affection it had formerly enjoyed; and these repeated fail­ures, by destroying all hope of redress at the hands of the constituted authorities, precipitated the crash of the Re­formation, which was in its inception scarcely concerned with doctrinal issues directly, but aimed mainly at faults of administration and morals.

Consequently a largely new problem presented itself for solution, and necessitated a fundamental change in the attitude of those concerned. Hitherto, whatever may have been the fierceness and bitterness of the disputes which the 15th-century councils had attempted to allay, they were, so to speak, family quarrels between members of the same great household, accustomed to the same mode of looking at religious questions, acknowledging the same hierarchy, and accepting the same standards, and thus with a vast body of agreement to go upon as a basis of reconciliation, leaving only comparatively minor details to be adjusted. But the German and Swiss Reformation had generated new communions, novel alike in their polity and much of their theology, and in active revolt, not merely against this or that detail or abuse, but against the Roman Catholic Church in its entirety, hierarchical, doctrinal, and political. The movement had not been confined long to its earlier limits, but had spread over all western Europe, had virtually conquered Holland and Scandinavia, was mak­ing great strides in France and England, and was begin­ning to threaten even Italy and Spain. Thus, the task was no longer the comparatively simple one of satisfying the demands of friendly remonstrants, but of winning back alienated nations, and, if that were too much to hope for, at least of saving the remnant of the Roman obedience from further disintegration. And for this purpose it was no longer sufficient, as it would have been a few years earlier, to discuss administrative details alone, but a review of the whole theological fabric of Latin Christianity, no part of which had been left wholly unimpeached, became a necessary factor in any possible scheme of reconcilia­tion. True, a precedent had been set in the theological discussions at the council of Ferrara-Florence, with its abortive effort to reunite Oriental and Latin Christendom, but the area and number of differences to be reconciled upon that occasion were incomparably smaller than those which had subsequently arisen, and the situation was thus one of extreme difficulty and delicacy, since there was always the danger of alienating many who had continued loyal so far, if very large concessions were made to the revolted Protestants, not a few of whom, besides, had already passed beyond the possibility of reconciliation. But, on the other hand, Luther had himself appealed to a general council from the bull “ Exsurge Domine ” launched at him by Leo X. in 1520, and his demand was taken up by the emperor and the princes of Germany, whether Catholics or Protestants, as the only conceivable means of terminating a crisis whose religious and political results might prove far more serious than even the least hopeful ventured to forecast. There was thus steady pressure from one side put upon the Roman curia to obtain the con­vocation of such a council, while scarcely less resistance to the proposal was offered by two very unlike parties in the Roman Church itself. For not only did those oppose it who were interested in the maintenance of the principal abuses complained of, and who feared that sweeping measures might be taken for their abolition, but some of the ablest champions of internal reforms, such as Cardinals Sadolet, Contarini, and Reginald Pole, were equally hostile to it, for the very different reason that they believed any such council likely to contain a majority determined on making it as abortive as those great synods had been which were fresh in the memory of all. Accordingly, this section gave its voice for the alternative scheme of pro­ceeding by way of less formal conferences, at which mutual explanations and concessions might be made by Catholics and Protestants, whereby a *modus vivendi* could be established, with less chance of the whole effort being wrecked by the intrigues of those who desired nothing less than practical reforms. A fresh difficulty was pre­sented by the opposition of the German princes to the assemblage of the council at Rome or anywhere outside Germany, as they distrusted the probable action of the Italian element, certain to preponderate in that event ; and, as the curia was equally bent on holding it within the sphere of direct papal influence, this dispute made it impracticable to agree even on the preliminaries during the pontificates of Hadrian VI. and Clement VII. The diet of Spires in 1529 renewed the demand for a general council, to be held in some large German city ; and the diet of Augsburg in 1530 summoned the Lutherans to return into Catholic communion at once and uncondition­ally, leaving their doctrines (formulated in the Confession of Augsburg that very year) to be judged of in a future council, which the emperor Charles V. pledged himself to obtain within a brief space. Clement V1I., then pope, was displeased at this initiative on the emperor’s part, but offered to convoke a council in some Italian city, such as Mantua or Milan, belonging to the empire, and outside the States of the Church,—expressing his wish that Charles V. should personally attend it. But he hampered this pro­posal with conditions which made it valueless for the main object of such an assembly, by declaring that no theo­logical questions upon which the church had spoken could be reopened, and that, if Protestants were to be admitted to the council at all, it must be, not as disputants, but as on their trial, and pledged beforehand to submit to the decisions of the council. No result, consequently, followed upon this step, nor was an embassy which Clement sent in 1533 to the German princes and to the kings of France and England with very similar provisions more successful, for it merely drew out a peremptory rejection of the scheme from the Protestants assembled at Schmalkald, by the emperor’s desire, for the purpose of discussing it. So the matter rested till the accession of Alexander Farnese to the papal throne as Paul III. in 1534. A much abler man than his predecessor, he was also more alive to the imperative need of at least appearing to approve some measure of reform, if the church was to be saved from impending dangers (indeed, a report on this subject, drawn up at his desire by a committee of cardinals in 1536, is one of the most important documents of the era), and he was thought to be favourable to the project of a council, whereas there is little doubt that Clement VII. had weighted his acceptance of the plan with impossible con­ditions, in order to avoid its realization, yet so as to let the responsibility of refusal rest with others than himself. Paul III. sent Vergerio as envoy into Germany, to confer with the emperor and the princes, offering to convoke a council at Mantua, and urging the danger of attempting to hold it in Germany, by reason of the violent lengths to which the Anabaptists were then proceeding. But, while the Catholic princes were content with this offer, it was refused by the Protestants, and the ambassadors of France and England supported them in their attitude. Vergerio, who had also a fruitless interview with Luther, returned to Rome early in 1536, but Paul III. was not discouraged by his failure, and proposed, in a consistory on April 8, to convoke a council at Mantua. This plan was in turn upset, not only by the continued resistance of the Protestants, but by the refusal of the duke of Mantua to permit the use of his city for such a purpose, unless upon conditions which the pope was unwilling to accept. Notice was accordingly given of a council to be opened