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ARTICLE VII.

CARDINAL NEWMAN: A TRIBUTE FROM THE
ANGLICAN STANDPOINT.

BY THE REV. HENRY HAYMAN, D. D., ALDINGHAM, ULVERSTON, ENGLAND.

THE death of Cardinal Newman removes one who was once a self-devoted and venerated leader in a school of Anglican opinion which has, on the whole, increased in weight and force since he crossed the brink and left it in its mid-struggle. His great work of relaying foundations in part, and of digging down to them and verifying their solidity as a whole, has been crowned, capped, and developed by later hands. Of course in that work, the work of many, even while he lighted and led the way, he had co-operative master-minds. Nor does the originative impulse belong to him. Alexander Knox, a layman at the end of the last century, left on record the opinion, that the clause of the creed, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," was in his time otiose, and that whoever sought to impart vitality to it, would stir such a controversy as that church had seldom seen. Newman himself ascribed that impulse to a Cambridge divine, the late Rev. Hugh James Rose, some time principal of King's College, London, "who, when hearts were failing, bade us 'stir up the gift that was in us,' and be-take ourselves to our true mother." Between the periods of Knox and Rose, the influence of a small but zealous band of English churchmen, of whom the central figure was again a layman, Joshua Watson, first treasurer of the National Society for educating poor children in church principles, made itself widely felt; and the feeling that the church

must be an organized society, having its own office-bearers and rules of communion, began to leaven the inertia of the establishment by law. The consolidation by Act of Parliament of several Irish sees under fewer bishops gave a further shock to that inertia, beginning now to stir with life; and a voice was given to this feeling of indignation by a sermon preached by John Keble, author of "The Christian Year," at the assize of the Oxford Circuit in 1833. Its subject title was "The National Apostasy." This brought Newman to the front of the movement. He, "out of his own head," at once started a series of "Tracts for the Times," published at irregular intervals up to the ninetieth number, which appeared in 1841. He had also meanwhile assisted the *British Magazine*, of which the editor was the Rev. W. Palmer, of Worcester College, Oxford; and from July 1838 to July 1841 he himself edited the *British Critic*. In 1835 Dr. Pusey joined the Tractarian writers, contributing a treatise "On Fasting." In 1836 was published Newman's own work on "The Prophetical Office in the Church," and in 1837 his "Essay on Justification." In 1838 the then Bishop of Oxford, Dr. Bagot, in his charge, made some reflections on the Tract series, which led Newman to offer to stop and suppress them as far as he could. The bishop, however, replied that such a decided course was unnecessary. If he had accepted Newman's offer, the famous No. 90 would never have been published, and the ensuing shock, in the form which it took, have been averted, although it is probable that the same views and argument would have found their way to light under some other title. Yet still, that might have caused an isolated explosion, instead of being, as it was, one which fired backward the whole series of the previous issues, and, by a convulsion which shook the entire ecclesiastical atmosphere, caused both surprise and, in its consequences, indignation to the author. "I had," he says, "been posted up by the

marshal on the buttery-hatch of my college, after the manner of discommoded pastry-cooks [i. e., those interdicted from dealing with members of the University],” “and in every part of the country and every class of society, through every organ and opportunity of opinion, in newspapers, in periodicals, at meetings, in pulpits, etc., etc., I was denounced as a traitor, who had laid his train and was detected in the very act of firing it, against the time-honored Establishment.” What had he done to open these batteries of hostile criticism and invective?

He had striven to show that the Romish excrescences on primitive doctrine and practice were alone the “objective” of the protests of the Thirty-nine Articles; and that, these excrescences set aside, there remained that primitive doctrine and practice, tenable consistently, with subscription to those articles. In this, taken as a general principle, there is nothing that need have been received with the shock of surprise and scream of panic which reverberated everywhere around. It was, in fact, a reiteration in a different form of the famous challenge of Bishop Jewel in the sixteenth century, that if any proof were given, that any general council or any considerable divine had, down to the fifth century, advocated the doctrines and practices then in debate between England and Rome, he, Jewel, would at once come over to the Romish side. The line might not have been drawn identically by Jewel and by Newman, where primitive standards ended and Romish ones began; but, as a mere test-principle, there was nothing novel in the promulgation of it. It is also probable that Newman overstrained his argument in its contact with some particular points, and

so long been held to be a line of *chevaux-de-frise* with all their points directed Rome-wards, that any attempt to show that their real direction was other than popularly conceived, was looked upon as a treacherous weakening of the whole line of defence against the common enemy. But there was in the school of thought in which he was now a leader a double element; one derived from old English antecedents, the other, from the revived study of patristic sources. The two were not inconsistent, and probably not a few individuals combined both. Still they were distinct. A. Knox, Joshua Watson, Rose, and others were examples of the combination—the laymen perhaps more remarkably than the clerics. The men of old English theory held to church and king as a vital principle imbedded in a system in which university and public school supplied the mill, and parson and squire the ultimate units of grist. Within the limits which this system marked for them, they wished for the spiritual revival to find scope and flourish. They had been bred all their lives in the notion that Catholic truth lay for them in the Anglican channel, as surely as the marrow lay in the bone. They rejoiced at the new development which wiped off the reproach of “high and dry,” and looked for a renewed blessing on the system which they honored most of all earthly institutions. Ultramontanism, Genevism, Dutch Calvinism, were alike abhorrent to them. They or their fathers had had some scant sympathy with Gallicanism, but Gallicanism was now dead. Of this old English wing, all remained faithful to their traditions. They were represented and led by Pusey and Keble, and not one of them joined Rome. The other wing was composed of men in whom the above influences were either wanting or were wholly secondary. They had clung for a while to the shallow school of individual piety, without much definite theology, or consciousness of church authority anywhere, known as the “Evangelical.” On them the revived ideas of

the fourth and fifth centuries came as a revelation. They absorbed and assimilated them with the ardor of neophytes, and found in them an *elixir vitae*—an inspiration of enthusiasm which they followed without any system of hereditary influence to restrain, or any care whither it might lead them. It was of this wing that Newman was the special leader, and from it proceeded, roughly speaking, the swarm who quitted the old hive, some before, but naturally more after, his secession. The attempt, nay the effort, to which they rallied, was to try how much of “Catholic” principles will the Articles bear. To men, who, like most of the then heads of colleges and nearly all the bishops, viewed those Articles as the ultimate standard, it seemed an offensive innovation to be told that there lay behind them a standard still ulterior, viz. the catholicity of the yet undivided church. Of course in theory they acknowledged this; but then for them the test had been applied once for all in the sixteenth century, the results for them were final, and the reopening of questions so decided seemed to them, if not tantamount to treachery and ecclesiastical suicide combined, yet to hang out an index-figure pointing unstable minds in those directions. Thus reposing on the unexamined popular assumption, that the *raison d’être* of the Articles was Anti-Rome, and finding those Articles themselves put into the crucible, with patristic tests applied with which they were little familiar and had mostly but a second-hand acquaintance, they felt naturally surprise, alarm, indignation, and insecurity; and the vials of those wrathful elements now broke on Newman’s head.

Of the “new party” above mentioned, Newman himself speaks as being “rapidly formed . . . , contemporaneously with that very summer [1839] when I received so serious a blow to my ecclesiastical views.” “These men cut into the original Movement at an angle, fell across its line of thought, and then set about turning that line in its own direction.”

He adds, they clearly "needed to be kept in order; and on me who had had so much to do with the making of them, that duty was as clearly incumbent; and . . . I was just the person, above all others, who could not undertake it."¹ The reason for this lay in his own growing uncertainties and fears: "I was in great perplexity, and hardly knew where I stood; I took their part; and, when I wanted to be in peace and silence, I had to speak out, and I incurred the charge of weakness from some men, and of mysteriousness, shuffling, and underhand dealing from the majority."²

As regards the Thirty-nine Articles, it would weary the reader unprofitably to discuss Newman's contention in detail. It was probably partly true and partly erroneous. He advanced the idea that the supremacy of the Pope was the thing against which the Articles were designed, whereas they declare that "the Church of Rome hath erred . . . *in matters of faith*;"³ and therefore must be taken as guarding against such errors; and they further apply to some such errors the terms, "a fond thing vainly invented," "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits."⁴ On the other hand, they recognize the "doctrine" of the "Books of Homilies" as "godly and wholesome;"⁵ which books uphold the primitive church (apparently implying the church down to the seventh century) as specially to be followed, also the Four General Councils, and two others since, as "allowed and received by all men," besides appealing to the authority of the "Ancient Catholic Fathers and Doctors." Thus, in laying down an ulterior standard of Catholic and primi-

low the horizon. "We cannot," says Newman himself, "unmake ourselves or change our habits in a moment," and when a man has by following a certain habit of mind won his way to a mitre, through the favor (in England) of some politician, master of a party majority at the moment, any one may easily calculate the chances of his modifying the views which such public preference has ratified. Newman avows he was making "trial how much the English Church will bear. I know," he says, "it is a hazardous experiment, like proving cannon." Tract No. 90 was the proof-charge, and the bishops exploded. After some months of hollow truce, Newman having undertaken to stop further issue of the Tracts, but not to suppress those issued, and the "understanding" being, as he says, that of silence and non-condemnation by the bishops, the latter began charging against them and him, and "went on in this way, directing their charges at me for three whole years. I recognized it as a condemnation; it was the only one that was in their power. At first, I intended to protest; but I gave up the thought in despair."¹ About the same time occurred the Anglo-Prussian establishment of the Jerusalem bishopric, concocted between the Chevalier Bunsen and the then Archbishop of Canterbury. Newman regarded the step as implying a fraternization with the Oriental heretical communities. From these events in 1841 he dates the death-bed of his Anglicanism, although he at first contemplated lay-communion within its fold. In 1843 he resigned his post as Vicar of St. Mary's, Oxford, after preaching four parting sermons there, in which he described the English Church as in the position of "Samaria," having still "a sort of place

not even its author, while it directly offended old friends and sympathizers.¹ It was merely the halting-place of his last stage.

That stage did not take him long to travel. Having retired to Littlemore and drawn a few kindred spirits about him for their mutual edification, he found himself beset by a sort of spiritual espionage. "I cannot walk into or out of my house, but curious eyes are upon me. . . . One day when I entered my house, I found a flight of under-graduates inside. Heads of Houses, as mounted patrols, walked their horses round those poor cottages. Doctors of Divinity dived into the hidden recesses of that private tenement, uninvited, and drew domestic conclusions from what they saw there."²

He seems to have felt natural irritation at the time, but the discipline eventually mellowed and softened him. He withdrew in 1845, and the Church of England felt a wrench through all the tissues of her body. He had been looking for the church of the fifth century. It filled his imagination. He recognized in Rome certain superficial points, and rounded off the rest in imaginative integration. He shot from his sphere, and now the star of his life has gently set. What Anglicans feel is, "Why should we mourn for him?" Rather, our period of mourning is over. It had lasted long, and the snapping of the last frail link of earthly life has now reunited us to him in a more intense and inseparable bond. Death has not built up, but removed the partition. He who is thus given back to those who loved and honored him, sheds spiritual influence in a wider sphere than could be commanded by the retreat at Littlemore or the Oratory at

region of thought, its probate is deferred. But his character and personality are an heritage of immediate value. That *mitis sapientia* which takes the sting from controversy; that innate nobleness which touches with something of its own lustre all who approach it, because it has first quenched every spark of self-seeking; the severe logic, ascetically dry, four-square and analytical; the rich imagination which deals, contrariwise, in largely integrated and highly rounded forms; the heart of love which ever gives its best and grudges not, which robs of austerity the hard mechanism of intellect, and oils every valve of human intercourse,—all these were met in him, and live not in memory only, as a mere picture on the dead wall of the past, but as a living study of an eye undimmed—of that single-eyed faith which sees all things from an undisturbed focus, and finds its standards of judgment in the pure ideals of holiness.

But we have around us that chorus of Babel, the sectaries of all denominations, striking for once the unwonted note of concord and harmony, as a tribute to something in the man which has penetrated them. What can that be, for his saintliness was not of the type familiar to them? It is probably the unalloyed genuineness of the man which compels their homage. The inward and outward wholeness of sincerity, which formed the grain of his character, pillars itself aloft over their heads, like a monolith of crystal, and has a self-luminous power which draws all eyes. In their homage to that their differences are for a moment hushed. A great spirit passing on its way, laying down the shell of mortality, and paying that tribute to the perishable which

will on a thousand trifles, there is that in a consistent sacrifice of all earthly ends to one primary, and that the highest known, which shows by contrast as a diamond amidst paste imitations. Each bubble-chaser holds his breath and bows the head with awe at the glimpse of a great truth lived through to the end, and emphasized by death. Worldly discords are hushed in a throb of genuine feeling which unifies for a moment the thoughtful part of humanity with the thoughtless, as the seal of completeness is set on a great example of self-devotion.

His powers in controversy were displayed in his "Apologia," in his answers to various assailants, and in his "theory of development"—a term which he made fashionable, before the labors of Darwin had stamped a physical connotation preferentially upon it. His mind reposed, however, too absolutely in his view of truth, to care much for the negation of the views of others. Thus controversy, as such, was distasteful to him, and he only descends into the arena when provoked. He would playfully sail off, when beset by some master of its pompous method, into a neutral discussion on hops, or steamboats, the Colorado beetle, or electric belts. Once, as the story goes, a pundit of argument broached the Origin of Evil, or the Bhuddistic *Nirvana*, at an Oxford dinner table; when Newman, taking his text from a dish of grapes before him, diverted the argument into hot-houses, their divers methods and various merits. And, ascetic as his tendencies undeniably were, he was at one time the steward of the Common Room at his College, and gave great satisfaction in his choice of wines. As a theologian, again, he had covered certain centuries with deep and fruitful study, but others he let alone. Whatever issued from him had the depth and fulness of his own convictions. Having sought and fought his own way to the enthronement of his own ideal, he was content. To plot out the ground of a theory, and map each square of the argument, like a chess-

board, as the professed theologians of his later church are wont to do, was repugnant to his nature. His way rather was to throw out in dominant relief some central truth, and then let all others sink into due proportion, as merely the satellite slopes of its primary mass.

Some have applied to him the term "mystic;" and of his keen realization of things unseen there is abundant evidence. But he loved to contemplate them as seen through familiar and secular objects. These last seemed to clothe them as a transparent veil, having indeed its own reality, however transitory, and most impressive when thus studied, as it were a parable of the deeper realities underlying it. Thus he was never visionary or unpractical, never averse to discuss the daily round and common tasks of humanity, never stumbling over a pebble because his head was in the clouds. Neither did his love of retirement ever sink into the moroseness of the recluse. He had a relishing love for human society, and knew the rare flavor of true friendship. To those whom he found congenial he was archly simple and humorously natural. He was stern only as a self-disciplinarian, but would always relax in favor of the claims of human weakness in others. "Given the alternative in a university of social life without study, or study without social life, I," he said, "should unhesitatingly declare for the former, not the latter." In a word, he looked on the formation of character as a greater thing than the storing of the mind or the exhibition of a theory of how to live. Study and theory had their place, but that place was secondary. Thus he declaimed with vigor against students "who are only possessed by their knowledge, not possessed of it," and who "have enlarged the memory at the expense of faculties

treats all his topics, as he loved to say, "in his shirt-sleeves." The argument seems to rise with the natural swell of a wave, which culminates and breaks, carrying away objections before it by its own weight. It is never dribbled out in syllogisms. He felt that it is the concrete human being that reasons, and that its conclusions are often right, where its premises or processes are wrong: "Should it be objected that this is an illogical exercise of reason, I answer, that, since it actually brings them to a right conclusion, and was intended to bring them to it, if logic finds fault with it, so much the worse for logic." Again, of himself he says: "I had a great dislike for paper logic. For myself it was not logic that carried me on. . . . It is the concrete being that reasons; pass a number of years and I find my life in a new place; how? the whole man moves; paper logic is but the record of it. All the logic in the world would not have made me move faster towards Rome than I did. . . . Great acts take time. At least this was what I felt in my own case; and therefore to come to me with methods of logic had in it the nature of a provocation. . . . And a greater trouble still than these logical mazes, was the introduction of logic into every subject whatever, so far, that is, as this was done. Before I was at Oriel, I recollect an acquaintance saying to me that 'the Oriel Common Room stank of logic.'" He cared nothing for the formal process, but everything for the concrete result.

The fascination therefore of John Henry Newman lay in what he was; more in the open book of his own life than in the volumes which he wrote and the deep things which he taught. From any stirring share in human affairs he had long ceased; but there remained, after all that he did was done, that which he *was*—indelible; as powerful in his quiet life-haven at the Oratory, as it had been when he was the foremost figure in theological strife—nay, sweeping a wider radius of influence now, than it could do then; for then it

was by circumstances limited to the few who knew and loved the man; but now it circles round the world wherever moral forces are acknowledged, as it were on a tide wave of emotion. He became so popular because he had always lived above popularity—not that he disdained it, for his moral mould was too large for the littleness of disdain, but took it as a homage, not to himself but to the truth for which he lived. Lord Bacon's adage, that the multitude pay homage readily to the commonplace virtues, while the highest of all obtain the rarest recognition, was in his case reversed. Few men of our or any day have lived their principles so thoroughly, but beyond this he had the threefold power which perceived those principles by intuition, impressed them by ratiocination, and stamped them upon others by his character. His own record of his struggles shows that his charming harmony of various tones was not reached at once, and the "kindly light" whose leading he invoked, came gradually on his path. Even those who had least sympathy with the deeper essence of his nature were struck by the mental and moral symmetry which marked its workings, the masterful yet graceful strength of his controversial attitude, the directness of point, yet needle-delicacy of touch, the force of matter and courtesy of manner—in short the thorough-bred style which expressed the man and made it impossible to him to execute a clumsy movement or give an unfair blow. But refined natures only would appreciate that chivalry of strength, most forcible when sympathizing with weakness, and that shrinking from all that soils the surface, where all

man, the readiness with which he replied to, and the graciousness with which he acknowledged, the respectful approaches of his juniors. The large heart seemed always open; and he who had outlived all his contemporaries found still "troops of friends" around him, and a crowd of disciples who knew him at second or third hand only, and yet felt as distinct a fascination of his reality, as though some electric band united them with those who had sat at his feet at Oxford forty years ago. The following example of his accessibility is among many which can be personally guaranteed. One of these disciples of the after-growth, shortly after Newman's elevation to the cardinalate, wrote, enclosing a copy of a theological serial containing an article against infidelity, founded in part on a passage in one of the "Plain Sermons" of half a century previous, with due acknowledgment of the source; but, finding the publication was disfigured by an advertisement, illustrated in a rather broad, style and founded on the passage in one of the *Ingoldsby Legends*, where—

"A nice cake of soap,
Worthy of washing the hands of the Pope,"

is presented for "The Cardinal" to perform his ablutions, the writer tore it out for the waste-basket. Cardinal Newman replied with mingled suavity and gravity—appreciatively, as regards the article; but adding the remark, that he "failed to perceive the relevancy of the illustration accompanying it, which he therefore re-inclosed"—in which, to his horror, the correspondent recognized the offending representation of a cardinal, of course in exaggerated hat and tassels, receiving the soap at the hands of a page. What he had intended exactly to exclude he had in fact included and placed by inadvertent haste, in closing for post, in the same envelope with his own letter. He of course wrote a modest apology explaining the oversight, which drew again a gracious reply.

But although thus flowing with the milk of human kindness, there was a period when he could on occasion be savage. In the soreness of heart which beset his last days of Anglicanism, he seems to have greeted with a growl any of either side, of old friends or new, who offered to approach too near. But this very soreness was but the anguish of the then impending wrench from the comradeship of earlier years.

Had it not been for this vein of tender feeling, allied closely to a tender scrupulosity of conscience, and for the shock which he foresaw among the ranks where he had been a loved and trusted leader, the change which was consummated in 1845 would have passed upon him some years sooner. The ties of attachment, and veneration for old friends, old attitudes of devotion, old habits of life and thought, were in him interwoven with the flexors of the will, in a degree of fineness resembling the subtle delicacy of nerve-web and muscular tissue in the human frame. The subject is a solemn and a tender one. He shall speak for himself:—

“My difficulty was this: I had been deceived greatly once; how could I be sure that I was not deceived a second time? I thought myself right then; how was I to be certain that I was right now? How many years had I thought myself sure of what I now rejected? How could I ever again have confidence in myself What certain test had I, that I should not change again after I had become a Catholic?”¹

How closely this state of mind illustrates that described by Shakespeare in the often-quoted lines,—

“Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma or a hideous dream.”

But he continues :—

“As far as I know myself, my one great distress is the perplexity, unsettlement, alarm, scepticism, which I am causing to so many; and the loss of kind feeling and good opinion on the part of so many, known and unknown, who have wished well to me.”¹

“How much am I giving up in so many ways! and to me the sacrifice is irreparable, not only from my age, when people hate changing, but from my special love of old associations and the pleasures of memory. Nor am I conscious of any feeling, enthusiastic or heroic, of pleasure in the sacrifice; I have nothing to support me here. . . . The simple question is, Can *I* (it is personal, not whether another, but can *I*) be saved in the English Church?”²

So he oscillated. But every oscillation of the ripe fruit upon the bough brings nearer the movement when it drops away; and Newman seems to have become matured intellectually for his change before he was so morally. Had he been more rigidly a man of logic and less a man of feeling, Oxford and the Anglican position would have seen the last of him much earlier in the forties.

Of the actual change—of the very moment when he stepped down upon the turn-table at last—a deeply interesting anecdote has lately found its way to light; although the letter which was its voucher has unluckily perished. That letter, one of several written to a similar tenor for a small circle of select friends, was addressed to Dr. Pusey as follows:—

“MY DEAR PUSEY—Before this reaches you, all will be over. Father Dominic, who is on his way to a chapter in Belgium, will be here this evening, and will, I hope, receive me into what I believe to be the Church of St. Athanasius.”

The last phrase is not absolutely guaranteed. “The Church of St. Athanasius, or something of that sort,” was

he had no wish to see the letter again, so he sent it to me, telling me that I might keep it." He kept it till his death; but had for a while previous mislaid, and could not produce it to the friend to whom he told the facts as above, with the slight uncertainty in the final phrase. Among his papers, it was, however, identified after his death, and most undiscerningly *burnt*. This precipitate act deprives us of the means of verification, and prevents the receiver of the statement, which he published in "John Bull" (London) September 20th, 1890, from speaking with autoptic authority. The destroyer, however, recognized not only the character and contents, but the fact of some added memorandum in another hand.

The key-stone of Cardinal Newman's mental system seems to me to be a sense of the objectivity of the highest truth. Ever since his mind threw off traditional trammels, and settled to its natural bent, this is the note which prevails—the dominant of its gamut. His early Continental tour in 1832—when on board the orange-boat, becalmed and befogged between Palermo and Marseilles, he wrote the lines, "Lead, kindly Light"—and the turn which his personal intimacies took, in John Keble and Hurrell Froude, and conversely his dropping away from others, who then or shortly after became "Liberal" leaders, are so many symptoms of his mental proclivity. His standard of authority for the objective truth thus recognized, was first Anglican and then papal, but to the idea itself he clung with a fundamental tenacity from about 1831 throughout life. Facts of spirit-life external to the mind have a cogency of impressiveness which for him was paramount. The law which reigns in those facts includes in its province of dominion the mind

ing the profession of a mere subjective tenet; or how distinguish it from the various *idola speciès* which form its surroundings?¹ Thus, with Newman, the objectivity of truth, however it might take a color from the receiving mind, yet moulded that mind by the pressure of its form; and in this will, I think, he found the kernel and germ of his "Grammar of Assent," the most exact thought-product of his mind. In his earlier period this objectivity, I think, extended itself to the region of politics; i. e., he seems to have held that there were certain relations existing as of right, because objectively true, between the citizen and the body politic. His comments on the expulsion of Charles X. in France, his dislike of O'Connell, and his detestation of the French tricolor are examples. Writing in 1853, he seems rather to view constitutional relations as the outward expression of certain deeply implanted racial germs, which expand through maxims and public sentiments into institutions, which may or may not harmonize with objective truth. He speaks on this as follows:—

"As individuals have characters of their own, so have races. Most men have their strong and their weak points, and points neither good nor bad, but idiosyncratic. And so of races. . . . Moreover, growing out of these varieties and idiosyncracies, and corresponding to them, will be found a certain assemblage of beliefs, convictions, rules, usages, traditions, proverbs, and principles; some political, some social, some moral; and these tending to some definite form of government and *modus vivendi*, or polity, as their natural scope. . . . This then is the Constitution of a state and securing, as it does, the national unity by at once strengthening and controlling its governing power. It is something more than law; it is the embodiment of special ideas, ideas perhaps which have been held by a race for ages,

ences of society; they erect nations into states and invest states with constitutions." 1

The few words which I have italicised, show that the writer by no means considered a constitution, however true, as a development, to some innate germ, as necessarily an expression of objective truth; and I suppose he would have considered this as tending to limit its authority.

It was but fair to take a glance at his political utterances, however secondary in their interest, as exhibiting the man. Besides which Newman was an intense Englishman. He knew his countrymen in their *forte* and in their *foibles*, as few professed divines have cared to know them. He has, in fact, hit off some characteristic traits with that fine point and that mordant acid which contributed to his etching style. He sketches a "John Bull" thus:—

"Rough, surly, a bully and a bigot, these are his weak points; but if ever there was a generous, good, tender heart, it beats within his breast. Most placable, he forgives and forgets; forgets not only the wrongs he has received, but the insults he has inflicted. Such he is commonly; for doubtless there are times and circumstances in his dealings with foreigners, in which, whether from despair or from pride, he becomes truculent and simply hateful. . . . He has qualities excellent for the purposes of neighborhood and intercourse. . . . He has within him a spring of energy, pertinacity, and perseverance, which makes him as busy and effective in a colony as companionable at home. Some races do not move at all; others are ever jostling against each other; the Englishman is ever stirring, yet never treads too hard upon his fellow-countryman's toes . . . Some races are like children, and require a despot to nurse and feed and dress them, and take them out for airings. Others, more manly, prefer to be rid of the trouble of their affairs, and use their ruler as their mere manager and man of business. Now an Englishman likes to take his own matters into his own hands. He stands on his own ground and does as much work as half a dozen men of certain other races

“ England surely is the paradise of little men and the purgatory of great ones. May I never be a Minister of State or Field Marshal! I'd be an individual, self-respecting Briton, in my own private castle with the *Times* to see the world by, and pen and paper to scribble off withal to some public print and set the world right. Public men are only my employés; I use them as I think fit: and turn them off without warning.”

Admire the delicacy again of the following stroke:—

“ At the public meeting held to thank that earnest and energetic man, Mr. Maurice, for the particular complexion of one portion of his theology, a speaker congratulated him on having, in questioning or denying eternal punishment, given (not a more correct but) a more genial interpretation to the declarations of Holy Scripture.”

In argument, the force which he put forth was probably nothing as compared with his reserves. Nor does he ever betray that deadness of hand which marks the treatise-maker; but whatever truth he grasps, quickens to life under the pulsation of his touch. No man, probably, ever passed through so momentous a shock of change, especially in the years of the judgment's maturity, unhinging the allegiance of half a lifetime, with so little alteration in his own personality. We of that earlier allegiance naturally prefer the mental products of that earlier period. They seem to us to contrast with the later growth, as the fruitage of the open air and sunshine contrast with those of a hot-house, and have more of the unforced aroma and native *bouquet*. In his earlier writings he seems to steer freely in quest of truth, following of course the somewhat stern standards which alone he recognized. In his later, he writes as though a thesis were set him and he had to find the proof. In this task-work he is always graceful and acute, but the toil is,

of cleavage which separated him from us later and remain unaffected by it. Here is a sample from "Christ Manifested in Remembrance, vol. iv. p. 263, ed. 1869:—

"'Kings of the earth, and the great men and rich men, and the chief captains and the mighty men,' who in their day so magnified themselves, so ravaged and deformed the church, that it could not be seen except by faith, then are found in nowise to have infringed the continuity of its outlines, which shine out clear and glorious, and even more delicate and tender for the very attempt to obliterate them. It needs very little study of history to prove how really this is the case; how little schism and divisions and disorders and troubles and fears and persecutions and scatterings and threatenings interfere with the glory of Christ Mystical, as looked upon afterwards, though at the time they almost hid it. Great Saints, great events, great privileges, like the everlasting mountains, grow as we recede from them."

Or take from the same volume, p. 218, on "The Greatness and Littleness of Human Life," the following:—

"Over and above our positive belief in this great truth [a future life] we are actually driven to a belief, we attain a sort of sensible conviction of the life to come, a certainty striking home to our hearts and piercing them, by this imperfection in what is present. The very greatness of our powers makes this life look pitiful; the very pitifulness of this life forces on our thoughts to another; and the prospect of another gives a dignity and a value to this life which promises it; and thus this life is at once great and little, and we rightly condemn it while we exalt its importance."

For chastened fervor, for unaffected solemnity, clearness of didactic outline, and pathetic earnestness of exhortation, one must go a long way back in the annals of the Anglican pulpit to find him surpassed. To the congregation of St. Mary's, Oxford, he was specially adapted by its higher degree of culture and by the academic sympathy between the University and the higher grade of professional and other minds having secular relations with its members. Besides these, not a few members of the University itself, especially among the rising juniors, the youth of devotional mettle and promise, filled places there, and raised the standard of capacity in the audience. From the time of Charles Simeon, of Cambridge, and Daniel Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta, to the middle of the century, was such an era for sermons as

had hardly been known since the Restoration put back the church into that niche from which the Cromwellian period had ousted her. The age was one of exemplary listeners, and the daily press had not yet eclipsed the pulpit. The average length of English parochial discourses was probably greater then than before or since. The religious fashion of the day thus gave Newman exceptional advantages to turn to account his lucid and earnest fervor; and, being at once a man of mark and, as the breeze of controversy blew to a gale, a marked man, he used those advantages with an impressiveness only strengthened by all that was known of a personal character transparently sincere and devoted. Thus, although he was never a great preacher, for he lacked that electric fascination which holds an audience by a spell woven of matter and manner, of voice, gesture, eye, and nervous sympathies, Newman grew into the hearts and minds of his habitual hearers with a power unperceived during the discourse itself, and felt only after its close. He tinged the pulpit with something of the academic lecture-room, and depended rather on the calmer current of afterthought than the momentary inundation of eloquence.

After recording our preference for the freshness and naturalness of the earlier Newman as against the later, it is only fair to set beside it the following verdict of a writer in the *Tablet* (R. C.) on the other side:—

“Newman's Anglican writings are clear and cold; when he became a Catholic, it was like going into a southern atmosphere, all glow and sunshine; his nature expanded, his eloquence took fire, and the passionate energy which had been seeking for an object found it in preaching the

implying a value, what astonishes Anglicans most in the later career of the Newman of their earlier memories, is that so little use was made of such a master-mind by those at whose disposal he had placed its fully matured powers. He had not yet reached his "grand climacteric," when he left us. His position on the whole since then has been one of perplexing obscurity to all who felt what a power they had lost in him. Of the Anglican church it is unhappily true that it hardly owns its greatest men, does not know what to do with them, feels them rather an excrescence on its system, and an incumbrance to the working of its machinery, as if a diamond had got into a grist-mill—in this respect how truly national! as reflecting (*teste* Newman, as above) that characteristic quality, "the paradise of little men, the purgatory of great ones." We honestly thought that Rome knew better, and eminent authorities are not wanting who extol her wisdom in that respect. The practical appreciation evidenced in the utilization of a convert so richly endowed with various gifts, supposed raised to a higher power by his conversion, does not tend to confirm that opinion. *Tandem aliquando!* was on the lips of most of us, when we heard that the Cardinal's hat had dropped upon him: "So they have really found him out at last as a spirit of the foremost rank!" His career in this respect suggests a noble swan, long estranged from its proper element, but finding its way thither at last, only to be *frozen in!*

As regards his style, Newman was so classical because he was so wholly unpedantic. His is never the mind that runs in the ruts of familiar phrase or traditional mannerism.

exercised by the grandest models of mental form on a sympathetic genius, because I am not aware that it has been noticed before. The entire attitude of his mind in the preface to his "Apologia" is that of Socrates in the famous "Apology" of Plato. To exhibit this in detail would be tedious trifling. I will just detach a specimen flower:—

"It is this which is the strength of my accuser against me;—not the articles of impeachment which he has framed from my writings, and which I shall easily crumble into dust, but the bias of the court. It is the state of the atmosphere; it is the vibration all around which will echo his bold assertion of my dishonesty; it is that prepossession against me which takes it for granted, that when my reasoning is convincing, it is only ingenious, and that when my statements are unanswerable, there is always something put out of sight or hidden in my sleeve" (p. xx).

To those who can recall the parallel complaint of Socrates against the established prejudices which filled and poisoned the popular mind of Athens against him, Platonic quotations would be superfluous, and to others unmeaning.

Questions of style often lead to such startling comparisons, as to have the effect, for the moment, of caricatures. I venture to compare him, then, with Dean Swift in some of the main intellectual elements which constitute style; more especially in the balance of logical against imaginative endowments, and the absence of rhetorical adulterations. In Swift, the two more interpenetrate one another; as it were, two charges in one gun-barrel; in Newman they are like parallel tubes, each detonating separately, but guided by a single sight. Swift has, indeed, a whole battery of power derived from debasement. His wit is a broadside of forked lightning which at once dazzles and blasts. His humor is Mephistopheles in motley. His was the bravado of irony, the vollied vituperation which scares and scorches, the corrosive venom of misanthropy, the sewage-bath of all that is foulest. All this sulphurous hemisphere was inaccessible to Newman and is shut out of the comparison. Again, Newman had a moral and spiritual elevation, and a tenderness

of feeling utterly inaccessible to Swift, and which therefore, for the present purpose, is cancelled also. I am, as it were, taking two strands out of either rope in order to compare the third. It is his lack of feeling which, when he is not either amusing or offensive, makes Swift dry reading. Newman's copious and spontaneous flow is too kindly to be ever dry. If Swift had had the moral and emotional nature of Newman, then, allowing for the difference of their centuries, he would have written as Newman wrote. For "proper words in proper places," they are, I think, the two greatest masters of English prose which the two centuries have seen, and that mainly by virtue of the balance of qualities above referred to. But, "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet," said Dryden to his aspiring kinsman. Our Newman, however, *was* a poet. I will cull from his own "Gerontius" a single blossom to throw upon his grave:—

"O man, strange composite of heaven and earth!
Majesty dwarfed to baseness! fragrant flower
Running to poisonous seed! and seeming worth
Cloaking corruption! weakness mastering power!
Who never art so near to crime and shame,
As when thou hast achieved some deed of name."

Those who remember the noble sonnet of Wordsworth on a theme borrowed from old Beda, beginning,—

"Man's life is like a swallow, mighty king,"

or that splendid stanza of Byron which comes upon us in Don Juan like a meteor flashing out of swampy slime,—

"Between two worlds life hovers, like a star
'Twixt night and morn, upon th' horizon's verge,
How little do we know that which we are!
How less what we may be!"

may hang this of Newman's beside them as worthy to form a triptych.

His tale of years all but spans nine decades of the nineteenth century, as did that of John Wesley before him of

the eighteenth; with whom again, especially in his earlier career, he has not a few points in common. Each sought to trim to larger and more lustrous life the waning lamp of spiritual religion. Each began his work in Oxford and led a band of the more finely tempered spirits there. Oxford, *felix prole virum*, claims each as an *alumnus*. Each grew in his respective century to be its most typical specimen among our native theologians; each became a centre of partisan strife; and each unwillingly, and, as it were, in spite of himself. In each, the prophetic spirit encountered the rooted prejudices of those about him. Wesley's strong reverence for, and study of, the early church, his longing to strengthen by some of its most saintly and serviceable usages the Anglican system as he knew it, and his recalling the Thirty-nine Articles from their popular Calvinistic interpretation, mark him as a laborer in the same quarry as Newman, albeit he left the deeper strata unsearched. But Wesley's mind was essentially prosaic and practical, with no visionary glimpses. He "asked no angel's wing, no seraph's fire;" whereas Newman bodied forth the unseen. His lyre indeed had few notes, but they are sweet and pure and lofty. Faith, hope, and charity, piety and reverence, are the lines of the staff on which they hang. He knew his own compass and never overstrained it. Few since Dante and Milton have aspired to kindred themes, and fewer still have not singed their wings in soaring up to them.

Is he realizing now the "dream" of his own "Gerontius" in the new realm into which he has passed—finding it all "true which was done by the Angel," in what he drew as the imagery of "a vision"—*οὐκ ὄναρ . . . ἀλλ' ὕπαρ ἦδη*,¹ and filling in his own outlines of symbolic mystery? The words which are its vehicle are those of the Guardian Angel to the Soul,—

¹ Homer's *Odyssey*, xx. 90.

“Thou livest in a world of signs and types,
The presentations of most holy truths,
Living and strong, which now encompass thee.
A disembodied soul, thou hast by right
No converse with aught else beside thyself.

But lest so stern a solitude should load
And break thy being, in mercy are vouchsafed
Some lower measures of perception,
Which seem to thee as though through channels brought,
Through ear, or nerves, or palate, which are gone.”

I only say, if so it be, so be it. For as St. Augustine says of the fire purgatorial, “I will not argue against it, because perchance it is true.”¹

¹ “Non redarguo, quia forsitan verum est.”—*De Civit Dei*, xxi. 26.