

failed to justify the high hopes for Neo-Scholasticism expressed in *Aeterni Patris*. The quality of the new professors at the Gregorian did not match the quality of their predecessors, and the same could be said of the replacements made at the other Roman institutions. Although Leo XIII made both Mazella and Zigliara cardinals and appointed both prefects of very important Roman Congregations, neither of them had any great understanding of modern philosophy or any notable sympathy for modern culture.<sup>59</sup>

The triumph of Neo-Scholasticism actually hurt the teaching of theology at the Gregorian. In the decades before *Aeterni Patris* the most distinguished theologians there were Giovanni Perrone, Carlo Passaglia, and Johannes Franzelin, none of whom was an adherent of the Neo-Scholastic movement. In fact, they had little interest in scholasticism as a coherent integrated system. Above all, they were positive theologians, interested in history and, although scholastics themselves, far from hostile to the new German theology. The first really distinguished Neo-Scholastic theologian to be appointed to the Gregorian was Louis Billot who, like Franzelin, was to become a cardinal. Billot arrived in 1885. He was exclusively a scholastic speculative theologian. Brilliant and influential though he was, he had practically no interest in history, and his writings are distinguished by a positive disregard for it. The result of his domination of the faculty unfortunately was that in the last years of the century, at a time when historical studies, especially in Germany, were raising serious problems for the Catholic faith, positive theology went into a serious decline at the Gregorian.

The new generation of professors in the Gregorian's faculty of philosophy were seminary professors rather than creative thinkers. Their publications were chiefly Latin manuals designed for undergraduates whose purpose was the clear exposition of received "Thomist" doctrines. At the conclusion of his masterly study of the Neo-Scholastic "Roman School" in his *Epistémologie thomiste*, Georges van Riet admitted ruefully that no real progress was made in Thomistic epistemology between the publication of Liberatore's works and the publication of Joseph Gredt's *Elementa philosophiae* in 1899.<sup>60</sup> Roger Aubert, the celebrated historian of the nineteenth-century Church, took an equally pessimistic view of the "Roman School."<sup>61</sup>

With the exception perhaps of Billot in theology and Mercier in