

II

Tract 90: Its Antecedents, Motives, Object, and Immediate Results.

I intend to devote this Paper to the subject of Tract 90: and it will not be otherwise than consistent with such intention if I speak, in the first instance, somewhat in detail of a circumstance which is known to have produced a powerful impression upon Mr. Newman's mind, and to have affected, more or less, every work which he took in hand subsequently to its date. This circumstance belongs properly to the period of history comprehended in my last paper; and as we have thus overshot our mark, it will be necessary to take our train back some little way, in order the better to bring it up to the point of destination.

It must be very difficult for those who are sons of the Church, not by adoption but by inheritance, to realise, even by a strong effort of imagination, the depth and extent of the ignorance which prevailed among members of the Anglican Establishment at the beginning of the Tractarian Movement with regard to the state and feeling of the Catholic community in England. It is no exaggeration to say that many of us knew far more about the manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians, or Scythian tribes, than of the characters and doings of this portion of our fellow-countrymen. I have no reason to think that I was myself at all behind the general run of my contemporaries in the advantages of education, or in knowledge of the world, so that my own ideas in early youth of the subject in question may be received as a fair sample of the average opinions of young people at the time. I thought that the "Roman Catholics" of England did not, at the most, number more than about 80 or 100 souls, who were distributed in certain great families over the midland and northern counties. I thought that each of these families lived in a large haunted house, embosomed in yew-trees, and surrounded by high brick walls. About the interior of these mansions I had also my ideas. I thought that they were made up of vast dreary apartments, walled with tapestry; with state bedrooms, in which were

enormous beds with ebony bedsteads surmounted by plumes, and which only required horses to be put to them in order to become funeral cars. I fancied, of course, that there reigned around and within these abodes a preternatural silence, broken only by the flapping of bats and the screeching of owls.

Of Catholic priests I had a far less distinct idea, and consequently an ampler field of conjecture. I knew only that they had their little suburban chapels, in which they perpetrated ineffable rites. The only token of humanity about them was rather of a pleasing character. It was the little modest presbytery by the side of the chapel, with its wicket by the road and its narrow gravel-walk, edged with neatly-trimmed box, leading up to the entrance, and its little garden by the side, in which the combination of the *utile* and the *dulce*¹ was so happily expressed by the union of pinks and sweet-peas with plants of a more homely and esculent character. But who and what were the inmates of these dwellings? They were never to be seen in public places, and if they ever went abroad it must be in company with the aforesaid owls and bats and other such shy and lucifugus creatures. Surely that could not be one of them whom we saw the other day working in his garden like a common labourer, or coming out of that poor little cottage, so meanly clad, with his hand on his breast and his eyes on the ground? Of course not; for priests are always represented, in pictures and on the stage, as big men, with haughty looks and shaven crowns. Such, or not very different, were my boyish notions of English Catholics; and the strange thing is that, although I have no reason to think that the subject was interdicted at home, somehow I never liked talking about it, or trying to clear up my notions by comparison with those of others. The subject never seemed to come up naturally, or to lie in anyone's way.²

This may serve to explain, what otherwise must seem so strange, the way in which during the earlier years of the Tracts the very existence of English Catholics appeared to be ignored in the controversial literature of the period. The silence about them did not, I really believe, arise from any feeling of indifference or contempt; except only in the case of one of the Tract writers,³ who never hesitated to avow these sentiments. It was much rather that they came in no one's path. As a proof that the ignorance to which I myself have confessed continued even through a considerable part of my Oxford career, I may mention that I did not know the Rev. Mr. Newsham, the priest of Oxford, even by sight, till, in the year 1845, he received me into the Church. The only one among those who took part in the Tractarian Movement to whom that worthy priest was personally known was Mr. Newman, who, on being appointed to the parish of St. Clements, in which the Catholic chapel of Oxford was situated, laid claim (I have heard) to him as one of his parishioners. If this story be true the tables ought to have been reversed, and were so some twenty years later.

Had this state of things been reciprocal, it is impossible to say how long the Tractarian Movement might have been in fulfilling its providential destiny. But it was not so. Towards the year 1838 the Tractarian leaders, at least their chief, became aware that an eye was upon them, tracking their steps, noting their errors and inconsistencies, and guiding them, when they least thought of it, to a higher truth. The second volume of the *Essays on Various Subjects*,⁴ which were republished some years ago from the *Dublin Review*, contains a series of papers, bearing on the Oxford Movement, by his Eminence Cardinal Wiseman, and among the rest the essay on the Catholic and Anglican Churches to which Dr. Newman, since he became a Catholic, has attributed, in great measure, the change of opinion which just six years afterwards issued in his conversion.⁵ It would occupy me too long to undertake anything like a complete analysis of the argument of that celebrated essay; and to give a mere abridgment of it would be to do it an injustice. No one, I think, who reads it, as I have lately done for a second or third time, can feel any surprise at the impression which it is now known to have produced upon one of the greatest intellects of our own or any other age.

I have felt it a duty, with a view to my present task, to read over also the article on the "Catholicity of the English Church,"⁶ which Mr. Newman put forth shortly after the publication of that on the "Catholic and Anglican Churches," and in reply to it. It is impossible, I think, to read that article, with the light which Dr. Newman's subsequent confession has thrown upon it, without discerning evident traces of the shock which his views had recently received. It may, of course, easily be represented by his enemies as a disingenuous attempt to palm upon his co-religionists a theory which he disbelieved. To myself it conveys no such impression. It is the work of one shaken but not yet cast down, who, with an affectionate clinging to his position too strong to satisfy the wishes of those who longed to win him, combines an amount of fairness towards his antagonists equally or yet more unsatisfactory to those who longed with no less eagerness to retain him. It is, in fact, a balanced argument of that kind which pleases zealous adherents on neither side of a controversy, but which, for that very reason, is all the more genuine as the expression of a mind which "dotes yet doubts, suspects yet strongly loves."⁷

To me there is something most beautiful in the way in which the author seems to oscillate between the evident bias of his intellectual tendencies and the no less evident attractions of his early faith. He seems to be thinking aloud; and his essay reads more like a confession than a didactic treatise. Throughout he is fearful of saying either too little or too much. Every strong statement he follows up with a qualification, or guards by a proviso. The whole result is that the essay appears both weak in argument and undecided in tone. But its weakness and indecision are the fault, not of the author, but of his cause,—an honour to his heart, no discredit to his intellect. The reply to the special paper which helped to demolish his theory is

contained in half a page, and reads almost like irony. No wonder this attempt failed to satisfy the devoted partisans of Anglicanism, and probably excited in the minds of many who, far from acknowledging the fact to others, scarcely liked to trust their own impressions of it, a suspicion that their champion had shifted his ground, and entered upon a path of which no one could foresee the termination. Those who looked narrowly into the article could scarcely fail to observe that, in the imaginary dialogue between an Anglican and a Catholic, into which the author throws his controversy, he leaves the Catholic in possession of the field. This might not, of course, be the writer's intention; but straws show the direction of the wind. Mr. Newman, meanwhile, went about his work as before. It was only his most intimate friends who knew that any change had come over him. But, as time went on, the fact became more perceptible. A thoroughly honest and sincere man cannot long keep such a secret, however much he may desire it. It oozes out in every natural expression of his character. In Mr. Newman it was soon betrayed by the tone of his sermons and his other writings.

The *Tracts for the Times* had now proceeded, in periodical issues, from their first to their eighty-ninth number. Many of them had passed without much observation, but some few had given great offence to one or more parties in the Establishment, and been the occasion of much earnest controversy. In this number was Dr. Pusey's Tract on Baptism,⁸ which defended with his usual learning, the doctrine of sacramental grace against the Low-Church and Latitudinarian parties. Things had also been said upon the other of the two sacraments which the Church of England professed to retain, of a nature to excite fears in the same quarters. But the two Tracts which created the greatest stir, and the objections to which were shared by many High Churchmen, were those of Mr. Isaac Williams on the "Theory of Reserve in Communicating Religious Knowledge,"⁹ and of Mr. Newman on the Breviary.¹⁰ The former of these essays was in the highest degree unpalatable to the Evangelicals, because it contained a scarcely-concealed attack upon their practice of preaching the doctrine of the Atonement indiscriminately before all hearers. The same Tract was ill received not merely by the Evangelical School, but by other parties also, because it propounded a theory of which none of them could foresee the results. "If religious knowledge," people said, "is to be dispensed by gradual instalments, and as its disciples are able to bear it, who can tell what may be in 'reserve' for any of us as time goes on? Better, then, break off at once from these teachers than allow them to lead us blindfold over marsh and quagmire." The Tract on the Breviary went far to confirm these impressions. It seems to have drawn down the remonstrances of Dr. Bagot, the Bishop of Oxford, who was, in the main, very fair and generous in his dealings with the Tractarians; for among the Tracts which Mr. Newman defends, in his published letter to that prelate after the appearance of Tract 90, I find an important place given to this on the Breviary.¹¹ It is to be lamented that in it even Mr.

Newman was tempted to depart from that spirit of justice towards the Church which was on the whole characteristic of him. In the course of the Tract in question he strangely says that the principal attitude of Rome towards the ancient Liturgy of the Church was that of having corrupted it; to which the writer in the *Dublin Review* very naturally replies by asking whether it were nothing to have prized and preserved it.

In the earlier part of 1841, eight years after the beginning of the movement, appeared the famous Tract 90. We are left at no loss to conjecture the motives which led Mr. Newman to take this critical and eventful step. He has fully explained them in his *Letter to Dr. Jelf*:

The Tract is grounded on the belief that the Thirty-nine Articles need not be so closed as the received method of teaching closes them, and ought not to be, for the sake of many persons. If we will close them, we run the risk of subjecting persons whom we should least like to lose, or distress, to the temptation of joining the Church of Rome . . . and as to myself, I was led especially to exert myself with reference to this difficulty, from having had it earnestly urged upon me, by persons whom I revere, to do all I could to keep members of our own Church from straggling in the direction of Rome.¹²

The fall of a thunderbolt could hardly excite a greater sensation in its neighbourhood than did these latter words in many quarters of the university and the country. It was like the “Ah, my lord, beware of jealousy!”¹³—the first clothing in words of a dreaded, half-suspected, half-realised phantasy. Till this time no one, except the very few who were in the secret, had even contemplated the possibility of such defections. “Tendencies to Rome” had indeed been freely imputed to the Tracts. But many persons hardly knew their own meaning in such phrases; while those who did attach to them a meaning had probably no more definite idea than that, some day or other, the proposals of Archbishop Wake might be revised: or, at all events, thought only of some great Romanising demonstration within the Established Church. Individual conversions to Rome were at that time so uncommon, involved so serious a step, entailed such costly sacrifices, that ample securities against them were supposed to exist on every side. What, then, was the general amazement on finding that the leader of the movement himself, who must be supposed to know its secrets better than anyone else, actually spoke, in a published document—in an apology too, where he would naturally use peculiar circumspection,—of “straggling towards Rome” as not merely a possible but a pressing contingency!¹⁴ Some indeed said, “They will be a good riddance.” But most men were wiser; and even those who thus

spoke did not bring home to themselves the import of their words. At all events, “secession to Rome” became, from that moment, a practical fear and a popular cry.

Tract 90 is a commentary not upon all the Thirty-nine Articles, but upon such of them only as appear, directly or by implication, to contradict certain Catholic doctrines. Their wording is in many places so extremely loose as to allow of their receiving the benefit of the doubt in favour of an orthodox interpretation. By dint of fixing upon their words meaning which were just admissible though not on the surface, or of clearing up doubts from the language of other Articles which was either explanatory or contradictory, and which it was more respectful to suppose the first rather than the second, the Tract vindicated for the Articles a sense not absolutely fatal to the authority of the Church and the grace of certain sacraments. In the case of those which undertake to deal with what they call “Romish doctrine” (in the original “*doctrina Romanensium*”), the writer considers that the framers meant to condemn not formal definitions of the Church (the Council of Trent had not then spoken), but certain popular yet “authorised” interpretations of those definitions to which the Church, in the abstract, viewed as a dogmatic teacher, was not formally committed. He thus seemed able to claim, on behalf of the Established Church, a certain doctrine of Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, &c., which was at any rate, be maintained, the doctrine of Antiquity, and might even be that of the Tridentine Decrees, apart from the aforesaid popular or traditionary interpretation of those Decrees; or, in other words, provided only that such doctrine were not what the Articles meant by “*doctrina Romanensium*,” it might be held consistently with an honest subscription to them.

Whether or not the framers of the Articles intended, consciously or implicitly, to admit such a distinction between abstract definitions and popular teaching it is impossible, at this distance of time, to determine; though it is historically certain that they could not have had the Council of Trent, at all events, in their eye. The supposition was, at any rate, discreditable either to their theological acumen or to their ingenuousness. Mr. Newman chose the former alternative—Mr. Ward seemed to prefer the latter. The view which Mr. Ward apparently adopted was that the English Reformers had two strings to their bow: the one to satisfy their friends abroad—the other to avoid offending, more than was necessary, the Catholic party in England. This general object they sought to attain by giving the Articles as Protestant an aspect as consisted with leaving certain loopholes through which Catholics, or at least the more Catholic-minded of the clergy, might creep in.¹⁵ Another person wrote a pamphlet to prove, historically, that some such compromise was highly probable in fact. Mr. Newman appeared to take a middle course, and to avoid all imputations upon the honesty of the English Reformers. He supposed them to have been rather diplomatic than dishonest. He spoke of the Articles as the same sort of compromise as would result from two very different parties having to draw up a petition to

Parliament, or other such public document, in which each side would have to secure a certain recognition of its own views by insisting largely upon the use of an ambiguous phraseology.

It is a fact, though almost an incredible one, that Mr. Newman was totally unprepared for the reception which this most remarkable essay encountered both in the university and throughout the country. This fact, which I state with unhesitating confidence, is a sufficient proof, if any can be necessary, of the perfect simplicity and honesty with which he undertook and executed his task. He most conscientiously believed that the interpretation of the Articles which he proposed, however new and however little consistent, in some parts at least, with their *primá facie* aspect, was yet fairly attributable to them; and he expressed the greatest surprise when a friend, to whom he showed the Tract previously to publication, gave it as his opinion (entirely borne out by the result) that it would completely electrify the university and the Church. With characteristic prudence, Mr. Newman so far acted upon this opinion as to take the advice of another friend upon the question of publishing the Tract: and as that friend did not appear to share the expectations of the other, or, at all events, considered that the object justified the risk, the author committed his manuscript to the press.

Tract 90 had not been out many days before the University of Oxford was in a fever of excitement. It was bought with such avidity that the very presses were taxed almost beyond their powers to meet the exigencies of the demand. Edition followed edition by days rather than by weeks; and it was not very long before Mr. Newman, as I have heard, realised money enough, by the sale of this shilling pamphlet, to purchase a valuable library. If, during the month which followed its appearance, you had happened to enter any common-room in Oxford between the hours of six and nine in the evening, you would have been safe to hear some ten or twenty voices eloquent on the subject of Tract 90. If you had happened to pass two heads of houses, or tutors of colleges, strolling down High Street in the afternoon, or returning from their walk over Magdalen Bridge, a thousand to one but you would have caught the words "Newman" and "Tract 90." Nor was it many days before action was taken upon the question. Four gentlemen, tutors of their respective colleges, came forward, as the representatives of the great body of their order, with a manifesto, in the course of which they stated that they were "at a loss to see what security would remain were the principles of the Tract generally recognised; that the most plainly erroneous doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome might now be inculcated in the lecture-rooms of the university and from the pulpits of our churches." It is worthy of record that of these four gentlemen one was the present Bishop of London, and another the Rev. Henry Bristow Wilson, one of the writers in the volume of *Essays and Reviews*, who has himself within the last two or three years been a defendant in the Ecclesiastical Court.¹⁶ This document was not put

forth many hours before Mr. Newman was again in the field with a reply to it in the form of the *Letter to Dr. Jelf* previously noticed in this paper. The sharpness of the contest is indicated by the extraordinary rapidity and vigour of the various movements. Tract 90, though dated on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, was not actually published till an early day in March. Yet on the 13th of that month, as appears by the date, Mr. Newman sent his letter to Dr. Jelf to the printer, and by that time the manifesto of the Four Tutors had been not only published but acted upon; for at the end of Mr. Newman's reply to it, there appears the following foot-note:— "Since the above was in type, it has been told me that the Hebdomadal Board has recorded its opinion about the Tract." The Hebdomadal Board, it may be necessary to say, consisted at that time of the body of heads of colleges and halls, who possessed initial power in the legislation of the university, but whose acts had no weight excepting as declarations of individual opinion, till they had been promulgated, and ratified by the vote of the academical convocation. This will account for the very mild way in which Mr. Newman notices the strictures which that board had thus early passed upon his work. The effect of the whole transaction was that Mr. Newman's Tract was never condemned by the university, nor he himself formally precluded from the exercise of any office, whether academical or clerical. He withdrew, of his own accord, certain expressions in the Tract which were nowise essential to its subject, but never made, as he distinctly states in his letter to Dr. Jelf, any retraction of it. It is remarkable that he should have escaped public condemnation and penalty, especially when we consider that, merely for a sermon in which the interpretation of the Tract was adopted, and not without qualification, upon a single point of doctrine, Dr. Pusey was afterwards condemned by a committee of six doctors, and inhibited from preaching before the university for two years.¹⁷ But Oxford did not forget the Tract; and four years afterwards collected the slumbering embers of its indignation, too fierce to be any longer repressed, in its onslaught against Mr. Ward.¹⁸

Dr. Pusey's moderation did much valuable service to the movement. He was, as Mr. Newman was not, a high dignitary of the Established Church—he was also a person of aristocratic birth and connections; and although one of the last men in the world to set store by such accidental advantages, yet, in an Established Church closely allied to the world, and affected, however unconsciously, by its spirit, such considerations could not fail to have their influence. Moreover, as I said in my last Paper, Dr. Pusey was the only member of the Tractarian School to whom the Evangelical party had any kind of attraction. His piety was not only most real, but it was of a popular and impressive character. He had also a way peculiarly his own, and entirely consistent with sincerity and simplicity, of rounding off the sharp edges of the strong and offensive statements of others, and thus presenting them under a far less odious aspect to those who disliked them. Hence Dr. Pusey had a definite and

most important place in the movement. While it was Mr. Newman's office to stimulate, and his misfortune to startle, to Dr. Pusey, on the other hand, belonged the work of soothing and the ministry of conciliation. He was the St. Barnabas of the movement. Yet the effect of his character and of his conciliatory spirit was less perceptible in the university than elsewhere. A writer in the *British Critic*¹⁹ throws some light upon that prejudice, so far, at least, as the action of the "Six Doctors" is an instance of it. On the whole, however, there can be no doubt of the service rendered to Tractarianism by the learning, piety, moderation, high character, and elevated position of this remarkable and estimable man. Indeed, it deserves to be recorded how much of the success of the work was due to the spirit of generosity, forbearance, and mutual confidence which prevailed among all its great originators. It is certain that Dr. Pusey did not fully sympathise with every view of Mr. Newman, or, at all events, with the mode in which he occasionally expressed himself; it is scarcely less certain that Mr. Newman could not always go along with the arguments by which Dr. Pusey defended him. Had there been less of loyalty on the one side, or of affection on both, these differences might easily have been exaggerated into causes of disunion, in which case the whole success of the work would, humanly speaking, have been at an end. It is, of course, possible to attribute these results to the spirit of compromise or the arrangements of diplomacy; all I can do is to express my own belief that the view I have taken of them, as it is the more charitable, is also the truer. It was one of the characteristics differences between these two eminent men that Dr. Pusey was far more dogmatical in the direction of consciences than Mr. Newman. He always seemed much surer of his ground; and as positive teaching and authoritative direction were just what thoughtful Anglicans wanted, he was in great request as a spiritual guide. He even undertook, it was commonly said, people's conscientious burdens, and made himself responsible for the consequences. Mr. Newman, on the other hand, in the midst of his great influence, was diffident of himself and unwilling to give strong opinions. Yet it is remarkable that in actual hold upon others there was no comparison between the two. Dr. Pusey's power over consciences was limited by the degree of his disciples' obedience; Mr. Newman's penetrated and swayed them in spite both of themselves and of himself. He ruled them without aiming at rule, and they acted under his influence while scarcely conscious of it. His casual words were treasured up as oracles, his hints were improved into laws; his very looks and gestures watched as a mirror of his thoughts; his latent feelings tenderly consulted, his wishes reverently anticipated, even his very peculiarities unconsciously copied. His personal influence in the Church of England was something to which experience suggests hardly a parallel. Yet, according to the paradoxical law upon which moral power seems to depend, the ratio of its extent appeared to be inverse with the degree in which it was sought. In *Loss and Gain* he has illustrated the case, and, with characteristic humility, to his own disadvantage.

“Dr. Pusey . . .,” continued Charles, “is said always to be decisive. He says, ‘This is Apostolic, that’s in the Fathers; St. Cyprian says this, St. Augustine denies that; this is safe, that’s wrong; . . .’”

“But the Puseyites are not always so distinct,” said Sheffield; “there’s Smith, he never speaks decidedly in difficult questions. . . .”

“Then he won’t have many followers, that’s all,” said Charles.

“But he has more than Dr. Pusey,” answered Sheffield.

“Well, I can’t understand it,” said Charles: “he ought not; perhaps they won’t stay.”

“The truth is,” said Sheffield, “I suspect he is more of a sceptic at bottom.”²⁰

Among the effects of Tract 90 it must be mentioned that Dr. Bagot, who was Mr. Newman’s ecclesiastical superior, sent a message to him stating that, in his opinion, the *Tracts for the Times* were doing mischief, and ought to be given up. Mr. Newman unhesitatingly acted upon this suggestion, and the *Tracts for the Times* accordingly expired with their 90th number. Mr. Newman announced his intention of withdrawing them in a published letter to Dr. Bagot, in which, without undertaking to defend, he feels it quite consistent with his duty to explain, such of the Tracts as had given the greatest umbrage to that prelate.

It deserves to be recorded that Mr. Ward, whose name now begins to occupy a prominent place in the history of that time, wrote two pamphlets in defence of Tract 90, distinguished by great moderation of tone, under the titles of *A Few Words*, and *A Few More Words*. An important point was gained in these publications by showing that the Homilies, which form the best extant commentary upon the Articles, evidently point at certain views of “Romish doctrine” which never were, and never could have been, sanctioned by the authority of the Church. Such, for instance, is that which attributes to the Saints and the Blessed Virgin (whom the Tractarians persisted in calling “St. Mary”) the honour due to God alone. Such also is some imaginary view of Purgatory which supersedes the doctrine of Eternal Punishment. We, who speak from within the Church, know full well how absolutely monstrous are such suppositions. But Mr. Newman, at the time he wrote the Tract, was under the impression that these and suchlike frightful corruptions, or rather contradictions, of Divine Truth were extensively countenanced by what he calls the “authoritative teaching” of the Church both in the sixteenth century and afterwards; meaning by that phrase the teaching of living authorities beside and beyond her express definitions.²¹

As I am anxious to place on record so much of the history of Tractarianism as may be necessary for the explanation of facts and phenomena which must enter into

the future ecclesiastical annals of this country, I have been obliged to go into details which I fear must be very uninteresting to many readers. Hence it is that, for my own relief as well as theirs, I am prepared to seize upon the lighter and more ludicrous features of the movement. Accordingly I shall not hesitate to wind up my present Paper, by presenting an aspect of Tractarianism which is historically certain, though it is absolutely impossible to describe it in its true colours without the appearance of burlesque. I allude to the prospects which about this time many sanguine persons began to entertain of a corporate union between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Establishment. A very few words will show how naturally these hopes would arise as a consequence of the Tract which has formed the subject of this Paper.

Persons who, before the appearance of Tract 90, had been inclined to suspect that the Church was right, and the Establishment wrong, had conceived but of one mode whereby their conscientious difficulties might be surmounted, should those difficulties persevere and become inveterate—that of submitting to the Church one by one. The Thirty-nine Articles, so far from offering to facilitate any other course, were looked upon as the most serious obstacle to union. They constituted the very charter of the “Church of England,” to give up which would be like surrendering its existence. Now, however, a rope was thrown out from the very quarter whence it was least expected. Had persons looked narrowly into the Tract upon which they founded their new hopes, they would have seen that it did not really furnish any basis of reconciliation between the two bodies. “Here,” says Mr. Newman, in his *Letter to Dr. Jelf*, “in one Roman doctrine which the Articles do not warrant,—Infallibility.” There was also another which lay at the root of the whole question—the Supremacy of St. Peter’s See. The doctrine of the Blessed Eucharist was, in Mr. Newman’s opinion, another insuperable difficulty: though Mr. Ward undertook, and with great apparent reason, to show that the Catholic dogma on that subject was as admissible upon the principle of interpretation set forth in the Tract as any other. But as the Tract was caught at in its general drift, rather than thoughtfully investigated, visions of unity began to flit before many a simple and zealous soul. “Perhaps, after all,” they said, “the Church of England might not object to give up the Articles; and even if she retained them, they would still serve as a valuable protest against those traditionary corruptions and practical errors against which no Formulary of Faith can speak more strongly than the Decrees of Trent themselves. Trent and Articles would stand side by side as two kindred witnesses against error; meanwhile Trent would proclaim to the world those truths which the Articles do not explicitly condemn (forbid the thought!), and therefore, of course, implicitly recognise. It is only, after all, one Faith under two aspects. Trent is the stronger in its witness to the Truth, England in its disclaimers of corruption; but the Truth which Trent proclaims England does not

disavow, and the errors against which England so loudly protests Trent does not shrink from admitting to be such—nay, does not hesitate to denounce.”

That such dreams should have a tendency to fascinate and to delude can be matter of surprise to no one who reflects how the process of a corporate union would have tended to obviate all the most appalling difficulties which hampered the course of individual conversion. With men like many of those who took part in the movement, the very least of these difficulties was the sacrifice of income and social position. But there was, in fact, no temporal obstacle which would not have vanished before the brilliant project which not merely haunted our imaginations, but was actually the subject of serious, at any rate, earnest deliberation.

There was one obstacle to the success of the plan, which certainly did not receive the consideration it deserved. We had, as the phrase runs, “our own consent” to the transaction, but forgot that to every contract two parties are necessary. Never was there a more delightful prospect nor a more magnificent scheme—in the eyes of its projectors. The First Napoleon mapping out of England on the eve of his proposed invasion and assigning Belvoir Castle to one of his generals, Arundel to another, and Lulworth to a third, was as nothing compared with the distribution of other men’s property, the overriding of other men’s rights, and the arrangement of other men’s temporal and spiritual affairs in which these amiable enthusiasts found it easy to indulge. Such bishops and deans as had the good fortune to be celibate would be ready to drop into the ancient sees, or to take the headships of the restored abbeys. The married clergy would be a greater difficulty. But bishops and regulars might be expected to separate from their wives, and those wives to pass naturally into the religious state. The secular clergy need not be molested for the present. In the normal state of things they, too, must be celibate, but “vested interests” might be respected for the moment, and the existing generation of wives suffered to die out.

It is almost unnecessary to say that Mr. Newman himself never entered into these views otherwise than by laughing at them. But, in his *Letter to Dr. Jelf*, he distinctly refers to them, and in *Loss and Gain*, has exposed them in that vein of brilliant and kindly wit which is peculiar to himself. They served to amuse many excellent persons for a considerable space of time, and had this undoubted advantage, that they dispelled, once for all, the prospect of a union which could only at last have verified the poet’s image:—

Mortua quinetiam jungevant corpora vivis.²²

The mists of theory melted away, and left in its stern reality the only alternative of duty—individual submission.

In my next Paper I must shift the scene to London for the purpose of introducing an episode or byplot. But I intend returning to Oxford and its neighbourhood before

I conclude, in order that we may wind up our story at the point from which we started.

Notes

1. Horace, in *Ars Poetica*, claims that literature is “*dulce et utile*” (sweet and useful). *Ed.*

2. My experience of priests was derived from Lichfield, where, on St. John’s Day, 1847, I had the happiness of celebrating Mass in the little “suburban chapel,” and the privilege of becoming personally acquainted, for the first time, with the venerable Dr. Kirk, who had been priest of Lichfield during the whole period of my boyhood and youth, and for many years before.

3. The Rev. W. Palmer, of Worcester College.

4. Dolman: 1853.

5. Dedication of *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*.

6. *British Critic*, Jan. 1840.

7. Shakespeare, *Othello* 3.3.200.

8. “Scriptural Views on Holy Baptism,” by Edward Bouverie Pusey, published in Tracts 67, 68, and 69 (24 August, 29 September, 18 October 1835). *Ed.*

9. “On Reserve in Communicating Religious Knowledge,” by Isaac Williams, published in Tracts 80 and 87 (1837, 25 March 1839). *Ed.*

10. “On the Roman Breviary as Embodying the Substance of the Devotional Services of the Church Catholic,” by John Henry Newman, published in Tract 75 (24 June 1836). *Ed.*

11. J. H. Newman, in his “Letter Addressed to the Right Reverend Father in God, Richard, Lord Bishop of Oxford, on Occasion of the Ninetieth Tract in the Series Called the *Tracts for the Times*” (1841), makes the following remarks: “And another Tract, which has experienced a great deal of censure, is that which is made up of Selections from the Roman Breviary. I will not here take upon me to say a word in its defence, except to rescue its author from the charge of wantonness. He had observed what a very powerful source of attraction the Church of Rome possessed in her devotional Services, and he wished, judiciously or not, to remove it by claiming it for ourselves. He was desirous of showing, that such Devotions would be but a continuation in private of those public Services which we use in Church; and that they might be used by individuals with a sort of fitness, (removing such portions as were inconsistent with the Anglican creed or practice,) *because* they were a continuation” (*The Via Media of the Anglican Church, Illustrated in Lectures, Letters, and Tracts Written between 1830 and 1841*, 2 vols. [London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1908], 2: 403-04). *Ed.*

12. *Letter to Dr. Jelf*, p. 27.

13. "O, beware, my lord, of jealousy" (Shakespeare, *Othello* 3.3.165). *Ed.*

14. This passage from Newman's *Letter to Dr. Jelf* might be compared to a passage from his Tract on the Breviary (No. 75), written five years earlier: "Till Rome moves towards us, it is quite impossible that we should move towards Rome; however closely we may approximate to her in particular doctrines, principles, or views." *Ed.*

15. Oakeley is here referring to William G. Ward's *A Few Words in Support of No. 90 of the Tracts for the Times* (Oxford: J. H. Parker), 1841. *Ed.*

16. The four tutors who, on 8 March 1841, published their protest were as follows: (1) T. T. Churton, M.A., Vice-Principal and Tutor of Brasenose College; (2) H. B. Wilson, B.D., Fellow and Senior Tutor of St. John's College; (3) John Griffiths, M.A., Sub-Warden and Tutor of Wadham College; (4) A. C. Tait, M.A., Fellow and Senior Tutor of Balliol College (Bishop of London from 1856 to 1868). Their "Letter to the Editor of the *Tracts for the Times*" stated, "The Tract has, in our apprehension, a highly dangerous tendency, from its suggesting that certain very important errors of the Church of Rome are not condemned by the Articles of the Church of England. . . . The Tract would thus appear to us to have a tendency to mitigate beyond what charity requires, and to the prejudice of the pure truth of the Gospel, the very serious differences which separate the Church of Rome from our own, and to shake the confidence of the less learned members of the Church of England in the Scriptural character of her formularies and teaching" (Randall Thomas Davidson and William Benham, *Life of Archibald Campbell Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury*, 2 vols., 3rd ed. [London: Macmillan and Co., 1891], 1: 81-2). Henry Bristow Wilson, the author of "Séances Historiques de Genève: The National Church" in *Essays and Reviews*, was, in 1862, prosecuted in the Court of Arches and sentenced to suspension of his clerical duties for having controverted the doctrine of everlasting punishment. In 1864, the Privy Council overturned the verdict of the Court of Arches, saying that it did "not find in the Formularies . . . any such distinct declaration of our Church upon the subject as to require us to condemn as penal the expression of a hope by a clergyman, that even the ultimate pardon of the wicked who are condemned in the day of judgment, may be consistent with the will of Almighty God" (George C. Brodrick and William H. Fremantle, eds., *A Collection of the Judgments of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in Ecclesiastical Cases relating to Doctrine and Discipline* [London: John Murray, 1865], 289). *Ed.*

17. E. B. Pusey preached his sermon "The Holy Eucharist a Comfort to the Penitent" at Christ Church, before the university, on 14 May 1843. It was objected to by Dr. Faussett, the Margaret Professor of Divinity, who caused it to be dealt with under the statute *de Concionibus*. Of the six doctors who formed the court, five

found the sermon to contain statements of doctrine contrary to the teaching of the Church of England. On June 2, Dr. Pusey was suspended for two years from preaching before the university. *Ed.*

18. W. G. Ward, in response to William Palmer's *Narrative of Events*, "set about writing a full account of his views." These were set forth in *The Ideal of a Christian Church, Considered in Comparison with Existing Practice*. This book was published in June 1844. The author's biographer states, "The practical portion of the book hinges mainly upon two points—his criticisms of the existing Anglican system, and his intimations that the Church of Rome is, in his opinion, to a great extent the natural guide and model for its reformation. . . . He presses to their consequences the Catholic principles professed by the whole [High-Church] party, and urges on them the necessity of working in unison, in spite of their differences in matters of detail, in the work of unprotestantising the National Church" (Wilfred Ward, *William George Ward and the Oxford Movement* [London: Macmillan and Co., 1890], 247-48, 273). On December 13 the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford published six incriminating passages from Ward's *Ideal*, which were said to be inconsistent with the Articles of the Church of England, and proposed to pass a resolution to this effect in a convocation scheduled for 13 February 1845. In the meantime, Ward was forbidden to act as deputy chaplain for Frederick Oakeley and to read morning and evening prayers. At the meeting of convocation, "Oakeley stood with Ward in the Rostrum, identifying his own opinions with those of his friend, and prepared to abide by their consequences." The immediate result of convocation was the censure of the selected passages and the degradation of (or deprivation of academic degrees from) Ward (*Ibid.*, 305, 325, 338, 343). *Ed.*

19. July 1843, p. 197.

20. *Loss and Gain*, ch. xiv.

21. It may be noticed as a striking fact that in the Established Church, which rejects Purgatory, the doctrine of the Eternity of Future Punishments is now extensively denied.

22. Virgil, *Aeneid* 8.485: "The living and the dead at his command / were coupled" (trans. John Dryden). *Ed.*