Lord of all good life, and the Saviour from all human ills, and the holy passion of the Cross sends us forth to the service of all needy souls.

Our fathers wrote a great chapter of social uplift in these 100 years, simply because they followed Christ to all the issues of His call.

> Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,
> And not on paper leaves or leaves of stone;
> Each age, each kindred, adds a verse to it,
> Texts of despair, or hope; of joy, or moan.

May God help us, in our age, to write our text of hope and joy.

W. RIDLEY CHESTERTON.

How the Infallibility of the Pope was Decreed.[1]

FREE Churchmen do not need convincing as to the fallibility of the Pope, but, perhaps, comparatively few of them know *how* fallible were the persons and proceedings through which the decree of his infallibility was secured. This at least must be my excuse for dealing with the subject here.

And first let us see what causes determined the definition in 1870. Among Catholics there was a strong desire to honour and console the Pope. Pius IX. was a man of amiable personal character, and his misfortunes elicited warm sympathy even from some who were not Catholics. He had undergone the hardship of exile, and now he seemed to be on the point of losing what yet remained of the Papal States, and therewith the last remnant of his so-called temporal power. But the chief reason was the desire to check, if possible, the ravages caused by the steady and alarming advance of rationalism in the lands of western civilisation in all departments of thought. It was supposed that the only effective remedy lay in the strengthening

[1] This paper is substantially the latter part of a lecture entitled, "The Story of Papal Infallibility," delivered at New College, London, as the Inaugural Lecture of the session 1932-3.

of authority. Free thought, scientific and historical, was putting forth fresh speculations almost daily, and making them universally known through the agency of a free press. Obviously, councils of the Church were a too slow and cumbrous machinery to deal effectively with the danger. For practical reasons they could not be summoned often; and there was the risk that they served to manifest division rather than unanimity of opinion on the questions deliberated. What was wanted was a single supreme head of the Church, who could infallibly pronounce the divine truth on all sorts of questions as they arose. This temper is seen conspicuously in W. G. Ward, one of the first of the Oxford tractarians to go over to Rome, who declared to a friend that he wished he might have a fresh Papal Bull for breakfast every morning along with his *Times*. As editor of the *Dublin Review*, Ward treated as disloyal Catholics all who were not prepared to accept *every* official utterance of the Pope as infallible.

The Catholic press was indeed diligently employed to pave the way for the acceptance of the dogma. An extreme instance is that of the French *Univers*, under the editorship of the layman, Vieullot. "We all know certainly only one thing, that is, that no man knows anything except the man with whom God is for ever . . . we must unswervingly follow his inspired directions." Vieullot even sneered at the deliberations preparatory to the Vatican Council, as implying that the Holy Ghost needed time for reflection, and he actually printed parodies of Catholic hymns in which the Pope's name replaced the name of God. But the greatest sensation was caused by the *Civilta Cattolica*, a paper controlled by the Jesuits of the Roman Court, who knew and indeed largely influenced the mind of the Pope himself. On February 6th, 1869, it published an article foreshadowing the adoption of the dogma of papal infallibility by acclamation at the forthcoming council. This, however, provoked vehement remonstrance in some quarters, and the Pope himself thought it politic to let it be understood that the paper was not warranted in assuming that it represented his own views.

We may now pass to a consideration of the Council itself and its proceedings. We cannot follow in detail the story of its successive sittings. But it will aid us in forming a judgment as to its competence to decree papal infallibility, if we examine (1) the *personnel* of the Council, (2) some characteristic specimens of its procedure, (3) the definition of infallibility itself, with its interpretation and practical consequences.

Let me say here that the primary authority for my statements is a celebrated Roman Catholic, the late Lord Acton; he was in Rome at the time, and in constant and close touch with

the minority leaders in the Council. He supplied at least the materials of a remarkable series of letters which appeared almost daily, during the sittings of the Council, in a German newspaper.[2] These were subsequently published as "Letters from the Council" by Quirinus, and they remain a first-rate source of information, not only as to the official proceedings of the Council, but also as to the views and activities of party leaders and committees. By common admission Acton was an excellent historian, of vast learning, and with a passion for historic truth. He died in full communion with the Roman Church, and no serious inaccuracy has ever been demonstrated in his reports of the Council.

The Council was one of the largest Catholic councils ever assembled. At its fullest it numbered over 700. Yet it was far from being adequately representative of the Roman Catholic world. To begin with, there were nearly 200 members who did not represent the Catholics of any geographical area—so-called "titular" bishops without dioceses, vicars apostolic, non-episcopal cardinals, and heads of monastic orders. Next, with regard to the diocesan bishops, representation was hopelessly disproportionate, whether we look at numbers or quality. Italy alone had 276 bishops, against 265 for all the rest of Europe. The Papal States (in Italy and Sicily) had sixty-two, representing less than three-quarters of a million souls, whereas Germany had fourteen, to a Catholic population of twelve millions. The great archbishops of Cologne, Cambrai and Paris, who were all anti-infallibilists, had flocks numbering together five million; yet they could be outvoted by any four other members of Council. And what makes the disproportion so disquieting is that the prelates most respectable for learning and character belonged almost exclusively to the minority, coming chiefly from Germany, France and America. "If any here" [in Rome], says Quirinus, "were to demand of the so-called theologians . . . the capacity of reading the New Testament and the Greek Fathers and Councils in the original language, he would be ridiculed as a dreamer."[3]

Religious literature was deplorably scarce and poor in Italy. It is a contemporary Italian writer who affirms that "in Italy there are not so many religious books printed in half a century as appear in England or N. America in one year. Here in Rome you may find a lottery dream book in almost every house, but never a New Testament, and extremely seldom any religious book at all." Quirinus, who quotes this, himself says,

[2] The Augsburg "Allgemeine Zeitung."

[3] Subsequent quotations in inverted commas are from Quirinus, unless otherwise assigned.

"It is difficult to form a notion of the ignorance of these Latins [Italians and Spaniards] in all historical questions, and their entire want of that general cultivation which is assumed with us [Germans] a matter of course in priest or bishop. And up to this time I have always found here that the predilection for the Infallibility theory is in precise proportion to the ignorance of its advocates." And again, "People here say, 'Why do you Germans . . . think everyone must learn to read? Take example from us, where only one in ten can read, and all believe the more readily in the infallible living book, the Pope.'" The Infallibilist leaders held that the definition would usher in a new dispensation —that of the Holy Ghost. Naturally, then, they were quite indifferent to facts of ancient history with which the dogma of infallibility was in contradiction.

If we are to say anything of the influence of *individuals* in the Council, we must at least not omit the Pope himself. The character of Pius IX. was such as to command general respect. His intellectual gifts, however, were of a modest order. "It is known here that small as are the intellectual requisites for ordination in the Papal States, it was only out of special regard to his family that Giovanni Maria Mastai could get ordained priest." He was in no sense a learned man. His ignorance of church history can be judged from his speaking[4] of his infallibility as "that pious doctrine which for so many centuries nobody questioned." He was specially devoted to the cult of the Virgin Mary. During the Council he announced that whoever, after confession and communion, recites the Rosary daily for a week, for the Pope's intention and for the happy termination of the Council, may gain a plenary indulgence of all his sins, applicable also to the dead. He adds that even when a child, and far more as Pope, he has always placed his whole confidence in the mother of God, and that he firmly believes it to be given to her alone by God to destroy all heresies throughout the world. Pius believed that through continual invocation and worship of the Madonna he had attained to an inspiration and divine illumination of which she was the medium—a purely personal privilege, which his predecessors did not all experience. As early as 1854 he summoned the bishops to Rome, and proclaimed to them on his own authority the dogma of the immaculate conception of the Virgin, though it was contrary to the teaching of some of the greatest doctors of the Catholic Church, e.g., S. Thomas Aquinas himself. Of course, the proclamation assumed his own infallibility, which he had proclaimed as early as 1846, without its provoking any commotion. He had indeed a peculiarly exalted self-

[4] In a letter to his nuncio at Paris.

consciousness. Quirinus quotes him as saying, "I believed it [his own infallibility] as plain Abbé Mastai; and now, as Pius IX, I feel it." "He frequently says that he too is a poor sinner, but (whereas) in all other mortals sin begets error as its necessary consequence . . . in his case, sin, through a special miracle, has no influence on the intellect." During the Council he proclaimed openly that he could not and would not tolerate any further doubt about his infallibility on the part of others. He actually declared on one occasion, "I know all about it," implying that he knew the state of affairs in Catholic Germany better than its own bishops.

It was this Pope who began the custom of frequent encyclicals on questions of the day. The most prominent example is the notorious Syllabus of 1864, which condemned eighty "errors of our time," including rationalism, Protestantism, socialism, any State control of Church affairs or education, civil marriage, freedom of conscience, of worship, and of the press. Should we be surprised to find that this man who trusted thus to his own direct inspiration was in reality very much at the mercy of advisers? This is repeatedly insinuated by Newman. Of these advisers the most influential were members of the Jesuit Order. (Papal infallibility had always been with them a favourite doctrine.) "He made the Jesuits a channel of his influence, and became an instrument of their own." It was after taking a Jesuit as his own confessor that his unique passion for proclaiming new dogmas became noticeable.

The Pope's faithful henchman in steering infallibility through the Council was Archbishop (afterwards Cardinal) Manning. "Manning appears to be recognised as their leader by all the adherents of the new dogma." His influence was in no way due to superior learning. "He does not possess a tenth part of the learning of his master [Newman]." His views of the Church's history were shallow and inaccurate. But he could afford to neglect history; for, according to him, "the appeal to antiquity is both a treason and a heresy." At the time of his conversion to Romanism, Manning could still say, "the intellect is God's gift, and our instrument in attaining knowledge of His will." But later he became an extreme advocate of authority. He himself told Ward that in 1867, on occasion of the feast of S. Peter and S. Paul at Rome, he and the Bishop of Ratisbon "jointly made a vow that they would not rest until they had secured the great dogma which was to give new glory to Christ's outraged vicar"; and Newman (in a letter) says that the securing of the Definition became with Manning a kind of "fixed idea." If so, it is hardly surprising to find him comparatively unscrupulous in the means he was prepared to adopt for securing

it. In another context Manning could declare that "imposture is the mark of a feeble and failing cause." But Newman does not hesitate to speak of "intrigue" and "trickery" in reference to Manning's tactics to secure the passing of the Infallibility decree at the Council. English priests who opposed it were silenced by threats of suspension and degradation. Father Thurston, S.J., says that "Manning made no secret of the policy of the committee organised by him, to exclude from the Deputation on the Faith" every name known to be adverse to the Definition," and he speaks of the presiding Cardinals yielding on an important point, against their better judgment, to the agitation of Manning. (Art. "Councils," *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics, IV.*) In the Council Manning took up the position that infallibility was already part of the Church's doctrine; hence (consistently) he treated all who opposed it as heretics, whose part in the proceedings was not to be listened to, but to hear their own condemnation; and he actually went so far as to suggest that as soon as the decree had passed, each bishop who had voted against it should have his excommunication handed to him along with his railway ticket on leaving Rome.

We will now turn to the Council itself, and indicate some features of its constitution and procedure which seem to have some bearing on the question of its competence to pronounce finally on the momentous question of infallibility.

The Bull whereby the bishops were summoned to the Council did not state specifically the business to be considered, and made no mention of infallibility in particular. On arriving they were assured that no one dreamed of defining it, and the Council had actually been in progress some time before the Infallibilist leaders judged it expedient to announce that the Decree would be brought before it.

The discussions took place in a hall of the full height of St. Peter's Church and the acoustics were so deplorably bad that real discussion was impossible. Only men with good carrying voices could hope to be heard, and even strong men were thoroughly exhausted by the efforts involved in a long speech. At the first voting several bishops replied "Against! for we have heard nothing." Before long, indeed, one-third of the hall was partitioned off, and shortly before the close of the Council an awning was spread over to serve as a sounding board. These changes, however, effected only a partial improvement. One cardinal declared he had not really been able to follow a single speech, another, that not twenty words of any speech had reached his ears. Yet Pius clung to this hall, though petitioned by bishops to change. We need not suspect that this was

precisely because it prevented thorough debate—although an Italian ecclesiastic told an Anglican clergyman as much. But the Pope had spent a very large sum on preparing it, and more important still was the consideration of its proximity to the shrine called the Confession of St. Peter, whence he believed an influence issued which helped to bring the bishops to one mind with himself. The official language of the proceedings was Latin. The majority of the bishops was not sufficiently accustomed to its use to be able to speak fluently and effectively in Latin.

By the Bull "*Multiplices inter,*" the Pope reserved to himself the nomination of all Council officers, and also the final determination of the subjects to be discussed. Any motions meeting with opposition were referred to a commission for revision, and as thus revised the Council could only *vote* on them. Should the Pope die during its proceedings, the Council was to be dissolved. Strict secrecy respecting all that took place within the Council was enjoined, on pain of mortal sin, on all the members. This regulation, however, was widely ignored. Manning obtained a dispensation from the Pope, and gave full information to Odo Russell, the British emissary to the Vatican, in order that he might checkmate Lord Acton's endeavours to get the government of Mr. Gladstone to intervene. Acton himself, as we have seen, freely published information derived from members. After many weeks had been spent with little or nothing accomplished, there appeared a regulation which empowered the presidents to stop a speech, and even to closure a debate if this were voted by a majority. And the closure was actually applied at a most important point in the course of the Council—to the general debate on the Pope's primacy—when there were still forty unheard, who had given notice of their intention to speak. Once more, all motions were to be decided by a mere majority vote—surely a very incongruous principle to apply to the determination of divine truth. At former Councils unanimity had been required for *doctrinal* decrees. At the Council of Trent, proposals opposed by even a few members were abandoned. At this Council the minority leaders contended again and again for moral unanimity, but all in vain.

Yet another serious drawback lay in the fact that the matters to be discussed were issued to the members only piecemeal. Thus the minority were deprived of the advantage of considering them in their mutual bearings, and organising their opposition in the most telling way. It happened further that more than once important new matter was issued so late as to give no time for its adequate consideration. Quirinus records that of 122 amendments to Chapter III of the Schema "de fide," most bishops got their copies only the day before they would be

called upon to vote on them. Worse still—when the approach of the hot season threatened a necessity of adjournment, in order to secure a vote on the question of papal infallibility the order of topics was altered, contrary to the standing orders. Logically of course, the doctrine of the Papacy follows on that of the Church, and can only be rightly defined in view of the latter; but despite protests it was taken first.

Pass on now to consider the question how far there was the chance of free discussion and impartial chairmanship. We may note first that a lively paper warfare went on outside the Council. The opposition could not get their pamphlets printed in Rome, but had to send them to Naples, or even farther. Quite so, retorts Dom. Butler (in his recent history of the Vatican Council)—in order to keep the presses free for prompt printing of official matter needed for the Council's proceedings, the authorities had to prohibit the printing of private manifestoes. This reply would hold good if the authorities had not discriminated in favour of the Infallibilists. But the Infallibilists experienced no difficulty in getting printed an address to the Pope in favour of defining infallibility, whereas a treatise opposing infallibility on principle had to be printed at Vienna, and smuggled into Rome. But this is not all; the whole edition of an anti-infallibilist manifesto by leaders of the minority was seized as contraband in the Roman post office, so that not a single bishop got a copy. Again, the Pope attempted, though vainly, to interfere with party meetings by forbidding gatherings of more than fifteen or twenty bishops outside the Council. In the Council itself the presidents used their authority anything but impartially. A speaker was liable to be interrupted by their bell as soon as he said anything distasteful to the Roman Court. An American and an Italian bishop were speedily silenced when they raised their voices against infallibility. When presidents so openly showed partiality we cannot wonder that the infallibilist majority learned before long to refuse a patient hearing to opposition speakers. At the first word of protest actually uttered in the Council against decreeing infallibility there was such an uproar as brought the sitting to a close. When the eloquent Hungarian, Strossmayer, ventured to protest against wholesale condemnation of Protestants, and contended that some of them had rendered good service to the cause of divine truth, there were angry outcries, and the president exclaimed, "This is no place for praising Protestants!" When Strossmayer refused to give way, and went on to exclaim that nothing could be imposed as church dogma unless supported by the bishops with moral unanimity, a frightful tumult arose. Several bishops rushed at the speaker and shook their fists in his face. If a

minority bishop made an affectionate allusion to the Pope, the majority could be heard to mutter, "et osculatus est illum"—thus comparing it to the kiss of Judas! If a minority bishop's speech was attacked, he could not reply in the same debate, whereas the members of the Papal Deputation who moved the official proposals could speak as often as they liked.

Beyond all this, pressure was brought to bear on bishops in all sorts of ways. They were virtually prisoners, for the police did not allow them to leave Rome without a papal permit, and this was not obtainable during the Council except in case of grave illness. Even rewards for compliance and punishments for non-compliance were dangled before individual councillors. There were bishops from mission fields, trained and maintained by the Papal Congregation for the propagation of the faith. They were mostly obsequious; but independent individuals were actually threatened with loss of their pay if they would not come to heel. On the other hand, various honours were offered to entice over members of the opposition. One bishop was captured by the privilege of being the only western bishop permitted to wear a vestment known as a "superhumeral." Others had the prospect of various offices about the Roman Court—titular bishops, protonotaries apostolic, confidential chamberlains, &c. A few of the opposition leaders were tickled with the hint of a prospective cardinal's hat.

The Pope did not scruple to use his personal influence on the side of the good cause, and this more and more openly as time went on. It should be premised that, in Newman's words, "his personal presence was of a kind that no one could withstand." Further, resistance was the more difficult because "neither the Catholic nor the non-Catholic public has any idea of the extent to which a bishop in the present day is dependent on Rome" (Quirinus); and for years past bishops had been in the habit of obsequious compliance. Papal censures were reserved for Liberalism, while extreme statements as to papal prerogatives and Mariolatry were unreproved (Dean Church). Mozley, writing to the *Times* from Rome, said, "His Holiness tells (opposition bishops) plainly that they are among his enemies—are damaging the good cause," and so on. Of the Pope's dealings with individuals one or two examples may be given. To a distinguished German prelate who proved indifferent to proffered rewards, the Pope put the Lord's question to Peter, "Lovest thou me?" But the most notorious case is that of Guidi, an Italian cardinal, justly respected for his learning, who dared in Council to deny that popes had any infallibility separately from that of the Church. He was immediately sent for, and the Pope boasted afterwards of having

sharply rebuked him. He is reported to have called him "the coryphaeus of my opponents" and "ungrateful to my person." And when Guidi claimed the support of tradition for what he had said, he received the famous answer, "*I* am the tradition." He was required to retract, was kept in virtual confinement, and plied with alternate persuasions and threats.

It remains to give a few specimens of what we may call the "lobbying" tactics whereby the infallibilist leaders sought to secure the passing of the decree. It may be well to preface them by recognising that both parties—majority and minority alike—accuse each other of "intrigue," and represent themselves as driven into counterplot by the sinister proceedings of the others. Probably neither has a stainless record, and for our purpose we have no need to decide with which rests the blame of beginning dubious practices. What concerns us is that intrigue, more or less crooked, certainly played a not inconsiderable part in the doings of the Council. At the outset a commission of twenty-four "on faith" was to be chosen. Manning and his friends sent round a list of nominations (including Manning's own name) to likely members of the Council, and with such success that when the result of the election was announced, not a single opponent of infallibility had secured a place. (No fewer than 450 voting papers had the same twenty-four names!)

On at least two occasions the project was set on foot to carry infallibility in the Council by acclamation, and was only defeated by a threat from the French and the American bishops respectively to secede from the Council. More than one attempt was made to smuggle in a recognition of the Pope's infallibilty by a back door; e.g., the authorities brought before the Council an amendment proposed by a French bishop, which included a parenthesis implying the infallibility of the Pope. After all the devices to eliminate opposition, when a vote was taken on the article respecting the Pope's primacy, eighty-eight declared against, while sixty-two more gave only a qualified assent. At the final vote, in public session, with the Pope present, there were only two "No's," the bulk of the opposition having already left Rome, to avoid the painful ordeal of having to vote against the Pope to his face.

Can we reasonably ascribe infallibility to the findings of such a Council—composed of members with such pronounced limitations of knowledge, intelligence, integrity and good faith, and proceeding to their ends by such crooked manœuvres? Roman apologists point out to us that the character of the Council and its methods are no worse, if no better, than those of our civil parliaments or councils. Suppose we grant it—what is it to the

purpose? To whom of us would it ever occur to claim infallibility for the decisions of any of these bodies? But ultimately the infallibility of the Council (or rather, of its majority) is just that of an individual—the Pope. How does it stand with him? We have had the figure of Pius before us, with its glaring defects in knowledge, humility, patience and charitable judgment of others. And we might add to these, control of temper and tongue! He is reported to have referred to an anti-infallibilist German cardinal as "that ass." He "broke out into the most bitter reproaches against [the English] Bishop Clifford . . . before an assembly of Frenchman, most of whom did not even know him by name, saying that he knew 'ex certa scientia,' the only reason why Clifford would not believe in his infallibility was because he had not made him Archbishop of Westminster. Yet there is, perhaps, no member of the Church whom everyone credits with so entire an absence of any ambitious thought."

Now, nothing short of a divine revelation could certify the Christian Church of the infallibility of an individual man. Is it credible on the *ipse dixit* of such a man as Pius IX? We should unhesitatingly say "No." Personal conformity to the revealed commands of God is the indispensable road to a knowledge of His mind and His will. There must be whole-hearted renunciation of our own will and pleasure and submission in all things to the obedience of Christ. We have Scripture for that.[5] And it seems to us that all experience confirms it. But now, we shall be told, this is Protestantism, or rather, Puritanism. The Catholic, on the other hand, does not see the indispensable connection between personal holiness and discernment of divine truth. Pius himself, as we have seen, believed that by a special miracle his personal sin was prevented from invalidating his intellectual processes. And as for the Pope's ignorance and superstition, did not a Jesuit theologian long since plead that "a thoroughly ignorant Pope may very well be infallible, for God has before now pointed out the right path by the mouth of a speaking ass?"

I am afraid then that we must waive what might be called the moral argument and fall back upon others. Try this. Since there have even been popes who declared themselves not bound by their word when given under pressure of fear, we might fairly question the validity of an assent to the Decree practically extorted from members of the minority by the threat of anathema; for an anathema against those who refused it *was* appended to the decree. Or we might point out that the decree itself rests in the last resort on that accursed fetish of Pro-

[5] John viii. 12; vii. 17.

testants, a private judgment—that, namely, of the Pope himself.[6] We might point to actual instances of fallible decrees issued by popes. In 1172 Alexander III. approved of a man who has sworn to marry a woman, deceiving her by a sham marriage, and then retiring into a monastery; and this decision became part of the Roman canon law. When Protestants point out palpable errors such as these, Roman apologists are apt to fall back on the plea that in these cases the popes were misled by their (fallible) advisers. But what is the use of an infallibility which cannot discern bad advice from good? Indeed, we may ask how it contrives still to be infallibility.

We have finally to look at the internal evidence of infallibility, if any, afforded by the terms of the decree itself. "We, clinging faithfully to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith . . . do, with the approval of the holy Council, teach and define it to be a dogma divinely revealed—that the Roman pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*, i.e., when in the exercise of his office of paster and teacher of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine respecting faith or morals for the observance of the whole Church, has command, through the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, of that infallibility wherewith the divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be equipped in defining doctrine respecting faith and morals, and thus such definitions of the Roman pontiff are irrevisable in themselves, and not merely by consent of the Church."[7]

Passing by such obvious criticisms as that the dogma of the Pope's infallibility has *not* the uniform tradition of the Church behind it, or that the infallibility contemplated by the decree is *not* the Church's, but the Pope's in distinction from the Church, let us concentrate attention on the phrase "ex cathedra." When does the Pope speak *ex cathedra*? Three conditions are indicated. (1) When he speaks in the capacity of universal teacher of the Church; (2) when he speaks, not as a private person, but in his capacity as successor of Peter; (3) when he speaks on questions of faith or morals. We might point out with Dr. Coulton that the last condition opens the way for endless debate. You can bring anything you like under one or other of these heads. "Galileo's contemporaries treated the motion of the earth as a matter of faith and morals" (*Papal Infallibility*, p. 55). The Jesuit Schrader lays it down expressly that no public act or direction of the Pope can be conceived of

[6] See art. "Infallibility" by Curtis, in Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.

[7] The last clause inserted by the majority after the opposition had withdrawn itself.

as *not* having a doctrinal significance.[8] But without dwelling on this point, we may ask with Mirbt (quoted by Coulton, p. 56), "How are we to recognise whether the decision of the Pope is given in the exercise of his doctrinal office or not?" No criterion is assigned, and no authentic interpretation has been accorded from the chair of St. Peter. Even a French Catholic declared that a man needs to exercise his private judgment to decide whether the Pope has spoken *ex cathedra* or not. Manifestly the decree itself imperatively requires interpretation. And the interpretations given by Roman Catholic scholars differ widely. A view that merits attention as occurring in a book on *True and False Infallibility,* which was written by Mgr. Fessler, the general secretary of the Vatican Council, and which received papal approval, was that "the assimilation of a single papal utterance to the rest of the Church's teaching appertained again to the discussions of the Schola"; which seems to mean in plainer language that any papal utterance, before issuing for general acceptance by the Church, should be reviewed by expert theologians. Manning, on the other hand, wanted to make everything depend on the Pope's intention, i.e., whenever he intends to require the assent of the whole Church he is infallible.

And as interpretations of the decree differ, so naturally do Roman Catholic scholars differ as to which of the actual papal pronouncements are to be accepted as *ex cathedra.* Fessler admits he can find "only a few." Cardinal Franzelin quotes only four cases which he regards as certain; while a priest named Carson claims general consent for only two, and adds, "Beyond these two . . . we cannot assert with any assurance that the prerogative of papal infallibility has been exercised from the day of Pentecost to the present time."[9] The fact is that only the ruling Pope can decide what utterances of himself or of his predecessors are to be accepted as *ex cathedra.* Small wonder that he shows himself backward to exercise the privilege! The burden of infallibility is too heavy for any *man* to bear. To a conscientious and serious-minded man the sense of responsibility must be paralysing. But if in these circumstances he shrinks from shouldering it, then we are left to speculate what is the value to the Church of a power which its possessors avoid using, except perhaps in cases where there is no serious division of opinion as to what their sentence should be.

A. J. D. FARRER.

[8] Von der römischen Einheit, 1866.

[9] There is no instance of a papal pronouncement addressed to the whole church before the beginning of the fourteenth century.