

tholic. The revolt is general, and the hour suitable for Germany to separate herself from Rome."

"All this is new to me, and highly interesting!" said the old count. "What idea have the Germans concerning the infallible teachings of the pope?"

"A perfectly correct one!" answered the major. "The infallible pope can make as many new dogmas as he pleases; he can issue the most ridiculous mandates, and insist upon their being received as divine truths, and by means of anathemas and excommunications he can compel all Catholics to believe every absurdity."

"Don't forget the pretensions of the pope to depose princes who do not govern according to his wish, and refuse to obey his commands," added the colonel. "If it pleases the pope to declare war upon any Protestant nation, every Catholic soldier must join the papal army."

"And then the Peter-pence that poor Catholics have to pay, and which the pope extorts from them," said the captain of cavalry. "No one is allowed to refuse these papal exactions, for every order of the infallible must be fulfilled as though it were a conscientious duty."

The count heard with astonishment these explanations of papal infallibility, and he could hardly suppress his laughter.

"I find the hatred of the good Germans very natural, if what they say of him is only true," said he.

"And I do not understand how this old Romish priest can, in the face of the present advanced state of civilization and enlightenment, presume to lay claim to such power," exclaimed the colonel. "He does not consider himself bound to respect the rights of any government or people; he acts like a new God."

"Do you believe, sir, that the State is to be worshipped as though it were a new God?" asked the count.

"With the idea of 'God' I by no means wish to unite all manner of religious superstition," replied the colonel. "Every school-boy knows that there is no such God. I only maintain that the State alone possesses the highest power in all things, and that it has, therefore, the right to establish a new religion, which will correspond with the exigences of the time; and that is a national church."

"Agreed, sir," said Rethel. "When the old God is deposed in Germany, it follows necessarily that the religion of this old God must be abolished. But if the State-power becomes the new god of the German Empire, it will have also