

of Rome and England. Despite the fact that the Tract was somewhat ambiguous, it was of incalculable service in the solution of a very practical question. It dealt not with the whole Thirty-nine Articles but simply with such of them as appeared to contradict Catholic doctrines. The wording of the Articles is in many places of such a kind as to admit no very natural interpretation. It is a notorious fact that they were intentionally drawn up by the English Reformers so as to satisfy their friends abroad and at the same time give the least umbrage possible to the Catholic party at home. They thus bore a Protestant aspect while their undercurrent was Catholic. Hence it was that Newman says, "fierce as the Articles might look at first sight, their bark would prove worse than their bite." It was Newman's purpose to check the Romeward progress of the advanced Tractarians, but in order to effect this he had no intention whatever of giving the Articles a biased interpretation; his sole aim was to give them a true interpretation, the interpretation that was inevitable.

The sense that he succeeded in extracting from the elusive expressions of the Articles was by no means unfavorable to the Catholic Church. The difficulty of Ward and his associates was overcome by Newman's declaration that the Articles were not opposed to Roman Catholic teaching and hence an Anglican might accept the Thirty-nine Articles and at the same time hold the essential belief of the Church of Rome.

Facts of paramount importance to the movement crowded upon one another after the appearance of the Tract. The sensation it caused was tremendous. Four influential Tutors of the University made a protest in consequence of which the Tract was brought to the attention of the Hebdomadal Board (consisting then of heads of colleges and halls of Oxford) whose opinion was that the tract was worthy of censure. However, owing to the failure of the academical convention to ratify this opinion the Tract was never formally condemned. On the advice of Dr Bagot, Bishop of Oxford, Newman suspended the publication of the Tracts, but to any retraction he would never consent. By the discontinuance of the Tracts the great catholicizing power in the Anglican Church was broken to pieces.

To the country at large Newman's interpretation of the