

and to make a character really live is the greatest feat of which human genius is capable."

Manning

In a recent issue of the *Month* (London) John Ayscough gives us some interesting reminiscences of Cardinal Manning. The Cardinal's opinion on the literary merits of the Douay Bible is worth recalling:—

"He was reading the Douai Version, and he praised me for saying that its inferiority to the 'Authorised Version,' from the mere point of view of beauty, seemed to me much exaggerated, and chiefly due to habitude and custom.

"Most of those who abuse the Douai Version," I suggested, 'have become so wedded to the Authorised Version by old use and custom that they could not suffer any other translation, and so they fall tooth and nail on the English of the Douai, which is not always inferior. It seems to me that "because a man shall go into the House of Eternity" is much more beautiful and poignant than "because man goeth to his long home."

"So it does to me. I cannot say that "Esau roared out with a great cry" is more beautiful than "Esau cried out with an exceeding bitter cry," but I suspect it is more characteristic of Esau. . . . But some of our converts never leave Oxford behind when they set out on the *iter Romanum*."

Exactly the same thing was said about himself at times. For instance:—

"He thoroughly admired General Booth's aims, and particularly the dragging of religion out into the slums from its clinging to the sanctuary in the churches, and the preaching of 'Faith without fringe.' Many years after the Cardinal's death I quoted this to a most eminent French Ecclesiastic, who thought it splendid. *Où? Où? Voilà ce qu'il faut aux coins des rues—un foi sans garniture!*"

"To a most reverend Italian prelate I also quoted it, but his comment was different:—

"Manning! Yes. A most sincere man, and full of zeal. But always a Protestant. No doubt he was in invincible ignorance."

Here is an interesting comment he made on certain verbose Lives of the Saints, in Italian:—

"They are mostly divided into chapters, each of which deals with some special virtue of the saint, such as 'The Gratitude of the Saint.' 'Such,' it will say, 'was the singular gratefulness of our saint that even for the slightest service from the most insignificant person he would invariably express his sense of gratitude were it at table or abroad in the city.' Which probably means that he said 'Thank you' if anyone passed him the salt."

Newman

If you are not one of those persons who cannot read anything better or higher than the latest novel turned out by a modern mediocrity you ought to have at least a few of Newman's works on your book-shelves. It has been said more than once in this column that the art of writing good prose is a matter that one must learn by the study of the masters. And to no writer can we go with more advantage than to the great English Cardinal whom John Morley crowned with the high praise that he was the most winning writer of English that ever existed. It may well be that such books as the *Grammar of Assent* or *The Development of Christian Doctrine* are too deep for the ordinary reader; but surely we all have intelligence enough to read *Loss and Gain* and the many volumes of *Essays and Historical Sketches* with profit and pleasure. Thank goodness it can never be said that Newman is a popular writer; for popularity is the mark of mediocrity. Yet for those who want to keep their eyes on the stars instead of on the earth popularity will always be a danger signal.

Newman as a Poet

Some critic once said that *The Dream of Gerontius* came near being a very great poem. If that

means anything it is that it is a really great poem, only that the critic was afraid to say so. For it is one of the laws of criticism (with few exceptions) to follow the beaten track and to say what the public want to hear. Therefore with all due deference to the critics we may be assured that Newman was a great poet, and that he wrote many very good poems, apart from *The Dream of Gerontius*. His prose reveals that he had the vision. Even in the *Grammar of Assent*, which is usually regarded as a dry treatise, for our part we find passages that awaken responses in our aesthetic sub-consciousness as surely as the sight of the sea bathed in the long glories of the moon, or that unspeakable and indefinable impulse from a vernal wood which Wordsworth alone could interpret for us. Those whose hearts have been stirred by the beauty and pathos of the dedication of the *Apologia*, and who love that glowing tribute to his friend, Ambrose St. John, will appreciate these lines in which Gregory tells of his affection for Basil what time they were schoolfellows in Athens:—

*May I not boast how in our day we moved
A truest pair, not without name in Greece;
Had all things common, and one only soul
In lodgement of a double outward frame?
Our special bond, the thought of God above,
And the high longing after holy things.
And each of us was bold to trust in each,
Unto the emptying of our deepest hearts,
And then we loved the more, for sympathy
Pleaded in each, and knit the twain in one.*

The story of the friendship of the two saints of olden days is as beautiful as that of Jonathan and David; and no less was that friendship between the Cardinal and his brother of the Oratory which touched so deeply poor George Eliot's lonely heart. We may be pardoned for thinking that the following little song deserves remembering too:—

*I wander by that river's brink
Which circles Exeter's dear domain;
I feel the chill night-breeze, and think
Of joys which ne'er shall be again.*

*I count the weeds that fringe the shore,
Each sluggish wave that rolls and rolls;
I hear the ever-plashing oar
Of Charon, ferryman of souls.*

IRISH HISTORY ESSAYS

We stated clearly that essays for our competitions should be received by June 15. We regret to say that not less than 50 essays from all parts of New Zealand reached us on the 17th and 18th, after the awards were made.—Ed. *N.Z. Tablet*.

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

A successful euchre social was held in St. Joseph's Hall one evening last week, in aid of the funds of the Christian Brothers' Cricket Club. There was a large attendance, and the function proved very enjoyable.

A Triduum, during the Octave of Corpus Christi, will commence to-day (Thursday) in St. Joseph's Cathedral, and conclude on Sunday evening. The "Te Deum" will be sung during the closing ceremonies of the solemnity.

The annual meeting of St. Joseph's Cathedral branch of the Catholic Federation will be held in St. Joseph's Hall after devotions on next Sunday evening. The committees of the Federation attached to the various suburban churches of St. Joseph's Cathedral parish will hold their annual meetings after Mass on Sunday morning, and the delegates to the parish committee will thereat be appointed.

The appeal made to the congregation of the Church of the Sacred Heart, North-East Valley, on