

# A LETTER TO THE REV. E. B. PUSEY, D.D., ON HIS RECENT EIRENICON, BY J. H. NEWMAN, D.D.

It can scarcely be a matter of surprise to those who have with any degree of attention, read Dr. Pusey's *Eirenicon*, that an answer to it was published by one of the Roman Communion. While the message of the *Eirenicon* was a message of peace, yet as Dr. Newman says, (page 9), the olive branch is discharged as if from a catapult: the practical and doctrinal errors, which, if not authorised, are at any rate, permitted in the Churches of the Roman obedience, are denounced in too bold words, our own position too manfully vindicated, for the book to remain before the world without a reply. Nevertheless, in his answer to Dr. Pusey, Dr. Newman does not even attempt to defend the original positions of Dr. Manning, which called forth the *Eirenicon*. He comes forth as the champion of his adopted Church, because he conceives that Dr. Pusey's words are a call and a challenge to him; yet he confines himself to the charges brought against her by Dr. Pusey, in regard to the "vast system as to the Blessed Virgin," and even then he makes no attempt to defend all the Churches of the Roman obedience, or all the writers who have sheltered themselves under the name of Romanists. Dr. Newman will not accept the challenge if he has to countenance the views of all divines, or the practical system which has been raised upon those views in Italy, Sicily, or Spain: he claims for the English Romanists, that they are bound only by the teaching of the Fathers, by the authoritative statements of the Roman Church, and by the disciplinal and doctrinal teaching, which, based upon those foundations, has become, in England, a distinctive feature of the English Roman Catholic Church. He thus really admits the division of the Roman Communion into its several national branches, which are independent of each other, except so far as all are dependent upon the See of Rome.

Under these limitations, Dr. Newman undertakes the defence of the English Catholics, (as Dr. Newman assumes them to be) from the charge of Mariolatry. For this purpose, he begins by enunciating the distinction to be observed between faith and devotion, and upon it states his case as follows:—

"I fully grant that devotion towards the Blessed Virgin has increased among Catholics, with the progress of centuries; I do not allow that the doctrine concerning her has undergone a growth, for I believe that it has been in substance one and the same from the beginning." (page 28.)

This distinction, Dr. Newman conceives to be a characteristic of his Church and its worship: "The faith is everywhere the same: but a large liberty is accorded to private judgment and inclination in matters of devotion," (page 30.) Now for their creed, he appeals to the fathers; he takes his stand upon the fathers, preferring to the "contentions and subtle theology" of more recent times, "the more elegant and fruitful teaching which is moulded after the image of erudite antiquity." He quotes passages from them in their chronological order to show what their teaching really was, and how high a doctrine he conceives