he began his reign, striking against jobbery, pluralities, dispensations, and laxity of clerical manners ; but all this short-lived zeal was speedily neutralized by his nepotism, surpassing that of any of his predecessors, and throwing the government of the States of the Church into the hands of his dissolute nephews, upon whom he rained all the wealth, honours, and authority in his power to bestow. And, as was to be expected, he set himself steadily to oppose every one of the class of reforms which touched doctrinal questions, just those for which the Protestants were urgent, encouraging only such as promoted the unity and discipline of the Roman Church itself, and made it more capable of effective resistance to the Reformation. He was not favourable to the reassembling of the council, not merely because of his experience of its languid action, nor even his dislike of the struggles of the non-Italian minority to assert some measure of independence against the coercive tutelage exerted by the several papal legates from the very first, but because he regarded himself as the sole and proper person to consider such matters at all, and a bull of his own promulgation a better mode of procedure, at once in fulness of authority and swiftness of formulation, than any conciliar decree. Consequently, no step for the resumption of the council was taken during his reign, which ended on August 18, 1559. After a longer inter­regnum than usual, Giovanni Angelo de’ Medici (not a member of the great Florentine house, but of humble Milanese extraction) was elected on December 26, 1559, as Pius IV. Markedly unlike his predecessor in almost every personal quality, he was much his superior in practical shrewdness and tact, and had none of that dislike to a council which Paul IV. had shown. So great, too, had been the strides made by the Reformation during his predecessor’s reign that he might well think Paul IV.’s policy undesirable, and he had this special motive for reversing it, that a movement was going on in France for the convocation of a national council there to consider the whole religious situation, which might very conceivably result in a revolt like that of England from the Roman obedience. Accordingly, Pius IV. determined on the resumption of the council of Trent, and issued a bull on November 29, 1560, convoking it anew.

But the whole face of Western Christendom, the whole religious situation, had materially changed since the ori­ginal assemblage of the synod in 1545. First, the imposing personality of Charles V. was removed from the scene, and Ferdinand I., his successor, enjoyed neither his per­sonal ascendency nor his political power, and could not be accounted as a possible competitor with the pope for the first place in the Catholic world, nor even as an ally with means for crushing the Reformation. Next, the Reformation itself was by this time an accomplished fact, a consummated revolt from mediæval Christianity. It had taken definite shape in various countries ; it had its own theological systems and traditions ; besides that a whole generation had now grown up under its influence, never having had any personal associations with Latin Christianity. And, on the other hand, the very lengths to which some of the Reformers had gone in their revolt generated a corresponding reaction in the Roman Church, so that many influential persons who had been in favour of moderate reforms and of explaining disputed points of theology were convinced that no limits could be logically or practically set to concessions in this direction, and therefore that it was necessary to make a stand against any concessions at all. And, what is more, one noticeable effect of the wave of controversy which had swept over western Europe was to accentuate points of difference, to close questions previously open, to make the current beliefs more incisive and, so to speak, legal in form, to diminish seriously the neutral area between the competing religious systems, and thus to bring them face to face as irrecon­cilable foes. One factor more, of greater importance at the time than any other, contributed to the revolution which is marked by the second council of Trent. As Spain took the political lead in the earlier half of the 16th century, so it took also the lead in theology. The Spanish divines were abler and more learned than all save the very foremost in any other country, and their influence was throughout the greatest at the council of Trent on purely theological issues. Now, the political and the theological genius of Spain had both just found their highest exponent in one person and the organization which he devised, Ignatius Loyola and the Company of the Jesuits. Two of his immediate disciples and recruits, Salmeron and Laynez, were chosen to be the pope’s theologians at the council of Trent, and exercised a greater influence than any other divines there in the formulation of its dogmatic decrees. But the Jesuits were to do more than this. The militant spirit of their founder had nothing in common with the alarm and vacillation which had for the most part marked the action of the Roman Church in dealing with the Lutheran and Calvinist revolt ; and, instead of being con­tent with devising schemes for standing on the defensive, and saving the remnant yet left to the Roman obedience, he conceived the bolder and safer plan of vigorous aggres­sion, to reconquer all that had been lost, and to add fresh acquisitions thereto. The Counter-Reformation which he initiated was in full operation when the second council of Trent assembled, and it was by this spirit that it was guided in its deliberations and decrees. The very thought of compromise was abandoned in fact, if not in open expression, and the only reforms thenceforward taken into consideration were such as would remove causes of weak­ness and scandal in the Latin Church, enabling it, without sacrificing one of its claims, to overcome by superior mass and discipline, by closer unity and more organized enthusi­asm, the heterogeneous, disordered, and already dissociated forces of Protestantism. The most obvious effect of these principles upon the second council of Trent was that the diminution, the all but disappearance, of variety of opinion amongst its members, and the resolution to crush Protest­antism rather than to parley with it in any scheme of mutual concession or accommodation, tended to shorten the preliminary discussions in a marked degree, so that little is to be noted of the long and animated debates of the earlier period, and the last few sessions exhibit even tokens of actual hurry to end the matter anyhow.

There was no intention on the pope’s part to proclaim the Counter-Reformation as the policy of the council, even if it may be safely assumed that he could predict its action, and he sent nuncios to the Protestant sovereigns as well as to the Catholics to signify the approaching resumption of its sittings. Francis II. of France had died between the promulgation of the bull and its notification in France, but the young king Charles IX., by the advice of the parlement of Paris, directed all the bishops of the kingdom to be in readiness for journeying to Trent. Three nuncios were despatched to Germany, but the princes assembled in diet at Naumburg received them unfavourably, asserting anew their determination to recognize no council which did not avow Scripture as its standard of appeal and give right of free discussion to Protestants, denying the right of any one save the emperor to convene a general council at all, and inveighing strongly against the papacy. The king of Denmark declined to admit the nuncio on any terms, declaring that neither he nor his father had ever had any dealings with the pope ; and Martinenghi, the nuncio commissioned to Elizabeth of England, was stopped by a messenger while still on the