societies, then, ministries and vicegerencies of God, channels of His grace, personal bearers and organs of His will; whom the societies, otherwise considered, are bound to honor and obey, as planets do homage to their central suns. So far the idea of objectivity reaches for the angelic life; but no farther. It does not turn the angels into dead nature forces, into winds, or flames of fire, or shining planetary orbs. They are not, even over against God Himself, and still less over against those who exercise authority upon them in God's name, mere passive organs of the Divine will, moving only as they are moved from beyond themselves; as a staff is moved, for example, by the hand of him who carries it, or a corpse by those who undertake to dress it for the grave. No; the angels have their own intelligence; their own will; their own self-moving life and action. All this in such sort, however, that their selfhood is as it were continually sunk in God, and devoted in spontaneous service to the well-being of the society of which they are a part. They *will* to do the will of God, and in their freedom cannot choose to do otherwise. The law they obey as from beyond themselves, is at the same time wholly in themselves. Authority and freedom are with them absolutely one; their law and their liberty each in the other; the liberty having in the law its

necessary matter or substance, and the law finding in the liberty its no less necessary form. As if the planets, now held blindly to their course, were made to have in them the light of inward intelligence, and with it the power of independent motion, to go where they might please, and should yet now of their own sweet pleasure move onward still as before, "forever singing, as they shine, the hand that made us is divine." So the angels do indeed, in their higher and more glorious heaven, show forth continually the praise of God, standing in His presence and swift to do His will. And this, we say, is the only true ideal, to be looked to and reached after in the culture of our human life, and most of all in this culture as it is required to go forward in the church. It must aim at least to bring those who are the subjects of it, to do the will of God on earth as it is done by the angels in heaven. It must be in order to freedom and truth in the inward parts. All its authorities, agencies and ministries must have this for their design and scope. Otherwise they cease to be true to the idea of religion, and are found thus false at once both to God and man.

But the Roman theory of Christianity and the Church, which after a thousand years has issued at last in the full-blown Jesuitic doctrine of the late Vatican Council, stands as we have already seen in world-startling contrast with all this. It goes on the assumption that a free subjectivity on the part of men, and an effectual objectivity on the part of God, are incompatible terms; and that to avoid the manifest bad possibilities of the first, there is but one alternative; namely, such an outward enthronement of the second over all the spheres of our human existence as shall reduce them to a state of mere automatic dependence on this external sovereignty. For the licentiousness of freedom we have substituted thus the licentiousness of power; the false absolutism of Hobbes, in the political order, for the false liberalism of Rousseau. As a theory of God's general relation to the world, it is deism in its difference from theism; such a view of God, as excludes Him in fact from all real immanence in the life of the world (physical or moral), and exaggerates in such sort the idea of His

transcendence, that He is regarded as standing on the outside of it, and working it after His own plan in a purely mechanical way. The authority that binds, becomes in this way all in all; the existence and life which are bound, less than nothing. And so it is in the end that Christianity itself, the highest sense of humanity (if it be true), and the "perfect law of liberty," is turned into a tremendous law of servility, a sirocco blast from the desert, before which the fairest fruits of humanity are struck with the blight of universal desolation.

We mean no polemical rhetoric or rant, in what we say; and God forbid that we should trifle with the subject irreverently in any way; for it is altogether too solemn for that. Our object here is mainly description only, and not argument; the description being left then to speak for itself.

Is not this system in truth the hard military rule of Ignatius Loyola and the Society of the Jesuits, made now after three hundred years to be the soul of the Papal Church? Does it not hinge throughout on the principle of blind obedience to external authority, blindly accepted as the organ of God in the same outward view? Does it not demand, Moloch like, the immolation of the understanding, the immolation of the will, the slaughter in one word of all spiritual and moral independence, on the part of those who commit themselves to its grim embrace, in order to make sure, in this frightful way, of their own eternal salvation? And is it not then a necessary result of all this, that the entire authority of God in the Christian Church, thus outwardly apprehended, should be taken to lodge itself ultimately in the single person of the Pope (the apex of the system); and that he should be declared infallible (regardless of all inward moral conditions, since all goes here by a sort of magical outward clock-work), so as to be for men the visible presence as it were, and actual speaking voice, of our Lord Jesus Christ on the earth? Then all other bishops and priests, belonging to the system, are simply puppets in the Pope's hand; he becomes himself in fact the entire hierarchy. And as Louis XIV. dared to say of France, *I am the State*, so Pius IX. then may say also, *I am the Church*; as he has in fact

already allowed himself to say in a truly naive way, *I am the Church Tradition!* But who cannot see, how this does away completely with St. Paul's view of what the Church is as the Body of Christ? A body is a living organism, having its life and activity inwardly, not in its head only (much less in a wooden figure of its head), but in all its parts; just what this Papal system is in no way willing to allow.

And if there may be with it no free organic life in the ecclesiastical order, how should it be tolerated with patience in the civil and political order? Let the constitution of Boniface VIII., the badly famous *Unam Sanctam*, with its doctrine of the two swords, give answer. This medieval document is now re-enacted in the broad-daylight of the 19th century, and is a blow struck in fact at the political independence of all nations. Cardinal Antonelli tells the nations indeed, that it is not to be taken in full earnest; but it goes with the system, necessarily, and cannot fail to pass now from theory into practice (as it is already doing in Germany and other countries), with consequences which God only can foresee; consequences, of which the German bishops gave solemn warning in the Vatican Council, although they are now themselves doing all they can to precipitate them, if need be in civil war, upon their native land.

From such outward mechanical domination over individual consciences, and over the independence of families and states it is but an easy and necessary step onward to the claim of a like outward domination over all human culture, all science and, art, all education, all the higher interests of the world's natural life, regarded as having in them any reason or right to be at all, outside of the vast strait jacket of authority prescribed for them by the unenlightened mind of the Pope. That is the sense of the *Syllabus*. Even history, as a science, must adjust itself to this Procrustean bed. Döllinger, one of the greatest masters of history, challenges the attention of the Archbishop of Munich to facts, which if established should blow the decree of the Pope's infallibility to atoms. The only answer deigned him, is excommunication. Professor Schulte, another such master, tries to get attention also to an overwhelming array of his-

torical testimony; but he too is met only with a curse, the last argument, and here the only one, of those who, in their fond spiritual autocracy, feel themselves to be *kings*. "The church," we are told, "must control the decisions of the historian" (and why not then the decisions of the astronomer also as in the case of Copernicus and Galileo); "all history and all science must be studied from the central point of the papacy."\*

What I have now brought into view, may serve to show the broad and profound meaning of the issue which is involved in the Old Catholic Movement. The question with which it is concerned has been at work for centuries, but never before under the same radical and urgent character as now. Around it are gathering more and more, whether with full consciousness or not, all the deeper forces of the world's life at this time; and it has now come to such a form, that it is hard to see how a full answer to it can any longer be delayed. That the world altogether is in the midst of a crisis of the most extraordinary sort is becoming continually more plain. Never was a great epoch heralded, not simply for the thought, but also for the very feeling of men, by a more impressive array of prophetic and admonitory signs. The concurrence of outward and inward forces, flowing together from different sides, in the age of the Reformation, was less striking. The only parallel to it is in what had place at the coming of Christ into the world; and it is not strange that some have been prompted to see in it, in this way, the actual counterpart of that first advent, the introduction of a new dispensation in fact, drawing with it in the end the full power and glory of His second advent.

"We are now plainly enough," says I. H. Fichte† "placed in a transition state, where slowly but irrevocably an era of a

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\* Are we to take it as a bold example of what an infallible Pope may dare to do in this way, or must it be taken for an unconscious self-ironizing *bull* of the Irish sort, that in the Vatican decree of Papal *Infallibility*, a mutilated utterance of Gregory the Great is gravely quoted so as to give a sense just the contrary of its real meaning, and the opposite of what all the learned world knows to have been the mind of that great and good man?

† *System der Ethik. Erster kritischer Theil.* 1850.

thousand year's duration is sinking into ruin, while the new world that is to rise out of the ashes of the old is hardly discernible as yet even in its rudimentary outline; directly around us threatening chaos, before us the heavy cloud of a still impenetrable future!" This was spoken nearly a quarter of a century ago, in view of the surging moral and political forces, revolutionary and reactionary, which were then at work among the nations of Europe. But who may not see with what accumulated sense it applies to the state of Europe and the world at the present time? Whenever before did a period of like brief duration precipitate upon the world's experience, such a succession of vast and mighty changes, as have gone forward, on both sides of the Atlantic, within the past twenty-two or three years? And who with the least faith in God can help seeing and feeling that these changes carry in them in some way the power of a common world-historical sense, and are conspiring rapidly toward a common world-historical purpose and end?

In the bosom of this universal crisis of the age it is, that the significance of the Old Catholic idea, the rehabilitation of the Catholic Church in its pristine character and form through an act of self-awakening from the thousand years' incubus of the Papacy—comes fairly into view. Looked at ideally and theoretically in this way, the movement is worthy of profound attention, and must be allowed to take its place among the higher apocalyptic signs and wonders of the age, even if practically for the time it should come to naught, or pass ultimately along with other movements into the service of some deeper and broader tide of reformation not yet in the thought of its present martyrs and confessors. The simple fact that it has made its appearance in Germany, after the Franco-Prussian war and coterminously with the resurrection of the German Empire, on the heels of the Vatican Council and the downfall of the Pope's temporal power, is enough to invest it for the thoughtful student of the times, with more than an accidental character and more than a transient interest. For it is not easy to feel, that Germany is not now destined, even more than in the 16th century, to lead the way in any great spiritual

revolution having to do with the religion and civilization of the Christian world.

It tells in favor of the cause again, that it is calling forth angry persecution on the part of its enemies, while it is characterized on its own side only by meekness, patience, sacrifice and persevering self-denial. The recreant bishops, with their army of vassal priests, have spared no pains to inflame the minds of an ignorant and superstitious laity, wherever it was possible, against the movement. Newspapers and tracts are at work, as well as pulpits, dealing out the most scurrilous abuse. Societies and public meetings are brought into requisition for the same purpose; and it is wonderful with what masterly effect. For although the Jesuits are gone, their educational drill is in full play. As an example, take the following graphic picture of the state of things in one region (the district of Münster), from the correspondence of the *Deutscher Merkur*, 23 Nov. 1862.

“Allow me,” the writer says, “to describe our circumstances in a religious and political view, as not without much that deserves notice. The people here have been for centuries quietly disposed, under different forms of government, being of rather sluggish spirit, and without any turn for politics. They are nearly all Catholics. The clergy formed under the mild views of such men as Overberg, Kistermacher, Katerkamp, and Kellermann, were plain, simple, good-hearted. One scarcely noticed, when the body began to change gradually by the introduction of new men trained under wholly different influences. The Jesuits themselves, till quite recently, observed moderation. So came on the years 1869 and 1870. When Prince Hohenlohe for a political purpose brought up the question of infallibility, it awakened here only displeasure; it was viewed as an offence toward the Catholic Church, to take the thing as in earnest. So when the *Civiltà Cattolica* came out with its well-known article on the subject, everybody was angry, and pronounced it craziness. As, however, the matter grew more serious, the clergy declared almost with one voice, that it was impossible the infallibility of the Pope could be de-



creed. And now? They have all submitted. Not a man of them resists; while many have grown fanatical, and drag the people along with them. The pulpit, the confessional, and private talk, were made use of to introduce the dogma. The women were worked upon, and these drew the men with them, or forced them to submit. When the major part was won, recourse was had to stringency; the refractory were refused absolution; the faithful were stirred up against them and made to threaten them with loss in their worldly business. So things have come to their present pass. Nobility and clergy work in common for the absolute power of the Pope with great zeal. In the quickest possible succession missions have been held in the towns and villages to gain over the people; being forbidden to the Jesuits, they are carried on by the Redemptorists now under other names. Numerous associations have been formed, which stand under the immediate direction of the priests, young men's sodalities, brotherhoods, Catholic unions of all sorts, and no pains are spared to swell their membership to the utmost. These are called upon for public demonstrations; pilgrimages; torch-light processions; to found new associations, put down obnoxious journals, to help spread their own party sheets, to promote ultramontane views, or gather subscriptions to addresses; and all such calls they must unconditionally obey.—Looking at the different classes of society, we find the ultramontane interest followed by the entire nobility, by nearly all the office-holders as far as they are Catholics, and by the majority of those who live in the towns and villages; a part knowing better, but keeping their mind cautiously to themselves. The country people are protected in some degree against the course of things by their plain natural sense and their attachment to past custom; hence farmers' unions, headed by nobles, are now actively employed to bring them into the traces.—The schools are in the hands of the Vatican party, and exercise of course a vast influence. Everywhere the Catechism of Overberg is in use; which all along has had in it the question: "Is the infallibility of the Pope an article of faith?" followed with the answer: "No; it is no article of faith." Now,

however, new leaves have been printed, making the answer just the other way, *Yes*; and all the Catechisms having been called in, the old leaf in every copy has been torn out and a new one put in its place. Thus the new doctrine was brought in, and wo to him who should now sell a Catechism with the old leaf. Only the excessive veneration in which the clergy are held in Münster territory could allow such a proceeding to pass without opposition. In this veneration the women go farthest, exalting particular priests at times into objects of fanatical devotion. These have then of course an almost boundless influence. All pains are taken to carry this man-worship to its highest pitch in favor of the person of the Pope. Devotion to him, entire self-immersion in his thought and will in genuine Jesuit spirit, is made to be the highest perfection; and so then, hate, curse, and persecution to any one who may in word or act oppose so holy a man. All manner of superstitious observances and fancies come in to help this malignant humor; and as the greatest foe of the new tendency is the German Empire, this is especially abhorred, and a fond eye turned toward France. This can be felt in the tone of the party sheets, as it is shown also by the avoidance of patriotic festivals and in other ways.—To the great mass-pilgrimages, which were set on foot by the priests during the latter part of the summer, with the utmost possible show, in almost all places, as demonstrations against the German Government, are added now conventions of Catholic Unions, which count by the thousand and more, and aim at a consolidation with the immense Catholic Association of Mentz. The speakers openly threaten a mobilization against Bismarck. Such mass meetings have been held in Borcken and Ahaus, and another is soon to come off in Coesfeld.—Altogether the results of the later clerical system in Münster territory may well give rise to concern. The blind subjection of the lower clergy to the bishop deprives them of all legal independence. By the Vatican decree the bishops are subjected to the Pope, and together with their clergy are but organs of his will whom the people must follow blindly. The Church, now ruled exclusively by the Pope,

takes hold on all the relations of life, and so we have a double kingdom. Here that of the Pope and his organs—the clergy and clerical associations; there the State, with its officers and its army. The Pope claims unconditional supremacy; the State unlimited control in secular affairs. But as both assert their dominion over the same subjects, and both are bent on using their power to the utmost, the result must be a conflict, which can end only with the sore defeat of one side or the other. The body of the people stand before this danger without knowing what it means; urged on all the time by their clerical leaders, and maddened through what they take to be persecution of the Church into ever greater hatred of the powers of the State. And as it is in Münster, so is it also in every region with a prevailing Catholic population. It is unmistakable that wires extend from France to Rome, and from Rome to Germany. Both France and Rome wish to reign; they join hands that each may gain its end. France, for revenge, and Rome, for the spiritual mastery of the world, are ready to commit themselves if need be, to the violence of open war. What that would mean for the ultramontane party in Germany, in the way of calamity and sorrow, is very easy to calculate, when we consider the sound and resolute spirit of the German people as a whole, and their actual preparation to put down any hostile agitation when it once comes to acts and blows. On the Jesuits and their servile ‘German Bishops,’ more than on the Pope, rests the terrible responsibility of the case before the bar of God and of history.”

An outrageous display of the rising temper here brought into view occurred on the 23d of December last, at Lippstadt in Westphalia, where Prof. Michelis had gone by special invitation, to address a meeting of Old Catholics. As he was on a visit to a friend in the afternoon, a mob of more than a thousand of the Pope’s friends, “persecuted Catholics” as they call themselves, gathered whistling and shouting in front of the house, and crying out against the “heretic.” Undertaking to return to his hotel, he was set upon with stones (just four days before the festival of St. Stephen!) one of which struck him on

the head ; and the ordinary police proving unequal to the occasion, a company of soldiers had to be called in to disperse the crowd—the result being, several of the rioters wounded, and four of the ringleaders put under lock and key. To such bigoted madness has it come with the papal party ; and leading newspapers of the party only regret openly, that the penalty of the disorder should not have fallen in this case on the really responsible cause of it, Prof. Michelis and the Old Catholics who invited him to Lippstadt !

The outlook of things in Germany at this time, it must be confessed, is exceedingly solemn. There is an ominous sultry feeling in the air, boding no one can say what tempests and storms. Listen to the following passage from a Prussian jurist : “ The rabid spirit of the common people makes the danger for the State in the highest degree pressing and serious. If the controversy were between the educated, between parties as they commonly are, while the great body of the population continued in true reverence for the secular order, single laws and ordinances might be enough ; but it is the millions of which the opposition boasts, who are to be taken into account here, and whose violent onset is to be withstood. And verily, it is no mere blind onset of the masses. The clergy have been for years organizing with the utmost prudence and foresight ; they are ready ; they can handle the masses with the greatest ease, just as they wish. The enemy of the empire is in the heart of Germany ; his league with outside hostile powers is beyond question. Depend not on the supposed reigning culture. The present mingling of religion and the lust of power is well adapted to produce the wildest fanaticism, capable of developing a force and calling forth a destruction, that would soon turn your complacency into terror. You hold the number of the deluded to be small ? you think you have the cultivated on your side, and make calculations which leave the enemy but little force ? You are deceived ! Cast your eyes over the land. In congregations of 5000 souls there are not 5, who would dare to withdraw themselves from clerical direction. Visit the mass meetings, and learn the number and strength of their attend-

ance. Hearken to the abuse of the government, the scorn thrown upon the hated German Empire, and notice the applause with which it is received by the mighty crowds of people. The danger of the return of the Thirty Years' War presses continually nearer; all the distraction and hopeless misery of those terrible days threaten to come again on our fatherland."

The question of what the State should do, or refrain from doing, in such a trial as that to which the German Empire has now come, in its relations with the Vatican or Jesuitic Church, is of course one of great difficulty; and we pretend not here to go at all into its consideration. In any view, however, it must be carefully distinguished from the issue between the Old Catholics and this Church. The ground was taken in Cologne, that the only true succession of the Catholic Church in Germany is with the Old Catholics, that they have therefore a right politically to be so regarded and treated by the State, and that it is a self-stultifying and suicidal policy for the State *not* at once to acknowledge them in this character. But with all this, they hold themselves, in a way that is wonderful for Europe, rigorously aloof from all merely civil and political agitation. Their movement is no card, for government ends, in the hands of Bismarck or the German parliament. Their trust is not in politics in any way, but in the power wholly of moral and religious ideas, enforced by conscience and the Spirit of God.

On this subject we have a powerful address from Dr. Maassen, Professor of Law, in Vienna, in which he says that he had not been fully satisfied with one point made in the Munich platform of the previous year; this, namely, that "we reject the dogma of infallibility"—among other reasons—"because also it is dangerous to the State." Not that he questioned the truth so stated; for no one could be more fully convinced than he was, that the doctrine was in fact incompatible with the independent existence of the political order universally. But *that* was not properly a motive in this Old Catholic cause. For if the dogma were really from God, then it must be accepted even if the political order *had* to give way before it. The only justifying

motive for this cause lay in the blasphemous untruth of the dogma itself. Others might reject it on political ground, or even as rationalists because of their holding no faith in the gospel at all. "But *we* for the gospel's sake refuse to own the infallibility of a mere man." Yet as Christians and Catholics, he goes on to say, "we are also citizens of the State, and have the same right and interest with others, to deprecate the bearing of the dogma in question on the common national life." Not even then, however, as if the question must be considered of life account for the Old Catholic cause in any way. A full outward adoption of that cause on the part of the State would seem indeed a vast gain; but it would involve also a vast peril. "Our future, our trust stands in the truth of our cause itself and in the firmness of our convictions and our faith." For the State, however, he adds, though not for their cause, "it is *eine Lebensfrage*"—a question literally of life and death. The truth of this proposition he then proceeds to make clear, and charges home upon the Prussian government particularly a weak and vacillating policy in the case, altogether unworthy of the world-momentous crisis.

"But be the course of things here what it may," he adds in conclusion, "our stand-point is not affected by it in the least. For us Pope and Bishops of the Vatican Church are no longer Pope and Bishops of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church at present has no Pope, and with only a few exceptions no Bishops. If a Council of orthodox Bishops could be convened (a thing just now impracticable), Pope Pius IX., and all the Bishops who have accepted the Vatican dogma, would be deposed from their offices and dignities. No such Council being possible, the necessity of the situation is for us equivalent to its judgment. This would be non-allowable only under two suppositions: first, a doubt as to the actual falsehood and heresy of the Vatican dogma; secondly, a doubt as to its actual and persistent acceptance by the Pope and his consenting Bishops. But both these points are clear, beyond all need of any judicial inquiry. Pope and Bishops are *ipso facto* thus deprived of their offices and powers. In what other view, could our present Congress

take measures for choosing a new Bishop? For us it is a fixed fact, that Pius IX. is no more Pope of the Catholic Church, and that the Archbishops and Bishops who have bowed to the Vatican decree are no more Archbishops and Bishops of the Catholic Church. This proposition is not uttered lightly; it is uttered by one who has looked toward these men with a sense of the most inward reverence, but who cannot yet shrink for a moment, where faith and conscience are concerned, from drawing the consequences on which only it is possible for faith and conscience to stand."

This address, we are told, was followed in the vast Gürzenich Hall with long-continued applause.

It remains yet to say something of the significance of the Old Catholic movement, as related to the subject of Church union. It is one of the observable peculiarities of the time, that the Christian consciousness under all forms (outside of the Vatican communion) is coming to be so much exercised with the thought that the existing divisions of the Christian world, back to the first grand rupture between the Oriental and the Western or Latin Churches, are something fatally wrong for Christianity, and that nothing is more necessary now than their removal to make room for its ultimate triumphs in the world. One may hear in this form as it were on all sides, "the voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God;" and feel also how the glorious promise hangs upon it: "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." It is indeed a dreary desert that surrounds us now everywhere, through our reigning sect system (the bane of all the fruits of the Spirit as described in Gal. v. 22, 23); "a land where no water is;" a dry and thirsty land without dew, and where the heavens cease to drop down fatness. Who among us has not felt its blighting, narrowing, weakening, stunting influence upon our general spiritual life? And who that reflects can help seeing with Dr. Döllinger, that the divisions of the Church are the cause of all its other weakness, its loss of missionary

power, its too generally pusillanimous, if not absolutely driveling attitude over against the inrolling tide of our modern skepticism and unbelief? What a thought that Christianity has conquered as yet no more than a third of the world's population; that Buddhism is both older and in numbers stronger; that Islamism, the paralysis of nations, is still going ahead of it in the work of new conversions; and that now when the highway of commerce and travel is opened for it into all the dark places of the earth, it has so little power to irradiate them with its own light? For, alas, our missions, whether Catholic or Protestant, are not taking any effectual hold upon the world's heathen life. They are at best but a sort of colonized Christianity, foreign establishments kept up within narrow limits through foreign supervision and help, without any true seat in the life of the people where they are; hybrid births we may call them in the bosom of that life, that belong to it after all only in an outward manner, and so have no capacity for propagating themselves (by a native ministry for example) in any truly independent way. And why is all this? There can be but one answer. It is owing to the fearfully dismembered state of the Christian Church. What hope can there be for any whole evangelization of India, for example, through a dozen different denominational agencies, practically opposing one another in their conceptions of what Christianity is, and each trying to draw converts to itself in the weak, piping voice of a miserable, separate, merely human sect? It is high time, surely, that the cry should be going up as it is now from the true heart of Christendom all over the world: "Return, O Lord, how long? And let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants. Restore Thou the captivity of Thy people. O satisfy us early with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil."

This piercing cry of the soul for the reintegration of the Christian faith and life in a form answerable to the original idea of Christianity, the necessary condition (according to the word of Christ Himself) of its own soundness and of its power



to conquer the world, becomes thus a measure and test by which we may try the spirit of all church constitutions at this time, so as to know whether they be of God truly or not. To be indifferent to what is so plainly now the inmost need of Christianity, or to be affected toward it in any way that is after all not really catholic or universal, but only sectarian and partial (the case with much of our popular declamation on the subject of church union), must be regarded in any case, as far as it goes, as an argument of defective church life, a presumption of questionable weakness with regard to all the main interests of this life; and so the opposite of such indifferent or superficial mind may be taken, in the case of any ecclesiastical cause, as the best proof of its being not of man but of God.

Applied to the Papal Church, this simple criterion is profoundly suggestive. That system has been notoriously the cause of the great division between the East and the West, through its tyrannical ambition and pride. It resisted all efforts made for the reform of the most crying abuses in the period before the Reformation; and so, in the sixteenth century, literally forced into existence that great Protestant secession, which has been the source of such endless division since. And through all this there has been no loving or yearning concern shown for a true inward healing of these sad breaches; but on the contrary a most unloving and stern intolerance of the very thought of union, except under the one condition of blind submission to a mere human autocracy, which contradicts the idea of Christianity, and which all history proves to have been unknown in the beginning. And now a new issue (the necessary logical end, however, of all going before) is joined with the universal conscience of the Christian world, driving it to the wall, and turning into derision, as it were, the whole thought of Christian union. Rome, of course, has in this *her* theory also of a world-reconciliation in the end. But it is most uncatholic. It is that of an artificial mechanical uniformity, without any sort of inward free organization, a dead monotonous reign of law over men without the spirit of life in them. To aim at unity in this way is a contradiction; to dream of

reaching it, an absurdity. The policy of the Vatican is cold, and hard, and harsh; it is against union rather than for it; and it carries in it thus no power to conquer the world in the way of truth and righteousness.

“Our hope for the Old Catholic movement,” says the earnest, whole-souled Dr. Reinkens, “rests first of all in the *hopelessness* of the Ultramontane Church. Nothing in the world that is no longer capable of development can stand. That is an unchangeable law: what is incapable of farther development must go down. The catholicity of the Church of Jesus Christ has four characters, like love; it has its height and its depth, its breadth and its length. Its height is its source in God; its depth is the mystery, that it coins the eternally one into an endless variety and fulness of glorious forms; its breadth is the expansive power it has to embrace all the nations of the earth in its band of love; and its length is the capacity of Christianity for development through all ages, and along with this its capability of appearing always in forms answerable to each stage of culture. But Ultramontanism has no catholicity; it is not Catholic, but Romish. It has, therefore, no height, for it springs from a few designing and ambitious men. It has no depth; for it sees unity only in superficial uniformity. It has no breadth; for it shrivels more and more together, has thrust off already half Christendom, is now causing new divisions, and will go on to shrivel till it vanishes from the earth. Finally, it has no length; for it can develop no farther, inasmuch as with the dogmas of the Pope's infallibility and autocracy, the system has got to its full end. The keenest wit of man is unable to see what more can come of it. That is God's judgment upon Ultramontanism; it must go down, because it has in it no power of farther evolution. And this is *our hope*: as Ultramontanism goes down, we grow; for out of its ruins rise the disenchanting nations, which will then embrace the truth and feel themselves happy with us.”

Our Protestant sects, it is unnecessary to say, are also plainly unequal in their sect character to the task of restoring Christianity to its true form and power. With all the sense there

may be among them of the wrong and misery of our Church divisions (and as already said, there is a great deal of that now in all directions), still it is not in their nature, *as sects*, to seek honestly an end of these divisions in the way of genuine catholicity; as they have not in them either *as sects* the power of doing anything effectual toward bringing such catholicity to pass. And the consequence of all this, as may be easily seen, is a growing impotency among them in their own abstract order of existence, each coming to be more and more the outward form and shell only of what it was in the beginning. Thus are they also judged of God and found wanting. But of this we will speak no farther at present.

Regarded from the point of observation here brought into view, the Old Catholic movement, it must be allowed, does carry in it, as Dr. Reinkens intimates, a bow of hope and promise for the world, that may well fix upon it the serious attention of all who pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Even if it should come to nothing more, it has in it the force of a great lesson at least on the subject of Christian union, worthy of being studied and laid to heart by all parts of the Church.

It may be taken as God's signature upon the work, that it has been from the beginning not simply a protest against the tyranny of Rome, the great cause of the existing divisions of the Church, but an earnest overture, at the same time looking to the end of these divisions in the restored unity of the Church. That is felt to be the positive and full ultimate meaning of the movement, without which the merely negative oppositional side of it would be in truth of very small account.

So with Dr. Döllinger in his "Lectures on the Reunion of the Churches," which have found so favorable a response in Germany and also in other parts of the Christian world. In the same view again, we find the subject brought forward by Dr. Schulte, as already shown, in his address at the opening of the Cologne Congress; and it became part of the business of the Congress afterwards, as we know, to consider and act upon a report upon it, presented by a theological commission which had been previously appointed for the purpose. We can only

look at the matter here in the most general way; our concern being mainly with the ruling principles and ideas, on which in the view of the Old Catholics this necessary side of the great Christian work in which they are engaged must go forward.

“In all efforts for the reunion of the Confessions,” they say, “four things are to be eschewed as vain; unbelief, superstition, indifferentism and politics or state-craft. *Unbelief* has no hope, and where there is no hope there can be no Church. *Superstition* is darkness, and only the light that shineth into the darkness can give us a Church. *Indifferentism* is not, as so many affect to think, the strength of man, the free scientific man; it is spiritual debility and weakness; and only spirit and life can create a Church. *State-craft* belongs to another sphere wholly different from that of the Church, and when it seeks to use religion for its own ends, religion being itself the highest end of man, it is a crime against religion; no political diplomacy or chess-play in this form, therefore, can ever advance that well-being of mankind which is comprehended in the union of the Christian Confessions.”

Such union, we are told, cannot consist in *uniformity*. National peculiarities, as they appear in different divisions of the Church, have their right, and are not to be suppressed. Hence unity cannot proceed from any single Confession imposing its will on others; it is possible only through the coming together of all. *Freedom* thus is the law here; not compulsion; not subjugation in any way. The union must be *historical*; based, as Dr. Döllinger says, on the Bible and the old oecumenical creeds; yet not so as to ignore the onward flow of the true Christian life in later times. Experience has shown, that as no true church union can come from statesmen and politicians, so neither can it come from ecclesiastics in their official character. Where hierarchies or ministries look upon themselves as the Church, separately from the body of the people, they are never free from the snare of ambition; and their official negotiations for unity, accordingly, are sure to run into an effort on each side to lord it in some way over the other. The union of the Confessions must come in the end from the hearts of God's

believing children, brought to feel their common relationship in the family of God, and so refusing to remain any longer apart. The Old Catholics consider this to be the soul of their own movement, which is thus something wholly new in Church history. "Not in fifteen centuries, not since the beginning of the great divisions of Christendom, has there been anything like it in this, that not the rulers of the Church but the people should rise and say: We ask and demand the return of unity; there is awakening in us a longing for it, which we know to be from the motion of the Divine Spirit now abroad in the Church at large, and this motion we follow by trying to put ourselves at once in a position for the realization of what we desire."

True Church union, it is here assumed, must be catholic in its end, not partial or denominational, and can only come therefore from a catholic mind and purpose in the beginning—a spirit that seeks the reintegration of the divided Church in its *wholeness*, and not any alliance simply of kindred fractions of the Church, which may only serve after all to strengthen the main walls of division. Yet this is not so taken as to exclude the separate organization of collective national Churches. On the contrary, these are essential to the conception of Catholic unity; for nations are original and necessary diversifications of our general human life, resting on the basis of nature; and in any ultimate completeness of humanity (the true idea of the Holy Church Catholic—the Body of Christ), they must be, not abolished, but upheld and conserved as necessary component parts of this life. Such being the case it would seem indeed to follow that the cause of Christian union, as things now are, to be at all effectual, must aim first of all in any case at a national Church wholeness or catholicity, as the only way of reaching catholicity at last in its full œcumenical form. The Old Catholic movement accordingly, proceeds on this principle. While looking to a restitution of Christian unity in the world at large as its ultimate object, its immediate object is the restitution of unity at home, in the Christianity of Germany. Having made herself free from the bondage of the Papal system, the Catholic Church of Germany is to clear

herself at the same time of the old disorders and abuses that have caused division heretofore, and so with the olive branch of peace in her hand say to the Protestant Church of Germany: Let our strife cease, and let us become one fold again under the one Shepherd Jesus Christ.

This is the idea that floats before the mind of Döllinger, and it made itself felt very sensibly in the Congress at Cologne. The English Bishops there showed at first some disposition to force into view their rather narrow theory of Anglicanism, as a model to be admired and followed in the proceedings of the body. But they were soon given kindly to understand, that the Old Catholics of Germany did not mean to become at once either Anglican or Oriental Episcopalians, and that they had no thought especially of looking upon German Protestantism around them in the Pharisaic style too often met with among the would be "Old Catholics" of England; and which, let us add, we find assumed at times with an air by the Episcopalian prudery of some also in this country. In the ideal resurrection Church of Germany, the vast spiritual wealth of the German Reformation is to be fully acknowledged and brought into use.

Such, we say, is the ideal of Döllinger and his friends. What may come of it practically hereafter, we presume not to forecast or predict. Neither do we pretend to criticise it here even as a theory or idea. Our business is to describe simply rather than review. It is not hard to see, however, that if the divisions of the Church in Germany could be healed in the way here proposed, and the now sundered Confessions were again reintegrated into a common grand National Church, in which the Old Catholic faith, redeemed from the long nightmare of the Papacy, should appear happily joined with what is right and good in Protestantism, it would go farther toward a resolution of the great question of the age than any other movement yet attempted or proposed for the purpose. Such a result reached in Germany would be like life from the dead, not only for that nation, but for the nations of Europe in general, and so in a very short time for the universal Christian world. It would be in this respect of infinitely more account than any

Pan-Episcopal, Pan-Presbyterian, Pan-Methodist, Pan-Lutheran or Pan-Reformed mustering of ecclesiastical forces under their several distinguishing banners, without regard to nationality; and of infinitely more account also, of course, than all mere outside leagues or alliances, that have no higher idea of Christian union than that of a pacification of sects, coming to a general mutual hand-shaking, and agreeing to bear with one another kindly in their respective shibboleths and distinctions.

Looking at the Old Catholic movement in this way, we are not surprised to hear that it is in fact making itself felt already as a power of religious awakening outside of itself, beyond what might seem to be as yet the measure of its outward importance. "It must tell," says Bishop Strossmayer, "on the future religious life of Germany." The distinguished French theologian E. de Pressensè, speaking of the Cologne Congress says: "This convention will assuredly be remembered in Germany. Never since the Reformation were more weighty words spoken. Whatever may be thought of them, they form a page in history, and possibly *the preface to a large book.*" A prominent representative of the Protestant mediational school in Germany writes: "The days of Cologne are over! The power of the Highest wrought visibly in that Catholic conciliabulum. The perplexities of the older Church history are struck dumb before the dower of a new movement in the life of the Church. Old Catholicism, as a religious power, has made a step forward. And this without suffering itself to be drawn by the sapient state worshipers of our time into the attitude of a political party." Dr. Bluntschli, Privy Counsellor and Professor of Heidelberg, a no less prominent representative of the free-thinking wing of German Protestantism, declares: "What he had witnessed in the Cologne Congress convinced him, that there was no ground for apprehending that the Old Catholic Movement would lose itself in the sand; and that the movement has before it a great future." Still another leading Protestant voice says, with reference to the reunion question: "The difficulties of the case have not been overlooked; but the greatest thing by far is that a hand is actually put to the

work. The Old Catholics have thereby shown themselves to be in the deepest conceivable sense German patriots and friends of the national peace. The common sympathy of the two Protestant Confessions with the movement, is working back also on their own relation to each other with salutary effect. Steady attention to what is here going on, and growing serious occupation with the problems and interests of Old Catholicism, have already begun to exert visibly an inward reconciling and uniting influence on the hostile parties of the Evangelical Church." One more testimony and we have done; a word this time from Italy, spoken by one of her best scholars, R. Bonghi, Professor in Rome. Called by his studies and position, he informs us, to observe closely the revelations that are taking place in the profound heaving and working of modern society, he has been led, in view of what official Romanism was on one side and the perpetual self-dissolving sect life of Protestantism on the other, to look upon the Old Catholic initiative as the last and only promise of help for the case. "If the reform of Catholicism succeeds not with you," he says, addressing the leaders of the movement, "if it succeeds not with you to restore a divinely accredited religious authority, free from all exaggeration, it will be in my judgment the greatest proof to show, that *Europe is on the eve of a religious overturning*, the end of which we can as little foresee as its mode of coming to pass."