

lawyers, and above all, so many writers of our day, superstitiously travesty, ridiculing, without examination, that which is the first of social truths.

This truth, Sire, you have courageously proclaimed, in spite of the proud but foolish sneers of contemporary pretended science ; and for this the friends of true science congratulate your Majesty.

II.

But why should their congratulations be mingled with a profound sorrow ? This sorrow, Sire, they cannot but feel at seeing how far the religious instincts of your Majesty have been imposed upon by those who have persuaded you that the faithful, the clergy, and even the Catholic Bishops of Germany, *deny the Christian teaching* (as to the obligation of obedience to the temporal authority) *so as openly to oppose the laws of the State.*

Yes, the religious feelings of your Majesty have been taken unawares. With a lawful indignation have the Catholics of your Kingdom defied the Prime Minister of the Empire to point out where, when, and in what way, they have ever claimed to exempt themselves from obedience to the laws ; but this challenge has never been taken up, and never will be.

The laws, Sire, which the Christians of your Empire cannot obey, without *denying the teaching of Christianity*, are not the laws of the State ; they are not the civil laws ; but they are the ecclesiastical laws, which, in spite of the Gospel—in spite of the belief throughout all ages of Christianity, in the distinction of the two powers, and in spite of the very constitution of your Empire, which had guaranteed religious liberty to the Catholics of Germany—the State now claims to impose upon your Christian subjects.

Those, Sire, are not civil laws, which lay down rules for the education of the clergy, and consequently for the religious education of the faithful. They are ecclesiastical laws.

Those laws are not civil laws which lay down rules for the institution of the clergy in the sacred ministry of souls.

Those laws are not civil laws which regulate the canonical discrimination between priests who are worthy and priests who are unworthy to exercise their sacred functions.

Those laws are not civil laws, but ecclesiastical laws, which regulate ecclesiastical judgments, in respect to such members of the Church as may deserve to be deprived of her spiritual com-