

leanings, instead of going into the Church he would have probably enlarged the domain of philosophy, and struck a light as fruitful of discoveries as Bacon; and, as we have indicated, were it not for his intellectual subtlety, thoroughness, and real and active and strong spirituality, he would never have joined the communion of the Church of Rome, nor issued a pamphlet from her bosom which might be used as an arrow against her loftiest pretensions, and pierce the heart of her imposing system.

"The mental process that landed Francis William Newman in Positivism resembled that which ultimately swung his brother into the arms of Roman Catholicism, the only difference being that in the one case reason was stronger than pious feeling, and in the other weaker. There seemed to the mind of the religious student, with the logical clearness of a Mill and the aspirations of a Madame Guyon, no halting place between authority and rationalism—between a Church carrying, as it were, in her apron the sacred fire of an abiding inspiration, and a godless deep—a world fatherless and forsaken.

"All that shocks the ordinary Protestant mind in the rites and doctrines of the Papacy ceases to be staggering and repulsive, once the premise that the system of inspiration and development is still going forward is accepted; while the philosophical mind can see neither improbabilities nor probabilities in matters supernatural, the word probability and the state of mind to which it belongs having, notwithstanding Butler's famous argument, reference merely to this mundane sphere and its little order. And just as the dictates of inexorable logic, applied, perhaps, in an unconsciously presumptuous spirit, combined with the dictates of a genuinely pious nature made him choose authority, so his honesty, his moral and intellectual sincerity, made it impossible for him not to go the whole journey. He therefore travelled across the whole religious continent between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. At the time the interval was not wide for him. But, arrived at his journey's end, his new friends scarcely knew what to do with him, and he was as much puzzled regarding them. He reasons himself into a belief that there must be a visible religious authority above the mind of man; but as this authority had no power to impose on him save that which his rational faculties would yield it, clearly those rational faculties were after all the ultimate law givers to him. For the authority claimed by the Roman Catholic Church, and the only sort of authority which would help a mind in the coil in which Newman's was, is not such authority as we have in view when we speak of a Government as 'the authorities.' Such authority as is possessed by the Government is derivative—being got from the people who could withdraw their obedience to it if they were so minded, or could dismiss it; and hence we speak of ourselves as self-governed. The authority claimed by the Roman Catholic Church is not even such as is possessed by the Caesar of an unqualified despotism, but such as would be that of an unqualified despotism united to perfect wisdom and perfect goodness. But if such an authority existed in this world there would be no need for any man with ordinary faculties of observation to reason himself to its side; it would draw towards it by irresistible cords all that was wise and noble in humanity; what would remain outside its bounds and hedges would be scarcely worth taking into account, would indeed be only fit to be burnt, like useless weeds. A man trained from youth in Roman Catholicism, or a weak mind destitute or almost destitute of the reasoning faculty, with the capacity for ratiocination latent or dead, may regard the Church as an absolute authority in all matters; but for a mind like Newman's this is impossible.

"The Church could only have over him the amount of authority his reasoning gave her; and her authority being secondary and derived was not supreme, and was indeed only a delusive covert, whither a deeply religious sceptic hid himself from the sight of a cold, naked scepticism, and closed his doors against the roar and tumult and earthquake of a destructive analysis that seemed to uprear the foundations of all things, to batter at the gates of faith as with the hammer of Thor, and to plunge creeds and catechisms in the fires of Vulcan. In this reply he told us that the Pope is not supreme in matters in which conscience is of supreme authority. It would be unfair to reply to his inference that a deadlock between conscience and the Pope is impossible, because of the above distinction, by saying that the Church holds that the Pope can decide wherein conscience is supreme—this would be unfair because it would be to treat him as if he were quibbling; but it would be quite just as regards the Church, as we fancy any Roman Catholic divine would admit. Not only would it be unfair, it would admit so far as a reply to an argument without specifying a lurking fallacy can admit a fallacy, that the Pope does not claim authority over conscience. Why, the great radical difference between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism is that one acknowledges the supremacy of conscience, and the other rejects this supremacy. No doubt Newman would say that in the sphere of morals the conscience even of a Roman Catholic would be supreme. But this, as he must be aware, was not so, even prior to the decree of infallibility because the doctrine of the relativity of moral and immoral acts settles entirely the notion of a supreme conscience, which implies an immutable morality.

"But suppose the attitude taken up by Newman in his reply to be one which is consistent with the teaching and history of Roman Catholicism, either infallibility is so much smoke, or a sphere within which conscience is supreme is a tract of cloud. Suppose infallibility to be real, it must be

infallible in its choice of a subject on which to decide, or else its infallibility is tainted in the initial stage. If it is infallible in its choice of a subject, conscience is out of court if it disputes with it, because *ex hypothesi* infallibility with unerring precision and divine guidance has decided that it may interfere, and its interference is in matter and form infallibly correct. If, however, there is a sphere within which conscience and not infallibility is supreme, then infallibility, if it clashes with conscience, must cease to be infallible. Newman supposes there is a land over which conscience rules, and within which we need not listen to the infallible voice; and it is implied that the infallible voice may seek to be heard, and therefore may err. But who is to decide what this sphere is? Not infallibility, because we see that it may err in the initial stage, Conscience? But conscience not being infallible may wish to enlarge its domain, and so there would at once be a dispute about boundaries between the two parties. But external life is, as we know, the archetype of conscience, and it is the intellect which recalls, compares, and applies knowledge, and draws inferences, and is not merely the chief aid of what we call conscience, but its illuminator.

"When we speak of an enlightened conscience we mean the conscience of an enlightened man. Thus we are again driven back to the supremacy of the intellect, the *nous*—and this Plato held, and what Newman's statement comes to is this: that in that sphere over which a man may be told by his reason that his own conscience, his sense of what is right, should rule, the Pope's infallibility has no control, which is almost as good as saying that infallibility has nothing to do with anything in a man's life that is worth spending a second in discussing. Infallibility is banished to the outhouses of human existence and we might fairly ask what was the use of so much bother about decreeing it? But that is not my object—my object is simply to point out that Newman escapes from the possibility of a deadlock between conscience and the Pope only by proclaiming the foundation doctrine of that Liberalism in religion which he tells us he nearly always hated, of private judgment, liberty of conscience; and not merely the foundation of Protestantism, but the foundation of Christianity, as we learn from the career of Paul, who was always appealing to the enquiring, rational spirit. He pares down infallibility to the vanishing point, and from the camp of its enemies proclaims liberty of thought."

Here Gwendolen notes: "Hale by his vehemence had carried us all away. We imposed silence. Yet I could see McKnom, Marquette and Helpsam were burning to put in their oar. I append the discussion that followed, but I was unable to take it down as well as I could wish. It was too snatchy."

Helpsam: "Newman's great impression on his time is owing to four things, any one of which will make a man remarkable: (1) He had a very engaging manner, call it magnetism, charm, what you will; (2) He was master of a fine style; (3) In a luxurious age he was an ascetic—an abstainer from nearly all that the mass of mankind live for; and (4) he had the courage to take a course of his own which he professed to mean a reformation in religion. You cannot deny the epithet 'great' to such a man, though you may deem his character in some respects weak, his views unsound and in a few cases silly. For what, as we commonly use the phrase, does 'great man' mean? Not a man great morally, intellectually, spiritually. Else where shall we find a great man? Some men seem to have no spiritual side to their minds, but are eminent in intellectual and moral qualities; others—take the Duke of Marlborough—to have neither moral nor spiritual instincts, but yet strong in intellect, and in those qualities which lead to personal aggrandizement—to success. The picture which Newman paints of himself in his 'Apologia' would not attract every good man, would not give most the idea of a born leader. Nevertheless there he stands—a defective, effective man—weak in judgment, as he will undoubtedly be regarded by many; yet apart from other men—apart from his age—a crusader born out of due time; his dialectic spear in one hand, a weapon not to be trifled with, not to be despised by any manner of means, or by the ablest man; in the other hand his rosary and the missal of a church which into ripe manhood he had regarded as anti-Christian; around him fancies that one would have smiled at in an old dyspeptic; yet, side by side with these great sacrifices, a unique figure in this age of luxury, scepticism, drift."

Rectus: "You place him higher than I would place him. He is not masculine, whatever else he may be, and his explanation of publishing Tract XV.—I think you will find it in Part IV. of his 'Apologia'—with which he did not agree—has the complexion of a confession, and avoidance, as the lawyers say in respect of one of Kingsley's charges. I am surprised at some of Mr. Hale's estimates of him. His mind had none of those qualities which go to make a philosopher like Bacon. He was a poet with a strong religious nature, and his fine dialectic, his skill in logical fence does not necessarily imply a robust reasoning power or a strong judgment, any more than skill as a swordsman always made a hero. His becoming a Catholic—or to use his own language a 'Roman priest'—proved he had failed in the aim he set before himself during that part of his life, which was a life of action, namely, to find a *via media*, something between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. I must say Mr. Hale's remarks, to which I listened with much pleasure, seemed to me wasted energy. What theologian can be named, all of whose views are consistent? It pleased a strong religious radical like Hale to

get an admission wherewith to belabour not Newman only, nor even one ecclesiastical system, but all."

Mr. Marquette and Mr. McKnom took part in the discussion, but I fear I lost their drift.

I have read the above to Messrs. McKnom and Helpsam, who say the report of their meeting is correct, and the only doubt they have is whether, now that death has touched him, a discussion of the kind is in good taste as to tone. McKnom says he regrets Miss Gwendolen did not catch what he said—at least on the likeness between Newman and Plato in the importance they attached to tradition. I spoke to Gwendolen on this (N.B.—she is a strong-minded young lady) and she said that, if Plato held the views attributed to him by McKnom, "Platonic philosophy was not much more robust than Platonic love."

Where the higher education of the ladies is going to land us, I leave others to decide. Mr. McKnom, who is looking over my shoulder as I write, says he knows very well, and that Plato has explained it all in the "Republic."

NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN.

## THE RAMBLER.

ON a bright May morning at eight of the clock in the Augarten at Vienna, in the year 1803, a group of excited men surrounded a violinist of English extraction named Bridgetower. These early morning concerts are a feature of musical Germany, and there perhaps was nothing remarkable in the event itself. But Bridgetower and his two or three friends were in an unusual mood and evidently harbouring strange excitements amongst them. One of them may have looked more haggard than the rest, and with reason, since at half-past four he had been called from his bed by a tyrannical and commanding genius, who thundered forth: "Write out this violin part of the first *allegro* with all haste." The trembling, but enthusiastic and devoted friend set to work; a scanty, very meagre pianoforte part was hastily jotted down, and the excited faces and uncertain tones of the little group of friends were soon merged in the exquisite strains of a work hereafter famous as the—I shall not reveal what just yet; suffice it, that was the first performance of a famous composition which eventually became one of the most precious and pleasing numbers upon all first-class English and European concert programmes. Between the years 1854 and 1878 it was played forty-four times at the Monday Popular Concerts, and to-day it ranks as one of the sweetest, most soothing, and at the same time, most brilliant *concertante* selections on record. It belongs to the school of "absolute" music by right of its classic beauty, perfect form, and the purity of the sentiments it arouses in all healthy musical minds. To take it, this noble work, the product of the mighty, the spiritual, the reverent and sorely-tried Beethoven, and place its name upon the title-page of a book, which so clearly asserts in formulated distinctness the potential vileness of its imputed truth and beauty, is a course of action no genuine lover of his fellowman would for one moment permit himself to follow. And it should be with deep, and not silent indignation, by any means, the duty of every admirer of Beethoven to combat with ringing words and true, the insinuations of a writer, who, as usual, shows the lamentable ignorance of the would-be analytical in music.

In other words, Tolstoi is not only guilty of deliberately proclaiming vice, if not from the house-top, at least from the piano-stool, but also of a certain amateurish ignorance of well verified musical facts. When Black and Hardy, and Braddon and Besant sometimes make rather ridiculous statements about music, it is plain they are not to be blamed, for they are only inventors, literary conjurers, romanticists of the worst school. These are hopeless. But even they, I venture to think, have never made, never will make, the astoundingly false statements that Tolstoi, the so-called realist, has made.

All this talk about music and morals is very interesting, because it involves a large amount of improving discussion and tends to make us more metaphysical—if that be any improvement. But Tolstoi is so cruelly out. There never was a more genuinely unimpassioned, though fiery, and altogether healthy and charming composition than the Kreutzer Sonata. In fact, all the Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn and Mendelssohn concerted works—what are commonly classified indiscriminately as chamber music—are "absolute" music, pure and beautiful. So are Symphonies, so are nearly all the piano and violin and vocal remains of these four great composers. When we come to Chopin, Liszt, Wagner and, perhaps, Schumann, in some of his phases, we, it is true, do scent a certain premonition of danger. The morbid languor of Frederic Chopin, the artificial brilliancy of Liszt, the waywardness of Schumann, and the downright passion of Wagner (at once the noblest and most dangerous of composers) are all present to modern students of the divine art and have got to be guarded against, met boldly, recognized fearlessly and put away relentlessly. For infinite suggestion (an unpleasant word but necessary here) one has only to mention all the love-music of "Faust." Had Tolstoi chosen to introduce the Garden Scene in "Faust," his goal would have been easy to guess, and some, at least, of his statements fairly sound. "Tristan und Isolde," I can imagine, might not be always found quite healthy hearing for the susceptible.

Thus the conclusion one arrives at is, that, since Tolstoi wished to point the unsavoury moral of a most immoral