revelation. It is under this sky and in this sunlight I would have you learn how to think. Confine not your thoughts in the narrow cell of a petty prejudice, or the slough of indolence, or the contracted limits of comfort and ease, when you can roam through the free air of the Infinite. Therefore, discipline your minds. Be not too credulous. There is a wise as well as a foolish skepticism. Science has her superstitions, and her romancings are as unreal and shadowy as those of the most ephemeral literature. Accustom yourselves to the habit of weighing carefully all you read or hear. Be not carried away by every novelty. Learn to sift the chaff from the grain. Remember that he is not the most learned man who has read the greatest number of books. Only in proportion as you digest and assimilate to your own thoughts what you read do you acquire genuine knowledge. Out of the world's thousand ideas make a single one your own, and I assure you that you will have made more intellectual progress than if you were able to repeat Homer or Milton from memory.

CHAPTER III.

EMERSON AND NEWMAN AS TYPES.

I.

1. THAT we may all the better understand the nature and scope of sound thinking, let us consider two typical thinkers of recent days, dwelling in different hemispheres of our globe, standing at opposite poles of human thought, and at the same time recognized masters of their own language. They both possessed this in common, that each was retiring, sensitive, shrinking from mere notoriety, not over-anxious to speak, and speaking only when each had something to say. They were loved in life, and in death their memories are revered by all who knew them; they are still admired by thousands and still misunderstood by thousands more.

2. One of these thinkers is Ralph Waldo Emerson. His was a mind like the Æolian harp. It was awake to the most delicate impressions, and at every breath of thought it gave out a music all its own. His sympathies with Nature were so strong, so intense, so real, that they seemed to take root with the plant, to infuse themselves into the brute creation, and to think and act with his fellow-man. His reading was broad. From the East and from

the West he gathered the sweets of all philosophic systems and all literatures, and in the laboratory of his brain wrought them into his own peculiar honey-comb of thought and expression. The deeper realities of life he overlooked. Those chasms that reveal whatever is revolting in life's squalor and misery, those seamy sides which Tolstoï and Ibsen place before us, were ignored by Emerson. His intellectual vision was too near-sighted to perceive them. A thing, be it an institution, or a custom, or a habit, exists; that suffices for Emerson; it must therefore be good, and useful, and beautiful in its own way. He is a passionate lover of the beautiful; he would reduce all morality to a code of æsthetics. Beauty of thought, beauty of expression, beauty of action, beauty of manners, — these are the outcome of his philosophy. Supreme culture is for him supreme human perfection.

3. However, we must not forget that Emerson is a thinker who has learned how to assimilate the best thoughts of the best writers and make them fructify in his own mind. His lines of thought are narrow, but he thinks on them intensely. Not infrequently his language only half expresses that which his mind labors to give utterance to. Some of his assertions are riddles. He speaks with the mysteriousness of the Sphinx. "We use semblances of logic," he tells us, "until experience puts us in possession of real logic."[1] Wherefore he disdains argument. He will not reason with you. He is

[1] *Letters and Social Aims*, p. 9.

content to throw out the hint or the suggestion; you may take it or leave it. He never obtrudes his views upon you. None the less does he pose as a thinker and a prophet. He is the Sir Oracle of Transcendentalism. But on life and death and immortality, Emerson is no wiser than the books he consults; nay, not as wise as some.

4. Unfortunately for Emerson and the value of his utterances, he ignores the supernatural in man. His view of religion is that religion is a merely human institution. He is tolerant only in certain directions. He has never acquired the large-sightedness that is expected from a man of his culture. Let him expatiate on the Nature he loves, on society, on manners, on experience, on representative men, on letters and social aims, and he is admirable, suggestive, original; but once he descends to concrete living issues, we find only the lifeless bones of intolerance dressed up with the time-worn garments of New England puritanical prejudices. I hold this truly eminent writer and thinker up to the reader that the reader may learn both from his strength and his weakness. One can no more make a model of his mind than one can of his style. He is in some respects a law unto himself. The secret of his success lies in this: that he does not isolate a thought; he studies its relations as far as his intellectual vision ranges.

5. Emerson had other limitations. He sought truth in every religious and philosophical system outside of the teachings of the Catholic Church. He attempted to embrace all systems, showing

thereby that he understood none. In vain is he read for a consistent moral code or a complete philosophic creed; groping through his books one not infrequently finds shadow taken for substance, dream for reality, Emerson for truth. Whole worlds of thought lie hidden from his vision as they stand enveloped within the umbra of Self projected into intellectual space. Still, his side-views and his half-utterances are suggestive. The reading of him with understanding is a mental tonic, bracing for the cultured intellect as is the Alpine air for the mountaineer. Could one imbibe his sympathy for Nature without becoming imbued with his pantheism; could one acquire his culture without the dilettanteism that accompanies it; could one make his love for the beautiful in all shapes and under all conditions one's own, — looking above all beyond the mere surface into the deeper and more spiritual beauty of things, — one would be learning a valuable lesson from Emerson's intellectual life.

II.

1. Now that we have had a glimpse of the inner chambers of Emerson's mind, let us study another type of thinker, that we may in admiration, and at a distance, and each in his own sphere, to the best of his ability, follow in the footsteps of this master. He is one whose word carries weight wherever the English language is known. His name is revered by the studious of all classes and of every creed; and it is so because he was, during the whole course

of a long life, thoroughly honest in the expression of his convictions. He did not understand the art of special pleading; he never learned the trick of covering up disagreeable truths or removing out of sight a fact calculated to tell against him. Endowed with an intellect one of the most acute ever bestowed upon man, and well disciplined by severe study and profound meditation, it was his delight to grapple with difficulties. That mind so ingenious and searching never rested till it found the basis of an opinion, or struck the central idea of a system. It is often a source of wonder to me how much patient, earnest thought its eminent possessor must have brought to bear upon an idea before he could see it in so many lights, view it in such different relations, and place it before the reader in all the nakedness of truth. But this is one of the characteristics of great thinkers, and such preeminently was John Henry, Cardinal Newman.

2. It was in 1877 that I first met Newman in the bare, modest parlor of the Birmingham Oratory, and I need scarcely add that that meeting is one of the most precious incidents in my life. I thought the very simplicity of that parlor was in keeping with the greatness of the man. Tinsel, or decoration, or an air of worldliness would have jarred with the simple, unassuming ways of the noble soul I met there. He had then lately returned from his beloved Oxford, where his Alma Mater, Trinity College, did herself an honor and him an act of tardy justice in inducting him as Honorary Fellow This veteran knight of natural

and revealed truth looked old and worn; his hair was blanched; his features were furrowed with the traces of age. His manners were gentle and condescending. His voice was soft and beautiful in its varied modulations, — now serious, now playful, according to the subject he spoke upon. With the most exquisite tact he listened or placed his remark as the case required. There was a charm in his conversation. As it flowed along placid and pleasant, his countenance glowed with a nameless expression; his eyes sparkled, and he spoke with all the strength and clearness of a man whose intellectual vigor is still unimpaired. I was not half an hour in his presence when I felt the spell of that irresistible personal influence which he swayed through life, whether within the walls of Oriel, or from the Protestant pulpit of St. Mary's, or in the retirement of the Oratory. I then understood the power that shook the Anglican Church to its very basis three and thirty years previously. In 1889 I again met this venerable leader of men; within him faintly flickered that brilliant intellectual light that had been the beacon and the comfort of so many souls groping through the mists of doubt and error. As Cardinal he was the same cheerful, pleasant, unassuming man that he had been as plain John Henry Newman. Gladly would I limn for the reader the dear, sweet face, so genial and gentle and serene, that ever haunts me; describe the voice, so feeble and yet so soft and mellow, that continues to reverberate in my ear; catch the genial gleam of those eyes that I still behold with their far-away

look, as though peering into another world and communing with some invisible person.

3. Though endowed with the delicate sensibility of the poet, Cardinal Newman never permitted sentiment or feeling or inclination or confirmed habit to control or divert the severe logic of his noble reason. See, for instance, the caution with which he took the most important step in his long career. For years inclination and grace and the logic of his mind had been leading him into the Catholic Church, but he makes no move that is not first sanctioned by reason and conscience.[1] His sympathies have gone forth to her long before proof or argument points out the way; but he holds aloof till reason becomes convinced.[2] He even keeps others for years from entering her Communion.[3] And whilst writing a book in favor of that Church he does not yet make up his mind to become a member; he reserves to himself the chance of changing his views after the whole argumentative process influencing him has been placed before him in writing.[4] In all this he is acting sincerely and in

[1] "I had no right, I had no leave, to act against my conscience." *Apologia*, 2d ed. p. 150. "All the logic in the world would not have made me move faster towards Rome than I did." *Ibid.* p. 169.

[2] May 5, 1841, he writes: "That my *sympathies* have grown towards the religion of Rome I do not deny; that my *reasons* for *shunning* her communion have lessened or altered it would be difficult perhaps to prove. And I wish to go by reason, not by feeling." *Ibid.* p. 189.

[3] "I kept some of them back for several years from being received into the Catholic Church." *Ibid.* p. 177.

[4] Lastly, during the last half of that tenth year (1844) I was

good faith. Protestants question his honesty; Catholics fear he may be trifling with grace; but none the less he waits and prays, and the truth grows upon him from the gray of dawn to the full light of day. Never for a single moment did he falter through the whole course of the long and painful struggle; from first to last he acted according to his lights; God respected the earnest endeavor and blessed it and crowned it with the grace of conversion. I repeat it, it is this strict and chivalric adherence to truth at all times and under all circumstances that won him the profound respect and admiration of Christendom. He disciplined his mind into the habit of seeing things as they are and of expressing them as he saw them, till it had become an impossibility for him to do otherwise.

4. His is a mind well worth our study. Its logical acuteness was something marvelous. Its analyzing power was searching and exhaustive. Its introspection seemed to be all-seeing. He understood so well the checks and limitations of the human intellect that he was never satisfied to accept an idea for the reasons on its face. Like Emerson, he regarded verbal logic as a mere provisional scaffolding. He went behind the formal demonstration to what he considered the far more powerful motives of credibility. The syllogism says not all. The real convincing and abiding reasons on which a proposition is accepted as true are beyond either the premises or the conclusion. "As to Logic," he remarks, "its chain of conclusions hangs loose at both ends; both the point from which the proof should start and the points at which it should arrive are beyond its reach; it comes short both of first principles and of concrete issues."[1] Besides all this there are undercurrents of sentiment and inclination, associations of ideas, obscure memories, half confessed motives, probabilities, popular impressions that determine the frame of mind and the tone of thought, and they all of them enter into his calculations. "And such mainly is the way," he tells us, "in which all men, gifted or not gifted, commonly reason, — not by rule, but by an inward faculty."[2]

engaged in writing a book (*Essay on Development*) in favor of the Roman Church, and indirectly against the English; but even then, till it was finished, I had not absolutely intended to publish it, wishing to reserve to myself the chance of changing my mind when the argumentative views which were actuating me had been distinctly brought out before me in writing." *Ibid.* p. 186.

5. Newman was not viewy as was Emerson. He abhorred vagueness. He thought in the concrete. He lived in a clearly defined world of his own. He had his own point of view and his own charming manner of clothing a truth, but he was always careful to make allowance for the personal element that might refract his vision or deflect his inference. His advice to a writer reveals one of the secrets of that giant-like strength which he displayed in controversy, and with which he so effectually overwhelmed his opponents: "Be sure you grasp fully any view which you seek to combat, and leave no room for doubt about your own mean-

[1] *Grammar of Assent*, chap. viii. § i.

[2] *Oxford University Sermons*, xiii. 7, p. 257, 3d ed.

ing."[1] A mind recognizing all these elements of thought and coördinating them, and giving each its value and position, is the highest ideal of a well-thinking mind that I can place before the reader. But I have not yet said all.

6. Cardinal Newman's mind is above all a religious mind. Religion is for him a reality, — an intense reality; it is a sacred tunic clothing all his thoughts and making them holy and earnest; it is an essential part of his existence; it is the life of his life. And this is not simply the religion of sentiment or of the mere viewiness of doctrine and dogma, but religion based upon clear-cut doctrines and well-defined principles. At the age of fifteen we find him resting "in the thought of two and two only supreme and luminously self-evident beings," himself and his Creator.[2] From that age, he tells us in one of those revelations of himself that light up his soul and show the man, "dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion: I know no other religion; I cannot enter into the idea of any other sort of religion; religion, as a mere sentiment, is to me a dream and a mockery. As well can there be filial love without the fact of a father, as devotion without the fact of a Supreme Being."[3] Here is the central thought of Cardinal Newman's intellect. All thoughts, all issues group around that one idea. Every sermon, every essay,

[1] Letter to W. S. Lilly, *Fortnightly Review*, September, 1890.

[2] *Apologia*, p. 49, ed. 1882. London: Longmans, Green, Reader & Dyer.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 96.

every treatise of the eight and thirty volumes penned by his hand, reveals a soul ever questioning, ever struggling with difficulties, ever solving to itself the problems and issues of the day, ever arranging and rearranging in clear, well-defined order its own views and opinions; and all for one object and with one result, that of harmonizing them with the teachings of religion. The thoughts and questionings and theories against which other strong and well-equipped intellects struggled only to be made captives of irreligion and agnosticism, he also wrestled with and became their master, each new effort giving him additional strength; and finally, his laurels won, and looking out upon the intellectual struggles of the day with the repose of a warrior who had been in the fight and had come out of it a victor, he passed away in his ninetieth year, enshrined in a halo of veneration.[1]

[1] The student desirous of understanding the philosophical phase of Newman's mind and method should read the following works in this order: 1. *Apologia.* 2. *Oxford University Sermons.* 3. *Doctrinal Developments.* 4. *Grammar of Assent.* This book restates and coördinates on a more scientific basis the principles discussed in the *University Sermons.* 5. *Idea of a University.*

The spiritual phase of his mind may be traced in his *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, and his *Sermons to Mixed Congregations.*

The purely literary phase of his mind is best illustrated in his *Present Position of Catholics in England*, *Loss and Gain*, *Callista*, and *The Dream of Gerontius.*