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LIBERALISM AND NEWMAN THE ANGLICAN: VISION AND RESPONSE

Extracto de la Tesis Doctoral presentada en la Facultad de Teología de la Universidad de Navarra

PAMPLONA
1982
Ad normam Statutorum Facultatis Theologiae Universitatis Navarrensis, perlegimus et adprobavimus

Pampilonae, die 10 mensis Iunii anii 1982

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Coram Tribunali, die 1 mensis Februarii anni 1982, hanc dissertationem ad Lauream Candidatus palam defendit

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Imprimatur: P. M. ZABALZA, Pro Vicario General
Pampilonae, 1-X-1982

Excerpta e Dissertationibus in Sacra Theologia
Vol. IV, n.º 5
PRESENTATION

Newman’s life can properly be described as a life devoted to fighting religious liberalism, the doctrine that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another.

But he did not restrict himself to expose the so-called usurpations and incongruities of liberalism. He tried simultaneously to provide Christian Theology with intellectual tools of a historical and speculative kind in order to anticipate and prevent the distorted reasonings and objections of liberalism.

The following pages deal with a key aspect of this subject. They should however, be read in the wider scope of the rich Newmanian thought concerning the doctrines of certitude and development of Christian dogma.

I wish to acknowledge the help and encouragement kindly given to me by Professors Domingo Ramos and José Morales, of the School of Theology of the University of Navarre.
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Sources for further reading: studies of Newman and of his epoch.


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This study purports to give an overview of the vision of Liberalism as seen in the developing mind of John Henry Newman during his Anglican life from 1801 to 1845. I will examine the ideology of Liberalism as conceived by Newman although this will necessitate touching lightly on the religious atmosphere and history of the first part of the nineteenth century, above all in England. At the same time, I will point out some of the intellectual ferment taking place in continental Europe. I also propose to show that the movement of Newman towards Catholicism that he embraced in October of 1845 can be seen as a flight from the destructive power of Liberalism more and more active within the bosom of his own Anglican Church, in a search for an absolute infallible authority to which he could entrust his intellect and will without fear of error. This was «a conversion», according to Disraeli, «that gave a blow to the Anglican Church from which it still has not recovered».

I originally planned the work as a study of the prophetical nature of Newman’s statement on Liberalism, after being struck by how well he diagnosed the situation in which modern man finds himself today after nearly two centuries of liberal ideology. Finally, I concluded that the best approach would be to present Newman’s own vision of the Liberalism of his own day, then recently born, and let the reader draw his own conclusions as to their applicability to our own days. But one cannot help but be impressed by recognizing almost exactly the same religious principles being introduced under the form of Latitudianism in Newman’s

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time, later appearing at the end of the nineteenth century in the Catholic Church under the name of Modernism, and persisting up to the present day although so forcefully condemned by Pope Pius X.

Naturally I hasten to point out that Liberalism is a generic term whose meaning has varied greatly depending on time and circumstance and whose manifestations are strikingly different depending on whether the term is applied to religion, political theory, economics or law. I want to make clear that the Liberalism with which this work deals is largely of the religious type as defined by Newman, and only incidentally and occasionally will I touch upon his reaction to the rampant political Liberalism of his day, largely a product of enlightenment thinking as filtered through the French Revolution. Undoubtedly Newman saw the connection between the religious and political variety of Liberalism as reflected in the «Zeitgeist» of the early nineteenth century. Newman shared the basic Tory conservatism, typical of an Anglican clergyman and of the son of a banker of the City, and although we can trace an interesting evolution in his political thought tending towards a more liberal posture, that does not directly concern us in this work.

In my preparatory reading for this work and in the search for a proper bibliography I was surprised by the almost total absence of work related to Newman and Liberalism save a few articles. Newman has been dissected from almost every conceivable angle, from prose stylist to religious mystic, Victorian poet to philosophical Platonist, but very little on what I consider the true struggle of Newman’s Anglican life. From which I have to conclude that either the topic is so obvious that it is hardly worth the bother or that the experts have missed the trees for the forest in over-concentrating on more miniscule reflections of the Newman kaleidoscope. Nevertheless they have missed this exciting war which lasted over twenty five years in which Newman almost invariably lost the skirmishes until he ceded the ground to the enemy, realizing that he had been mistaken in his premise, that the Anglican Church was one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

But in «dying to himself» through his conversion he won, for he was granted the grace to enter into the true Church, and thus continued the struggle from a much firmer ground and, although poorly compensated for his efforts until very late in his life, he was finally vindicated with his naming to the Cardinalate by Leo XIII
in his first consistory. And even in that great event he took advantage to continue his attack on Liberalism with his «Biglietto» speech.

I spent a considerable amount of time pondering on the best method to examine Newman's views on Liberalism and have finally decided, as have many other authors in their treatment of other themes that a chronological approach was the best. Given that the main purpose of the essay is to collect and reveal the development of the mind of Newman during the first part of his long life I opted for a division in three distinct periods: 1820-1831, 1832-1839 and 1840-1845.

CHAPTER I: FIRST IMPRESSIONS (1820-1831)

«Oxford, home of lost causes and forsaken beliefs and unpopular names and impossible loyalties».

To understand the first part of Newman's life, it helps to have an idea of the environment in which he lived and worked. Until 1845 his life is inextricably bound up in the University of Oxford, excepting his childhood up to the age of sixteen. He himself tells us that the permanent incorporation into the University upon his election as a fellow of Oriel College was perhaps the most important day of his life.

The educational realities of Oxford in the early nineteenth century, perhaps presaging the rapid political changes to come, were undergoing reform. A true liberal education, as later described by Newman in his Catholic work The Idea of a University, was gradually becoming the ideal of the various undergraduate colleges. Newman's own, Trinity College, was no exception. Rather than endless rounds of parties, hunting and desultory readings, true study under the tutorial system followed by rigid examination became the norm. Oxford evolved from its role as a four-year boarding-house for the dissipated rich into a center of intellectual and religious ferment.

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2. May 12th, 1879.
The problem, unbeknownst to the young Mr. Newman was that the vigorous reform then being undertaken in various parts of the University was bringing with it the powerful seeds of rationalism and unbelief from which hitherto it had been largely sheltered. These seeds were destined to flower and gradually choke off the «high and dry» weeds of traditional Anglicanism. «Mark Pattison claimed that during the previous one hundred and fifty years reason has first been offered as the basis of faith before gradually becoming its substitute. Between 1688 and 1750 men had eliminated religious experience and since 1750 they had also lost the power of using the speculative reason» 4.

Newman, emerging from an Evangelical secondary education whose ideas lingered for some years with him, was thrust upon his election to Oriel into contact with scholars of high character and intellect who were already sliding, in some cases almost imperceptibly, into a comfortable scepticism regarding the claims of religion and belief. The contempt that Thomas Arnold, the former Oxonian and celebrated headmaster of the Rugby School, felt for dogmatism and formal religion was already producing fruit not only in Oxford but in all of educated England.

The Oxford of Newman's time was by no means exempt from continental influences. «The first half of the nineteenth century bore the impress», in the words of Dean Stanley, «of the deeper seriousness breathed into the minds of men not only in England but in Europe by the great convulsion of the French Revolution» 5. The French Revolution and its ideas indeed had a strong impact in England. These enlightened ideas would become the basis for the Liberal Party which evolved out of the Whigs, the parties of the great reforms. The tide was very strong and the Tories or Conservatives found themselves cast as the party of reaction, which is to say they gradually ceded territory until they themselves had embraced the same liberal ideology.

Many of the men who were Newman's contemporaries at Oxford in the better colleges such as Oriel and Balliol later became the leading Churchmen and politicians of their day, spreading their latitudinarianism throughout England and its empire.

When Newman was elected on the twelfth of April in 1822 as a fellow of Oriel he was introduced into a group in the common room widely known as the Noetics. «This knot of Oriel men was distinctly the product of the French Revolution, they called everything into question, they appealed to first principles, and disallowed authority as a judge in intellectual matters»⁶. These were the colleagues with whom Newman was to dine, take tea and exchange ideas in the coming years. Here he would form himself for the coming battle although not without danger of succumbing to the same temptation of pure reliance on reason. Fortunately Newman was of an independent frame of mind and, as we shall observe later, the first impressions of the importance of dogma received early on in his youth never left him. He describes the atmosphere well in the following passage:

«In the present day mistiness is the mother of wisdom. A man who never enunciates a truth without guarding himself against being supposed to exclude its contradictory, who holds that Scripture is the only authority, yet that the Church is to be deferred to, that faith only justifies, yet that it does not justify without works, that grace does not depend on the sacraments, yet it is not given without them, that Bishops are a divine ordinance, yet those that have them not are in the same religious condition as those who have, this is your safe man and the hope of the Church, this is what the Church is said to want, not party men but sensible, temperate, sober well judging persons to guide it through the channel of no meaning between the Charybdis of Aye or No»⁷.

At the same time as these first liberal ideas were entering strongly in the British world, few people suspected the far reaching effect they would have on the touchstone of the Anglican religion in England, the relations between Church and State. «The relation between Church and State was in the high Anglican tradition, a almost sacramental bond which molded the inner life and spiritual ethos of the community»⁸. But it was here precisely that the first serious cracks began to appear that were later to push Newman along with others to form the Oxford movement and to the publi-

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⁷. Apo., 64.
cation of the first Tracts of the Times. The event was the suppres-
sion of the supposedly inviolable Irish Bishoprics occasioned by
the Reform Bill of 1832, for as Newman says in a letter to Frede-
rick Rogers, former pupil and close friend, «I am against all mea-
sures that tend to the separation of Church and State».

Now that I have placed Newman somewhat in the philosophical
and historical context of his day I will proceed to a character
sketch of the young Oxonian and the history of his early religious
ideas. This can be examined in detail in the Apologia and Autobiog-
aphical Writings along with the Ward and Trevor biographies.

Newman was brought up in the comfortable religious atmos-
phere of a typical upper middle class family during the Georgian
era. The advice of Newman’s father is quite symptomatic: «religion
when taken too far produces weakness of character»

This would be a sentiment not at all uncommon in this era where religious
dedication as an Anglican priest would mean wife, family, and a
comfortable income. The thought that his son would one day be-
come the greatest spokesman for Roman Catholicism in the nine-
teenth century would have no doubt shocked him greatly. The
living of the moral law of the ten commandments and weekly atten-
dance at services were in his mind the height of the religious spirit.

Soon after his conversion, Newman wrote a novel on the stay
of a young Anglican at Oxford who is studying for holy orders
and searching for religious truth. Although Newman warns us in a
preface to the book that we should not identify the fictional cha-
racter Charles Reding with himself, the resemblance is too exact to
lead to any other conclusion. Anyone who has closely read the works
of Newman can see the many parallels. Newman describes the
young Reding in this way «gentle and affectionate and cheerful, and
easily led by others, except when duty clearly interfered (underli-
ning mine)». (L.G., 2). This description fits in very well with
testimony given of Newman by close friends in later life.

The first notice we have of his strong religious leaning comes
to us at the early age of fifteen, precisely when often times the
development of body and mind make strong demands on a youth
developing into manhood. In his Apologia he recounts that, «When
I was fifteen (in the autumn of 1816) a great change of thought

took place in me, I felt under the influence of a definite creed and received into my intellect impressions of dogma, which, through God's mercy, have never been effaced or obscured." His description of the event clearly makes it a landmark in the formation of his religious character.

Soon afterwards Newman went up to Trinity College as a young commoner, and it is there that his first perception of the destructive forces of Liberalism begins. Before continuing, I want to note that during young Newman's school years 1808-1816 he had gradually fallen under the influence of one of the masters, Dr. Walter Mayers, an Anglican clergyman of Evangelical persuasion. The Evangelicals were a group within the Anglican community that tended strongly to emotionalism in religion with strong links to the Methodism of Wesley and Whitfield. They placed a strong emphasis on the relationship of God and the sinner unencumbered by Church structure and the importance of individual holiness. Above all this type of thought held sway in the lower classes in as much as they shied away from intellectual thought and put the emphasis on personal interpretation of the Bible. As such they never were the dominant group for long in Cambridge or Oxford. In later years Newman considered them as lineal descendents of the Puritans of the seventeenth century. Newman gradually discarded his Evangelical ideas as he immersed himself deeper in the study of the Anglican divines and the Fathers of the Church. A continuing relationship in the 1820's with Richard Whately and Edward Hawkins, both strong logicians and Fellows of Oriel, was not at all conducive to the not so latent emotionalism of Evangelicalism. He realized that "the future lay between the parties which had yet to emerge in clear and definite lines and colour from the background of moderate churchmen — the Liberals and the Catholics."  

Mayer's great contribution to Newman's development was his nurturing a thirst for holiness in his young pupil that was to endure unto death. He also introduced him to some of his first religious texts whose principles and maxims were to remain with him as instruments in the great events ahead. But that first conversion was permanent and even as early as 1817 we find him asking Mayers in a letter "For indeed how could it be that baptized

11. Apo., p. 17.
12. WARD, M., op. cit., p. 127.
infants dying in their infancy could be saved, unless the spirit of God was given them, which seems to contradict the opinion that Baptism is not accompanied by the Holy Ghost?» 13.

Later in the same month, however, we see that Newman still has not discovered the concept of an authority that speaks through the established Church, although the need is clearly felt. «For indeed I find I have a great need of some monitor to direct me and I sincerely trust that my conscience, enlightened by the Bible, through the influence of the Holy Spirit may prove a vigilant and faithful guardian of the principle of religion» 14. Amidst the controversies of his years at Oxford he soon discovered that the aids cited above were not sufficient; he was to see many well-intentioned men fall by the wayside following just those same principles. So we see as early as 1817 he was already embarked on that search for a «monitor to direct», the search that only ended in 1845 in Littlemore.

At this point I will skip over some of his university years that, although not uneventful, shed little light on his opinions of the development of unbelief in his day. It is only with his decision to take Holy Orders, the reception of the B.A. degree, and finally election to Oriel that he is placed firmly in the environment where he will spend the rest of his Anglican life, gradually being encircled by the new religion of latitudinarianism.

The first public writing that we have record of is a letter to the editor of the British Critic, a periodical of the time, that he writes at the age of twenty one. The letter is directed to the subject of the analogical difficulties in mathematics and religion. It contains his first attack on liberal opinions in the matter of theology. He points out that «a true religion that has no mysteries is absurd» 15. He points out that the principles upon which mathematics and religion are built are quite distinct, one supernatural and the other material. The letter reflects the young Newman’s current interest in mathematics and even more his constant search for certainty or what he would later call in his Catholic writing «real assent». A little before writing to the Editor he had written to a close friend that «my current interest and principal amusement at

13. L. D. to Walter Mayers, Jan 1817.
14. Ibid.
present is the contemplation of that branch of knowledge which is founded in necessary matter» 16.

Upon his election to Oriel in the following year Newman first came into contact with two men who were to influence him greatly during the rest of the decade of the 1830's. They were Richard Whately, the future Archbishop of Dublin, and Edward Hawkins, future Provost of Oriel. Newman’s friendship with these gentlemen gradually waned as their philosophic and religious differences became apparent. Newman continued to have affection for them both and always refrained from personal attacks although not hesitating to vilify their ideas. On the other hand, both Hawkins and above all Whately did not miss many opportunities in later years to give their rather strong opinion on both Newman and his ideas. While Newman grew increasingly conservative in his own unique fashion, both Whately and Hawkins flowed with the liberalizing trend in the Anglican Church. Regarding Hawkins, Newman tells us:

«There is one principle which I gained from Dr. Hawkins, more directly bearing upon Catholicism, than any I have mentioned and that is the doctrine of tradition, viz. That the sacred text was never intended to teach doctrine, we must have recourse to the formularies of the Church, for instance to the Catechism, and the Creeds» 17.

Therefore Newman learned the reasoning behind one of the essential arguments for the Anglican Church, that of antiquity, from a man who was to be a future opponent. This quote bears out the veracity of Newman’s self description in the person of the fictional Charles Reding, that he was easily led by others. Perhaps it is a measure of the powerful influence of religious Liberalism that even a man as firmly rooted in the necessity of doctrine as Hawkins could succumb to some of its tenets.

In the same passage Hawkins recognizes some of the dangers that were already appearing on the horizon for Sacred Scripture: «It was Dr. Hawkins who taught me to anticipate that, before many years were over, there would be an attack made upon the books and canons of Scripture» 18. Newman thus went forewarned into the fray with strong Catholic notions of the importance of

16. Ibid., p. 98.
17. Apo., p. 22.
18. Ibid., 21.
both the Teaching Authority of the Church and Sacred Scripture. It is quite significant that Hawkins along with Newman could foresee the attack by the liberals on the reliability of Sacred Scripture, knowing that such an attack in a Protestant world could demolish the foundation for credibility. They anticipate by many years the Biblical criticism of Strauss, Renan and Harnack and, perhaps even more importantly, foreshadow the Modernism that was to afflict the Catholic Church at the end of the nineteenth century.

However, it was from Richard Whately, under whom he was later to serve as Vice-Principal of St. Alban’s Hall, that he obtained that which would nearly complete his theological foundations: the notion of the Church. «What he (Whately) did for me in point of religious opinion was first to teach me the existence of the Church as a substantive body or corporation» 19. He was already shedding his Evangelical feathers although his memberships in the Missionary and Bible Societies were still active.

He was ordained as an Anglican priest in 1825. He was still learning rapidly but already one begins to catch a glimpse of the powerful intellect that was developing its own peculiar stance against the Oriel Noetics. Up to this point he had lived very well the last words of advice that his father gave him before he died in December of 1824: «Do not show ultraism in anything» 20. He thus commenced on his long career as an Anglican clergyman, renowned both for his intellect and personal holiness, which was to last up to 1843 with the resignation of the living of St. Mary’s. Some of the more positive elements of Evangelical thought still remained. In regard to his pastoral ministry, he says «those who make comfort the great subject of their preaching seem to mistake the end of their ministry. Holiness is the great end. There must be a struggle and a trial here. Comfort is a cordial, but no one drinks cordials from morning to night» 21.

He continued his philosophical and religious reading by deepening his familiarity with the great Anglican writers of the eighteenth century. «Besides Summer, Butler’s celebrated work, which he studied about the year 1825 had, as was rational, an important

19. Ibid., 24.
20. A. W., 203.
indirect effect upon him in the same direction as placing his doctrinal views on a broad philosophical basis, with which an emotional religion could have little sympathy».

Butler’s great work on analogy greatly influenced his *University Sermons*, which he began to preach at this time and continued until his taking leave of St. Mary’s. Many years later his reading of Butler was to influence the other great work on the relationship between faith and reason, *The Grammar of Assent*.

Between the early influence of Whately and Hawkins, the reading of Butler, and his first concrete taste of «real» life as encountered in the rounds of his pastoral duty, his religious views were rapidly taking shape. Again, a description of Charles Reding: «The theory of dogmatic truth, as latitudinarianism during the course of his first years, gradually began to energize the mind».

Already he was entering into controversy over the validity of Christianity with his brother Charles in letters that lasted many pages. Charles quite probably was insane and certainly eccentric and proved to be a constant source of worry for his brother John, both spiritually and monetarily. However these letters afford us a great insight into the early apologetic of Newman against unbelief. In a letter to Charles he states «the point I have maintained throughout, has been, that it is unfair to judge the genuiness of a revelation by the thing revealed — that the credentials are no more contained in the message itself which it purports to bring from heaven, than an ambassador’s instruction from his sovereign are his credentials».

In 1826 he commenced the first of his *University Sermons*, regularly scheduled rotating sermons preached in front of the university. He used the pulpit as a means to undertake a strong stance against the beginnings of unbelief then current by insisting on the compatibility of faith and reason, again foreshadowing a theme that would be taken up by the Catholic Church pre-eminently, in the First Vatican Council. Consequently these sermons differ both in style and content from his regular Sunday sermons published as the *Parochial and Plain Sermons*. Those sermons are

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directed much more to the conscience than to the intellect. Upon the publication of the University Sermons the mature Newman was to proclaim them the best work he had ever done although not the most perfectly wrought. They are central for an understanding of Newman’s developing perception of the Liberalism of the day.

In the first of these sermons Newman takes up the charge that revealed religion is hostile to the advance of philosophy and science. In order to realize the importance of the sermon, one has to realize that this is a twenty five year old recently ordained Anglican clergyman who many years before the appearance of Darwin, Huxley and the scientific revolution is already addressing himself to one of the main questions of the future day. At the beginning he points out quite succinctly «the philosopher might speculate but the theologian must submit to learn» 25. He thus makes clear that the mysteries offered as dogmatic truth must be assented to on the authority of God who reveals through the Church. Reason may be applied to their explanation but only to clarify and not to challenge. He attacked openly what he perceived as a hidden wish among the intelligentsia, that is the desire to see Christianity fail through incompatibility with modern man and civilization.

«It is to be lamented that many even of the present respectable advocates of improvement in the condition of society, and patrons of general knowledge, seem to consider the interests of the human race quite irreconcilable with those of the Christian Church and though they think it indecorous or unfeeling to attack religion openly, yet appear confidently to expect that the progress of discovery and the general cultivation of the human mind must terminate in the fall of Christianity» 26.

In the case of the Anglican Church and English society, these individuals were not far wrong in their analyses of the possible failure of Christian influence in their society. Certainly no one today would point to Great Britain as the model of a Christian state. During the remainder of Newman’s life well into the Victorian era, the opponents of Christianity became increasingly bold in their interventions in society. Acknowledged atheists, agnostics and skep-

24. U. S. «The philosophical temper first enjoined by the Gospel».
25. Ibid., 2.
26. Ibid., 3.
tics were none too common in 1826; they became all too common by 1889.

This, his first university sermon, already gives a hint of the line of thought that he will pursue in his Catholic period, above all in his *Idea of a University*. He points out that «to feel and appear timid on witnessing the enlargement of scientific knowledge is almost to acknowledge that there may be some contrariety between it and Revelation» 27. He was already resolving the dichotomy so often witnessed in the present day of supposed conflict between the idea of scientific progress and religion. His deep religious faith leads him to conclude and rightly so that there cannot be any real disagreement between truths, and if there appears to be one, then more research is needed on the scientific question.

Newman already recognizes the divisions that were inherent in the widening distance between the theology and philosophy of the day. He realized that unless philosophy was recognized as subordinate to theology the result would be catastrophic for modern thought and morals. He comments, «There is much despair lest the philosophical school should be found to separate from the Christian Church and at length disown the parents to whom it has been so greatly indebted. And this evil in a measure has befallen us, that it does not increase we must look to that early religious training to which there can be no doubt all persons — those in the higher as well as in the poorer classes should be submitted» 28. To Newman, what we today would call «catechetics», the religious education of the young, was of paramount importance in assuring a helthy society, both intellectually and morally. Newman in fact spent numerous hours teaching Cathechism to the young children of his parish, first at St. Clements and later at St. Mary’s.

Newman’s early life can be marked off as a series of four conversions, that of 1816 as an adolescent, that of 1827 as a fellow at Oriel, that of 1833 during his long illness in Sicily, and finally in middle age with his conversion in 1845 to the Roman Catholic Church. Of great importance is the conversion of 1827 in which he tells us that he was awakened violently from his slumber by the two great blows of illness and the interior desolation caused by

the death of his younger favorite sister Mary. According to his own account he was drifting dangerously in the direction of intellectual Liberalism due to a strong desire for intellectual excellence stemming from pride. Newman has a well deserved reputation for being at times over sensitive. Nevertheless this sensitiveness produced that overriding desire for personal holiness that was the motivation of his life. Judging from the writings that he has left: sermons, letters and diaries, articles, etc.... I have not been able to find any evidence for this supposed drift towards the spirit of the day. However Newman mentions it repeatedly in later writings and we must rely on his word.

At this point he still had not completely settled his own religious opinion, being pulled in opposite directions by the Evangelical and Liberal currents around him. This uncertainty together with the events of his everyday university life produced a crisis that was resolved in a manner that was to give him direction for the rest of his life. As early as Mary 1825 he had planned a systematic reading of the Fathers of the Church but it is only in July 1828 that he finally begins the project with the reading of the most primitive Fathers, the Apologists. He testifies to the importance of the reading in both his autobiographical writings. «The ancient Fathers saved him from the danger that threatened him» \(^{29}\) and «in proportion as I moved out of the shadows of Liberalism which had hung over my course, my early devotion to the Fathers returned and in the long vacation of 1828 I set about to read them chronologically, beginning with St. Ignatius and St. Justin» \(^{30}\).

The impact of the sanctity and genius of the fathers is immeasurable; certainly no other modern religious figure has delved so deeply in their spirituality. With this patristic orientation his writings become increasingly stylistic and his two important theological works are laden with history and doctrinal information on the first centuries of the Church.

We see Newman gradually turning away from the influence of Hawkins, Whately and Blanco White, an apostate Spanish priest in residence in Oxford, and taking up with the most traditional Anglican elements of Oxford, John Keble, Hurrell Froude and Edward B. Pusey. These are the men who will begin with him the

\(^{29}\) Ward, M., op. cit., 104.

\(^{30}\) Apo., 35.
Oxford Movement. They will remain his fast friends and supporters up to the day of his conversion. They «were beginning the process of turning a Liberal into a Catholic» 31.

In the later part of the decade of the 1820's John Keble's *Christian Year*, a book of devotional poetry, became very popular among the «higher» elements in the Anglican Church and Newman was not immune from its influence. Keble helped to add another part to the foundation that Newman was building for his conception of a true Catholic Church. «The first of these was what may be called in a large sense of the word, the Sacramental system, that is the doctrine that material phenomena are both the type and instrument of real things unseen» 32.

Hurrell Froude was to influence Newman in a different manner. Froude, the son of an Anglican clergyman himself, was intensely taken up with the history of the Church in the Middle Ages, with the greatness of Hildebrand and Innocent III and the martyrdom of St. Thomas of Canterbury. He was much more rapid than Newman in his appreciation of Catholicism and served as a constant prod for Newman in taking action on the great religious questions of the day.

As Newman gradually finished his formation regarding the true nature of the Church, the liberal inroads in both Church and Society became even greater. «Liberalism began to reveal its chief principle, hatred of dogma and hatred of mystery» 33. With the more open revelation of liberal principles Newman’s recognitions of its possible effects both in the present and in the future became more perceptive.

In 1829 he wrote to his sister Jemima «I think there is a grand attack on the Church in progress from the utilitarians and schismatics» 34. He saw the progress that the utilitarian philosophy of Jeremy Bentham and the Mills, father and son, was making in the political philosophy of England and consequently on its state established Church. He identified the Catholic Emancipation of 1829 as one of the first blows towards a disastrous separation of Church and State. Soon afterwards comes the most succint ana-

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34. *L. D. March 4, 1829.*, 128.
C. JOHN MCCLOSKEY in an analysis of Liberalism in the first period of his Anglican life. In a letter written to his mother:

«We live in a novel era, one in which there is an advance towards universal education. Men have hitherto depended on others, and especially the Clergy for religious truth; now each man attempts to judge for himself. Christianity is of faith, modesty, lowliness, subordination but the spirit of work against it is one of latitudinarianism, indifferentism, republicanism, and schism, a spirit which tends to overthrow doctrine as if the fruit of bigotry... The Church party is poor in mental endowments. It has not activity, shrewdness, dexterity, eloquence or practical powers. On what then does it depend?

On prejudice and bigotry» 35.

Newman already sees himself in the minority facing a tidal wave of unbelief. At the same time he recognizes that the Anglican Church as then constituted was utterly unable to wage effective battles against such apparently insurmountable odds. The formation of the Oxford Movement was still some years away but Newman was already steeling himself for the battle to come within the heart of the Anglican Church. Only the conviction that he possessed the truth and that he would continue to have divine aid enabled him to carry out his ministry.

He saw the Church besieged from all directions. At this point he had little real knowledge of the Roman Church, just the normal prejudices of an Anglican clergyman mixed with some more bitter sentiments as a result of his Evangelical youth. Thus in his own words «But here again in Emancipation (of Irish Catholics) is the symptom of a systematic hatred to our Church, borne by Romanists, Sectaries, Liberals and Infidels. If it were not for the Revolution which one would think attend it, I should say the Church must fall» 36. Nevertheless it is rare to find attacks against the Catholic Church in the corpus of his work, rather he constantly excoriates the Liberals, «pas d’ennemis á droite». Thus when in 1843 he formally retracted all his criticism of the Roman Church, in fact there was not all that much to retract.

In the year 1830, as in 1820 and 1848, there were revolutions

35. Ibid. to S. Rickards, Feb. 6, 1829, 119.
36. Ibid., to Jemima Newman, Aug. 10, 1830, 267.
throughout Europe. France suffered yet another convulsion and Newman who shared the common British disdain for the continent was not slow to comment on the occurrence in France. «They seem the most wicked nation on earth and King Charles and his ministers are a set of poltrons for not staying to be shot or guillotined». The more mature and theological Newman in later life was to comment in his *Apologia*: «shortly before there had been a Revolution in France, the Bourbons had been dismissed and I believe that it was unchristian for nations to cast off their governor, and much more, sovereigns who had the divine right of inheritance» 37. He shared the common tenet of High Anglicanism of the divine right of kings that would lead him to refer to the «martyrdom» of King Charles I. It was an opinion that he would modify as time went on.

By the middle of 1830 Newman has clearly rid himself of any vestiges of Evangelism. His attention now is focused on the various ways Liberals are infiltrating the society and what would be its ultimate impact on the Church. By no means is he a disinterested observer; it is simply that he has not yet encountered the influence nor the means to counteract the Liberalism in an organized manner.

«The tendency of the age is towards Liberalism i.e. a thinking established notions worth nothing. In this system of opinions a disregard of religions is included. No religion will stand deprived of its forms. It is nothing to say it is truth-moral truth is not acceptable to man’s heart, it must be enforced by authority of some kind or other… A system of Church government was actually established by the Apostles, and is thus the legitimate enforcement of Christian truth. The Liberals know this — and are in every possible manner trying to break it up. (ref. Bible Society) On the contrary I believe it makes Church men Liberal… I think it is preparing the downfall of the Church» 38.

Newman still firmly believed that the Anglican Church was apostolic in its origin. He only wanted it to exercise its rightful powers. In this he was to be constantly disappointed.

37. Opo., 39.
In another of the *University Sermons* preached in 1830 he warns his congregation «It is even now the way of the world to look upon the religious principles as a mere peculiarity of temper, a weakness, or an enthusiasm, or refined feeling, characteristic of a timid and narrow or a heated or highly gifted mind» 39. He insists even more stubbornly on the importance of the dogmatic principle, that there are truths given to our assent on the authority of the one giving them. One notes a reflection of personal experience in private controversy of the Oriel Common Room kind with Blanco White and Richard Whateley when he refers to the «timid and narrow», or «heated and highly gifted».

By 1830 he affirms that «the Children of evangelical parents, if they see the world, will generally turn liberals... Give them education, they will turn scoffers, having already the evil heart of unbelief in them» 40. Quite strong words for a former Evangelical but by this point he is so firmly convinced that dogmatic belief is the touchstone of Christianity that he could make such a statement. The history of religious belief in this century has certainly proved his prophecy out.

The gradual disappearance of the sense of sin or the need of repentance and the gradual disappearance of religious influence in everyday life were all forseen by Newman as early as 1831. «It is the sign of the day to put religious considerations out of sight, and, forgetting there is any power above man’s to think that what he can do, he may do with impunity» 41. The gradual self-deification of man by rationalism and the utter self-righteousness expressed in the mores of the day were to form part of the principal characteristics of the long Victorian era that was to begin in 1837. Newman diagnosed the disease from the onset of its first symptoms.

In 1831 late in the year Newman preached the most important of his *University Sermons* in dealing with the root of his understanding of the meaning of Liberalism for his day. The sermon is entitled «Usurpations of Reason». The harmony between faith and reason was one of the major themes to which he would return time and time again throughout his life in books and sermons. He felt that most intellectuals misunderstood the range and applications of

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reason to revealed truth. The use of the word «usurpation» in the title of the sermon is revealing when we consider its then frequent use in relation to the unlawful rebellion against the throne. In the same way he considered that reason when used wrongfully usurped the divine truth. He recognized and encouraged the use of reason in its proper sphere but not for the purposes of doubting where it has no proper role, for who can doubt God and expect to be saved. «It appears that exercises of reason are either external, or at least only ministrative, to religious inquiry and knowledge: accidental to them, not of the essence; useful in their place, but not necessary... In this day, then, we see a very extensive development of an usurpation which has been preparing, with more or less open avowal, for some centuries, the usurpation of Reason in morals and religion» 42.

Newman had a keen sense of the importance of history, a result of his classical education and a profound reading of the Fathers and the Anglican divines. From this study he developed a fine sense of the historical roots of heresy and the modern ideologies. Thus «the usurpation of the reason may be dated from the Reformation... Accordingly, Revealed Religion was in a great measure stripped of its proof; for the existence of the Church had been its external evidence, and its internal had been supplied by the moral sense» 43. Here we see Newman consciously affirming the need for a universal Catholic Church as the authority to which the faithful should submit. By now, in part due to the influence and friendship of Keble, the Protestants were clearly the culprits for the corruption of the Anglican Church.

Newman then points out the great danger for the Church, a danger that sounds so familiar to Roman Catholics that have lived through the Post-Vatican II era, of the misinterpretation of the role of the Church in the modern world. «Our great danger is, lest we should not understand our own principles, and should weakly surrender customs and institutions, which go far to constitute the Church what she is —the pillar and ground of moral truth— lest from a wish to make religion acceptable to the world in general we betray it to its enemies» 44. Newman rejects finally any false con-
cessions, insisting on the need for a sound doctrinal and theological knowledge in the Church to better prepare its defense and propagation in the modern world. He continues «However, what are the essentials of any system, both in doctrine and discipline, what we may safely give up and what we must finally uphold, such practical points are to be determined by a more mature wisdom» 45.

We have now completed the first part of our examination of the vision of Liberalism in Newman. From this time on Newman would become more intimately concerned in the religious questions involving both the Church and the nation. His thought will thus reflect more of a commitment and less sober reflection. He has recently begun his first book The Arians of the Fourth Century, a direct result of his readings of the Fathers. We have seen that his theological formation as an Anglican is now complete and now remains the question of finding that «mature wisdom» to which he and the English people must look for safety against the onslaught of disbelief.

CHAPTER II: A VISION FORMED (1832-1839)

This chapter will necessarily concern itself more with the years 1832-1834 for several reasons. The years 1832-1833 were crucial for during these two years Newman preached five of his University Sermons, followed by the voyage and subsequently the founding of the Oxford Movement soon after his return from the continent. Thus above all in these early years of the decade we have a rich record in written material: sermons, letters and diaries, etc... As these years are the turning point in his life they reflect his reaction to the ever increasing Liberalism of the day. After 1834, Newman dedicates himself ever more increasingly to action through his work in the university and religious world.

In his sermon «Personal influence, the Means of propagating the Truth», preached early in January, Newman clearly identifies the enemy and forsees an inevitable reaction against the inroads of religious Liberalism. He does not reveal to us if he already has in

45. Ibid., 74.
mind the form of the Oxford Movement, but the need for an educational and formative apostolate is clearly seen. «Moreover, this great, though, dangerous, faculty which evil employs as its instrument in the warfare against the truth, may stimulate all kinds of virtute, and thus becomes the rival of the true saints of God, whom it is opposing» 46. Later he goes on to refer to the difficulties which beset the propagation of the truth and proposes personal influence as the most effective means of changing society. This advice comes very naturally from a man who had a great gift for winning and maintaining friendship. By now Newman had locked in firmly on Liberalism as the adversary, he would waste little ammunition on Roman Catholicism and Evangelism from now on. «Liberalism was the enemy, in religion primarily but one spirit ran through it all, and this external activity was only a preliminary to the total triumph» 47.

His pastoral ministry at St. Mary’s was continuing with intensity. He preached perhaps more in this year (1832) than in any other in his life. At the same time he was deepening his friendship with Hurrell Froude and John Keble, the future co-founders with Newman of the Tractarians. In April he preached another sermon to the university on the theme «Justice as a principle of Divine Governance» where again he jousts with the growing liberal thought «we must never say that an individual is right, merely on the ground of his holding an opinion which happens to be true, unless he holds it in a particular manner» 48. Again he places the emphasis on the doctrinal principle, that God and his Church demand unconditional assent to the truth revealed and that a mere reasoned conclusion, even though correct, is not enough to assure salvation. Reason is fallible but the Holy Spirit is not.

He later points out the gradual distortion of what the true meaning is of being a Christian. The follower of Christ has gradually become desupernaturalized, the theological and cardinal virtues are replaced by merely human ones. The combination of Lutheran justification by faith alone and Calvinist predestination are becoming so ingrained perhaps unconsciously in the British character, that the Victorian bourgeois «Christian» is becoming a reality. Newman

46. U.S., 90.
47. WARD, M., op. cit., 232.
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sees the beginnings already visible and foresees the debilitating consequences for society. «It is an especial fault of the present day to mistake the false security of the man of the world for the composure, cheer, and benevolence of the true Christian» 49. Later in his Catholic *Occasional Sermons* he will convincingly explain how widespread this self-deception regarding the true nature of the Christian life has become and how many souls are lost as a result of its deception. In his old age he would look back upon the century and muse upon the fact that he had lived through and witnessed the almost complete dechristianization of the English society. I cringe to think what would have been his reaction to England and the modern world in the twentieth century.

As he develops his thought in the sermons, he turns his attention to the topic of dogmatic authority by showing one example of its undermining in the heresy of Socianism or Unitarianism i.e. a belief in one God without any reference to the threePersons of the Holy Trinity. Newman often refers to the belief in the Trinity as the most important because it deals with the Godhead and is so clearly a complete mystery to the human mind. In fact, it is one of the first doctrines that a liberal will attack because he can not see its «usefulness». Socinians therefore are those who hold that «doctrinal opinions do not influence our characters or prosperity, nor deserve our serious attention» 50.

Newman repeatedly mentions in his writings and most prominently in the first pages of the *Apologia* that when he was young, he was convinced that the invisible world was more real than the visible one. This somewhat Platonic viewpoint stayed with him for the rest of his life. Consequently, his deeply supernatural outlook recoiled before the suggestion that the Trinitarian dogma would not merit «serious attention». He attacks violently the notion of God as the Watchmaker of the Enlightenment thinking who only looks down upon the world with benevolence, never interfering or judging, a God whom it is impossible to offend. Naturally he saw that such thinking would lead to a complete abandonment of the need for penance and mortification as «medieval». If all are destined to eternal life there is no need for repentance. Thus, the true end of man becomes not the glory of God but rather the good of

mankind. And according to the liberal utilitarian philosophy, man best pursues the good of mankind by pursuing his own self interest. How easy it then becomes for the young man of 1832 to ignore supernatural considerations and still be assured of salvation. Newman recognizes the danger from the very beginning and speaks clearly from the pulpit to warn his congregation to avoid contamination at the risk of their souls.

In May of 1832 Newman continues this series of sermons with another entitled «The contest between Faith and Sight» where he gives a close analysis of how easily modern man falls into the abyss of liberal thought, an event which he had no doubt witnessed many times in the course of his university and pastoral work. At times the description of the process sounds eerily familiar to the twentieth century man. In a reference to Edward Gibbon the great historian and skeptic, the author of «The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire», with which Newman was very familiar, he mentions «the masters of a new school of error which seems not yet to have accomplished its destinies» 51. Gibbon was a Catholic convert, later apostate, much influenced by Voltaire. He viewed the development of Christianity as a mere historical phenomenon bereft of any transcendent importance. He deeply influenced the first generations of the early nineteenth century in England by his thought.

In the same sermon, Newman reveals the mixed emotions with which the English gentleman approached Christianity.

«Or shall he be led by a speculative turn of mind or a natural philanthropy to investigate the nature of man, or exert himself on plans for the amelioration of society, then his opinions become alternately impressed with the character of a more definitive unbelief. Sometimes he is conscious to himself that he is opposing Christianity, not indeed opposing it willfully but as he conceives, unavoidably, as finding it in his way. This is a state of mind into which benevolent men are in danger of falling at the present age. While they pursue objects tending, as they conceive, towards the good of mankind, it is by degrees forced upon their mind that Revealed Religion thwarts their proceedings and averse alike to relinquish their plans, and to offend the feelings of others they determine on letting matters take their course, and believ-

51. Ibid., 106.
ing fully that Christianity must fall before the increasing illumination of the age, yet they wish to secure it against direct attacks, and to provide that it no otherwise falls than as it unavoidably must at one time or other, as every inflexible instrument crumbles under the hand of the great Innovator, who creates new influence for new emergencies, and recognizes no right divine in a tumultuous and shifting world» 52.

The Englishman’s ambivalent attitude towards the Church as a merely useful instrument for domestic peace becomes more and more evident as the State increases the use of its power over the supposed prerogatives of the Church. The dichotomy set up between the interior and active life in the Protestant Reformation becomes absolute. «Keeping the faith in the main, giving up the notion of its importance... They consent to abandon articles of faith as the basis of Christian fellowship... To distinguish between their public and private duties and judge them by separate rules 53. Truth has lost its attraction, a false fraternity becomes the norm. So we see that the principles of false ecumenism are by no means a product of the later twentieth century. We can recognize many of the tenets of atheistic French Enlightenment thinking contained in the skillful sketch of Newman.

As the year progresses, his diagnosis of the worsening crisis becomes more acute and one senses that Newman sees the urgent need for action but hesitates to «sound an uncertain trumpet», in the words of the later motto of the Tracts for the Times, as he still has not settled on the most effective means to combat the heresies of the day. The revolutionary events in France and the coming of the English Reform cause him to perceive that the capital sin at the root of these occurrences is Pride.

In a sermon preached in November of 1832, he attacks the concept of class conflict as unchristian «or when as lately the lower orders rise up against the powers that be, in direct opposition to the word of Scripture» 54. In his last sermon of 1832 he lays emphasis on «obedience and submission to a positive commandment»

52. Ibid., 128.
53. Ibid., 121-3.
pointing out the «duty of Ecclesiastical unity» 55 and that «the sacraments, too, are of the same positive character» 66. The emphasis on Christian obedience and Church unity is continued further. «This is evident in the case of civil government, the forms and offices of which, when once established, are to be received for conscience-sake by those who find themselves under them» 57.

In the later part of the sermon he examines the present state of Liberalism and the dangers fraught in it for the Christian. He describes Liberalism as «the principle of cleaving and breaking down all divine ordinances, instead of building up yet it should be recollected that very rarely have its members (The Church) escaped the infection of the age in which they lived» 58. This sermon brings Newman right up to the moment of his departure for the Mediterranean. By now he has isolated the Liberal virus, done a pathological analysis, and seen how it spreads its infection; soon will come the moment when he has to make the prescription that will create the antibodies necessary in the Anglican Church to effectively combat it.

Before embarking on Newman’s reactions to his Mediterranean voyage and its effect on his vision of Liberalism, I will examine his first book, The Arians of the Fourth Century, whose writing encompasses the whole of this early period of the thirties. It provides unique insights into Newman’s vision of Liberalism in that for the first time he relates the occurrences of his day with the events of the first centuries of Christianity, concretely with the struggle of the early Church with the Arian heresy and its variations. As Chesterton has said, there are no new ideas. The research and investigations done by Newman permitted him to see where liberal thought could lead if it was not correctly analyzed and corrected. It strengthened his resolve to rely on the foundations of the Church, Authority and Antiquity. In as much as he continued to identify the Anglican Church with the Church of the Apostles, he felt reassured that the Church could weather the present storm as it had done so many times in the past.

He points out that the dogmatic symbols as taught by the Church were the chief catechetical instruments. «But in that pri-

56. Ibid., 171.
57. Ibid., 173.
58. Ibid., 174-5.
mitive age, the Apostolic tradition, that is the Creed, was practically the chief source of instruction especially considering the obscurities of Scripture, and being withdrawn from public view, it could not be subjected to the degradation of comparison on the part of inquirers and half-Christians, with those written documents which are vouchsafed to us from the same inspired authorities»

As a Christian Newman had a superiority complex i.e. the truths of God should not be subjected to mere rationalistic inquiry. He was already aware and apprehensive about «the cheapening of Religion and Truth through discussion and lack of reverence»

In examining the Arian heresy and its doctrinal consequences Newman sees the historical argument for dogmatic religion as a sure means of ascertaining the truth. This is not to say that he did not favor theological discussion, he did, but only under the watchful eye of religious authority. «Arius began by throwing his question as a subject of debate for public consideration»

To Newman this was a clear example of the dangers of bringing dogmatic discussion into the newspapers, a clear case of throwing pearls before swine. Unless the discussion was authorized and supervised by the Church the conclusions were bound to be faulty, given the fallible nature of man’s intellect. «Much as we may wish it, we cannot restrain the raving of the intellect, or silence its clamorous demand for a formal statement concerning the object of our worship»

He also realized that false opinions in history have often provoked needed doctrinal definition by the Church. «But false doctrines force us to analyze our own notions, in order to exclude it»

He certainly did not apply this thought positively to irreverent religious Liberalism which was rather a concerted attempt to undermine the foundations of Christian doctrine and ethics.

Newman firmly gives us his opinion on the treatment of both heresy and heretics, an opinion not at all usual in the England of the 1830's.

«Many a man would be deterred from out-stepping the truth could he see the end of his course from the begin-

60. Ibid., 136.
61. Ibid., 146.
62. Ibid., 164.
63. Ibid.
ning. The Arians felt this, and therefore resisted a detection which would at once expose them to the condemnation of all serious men. In this lies the difference between the treatment due to an individual in heresy, and to one who is confident enough to publish the innovation which he has originated. The former claims from us the most affectionate sympathy and the most considerate attention. The latter should meet with no mercy, he assumes the office of tempter, and so far as the error goes must be dealt with by the competent authority, as if he were embodied Evil. To spare him is a false and dangerous pity. It is to endanger the souls of thousands, and it is uncharitable towards himself» 64.

Finally, Newman gives the reader his sketch of the type of men needed and produced in times of doctrinal upheaval. He refers to «Athanasius, type as he really was and instrument of that Apostolic Order which, whether or not united to the civil power, must to the end of time, divide the rule with Caesar as the minister of God» 65. Newman was searching, in vain, for a modern day Athanasius to rule, with an increasingly impertinent Caesar, the British State. After his Mediterranean trip he evidently realizes that God may be calling him precisely for that role. At the same time on the opposition side these times of trial bring forth unscrupulous men who also leave their names to posterity and infamy. «But herein is the strength of audacious men, who gain what is unjust by asking what is extravagant» 66. Such men were Richard Whately and Thomas Arnold. They had to be opposed.

On December 8, 1832, Newman sailed in company with Hurrell Froude and his father for the Mediterranean. Soon afterwards a steady stream of letters, poems and gifts began to stream back to England. Much of the written material deals precisely with the great religious questions of the day, interspersed with the description of scenery and every day events typical of a continental Grand Tour. On Christmas day he writes to his sister Harriet: «Surely there is something very wrong in the actual state of the Church in England we are neither one thing or the other, neither strong enough to command obedience or loose enough to protest in our
separate person». The idea of the Movement is already clearly germinating. He writes to his sister from Malta: «I mention all this at length because it exemplifies the admirable system of Papacy as an instrument of power». It is the first time that Newman has come in close contact with the Roman Church and naturally admires that which is so lacking in the Anglican Church, an authority that imposes discipline.

Naturally his own visit to the Eternal City itself occupies a good deal of space in many of his letters. His rather ambivalent attitude still continues. He finds it difficult to overcome inbred prejudices: «How shall I call thee, Light of the Wide West, or heinous error seat?» He concludes that «as to Rome, union with her on our part is impossible and ever will be». At this point he little dreamed how true his prophecy would turn out although not in the way he foresaw: the only union possible would be individual submission to the Roman Church.

The political and ecclesiastical events at home of which he received news through periodicals and letters, served to heighten his ire and frustration at his own impotency. The Reform Bill had been passed after much controversy in late 1832 and Newman, ever the rigid Tory, could not forgive the former Oxford M. P. Robert Peel who had voted the Bill and whom he considered a traitor. To his good friend Thomas Mozeley he wrote on March 9, 1833 «I cannot boast of any greater philosophical coolness than before and on reading the papers of the beginning and middle of February, I hate the Whigs (of course, as Rowena says, in a Christian way) more bitterly than ever».

Thomas Arnold’s Broad views were becoming ever more influential in the Church and Newman sensed that the battle might be fought and lost without his even being able to participate. «If we hear right accounts of Arnold’s pamphlets, he is opening the door to alterations in doctrine some day to come… (the time is coming when we must choose sides)». Newman has already chosen his side but he foresees the need to make that view available in an organized fashion to the Anglican clergy and faithful.

68. L. D. to Jemima Newman, Jan. 15, 1833, 190.
69. Ibid., 232.
70. Ibid., to T. H. Jenkins, April 7, 1833, 280.
71. Ibid., 242.
72. Ibid., to E. B. Pusey, March 19, 1833, 259 and G. Ryder March 14, 1833, 249.
The long periods of time spent alone in conversation with Hurrell Froude help him to further refine his examination of Liberalism. However during the voyage he lacked his normal outlet of preaching and pastoral work in order to release his frustrations and pentup energies.

«The Bill for the suppression of the Irish Sees was in progress and filled my mind. I had fierce thought against the Liberals. It was the success of the Liberal cause which fretted me inwardly. I became fierce against its instruments and its manifestations. A French vessel was at Algiers, I would not even look at the tricolour» 73.

Due to the influence of Froude, one of Newman's most fixed opinions was in the process of change i.e. the necessity of union between Church and State. Froude who had studied deeply the history of the Middle Ages, was struck, by the frequent tyranny of the State over the Church as evidenced in the martyrdom of St. Thomas of Canterbury. This change on the part of Newman was important because, consciously or not, he was admitting that the Anglican Church was not capable of standing up to the British State which would eventually either abolish or secularize it. «With Froude, Erastianism that is, the union as he viewed it of Church and State was if not the parent, the serviceable and sufficient tool of Liberalism» 74.

There was no longer a real question of the significance of Liberalism for Newman. The much urgent question was what was to be done to stave off the flood of unbelief? «The vital question was how were we to keep the Church from being liberalized? I thought that if Liberalism once got a footing within her, it was sure of the victory in the event... There was a need of a Second Reformation» 75. Newman's predictive ability again is shown for Liberalism did in fact gain the victory, and as a result Anglicanism lost perhaps its greatest and one of its last champions in Newman himself.

In the middle part of his journey on April 16, 1833 Newman writes to his friend W. J. Trower and comments «I am up in arms against the Shelleyism of the day, which resolves religion

73. Apo., 42.
74. Ibid., 46.
75. Ibid., 40.
into feeling, and makes it possible for bad men to have holy thoughts. Good thoughts are only as good as far as they are taken as means to an exact obedience or at least this is the chief part of their goodness. It is important to realize that Newman here already foresees one of the main tenets of the Modernism to come, the replacement of belief with sentiment. Nonetheless Newman cannot be characterized as a staid reactionary. He did not oppose progress on principle. In his later Catholic years he would be attacked by the more extreme of the ultramontanes precisely because he favored a coming to terms with the modern world saying that the Church had nothing to fear because its foundation and continual presence were divine. He was much more opposed to the spirit of Liberalism than to any physical advance that could have been attributed to its spirit whether it be the steam engine or the discovery of electricity. It is the disobedience to divinely constituted authority in Church or State, that bothered him.

After experiencing an almost fatal illness at the end of his trip in Sicily Newman finally appears to have seen his mission clearly. In a letter to his close friend F. Rogers on June 5 he writes of his illness «I gave my servant directions how to convey news of my death (should it be so) to England, at the same time expressing to him a clear and confident conviction that I should not die. The reason I gave was that I thought that God had work for me. I do not think that there was anything wrong in this, on consideration.»

A few days afterwards he composes another in a collection of poems that he was writing along with Hurrell Froude to be published on their return. The title of the collection was Lyra Apostolica and the name of the poem «Liberalism».

Ye cannot halve the gospel of God's grace... And so yet halve the truth, for ye at heart. At best are doubters whether it be true. The theme discarding, as unmeet for you Yet seeming Christian O new composed art of The Ancient foe! But what, if it extends o'er our camp and guides our patron friend

76. L. D. III, 292.
77. L. D. III, 314.
78. L. D. 319.
Liberalism, for Newman, was an attack on the goodness of God. The Liberal more often rejects doctrine as a result of some incompatibility with his personal life rather than any strong intellectual conviction regarding its falsehood. Newman saw the secularism of the days as one more instrument of that «Ancient Foe» Satan and worried lest it influence his own close friends and associates.

This fear of the surrender of many former pillars of the Anglican Church to Liberalism provokes another poem from Newman.

O same that Christian joins with infidel. in learned search and curious seeming art! Burn we our books, so Christ's we be in heart. Sooner than heaven shall court the praise of hell. Self-flattering age! To whom shall I not seem. Pained with hot thoughts, the preacher of a Dream 79.

Newman's adhesion to the truth books no compromise. He has no interest in pleasing a self-flattering age, only in pleasing God.

With the start of the Oxford Movement upon the preaching of the sermon «National Apostasy» by John Keble, Newman enters a new phase of his Anglican life. Now he will have an opportunity to test his conception of the Church in active combat against the Liberals. His comments on the normal Broad Church doctrine will become more strident and open. He will become identified in the public mind with the Movement and thus bear a heavier responsibility to search even more deeply for the root causes of the illness afflicting the Anglicans. The difference also lies in that now Newman is a member of a group of like-minded faithful of the Anglican Church, Froude, Pusey, Keble, Williams. «They all stood for Authority and Tradition against Liberalism, for supernaturalism against Rationalism and Naturalism. The fundamental note of the Oxford Movement was its Anti-Modernism» 80. This judgement is correct for the Movement was fighting the same enemy that afflicts the modern world in our age, the faith in reason, scientific progress, and narcissistic self-fulfillment. This was to be the basis for the Modernists at the beginning of the century and whose doctrines, or lack thereof, still afflict us in the present day.

Newman conceived the Oxford Movement as a latter day co-

79. Ibid., 320.
rollary to the work of the Church Fathers. «We were upholding that primitive Christianity which was delivered of all time by the early teachers of the Church», and even further on «I was confident in the truth of a certain definite religious teaching, based upon this definition of dogma viz. that there was a visible Church with sacraments and rites which are the channels of invisible grace» 81. Newman already possesses a completely Catholic notion of the fundamental dogmas of the Church. He would have to undergo much persecution and internal suffering during the coming years in order to come to the realization that what he held as dogma was not the dogma of the Anglican Church, neither hierarchy nor faithful. The liberal response to the dogmatism of the Oxford Movement would not be to deny the dogmas but only to deny their relevance to modern man and hence claim that they could be discarded as articles of belief 82.

In 1834 in a letter to Richard Whately, his former friend and mentor, he sketches the dangers of the liberal opinion that Whately holds and spreads, and at the same time reveals an exquisite sense of charity in not imputing bad will to the Archbishop. «I can feel not reluctance to confess that, when I was first noticed by your Grace, gratitude to you and admiration of your powers weighed strongly upon me and had not something from within resisted, I should certainly have adopted views on religious and social duty, which seem to my judgement to be based upon pride and reason and to tend towards infidelity, and which in your own case nothing but your Grace's high religious temper and the unclouded faith of your mind have been able to withstand» 83.

We see that Newman was not attacking individuals but their ideas. He rather had interest in persuading some of his former, Anglican friends to denounce their incipient Liberalism and return to the straight path. In the Apologia Newman clearly identifies the enemy which is an ideology. «My battle was with Liberalism. By Liberalism I meant the anti-dogmatic principle and its development... Dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion... Religion as a mere sentiment, is to me a dream and a mockery» 84.

81. Apo., 50.
82. Ibid., passim.
84. Apo. 54.
Soon, afterwards, a professor of Moral Philosophy, R. D. Hampden, with whom Newman had already engaged in some heated battles, published a pamphlet urging the abolition of all religious tests for entering the Universities. Newman saw this attempt as another example of religious indifferentism spreading directly into the heart of his beloved Oxford. «While I respect the tone of piety which the pamphlet displays, I do not trust myself to put on paper my feelings about the principles contained in it, tending as they do in my opinion altogether to make shipwreck of Christian faith» 85. It was very rare that Newman would reach such a state of anger that he would not reasonably explain his views in a controversy. But the progress of Liberalism was so rapid and evidently unstoppable that in this case he was at a loss for words lest he offend in charity.

I will close this period of Newman’s Anglican life with an examination of the most significant of the Tracts for the Times for an understanding of his vision of Liberalism as a consequence of rationalism. It was published in 1836 with the title «On the Introduction of Rationalistic Principles in Religion». In starting he gives us a brief definition of what he conceives to be rationalism. «It is characterized by two peculiarities: its love of systematizing, and its basing its system upon personal experience, on the evidence of senses. In both respects, it stands opposed to what is commonly understood by the word Faith, belief on testimony, for which it deliberately replaces System (or what is properly called Reason) and sight... Rationalism then in fact is a forgetfulness of God’s powers, disbelief of the existence of a First Cause sufficient to account for any events or acts, however marvelous or extraordinary, and a consequent measuring of the credibility of things not by the power and other attributes of God but by our own knowledge, a limiting the possible to the actual, and defying the infinite range of God’s operations beyond our means of apprehending them» 86. Newman was familiar through his writings with the rationalism of the Enlightenment and with the philosophical ideas of Hume his countryman. He realized that once the divine authority was rejected as insufficient or unprovable, then the recourse to human reason individualized in a thousand opinions was the inevitable result.

86. Tracts, 2,
The so-called right of private judgement becomes the norm for belief. «Our private judgement is made everything to us — is contemplated, recognized and referred to as the arbiter of all questions and as independent of everything external to us» 87. Faith is no longer a supernatural virtue bestowed upon us freely by a loving God, it becomes the simple rational assent to a series of evidences as seen by the believer. «In short he owns that faith, viewed with reference to its objects, is never more than an opinion, and is as pleasing to God, not as an active principle apprehending difficult doctrines, but as a result and fruit, and therefore an evidence of past diligence, independent inquiry, dispassionateness and the like. Rationalism takes the words of Scripture as Ideas, Faith as things or realities» 88.

He later reveals the logical construction used by the rationalistic Liberal mind to invent a tautological system seemingly foolproof. «And the dispensation thus being hewned and chiseled into an intelligible human system is represented when thus mutilated as affording a remarkable evidence of the truths of the Bible, as evidence level to the Reason, and superseding the testimony of the Apostles. That is according to the above observation that Rationalism's want of faith, which has first invented a spurious gospel next looks complacently on its own offspring and pronounces it to be the very image of that notion of Divine Providence, according to which it was originally modelled» 89.

What precisely proves so irritating to Newman is the mask of religiosity with which the enemies of the Church cover their corruption of true doctrine. He could withstand the open skeptics and agnostics who were at least above board in their attack on Christian belief but this type of camouflaged guerrilla warfare smacked of treacherous cowardice to him.

In a subsequent passage he refers to one of the main proponents of the Broad Church in the following scathing terms. «We need only consider him as the organ (involuntary if you will or unwitting), but still the organ of the spirit of the age, the voice of that scornful, arrogant, and self-trusting spirit which has been

87. Ibid., 4.
88. Ibid., 7.
89. Ibid., 14.
enchained during latter ages and waxes stronger in power day by
day till it is fain to stamp under foot all the host of heaven» 90.

In conclusion, Newman reveals both his analytical and prophe­
tical powers at their highest. He lays out for view both the reason
for the success of these doctrines and their eventual destination if
they are not stopped.

«The reason (I believe) why many pious persons tolerate
such a writer as this is, that they have so fully identified
spirituality of mind with the use of certain phrases and
professions, that they cannot believe that a person who
uses them freely, naturally can but be taught of the Holy
Spirit: to believe it otherwise would be unsettling their
mind from the very foundations which indeed must take
place sooner or later whether they will or not» 91.

Newman witnessed a sharp drop in supernatural belief during
the remainder of his life. He saw it replaced with weak sentimen-
talism and an ever increasing pursuit of the material goods of life
which so characterizes the modern world of today. That his warnings
were not heeded is one of the great tragedies not only for the
Anglican Church but for the whole world.

«There is a widely, though irregularly spread school of
doctrine among us, within and without the Church, which
intends and professes the peculiar piety as directing its
attention to the heart itself, not to anything external to
us whether creeds, action, or rituals. I do not hesitate to
assent that their doctrine is based upon the error, that
it is, really a specious form of trusting man rather than
God, that it is in its nature Rationalistic and that it
tends to Socioanism. How the individual supporters of
it will act as they go on is another matter. The Good
will be separated from the Bad, but the School, as such will
pass through Sabellianism to that «God-denying aposta­
sy» to use the ancient phrase, to which in the beginning
of his career: it professed to be especially opposed» 92.

Newman was now ready to begin the agonizing rapprochement
with the Roman Catholic Church.

90. Ibid., 50.
91. Ibid., 52.
92. Ibid., 53.
CHAPTER III: TOWARDS THE TRUTH (1840-1845)

The mission of «relentless war against Liberalism» \(^93\) was still continuing at a feverish pace as Newman entered the year 1839. Although his analysis of Liberal thought remained complete, his own position towards the carrier of the virus, the Anglican Church was gradually changing from a confident loyalty to the suspicion that perhaps the Church lacked legitimacy and therefore was not worthy of his loyal adherence. As he himself put it «It is impossible to stop the growth of the mind» \(^94\). And although Newman was very active he also possessed in the highest degree the virtue of patience. As regards his possible conversion to Catholicism «he let it work its way and find its place, and shape itself within him, by the slow spontaneous action of the mind» \(^95\).

By this time Newman had become the most prominent figure in the English Church. He was slavishly followed and even imitated, to his dismay, by a host of young University students and his opinion was treasured and as J. A. Froude was to comment «Credo in Newmanuum was a common phrase in Oxford and it is still unconsciously the faith of nine-tenths of English converts to Rome» \(^96\). His views on the relentless invasion of Liberalism as expressed in sermons, letters, and articles are rendered more important as they are awaited and acted upon by an increasingly eager public.

The age of unbelief was well into its first period of growth and Newman although not yet despairing of the battle saw that dogmatic religion was rapidly losing influence in universal education and the newspapers. He would soon have to make the decision whether to go down with the ship or switch to a flagship that was unsinkable. Already, although relatively still a young man, he was looking to the younger generation to take up a battle that he saw rapidly being lost. «The hope of the Church does not lie with the newspaper readers. It lies with thoughtful men and young

\(^94\) L. G., 202.
\(^95\) Ibid., 65.
\(^96\) WARD, M., op. cit., 317.
men — whether lay or clerical. And they will in their sphere and place spread the truth against the newspapers» 97.

In 1839 after a seven year interruption he returns to his preaching of the University Sermons. As before he is still taken up with the apologetical aspects of the relationship between faith and reason. However it is a sobered, chastened Newman that returns to take his turn in the St. Mary’s pulpit. In his first sermon, preached on the Epiphany in 1839 he traces out clearly the process of the act of faith that he will later develop brilliantly in the Grammar of Assent. «Faith does not demand evidence so strong as is necessary for what is commonly considered a rational conviction, or belief on the ground of Reason, and why, because it is mainly shaped by antecedent considerations» 98. Newman emphasises here that the act of faith, elicited by grace, is not a pure reasoning by syllogism to a conclusion. He attempts to show that the act of faith is a product of antecedent considerations that have to do with the very moral nature of man himself. The whole man believes, body and soul, reason and imagination. Faith is not a simple conclusion. «Faith is a principle of action». Whereas Reason (as the word is commonly used) rests on the evidence, Faith is influenced by actions» 99.

The following Sunday he expatiates on the same theme. Already one can sense he is starting to feel the attraction of an «idolatrous and superstitious» Roman Church in comparison with an Anglican «dry» one.

«Yet a Faith which generously apprehends Eternal Truth though at times it degenerates into superstition, is far better than cold, sceptical, critical tone of mind, which has no inward sense of an overruling, ever-present Providence, no desire to approach its God, but sits at home waiting for the fearful clearness of His visible coming, whom it might seek and find in the due measure amid the twilight of the present world» 100.

Newman had clearly grown in the profundity of his supernatural life during the course of the decade and his sermons, always elevated in tone, take on an even more exalted sound. After six

97. Ibid., 334.
99. Ibid., 188.
years of intense activity as one of the leaders of the Oxford Move­
ment and so little apparent effect on the world it is as if he seeks
with even more desire the comforts of spiritual consolation. «Dif­
ferent ambassadors of God to men show forth different virtues,
and if one were to set to choose Newman's, one would answer
unhesitatingly — he was supremely in an unbelieving Age, a man
of faith» 101.

In his final sermon of the year in May 1839 «Love, the Safeguard of Faith against Superstition» Newman strikes perhaps the
most telling blow against the general secular unbelief. The liberals
always portrayed themselves as the party of right reason, moder­
tation, fighting against the superstition of the Dark Ages. They were
the party of the progressive future. Newman shows that «Unbelief
is opposed to Reason also but it criticizes the evidence of Religion,
only because it does not like it, and really goes upon presumptions
and prejudices as much as Faith does, only presumptions of an
opposite nature» 102.

During the summer of 1839, Newman read an article by the
future Cardinal Wiseman in the Dublin Review on St. Augustine.
The effect, so movingly described in the Apologia was to moment­
tarily shake his confidence in the Anglican Church as divinely sup­
ported. The phrase of St. Augustine securus judicat orbis terrarum
as applied to the Roman Church suggested to Newman that perhaps
that divine authority lay in Rome and not in Westminster or
Oxford. Soon afterwards he was writing to a friend that «the spirit
of Luther is dead, but Hildebrand and Loyola are alive... Would
you rather have your sons and daughters members of the Church
of England, or of the Church of Rome?» 103. As the year went on
Newman perceived that the forces of Liberalism in religion and
politics were annihilating the opposition. This indicated even more
strongly to him that the truth could not reside in a Church that would
not stand up for its apostolic prerogatives and actually cooperated
materially if not formally in evil.

In February 1840 he comments that «all these and many more
spirits are seen uniting and forming into something shocking» and
in a letter to his sister Jemima «So it seems to me as if there
were coming a great encounter between infidelity and Rome and

102. Ibid., 230.
103. Ibid., 335.
that we should be smacked in between them» 104. He no longer sees the Anglican Church as one of the protagonists in the struggle that was raging in the modern world. His hope as embodied in the above quotation, was that a faithful remnant of true believers could remain in the Anglican Church.

Newman continues with his study of Faith and Reason in a sermon entitled «Implicit and Explicit Reason» preached on St. Peter's Day 1840. He insists on the dogmatic principle as the only effective way to counteract religious Liberalism. At the same time he emphasizes that even the lower classes can remain religious by an assent to the truths revealed based on divine grace and not pure reason. «In these words, I conceive we have, a clear warrant, or rather an injunction, to cast our religion into the form of Creed and Evidences... Faith cannot exist without grounds or without an object; but it does not follow that all who have faith should recognize, and be able to state what they believe, and why» 105.

In November 1840 Newman says that »Whether or not Anglicanism leads to Rome, so far is clear as day, that Protestantism leads to infidelity» 106. In 1841 three events take place that help him to see that the Anglican Church clearly lacks validity. The first is a result of his continuing reading of the Fathers of the Church centering on the conflict between doctrinal truth and heresy. Specifically he returns to the battle of St. Athanasius with the Arians. Newman makes an analogy on his own time with the situation in the Church of the Fourth century, and observes that the Protestants can be identified with the Arians, the Anglicans with the Semi-Arians, and the Romans remain the same. Thus he conceives the Anglican Church as lacking the three notes of the Church, in that it is neither One, Catholic, nor Apostolic. At this point he is not yet convinced that it lacks the fourth of Holiness. The second event is the suppression of the Tracts for the Times as a result of the very unfavorable reception given to Tract Ninety by the Anglican hierarchy. In this tract Newman attempted to show that the Thirty-Nine articles could be sworn to in a Catholic sense. The third is the decision by the British State seconded by the Anglican Church to establish an ecumenical bishopric with the Lutherans in Jerusalem. Thus the Anglican Church loses all credi-

104. Ibid., 360.
bility with Newman by a shocking act of religious indifferentism if not sacrilege. It is precisely at this point that Newman finds himself effectively driven out of the Anglican Church through its newly acquired Liberalism. «It is not love of Rome that unsettles people but fears of heresy at home» 107. He now throws off his theory of the Via Media as woefully inadequate. «The Jerusalem Bishopric was the ultimate condemnation of the old theory of the Via Media» 108.

In the same summer Newman touches upon the important subject of private judgement having realized that a proper understanding of this much abused term was a key to the adherence to a dogmatic religion. He foresaw the breakdown of the concept of universal truth that would bind all members of society. He pointed out that very few people actually fully believe in the principle of private judgement. «If a staunch Protestant's daughter turns Roman why does he not exult in the occurrence... all this would lead us to suspect that the doctrine of private judgement is held by very few persons indeed, and the great mass of the population are either stark unbelievers in it, or deplorably dark about it... and hold not the right of private judgement but the private right of judgement, in others words their own private right and no one's else» 109.

In this Newman forsees the rise of the modern ideologies each one proclaiming its own truth to which all should be submitted: Socialism, Marxism and Nazism. The human mind craves certitude and if not provided it from above will devise its own system in which to place its faith.

Newman touches upon the subject of the role of development and changes in regard to private judgement. «Considering that change is really the characteristic of error and unalterableness the attribute of truth, of holiness... we consider that when private judgement moves in the direction of innovation it may well be regarded at first with suspicion and treated with severity... private judgement if not a duty, is a sin» 110. This essay is essential for an understanding of Newman's movement to Rome. It is precisely because he sees the Anglican Church changing for no apparent reason that he must leave it. He will write his Development in order to con-

107. Ibid.
108. Apo., 139.
110. Ibid., 340.
vince himself that the Catholic Church is unaltered although divinely developed through time.

Newman feels the ever growing need for supernatural assistance. Human reason and judgement are fallible. «These things being considered, we lay it down as truth that Divine aid alone can carry any one safely and successfully through an inquiry after religious truth» 111. Divine aid can come alone to the individual as an actual grace but Newman realizes the necessity of a Church that provides the source of sanctifying grace in order to preserve uncontaminated the depositum fidei. He pointed out that the real and legitimate use of private judgement in matters of religion is in the question of searching for the true teacher. Newman would spend the next four years assuring himself of the validity of the Catholic Church as the true teacher to which he must submit himself in order to gain true freedom.

«While then, the conversions are brought about in a very marked way, through a teacher and not by means of private judgement, so again, if an appeal is made to private judgement, this is done in order to settle who the teacher is, and what are his notes or token, rather than to substantiate this or that religious opinion or practice. And if such instance bear upon our conduct at this day, then the practical question before us it, who is the teacher now, from whose mouth we are to seek the law, and what are his notes» 112.

The school of Arnold, Jowett and Stanley would argue that man must rely on reason and not on what they considered outmoded superstition in order to arrive at the truth. One can trace clearly the development of these English intellectuals during the nineteenth century from theists to atheists. This came as a result of a basic misunderstanding of the right of private judgement and a reliance on the intellect in place of the traditional reliance on divine authority as expressed through the Church. Many centuries earlier St. Thomas Aquinas had written:

«In human investigation there is generally a mixture of falsehood on account of the weakness of our intellect in judging and therefore (if the intellect were left by itself)
many would remain in doubt, especially when they see that different opinions are maintained by various persons all of whom have a reputation for wisdom» 113.

In 1843, Newman delivered the last of his *University Sermons* which reads like a synthesis of the book he was about to write on the development of doctrine. At this point Newman surely already realized that his conversion to the Roman Church was not too many days away. He now openly refers to the Roman Church as Catholic and to the Protestants, including the Anglicans as heretics. «The badge of heresy, its dogmas are unfruitful, it has no theology... Deduct its remnants of Catholic theology and what remains? Polemics, protests, Biblical criticism... Heresy denies to the Church what is wanting in itself» 114. One senses a certain bitterness in his rejection after so many years of loyalty to the Anglicans, only to find that he had been deceived. The Anglican theology had become «words without meaning, and deductions which come to nothing... private opinions which if individuals will hold for themselves, at least they have no right to impose on others» 115.

In February of 1845 Newman begins the writing of his great work the *Development of Dogma*. At its finish he will call for a Catholic priest to hear his general confession and receive him into the Catholic Church. The book is important from our standpoint that it combines both a theological and more importantly a historical attack on Protestantism and its legitimate offspring Liberalism. At the same time he develops a theory to reconcile the gradual evolving of Catholic dogma with its role as the guaranteed truth of God. Right from the beginning he argues with those that hold «Christianity does not fall within the province of history — that it is to each man what each man thinks it to be, and nothing else» 116. Newman contends instead that «To be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant» 117. As a result of the readings of the Fathers and the heretical character of the Anglican Church, Newman ceased to be a Protestant and became Catholic.

He now accused Liberalism, a philosophy already espoused by

113. *Contra Gentiles*, Ch. IV, n. 3.
114. *WARD, M., op. cit.*, 353.
115. *Ibid*.
the majority of the educated world, of deliberate distortion of philosophy and history in order to «prove» its principles. «The assailants of dogmatic truth have got the start of the adherents of whatever creed, philosophy is completing what criticism has begun. Already infidelity has its views and conjectures to which it arranges the facts of ecclesiastical history» 118. Newman here forsees the coming of Comtian positivism, the evolutionism of Darwin and many other philosophies that will encourage the spread of unbelief.

There remains no middle ground for Newman. He would have agreed wholeheartedly with the Chesterton dictum that there are no new ideas, «the doctrines of heresy are accidental and soon run to an end, its principles are everlasting» 119. His study of the Fathers and later of Medieval Church history encouraged by Froude show clearly that the same principles appear again and again only to be repeatedly condemned, if necessary, by the Church. The unique problem of our age is that the errors have become so widespread through the means of communication, universal education etc. that simple condemnation, although necessary, is not enough to snuff out the pernicious heresies. We have reached a point where, to quote a Father of the Church, many «speak Scripture without a sense of Scripture and profess a faith without faith» 120.

He concludes the book and his Anglican life with a statement of the Liberal Philosophy that he denounces as irredeemable, seeing that it is the very Anglican Church once so loved that nourishes it.

«That truth and falsehood in religion are but matters of opinion, that one doctrine is as good as another, that the Governor of the world does not intend that we should gain the truth, that there is no truth, that we are no more acceptable to God, by believing this than by believing that, that no one is answerable for his opinions, that they are matters of necessity or accident, that it is enough if we sincerely hold what we profess, that our merit lies in seeking not possessing, that it is a duty to follow what seems to be true, without a fear lest it not be true, that it may be a gain to succeed, and can be no harm to fail, that we may take up and lay down opinion at pleasure,

119. Ibid.
119. Ibid., 182.
120. Ibid., 304.
that belief belongs to the mere intellect and not to the heart, that we may safely trust to ourselves in matters of faith, and need no other guide — this is the principle of philosophies and heresies, which is its very weakness» 121.

These false opinions sound so familiar to us of the twentieth century that they are not at all shocking. But Newman foresaw and analyzed all this long before these ideas were to capture the greater part of the western world. Indifferentism was to triumph and Newman saw the Rock upon which Christ built his Church as the only refuge where he could find salvation — and the only safe place from which to continue the struggle, not to end until his death.

I will conclude this chapter with an examination of several of Newman’s statements concerning his adversaries and the cause of his fall as the head of the Oxford Movement. In September of 1843 he resigned the living of St. Mary’s and began the process of throwing off the accoutrements of an Anglican clergyman. Commenting on his resignation he says, «I found no fault with the Liberals, they have beaten me in a fair field... the men who had driven me from Oxford were distinctly the Liberals. It was they who had opened the attack on Tract Ninety, and it was they who would gain a second benefit if I went on to retire from the Anglican Church. As I have already said, there are but two alternatives, the way to Rome, and the way to Atheism: Anglicanism is the halfway house on one side, and Liberalism is the halfway house on the other» 122. So at the end of his Anglican life he had deduced that Liberalism leads almost inevitably to Atheism. And what is the ultimate cause of this Atheism? Newman tells us that «three centuries ago the establishment of religion material, legal, and social was generally adopted as the best expedient for the purpose in those countries which separated from the Catholic Church and for a long time it was successful, but now the crevices of these establishments are admitting the enemy, the «wild, living intellect of man» 123. Thus Liberalism ultimately arises from pride, the resistance of man to the authority of God.

Finally, Newman writing many years later in his Apologia

121. Ibid., 357.
122. Apo., 184.
123. Ibid., 335.
looking back on his battles as an Anglican points out the development of Liberalism since those days.

«The Liberalism which gives a colour to society now is very different from that character of thought which bore the name thirty or forty years ago. It is scarcely now a party, it is the educated world. When I was young I knew the word first as giving name to a periodical set up by Lord Byron and others. Afterwards, Liberalism is the badge of a theological school, of a dry and repulsive character, not very dangerous in itself, though dangerous in opening the door to evil which it did not itself anticipate or comprehend. Now it is nothing else than that deep plausible skepticism of which I spoke above, as being the development of human reason, as practically exercised by the natural man» 124.

CONCLUSIONS

To trace the development of Newman’s thought regarding religious liberalism during his Anglican life has been a difficult but rewarding task. Although the development is pain-staking it never lacks lucidity nor continuity. We watched as Newman first struggled with Liberalism as an alien force attacking the Anglican Church from outside and then gradually awakening to the reality that the religious Liberalism inside the Anglican Church was an endogenous but arrested development of the Reformation of which the Anglicans were an offspring. What led Newman to finally take refuge in the Catholic Church was the realization as an active warrior in the battle against Liberalism that he had been unwittingly acting as a kind of double agent as long as he remained with the Anglicans, a Protestant Church.

My intent in the first part of the thesis was to organize the thought of Newman on religious liberalism. That he was among the first both to recognize the ideology and analyze it there is little doubt. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of his discovery is that it is done by a former Evangelical who spent the early part

124. Ibid., 335.
of his life in the highly stratified atmosphere of a religious Oxford. At the same time in Europe writers such as Bonald and Maistre were also beginning their own examinations of the problem but from a different perspective that included a resurgent Catholic Church after the Napoleonic era and recurring revolutions.

The Liberalism that Newman was facing was much more insidious and perhaps more deadly; the type of Liberalism that was to spread in the Anglo-Saxon world was by no means so openly atheistic or revolutionary. As in the mid-Sixteenth Century, the English people changed rapidly almost without realizing it. In the sixteenth century the change was from Catholicism to Protestantism, the nineteenth, from Protestantism to a liberal secularism. The latter change took place precisely because the Anglican Church, excepting some members of the Oxford Movement, was unable to react due to the heretical principles buried though hidden in its very foundation. The fact that the Anglican Church rejected its greatest thinker and religious genius was the ultimate proof of its base origins.

Perhaps what makes this thesis of particular value is that it shows that Newman's original perception of Liberalism, its roots and its future, are not outdated. Repeatedly during my reading I was struck by the similarities that exist between his era and our own. Many of the passages quoted in the text could be used to describe some of the excesses that the Church has suffered during the unfortunate postconciliar age. Naturally, his foresight regarding the development of Biblical criticism, modern philosophy, and the breakdown of morals are very noticeable. A thesis well worth the writing would be on an exact correlation of Newman's analysis of the future as applied to the Catholic Church and Protestant sects.

The secondary purpose of the thesis was to show the intimate connection between Newman's conversion to the Roman Church and his headlong flight from Liberalism. He sought a Church where heresy could not have a permanent home and he found that in Rome. I have already quoted in the text Newman's comment that it is a fear of heresy at home that drives people to Rome and not a particular love. This insight may also give us a key for understanding his later battles as a Catholic against the extreme ultramontane tendencies inside the Vatican I Church. Newman was always very faithful to the Church with a great love and respect for the Pope but at the same time he had a great admiration for the national
traits of the Church and the importance of being in, if not of, the modern world.

His readings of the Fathers influenced him greatly as he relived the battles of Athanasius and Augustine against the heretics of their times. At the same time he had reverence for the important Anglican divines, above all for Bishop Laud and the Non-Jurours who also figured in his personal hagiography. But more than simple words, actions were involved in these struggles. We have seen that it is essential to look at the actions of Newman both in words and events to fully understand his vision. The vision remains but his response has given us an idea of his worth. And as his vision is so applicable both to his own period and the century following his death it may well be that apologetical and theological writings along with his actions may aid us in combatting the errors of the present day which appear similar, although developed, to those of his day.

I want to emphasize that we cannot simply view Newman as a cold philosophical analyst. He was a man of great sentiment and emotion and his complaint against Liberalism and the breakdown of the Anglican Church were felt in his heart as much as his head. Newman believed strongly in the union of body and soul in the whole man. His whole Anglican period was spent to use Carlyle’s eloquent phrase in a search for «true guidance in return for loving obedience». He saw this as man’s true need and it can only be truly satisfied in the Catholic Church.

Although I have placed stress on the development of Newman’s vision I should also point out its underlying coherence from the beginning. All of Newman’s critique stemmed from his deep belief and love of doctrine of the Church and this love was impressed supernaturally. Newman, like many of his close friends, could easily have fallen if it were not for God’s grace from his earliest years. «What I held in 1816, I held in 1833, and I hold in 1864. Please God, I shall hold it to the end» 125. In his later days Newman was to witness and to some extent participate in the conflict which he has seen emerging «It is very certain that neither Puritanism nor Liberalism has any permanent inheritance within her... It does but occupy the space between contending powers, Catholic Truth and Rationalism... Then indeed will be the stern encounter,

when the real and living principles, simple, entire and consistent, one in the Church, the other out of it, at length rush upon one another, contending not for names and words or half-views, but for elementary and distinctive moral characters. The conflict still has not been resolved and the history of the twentieth century bears witness to the ferocity of the conflict and its disastrous consequences for mankind.

The measure of the impact of Newman can in part be measured by his ever growing influence in our own day. There are few men who rise above their own time and place and promise to be remembered as long as the world exists. For when the great struggle ends and the truth triumphs as it must, the men of that generation will look back and declare that Newman was the first to recognize the ideology of Liberalism, define it and foresee its consequences.

He was a man entirely consistent in his belief and his behaviour. He devoted himself entirely to his cause, heart and mind, body and soul. He did not only preach «personal influence» but clearly practiced it through his friendships, preaching, classes, etc. One, after having examined his early life, gets the sense of a «superiority complex» i.e. he possessed the Truth and although many battles would be lost, and almost all of them were, felt that in the long run the truth of the Faith would inevitably prevail.

In his writings he began the life-long task of constructing an exposition of the faith that would explain the basis for belief in an increasingly sceptical nineteenth century. That this method has had some measure of success we may judge by the large following of his own day and by the fact that today more people than ever are reading and being affected by his work.

The forming of a popular religious movement based on Catholic dogmatic belief was a singular event in the nineteenth century and reflects Newman’s prodigious powers. Certainly England has not experienced anything similar since the founding of the Movement in 1833 and its long-lasting impact on the British and Anglo-Saxon world.

Thus we see that Newman’s response to Liberalism was based upon a never-changing, uncompromising principle. This principle was the ancient Catholic faith of England. Gradually Newman came to discover that this faith had ceased to exist in the Anglican
Church. Therefore from one viewpoint, it could be argued that all of Newman's controversies, books, editorships, etc. were for naught, at least from the viewpoint of restoring the Catholic truth to the Anglican Church. However all this work was to bear fruit in later life in the thousands of converts that Newman brought to the Church, directly by his tutelage, or indirectly through his writings and example, and the constant influence that Newman enjoys in the present day among people of all religious persuasions.

We can view, then, Newman's response to his vision of Liberalism as a preparation for the continuation of the struggle during the second half of his life as a Catholic. This vision and its response, with the indispensable aid of divine grace, led him by his conversion to a port of call where he was safe from the winds of doubt. In contrast, his Anglican years had more than their share of inner turmoil and conflict regarding his own religious opinions apart from his active public life.

I would hope that further research could be done on the continuation of the war with liberalism and the construction of a Catholic apologetic during his life after 1845. There is more than sufficient material to make the venture of interest. Another theme might also deal with the impact of his theological and apologetic thought on the documents of the Second Vatican Council. In the words of Pope Paul VI who presided over and closed the Council.

He (Newman) who was convinced of being faithful throughout his life, with all his heart devoted to the light of truth, today becomes an ever greater beacon for all who are seeking an informed orientation and sure guidance amidst the uncertainties of the modern world a world which he prophetically foresaw 127.

Newman's vision of Liberalism was thus commented upon by Rome. Perhaps those virtues which best explain the foundation for his recognition and struggle against liberalism are explained by the Holy Father John Paul II.

The inspiring thought of Newman's genius, which speaks to us of deep intellectual honesty, fidelity to conscience and grace, piety and priestly zeal, devotion to Christ's

127. PAUL VI, Insegnamenti, April 7, 1975, Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana.
Church and love of her doctrine, unconditional trust in divine providence and absolute obedience to the will of God.

Newman's response to liberalism encourages us of the twentieth century to rely on the same means that he used as an Anglican: personal sanctity and the use of all legitimate instruments in religious, political, and social life to spread the Faith and confound those who would destroy it. Only time will tell if we can encounter men such as Newman in our own age.

128. JOHN PAUL II; Ibid., April 7, 1979.
APPENDIX

GENERAL CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF
J. H. NEWMAN
1801-1890

1. THE YEARS 1801-1877:

1801
21 February: Born in Old Broad Street, London, the eldest of 6 children.
9 April: Baptized in the Anglican Church of St. Benet Fink.

1808
1 May: Starts school in Ealing.

1816
8 March: His father’s bank is closed.
August-December: Newman’s first conversion.
14 December: Enters Trinity College, Oxford, as a commoner.

1817
8 June: Comes into residence at Trinity College.
30 November: First Communion in the Church of England.

1818
13 May: Elected scholar of Trinity College.
4 November: Publishes, together with his friend J. W. Bowden, «St. Bartholomew’s Eve».

1820
5 December: B. A. degree.
1821
May: Letter to the Editor of the «British Critic»: on the analogous difficulties in mathematics and religion.
1 November: Newman’s father is declared bankrupt.

1822
12 April: Elected a Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford.
1 July: Whately gets Newman to assist him in preparing his articles on Logic for the Encyclopaedia Metropolitana.

1824
31 May: Finishes his article on «Cicero».
13 June: Ordained a deacon in Christ Church, Oxford.
23 June: His first sermon at Over Worton.
3 July: Interested in becoming a foreign missionary.
4 July: Starts pastoral work in St. Clement’s, Oxford.
29 September: His father dies.

1825
26 March: Becomes Vice-Principal of St Alban’s Hall, Oxford, under R. Whately.
29 May: Ordained priest of the Church of England in Christ Church, Oxford.
15 August: Starts his article on «Miracles».
9 September: Starts his article on «Apollonius».

1826
21 February: He resigns as curate of St Clement’s and Vice-Principal of St Alban’s in order to start as Tutor of Oriel College after Easter.
31 March: R. H. Froude and R. I. Wilberforce are elected Fellows of Oriel College.
May: Newman’s opposition to Dr. Hampden.
1 May: Decides to read the Fathers of the Church systematically.
2 July: His first University Sermon.
1828
5 January: His youngest sister, Mary, dies.
2 February: Becomes Vicar of St Mary the Virgin, the University Church in Oxford. Hawkins is elected Provost of Oriel College.

1829
First disagreement with Hawkins and Whately about the re-election of Peel in Parliament.

1830
Because of differences in principles between Hawkins and Newman, the latter has to resign his tutorship at Oriel College.

1831
Newman gives more time to his duties as Vicar of St Mary’s.

1832
December: He concludes his book «The Arians of the Fourth Century».
Sets out on a journey to the Mediterranean with R. H. Froude and his father, Archdeacon Froude.

1833
19 April: Newman returns to Sicily by himself and falls seriously ill.
16 June: On the boat from Palermo to Marseilles he writes «Lead Kindly Light».
14 July: Keble preaches in St. Mary’s Oxford, on «National Apostasy».
9 September: Newman publishes the first of the «Tracts for the Times» which spread the ideas of the Oxford Movement.

1834
March: The first volume of Newman’s «Parochial and
Plain Sermons» published. Newman starts a series of lectures in Adam de Brome’s Chapel in St. Mary’s, published as «The Prophetical Office of the Church» (1837) and «Lectures on Justification» (1838), and later republished as the «Via Media».

1835

Second volume of «Parochial and Plain Sermons» published.

1836

«Parochial and Plain Sermons III».
28 February: R. H. Froude dies of consumption. Newman has a Church built at Littlemore, a village which belongs to his parish.
27 April: Marriage of his sister Jemima to J. Mozley.
17 May: Newman’s mother dies.
27 September: Marriage of his sister Harriett to T. Mozley.

1838

Newman becomes editor of the «British Critic», a post which he holds until July 1841.

1839

Summer: «Parochial and Plain Sermons IV».
Newman reads Wiseman’s article in Dublin Review about St. Augustino, and the Donatists. First doubts about Anglicanism.

1840

«Parochial and Plain Sermons V».

1841

25 January: Tract 90 published. This tract is censured by the University and causes a great deal of alarm. At the request of the Bishop of Oxford no further tracts are published.

September: Newman retires to Littlemore, where he resides until February 1846.
1842

«Parochial and Plain Sermons VI».

1843

Summer: Newman is clear about his situation: his doubt about the Church of England is greater than his doubt about the Roman Church.

18 September: He resigns from St. Mary's.


1844

September: Finishes the translation of the «Select Treatises of St. Athanasius in controversy with the Arians».


1845


3 October: He resigns his fellowship at Oriel College.

9 October: He is received into the Roman Catholic Church by Fr. Dominic Barberi, the Italian Passionist.

1 November: Confirmed by Dr. Wiseman in Oscott.

1846

22 February: He leaves Littlemore for Maryvale, Old Oscott, offered to him by Dr. Wiseman.

September: Leaves England for Rome where he will prepare for the priesthood.

1847

January: Decides to become an Oratorian.

30 May: Ordination for the priesthood.
1848
1 February: Foundation of the first Oratory in England, Maryvale.
The novel «Loss and Gain» published.

1849
2 February: Opens the Oratory in Alcester Street, Birmingham.

1850
22 August: Pope Pius IX confers an honorary degree of divinity on Newman.
Summer: Lectures in London: «Certain Difficulties felt by Anglicans in submitting to the Catholic Church».
October: Wiseman announces the Restoration of the Hierarchy in England, which causes a strong reaction among Anglicans.

1851
Lectures in Birmingham: «On the Present Position of Catholics in England». In the 5th lecture he denounces the ex-priest Achilli and as a consequence is sued for libel.
5 November: The long Achilli trial starts.
12 November: Newman is nominated the first Rector of the Catholic University of Ireland.

1852
January: Difficulties in the London Oratory.
February: The Oratorians in Birmingham move from Alcester Street to Edgbaston.
10 May: Newman delivers his first university lecture in Dublin, later in the year published together with others as «Discourses on the Nature and Scope of University Education».
13 July: Newman preaches «The Second Spring» for
the first Synod since the Restoration of the Hierarchy in England.

1853
31 January: The end of the Achilli Trial: Newman loses it and is fined £ 100.
22 November: The Oratory Church in Birmingham opened.

1854
3 November: The University in Dublin opened.

1855
Summer: Newman publishes his second novel «Calista».
Autumn: The difficulties with the London Oratory result in a separation of both houses.

1856
1 May: The University Church in Dublin, dedicated to the Apostles Peter and Paul, opened.

1857
March: Newman informs the Irish Bishops that he wants to resign as Rector of the University on November 14th. They ask him to remain for another year as non-resident Rector.
August: Wiseman informs Newman that the supervision of a new translation of the Bible is to be entrusted to him. However, because of the division between the London and the Birmingham Oratory, the plan was not to be realized.

1859
21 March: Newman takes over as editor of the «Rambler» in order to prevent a censure by the Hierarchy. After the July issue with the article «On consulting the faithful in matters of doctrine» he is requested to resign.
2 May: Foundation of the Oratory School.
1864
January: Charles Kingsley states in an article that truth for its own sake had never been a virtue with the Catholic Clergy and refers to Newman as having affirmed this. Newman starts a correspondence with Charles Kingsley.

April-June: Newman’s answer to Kingsley: “Apologia pro vita sua”.

1865
May-June: “The Dream of Gerontius”.

1866
January: “A letter to Pusey on occasion of his recent Eirenicon”.
25 December: Propaganda Fide gives permission to found an Oratory at Oxford, a postscriptum however mentions that Newman should not take up residence there. The Oxford plan in dropped.

1870

1875
14 January: “A letter to the Duke of Norfolk, in answer to Gladstone’s accusation that Catholics are not loyal subjects of the State”.
24 May: Death of Ambrose St. John, Newman’s most faithful friend.

2. 1878-1879: THE CARDINALATE:

1878
7 February: Death of Pope Pius IX.
20 February: Election of Pope Leo XIII.
26-28 February: Newman visits Oxford for the first time since 1846 and he is a guest of Trinity College.
which made him its first Honorary Fellow. Soon after the election of Pope Leo XIII rumours spread that Newman would be made a Cardinal. Newman himself was not yet informed that English Catholic laymen had petitioned this in Rome.

27 December:

Newman thanks Margaret Dunn, who was received in audience by Pope Leo XIII and was presented to the Pope as a penitent of Newman's.

Pope Leo XIII inquired about Newman and showed a great interest in him. He sent his Apostolic Blessing to Newman, through Margaret Dunn, as well as an autographed card.

1879

Newman receives through Cardinal Manning and Bishop Ullathorne the news that the Cardinalate is offered to him.

Newman sends an official answer to Cardinal Manning, stating that his sole difficulty in accepting this offer consists in the residence in Rome, but he adds that he does not think it the Holy Father's intention to call him to Rome. Bishop Ullathorne endorses this by a letter of his in which he asks permission for Newman to remain in Birmingham.

Cardinal Manning sends Newman's letter, but not Ullathorne's, to the Cardinal Secretary of State. Bishop Ullathorne sends an even more explicit letter to Cardinal Manning. Nevertheless the rumour is spread that the Cardinalate has been offered to Newman and that he has declined.

Cardinal Manning writes to the Duke of Norfolk stating that Newman has declined the Cardinalate.

15 March:

The Cardinal Secretary of State sends Newman to the official announcement of his elevation to the Cardinalate.
16 April: Newman starts his journey to Rome.
27 April: Newman has his first audience with Pope Leo XIII.
12 May: Newman receives the «Biglietto» of the Cardinal Secretary of State in which it is announced to him that, that same morning, during a secret consistory, he had been elevated to the Cardinalate. Newman answers giving his «Biglietto Speech».
12 May: Newman goes to the Vatican in order to receive the cardinal’s biretta from Pope Leo XIII.
15 May: During the public consistory Newman receives, together with the other newly nominated Cardinals, the red hat.
1 July: Newman returns to Birmingham.

3. 1880-1890: The last years:

1880
May: Newman visits Oxford and Trinity College again.
Two sermons preached in the Church of St. Aloysius, Oxford, on Trinity Sunday, 1880, and printed for private circulation.

1881
February: Select treatises of St. Athanasius in controversy with the Arians (2nd ed.).
26 June: Cardinal Newman preaches at the London Oratory.

1882
Prologue to the Andria of Terence (in Latin) «Notes of a visit to the Russian Church in the year 1841-1844», by William Palmer, selected and arranged by Cardinal Newman.
1883

«Via Media».

1884

February: What is the obligation of a Catholic to believe concerning the inspiration of the canonical Scripture? Being a postscript to an article in the «Nineteenth Century Review», in answer to Professor Healy, (Stray Essays).

1885

October: The development of religious error: Contemporary Review.

1886

Newman’s health begins to fail.

1889

25 December: Newman celebrates Holy Mass for the last time.

1890

According to Father Neville, when Newman found himself unable to celebrate Mass any more, he learnt by heart a Mass of the Blessed Virgin and a Mass of the Dead.

One or other of these Masses he repeated daily, whole or part, and with the due ceremonies, for the chance that he hoped for, since his sight and strength varied, that with the brighter sunlight of the spring he might some day find himself in condition to say Mass once again. He was determined, he said, that no want of readiness on his part should cause him to miss the opportunity should it occur. He continued this preparation until within two or three days of his death.

10 August: He receives the last sacraments.

11 August: Death of Newman.

19 August: Newman is buried in Rednal near Birmingham, in the Oratorian graveyard.
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