

The Kulturkampf

the constitutional conflict and church questions sank into less prominence, so that finally in 1867 the Catholic party ceased to exist in the Chamber. But in the autumn of 1870 the public mind was dwelling again on ecclesiastical problems; the effects of the French war and the Infallibility Dogma upon the position of the Catholic Church in Prussia could not be calculated definitely; the Pope moreover was in need of help, and altogether it was easy for office-seekers so to work upon a nervous electorate as to induce it to return a large number of Catholics irrespective of the party to which they belonged. At the same time, it is well to repeat that in 1870 there was no intention of establishing a new "fraction" or of reviving the old one,¹ and to describe the Catholic members as constituting at this time a new party is doubly incorrect. The leading Ultramontanes had

¹ The evidence seems to be quite conclusive on this point. Blum p. 28, who is throughout most hostile to the Catholics, tells of a dinner given by von Savigny in Berlin at the end of 1870, at which "der geistliche Rat Müller" proposed the formation of a Catholic party. Peter Reichensperger, one of the most violent of Ultramontanes, declared in reply that "that would be a great misfortune for them as Catholics." ("Das wäre ein grosses Unglück für uns Katholiken.") Windthorst also disapproved of the plan most strongly. The original account of this incident is given, according to Majunka, p. 35, in the "Bonifaciuskalender" of 1883, edited by Müller and also in his "Märkisches Kirchenblatt," but I have not been able to obtain either of these originals. See Appendix A. p. 133