

THE RIDDLE OF THE UNIVERSE

Germany is the cradle of the Reformation and the modern emancipation of reason; on the other hand, it unfortunately has in its 18,000,000 Catholics a vast host of militant believers, who are unsurpassed by any other civilized people in blind obedience to their chief shepherd.

The dangers of such a situation were clearly recognized by the great statesman who had solved the political "world-riddle" of the dismemberment of Germany, and had led us by a marvellous statecraft to the long-desired goal of national unity and power. Prince Bismarck began the famous struggle with the Vatican, which is known as the *cultur-kampf*, in 1872, and it was conducted with equal ability and energy by the distinguished Minister of Worship, Falk, author of the May laws of 1873. Unfortunately, Bismarck had to desist six years afterwards. Although the great statesman was a remarkable judge of men and a realistic politician of immense tact, he had underestimated the force of three powerful obstacles—first, the unsurpassed cunning and unscrupulous treachery of the Roman *curia*; secondly, the correlative ingratitude and credulity of the uneducated Catholic masses, on which the papacy built; and, thirdly, the power of apathy, the continuance of the irrational, simply because it is in possession. Hence, in 1878, when the abler Leo XIII. had ascended the pontifical throne, the fatal "To Cañossa" was heard once more. From that time the newly established power of Rome grew in strength; partly through the unscrupulous intrigues and serpentine bends of its slippery Jesuitical politics, partly through the false Church-politics of the German government and the marvellous political incompetence of the German people. We have, therefore, at the close