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Heuser, H. J.
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The New Syllabus.

Its Meaning and Purpose

By the Rev. H. J. Heuser



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No. 20

OCTOBER, 1907

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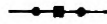
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The Syllabus



Its Meaning and Purpose

By the Rev. H. J. Heuser



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Educational Briefs

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The New Syllabus

Decree of the Holy Roman and Universal
Inquisition, 3 July, 1907



WITH result truly deplorable our age, impatient of a curb, in investigating the ultimate causes of things, often so follows novelty that, casting aside, as it were, the inheritance of the human race, it falls into the most serious errors. These errors will be far more baneful if sacred studies, the interpretation of Sacred Scripture and the principal mysteries of the Faith, are in question. It is, too, greatly to be regretted that even amongst Catholics are to be found writers not so few who, passing beyond limits laid down by the Fathers and by Holy Church herself, with a pretence of higher intelligence and in the name of historical examination, seek for that progress in dogmas which is in reality their corruption.

Lest errors of this kind, which are daily spread amongst the Faithful, should take root in their souls and corrupt the purity of the Faith, it has pleased the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius X, by Divine Providence Pope, that the chief amongst them should be pointed out and condemned through

this office of the Holy Roman and Universal Inquisition.

Wherefore, a diligent examination having been made and the opinion of the Rev. Consultors having been taken, the Cardinals, General Inquisitors on questions of faith and morals, have decided that the following propositions should be denounced and proscribed, as they are denounced and proscribed by this general Decree:

1. The ecclesiastical law which prescribes that books concerning the Divine Scriptures are to be submitted to previous censorship does not apply to those engaged in criticism or scientific exegesis of the Old and New Testament.

2. The Church's interpretation of the Sacred Books is not to be despised, but it is subject to the more accurate judgment and correction of exegetes.

3. From the ecclesiastical decisions and censures directed against free and more cultured exegesis it may be inferred that the faith set forth by the Church contradicts history, and that the Catholic dogmas cannot, in fact, be reconciled with the truer origins of the Christian religion.

4. The *Magisterium* of the Church cannot determine the proper sense of the Sacred Scriptures by dogmatic definitions.

5. As only revealed truths are contained in the deposit of the Faith, it is by no means within the province of the Church to pass judgment on the statements of human sciences.

6. In defining truths, the learning and the

teaching Church so coöperate that nothing remains for the teaching Church except to sanction the common opinions of the learning Church.

7. When the Church prescribes errors, it cannot exact from the faithful any internal assent embracing the decisions published by it.

8. They are to be considered quite free from fault who attach no importance to the condemnation pronounced by the Sacred Congregation of the Index or other Sacred Roman Congregations.

9. They are obviously too simple or too ignorant who believe that God is the author of the Sacred Scripture.

10. The inspiration of the books of the Old Testament consists in this, that the Jewish writers handed down religious doctrines under a certain peculiar form little known, or unknown to the Gentiles.

11. Divine inspiration does not so extend to the whole of the Sacred Scriptures as to secure all and each of the parts from every error.

12. The exegete, if he wishes to apply himself usefully to Biblical studies, should put aside every preconceived opinion on the supernatural origin of the Sacred Scripture, and should interpret not otherwise than he would other merely human documents.

13. The Evangelists themselves and the Christians of the second and third generation took the Gospel parables in an artificial sense, and thus gave occasion for the slight fruit of the preaching of Christ amongst the Jews.

14. In many narratives the Evangelists related not so much what is true as what they thought would, although false, prove rather serviceable to the readers.

15. Under the Canon was defined and established the Gospels which increased by constant additions and corrections; therefore only a slight and uncertain trace of the doctrine of Christ remained in them.

16. John's narratives are not properly history, but a mystic contemplation of the Gospel; the sermons contained in his Gospel are theological meditations about the mystery of salvation devoid of historic truth.

17. The fourth Gospel exaggerated the miracles not only that they should appear more extraordinary, but also that they might be better suited for attesting the work and the glory of the Word Incarnate.

18. John, no doubt, shows that he bears the character of a witness to Christ; but in reality he is only an excellent witness to the Christian life, or the life of Christ in the Church at the end of the first century.

19. The heterodox exegetes have given the true sense of the Scriptures more faithfully than the Catholic exegetes.

20. Revelation can be nothing else but the consciousness acquired by man of his relationship to God.

21. The Revelation which is the object of Catholic faith was not completed with the Apostles.

22. The dogmas which the Church puts forward as revealed are not truths that have come down from heaven, but a certain interpretation of religious facts which the human mind has secured by laborious effort.

23. There can and does actually exist opposition between the facts which are related in the Holy Scripture and the dogmas of the Church that depend on them; so that a critic may reject as false facts which the Church believes to be most certain.

24. The exegete is not to be blamed who lays down premises from which it follows that dogmas are historically false or doubtful, provided that he does not directly deny the dogmas themselves.

25. The assent of faith ultimately rests on a heap of probabilities.

26. The dogmas of the Faith are to be held according to their practical sense—that is to say, as a preceptive rule of action, not as a standard of belief.

27. The Divinity of Jesus Christ is not proved from the Gospels, but is a dogma which the Christian conscience has deduced from the notion of the Messiah.

28. When He exercised His ministry Jesus did not speak with a view to teaching that He was the Messiah, nor were His miracles intended to show this.

29. It may be granted that the Christ whom history presents is much inferior to the Christ who is the object of faith.

30. In the Gospel texts the name Son of God is only equivalent to the name Messiah; it by no means signifies that Christ is the true and natural Son of God.

31. The teaching concerning Christ which Paul, John, and the Councils of Nicæa, Ephesus, and Chalcedon hand down is not that which Jesus taught, but what the Christian conscience conceived with regard to Jesus.

32. The natural sense of the Gospel texts cannot be reconciled with what our theologians teach as to the conscience and infallible knowledge of Jesus Christ.

33. It is evident to every one who is not led by preconceived opinions either that Jesus taught error concerning the approaching advent of the Messiah or that the greater part of His doctrine contained in the Synoptic Gospels is devoid of authenticity.

34. The critic cannot ascribe to Christ knowledge without limit except on the hypothesis, which cannot be conceived historically and which is repugnant to the moral sense, that Christ as man had the knowledge of God and yet was not willing to make His disciples and posterity acquainted with so many things.

35. Christ had not always the consciousness of His Messianic dignity.

36. The Resurrection is not properly a fact of the historical order, neither proved nor provable, which the Christian conscience gradually inferred from other facts.

37. Faith in the Resurrection of Christ was concerned at the beginning not so much with the fact of the Resurrection itself as with the immortal life of Christ with God.

38. The doctrine on the expiatory death of Christ is not Evangelical, but only Pauline.

39. The opinions on the origin of the Sacraments with which the Tridentine Fathers were imbued, and which undoubtedly had an influence on their dogmatic Canons, are far different from those which now rightly prevail amongst historical investigators of Christianity.

40. The origin of the Sacraments is due to the fact that the Apostles and their successors interpreted some idea and intention of Christ under the movement and influence of circumstances and events.

41. The Sacraments have no other object than to bring to man's remembrance the ever-beneficent presence of the Creator.

42. The Christian community introduced the necessity of baptism, adopting it as a necessary rite and associating it with the obligations of the Christian profession.

43. The custom of baptizing children was a disciplinary development which was one of the causes why the Sacrament was divided into two—Baptism and Penance.

44. There is no proof that the rite of the Sacrament of Confirmation was employed by the Apostles; the formal distinction, therefore, between the two Sacraments—Baptism and Con-

firmation — does not belong to the history of primitive Christianity.

45. Not all that Paul relates concerning the institution of the Eucharist (I Cor. xi, 23-25) is to be accepted as historical.

46. The conception of a Christian as a sinner reconciled by the authority of the Church did not exist in the primitive Church; it was only very slowly the Church became accustomed to this conception. Nay, even after penance was recognized as an institution of the Church it was not called by the name of a Sacrament because it was considered an ignominious Sacrament (*sacramentum probrosum*).

47. The words of the Lord, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained” (John xx, 22-23), do not refer at all to the Sacrament of Penance, whatever it may have pleased the Tridentine Fathers to declare.

48. James in his Epistle (v. 14-15) does not intend to make known a Sacrament of Christ, but to recommend a pious custom, and if perchance he sees in this custom a means of grace he does not take it in the rigorous sense used by the theologians who fixed the notion and number of the Sacraments.

49. The Christian Supper having gradually assumed the character of a liturgical action, those who were accustomed to preside at the Supper acquired the sacerdotal character.

50. The elders who discharged the office of overseers at the meetings of the Christians were appointed by the Apostles as priests or bishops to provide the necessary regulation of the growing communities, not especially to perpetuate the Apostolic mission and power.

51. Marriage could not become a Sacrament of the new law till late in the Church, since for marriage to be considered a Sacrament it was necessary that there should first be a full theological development of the doctrine on grace and the Sacraments.

52. Christ had no intention of establishing the Church as a society to last on earth for a long series of centuries; nay, rather in the mind of Christ the Kingdom of Heaven was presently about to come with the end of the world.

53. The organic constitution of the Church is not immutable; but Christian society, in the same way as human society, is subject to a perpetual evolution.

54. The dogmas, the Sacraments, the Hierarchy in their conception and in reality are only expressions and developments of the Christian thought which have been increased and perfected by external additions the little seed hidden in the Gospel.

55. Simon Peter never even suspected that the primacy in the Church was entrusted to Him by Christ.

56. The Roman Church has become the head of all the Churches not by the arrangement of

Divine Providence, but owing to conditions purely political.

57. The Church shows itself hostile to the progress of the natural and theological sciences.

58. Truth is *no* more immutable than man himself inasmuch as it is evolved with him, in him, and through him.

59. Christ did not teach a fixed body of doctrine applicable to all times and all men, but rather he set on foot a certain religious movement adapted or to be adapted to different times and places.

60. The Christian doctrine was in its origin Judaic, but it became by successive developments first Pauline, then Johannine, and finally Hellenic and universal.

61. It can be said without paradox that no chapter of the Scripture from the first of Genesis to the last of the Apocalypse contains doctrines completely identical with that which the Church presents on the same subject, and therefore that no chapter of the Scripture has the same sense for the critic and for the theologian.

62. The principal articles of the Apostles' Creed had not for the Christians of the earliest times the meaning which they have for the Christians of our times.

63. The Church shows herself incapable of efficaciously safeguarding the gospel of ethics because she obstinately adheres to unchangeable doctrines which cannot be reconciled with modern progress.

64. The progress of the sciences demands that the conceptions of the Christian doctrines on God, the Creation, Revelation, the Person of the Incarnate Word, and the Redemption, should be reformed.

65. The Catholicism of to-day cannot be reconciled with true science unless it be transformed into a kind of non-dogmatic Christianity, that is, into a broad and liberal Protestantism.

On the following Thursday, the fourth of the same month in the same year, a faithful report of all this being made to our Holy Father Pope Pius X, his Holiness approved and confirmed the decrees of the Most Eminent Fathers and ordered that all and each of the propositions given above should be held by all as condemned and proscribed.

PETER PALOMBELLI,

*Notary of the Holy Roman and Universal
Inquisition.*

The Syllabus



THE OLD SYLLABUS.

WHEN, forty-three years ago, Pius IX published his famous "Syllabus" in connexion with the Encyclical *Quanta cura*, there arose protests from governments and from public men against the stringency of the doctrines and the reactionary effect these were likely to have upon modern political and scientific progress. Yet the "Syllabus" of 1864 was nothing more than a collection of propositions containing various ethical and doctrinal errors, which had already been, separately and distinctly, censured in the published Encyclicals and Allocutions of Pius IX; and they were here merely brought together so as to serve the interpreters of Catholic doctrine as an index of the Church's mind, exhibited in the utterances of her chief spokesman, on questions of the day. Each proposition offered a text which might be (like the texts for sermons taken from the Gospels) elaborated in the light of the documentary context wherein it had originally appeared, and made to illuminate Catholic truth according to the exigencies and varying occasions of time, place, and the capacity of the faithful. A dozen or more of these

texts were embodied in the Encyclical *Quanta cura* itself; and thence arose those animated scholastic discussions as to the extent to which the "Syllabus" might be considered to be an *ex cathedra* pronouncement possessing the note of infallible truth. Viewed from the point of practical utility these disputes contributed little or nothing to the actual understanding and observance of the doctrine and discipline set forth in the document which, whether infallible or not, called for the Catholic's loyal assent to the obvious signification of each proposition. If there existed any reasonable doubt as to which of several possible meanings a clause might bear, Catholics were free to accept the widest interpretation compatible with what the Church had elsewhere clearly defined; and this despite the dicta of individual interpreters or theologians differing from one another in their views. The discussions were kept alive for upward of thirty years, as is demonstrated by the Abbé Vieville's *Le Syllabus Commenté*, a volume of nearly 500 pages published in 1879, and the more recent *Vindicia Syllabi*,¹ not to speak of the numerous controversial writings which dealt rather with the tendency than with the text of the Syllabus, as defended in Newman's answer to Gladstone, or presented in the differences of viewpoint taken by theologians like Cardinal Mazzella as against Hefele and others.

¹ 1897, Naples.

The Syllabus of Pius IX was regarded as a somewhat novel form of instruction addressed to the faithful by the sovereign teacher of Christendom. It stated what Catholics could not conscientiously accept in the place of sound interpretation of their faith, and what therefore they must refrain from teaching and endorsing. This method of censuring erroneous doctrines left untouched the broad freedom of interpretation which belongs to man by reason of his native endowments of intelligence and free will; and the wars waged in the theological schools bear witness to this freedom, even whilst men in the exercise of it not infrequently lost sight of the principle of St. Augustine — *non pervenitur ad veritatem nisi per charitatem*. But the Church is not responsible for the *odium theologicum* generated in her schools any more than she is answerable for the other symptoms of weakness exhibited in her children whom she seeks to educate, or even in the teachers and executives to whom she commits the work of reform.

There had been earlier attempts to formulate such a chart of opinions to be avoided as the Syllabus of Pius IX represented. Cardinal Fornari had prepared “a list of errors” in doctrine and discipline which it was hoped would receive Pontifical sanction and be promulgated in connexion with the dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception in 1852. Later, in 1860, Bishop Gerbet of Perpignan published for his own diocese a syllabus of eighty-five propositions

dealing with the errors of the day. The document became actually the model in form of the Syllabus which Pius IX promulgated in 1864 under the title of "Syllabus comprising the principal errors of our age, censured in the Consistories, Encyclical writings, and Apostolic Letters of His Holiness Pius IX." It dealt with a large range of topics that had during the previous half-century formed the staple of doctrine and discussion in the new schools of philosophy and politics. Thus it condemned the vagaries of pantheism, naturalism, and rationalism, as taught by Spinoza, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and interpreted by Cousin, Jules Simon, and their less radical disciples. A distinct group of propositions had for its object to censure the various forms of indifferentism and latitudinarianism; others were leveled at socialism, communism, and certain liberalizing societies acting under the pretence of religious zeal. The political upheavals of Italy had turned the Pontiff's attention to the question of ecclesiastical rights, including the temporal sovereignty of the Pontiff. Accordingly a proportionate number of propositions dealt with this subject. Other errors which were stigmatized touched different questions of Christian morals, especially the modern aspects of Marriage and the sacramental safeguards of Catholic social and family life.

Somewhat different in scope and in tone from the Syllabus of Pius IX is the present Syllabus which, lacking the note of personal utterance,

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appears as the work of the Sacred Congregation of the Inquisition under the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff.

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broadly speaking, states the authoritative attitude of the Church toward modern errors propagated mainly, though not exclusively, within the fold. It is a disciplinary measure issued by her teaching authority (*magisterium*) for the guidance of those who profess allegiance to her doctrine and discipline. Its object is to serve, on the one hand, as a check to the unguarded defenders of novel theories which trench upon the domain of faith and morals, and on the other as a guide to the consistent Christian who may find himself in doubt about the safety of doctrines that appeal to him by their plausibility, yet rouse his suspicion by their novelty and apparent divergence from established truths and principles, as hitherto interpreted by tradition.

The immediate purpose of the new Syllabus is not to instruct theologians, but to safeguard the faithful. Hence, any attempt to subject the different propositions to the straining process of critical analysis, or to apply to their interpretation those minute distinctions which seem to be the prerogative of the schools, would frustrate the straightforward intention of the Sovereign Pontiff at whose instigation a commission of the S. Inquisition was appointed to draw up this Syllabus. The principal aim of the document is

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clearly enough indicated in the brief introductory, which states that these errors are censured because they *are daily spreading among the faithful, threatening to take root in the minds of Catholic people, and thereby corrupting the purity of their faith.*¹

It is true that many of the propositions in the new Syllabus suggest the censure of current writings which, though unnamed here, are understood to be identified with the teaching of men who, by their proficiency in historical learning and scientific investigation, occupy an intellectual position above the masses. But it is also apparent that the modern methods and means which render the conclusions of these scholars popular have greatly increased, and that a less gifted and indiscriminate reading public is apt to be indoctrinated with tenets, the reasons or motives and merits of which it cannot grasp or fairly judge of. Every thoughtful man knows that those zealots who are least adequately prepared by previous systematic study to demonstrate a theory will be the most eager to support what their partial knowledge commends. It is much easier to declaim in the name of science, by quoting the words of a master, than to support a given state-

¹ Ne vero hujus generis errores, qui quotidie inter fideles sparguntur, in eorum animis radices figant ac fidei sinceritatem corrumpant, placuit SSmo. D. N. Pio, ut per hoc S. R. et U. Inquisitionis officium ii qui inter eos praecipui essent, notarentur et reprobarentur.—*Decr., Intro.*

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ment by the demonstrated exercise of sound and correct judgment. And since the fact that a man is learned and has made many experiments does not necessarily render all his conclusions certain, even when they are very plausible, it is but just that our children and the simple-minded folk among us be prevented from blindly "swearing by the words of the individual teacher," whenever there are reasons to fear that his conclusions are either doubtful or dangerous to their peace of mind.

Such reasons exist whenever men of equal learning or of sound judgment differ in their conclusions drawn from the same or kindred premises. It is not necessary for a man to be a scientist or an experimentalist to understand the value of scientific conclusions; in truth, no man is more in danger of overestimating the worth of special investigations than he who has made them. They are his offspring, and so he loves them, exaggerates their weight and their utility; and as his has been the hard labor of establishing them he is naturally reluctant to admit the criticism that would show them to be inconclusive or erroneous. Nevertheless, in the case of the scientist, as of the genius, we most often find verified what is said of men in general, namely, that the public takes each of them at his own valuation. It is a fallacy of common human weakness. Under these circumstances there must be some court of appeal whose judges are more broad-minded than the individual to decide, if

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not upon the intrinsic or absolute correctness of scientific conclusions, at least upon the value of their indiscriminate application, their probable weight as compared with other testimony of a different or contrary tendency, and of the good or harm they may effect when taught to the people. For a conclusion may be theoretically true, yet its application to actual circumstances may be inopportune or, what is worse, hurtful, because the occasions for misapplications happen to be unduly rife. It may be said therefore that when a learned man appraises his discovery, and his friends and admirers conspire to advertise it in his behalf, as a new truth, the general public is much in the position of an audience to whom an eloquent lecturer announces a new remedy of ancient ills. The very novelty of the discovery causes an exaggerated statement of its value, and when its adoption has become the fashion, those who doubt are apt to be decried as adherents of an old school or as obscurantists. Time passes, and the panacea of yesterday is superseded by a fresh nostrum, whilst the reasons which approve the new are the reasons that condemn the old. Let one examine the records of the history of political economy, of exegesis, of experimental science—and with these the Syllabus happens to deal—and he will find that the popular theories of one age have invariably created a reactionary theory in the next quite as popular as the contradictory one that preceded it. Monarchism and republicanism, private interpretation of Scrip-

ture and the higher criticism, spontaneous generation and the germ theory, furnish instances of economical, Biblical, and scientific views of diametrically opposite philosophical schools claiming almost universal sway for a time as the only evidence and possible solution of existing problems.

Who is to settle the practical difficulties arising out of the conflict of minds? In the secular commonwealth it is the State authority, with due regard to the existing political forms and the circumstances which make legislation effective. In the religious commonwealth it is the Church.

COMPETENCY OF THE CHURCH TO POINT OUT
SCIENTIFIC ERROR.

The objection is frequently raised that, in proscribing the works of writers who have made special historical or scientific research for the purpose of throwing light upon modern questions, particularly of Scripture and of doctrine, the Church authorities use mere repressive power against the quite distinct claims of reason and intelligence. Thus, to take the present Syllabus as an instance, a few churchmen represented by the Inquisition, with Pius X, who lays no claim to special scientific training, as their president, agree to stigmatize as erroneous the published investigations of the Abbé Loisy, a life-long student in the field of the Scriptures and of dogma. It is as if a jury of common laborers, however intelligent and honest they may be, were to sit in judgment on the scientific merits of the physio-

logical tests of a Leipzig specialist, whose laboratory apparatus for investigating and observing the manifestations of animal and psychic life secure for him results not easily accessible to the ordinary student. In other words, an unprofessional jury undertakes to pronounce judgment upon the merits of expert scientific testimony.

The objection would have weight if we had here a perfect analogy. The Roman jury of the Inquisition does not pretend to pronounce sentence upon expert scientific testimony, but rather upon the very commonplace moral effects which are certain to result from the teaching of such testimony if spread broadcast among those who are not qualified to discriminate between a scientific hypothesis and an ascertained fact. The Syllabus deals with the value of the results assumed as demonstrated by the individual scientist, not with the correctness of the processes by which he may have reached them. The object of the Church is to safeguard the truth of things and the possession of truths of which she has been assured by a far higher Intelligence than that of a commission of theologians such as compose the Inquisition. That a scientist, however learned or conscientious he may be, should rob a Christian mind of the motives of credibility upon which divine revelation rests, and give him in return nothing but the assurance of individual talent and labor, is admitting a principle which subverts the very fundamentals of sane evidence, unless we relinquish the testimony of revealed religion entirely.

Whenever we meet with a statement accepted as actual fact by the authorities of the Church, and maintained as fact against the contrary assertion of the scientist, either such fact is vouched for by divine revelation or its contrary assumption is not sufficiently demonstrated by science to warrant the sacrifice of an established tradition. Such is the case with regard to the theories, lately repudiated by the authorities of the Church, touching the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, or the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel. Her censure of both theories means in the first place that the champions of the new theory have merely criticized the old tradition without proving conclusively that it is erroneous. In other words, they have not brought positive proof of sufficient weight to equal that on which the traditional belief rests. Hence that belief must stand. The Church authorities do not add "for the present," simply because, since there is no sufficient reason to accept the new exegesis or new theology as more than a mere hypothesis, any prognosis of what science may prove hereafter is out of place. The unbiased critic will recognize this truth on examination of the facts in every single case. The Church may have reasons to alter her disciplinary laws, as any society may, but whilst she makes them for present conditions they are absolute and presently binding.

It is plain, then, that a competent jury in such cases need not possess expert learning to pass

sound judgment upon the practical effects which certain doctrines must exercise upon the moral and religious life of the community, or to decide whether and how far a newly-claimed doctrine contradicts an established truth of a higher order. One might, indeed, quote historical evidence to show that narrow judgments of potent churchmen occasionally limit the free exercise of genius. The case of Galileo is a favorite one with the advocates of individual rights as against the abuse of ecclesiastical rule. To make such incidents the basis of an argument against the beneficent purpose and action of an institution like the Inquisition appears to us very much the same as if one inveighed against the supreme courts of justice, because it can be shown that such courts have occasionally erred in pronouncing judgment. Unless we make the Inquisition an infallible tribunal, we must expect that it is liable to issue judgments that may possibly be reversed at some future time. But the existence of such a possibility neither suspends the judgments of a legal tribunal nor creates any presumption that its decisions are not as a rule just and true.

To confine ourselves to the application of this test of the justice of the censures implied in the Syllabus, we should find it in sooth difficult to select a more representative body of educated and liberal-minded judges than the commission appointed to examine the ethical, Biblical, and theological theories and doctrines of modern

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times, and to pass judgment as to whether and in what sense these theories imply a subversion of established principles and truths maintained in the apostolic deposit of Catholic faith. The Inquisition consists of about fifty members, among whom are some thirty consultors, heads for the most part of religious communities, of universities and learned academies, who have attained their positions in nearly every case by fully demonstrated ability through long years spent both in teaching and in actual administration. Practically every order and nationality has its representatives in this body—Father David Fleming, the English Franciscan, P. Cormier, the French Dominican, P. Wernz, the German Jesuit, the two latter being the Generals of their respective Orders. Besides these there are the officials called qualificators and archivists, who directly serve the consultors, read, revise, ascertain facts, verify, compare, and collate the results. These men do not do their work hastily. In the present case they have been working for two years. The conclusions of their labors are tabulated, again examined, and finally submitted to the judgment of the tribunal which has at its head ten or more cardinals, men of exceptional learning, of tried experience, and of conscientious appreciation of the responsibility to the public which their judgment involves. That the Sovereign Pontiff, head of a body whose pronounced tendencies are in favor of vindicating the good name of the Church as the protector of learning

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no less than as the guardian of faith, should assume any other than a most liberal and benevolent attitude in reviewing the tenets that claim the patronage of science, seems contrary to every fair view of the case. Cardinals Rampolla, Gotti, Ferrata, Serafino Vannutelli, Merry del Val, Respighi, Steinhuber, Segna, Vives y Tuto, who form the chief judges of the Inquisition, are not men who would lay themselves open to the charge of patronizing obscurantism, unless it were demanded by the evident duty of defending the fundamental principles of Christian doctrine and discipline. There are, of course, those who believe that the doctrines of the Gospels are obscurantism, and that the principles which Christ characterized as heavenly wisdom should be revised to give place to the utilitarian wisdom of the world which He pronounced to be folly. In her own domain the Church must remain judge of these things; and the preservation of faith and of morals through religious discipline is eminently the province of the Church. To carry out effectually this work of safeguarding her subjects from the aggressive enterprises of those who, under the guise of intellectual progress, sincere though they be, threaten to destroy the life of faith, the Church has her organs of government, one of which is the Inquisition, and these organs issue their laws, warnings, directions, as in this case of the Syllabus.

A BOARD OF MORAL HEALTH.

The functions of the Inquisition and the meaning of the Syllabus will perhaps be best understood if we compare them to similar institutions in the civil order. Republican government is not supposed to interfere with individual rights. Its object is rather to promote the contentment and prosperity of its subjects. It promotes science and individual enterprise, and secures the rights of competitive action by legislation, sometimes restrictive, sometimes punitive. It also provides for the physical well-being of its subjects within certain limits. Among the measures adopted for this purpose there are Boards of Health, whose functions are, on the one hand, to prevent the rise and spreading of disease, and on the other hand to promote the use of wholesome food-stuffs to the exclusion of adulterated products which we owe to the progress of science and to the commercial enterprise of individuals and of companies. Now the Board of Health claims, and justly, to forbid the indiscriminate emptying into public streams or highways, of garbage, or chemical matter, or animal products, which might infect the common air or water; and this even when such products are the necessary concomitant of important scientific or commercial enterprise. Again, the Board of Health deems it a duty to protect the public against the thousand and one doubtful and noxious food preparations which commend themselves to the housewife as labor-saving, cheap, and palatable, not to speak

of the fact that they are promotive of invention as well as of industry. Does the average citizen complain of violation of his personal rights because he is confronted in public places with an inscription "Please do not spit," or because he receives a list from the Department of Public Health warning him that the "absolutely pure baking soda" is adulterated with arsenic or other hurtful ingredients? The manufacturer of these products may cry out against such legislation because it puts an embargo on scientific experimentation of benefit to mankind by proposing to feed it more economically, or because it interferes with the individual right of a citizen to poison himself comfortably. But a sensible economist will conclude that the government's vigilance is beneficent in its purpose and advantageous in its net results. Even if the Board of Health were, through the fanaticism of one or other of its members, at times to pass some extreme measure or injure some individual or private interest, we should not interpret such action as indicative of the uselessness or injuriousness of the principle and method of hygienic protection.

Now the Inquisition is nothing more or less than the Board of Health of the Church. Its functions are, of course, in the moral order. It examines the poisonous products of modern inventions which the intellectual enterprise of scholars throws upon the market, or into the streams of popular education. It warns the citi-

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zens of the religious commonwealth which the Church represents, and it forbids under censure the pollution of public places, or the manufacture and sale of noxious products that would infect the moral health of her subjects. In regard to some things prohibited we can conceive of changed conditions that would remove the noxious character of these things when applied in a different way. But as it is, they are hurtful to the public, and without issuing an infallible verdict in a matter which does not require such assurance, the Church claims the right of demanding obedience, such as an intelligently directed will gives to a disciplinary command, or even warning, issued for the common good. The Syllabus is a list of adulterated food products, the result of scientific experiment, but not on that account the less injurious to the health of heart and mind.

CATEGORIES OF ERRORS.

To obtain a better survey of the kinds of adulterated and poisonous mental food products of which the Syllabus forms an instructive, if summary, list, the sixty-five propositions or errors which it contains may be grouped under five heads. There are false teachings about the functions of authority, of written revelation, of apostolic tradition, of dogmatic integrity and unity, and of the development of doctrine. They deal with principles, or with facts, or simply with effects. They may not censure a proposition in

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its separate parts, but only in its entirety, for the parts may be true, and yet the composition false. Salt is one of the most helpful factors of nutrition, yet chlorine which forms part of it causes almost instant death when absorbed separately by the vital organs.

Thus, through the Syllabus of the Inquisition, the Church in her capacity as guardian of the faith proscribes loose views about authority, ecclesiastical and civil, since she understands that all authority is from God. She vindicates the value of accredited divine revelation upon which faith must build up its confidence in the future. She repudiates the assumption of the individual to interpret the laws of faith and discipline, which have the sanction of ages, by the mere notions of a new philosophical theory, or to give up the acquired historical bases of moral law and rectitude merely because of the assertions that they are disproved by analogy and the existence of myths and fables which resemble the facts of sacred history. The careful student of these propositions will easily recognize that the Church does not condemn a free interpretation of historical evidence, as, for example, in Scripture, where there is warrant for relinquishing a literal for a figurative sense.

There is abundant evidence in the utterances and acts of both Pius X and those who act under his chief authority, that the government of the Church is anxious to advance the interests of science in all its domains; but also to maintain

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that first of prerogatives and duties which her position as Christ's representative entails—namely, to advance the principles of sound ethics and religion, and to make education the vehicle not merely of intellectual prowess (which may lead to fatal errors), but also of that highest culture which Christian civilization represents, only because it has been moved by Christian principles as taught in the Gospel and the doctrinal code of the Church.

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