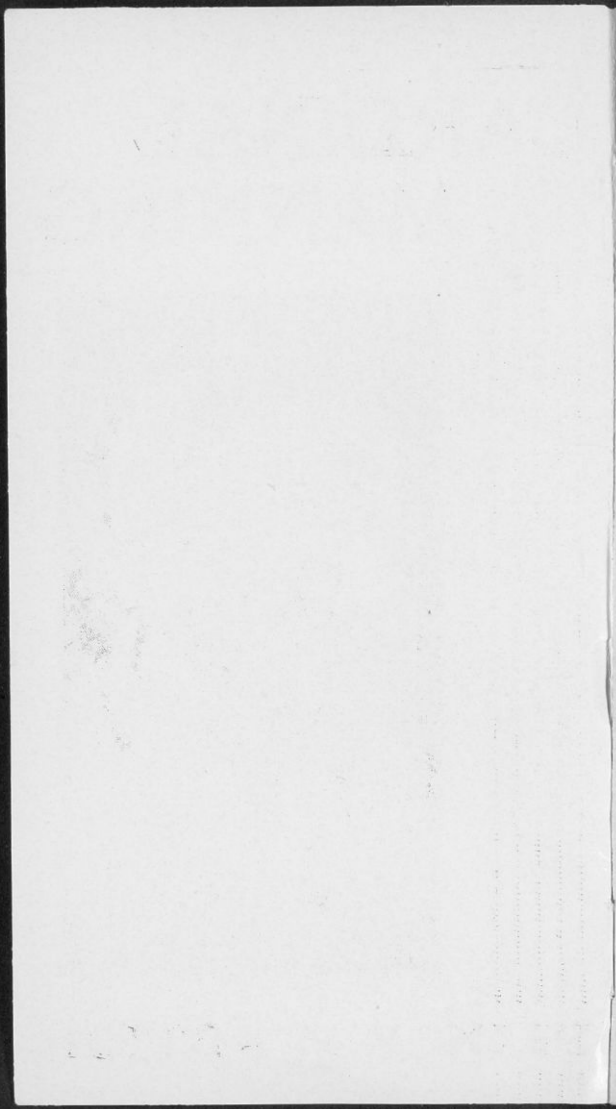


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CARDINAL MANNING



PRINCE *of* ACTION



CARDINAL
MANNING



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OF
ACTION

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Our Lady of Mercy Church
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THE FOREWORD

The name of John Henry Newman dominated the horizon of nineteenth century religious England. Had he never lived, the influence of Henry Manning would have loomed immeasurably greater. As things were, the lustre of Manning dulled against the meteoric effulgence that was Newman's.

However, the comparison between these contemporaries is a matter of dispute. Arthur Hutton was personally acquainted with both of them. From this vantage point, as well as from his undisputed place in the world of letters, Hutton speaks authoritatively. His being closely allied to the Oxford Movement without becoming absorbed by it, makes his statement valuable.

"It was the singular fortune of Cardinal Manning," he said, "that after nearly twenty years of active and honored service within the Church of England, he should enjoy in the course of some forty years, no less active and honored service. It has further been his lot to make a mark on the religious history of his country, greater, perhaps, than that made by Newman, though he had none of the

latter's genius, none of his critical power, none of his poetic sensitiveness, nor that singular magnetic personality which sometimes fascinated and sometimes repelled. Still he possessed and exercised the qualifications of a leader; and the extraordinary change in the position of the Roman Church during the last thirty years may be ascribed, so far as it can be ascribed to the exertions of any one man, to Manning's skillful guidance and unremitting toil."

It is a splendid tribute, demanding a closer study of the man. Henry Manning has suffered more at the hands of men who never knew him than from his contemporaries. Perhaps, it was the presence of another genius that betrayed Manning's memory. Churches, orphanages, ecclesiastical edifices, progress in the externals of religion, lose the stamp of their initiators and are soon confused in the general march of the Church. Intellectual cathedrals are different. "The Apologia", "The Development of the Doctrine", "The Idea of a University" are monuments that defy time. They will never lose the imprint of their creator.

So, in the retrospect, Manning is dwarfed in comparison with Newman. But while he lived he wielded tremendous influence. His cardinalate, no doubt, marked the zenith of the Catholic revival in England, as his dynamic energy forged the driving force behind the Church's resurrection.

I am encouraged to outline Manning's life for two reasons. The first centers about the genial editor of a priest's magazine. He recently lectured before a convert's league in Chicago. Before his conversion to Catholicism, he had been a prominent Episcopalian minister. Now, as a Catholic priest, he told us surprising facts about his earlier life. For years he had preached, from his Anglican pulpit, a Catholic doctrine, using unwittingly Rome as his authority. One particular Sunday, he had delivered a sermon on the Immaculate Conception of Mary, while his neighbor hard by was trying to prove that Christ was the natural Son of Joseph. Their bishop, hearing of their unorthodox subjects, sent for them and reproved them gently.

"You are both heretics; but I cannot touch either of you." Such

lack of unity and authority was enough to convince our friend, the heretic, that his position was untenable.

It struck me that his conversion was a miniature copy of Manning's. His merely standing there, a priest, against the background of a sincere Protestant ministry, presented a telling argument for the reasonableness of the Church. It is hoped that a portrait of another minister will stimulate the same emotions.

Aside from this, there is a personal reason. A similar biography of Cardinal Newman had the good fortune of bringing a non-Catholic into the Church. Something in the mere outline of a life furnished her with a proof for Catholicity. Perhaps one other will see in Manning's life the same solution of a religious problem.

This is written for such a one.

CARDINAL MANNING

Prince of Action

Henry Manning was born July 15, 1808, in Totteridge, Herfordshire, England. His father was wealthy, being a director of the Bank of England. So young Henry's boyhood was untroubled. Riding, shooting, boating and cricket were second nature to him. He never lost his keenness for sport. As a dignified old Cardinal, he often told with surprising enthusiasm, of the triumphs of his rough and tumble adolescence which left him according to his friends, "good looking, indolent and popular."

When he was nineteen, he was sent to Balliol College, Oxford. The grave traditions of the school failed to impress the dashing young man's temperament, but his innate oratory combined with his gift for argument soon made him the leading debater of his class, a class which harbored no less a personality than Gladstone.

In 1831 the Manning fortune collapsed. So Henry secured work in the Colonial offices. His career in diplomacy seemed marked out

while Gladstone seemed destined for the Church. A queer trick of fortune reversed the picture. In 1832 Manning decided to study for the ministry, feeling the mysterious twitching of a vocation. When he returned to Oxford for his degree, his friends welcomed back a very serious student indeed. They agreed that any which way he turned he would succeed.

Is Ordained and Married

He was ordained soon afterwards, receiving a living in Lavington, in Sussex. The following year found him courting and subsequently marrying Caroline Sargent. She was "young and beautiful". But the ravages of a constitutional disease blighted the dreams of the pair. She died childless after four years of married life.

Years later the Archbishop of Westminster was reminded to his embarrassment about these early days when he would sit by her grave writing his sermons. As things were, Christendom would have been embarrassed had God not taken the frail young wife. Delicate as she was, her presence would have been a stumbling block

to her husband's future greatness. As a Catholic, he would perhaps have lived and died a layman, amidst musty books and colonial reports.

Manning, saddened and alone, threw himself into parish work. The air was portentous, charged with Tractarianism. He was influenced perceptibly by the "Tracts of the Times", which, at the moment, were cannonading the country. The names of Newman, Froude and Pusey were magic words. Imagine the consternation of smug old England at hearing from these men that the Church had been enslaved by the secular power and degraded by the faked doctrine of Protestantism. Behind it all, peered the face of the master mind who had fallen in love with the ancient Church. His pen was dipped in the romance of the middle ages, his words leaped forth like a broadsword from its scabbard to cleave open contradictions and doubt.

Henry Manning in his village rectory saw that face and caught those words of Newman. They stirred him strangely, although the two scarcely spoke in life. Manning was to call him "the

master-builder, to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for intellectual help and light greater than to any (other) one man of our time". No doubt, he was haunted by Newman's demand for unity as a prime necessity of the true Church. It became a fetish with the promising young clergyman as is evident from his first published sermon in which he bemoans the tragedy that "for three hundred years men have seemed to sicken at the very name of unity".

Manning became Archdeacon of Chichester before his thirty-second birthday. It was a splendid promotion. Supervision over the parishes of his district lent him deserved prestige. He was beginning to forge ahead. He was appointed select preacher at Oxford. It was said that only three men could fill St. Mary's a week day afternoon, Newman, Goulburn and Manning. There came talk of his becoming bishop. All in all, the genial, brilliant Archdeacon was a success.

Turned Away by Newman

About this time he delivered a violent tirade against Rome from the pulpit which Newman had just vacated. A few days later he

called on Newman who was in retirement in Littlemore at grips with his own religious difficulties. Manning was refused entrance. The report of his sermon had preceded him. Manning strolled back to Oxford stung to the quick. No doubt the vision of a closed door came before the aged primate as he preached, nearly fifty years later, over the remains of Newman. There lay that day, leveled in death, the body of a genius. Over it swept the clear, time-mellowed words of another genius. During life, those minds had never blended; a closed door, a sermon preached against the very Church which in time was to raise both to princedoms in its ranks—How strange!

In 1842, Manning published his "Unity of the Church." His fame as a controversialist increased, but not nearly so much as his renown in administration, in parish work, and as a pulpit orator.

In 1848, he visited Rome. His audience with Pope Pius IX was singular. He came off with a different attitude towards Roman ecclesiastics. Little did Pope Pius IX realize that the Archdeacon would one day receive the Cardinalate

from his hand and that his dying moments would be comforted by the comely young heretic.

When Manning returned to England, it was torn with dissension. The state was controlling religious policies, always a suicidal principle. Dr. Hampden, although a heretic, was kept in office by the crown. Manning felt this interference keenly and wrote vigorously against it. He quickly became the leader of the movement launched by the Tractarians. When the Gorham case suddenly appeared he stepped naturally into the forefront of battle.

Rev. George Gorham, originally a Calvinist theologian with decidedly unorthodox views on Baptismal regeneration, was ordained by the Bishop of Ely not without serious opposition. The ordinary of Exeter later discovered his heretical views and suspended him. The famous Gorham trial approved the bishop's action, but later the judicial committee decided to allow his institution, which decision was supported by the Court of Arches. Nothing could be done but submit to the State. Royal Supremacy was resurrected with a vengeance and all England was agog with

controversy. It was a severe shock to Manning's passionate love of his Church. Up to then, he had solved doubts moderately well but this contradiction of spiritual values was too much. His pen flared into action. But as the clouds settled he saw clearly the course he must take. A Civil Court deciding conclusively a point of doctrine was inconceivable. The secular conception of the Anglican Church had at last cropped up in its offspring.

He Becomes a Catholic

As Manning presided over committees of protest his friends could read the handwriting on the wall. Their fighting Archdeacon was broken, the fine fire in his eyes had cooled, he was as a man facing execution; and it was the murder of the love of his years of sincere service. For the second time his bride, whom he dearly cherished, was snatched from him. No one was surprised when he resigned his Archdeaconry. Everyone knew the inevitable when he wrote to his friend Hope-Schott that "it is either Rome or license of thought and will." Father Brownbill, S. J. received him and Hope-Schott in-

to the Church on Passion Sunday, 1851.

Unlike the conversion of Newman, no one seriously questioned Manning's move. He was noted for his courage and honesty. It seemed the thing to do. It must be said that the Archdeacon fitted immediately into the mosaic of the Church without painful mental tortures. He wrote "I have found in the Catholic Church all that I sought, and more than, while without its pale, I had ever been able to conceive". The Church of England never doubted it. Although "mourning the loss of one of the holiest of her sons," it felt that he had simply moved over a step with his usual courage. It was a kindly fate, one that never smiled on the transcendent beauty of Newman's conversion.

One would think that comparative obscurity would follow this momentous step. Not so with the up and doing convert. He was in a straddling position, somewhere between lay and cleric. It took little time for him to define his course. He was ordained a priest by Cardinal Wiseman before he was ten weeks a Catholic. He left for Rome immediately. Here he

spent nearly three years studying at the famous "Accademia". During these student days, he was a frequent visitor at the Vatican where Pope Pius IX took him into his confidence. With his return to England, he was appointed Provost of Westminster. He worked untiringly bringing dozens of prominent converts into the Church. Among them were Edward Badeley, Robert Wilberforce, Archdeacon of East Riding, and Henry Oxenham of Oxford. During his years as Provost, he steadfastly supported the aging Cardinal Wiseman against the disloyalty of the Old Catholics. Continually he delivered impassioned sermons and wrote spirited articles in defense of the Vicar of Christ.

Is Consecrated Archbishop

Within a few years he was regarded as the champion of Papal Supremacy. People forgot that there had been a transition. Was this Manning or a twin brother actually born and raised under the shadow of Saint Peter's? But it was characteristic of the man to never compromise when he honestly saw his way.

The kindly Dr. Wiseman died

encompassed with trials and difficulties. England woke up one morning to find Dr. Manning, Archbishop of Westminster. His appointment sprung, no doubt, from a personal mandate of Pope Pius IX, who had unbounded confidence in the Provost. Men who feared the indomitable fighter began to love him as their new Archbishop. He stood before them a perfect paragon. Tall, graceful in figure, ascetic features, genial, clear cut in speech, he conformed perfectly to the pattern of his exalted priesthood.

That was in 1865. From that date his ministry became almost superhuman. Unceasing visitations of his diocese, gigantic building programs, a constant defense of the Church against a hostile press left him continually in the line of battle. His solicitude for the poor created for him the enviable reputation of one "who lived among his people; and their feet wore the threshold of his door."

Archbishop Manning's participation in the Vatican Council was the crowning achievement of his career. July 18, 1870, the Decree concerning the infallibility of the Pope was passed by the assembled

bishops and the Vicar of Christ. Of course, infallibility had always been a constituent element of the Church's doctrine since Christ appointed St. Peter head of the Apostles. However, it had never been formally defined as a tenet of faith until the modern spirit of rationalism had provoked a more emphatic assertion of the Church's stand. During the Vatican deliberations, Manning was a leading figure. It is said that Pope Pius IX consulted him on every move. More certainly, his address on the definition was applauded with gusto by his fellow bishops. The one time Archdeacon had become an Archangel in the councils of another Church.

Raised to Cardinalate

It was announced on March 6, 1875, that Henry Manning was to become a Cardinal. It was nearly the last official act of Pope Pius IX as his successor's early historic move, as Leo XIII, was to elevate Newman to the same honor. England gasped at having two princes of the Church living within a few miles of each other. The impression grew that the Catholic Church was not such a barbarous society

after all. Newman, Ward, St. John, Manning, the Wilberforces, Faber, Hope, Allies, Maskell, Dodsworth and Badeley typified highly sincere theological thought. Here they were living and dying complacently in their new religious life with two of them in the sacred college itself. No one argued about it. An epidemic of unbalanced minds could not suddenly infest the land. There must be reason somewhere in the maze of Catholic doctrine. People began to investigate. Hundreds came off with a new and enduring faith. The Romeward movement was on. Men knew not what souls it would sweep up in its hurricane course. Nor do they to this day, a day of confusing religious revolution.

For thirteen years, the Cardinal graced his exalted office. He was received by high and low with special favor. Prejudices were gradually breaking down in his favor. His membership in the Metaphysical Society brought him in close contact with William Gladstone, Frederic Harrison, John Ruskin, Dr. Martineau, Professor Huxley, Tyndall, Lord Tennyson and the Duke of Argyll. This intellectual side of his character fostered the

publication of many volumes of theology and economics. He was at home on Parnassus as well as in the huts of the peasants in the foothills. The London Tablet could truthfully say "to Cardinal Manning more than to any man is it due that English Catholics have at last outgrown the narrow cramped life of their past of persecution and stand in all things on a footing of equality with their fellow countrymen. He has been the great leader who has led us from the desert places and the time of bondage, and into the land of promise. Before his words, and life, and example the barriers of prejudice have gone down, one after another, as the walls of Jericho. He has helped us to live down a world of ignorant opposition."

His Death—A Great Loss

The tall spare frame that housed his vaulting soul was soon to crumble. Time alone could conquer his indomitable spirit. As he lay in state in his Cathedral, he represented slumbering power. Even death could not rob him of the argument he embodied. That day, an interested Anglican student gazed upon the countenance of the

warrior who had left the English Church a half a century before and now lay in a peaceful sleep, evidently convinced to the last that his conversion was demanded by circumstances. The young man left the catafalque with an alarming distrust of his own position. His later becoming the Episcopalian bishop of Delaware in no way allayed his fears. Eventually he too would submit to Rome against a background that was similar to the Gorham controversy. Could it be that the dead Cardinal had reached up invisibly to touch the heart of Frederic Joseph Kinsman with the magic words, "Follow me"?

It is a tragic coincidence that, within the space of two years, England was deprived of its greatest modern Churchmen, Cardinals Newman and Manning. It could afford the loss of neither. What Manning was to the body of the Church, Newman was to its mind. In their different avenues, they wrought a thing of beauty. The Church no longer sang "songs of Sion by the streams of Babylon". It began a vigorous life in Mary's own country; and, God knows, it cannot be daunted.

Today we have a solidified Church in England. It gives to its subjects the security of a united system. From the green of Hyde Park to the corridors of Oxford, Catholicism is commanding the respect of Englishmen. Like the sun it shines on old and young, rich and poor, scholarly and ignorant with the same convincing warmth. Thousands come yearly into its communion; and there should be Newmans, Mannings, Chestertons, Martindales, Lunn, Kinsmans, Johnsons and Delaneys as long as the arguments for the true Church exist, so enslaving is its golden chain of reason. No wonder, we pay homage to a man who battered down so successfully the material barriers against its progress.

Between the English towns of Deal and Canterbury, there lingers the shadow of an old Roman road. Somewhere against its earthy bosom, was laid the heart of a valiant bishop, Augustine of Canterbury. More than a thousand years ago, he had left the monastery of Gregory on the Coelian Hill in Rome to penetrate the solitudes of Britain. In a short time he built a triumphant Church upon a pagan wilderness.

A world of history sprawls itself between the seventh and the nineteenth century, when Henry Manning possessed, as Cardinal, the Church of Gregory, which belonged to the very monastery where Augustine conceived his apostolate to Britain. But how intimate was time and place to the two bishops! Augustine had fashioned a monument of faith that would one time totter through the ages and know its members to crumble beneath centuries of hate and persecution. It was left to another apostle, drinking from the same spring of inspiration, to return to England and resurrect the Church's splendor.

On the Coelian Hill the wind still whispers in unceasing melody. It fingers through the reaches of St. Gregory's shrine, caressing tenderly a red Cardinal hat as it suspends among unnumbered memories.

And well it might. It is the cradle song of giants.

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