

# The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the  
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Editor: DR. PAUL CARUS.

Associates: { E. C. HEGELER.  
MARY CARUS.

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VOL. XXI. (No. 10.) OCTOBER, 1907.

NO. 617.

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CHICAGO

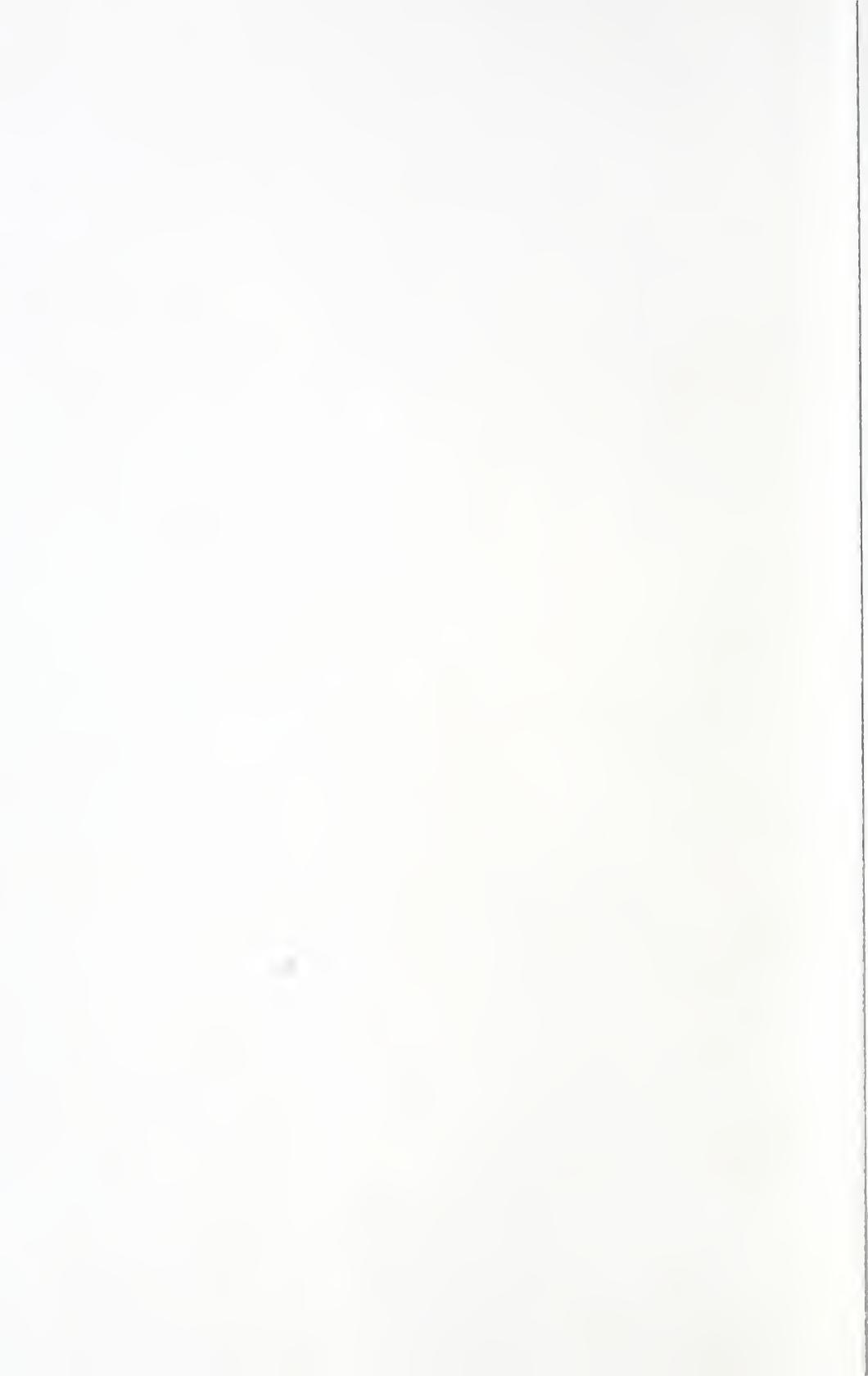
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# THE MONIST

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Philosophy of Science

DR. PAUL CARUS  
EDITOR



ASSOCIATES { E. C. HEGELER  
MARY CARUS

"The Monist" also Discusses the Fundamental Problems of Philosophy in their Relations to all the Practical Religious, Ethical, and Sociological Questions of the day.

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POPE PIUS X.

*Frontispiece to The Open Court.*

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## THE SYLLABUS OF POPE PIUS X.\*

A TRANSLATION OF THE LATEST DECREE OF THE HOLY  
ROMAN AND UNIVERSAL INQUISITION.

Wednesday, July 3, 1907.

**I**T is the misfortune of our age that, being impatient of every restraint, it is disposed, in its search after primary truths, to accept novelties, whilst at the same time abandoning, to a certain extent, the heritage of the human race, thus falling into the gravest errors. These errors will be exceedingly pernicious if they relate to matters of sacred discipline and the interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures and the principal mysteries of the Faith.

It is a matter for the profoundest regret that a certain number of Catholic writers, transgressing the limits established by the Fathers and the Church herself, have devoted themselves to the alleged development of dogmas, whilst in reality, under the pretext of higher research, and in the name of history, they explain away the dogmas themselves. That these errors, which every day are spreading more and more amongst the faithful, may not find lodgment in their minds and thus corrupt the purity of the Faith, it has seemed good to Pius X, Pope by Divine Providence, to note and condemn, through the agency of the Holy and Universal Inquisition, the most prominent of these errors. Therefore, after a thorough examination, and after consulting with the Reverend Consultors, the Eminent and Most Reverend Lord Cardinals, who are Inquisitors General in all matters pertaining to faith and morals, have decided that the following propositions should be condemned and proscribed, and they are herewith condemned and proscribed by this general decree:

I. The ecclesiastical law which prescribes that books treating of the Holy Scriptures shall be subjected to a preliminary censor-

\* Translated for the *New York Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register*.

ship is not applicable to writers who devote themselves to the criticism and scientific exegesis as regards the books of the Old and the New Testament.

II. The Church's interpretation of the Sacred Books, which should not be contemned, should nevertheless be subordinated to the more accurate judgment and correction of exegetists.

III. From the ecclesiastical censures and condemnations launched against the free and more recondite exegesis one would be justified in inferring that the faith proposed by the Church is opposed to history, and that Catholic dogmas are irreconcilable with the true origins of the Christian religion.

IV. The teaching function of the Church through dogmatic definitions cannot determine the true meaning of the Holy Scriptures.

V. As only revealed truths are contained in the deposit of faith, it does not belong to the Church under any circumstances to pass judgment on natural sciences.

VI. In defining truths the Church, in process of learning (*ecclesia discens*), co-operates with the teaching Church (*ecclesia docens*) in such a way that nothing remains for the teaching Church to do but to sanction the opinions adopted by the *ecclesia discens*.

VII. When the Church proscribes errors she may not demand of the faithful their inner assent to the judgments she passes.

VIII. Those should be held blameless who pay no attention to the condemnation of the Index and other Roman Congregations.

IX. Those manifest a great amount of simplicity or ignorance who believe that God is really the author of the Holy Scriptures.

X. The inspiration of the books of the Old Testament consisted in the fact that the Hebrew writers transmitted religious doctrines under a peculiar aspect, of which the Gentiles had little or no knowledge.

XI. Divine inspiration does not guarantee all and every part of Holy Scriptures against error.

XII. The exegetist who desires to devote himself with profit to Biblical studies should above all things lay aside all preconceived ideas as to the supernatural origin of the Holy Scripture and interpret it just as he would other documents of purely human origin.

XIII. The Evangelists themselves and the Christians of the second and third generations arranged the Gospel parables in their own way and thus furnished the reason why the preaching of Christ bore so little fruit among the Jews.

XIV. In many of their narratives the Evangelists have thought

less of searching after the truth than of telling things, which, though false, they believed would benefit their readers.

XV. The Gospels were continually added to and corrected until the time they became the definite and recognized Canon. The result is that they contain a very slight and vague trace of the teachings of Christ.

XVI. What John narrates is not historical in the true sense of the word, but a mystical meditation of the Gospel. The discourses embodied in his Gospel and his theological meditations on the mystery of salvation are wholly devoid of historical truth.

XVII. The Fourth Gospel exaggerates miracles, not only for the purpose of making them appear more extraordinary, but also that they may in a more fitting manner body forth the work and the glory of the Word Incarnate.

XVIII. John claims for himself the authority of one who can bear witness as to Christ. Now, in reality, he was at the end of the first century a far removed witness as to the Christian life or of the life of Christ in the Church.

XIX. Heterodox exegetists have mastered the sense of Holy Scripture much better than Catholic exegetists.

XX. Revelation is nothing else than man's acquired consciousness of relationship with God.

XXI. The revelation which constitutes the subject-matter of the Catholic Faith was not completed in the Apostolic Age.

XXII. The dogmas, which as the Church teaches have descended from heaven, are only the interpretation of certain religious facts which the human consciousness has acquired after great effort.

XXIII. Between the facts narrated in Holy Scripture and the dogmas of the Church based on these facts there can exist, and in fact does exist, a contradiction. Consequently, every critic has a right to reject as false, facts which the Church holds as most certain.

XXIV. It is not reprehensible in an exegetist to state premises from which it logically follows that dogmas are false or historically dubious, provided he does not attack directly the dogmas themselves.

XXV. The assent to faith, in the last analysis, rests on the sum total of probabilities.

XXVI. The dogmas of faith should be retained in a practical sense, that is to say, not as a rule of faith, but as a recognized rule for conduct.

XXVII. The divinity of Christ cannot be proved by the Gos-

pels. It is only a dogma which the Christian consciousness evolved from the idea of a Messiah.

XXVIII. When Jesus exercised His ministry, He did not speak for the purpose of making Himself known as the Messiah, nor were His miracles performed with a view of showing that He was.

XXIX. It is permissible to concede that Christ, as known to history, was far inferior to the Christ who is worshiped by faith.

XXX. In all the Biblical texts the name, Son of God, is equivalent to Messiah, and does not by any means signify that Christ was the real and natural son of God.

XXXI. The doctrine as to Christ taught by John, Paul and the Councils of Nice, Chalcedon and Ephesus, was not the doctrine taught by Christ, but was the doctrine concerning Jesus, which was born of the Christian consciousness.

XXXII. It is impossible to reconcile the plain and natural sense of the texts of the Gospels with what theologians teach in regard to the self-consciousness and infallible knowledge of Jesus Christ.

XXXIII. It must be evident to every one who is not under the influence of preconceived opinions, that either Jesus was deceived when He spoke of the coming of the Messiah in the near future, or that the greater part of His doctrine contained in the synoptical Gospels is wholly unauthentic.

XXXIV. The critic cannot attribute to Christ unlimited knowledge unless on a hypothesis which historically is inconceivable, and which is repugnant to the moral sense, namely, that Christ in so far as He was a man, possessed the knowledge of God, and yet He was unwilling to communicate the knowledge of so many things to His disciples and posterity.

XXXV. Christ was not always conscious of His Messianic dignity.

XXXVI. The resurrection of the Saviour is not a historical fact, properly speaking, but belongs to the purely supernatural. It has not been demonstrated, nor is it demonstrable. The Christian consciousness gradually evolved it from other facts.

XXXVII. From the very beginning faith in the resurrection did not concern itself so much with the actual fact of the resurrection as it did with the immortal life of Christ with God.

XXXVIII. The doctrine of the expiatory death of Christ is not a Gospel, but a Pauline doctrine.

XXXIX. The opinions as to the origin of the sacraments with which the Fathers of the Council of Trent were imbued, and which unquestionably left their impress upon their dogmatic canons, are

quite different from those which are now entertained by historians of Christianity.

XL. The Sacraments had their origin in what the Apostles and their successors, influenced by facts and guided by circumstances, interpreted as the idea and the intention of Christ.

XLI. The Sacraments serve no other purpose than to recall to the minds of men the ever beneficent presence of the Creator.

XLII. The Christian community originated the necessity of baptism, constituting it an obligatory rite, and attaching to it obligations in connection with the profession of the Christian faith.

XLIII. The practice of conferring baptism upon infants was due to disciplinary evolution. One of the reasons for this was to make two Sacraments out of one, namely, baptism and the Sacrament of penance.

XLIV. There is nothing to prove that confirmation was conferred by the Apostles. The formal distinction between the Sacraments of baptism and confirmation did not exist in the early days of Christianity.

XLV. What Paul says (1 Cor. xi. 23, 25) about the institution of the Eucharist, must not be taken in a historical sense.

XLVI. The thought of bringing about the reconciliation of the sinner through the authority of the Church did not prevail in the early Church. It was only by degrees that the Church accustomed herself to take this view. Long after penance came to be regarded as an institution of the Church it was not called a sacrament because it was regarded improper to apply to it the name of sacrament.

XLVII. The words of Christ: "Receive ye the Holy Spirit, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained," bear no relation at all to the Sacrament of penance, no matter what the Fathers of the Council of Trent may be pleased to assert.

XLVIII. James, in his Epistle (14 and 15), had no intention of proclaiming the Sacrament of the Eucharist. He only recommended it as a pious practice. If he perhaps saw in it the means of grace, he did not accept it in the same literal sense as did the theologians who established the theory and the number of the Sacraments.

XLIX. The Lord's supper gradually assumed the form of a liturgical function. Those who were in the habit of presiding assumed a sacerdotal character.

L. The elders who exercised the duty of supervising the Christian assemblies were made priests or bishops by the Apostles that

they might provide for the necessary organization of growing Christian communities, and not especially for the purpose of perpetuating the mission and power of the Apostles.

LI. Marriage in the Church became a sacrament of the new law only by slow degrees. In fact, in order that marriage should be regarded as a sacrament, it was necessary that the theological theory of grace and of the sacrament should have been previously established.

LII. Christ had not the intention of constituting the Church as a society to endure on earth through successive centuries; on the contrary, He believed that the Kingdom of Heaven would come at the end of the world, which was then imminent.

LIII. The organic constitution of the Church is not immutable. On the contrary Christian society, like human society, is subject to perpetual evolution.

LIV. The dogmas, the Sacraments, the hierarchy, in their conception, as well as in their existence, are only the interpretation of the Christian thought and of the evolutions which, by external additions, have developed and perfected the germ that lay hidden in the Gospel.

LV. Simon Peter never suspected that the Primacy in the Church had been conferred upon him by Christ.

LVI. The Roman Church became the head of all churches, not by divine ordinance, but by purely political circumstances.

LVII. The Church has shown herself to be an enemy of natural and theological sciences.

LVIII. Truth is no more immutable than man himself, with whom and in whom and through whom it changes perpetually.

LIX. Christ did not teach a fixed, determined body of doctrine applicable to all times and to all men. But rather He started a religious movement adapted or capable of being adapted to different times and places.

LX. The Christian doctrine was first Judaic, then Pauline, then Hellenic, then Universal.

LXI. One may assert without being guilty of a paradox that there is no chapter in the Bible, from the first of Genesis to the last of the Apocalypse, that contains a doctrine exactly the same as that which the Church teaches in regard to the same object. Consequently no part of the Scripture has, for the critic, the same meaning it has for the theologian.

LXII. The principal articles of the Apostles' Creed had not for

the primitive Christians the same meaning that they have for the Christians of to-day.

LXIII. The Church has shown herself incapable of effectively defending ethical Gospel, because she obstinately is attached to immutable doctrines which are incompatible with modern progress.

LXIV. The progress in science demands a reform in the conception of Christian doctrine, and on the subject of God, of creation, of revelation, of the Personality of the Word, and of redemption.

LXV. Catholicism as it now exists, cannot adapt itself to true science unless it transforms itself into a form of non-dogmatic Christianity; in other words, into a Protestantism that is broad and liberal.

On the following day, Thursday, the fourth of the same month and year, a report of all this having been made to His Holiness, Pius X, His Holiness approved and confirmed the decree of the Most Eminent Fathers, and has ordered that all and each of the propositions cited above shall be considered by all as condemned and proscribed.

PETER PALOMELLI.

Notary of the Holy Roman and Universal Inquisition.