

AN INTELLECTUAL LEADER.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF JOHN HENRY CARD. NEWMAN.

III.

A LITTLE more than a decade after the Achilli affair, Dr. Newman was again prominently before the public, but under very different circumstances. It was a wrestling this time with the intellectual forces which determine the good or evil opinions of men; and he came out of the strife conspicuously victorious, bearing off as his prize the admiring respect of all classes of his countrymen.

Canon Kingsley, in a review of Mr. Froude's History of England, which appeared anonymously in Macmillan's Magazine for January, 1864, had the following:—

"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 this wicked world, which marries and is given in marriage. Whether this notion be doctrinally correct or not, it is at least historically so."

Dr. Newman was naturally astounded by so unmerited an attack, and none the less deeply hurt that it involved, through him, the honour of the whole priesthood—through him whose whole life, as Mr. Froude says, had been a struggle for truth, to the entire forgetting of his own interests. He therefore wrote to the Messrs. Macmillan, not, he said, to seek reparation, but merely to draw their attention to a grave and gratuitous slander, with which, he felt confident, they would be sorry to find their names associated, pointing out at the same time that there were no words of his—much less any quotation from his writings—given in support of so monstrous a charge. This letter having been sent to Mr. Kingsley, that gentleman wrote to Dr. Newman, saying that he had drawn his conclusions from many passages in his writings, but had referred in particular to a sermon published in 1844, and entitled "Wisdom and Innocence." He added, however, that if Dr. Newman would show him he had wronged him, as he was happy to believe from the tone of the letter to Messrs. Macmillan he would be able to do, he (Mr. Kingsley) would gladly retract his accusation as publicly as he had made it.

Deeply hurt by Mr. Kingsley's avowal of his authorship of the slander, Dr. Newman demanded an explanation, and an admission that the article in the *Review* contained an accusation for which there was no justification. Mr. Kingsley thereupon submitted a draft of the following for his approval:

"Dr. Newman has, by letter, expressed, in the strongest terms, his denial of the meaning which I had put upon his words. *Nomanknows the use of words better than Dr. Newman*; no man, therefore, has a better right to define what he does or does not mean by them. It only remains, therefore, for me to express my hearty regret at having so seriously mistaken him; and *my hearty pleasure at finding him on the side of truth, in this or any other matter.*"

This, Dr. Newman saw, as it is not, indeed, very difficult to see, would leave an impression the very reverse of what he required from the explanation; and he therefore withheld his approval. Mr. Kingsley thereupon offered to omit the words italicised above, saying that he thought he would then have done all one gentleman should expect from another; but Dr. Newman still objected that the paragraph, even as amended, would seem to imply that he had been confronted with definite abstracts from his works, and had given his own explanation of them to the publishers. This he had indeed wished, but had not been so fortunate as to bring about. Kingsley, however, sent his paragraph to the magazine, and its publication brought forth from Dr. Newman a rejoinder, the following extract from which will convey an idea of the whole:

"Mr. Kingsley begins by exclaiming,—'O the chicanery, the wholesale fraud, the vile hypocrisy, the conscience-killing tyranny of Rome! We have not far to seek for an evidence of it. There's Father Newman to

wit! one living specimen is worth a hundred dead ones. He, a priest writing of priests, tells us that lying is never any harm.'

"I interpose: 'You are taking a most extraordinary liberty with my name. If I have said this, tell me when and where.'

"Mr. Kingsley replies: 'You said it, reverend sir, in a sermon which you preached when a Protestant, as Vicar of St. Mary's, and published in 1844.'

"I make answer; 'Oh . . . Not, it seems, as a priest speaking of priests; but let us have the passage.'

"Mr. Kingsley relaxes: 'Do you know, I like your tone. From your tone I rejoice, greatly rejoice, to be able to believe that you did not mean what you said.'

"I rejoin; 'Mean it! I maintain I never said it, whether as a Protestant or as a Catholic.'

"Mr. Kingsley replies: 'I waive that point.'

I object: "Is it possible? What? Waive the whole question! I either said it or I didn't. You have made a monstrous charge against me; direct, distinct, public. You are bound to prove it as directly, as distinctly, as publicly; or to own you can't." "Well," says Mr. Kingsley, "if you are quite sure you did not say it, I'll take your word for it; I really will."

My word! I am dumb. Somehow I thought it was my word that happened to be on trial. The *word* of a Professor of lying, that he does not *lie!* But Mr. Kingsley re-assures me: "We are both gentlemen," he says; "I have done as much as one English gentleman can expect from another."

I begin to see: he thought me a gentleman at the very time that he said I taught lying on system. After all, it is not I, but it is Mr. Kingsley who did not mean what he said.

So we have confessedly come round to this preaching without practising; the common theme of satirists from Juvenal to Walter Scott! "I left Baby Charles and Steenie laying his duty before him," says King James, of the reprobate Dalgarno; "O Geordie, jingling Geordie, it was grand to hear Baby Charles laying down the guilt of dissimulation, and Steenie lecturing on the turpitude of incontinence."

Mr. Kingsley replied to this masterly exposition of the case in an article under the title "What, then, does Dr. Newman mean?" It was very plain to all who read that he was tingling from the effects of his opponent's thrusts, and anxious for revenge; for he hesitated not to make use of most insulting insinuations, and challenged Dr. Newman's honesty on every point. But he deserves our thanks for his article nevertheless, for the reply to it was the famous "Apologia pro Vitâ Suâ."

"I must," said Dr. Newman, "give the true key to my whole life. I must show what I am that it may be seen what I am not, and that the phantom may be extinguished which gibbers instead of me. I wish to be known as a living man, and not as a scarecrow which is dressed up in my clothes. False ideas may be refuted indeed by argument, but by true ideas alone are they expelled."

And he has shown himself as he is to an extent which makes us realize in astonishment the immense power of self-analysis possessed by him. It is, of course, a history of his religious life only; but very few have lived a life so near to being exclusively religious. From his very infancy his whole mind was bent to the task of finding out his real duties to God, and every energy spent in doing them. Ever present with him was the conviction that in God he "lived and moved and had his being."

In this remarkable book he has given as minute a description of the workings of his intellect, and the effect upon it of every opinion and event with which it came appreciably into contact, as a scientist might give of the results of an experiment in his laboratory upon some substance whose qualities he had been testing.

The book appeared in parts, and the appearance of each instalment was eagerly looked for by the reading public. At the end of the first part he says:—

"And now I am in a train of thought higher and more serene than any which slanders can disturb. Away with you, Mr. Kingsley, and fly into space."