

**CARDINAL NEWMAN'S PERSONAL INFLUENCE.**

The following is taken from the well known college paper, the Fordham Monthly, published at St. John's Fordham N.Y. and reflects the greatest credit on the author, who is yet only an under-graduate of St. Johns College (Conducted by the Jesuit Fathers) Mr. C. W. Wingerter was formerly a student of St. Mary's College Montreal—

All the world seems unanimous in allowing that the century in which we now find ourselves is destined to have a most noted place in history. In the light of this fact there is a world of significance in the remark made by a Protestant clergyman writing for the 'Andover Review' of August, 1885. He says: "To comprehend our age we must know well not merely Carlyle and Darwin and Martineau; we must know as well John Henry Newman, his life and his works. For when the history of the nineteenth century is written, no influence will be found more potent and persuasive than his."

At first sight we might be inclined to protest against such a broad assertion, did we know that all the intelligent literature of the past forty years which at all touches upon that portentous birth of time, the Oxford Movement, agrees that it marked an epoch not only in the Anglican Church, but in all history. And Mr. Mozley, in his interesting 'Reminiscences,' only voices the common thought of his intelligent contemporaries when he says of the actors in it, "I may honestly say that, with the exception of Keble, I do not think one of them would be a living name a century hence, but for his share in the light of Newman's genius and goodness."

From this it is seen forthwith what a broad field opens to the one seeking to treat of the life and influence of Cardinal Newman, and this we are free to do because, in view of the greatness of the movement in which he was the most prominent actor, he already belongs to history. The field widens to our gaze when we recall to mind that this foremost figure of our times has been a most prolific writer whose pure and vigorous English has made his works classic even in his lifetime, and deserved that no less eminent a critic than Matthew Arnold should style him the greatest living master of English prose. Nor will one who has ever read that poetic prose deny that, besides being philosopher, theologian, historian, preacher and lecturer Dr. Newman has received the gift of poetry as part of his birthright.

But it is not my intention to treat either of the great Cardinal's life or works, or of his connection with the history of his age. Yet my task, whose only excuse for its imperfect fulfillment will be that it is a labor of love, is no less venturesome than would be the attempt to treat as they deserve the life and works of him about whose secession to Rome, Gladstone said, "A great luminary drew after him the third part of the stars of Heaven."

Volumes have already been written on this wonderful man, and volumes will yet be written. In all however whether from the pen of friend or foe, there exists to a remarkable degree, the one common tone of admiration. It is true that at times hostile writers only give vent to their admiration because they cannot help it, but there are many who write with the same frank spirit as Kegan Paul's in the Century for June, 1882. A liberal of the liberals, one of those therefore, falling under Dr. Newman's stern disapproval, I write with affectionate sympathy of a pupil for a master whom he cannot follow, with genuine admiration for the subtlest, intellect the largest heart, the most unselfish life I know.

Surely anyone who has read the countless like passages in writers sometimes wholly at variance with each other in all things else, and nearly always having different opinions from those held by Dr. Newman, must have asked himself the question I have proposed to answer in this short paper, What is the secret of Cardinal's Newman's power to win admiration from all intellects alike? and why is it that every item of his career is read with a keen interest akin to that we are wont to attach to some mysterious and traditional figure of romance or fable?

That there was a peculiar charm of winning attractiveness in his person he himself unconsciously notes in one of his earliest poems, where he places among his manifold blessings—

"Blessings of friends, which to my door,  
Unasked, unhop'd, have come."

All who have met him speak of his attractive power which held in his friendship men from whose communion he had broken off, at the cost of their and his unspeakable pain. On his visit to Oxford in 1878, Dr. Pusey welcomed him most sincerely. And in his earlier days when more than his spirit and his name ruled Oxford, this personal influence was at its full and well nigh irresistible. Mr. Mozley describes it in many instances and thus in the case of poor Sidney Herbert: "Every Oriel man without a moment's hesitation, sets down the redeeming features of his unhappily brief career to the influence of Newman, surrounding him and penetrating him in spite of a wilful and stubborn resistance, and asserting possession of him in due time."

It was against his salutary influence that James Anthony Froude struggled in his college days, with what a most unhappy effect can be judged by all those acquainted with his—to put it most charitably—unfortunate writings. Yet even he whose perverse will had led him into a path the very opposite to Dr. Newman's, pays a glowing though unwilling tribute to the person of the Cardinal, attributing to him a most attaching

gentleness, sweetness, singleness of aim and purpose; he says that he was formed by nature to command others and had the faculty of attracting to himself the passionate devotion of his friends and followers.

Although Cardinal Newman founded no sect, he yet resembled the old Greek philosophers in this, he had a following of young friends who were his heart and soul, ready to go through fire and water for his sake, and some of them, like Hurriell Froude, 'only likely to quarrel if the pace was too slow.' "The wondering parents of the young man who came home from Oxford with the one name of 'Newman' ever on his admiring lips must have asked themselves the question which naturally prompts itself to us and which must have come to a spectator who had seen what Principal Sharp describes when he tells us how, more than forty years ago, in Oriel Lane light-hearted undergraduates would drop their voices and whisper 'There's Newman when he'd trust forward and gaze fixed on some vision seen only by himself; with swift, noiseless steps he glided by filling them with awe for a moment as if it had been some apparition that had passed."

And it was this same mysterious personal charm which drew all Oxford to fill St. Mary's with eager ears to hear some thrilling Sunday afternoon sermons and to revel in the presence of 'that voice'—I used the words of Anthony Froude—'so keen, so preternaturally sweet, whose very whisper used to thrill through crowded churches, when every breath was held to hear, that calm gray eye; those features so stern and yet so gentle.' This was the power which, added to his genius and his style, made him the one great figure of those days and makes his name a great one to the imagination still.

But when all Oxford resounded with that name, the memory of which even in the after time was to be the one potent power in the university, 'alike a charm to omnium with, and a dangerous force to exorcise,' the ever memorable 9th of October, 1845, drew nigh, and with it came the end of twelve long years of intense and earnest thought; and "Ho Megaw" as Henry Wilberforce used to speak of him, chose 'the reproach of Christ as to be esteemed greater riches than the treasure of the Egyptians.' And when he was gone, the small hamlet of Littlemore, once his sojourn, became a Mecca for enthusiastic young Oxford men who loved his memory.

How sacredly he was remembered we may learn in hearing Kegan Paul tell of a home near Oxford in which a veiled crucifix seemed to its possessors to have gained a special sanctity because it had been Newman's; and how those who had attended his former church at Littlemore prayed all the more fervently because he had prayed their before them while the young zealots of that day loved St. Mary's most because of its pulpit whence Newman had preached.

The secret of the charm that fascinated while it awed the younger enthusiasm of Oxford is partly to be found in man's veneration of the mysterious and the solitary, and his admiration of the tamelessness of soul which was ready to essay the impossible. Although in Oriel days Cardinal Newman was known to be almost romantically devoted to the inner circle of his friends, to the world at large he seemed as one who dwelt apart from men and from the age which claimed him. With an earnestness which would not permit him 'to pause, to make an end,' he occupied his whole future; we are told he was ever yearning to build up as fast as men cast down, and to plant again the waste places. Mr. Mozley says 'It was never possible to be even a quarter of an hour in his company without a man feeling himself to be invited to take an onward step sufficient to tax his energy or his faith.'

Not satisfied to follow the example of other tutors he made his connection with the under graduates something more than simply official or nominal, and thus won their love to him as to a father or an elder and affectionate brother. Like Walter Scott in being one of the most noble and lovable figures in English letters, he assembled him also in this that he was ever seeing the best and highest parts of the human character. He looked for water from the deserts, and trusted that the broken reeds might yet rule the forest, ever hoping against all hope.

It was such qualities as these which made him the idol of those who lived in his immediate presence; while the shadows of the beautiful features of his attractive soul made him revered to those who only saw him through his works or heard his most entrancing voices break in the silence of St. Mary's with words and thoughts which were a religious music. His severity of soul was linked to a gentleness of spirit which filled him with

"A hate of hate, a scorn of scorn,  
A love of love;"

which made controversy distasteful to him, and the thought of ridiculing an adversary, though he never lacked opportunities and ever had the power, foreign to him. And what a world and a wealth of meaning is there in the fact that his bitterest enemies could not accuse him of unfairness!

But we must not hope to write the secret of his popularity in a few words. Many circumstances combined to produce it, and there was never a like example of such popularity because there was never a like combination of such circumstances. I have told of some. And one who will read between the lines of his sermons may there find another. These sermons, while ever teaching the human soul's direct relation to God—"the everlasting face to face with God,"—were the first since those of Jeremy Taylor to teach also that beauty was consonant with holiness; that piety need not be ugly, that the love of God need

not be hideous. Beautiful poems they were rather than sermons, and yet overflowing with an earnest and heart filling love for God which was as new to his hearers as it was attracting.

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