

borough. "On that occasion he assured the electors that he represented not the body but the spirit of the Church of Rome." What the electors made of this assurance we do not know, and it would be vain to conjecture. They placed him, however, at the head of the poll. But his majority was a single vote, which disappeared on a scrutiny, and he never again took his seat on the green benches of the House of Commons. He had none of the gifts required for winning large popular constituencies, even if his creed had not been a fatal objection in the mind of the average British voter five-and-thirty years ago.

While Sir John Acton sat in the House, and silently voted with his party, he had not been inactive. The views of the most cultivated and enlightened among English Catholics were expressed in the fifties by a monthly periodical called the *Rambler*. The editor of the *Rambler* was the greatest of converts, John Henry Newman. In 1859 an article of Newman's on consulting the laity in matters of doctrine was condemned by authority at Rome, and Newman withdrew from the editorial chair. He was succeeded by Sir John Acton, and no better choice could have been made. He edited the *Rambler* till 1862, when it became merged in the *Home and Foreign Review*. His first contribution, in November 1859, was a criticism of Mill on Liberty, which he took up again in the following March. The subject was peculiarly his own, though he could not, as a Catholic, approach it from Mill's point of view. He wrote, contrary to his custom, in the first person singular, and signed the article "A"; which, in his own review, amounted to acknowledgment. "By liberty," wrote the Liberal Catholic, "I mean absence of accountability to any temporal authority," and he added, "I make no reservations." He afterwards learned that liberty was positive, and that spiritual as well as temporal authority might be pushed to a point inconsistent with freedom. These youthful contributions to his favourite theme show rather the wonderful knowledge which he had acquired at five-and-twenty than the delicate and subtle discrimination