

John Henry Newman

Personal Data

Born	21 Feb 1801, London (eldest of 6)
Baptized	9 Apr 1801
Died	11 Aug 1890, Birmingham
Father	John Newman
Mother	Jemima Fourdrinier
Brothers	Charles, Francis
Sisters	Harriett, Jemima, Mary
Ordination — Anglican	29 May 1825, Oxford
Catholic Confirmation	Name — Mary; date 1 Nov 1845 *
Ordination — Catholic	1 June 1847, Rome **
First Mass	5 June 1847 **
Last Mass	25 Dec 1889 **
Founder	Oratory of St. Philip Neri in England
Created Cardinal	12 May 1879, Rome, by Pope Leo XIII
Motto	Cor ad cor loquitur— Heart speaks to Heart
Epitaph	Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem— Out of shadows and images into the truth
Declared Venerable	22 Jan 1991 by Pope John Paul II

* Ward, pp. 96-99.

** Meriol Trevor, *Newman's Journey*.

Chronology

Dates	Event
1801	Born in London Feb 21
1808	To Ealing School
1816	First conversion
1817	To Trinity College, Oxford
1822	Fellow, Oriel College
1825	Ordained Anglican priest
1828-43	Vicar, St. Mary the Virgin
1845	Received into Catholic Church
1847	Ordained Catholic priest in Rome
1848	Founded English Oratory
1854-58	Rector, Catholic University of Ireland
1859	Opened Oratory school
1864	Published <i>Apologia</i> (picture)
1877	Elected first honorary fellow, Trinity College
1879	Created cardinal by Pope Leo XIII
1885	Published last article
1888	Preached last sermon Jan 1
1889	Said last Mass on Christmas Day (picture)
1890	Died in Birmingham Aug 11

Biographical Essay

Catholic Encyclopedia (1911)

Newman, John Henry (1801-1890), Cardinal-Deacon of St. George in Velabro, divine, philosopher, man of letters, leader of the Tractarian Movement, and the most illustrious of English converts to the Church, b. in the City of London, 21 Feb., 1801, the eldest of six children, three boys and three girls; d. at Edgbaston, Birmingham, 11 Aug., 1890. Over his descent there has been some discussion as regards the paternal side. His father was John Newman, a banker, his mother Jemima Fourdrinier, of a Huguenot family settled in London as engravers and paper-makers ... His French pedigree is undoubted. It accounts for the religious training, a modified Calvinism, which he received at his mother's knees; and perhaps it helped towards the "lucid concision" of his phrase when dealing with abstruse subjects. His brother Francis William, also a writer, but wanting in literary charm, turned from the English Church to Deism; Charles Robert, the second son, was very erratic, and professed Atheism. One sister, Mary, died young; Jemima has a place in the cardinal's biography during the crisis of his Anglican career; and to Anne Mozley [sister-in-law of his sister—Mozley, vol. ii. p. 438] we are indebted for his "[Letters and Correspondence](#)" down to 1845, which contains a sequel from his own hand to the "Apologia".

A classic from the day it was completed, the "[Apologia](#)" will ever be the chief authority for Newman's early thoughts, and for his judgment on the great religious revival known as the Oxford Movement, of which he was the guide, the philosopher, and the martyr. His immense correspondence, the larger portion of which still awaits publication [[Note](#)], cannot essentially change our estimate of one who, though subtle to a degree bordering on refinement, was also impulsive and open with his friends, as well as bold in his confidences to the public. From all that is thus known of him we may infer that Newman's greatness consisted in the union of originality, amounting to genius of the first rank, with a deep spiritual temper, the whole manifesting itself in language of perfect poise and rhythm, in energy such as often has created sects or Churches, and in a personality no less winning than sensitive. Among the literary stars of his time Newman is distinguished by the pure Christian radiance that shines in his life and writings. He is the one Englishman of that era who upheld the ancient creed with a knowledge that only theologians possess, a Shakespearean force of style, and a fervour worthy of the saints. It is this unique combination that raises him above lay preachers *de vanitate mundi* like Thackeray, and which gives him a place apart from Tennyson and Browning. In comparison with him Keble is a light of the sixth magnitude, Pusey but a devout professor, Liddon a less eloquent Lacordaire. Newman occupies in the nineteenth century a position recalling that of Bishop Butler in the eighteenth. As Butler was the Christian champion against Deism, so Newman is the Catholic

apologist in an epoch of Agnosticism, and amid theories of evolution. He is, moreover, a poet, and his "[Dream of Gerontius](#)" far excels the meditative verse of modern singers by its happy shadowing forth in symbol and dramatic scenes of the world behind the veil.

He was brought up from a child to take great delight in reading the Bible; but he had no formed religious convictions until he was fifteen. He used to wish the Arabian tales were true; his mind ran on unknown influences; he thought life possibly a dream, himself an angel, and that his fellow-angels might be deceiving him with the semblance of a material world. He was "very superstitious", and would cross himself on going into the dark. At fifteen he underwent "conversion", though not quite as Evangelicals practise it; from works of the school of Calvin he gained definite dogmatic ideas; and he rested "in the thought of two and two only absolute and luminously self-evident beings, myself and my Creator". In other words, personality became the primal truth in his philosophy; not matter, law, reason, or the experience of the senses. Henceforth, Newman was a Christian mystic, and such he remained. From the writings of Thomas Scott of Aston Sandford, "to whom, humanly speaking", he says, "I almost owe my soul", he learned the doctrine of the Trinity, supporting each verse of the Athanasian Creed with texts from Scripture. Scott's aphorisms were constantly on his lips for years, "Holiness rather than peace", and "Growth the only evidence of life". Law's "Serious Call" had on the youth a Catholic or ascetic influence; he was born to be a missionary; thought it God's will that he should lead a single life; was enamoured of quotations from the Fathers given in Milner's "Church History", and, reading Newton on the Prophecies, felt convinced that the pope was Antichrist. He had been at school at Ealing near London from the age of seven. Always thoughtful, shy, and affectionate, he took no part in boys games, began to exercise his pen early, read the Waverley Novels, imitated Gibbon and Johnson, matriculated at Trinity College, Oxford, Dec., 1816, and in 1818 won a scholarship of £60 tenable for nine years. In 1819 his father's bank suspended payment, but soon discharged its liabilities in full. Working too hard for his degree, Newman broke down, and gained in 1821 only third-class honours. But his powers could not be hidden. Oriel was then first in reputation and intellect among the Oxford Colleges, and of Oriel he was elected a fellow, 12 April, 1822. He ever felt this to be "the turning point in his life, and of all days most memorable".

In 1821 he had given up the intention of studying for the Bar, and resolved to take orders. As tutor of Oriel, he considered that he had a cure of souls; he was ordained on 13 June, 1824; and at Pusey's suggestion became curate of St. Clement's, Oxford, where he spent two years in parochial activity. And here the views in which he had been brought up disappointed him; "Calvinism was not a key to the phenomena of human nature as they occur in the world." It would not work. He wrote articles on Cicero, etc., and his first "[Essay on Miracles](#)", which takes a strictly Protestant attitude, to the prejudice of those alleged outside Scripture. But he also fell under the influence of

Whateley, afterwards Anglican Archbishop of Dublin, who, in 1825 made him his vice-principal at St. Mary's Hall. Whateley stimulated him by discussion, taught him the notion of Christianity as a social and sovereign organism distinct from the State, but led him in the direction of "liberal" ideas and nominalistic logic. To Whateley's once famous book on that subject Newman contributed. From Hawkins, whom his casting vote made Provost of Oriel, he gained the Catholic doctrines of tradition and baptismal regeneration, as well as a certain precision of terms which, long afterwards, gave rise to Kingsley's misunderstanding of Newman's methods in writing. By another Oxford clergyman he was taught to believe in the Apostolic succession. And Butler's "Analogy", read in 1823 made an era in his religious opinions. It is probably not too much to say that this deep and searching book became Newman's guide in life, and gave rise not only to the "Essay on Development" but to the "Grammar of Assent". In particular it offered a reflective account of ethics and conscience which confirmed his earliest beliefs in a lawgiver and judge intimately present to the soul. On another line it suggested the sacramental system, or the "Economy", of which the Alexandrians Clement and St. Athanasius are exponents. To sum up, at this formative period the sources whence Newman derived his principles as well as his doctrines were Anglican and Greek, not Roman or German. His Calvinism dropped away; in time he withdrew from the Bible Society. He was growing fiercely anti-Erastian; and Whateley saw the elements of a fresh party in the Church gathering round one whom Oriel had chosen for his intellectual promise, but whom Oxford was to know as a critic and antagonist of the "March of Mind".

His college in 1828 made him Vicar of St. Mary's (which was also the university church), and in its pulpit he delivered the "[Parochial Sermons](#)", without eloquence or gesture, for he had no popular gifts, but with a thrilling earnestness and a knowledge of human nature seldom equalled. When published, it was said of them that they "beat all other sermons out of the market as Scott's tales beat all other stories". They were not controversial; and there is little in them to which Catholic theology would object. Their chastened style, fertility of illustration, and short sharp energy, have lost nothing by age. In tone they are severe and often melancholy, as if the utterance of an isolated spirit. Though gracious and even tender-hearted, Newman's peculiar temper included deep reserve. He had not in his composition, as he says, a grain of conviviality. He was always the Oxford scholar, no democrat, suspicious of popular movements; but keenly interested in political studies as bearing on the fortunes of the Church. This disposition was intensified by his friendship with Keble, whose "Christian Year" came out in 1827, and with R. Hurrell Froude, a man of impetuous thought and self-denying practice. In 1832 he quarrelled with Dr. Hawkins who would not endure the pastoral idea which Newman cherished of his college work. He resigned his tutorship, went on a long voyage round the Mediterranean with Froude, and came back to Oxford, where on 14 July, 1833, Keble preached the Assize

sermon on "National Apostasy". That day, the anniversary of the French Revolution, gave birth to the Oxford Movement. Newman's voyage to the coasts of North Africa, Italy, Western Greece, and Sicily (Dec., 1832–July, 1833) was a romantic episode, of which his diaries have preserved the incidents and the colour. In Rome he saw Wiseman at the English College; the city as mother of religion to his native land, laid a spell on him never more to be undone. He felt called to some high mission; and when fever took him at Leonforte in Sicily (where he was wandering alone) he cried out, "I shall not die, I have not sinned against the light." Off Cape Ortegale, 11 Dec., 1832, he had composed the first of a series of poems, condensed, passionate, and original, which prophesied that the Church would yet reign as in her youth. Becalmed in the Straits of Bonifacio, he sought guidance through the tender verses, "[Lead, Kindly Light](#)", deservedly treasured by all the English-speaking races. They have been called the marching song of the Tractarian host. But during the earlier stages of that journey it was not clear, even to the leader himself, in what direction they were moving—away from the Revolution, certainly. Reform was in the air: ten Irish bishoprics had been suppressed; disestablishment might not be far off. There was need of resistance to the enemies without, and of a second but a Catholic, reformation within. The primitive Church must somehow be restored in England. Others met in committee and sent up an address to Canterbury; Newman began the "Tracts for the Times", as he tells us with a smile, "out of his own head." To him Achilles always seemed more than the host of the Achaeans. He took his motto from the Iliad: "They shall know the difference now." Achilles went down into battle, fought for eight years, won victory upon victory, but was defeated by his own weapons when "[Tract 90](#)" appeared, and retired to his tent at Littlemore, a broken champion. Nevertheless, he had done a lasting work, greater than Laud's and likely to overthrow Cranmer's in the end. He had resuscitated the Fathers, brought into relief the sacramental system, paved the way for an astonishing revival of long-forgotten ritual, and given the clergy a hold upon thousands at the moment when Erastian principles were on the eve of triumph. "It was soon after 1830", says Pattison grimly, "that the Tracts desolated Oxford life." Newman's position was designated the Via Media. The English Church, he maintained, lay at an equal distance from Rome and Geneva. It was Catholic in origin and doctrine; it anathematized as heresies the peculiar tenets whether of Calvin or Luther; it could not but protest against "Roman corruptions", which were excrescences on primitive truth. Hence England stood by the Fathers, whose teaching the Prayer Book handed down; it appealed to antiquity, and its norm was the undivided Church. "Charles", said Newman, "is the king, Laud the prelate, Oxford the sacred city, of this principle." Patristic study became the order of the day. Newman's first volume, "[The Arians of the Fourth Century](#)", is an undigested, but valuable and characteristic, treatise, wholly Alexandrian in tone, dealing with creeds and sects on the lines of the "Economy". As a history it fails; the manner is

confused, the style a contrast to his later intensity and directness of expression. But as a thinker Newman never travelled much beyond the "Arians" (published 1833). It implies a mystic philosophy controlled by Christian dogma, as the Church expounds it.

In the "Apologia" we find this key to his mental development dropped by Newman, not undesignedly. "I understood", he says, "... that the exterior world, physical and historical, was but the manifestation to our senses of realities greater than itself. Nature was a parable, Scripture was an allegory; pagan literature, philosophy, and mythology, properly understood, were but a preparation for the Gospel. The Greek poets and sages were in a sense prophets." There had been a "dispensation" of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews. Both had outwardly come to nought; from and through each had the evangelical doctrine been made manifest. Thus room was granted for the anticipation of deeper disclosures, of truths still under the veil of the letter. Holy Church "will remain after all but a symbol of those heavenly facts which fill eternity. Her mysteries are but the expression in human language of truths to which the human mind is unequal" ("Apol.", ed. 1895, p.27). Such was the teaching that "came like music" to his inward ear, from Athens and Alexandria. Newman's life was devoted, first, to applying this magnificent scheme to the Church of England; and then, when it would not suit those insular dimensions, to the Church of the centre, to Rome. But its wide implications even this far-glancing vision did not take in. However, it substituted a dynamic and progressive principle in Christianity for one merely static. But the Anglican position was supposed to rely on Vincent of Lerin's *Quod ubique*, admitting of no real developments; its divines urged against Bossuet the "variations" of Catholicism. From 1833 to 1839 the Tractarian leader held this line of defence without a misgiving.

Suddenly it gave way, and the Via Media disappeared.

Meanwhile, Oxford was shaken like Medicean Florence by a new Savonarola, who made disciples on every hand; who stirred up sleepy Conservatives when Hampden, a commonplace don, subjected Christian verities to the dissolving influence of Nominalism; and who multiplied books and lectures dealing with all religious parties at once. "The Prophetic Office" was a formal apology of the Laudian type; the obscure, but often beautiful, "[Treatise on Justification](#)" made an effort "to show that there is little difference but what is verbal in the various views, found whether among Catholic or Protestant divines" on this subject. Döllinger called it "the greatest masterpiece in theology that England had produced in a hundred years", and it contains the true answer to Puritanism. The "[University Sermons](#)", profound as their theme, aimed at determining the powers and limits of reason, the methods of revelation, the possibilities of a real theology. Newman wrote so much that his hand almost failed him. Among a crowd of admirers only one perhaps, Hurrell Froude, could meet him in thought on fairly equal terms, and Froude passed away at Dartington in 1836. The pioneer went his road alone. He made a bad party-leader, being liable to sudden gusts and personal resolutions which ended in

catastrophe. But from 1839, when he reigned at Oxford without a rival, he was already faltering. In his own language, he had seen a ghost—the shadow of Rome overclouding his Anglican compromise. Two names are associated with a change so momentous—Wiseman and Ward. The "Apologia" does full justice to Wiseman; it scarcely mentions Ward ... Those who were looking on might have predicted a collision between the Tractarians and Protestant England, which had forgotten the Caroline divines. This came about on occasion of "Tract 90"—in itself the least interesting of all Newman's publications. The tract was intended to keep stragglers from Rome by distinguishing the corruptions against which the Thirty-Nine Articles were directed, from the doctrines of Trent which they did not assail. A furious and universal agitation broke out in consequence (Feb., 1841). Newman was denounced as a traitor, a Guy Fawkes at Oxford; the University intervened with academic maladroitness and called the tract "an evasion". Dr. Bagot, Bishop of Oxford, mildly censured it, but required that the tracts should cease. For three years condemnations from the bench of bishops were scattered broadcast. To a mind constituted like Newman's, imbued with Ignatian ideas of episcopacy, and unwilling to perceive that they did not avail in the English Establishment, this was an *ex cathedra* judgment against him. He stopped the tracts, resigned his editorship of "The British Critic", by and by gave up St. Mary's, and retired at Littlemore into lay communion. Nothing is clearer than that, if he had held on quietly, he would have won the day. "Tract 90" does not go so far as many Anglican attempts at reconciliation have gone since. The bishops did not dream of coercing him into submission. But he had lost faith in himself. Reading church history, he saw that the Via Media was no new thing. It had been the refuge of the Semiarians, without whom Arianism could never have flourished. It made the fortune of the Monophysites, thanks to whom the Church of Alexandria had sunk into heresy and fallen a prey to Mohammed's legions. The analogy which Newman had observed with dismay was enforced from another side by Wiseman, writing on the Donatists in "The Dublin Review". Wiseman quoted St. Augustine, "*Secures judicat orbis terrarum*", which may be interpreted "Catholic consent is the judge of controversy". Not antiquity studied in books, not the bare succession of bishops, but the living Church now broke upon him as alone peremptory and infallible. It ever had been so; it must be so still. Nicaea, Ephesus, and Chalcedon thus bore witness to Rome. Add to this the grotesque affair of the Jerusalem bishopric, the fruit of an alliance with Lutheran Prussia, and the Anglican theory was disproved by facts.

From 1841 Newman was on his deathbed as regarded the Anglican Church. He and some friends lived together at Littlemore in monastic seclusion, under a hard rule which did not improve his delicate health. In February, 1843, he retracted in a local newspaper his severe language towards Rome; in September he resigned his living. With immense labour he composed the "[Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine](#)", in which the apparent variations of dogma,

formerly objected by him against the Catholic Church, were explained on a theory of evolution, curiously anticipating on certain points the great work of Darwin. It has many most original passages, but remains a fragment. On 9 Oct., 1845, during a period of excited action at Oxford, Newman was received into the Church by Father Dominic, an Italian Passionist, three days after Renan had broken with Saint-Sulpice and Catholicism. The event, although long in prospect, irritated and distressed his countrymen, who did not forgive it until many years had gone by. Its importance was felt; its causes were not known. Hence an estrangement which only the exquisite candour of Newman's self-delineation in the "Apologia" could entirely heal.

His conversion divides a life of almost ninety years into equal parts—the first more dramatic and its perspective ascertained; the second as yet imperfectly told, but spent for a quarter of a century *sub luce maligna*, under suspicion from one side or another, his plans thwarted, his motives misconstrued. Called by Wiseman to Oscott, near Birmingham, in 1846, he proceeded in October to Rome, and was there ordained by Cardinal Fransoni. The pope approved of his scheme for establishing in England the Oratory of St. Philip Neri; in 1847 he came back, and, besides setting up the London house, took mission work in Birmingham. Thence he moved out to Edgbaston, where the community still resides. A large school was added in 1859. The spacious Renaissance church, consecrated in 1909, is a memorial of the forty years during which Newman made his home in that place. After his "[Sermons to Mixed Congregations](#)", which exceed in vigour and irony all others published by him, the Oratorian recluse did not strive to gain a footing in the capital of the Midlands. He always felt "paucorum hominum sum"; his charm was not for the multitude. As a Catholic he began enthusiastically. His "[Lectures on Anglican Difficulties](#)" were heard in London by large audiences; "[Loss and Gain](#)", though not much of a story, abounds in happy strokes and personal touches; "[Callista](#)" recalls his voyage in the Mediterranean by many delightful pages; the sermon at the Synod of Oscott entitled "[The Second Spring](#)" has a rare and delicate beauty. It is said that Macaulay knew it by heart. "When Newman made up his mind to join the Church of Rome", observes R. H. Hutton, "his genius bloomed out with a force and freedom such as it never displayed in the Anglican communion." And again, "In irony, in humour, in eloquence, in imaginative force, the writings of the later and, as we may call it, emancipated portion of his career far surpass the writings of his theological apprenticeship." But English Catholic literature also gained a persuasive voice and a classic dignity of which hitherto there had been no example. His own secession, preceded by that of Ward (amid conflicts of the angriest kind at Oxford), and followed by many others, had alarmed Englishmen. In 1850 came the "Papal Aggression", by which the country was divided into Catholic sees, and a Roman cardinal announced from the Flaminian Gate his commission to "govern" Westminster. The nation went mad with excitement. Newman delivered in the Corn Exchange, Birmingham, his "[Lectures on the](#)

Position of Catholics" (he was seldom felicitous in titles of books), and, to George Eliot's amazement, they revealed him as a master of humorous, almost too lively sketches, witty and scornful of the great Protestant tradition. An apostate Italian priest, Achilli, was haranguing against the Church. Prompted by Wiseman, the Oratorian gave particulars of this man's infamous career, and Achilli brought a charge of libel. Newman, at enormous expense, collected evidence which fully justified the accusations he had made. But a no-popery jury convicted him. He was fined £100; on appeal, the verdict was quashed; and "The Times" admitted that a miscarriage of justice had taken place when Newman was declared guilty. Catholics all the world over came to his relief. His thanks are on record in the dedication of his Dublin "Lectures". But he always remembered that to Wiseman's haste and carelessness he owed this trial.

There was much more trouble awaiting him. The years from 1851 to 1870 brought disaster to a series of noble projects in which he aimed at serving religion and culture. In Ireland the Bishops had been compelled, after rejecting the "Godless" colleges in 1847, to undertake a university of their own. Neither men nor ideas were forthcoming; the State would not sanction degrees conferred by a private body; nevertheless, an attempt could be made; and Newman was appointed rector, November, 1851. Three years passed as in a dream; in 1854 he took the oaths. But he had, in 1852, addressed Ireland on the "Idea of a University" with such a largeness and liberality of view as Oxford, if we may believe Pattison, had never taught him. The "Lectures" end abruptly; they gave him less satisfaction than any other of his works; yet, in conjunction with his brilliant short papers in the "University Magazine", and academic dissertations to the various "Schools", they exhibit a range of thought, an urbanity of style, and a pregnant wit, such as no living professor could have rivalled. They are the best defence of Catholic educational theories in any language; a critic perhaps would describe them as the Via Media between an obscurantism which tramples on the rights of knowledge and a Free-Thought which will not hear of the rights of revelation. Incidentally, they defended the teaching of the classics against a French Puritan clique led by the Abbé Gaume. This was pretty much all that Newman achieved during the seven years of his "Campaign in Ireland". Only a few native or English students attended the house in St. Stephen's Green. The bishops were divided, and Archbishop MacHale opposed a severe *non possumus* to the rector's plans. In administration difficulties sprang up; and though Newman won the friendship of Archbishop Cullen and Bishop Moriarty, he was not always treated with due regard. The status of titular bishop had been promised him; for reasons which he never learnt, the promise fell through. His feeling towards Ireland was warm and generous; but in Nov., 1858, he retired from the rectorship. Its labours and anxieties had told upon him. Another large enterprise, to which Cardinal Wiseman invited him only to balk his efforts, was likewise a failure—the revision of the English Catholic Bible. Newman had selected a company of revisors and had

begun to accumulate materials, but some small publishers' interests were pleaded on the other side, and Wiseman, whose intentions were good, but evanescent, allowed them to wreck this unique opportunity. During the interval between 1854 and 1860 Newman had passed from the convert's golden fervours into a state which resembled criticism of prevailing methods in church government and education. His friends included some of a type known to history as "Liberal Catholics". Of Montalembert and Lacordaire he wrote in 1864: "In their general line of thought and conduct I enthusiastically concur and consider them to be before their age." He speaks of "the unselfish aims, the thwarted projects, the unrequited toils, the grand and tender resignation of Lacordaire". That moving description might be applied to Newman himself. He was intent on the problems of the time and not alarmed at Darwin's "Origin of Species". He had been made aware by German scholars, like Acton, of the views entertained at Munich; and he was keenly sensitive to the difference between North and South in debatable questions of policy or discipline. He looked beyond the immediate future; in a lecture at Dublin on "A Form of Infidelity of the Day" he seems to have anticipated what is now termed "Modernism", condemning it as the ruin of dogma. It is distressing to imagine what Newman's horror would have been, had his intuition availed to tell him that, in little more than half a century, a "form of infidelity" so much like what he predicted would claim him as its originator; on the other hand, he would surely have taken comfort, could he also have foreseen that the soundness of his faith was to be so vindicated as it has been by Bishop O'Dwyer, of Limerick, and above all, the vindication so approved and confirmed as it is in Pius X's letter of 10 March, 1908, to that bishop. In another lecture, on "Christianity and Scientific Investigation", he provides for a concordat which would spare the world a second case of Galileo. He held that Christian theology was a deductive science, but physics and the like were inductive; therefore collision between them need not, and in fact did not really occur. He resisted in principle the notion that historical evidence could do away with the necessity of faith as regarded creeds and definitions. He deprecated the intrusion of amateurs into divinity; but he was anxious that laymen should take their part in the movement of intellect. This led him to encourage J. M. Capes in founding the "Rambler", and H. Wilberforce in editing the "Weekly Register". But likewise it brought him face to face with a strong reaction from the earlier liberal policy of Pius IX. This new movement, powerful especially in France, was eagerly taken up by Ward and Manning, who now influenced Wiseman as he sank under a fatal disease. Their quarrel with J. H. N. (as he was familiarly called) did not break out in open war; but much embittered correspondence is left which proves that, while no point of faith divided the parties, their dissensions threw back English Catholic education for thirty years. These misunderstandings turned on three topics:—the "scientific" history which was cultivated by the "Rambler", with Newman's partial concurrence; the proposed oratory at Oxford; and the temporal power,

then at the crisis of its fate. Newman's editorship of the "Rambler", accepted, on request of Wiseman, by way of compromise, lasted only two months (May-July, 1859). His article, "[On Consulting the Laity in Matters of Doctrine](#)", was denounced at Rome by Bishop Brown of Newport and Menevia. Leave was given for an Oratorian house at Oxford, provided Newman did not go thither himself, which defeated the whole plan. A sharp review of Manning's "Lectures on the Temporal Power" was attributed to Newman, who neither wrote nor inspired it; and these two illustrious Catholics were never friends again. Newman foresaw the total loss of the temporal power; his fears were justified; but prevision and the politics of the day could not well be united. Of all Christians then living this great genius had the deepest insight into the future; but to his own generation he became as Jeremiah announcing the fall of Jerusalem. Despondency was his prevailing mood when, in January, 1864, from an unexpected quarter, the chance of his life was given him.

Charles Kingsley, a bold, picturesque, but fiercely anti-Catholic writer, dealing, in "Macmillan's Magazine", with J. A. Froude's "History of England" let fall the remark that "Truth, for its own sake, had never been a virtue with the Roman clergy. Father Newman informs us that it need not, and on the whole ought not to be; that cunning is the weapon which heaven has given to the Saints wherewith to withstand the brute male force of the wicked world which marries and is given in marriage. Whether his notion be doctrinally correct or not, it is at least historically so." These assertions had no foundation whatever in fact. Newman demanded proof; a correspondence ensued in which Kingsley referred to one of the Oxford Anglican sermons generally; he withdrew his charge in terms that left its injustice unproved; and thus he brought on himself, in the pamphlet which his adversary published, one of the most cutting replies, ironical and pitiless, known to literature. He returned to the assault. "What then does Dr. Newman mean?" was his question. The answer came in the shape of an "[Apologia pro Vita sua](#)", which, while pulverizing enemies of the Kingsley stamp, lifted Newman to a height above all his detractors, and added a unique specimen of religious autobiography to our language. Issued in seven parts, between 21 April and 2 June, 1864, the original work was a marvel of swift and cogent writing. Materials in expectation of some such opportunity had been collecting since 1862. But the duel which led up to an account of Newman's most intimate feelings exhibited sword-play the like of which can be scarcely found outside Pascal's "Provincial Letters" and Lessing's "Anti-Goeze". It annihilated the opponent and his charge. Not that Newman cherished a personal animosity against Kingsley, whom he had never met. His tone was determined by a sense of what he owed to his own honour and the Catholic priesthood. "Away with you, Mr. Kingsley, and fly into space", were his parting words to a man whose real gifts did not serve him in this wild encounter. Then the old Tractarian hero told the story of his life. He looked upon it with the eye of an artist, with self-knowledge like that of Hamlet, with candour, and pathos, and awe; for

he felt a guiding power throughout which had brought him home. The handling was unaffected, the portraits of Oxford celebrities true and yet kind; the drama which ended in his renunciation of place and power at St. Mary's moved on with a tragic interest. His brief prologues are among the jewels of English prose. A word from St. Augustine converted him, and its poignant effects could not be surpassed in the "Confessions" of the saint himself. The soliloquy, as we may term it, which describes Newman's attitude since 1845, presents in a lofty view his apology, which is not a surrender, to those Catholics who mistrusted him. Though he never would discuss the primary problems of Theism *ex professo*, he has dwelt on the apparent chaos of history, goodness defeated and mortal efforts futile, with a piercing eloquence which reminds us of some lament in Æschylus. He met Kingsley's accusations of double-dealing proudly and in detail. But by the time he reached them, Englishmen—who had read the successive chapters with breathless admiration—were completely brought round. No finer triumph of talent in the service of conscience has been put on record. From that day the Catholic religion may date its re-entrance into the national literature. Instead of arid polemics and technical arguments, a living soul had revealed in its journey towards the old faith wherein lay the charm that drew it on. Reality became more fascinating than romance; the problem which staggered Protestants and modern minds—how to reconcile individual genius with tradition, private judgment with authority—was resolved in Newman's great example.

Amid acclamations from Catholics, echoing the "aves vehement" of the world outside, he turned to the philosophy which would justify his action. He began the "[Grammar of Assent](#)". Still, Manning, now archbishop, Talbot, chamberlain of Pius IX, Ward, editor of the "Dublin Review", were not to be pacified. Manning thought he was transplanting the "Oxford tone into the Church"; Talbot described him as "the most dangerous man in England"; Ward used even harder terms. In 1867 an attack by a Roman correspondent on Newman led to a counter-move, when two hundred distinguished laymen told him, "Every blow that touches you inflicts a wound upon the Catholic Church in this country." His discriminating answer on the cultus of Our Lady to Pusey's "[Eirenicon](#)" had been taken ill in some quarters. One of his Oratorians, H. I. D. Ryder, was bold enough to cross swords with the editor of the "Dublin", who inflicted on friend and foe views concerning the extent of papal infallibility which the Roman authorities did not sanction; and Newman rejoiced in the assault. In 1870 the "Grammar" was published. But its appearance, coinciding with the Vatican Council, roused less attention than the author's suspected dislike for the aims and conduct of the majority at Rome. Years before he had proclaimed his belief in the infallible pope. His "Cathedra Sempiterna" rivals in fervour and excels in genuine rhetoric the passage with which de Maistre concluded his "Du Pape", which became a text for "ultramontane" apologetics. Yet he shrank from the perils which hung over men less stable than himself should the definition be

carried. He would have healed the breach between Rome and Munich. Under these impressions he sent to his bishop, W. B. Ullathorne, a confidential letter in which he branded not the Fathers of the Council, but the journalists and other partisans outside who were abounding in violent language, as "an insolent and aggressive faction". The letter was surreptitiously made public; a heated controversy ensued; but Newman took no further part in the conciliar proceedings. Of course he accepted the dogmatic definitions; and in 1874 he defended the Church against Gladstone's charge that "Vaticanism" was equivalent to the latest fashions in religion (see his "[Letter to the Duke of Norfolk](#)"). Newman's demeanour towards authority was ever one of submission; but, as he wrote to Phillips de Lisle in 1848, "it is no new thing with me to feel little sympathy with parties, or extreme opinions of any kind." In recommending the Creed he would employ "a wise and gentle minimism", not extenuating what was true but setting down nought in malice. The "Grammar of Assent" illustrates and defends this method, in which human nature is not left out of account. It is curiously Baconian, for it eschews abstractions and metaphysics, being directed to the problem of concrete affirmation, its motives in fact, and its relation to the personality of the individual. This hitherto unexplored province of apologetics lay dark, while the objective reasons for assent had engrossed attention; we might term it the casuistry of belief. Newman brought to the solution a profound acquaintance with the human heart, which was his own; a resolve to stand by experience; and a subtilty of expression corresponding to his fine analysis. He believed in "implicit" logic, varied and converging proofs, indirect demonstration (*ex impossibili* or *ex absurdo*); assent, in short, in not a mechanical echo of the syllogism but a vital act, distinct and determined. The will, sacrificed in many schools to formal intellect, recovers its power; genius and common sense are justified. Not that pure logic loses its rights, or truth is merely "that which each man troweth"; but the moral being furnishes an indispensable premise to arguments bearing on life, and all that is meant by a "pious disposition" towards faith is marvellously drawn out. As a sequel and crown to the "Development" this often touching volume (which reminds us of Pascal) completes the author's philosophy. Some portions of it he is said to have written ten times, the last chapter many times more. Yet that chapter is already in part antiquated. The general description, however, of concrete assent appears likely to survive all objections. How far it bears on Kant's "Practical Reason" or the philosophy of the will as developed by Schopenhauer, has yet to be considered. But we must not torture it into the "pragmatism" of a later day. As Newman held by dogma in revelation, so he would never have denied that the mind enjoys a vision of truth founded on reality. He was a mystic, not a sceptic. To him the reason by which men guided themselves was "implicit" rather than "explicit", but reason nevertheless. Abstractions do not exist; but the world is a fact; our own personality cannot be called in question; the will is a true cause; and God reveals Himself in conscience. Apologetics, to be persuasive,

should address the individual; for real assents, however multiplied, are each single and *sui generis*. Even a universal creed becomes in this way a private acquisition. As the "Development" affords a counterpart to Bossuet's "Variations", so the "Grammar" may be said to have reduced the "personal equation" in controversy to a working hypothesis, whereas in Protestant hands it had served the purposes of anarchy.

For twenty years Newman lay under imputations at Rome, which misconstrued his teaching and his character. This, which has been called the ostracism of a saintly genius, undoubtedly was due to his former friends, Ward and Manning. In February, 1878, Pius IX died; and, by a strange conjuncture, in that same month Newman returned to Oxford as Honorary Fellow of Trinity College, "dear to him from undergraduate days". The event provoked Catholics to emulation. Moreover, the new pope, Leo XIII, had also lived in exile from the Curia since 1846, and the Virgilian sentiment, "Haud ignara mali", would come home to him. The Duke of Norfolk and other English peers approached Cardinal Manning, who submitted their strong representation to the Holy See. Pope Leo, it is alleged, was already considering how he might distinguish the aged Oratorian. He intimated, accordingly, in February, 1879, his intention of bestowing on Newman the cardinal's hat. The message affected him to tears, and he exclaimed that the cloud was lifted from him forever. By singular ill-fortune, Manning understood certain delicate phrases in Newman's reply as declining the purple; he allowed that statement to appear in "The Times", much to everyone's confusion. However, the end was come. After a hazardous journey, and in broken health, Newman arrived in Rome. He was created Cardinal-Deacon of the Title of St. George, on 12 May, 1879. His [*biglietto speech*](#), equal to the occasion in grace and wisdom, declared that he had been the life-long enemy of Liberalism, or "the doctrine that there is no truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another", and that Christianity is "but a sentiment and a taste, not an objective fact, not miraculous". Hitherto, in modern times, no simple priest, without duties in the Roman Curia, had been raised to the Sacred College. Newman's elevation, hailed by the English nation and by Catholics everywhere with unexampled enthusiasm was rightly compared to that of Bessarion after the Council of Florence. It broke down the wall of partition between Rome and England. To the many addresses which poured in upon him the cardinal replied with such point and felicity as often made his words gems of literature. He had revised all his writings, the last of which dealt somewhat tentatively with Scripture problems. Now his hand would serve him no more, but his mind kept its clearness always. In "The Dream of Gerontius" (1865), which had been nearly a lost masterpiece, he anticipated his dying hours, threw into concentrated, almost Dantean, verse and imagery his own beliefs as suggested by the Offices of Requiem, and looked forward to his final pilgrimage, "alone to the Alone". Death came with little suffering, on 11 Aug., 1890. His funeral was a great public event. He lies in the

same grave with Ambrose St. John, whom he called his "life under God for thirty-two years". His device as cardinal, taken from St. Francis de Sales, was *Cor ad cor loquitur* (Heart speaketh to heart); it reveals the secret of his eloquence, unaffected, graceful, tender, and penetrating. On his epitaph we read: *Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem* (From shadows and symbols into the truth); it is the doctrine of the Economy, which goes back to Plato's "Republic" (bk. VII), and which passed thence by way of Christian Alexandria into the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, the poetry of the Florentine, and the schools of Oxford. John Henry Newman thus continues in modern literature the Catholic tradition of East and West, sealing it with a martyr's faith and suffering, steadfast in loyalty to the truth, while discerning with a prophet's vision the task of the future.

As a writer of English prose Newman stands for the perfect embodiment of Oxford, deriving from Cicero the lucid and leisurely art of exposition, from the Greek tragedians a thoughtful refinement, from the Fathers a preference for personal above scientific teaching, from Shakespeare, Hooker, and that older school the use of idiom at its best. He refused to acquire German; he was unacquainted with Goethe as with Hegel; he took some principles from Coleridge, perhaps indirectly; and, on the whole, he never went beyond Aristotle in his general views of education. From the Puritan narrowness of his first twenty years he was delivered when he came to know the Church as essential to Christianity. Then he enlarged that conception till it became Catholic and Roman, an historical idea realized. He made no attempt, however, to widen the Oxford basis of learning, dated 1830, which remained his position, despite continual reading and study. The Scholastic theology, except on its Alexandrian side, he left untouched; there is none of it in his "Lectures", none in the "Grammar of Assent". He wrote forcibly against the shallow enlightenment of Brougham; he printed no word concerning Darwin, or Huxley, or even Colenso. He lamented the fall of Döllinger; but he could not acquiesce in the German idea by which, as it was in fact applied, the private judgment of historians overruled the Church's dogmas. Conscience to him was the inward revelation of God, Catholicism the outward and objective. This twofold force he opposed to the agnostic, the rationalist, the mere worldling. But he seems to have thought men premature who undertook a positive reconciliation between faith and science, or who attempted by a vaster synthesis to heal the modern conflicts with Rome. He left that duty to a later generation; and, though by the principle of development and the philosophy of concrete assent providing room for it, he did not contribute towards its fulfilment in detail. He will perhaps be known hereafter as the Catholic Bishop Butler, who extended the "Analogy" drawn from experience to the historical Church, proving it thus to be in agreement with the nature of things, however greatly transcending the visible scheme by its message, institutions, and purpose, which are alike supernatural. The best authorities on Newman are his own writings; *Collected Works* (36 vols., popular ed., London, 1895); *My Campaign in Ireland*

(London, 1896); *Meditations and Devotions* (London, 1895); *Addresses and Replies* (London, 1905) (the last three posthumous, ed. by NEVILLE); *Letters and Correspondence* (to 1845), ed. ANNE MOZELY (London, 1891). See also monographs by HUTTON (London, 1891); BARRY (London, 1904); BRÉMOND (Paris, 1907); LILLY in Dict. of Nat. Biography, s. v.; and consult: WILFRID WARD, *W. G. Ward and the Oxford Movement* (London, 1889); IDEM, *Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman* (London, 1897); PURCELL, *Life of Cardinal Manning* (London, 1895); DE LISLE AND PURCELL, *Life and Times of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle* (London, 1900); GASQUET, *Lord Acton and his Circle* (London, 1906); with caution T. MOZLEY, *Reminiscences of Oriel* (London, 1882).

[See also—[Life of Cardinal Newman](#), Wilfrid Ward, 1912.]

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