

## The Munich Congress

The actual rebuilding of the church was far more difficult than the creation of thousand-voiced protests. How should it take shape? These men, pious Catholics, inflamed with the passion for truth, desired to remain where they were. For this very reason genuine Catholicism, not the ultra-montanist, but the ideal Catholicism of the Church as it had always, everywhere been known was the cherished hope of their souls and the pattern after which they wanted to build. Irrevocably outlawed by the Roman Church it was not to take form outside of that body and its destiny lay in their hands.

In this sense, the Munich Congress, made up of three hundred delegates from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, with numerous guests from all Christian lands of the earth, as early as September 1871 made out this distinct program: "We firmly hold to the old Catholic Faith as attested by tradition and the Scriptures as also to Catholic worship."

They rejected the newly created dogmas of Pius IX, including that of the immaculate conception of Mary, and further declared, "We aim, with the cooperation of theological and canonical science, at a reform of the church which, conceived in the spirit of the ancient church, shall remove the existing defects and abuses, and in particular meet the just wishes of the Catholic people for constitutionally regulated participation in church affairs."

In Cologne, Germany, the following year, another congress under the direction of Dr. von Dollinger went still further in a practical direction. Under the lead of Dr. von Schulte the determinative features of the old Catholic church order were fixed. The Bishop was to have all rights common to his office, but the clergy and laity were given a voice in the direction of legislation and discipline. The Bishop was to be presiding officer of the Council but elected by it. No pastor was to be appointed who was not first acknowledged by the members of the local parish. No taxes for dispensation and appointments were to be raised. These formed the fundamental principles of the movement, apart from its allegiance to the traditional faith of the Church, which in opposition to "Roman" or "Vatican" Catholicism began to take form ecclesiastically under the name "Old Catholic