

Pope issued his Encyclical Letter against modern thought. In the Syllabus of Errors which this epistle condemned, Pius the Ninth, who had once been reckoned a Liberal, included the heresy that the Holy See ought to seek reconciliation with progress, with Liberalism, and with modern thought. He further pronounced that the Roman Catholic religion should be the exclusive religion of the State; and that liberty of worship, and freedom of the Press, promoted moral corruption and religious indifference. There was, he added, no hope for the eternal salvation of those who did not belong to the true Church. Although Sir John Acton had had some share in provoking the publication of the Syllabus, he made no reply. He had withdrawn from the controversy without surrendering either his faith as a Catholic or his principles as a man.

In 1865 Acton ceased to be a Member of Parliament, and in the same year he married a Bavarian lady, the eldest daughter of Count Arco-Valley. From this time too he abandoned the practice of regular editing and reviewing, nor did he write again for avowedly Catholic organs, though he was throughout the remainder of his life an occasional contributor to secular periodicals on historical and theological subjects. The popular idea that he wrote little, and passed his whole time in reading or talking, is erroneous. That he did not put out much in his own name is true. But the list of his anonymous articles fills more than twenty pages of an octavo volume, and their variety is quite as remarkable as their number. He read every new book of the smallest importance. In the *Home and Foreign Review* alone there are more than seventy critical notices from his pen. The pen, however, was not the only instrument by which he imparted to others some fragments from his vast stores of knowledge. To his neighbours, one can hardly call them his constituents, in the little town of Bridgnorth, he delivered several lectures, now out of print and scarce, which for range and quality must have been very different from anything his audience had heard before. The first,