

With these general observations, you will perfectly enter into the meaning of this beautiful and admirable Letter of which the following is the preamble.

§ 2.—MOTIVES FOR THE CONVOCAION OF THE
FUTURE ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL.

*Apostolic Letter of Our Holy Father Pope Pius IX, to all the
Protestants and other Non-catholics.*

PIUS IX.

" You are already aware, that having been raised in spite of Our unworthiness, to this chair of Peter, placed consequently over the supreme government of the entire Catholic Church, and divinely entrusted with its preservation by Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, We have judged fitting to call to Our presence Our Venerable Brothers the Bishops of the whole world, and to assemble them in order to celebrate, next year, an Œcumenical Council, so that in concert with these same Venerable Brothers, called to share Our solicitude, we may take all the resolutions which shall seem the most fitting and necessary, whether to dissipate the darkness of so many fatal errors which daily extend their empire more and more, and are being set loose to the great loss of souls, or to establish daily more and more, and to increase among the christian peoples confided to Our vigilance, the reign of the true faith, of justice and of the true peace of God. Firmly relying on the strict and dear compact of union which so admirably attaches unto us and to this Holy See, these same Venerable Brothers, who have never ceased during the whole course of Our supreme Pontificate, to give to Us and to this Holy See the most convincing marks of their love and respect; we entertain a well-founded hope that the Œcumenical Council, convoked by Us in this present century, will, under the inspiration of divine grace, like the other General Councils in past ages, bring forth abundant fruits, a source of happiness, for the greater glory of God and the eternal salvation of men."

§ 3.—MARKS OF THE TRUE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST.

Such, D. B. B., are the first words which the good shepherd addresses to those of his dear flock, whom he