

Believing, as he did, that "the full exposition of truth is the great object for which the existence of mankind is prolonged on earth," he could not allow the Papal Syllabus to deter him from following truth with all the knowledge and ability he could command. The *Chronicle*, for which he had written so often, came to an end in 1868. But the same editor, Mr. Wetherell, took over next year the *North British Review*, to which Acton contributed a learned essay on the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew, marshalling the facts in favour of the theory that the murder of the Huguenots had been premeditated at Rome. Researches such as these, and the consequences which they involved, were not congenial to the Vatican, nor to the personally amiable, dogmatically unbending Pontiff who was still under the protection of foreign bayonets. But to no one was Acton's freedom of speculation and inquiry more repugnant than to the able and ambitious prelate who had succeeded Wiseman as Catholic Archbishop of Westminster. Dr. Manning was at that time a rigid supporter of extreme Ultramontane doctrine, and of authority as opposed to freedom in opinion. With the ardent zeal of a convert, and a convert, as his recent appointment showed, much in favour at Rome, he strove to suppress the religious independence of the English Catholics. But an historical controversy with Acton was a serious affair. It resembled nothing so much as going in for a public examination with a reasonable certainty of being plucked, and that prospect did not smile upon dignified ecclesiastics impressed with a due sense of their own importance. Moreover, Manning was already absorbed in a policy which would put down moral and intellectual rebellion in the Church of Rome once for all.

So early as the 8th of December 1857 the Pope had signed a Bull, convening the whole episcopate of his Church to an Œcumenical Council at Rome in the same month of 1869. Although it was not officially stated, it was perfectly well known that the object of the Council was to proclaim the infallibility of the still Sovereign