

APPENDIX I

In his letter of February 10, 1865, to Mr. Leo Dupont, Fr. Eymard informed Mr. Dupont about the evolution of things regarding his request for the Cenacle. The study of the matter was still in course. Fr. Eymard began a retreat on January 15, which was to conclude only when the matter was settled. This was to go beyond March 7, which he had hoped for. It would be settled definitively by the General Assembly of Cardinals on March 28th. The answer was negative and Fr. Eymard was notified the following day.

But the principal purpose of this letter was something else. On December 8, 1864, Pope Pius IX issued the encyclical *Quanta cura*, to which the Syllabus was joined. Strong reactions emerged everywhere. In France the anti-clerical press and liberal thinkers flew into a rage. In a circular letter of January 1, 1865, the government forbade the bishops from publishing the Syllabus. Finally, on January 5, Napoleon II signed a decree allowing the publication of the last part of the encyclical.

The French bishops protested against this usurpation of civil power over doctrinal matters. On January 26, Bishop Dupanloup, the Bishop of Orleans, published a work [entitled] “The Agreements of September 15 and the Encyclical of December 8.” By the Agreements of September 15, France promised the Piedmontise Kingdom to gradually withdraw its troops from the Papal States with a two year delay: for French Catholics, this amounted to a change of the political position maintained until that time. As a citizen, Dupanloup was requesting clarifications.

Commenting on the doctrinal part of the Syllabus, Bishop Dupanloup concentrated on justifying the Pope’s opinion, using the distinction of thesis and hypothesis. The leaflet received considerable success. The Apostolic Nuncio in Paris congratulated the author and hundreds of bishops did the same.

Among Catholic advertisers, the Syllabus was perceived otherwise: liberals were upset and Montalembert considered giving up the direction of the “Correspondent.” He presented an intervention to the Congress of Malines which was held April 18-22, 1863: if he proclaimed his absolute submission to the Church and to the Pope in matters of dogma, he denounced the “marriage of the throne and the altar.” His intervention, published under the title *The Free Church in a Free State*, was very successful. But the context was difficult: Emmanuel II was stripping the Pope of his States and promoting religious indifference in his kingdom. Bishop Pie of Poitiers accused Montalembert in Rome of supporting opinions condemned thirty years earlier, and Cardinal Antonelli, under pressure, blamed the author in a secret communication. The work of Bishop Dupanloup reassured liberal Catholics and the Vice-Count of Meaux kept Montalembert at the head of the newspaper. He remained submissive, not without sadness of heart.

The attitude of the ultramontanes was quite different. Veillot was in Rome at the time of the publication of the Syllabus. He rejoiced, he saw it as a condemnation of liberal Catholics. He strongly reproached Bishop Dupanloup for an incomplete reading of the document. And when, on February 4, 1865, the Pope addressed a letter of congratulations to the Bishop of Orleans, Veillot only referred to the last lines where the Pope urged the bishop to pursue his task, not only to refute erroneous interpretations, but also to spread his thought. It is clear that Veillot used the Pope’s letter to attack his adversaries, the liberal Catholics!

The letter of Fr. Eymard is a burning testimony on those current issues. He was also in Rome at the time the encyclical and the Syllabus were published. He was aware of the letter of Bishop Dupanloup. The congratulatory letter from Pius IX to the Bishop of Orleans had just been published. Fr. Eymard first attacked the “so-called liberals,” the heirs of the Revolution of 1789. As for himself, he sympathized with the ultramontanes and he feared that Montalembert might act upon the publication of Dupanloup. The school of liberal Catholics still bore the weight of the condemnation which had struck Lamennais in the past. This letter, written to a friend, is without doubt, the most explicit document we have on the political choices of Fr. Eymard.

Appendix I

In passing, we might also notice the strange interpretation of the number of the Apocalypse. Who is the Ludovicus/Louis about whom Fr. Eymard is thinking? Should we see it as the name of the Emperor, Louis Napoleon, because of his reversal of opinion on the Roman question?... This crime of lese-majesty would not have displeased a legitimizing royalist like Mr. Dupont!

- by Fr. Andre Guitton SSS