John Henry Cardinal Newman: The Pilgrim Poet

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This is to certify that Mary K. V. has been, since her registration, working under my supervision with utmost regularity and diligence. I have been watching her progress at all stages of her work. She has been to Oxford, Cambridge, Birmingham and Rome to collect materials, hitherto unexplored. I have found her ability and conduct to be highly satisfactory. From the standpoint of prescribed requirements as well as the accepted standard, Mary K. V.'s thesis on Newman, is eminently fit to be submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts.

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CONTENTS

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Mary K. V.

PREFACE

John Henry Cardinal Newman whose life spanned almost the whole of nineteenth century England, was one of its distinguished religious leaders, educationists and litterateurs. Yet in his zeal for a holy life and in his spiritual urge for divine illumination, he did not want to carve a niche in the temple of fame. From the very beginning of his life, this brilliant young Anglican felt an urge to become a spiritual pilgrim, to follow the will of God as it would guide him along the path to an eternal union with his Creator. The four last things of Christian theology: Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell were always uppermost in Newman's mind.

Finding the Church of England in considerable turmoil along with other like-minded friends, Newman launched the Oxford Movement in the 1830s. He was its leader and worked to rediscover in the Church of England the early traditions of her Apostolic roots. Newman felt called upon to lead the fellow pilgrims back to the true faith which alone could bring them spiritual health and salvation. So he wrote and published poetry intended to stimulate discussion of many important religious issues. However opposition to his ideas grew and he and the other Tractarian writers were in serious conflict with the authorities of the Church of England. Eventually Newman reached the conclusion that the Apostolic Church founded by and upon Christ had only survived in the Roman Catholic Church. He

resigned his ministry in the Anglican Church, left Oxford, his University and with much inner conflict and regret, joined the Roman Church.

Newman's life as a Catholic was full of difficulties, neither was his pilgrimage to God easy. His poetry reflects this suffering, but it also reveals his steady passion for the Pilgrimage towards the Beatific Vision, that is, union with God in that Eternal Home.

In the Victorian age, so complex in its corpus of thought and feeling, not only the average man but also intellectuals suffered from a sense of personal perplexity which was partly moral, partly religious and partly worldly. Newman rose above the basic dilemma which disturbed the Victorians in general. Among the towering intellectuals of Victorian England, such as Thomas Carlyle, Charles Darwin, George Eliot, Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, Matthew Arnold, it was only Newman who retained religious faith. While the other intellectuals succumbed to actual unbelief or to some form of agnosticism, Newman had the spiritual insight and inner strength to fight his way through the valley of scepticism, destructive liberalism and materialism.

Newman's life-long endeavour was to rebuild Christian values from the spiritual ruins of the century in which he lived. Yet he realized the importance of this visible world in leading men on their pilgrim journey towards the attainment of their spiritual quest. Hence he wished to perfect our understanding of this known world by revealing another dimension, that of the spirit. His poetry would be a revelation

of the fundamental truths of life.

Observing sensitively the strange intermingling of joys and sorrows, achievements and failures, life and death, birth and decay, his vision of human nature and the earthly predicament assumed greater significance each passing year. He discerned below the surface of this strange, deceptive world, the splendour of God that still remained under the ravages of sin and selfishness. Hence he sought to bring about a harmony between this world and Eternity. What he longed for in the nineteenth century was a true spiritual renaissance.

Hence Newman felt commissioned to revive the transcendental values of life. Discerning below the facade of gentlemanly virtues he was aware that society stood most in need of religion of inward heart and the pursuit of sanctity. Yet he was amazingly open to the problems that faced his contemporaries and could understand the hearts of both the intellectuals and the ordinary men of his day. Hence he could strike the right chord in each of these groups. A great pilgrim leader with a passion akin to Shelley's for reforming the world, concentrated on the interior movement of the soul in its progress towards God. Yet the visionary in him did not exclude the realist who recognized the value of scientific pursuits and their importance in the progress of human society. But he also apprehended that while knowledge forms the mind, it is contact with the Unseen which alone is capable of subduing moral evil, and fostering higher values. His spiritual vocation is closely allied to his poetic vocation.

Unlike most literary men who give to the world works of

pure literary power and intellectual brilliancy, Newman found life no arena upon which brilliant accomplishments are to be displayed. Hence Newman gave in his most spontaneous poetic expression his passion for religion with no regard to stylistics while other poets work and rework to bring their poems to a state of perfection which makes them exquisite poems. Yet many a talented and more laborious poet has achieved no more than Newman's immortal poem "The Pillar of the Cloud."

Newman's inner spiritual experiences which have been distilled in his poems form the very breath of his poetry. His was a persistent Spiritual Quest. His personal religious values and the humanistic views to which he was so passionately attached, had much to do with the philosophical and ethical connotations of his poetic compositions. This aspect of his poetic creation is not, of course, debatable but what raises debate is that his religious and moral zeal turned him into a poet apart from the popular image. Newman's sheer passion of Biblical, liturgical, theological and dogmatic adherence cuts him off from our own age. His poems have lost much of their power and appeal today because religious symbols and values have lost their meaning for most readers. As a result, that strong emotional impact they had on Newman's readers at the time, is lost on twentieth century readers. But in his day, Newman's poetry lighted the path of many who wandered in the 'encircling gloom' of religious doubt and worldly gain.

Newman's lyrical effusions reveal the loves and the fears of his soul which for a time 'loved the garish day,' yet was gifted with glimpses of the Eternal. His poetry which is of the nature of an autobiography deals with an examination of the state of his own soul

on his earthly pilgrimage. In his poems Newman unveils the hidden springs of his spiritual life and personal holiness. Here we encounter a powerful mind with problems, personal or public which lead to the treatment of reality and God arising fresh out of actual incidents in his day to day life. His poems enable us to trace the dream-work of his imagination upon the contents of his thought. They unveil his doubts and struggles along the pilgrimage, the delights of light and the oppressions of darkness, which both cheered and saddened his pilgrimage. The poems reveal his earnest search for Truth. They are investigations of sense and outward things by the pilgrim who lived in a world of uncertainties and unrealities.

The rapture of the poet's heart at the touch of the Divine along his pilgrim journey is expressed in the powerful, only cultivated imagery and diction which befitted the most 'urbane' of Victorian gentleman and adherent of the Victorian reserve. His superiority of mind, his concern for what is genuine, his rejection of anything tawdry produced a distinguished poetic language, transparent, austere, reticent and gravely beautiful. But in today's world of jazz and rock music, the delicate sensibility revealed in Newman's noble yet gentle expression, is unrecognized. Nevertheless, his poetry would sound the deepest chords in every virtuous soul that believes in a Life Force regardless of the barriers of time and space. Such for example was the case with Mahatma Gandhi. Thus Newman would always stand as a rare example of the religious consciousness that resides at the core of every human being and would continue to guide men of every age in their hour of religious confusion and distress.

The pilgrim's poems which are the fruits of his inborn yearning

for a union with the Divine are starkly real and bear an aura of the spiritual. Newman belongs to that group of literary men whose creations rank them among prophets rather than authors. The spiritual essence in his poetry raises him above poets who are just singers and no more. He resembles the Psalmists of old in his devotedness to an ideal. Like the Hebrew poet, Newman paid attention to the content. If the Psalm poetry is unique in its God-intoxicated expression, Newman's poetry is reminiscent of the Psalm poetry in its single-hearted concentration on God. He is also akin to the Eastern rishis who consider the world 'Maya' or unreality.

In order to restore the equilibrium of a dynamic pilgrim humanity gone astray in its progress towards God, Newman tried to awaken its religious consciousness. His literary works are large, full of spiritual vigour, poetic vision and far-sighted spirituality. He believed in his call to lead others along the path of Christ to whom he himself was committed. He saw himself as a leader of the pilgrimage.

The image of life as a pilgrimage is pervasive throughout much of his work in both prose and poetry. However while Newman's prose is well-known and highly regarded, his poetry, with only a few exceptions is less accessible today. Tastes in poetry have changed radically and what Victorians found appropriate in style and subject matter finds a reduced audience in the late twentieth century.

However, Newman's poetry deserves an audience and perhaps particularly today. We are in a vortex in the twentieth century. Life has become more complex and materialistic. Society is in the melting pot and the values Newman upheld and vindicated are being

accepted by people today with a sceptical lifting of the eyebrows and an ironical grin. But he is growing in stature and importance with the passage of time in a world of psychological unrest and spiritual bankruptcy for his moral excellence and spiritual vision. In his own day if sceptics came to scoff and remained to pray listening to his sermons, in our day, studying his poetry they would be spiritually invigorated.

Over and above, a study of Newman's poetry gives us a deeper understanding of a great and brilliant man who was so very influential in his time. Part of his great influence on people of his day rested on his poetry. A study of this poet's pilgrim quest, as revealed in his hymns, lyrics and especially in his poetic masterpiece The Dream of Gerontius makes an interesting and enlightening study, spiritually, psychologically as well as theologically. His life long dedication to a Heavenly Pilgrimage, and his ideas about the progress of the journey make a study of his poetry of great interest even today.

The ensuing dissertation is divided into ten chapters. The chapter titled "The Curtain Rises' presents Newman against the religio-literary scene and examines the hidden springs of his pilgrim vocation. The chapter titled " The Shaping of the Pilgrim Muse" traces the influence on the poet of the prevailing poetic theories of the early nineteenth century and the evolution of Newman's own poetic theories. "Traits of a Poet in the Pilgrim" throws light on the ingrained poetic qualities of the man and the hidden poet in prose. "The Pilgrim Prayer" explores the poet's examination of his mental

attitudes, spiritual failings and his need for Divine guidance. "The Pilgrim Leader" presents the poet commissioned to be a leader of the pilgrims. "Sailing in Company" highlights the poet's need for friends and human-ties on his earthly sojourn. "Sign Posts on the Pilgrimage" studies the guiding ideas of the poems leading the poet to his goal. "Joys of the Pilgrim" elucidates the poet's experience of spiritual consolation. "A Glimpse of the Beatific Vision" concentrates on the end of the spiritual quest: an intimation of the Supernatural Union. The conclusion sums up the findings of the study.

1. THE CURTAIN RISES

1. 1. Newman in the religio-literary scene

John Henry Newman, born in 1801, lived until 1890 was implanted in nineteenth century England even as the universal Shakespeare was deeply rooted in Elizabethan England. No writer ever completely transcends his time. So a study of the milieu in which Newman lived is essential to an understanding of him and his literary works.

It was an age of great progress. The advances made by science and technology affected the life of the society as a whole. The sensation caused by Geology, Physics and Biology brought into question the long established authority of the Bible and Christianity. Foremost among the ideas were the moulding and modifying of the living species propounded by such men as Darwin, Lamarck, Thomas H. Huxley and others. These notions reaching the average reading public, their simple, conventional faith and traditional beliefs were shattered. Even though the 'historicity' of the Bible was not really affected, the trouble lay in the traditional interpretation of it. Matthew Arnold wrote of this age of interrogation and doubt:" There is not a creed which is not shaken, not an accredited dogma which is not shown to be questionable, not a received tradition which does not threaten to dissolve. "[1]

Industrial development increased the comforts of life. But men of greater vision such as Carlyle, Ruskin, Newman and Arnold discerned beneath the apparent prosperity the selfishness of industrialists and blindness to the meaning of life. Hence they raised their voices against the spirit of

their time and urged men to be honourable and truthful. Carlyle's Sartor Resartus portrays the spiritual travail of the times. Ruskin's Unto This Last and Matthew Arnold's Culture and Anarchy are examples of spiritually noble literature. Newman's Apologia pro Vita Sua raises the moral pulse of its readers and is one of the great spiritual classics of all time. Novelists such as Thackeray, Anthony Trollope, and Charles Dickens in his later works depicted the anxieties, snobbery and related psychological diseases which sprang from the ambiguities of rank and wealth in a time of social flux. The numerous pamphlets of the time are contemporary testaments to the social conflicts.

The introduction of free education and the establishment of new universities increased the number of writers as well as that of the reading public. It was also an era when the least educated read poetry and considered it a serious subject of study in the same category as history, philosophy and sermons. [2] Hence poems were used as effective 'engines' even if 'quasi-political,' by Newman and his colleagues of the Oxford Movement. In his poems Newman lamented the contemporary situation and offered the 'Kindly Light' to men embroiled in a maze of religious doubt and baffling philosophy. The withering of faith and encroaching materialism cast their shadows on the poetry of the time.

The old order was overthrown by the endless process of technical inventions. The age of chivalry disappeared giving way to political virtues and canons of Reason which were moulding human society. Newman rejoiced at the progress civilization brought about and fought only against the evils that went with the changes. He considered it good fortune to have been born an Englishman: "His hermit spirit dwells in his own age." [3] But science and wealth were not the new idols for him. In his opinion the absolutely vital key issue was: is

England going to remain true to its Christian vocation or abandon it? This led Newman to work out a view of Christianity and culture which fostered what was best in the intellectual, imaginative and artistic world without giving in to the spirit of the age. He believed that culture had to be completed and enhanced by religion if it were to accomplish anything of lasting value. This vision of humanity made his contribution unique and is of the highest importance.

The mystic sense of the Unseen which Newman possessed co-mingled with force of will, keenness of intellect, an understanding heart and an inborn ability to move and to lead. Along with these traits there was in him an aristocratic refinement, delicacy and charm. These qualities fashioned him into a unique religious and literary leader. From childhood Newman who lived under the influence of poetical and religious experience and preferred holiness to every other concern, came forward as a champion of the Church in a power seeking world. This explains the reason why Newman in his day used art for the sake of religion and not for art's sake. He became a beacon light in a perplexed and complex time. Newman had passed on from a static to a dynamic view of the universe before the doctrine of biological evolution convulsed his contemporaries. From his study of early Christian history Newman had worked out a theory of the development of ideas which antedated the theory of the biological development of mankind. His mind had already made the transition from the static to the dynamic view of the world which his contemporaries found so hard to believe. His days were devoted to presenting evolution of religious beliefs to men who were increasingly being attracted by scientific thinking. The most noted of these works is Development of Christian Doctrine.[4] Newman's development theory fits in well with the pilgrim's poetic approach. His life was a journey into a deeper understanding of Truth. For Newman the ultimate

reality was that Life is a pilgrimage leading to the Beatific Vision and Eternal Union with God.

Liberalism in religion was the doctrine that one creed is as good as another and as a consequence no religion holds the whole truth. It taught that all were to be tolerant for all were matters of opinion. Revealed religion was also not a truth according to liberal philosophy but a sentiment and taste. Hence the liberals tried to adapt the Church to the spirit of the age. Newman's writings contain valuable lessons in religion and in education. He staunchly endeavoured to meet the corrosive influence of liberalism on its own grounds and wrote uncompromisingly in the poem "Science:" [5]

> And so is cast upon the face of things
> A many webs to fetter down the Truth;
> While the vexed Church, which gave in her fair youth
> Prime pattern of the might which order brings,
> But dimly signals to her distant seed,
> There strongest found, where darkest in her creed. (7-12)

He found it a 'self-flattering age' (17) which was interested only in "learned search and curious seeming art" (14) which considered a herald of religious faith 'the preacher of a dream' (18). He had a large measure of the logician combined with the creative imagination of a poet and the deeply thinking spirit of a philosopher. These qualities made him an artist, a prophet, a philosopher and a critic.

A call for rationality in all spheres of life was the keynote of this era. Rationalism acquired immense practical influence under the Benthamites and became the 'supreme tribunal' of the nineteenth century. This led the Victorians to downgrade imaginative and aesthetic experience. The utilitarians considered Keats's kind of truth which could be tested on one's pulse unadulterated nonsense.[6] According to John Stuart Mill:

> A poet in our times is a semi-barbarian in a civil community. He lives in the days that are past. His ideas, thoughts, feelings, associations, are all with barbarous manners, obsolete customs and exploded superstitions. The march of his intellect is like that of a crab, backward. The brighter the light diffused around him by the progress of reason, the thicker is the darkness of antiquated barbarism, in which he buries himself like a mole, . . .[7]

For many, poetic truth and religious truth were replaced by scientific and commercial truth. Carlyle thought that such an unquiet and chaotic time required clear speech and words of command. Such views led Newman to contribute severe poems to the British Magazine endeavouring to give an insight into the right values for men in a time of perplexity and confusion. With that unique synthesis of a rationalistic, an artistic and a religious sensibility, Newman rose above the sceptical climate of the time.

On the whole, the Victorian poets were keenly aware of their responsibilities. Their poetry testifies to the effort to attain a philosophical synthesis of the many conflicting aspects of the time. This explains the seriousness of the Victorian concept of poetry. The temper that prevailed in the nineteenth century was similar to that of the seventeenth century which was one of scepticism. But unlike the seventeenth century devotional poets, who did have a fixed central authority, nineteenth century poets were overtaken by a certain insecurity and a lack of authority in poetry of speculative thought and religion. Yet the poetry of Newman depicts his total grasp of the social, scientific, psychological and religious pulse of the time. Rooted and grounded in eternal verities, he was an authority on the baffling issues of the time and thus as a poet he cannot be ignored.

Though the early Victorians were heirs to the Romantics in many respects, the intellectual outlook of the Age of Reason still

prevailed. Thus the dislike of the Victorians for emotional outpourings placed certain restrictions on the poets of the time. They sought worthy themes and the honest agitators among them displayed passionate zeal for several causes. Here one finds Newman with his insatiable quest for right living. The poets believed that they had a mission to fulfil and the readers of poetry looked for a doctrine and a revelation. Even though the very ethos of the age seemed opposed to poetry, the poetic output during the age was considerable. Thinking characterized much of the best poetry of the century, as Geoffrey Tillotson has remarked.[8] The poems also convey the quality of movement. But the poets never aimed at Miltonic perfection and had little technical interest in their poetry. Poetry as a whole conformed itself to traditional diction and metrical form. Poets such as Browning broke away from the traditional lyric form and Matthew Arnold experimented with free verse. The Victorians did not strive after literary fame and followed spiritual pursuits in the midst of a non-believing mass. Thus though the age was extremely confused in many ways, it still was an age in which there was both faith and reason in the life of the nation.

The quality of movement in the poems might imply that the Victorian poets while not antithetical to new learning per se, were urging readers to hold on to eternal verities, to avoid casting aside the strengths of transcendental beliefs as new scientific insights were being gained. Such for certain was the case with Newman. His refrain: 'Lead Thou me on!'[9] was in fact a pilgrim prayer, to guide him on from the known scientific phenomenon to the Unseen Power which defies all proof.

The early Victorian poetry gave no evidence of unconquered scepticism other than in the cases of Arthur H. Clough and Thomas Cooper. In Memoriam is both religious and secular and in its way is a sample of what Newman meant by liberalism. The vision of a world where man progressed towards the fuller

expression of the divine within him was clearly visible in the poets of this period. As the century marched ahead, the sea of faith ebbed. Many of the imaginative writers and distinguished intellectuals seemed to have abandoned religious belief. Tennyson and Arnold shared the wistfulness of being half believers. Harriet Martineau and George Eliot expressed the aching void left in human hearts by the loss of faith. Such was the case with Darwin, Thomas Huxley, Carlyle, Herbert Spencer, Arthur Clough and many others. Clough lost his faith and his "Easter Day" mirrors the intellectual and religious struggle in his soul. James Thomson's "City of Dreadful Night" is a powerful and sincere expression of a despairing creed. But Browning remained robustly optimistic. The world which had passed out of existence and the uncertainties of the one not yet formed worked together in creating a strain of pessimism in the works of Matthew Arnold. All these currents of thought coloured the last years of the century.

Newman belonged to the group of the religious poets of the earlier years of the nineteenth century even though he continued to write poems throughout his life. Along with John Keble, John Mason Neale and Robert Stephen Hawker he played a major role in the reawakening of the Church of England. Newman stands out among these poets for his great imaginative power and speculative thought. Hence he could have taken the place of Keble as the poet of Neo-Catholicism but he chose a more spiritual role.

Along with the rationalistic-scientific movement, the century also witnessed the rebirth of a new kind of idealism. The doctrine of Carlyle, the sentimental art of Dickens, the religious renewal at Oxford, the aesthetic and social crusade of Ruskin found psychological affinity with the most profound spiritual trends which produced the works of Wordsworth and

Shelley. In fact the Oxford Movement was a continuation of the Romantic revival which was a reaction against the superficial character of the religious teachings and the literature of the time. The Movement worked to revive those truths of Christian revelation which alone were able to satisfy the 'spiritual wants' [10] which lay beneath Romantic restlessness. These thoughts expressed clearly that new approaches to the idea of society, religion and God were the demands of the time.

Many of the views which Newman porpagated became a permanent part of the nineteenth century poetic experience and a living tradition for the rest of the age. His poetry illustrates the religio-literary culture of the age which moved in tandem with the better known social and psychological trends. Thus his poetry makes clear what the nineteenth century experience was when religion was not a separate department of life as it is today. His poetry expresses the concerns of the age and their genius loci. He was the philosopher and the interpreter of the Christian renaissance. Men like Newman and Coventry Patmore who might have been mystics in another age were driven to being staunch religious champions in the midst of a society which struggled between the religious and the new rationalistic theories.

No ecclesiastical figures of the last century engage the interest of discerning twentieth century scholars as Newman does. An unusually gifted individual, he held several distinguished offices. He was elected a Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, in 1822 and was ordained priest in 1824. In 1826 he became Tutor of Oriel College, the most intellectually distinguished College in the Oxford of his day. He was appointed Vicar of St. Mary's, the University Church, in 1828 and had the honour of being one of the select University preachers. He was an instructor, a counsellor and head of the newly-founded University of Dublin. He wrote poems,

histories, biographies, autobiographies, treatises, tracts, controversial papers and other volumes. He wrote over 20,000 letters, hundreds of sermons, many theological and literary works and a poetic masterpiece The Dream of Gerontius. His Apologia pro Vita Sua is placed side by side with the Confessions of St. Augustine. He was master of not just a single literary genre, for he was as versatile in the modes of expression as he was in the range of thought. Critics of his day pointed out the spiritual significance of his poetry and the imaginative appeal of his prose. He considered the world well lost in exchange for the possession of religious Truth. His old College Trinity, made him its honorary Fellow in 1877 and in 1879 the Catholic Church honoured him by bestowing on him the status of a Cardinal. Newman died on 11 August 1890.

Newman would always be regarded as a great religious writer. Like Wordsworth or Hardy he was alert to the simple things in life while, like Matthew Arnold, he was deeply involved in the urgent public matters of the day.[11] He had an eye for detail, and was able to read the motives of human behaviour like a Jane Austen or a Sherlock Holmes. He had the gift of portraying characters and situations with wit and sustained irony. Newman's religious and educational interests provide the central pattern of his entire life. Nothing was ever too large for him or too trivial if it shed light on the central question of what man and his destiny really are. For Newman destiny was the attainment of the Beatific Vision when Life's pilgrimage was over.

Newman influenced the whole of the nineteenth century, an influence which no English man of any consequence or education could wholly escape. The economist Walter Bagehot and Matthew Arnold the poet, both of whose views differed from his, yet felt the glamour which Newman exercised over so many who belonged to camps utterly distinct from his own. Matthew Arnold

regarded him as a living embodiment of the 'Christian gentleman' and almost a miracle of the mid-nineteenth century England. His gentlemanliness was evident in his intellectual delicacy and urbanity of style. Dean Stanley of Westminster and Gladstone himself were among those who were touched by the rare magnetism of his personality.

Newman's penetrating insight into human nature enabled him to understand well his own age and its tendencies. Pater said of Newman that he had "dealt with all the perturbing influences of our century in a manner as classical, as idiomatic, as earnest and elegant as Steele's !"[12] Both as a literary master and as a religious genius he holds a permanent rank as a neo-classicist. In restoring to religious life the vitality of its earlier days, Newman proposed reforms which were more refined, intellectual, academic and humane. Newman, as a pilgrim, tried to find his way to God in whom he so firmly believed. He tried to guide men to the same goal. Hence he gave a humane touch to the technicalities of religious problems and made them more accessible to all.

His image has gathered stature with the years. Newman is widely read and studied for his spiritual and intellectual gifts in this age of psychological unrest and spiritual bankruptcy. The frequent lectures, seminars, conferences held on Newman in various places, the published work of scholars in many lands give ample testimony to the international interest in Newman. The poet had written in the poem "The Age to Come,"[13] about his own situation:

> When I would search the truths that in me burn,
> And mould them into rule and argument,
> A hundred reasoners cried,--"Hast thou to learn
> Those dreams are scatter'd now, those fires are spent ?
>
> (1-4)

He had also foreseen the future as this poem illustrates: "But

now, I see that men are mad awhile, / And joy the Age to come will think with me:--" (9-10).

1.2. The blooming spirituality

Newman's poetry is in the nature of an autobiography. It gives us insight into the mind and heart of the man who was a pilgrim, prophet and saint first and foremost. He considered this his one mission as the poem "The Priestly Office"[14] portrays:

> In service o'er the Mystic Feast I stand;
> I cleanse Thy victim-flock, and bring them near
> In holiest wise, and by a bloodless rite.
> O Fire of Love! O gushing Fount of Light!
> Dread office this, bemired souls to clear
> Of their defilement, and again make bright. (1-6)

The priest in him realized the awe-inspiring nature of his vocation. Yet as he treasured this office, he placed at the service of his God his intellectual and literary gifts to interpret for the world spiritual truths according to the requirements of the age. The poem "Morning"[15] depicts how in adoration he sets out on his pilgrimage: "I RISE and raise my clasped hands to Thee!" (1), "Thus I set out;--Lord! lead me on my way !" (9). Thus he chose a path of true religious adherence which acted like a beacon and led many in the same pilgrim path.

A study of Newman, the pilgrim poet, reveals that four volumes of his poetry were published during his lifetime. They show the spiritual growth of the poet's soul as well as his endeavour to establish a right relationship between the human soul and the Supreme Power which is behind the material phenomena. Since the spirit and the temper of his epoch was against the religious aspirations of the human soul, there

arose a tension in him from which his poetry is born. The four volumes of poetry are Memorials of the Past, Verses on Religious Subjects, The Dream of Gerontius and Verses on Various Occasions. Besides these he was a major contributor to three other volumes -- St. Bartholomew's Eve, Lyra Apostolica and Hymns for the Use of the Birmingham Oratory, 1854. He also had some share in the following three volumes--Hymns for the Use of the Birmingham Oratory, 1857, Hymn Tunes of the Oratory, 1860, and Verses for Penitents, 1806. [16]

The poems belong to three stages in Newman's life. A study of them reveals that each stage possesses quite different characteristics but, despite the differences, there emerges a clear pattern of unity in the spiritual and artistic development of the man. Even though he expressed a keen sense of his artistic potential in the two earlier stages, the culmination of a lifetime of poetic activity took place only in the third stage. Here the poet fused creatively the roles of the pilgrim and the poet.

The fount from which Newman drew spiritual strength for his divine mission was his single-hearted devotion to God. Even at the first stage in the pilgrim poet's journey, the poems reveal his natural absorption in God and his concern in championing God's cause. The first volume of poetry which appeared in print was St. Bartholomew's Eve. [17] Newman had written it in 1818, when he was seventeen years of age in collaboration with his class mate John William Bowden. This poem is a manifestation of Newman's natural poetic sensibilities and his spiritual yearning. Its 'sacred notes' (25) are strung: "Till the rapt soul on bolder pinions soars" (26) to "breathe seraphic fire" (28). The mystic soul of the pilgrim was vividly conscious of the angel guardians who would lead him through to the end of his pilgrimage and on to the

Beatific Vision:

> Angelic guardians, natives of the sky,
> Who, seeming distant, hover ever nigh,
> To aid the virtuous, cheer the sad, delight,--
> Too blest to feel our woes, too good to slight,
> With holy anger . . . (373-377)

While Bowden wrote the historical parts, it was Newman who chose to write the theological side of the romance on the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Those parts of the poem contributed by Newman far exceed in beauty and poetic feeling than the sections written by Bowden. This long poem published privately sold fifty copies in twenty four hours. In 1890, The Times obituary on Newman included the comment: "The Cardinal was always proud of that work, perhaps as his first born." [18]

The second volume published privately in 1832 was Memorials of the Past . This volume was meant only for the immediate circle and is addressed to the members of his family. The title page of the volume has these far seeing lines: "Strains, framed in youth, in our life's history / Stand as antiquities, and so we love them -- / Each has its own legend, and so bespeaks its times."[19] The 'Strains, framed in youth,' in the pilgrim poet's life story were the reality and the permanence of the spiritual world contrasted with the impermanence and the insubstantiality of the world about him,and his single hearted quest after Truth. They also include the themes of angels, dreams, death, the tension within the framework of faith and his early sense of a spiritual vocation. Hence Newman moved away from the sensuous aspects of earthly beauty to the eternal beauty of God. He considered imagination to be a spiritual energy through which he could glance beyond the visible phenomenon into the Invisible. As a result, his ecstasy of faith in God and the revelation he

expressed in poems, are essentially spontaneous and intensely spiritual.

The poem "Solitude"[20] expresses the poet's preoccupation from his earliest years with the inner life and his communion with spiritual powers. He experiences in 'stillness' 'a magic power' (1) which kindles in his soul "Diviner feelings, kindred with the skies"(4). In solitude the poet purifies his heart and raises it to heaven and experiences heavenly love. Already in this poem, "Solitude" written at the age of seventeen, the pilgrim theme is brought out. The image of the desert wandering Arab looking to the skies (5-6) in the poem suggests the direction of the pilgrimage. The pilgrim here is a hermit who fixes his heart on heaven. The movement of this Newman pilgrimage is upward away from the earthly din towards the goal of heaven.

The poet paints a paradise with Angel choirs and their melodious hymns which bears no parallel to any earthly pleasure:

> There is a spirit singing aye in air,
> That lifts us high above all mortal care.
> No mortal measure swells that mystic sound,
> No mortal minstrel breathes such tones around,—
> The Angel's hymn, — the sovereign harmony
> That guides the rolling orbs along the sky,— (11-16)

The poet is also an artist in word painting. With a few strokes of his brush he dabs a vivid picture of the world beyond. He grieves over man who "knows not of the bliss, / The heaven that brightens such a life as this" (21-22).

Themes of angels and images of heavenly harmony are already set to tune: the poet-devotee composes his devotional songs as he advances on his pilgrimage. Newman had strong belief in angels from his childhood.[21] It was a reality for him as real as the visible phenomena, as it still is for

millions of Catholics even today. He makes references to Angels in many of his poems. In the poem "Guardian Angel"[22] Newman addresses:

> My oldest friend, mine from the hour
> When I first drew my breath;
> My faithful friend, that shall be mine,
> Unfailing till my death. (1-4)

He believes: "When life is ebbing low" (34); and even at the Last Judgement: "Mine, when I stand before the Judge" (37) and: "Thy gentle arms shall lift me then, / Thy wings shall waft me home" (43-44).

Another of Newman's strong belief was in the Church as Christ's 'purchase dear,'[23] and as the way to salvation. For him the Church was a mother who nourishes her children on their pilgrimage. The Church was to Newman'mother of Saints,' 'school of the wise, nurse of the heroic' and most of all his 'mother.'[24] He loved it and took pride in its universal character and heavenly union as is reflected in the poem "The Holy Trinity:"[25]

> The Church of God, the world-wide name,
> Found in all lands, yet everywhere the same;
> Love with its thrilling unison
> Knows how to knit ten thousand hearts in one.
> . . . . . .
> A golden chain unites the earth and sky;
> Angels, the Church below, the Church on high,
> O triply blest, to us are nigh. (9-12, 22-24)

As far as Newman was concerned, he believed that Church was the only way to God, although he respected other religious beliefs.

For Newman, dogma was spiritual truth revealed by God. He had a sturdy faith not only in Christ who is God, but also in the dogmas of religion. He believed faith to be the means by which mankind received supernatural graces and powers. In the

poem "Flowers without Fruit,"[26] he writes:

> Faith's meanest deed more favour bears,
> Where hearts and wills are weigh'd,
> Than brightest transports, choicest prayers,
> Which bloom their hour and fade. (9-12)

Newman's early choice of a celibate life speaks for the 'one' desire of this pilgrim. In the poem "The Married and the Single," [27] he portrays the life of celibates 'glorious' (15): "Aiming as emblems of their God to shine" (23), and "Loving their God" (26) in single hearted devotion. He concludes the poem thus:

> Let others seek earth's honours; be it mine
> One law to cherish, and to track one line,
> Straight towards heaven to press with single bent,
> To know and love my God, and then to die content.
> (112-115)

But he was not a grim celibate and did not undervalue the beauty and truth to be found in women. In the same poem he writes of them:

> But, when the Christ came by a Virgin-birth,—
> His radiant passage from high heaven to earth,—
> And, spurning father for His mortal state,
> Did Eve and all her daughters consecrate. (9-12)

The poem "My Lady Nature and Her Daughters"[28] describes the delight ladies take in dress, dances, their eagerness 'to join the festive ring' (57), and about their mirth: "Not a sight so fair on earth, / As a lady's graceful mirth" (59-60). The poet ends the poem drawing the reader's attention to the noble mission of ladies. In this 'rude,' 'unkind' (84) world it is only ladies who would befriend 'work-day souls' (82), and so: "Seek we lady-lighted home. / Nature 'mid the spheres bears sway, / Ladies rule where hearts obey." (88-90) Though Lady Nature bears her sway amidst the spheres, it is the earth-bound

ladies who rule over hearts.

The distinctive features of Newman's language may be noted as follows. He chose a style rich in Biblical aroma and allusions as the Victorians were familiar with Biblical language. Rhetoric and rhythms drawn from Scriptures enabled him to communicate in readily understandable and persuasive terms with a susceptible audience. His use of dense Biblical allusions aimed at maximum effect. The ordinary Victorian was brought up in a culture circumscribed by Christian teaching. This had influenced his outlook upon life and the foundations of his morality. Now when his Christian culture came under question the Victorians found solace in the language of Newman. Unlike Milton's writing which was unintelligible to many readers, overloaded as it was with classical allusions, Newman's writing, was more accessible. He made effective use of such features as liturgy, Church traditions and history, theology, dogma, the lives of saints, in his poetry. It did speak powerfully to the men of his time though it has lost much of its influence on men today since few people now share his religious beliefs.

This contemplative apostle had a striking awareness of the transience of life even at an early stage. It is conveyed in the poem "My Birthday" [29] written at the age of eighteen. Though it is his birthday, thoughts of celebratory 'riots' (12) and 'greetings loud' (12) are rejected by the young man ascetically: "What! joy because the fulness of the year / Marks thee for greedy death a riper prey? / Is not the silence of the grave too near ?" (15-17). What the poet awaits is:

> This feeble spirit to the sky aspire,--
> As some long-prisoned dove towards her nest—
> There to receive the gracious full-toned lyre,
> Bowed low before the Throne 'mid the bright seraph
> choir. (60-63)

These lines reflect the poet's deepest desire for that ultimate union with God in heaven. This poem written in beautiful Spensarian

stanzas conveys clearly that Newman could have acquired a poetic fame approaching that of Spenser or Milton but he preferred divine illumination to poetic fame. "The Trance of Time"[30] too conveys the idea that Newman's heart is fixed on the Unchangeable. Hence the changes of nature and the discriminations of seasons do not affect him for he can antedate: "Heaven's Age of fearless rest" (32). This poem is close to the philosophical cheerfulness of the firm-purposed man in Horace. The lines in which Virgil describes the triumph of philosophy over superstition Newman takes as his motto.[31] The poem also expresses the transience of life, every thing passes out of sight in a brief time. 'The season-measured year' (2) with its 'short-lived four' (9) Spring, with its songs, Summer with its flowers (5), Autumn with its 'bowers' (7) and Winter with its 'social rings' (18) remind him of the four stages in the life of an individual which also has only a transitory existence: "Long days are fire-side nights, / Brown autumn is fresh spring" (19-20). Hence the poet queries:

> Then what this world to thee, my heart ?
> Its gifts nor feed thee nor can bless.
> Thou hast no owner's part
> In all its fleetingness. (21-24)

The publication of Memorials of the Past pointed out clearly Newman's sense of artistic identity and spiritual vocation. He wrote of himself:

> I am a harp of many strings, and each
> Strung by a separate hand; most musical
> My notes, discoursing with the mental sense
> Not the outward ear.[32]

The pilgrim poet gives here a clear identification of self and allots to himself a serving role. He is to be 'Strung' (2) by the Almighty. The poet places his varied talents at the disposal of heaven.

"A Birthday Offering"[33] depicts the poet as an active

apostle. He feels summoned to be the champion of the Lord to serve as a messenger of heaven. He treasures his pilgrim vocation:

> I change it not away
> For patriot-warrior's hour of pride,
> Or statesman's tranquil sway;
> For poet's fire, or pleader's skill. (68-71)

This he would do with "Prayer-purchased blessings on our [his] head" (36), "To brace thy [his] arm, and nerve thy [his] heart,/ For maintenance of a noble part" (5-6) in his role as an ambassador of the Lord, he may stand at the end of his pilgrimage: "As victor(s) in a deathless land" (78). As is foreseen in this poem, the present day followers around the globe are a proof of his influence even today. Thus he is granted more than his sole desire for a place in eternity for he is also granted fellow pilgrims to spread his noble ideas and vision.

The poet being a mystic has gained insight into the nature of God and writes in the poem. "The Hidden Ones:"[34] "Christ rears His throne within the secret heart, / From the haughty world apart" (7-8). The pilgrim feels marked off from the world, living a secret life shut away from the noise of history and worldly achievements. This sense of separateness of the individual soul owes something to Newman's early Calvinistic training, but it is a feature which remains part of him. Hence he sets himself apart and is not ruled by "reason's might / Forcing its learned way" (13-14). He considers those who trust only in scientific and rational conclusions: "Blind characters! these aid us not to trace / Christ and His princely race" (15-16). The saints of God are controlled by: "Meekness, love, patience, faith's serene repose" (21). Thus in this mystery of the elect the hidden saints of God belong to a chosen band and the poet himself is: "The remnant fruit of largely-

scatter'd grace" (26). It is the paradox of religion:

God sows in waste, to reap whom He foreknew
Of man's cold race;
. . . . . .
He waits, by scant return for treasures given,
To fill the thrones of heaven (27-28, 31-32).

Realizing the ways of heaven he prays: "Oh! lest our frail hearts in the annealing break, / Help for Thy mercy's sake !" (39-40)

In the poem "A Thanksgiving"[35] the pilgrim poet dedicates himself to be completely God's: "I am all Thine,—— Thy care and choice / My very praise is Thine" (3-4). Then he offers his praise and adoration to God for the bright dreams, the faculty of imagination , the strong convictions he gained through the power of reason, for the love received at home and from friends. These blessings are to him but faint shadows compared to the personal experiences he has of the Lord and His presence. Then he professes to follow the Lord without counting the cost and welcomes heroically any 'heart-pang' (22) or affliction:

Yes! let the fragrant scars abide,
Love-tokens in Thy stead,
Faint shadows of the spear-pierced side
And thorn-encompass'd head. (25-28)

The poet longs for the Lord's supreme sway in his life:

And such Thy tender force be still,
When self would swerve or stray,
Shaping to truth the forward will
Along Thy narrow way. (29-32)

The poet hands over his life to the Lord, his mystic prayer is: "Deny me wealth; far, far remove / The lure of power or name" (33-34); for he knows: "Hope thrives in straits, in weakness love, / And faith in this world's shame" (35-36).

The poet finds the lowly snapdragon, in the poem with the same title [36] a symbol of himself. While the other favoured and prized flowers such as rose, lily and dahlia adorn an earthly paradise, the humble snapdragon is content:

Mine, the Unseen to display
In the crowded public way,
Where life's busy arts combine
To shut out the Hand Divine. (47-50)

As soon as the flower realizes its duty, there comes a transformation in its very being and the poet himself gets confirmed in his pilgrim-mission:

Ah! no more a scentless flower,
By approving Heaven's high power,
Suddenly my leaves exhale
Fragrance of the Syrian gale
Ah! 'tis timely comfort given
By the answering breath of Heaven!
May it be! then well might I
In college cloister live and die. (51-58)

Living his priestly vocation most effectively till his death, is what the poet desires most here.

Poems such as "Epiphany-Eve" and " The Sign of the Cross" are tender, devotional lyrics and illustrate the fact that the poet was a deep contemplative as well. In "Epiphany-Eve" [37] the poet's heart is over-powered by tender emotions and deep devotion to Christ. His contemplative heart addresses Christ: "Dearest, gentlest, purest, best!" (22), "Loveliest, meekest, blithest, kindest!" (52). The poet longs: "To kiss the dear prints of thy [Christ's] feet, / Tracing thus the narrow road / All must tread, and Christ has trod" (49-51). This is just what St. Ignatius of Loyola, another mystic did in Holy Land: going there a second time, he carefully noted on Mount Olivet the precise direction of the foot prints of Christ found

there.[38] It is interesting that Newman uses the same gesture as Ignatius to stir up devotion.

His meditations reveal to the poet that any true follower of Christ has to 'trace' the narrow path and prays humbly: "Lead! we seek the home thou findest!" (53) for to the poet the true home is heaven. The favourite home imagery is used here. He is persistent in his prayer for he experiences deeply the need of the Lord not only in his earthly pilgrimage but also in that of the other pilgrims:

> Lead, a guiding beacon bright
> To travellers on the Eve of Light.
> Welcome aye thy Star before us,
> Bring it grief or gladness o'er us; —
> Keen regret and tearful yearning, (56-60)

Here there is a foreshadowing of the poem to come "Lead, Kindly Light," and it is clear that Christ is the 'Kindly Light.' The pilgrim then prays:

> Or, when day-light blessings fail,
> Transport fresh as spice-fraught gale,
> Sparks from thee, which oft have lighted
> Weary heart and hope benighted. (64-67)

On his pilgrim way, the poet decides:

> I this monument would raise,
> Distant from the public gaze,
> Few will see it; -- few e'er knew thee;
> But their beating hearts pursue thee, -- (68-71)

The poet's pilgrim offering--all the gifts he possesses of heart and mind with which he would prepare himself and his fellow pilgrims—would be the 'monument' he would erect. The path to the cairn he would raise on his pilgrim way would be a narrow one. Hence only those of noble vision: "These will read, and these will prize it" (75). The poet knew he would not have complete following in the path of Lord.

The poem "The Sign of the Cross"[39] is another expression of his piety as a man and as a priest. Though the poem is simple, full of faith and fervour yet concrete. The virtuous soul of the poet experiences the spiritual blessings inherent in holy gestures:

> Whene'er across this sinful flesh of mine
> I draw this holy Sign,
> All good thoughts stir within me, and renew
> Their slumbering strength divine;
> Till there springs up a courage high and true
> To suffer and to die. (1-6)

It portrays a quality of Newman at its best when he is often reminiscent of George Herbert. Here again in the poem, like St.Ignatius, Newman makes use of gestures to stir up devotions.

One of the reasons why Newman embraced his pilgrim vocation with an uncompromising fervour was because he understood the reality of religious scepticism with regard to his age. As a result the poetic vocabulary begins to include references to the 'veil,'[40] at the heart of the religious experience. Thus at the beginning of the poem "My Birthday,"[41] after setting an external Nature scene, the poet unexpectedly refers to his own 'misty sight' (9). Thus a need for God to make Himself felt is found even though the poet was totally committed to his Christian faith. The implicit tension between faith and uncertainty depicts the poet's contemporary religious attitudes. The poem "My Birthday" portrays that faith is not easy: "I fain would try / Albeit in rude, in heartfelt strains to praise / My God" (5-7). The verb 'try' implies effort and there is a lack of ease in this faith.

Again in "Paraphrase of Isaiah LXIV,"[42] the poet prays to God: "O That Thou wouldst rend the breadth of sky,/ That veils Thy presence from the sons of men !" (1-2) The poet longs

for a direct visual proof of the Lord to carry out his spiritual vocation and such a proof would, the poet tells the Lord: "Appal Thy foes; and, kings, who spurn Thy rule" (9). The pilgrim poet's prayer is for each pilgrim: "A God of love, guiding with gracious ray / Each meek rejoicing pilgrim on his way" (17-18).The poet continues pleading for the pilgrims:

> Yea, though we err, and Thine averted face
> Rebukes the folly in Thine Israel done,
> Will not that hour of chastisement give place
> To beams, the pledge of an eternal sun ?
> Yes! for His counsels to the end endure;
> We shall be saved, our rest abideth sure. (19-24)

Even when the poet is assured in his heart of the Lord's mercy on the sinful race, sins of mankind make him cry out in intense sorrow:

> Lord, Lord! our sins ... our sins ... unclean are we,
> Gross and corrupt; our seeming-virtuous deeds
> Are but abominate; all, dead to Thee,
> Shrivel, like leaves when summer's green recedes;
> While, like the autumn blast, our lusts arise,
> And sweep their prey where the fell serpent lies.
> (25-30)

Such is the condition of the pilgrims. The imagery in the lines depict the corrupt, deteriorating moral plight of men and their actions. The poet finds "none to plead with God in prayer" (31), and takes up their cause on his way:

> But now, O Lord, our Father! we are Thine,
> Design and fashion; senseless while we lay,
> Thou, as the potter, with a Hand Divine,
> Didst mould Thy vessels of the sluggish clay.
> Mark not our guilt, Thy work of wrath recall,
> Lo, we are Thine by price, Thy people all! (37-42)

The poet prays in persuasive terms, throwing his focus

on the Lord's own creation of man and on the weakness of human nature. He further points out to the Lord that these are His own chosen people but: "Low lies our pride; -- and wilt Thou self-deny / Thy rescuing arm unvex'd amid thine Israel's cry?" (47-48). Hence the pilgrim poet made it his mission to take up the cause of his fellow pilgrims in the Anglican Church and thus to restore to them the ancient glory of the early Church which held on to its Apostolicity and fellowship in that faith.

The lyrics of Newman written at the first stage of his journey are touching, devotional lyrics. They are lucid and wistful and have a unique beauty of their own. Even Swinburne recognized "the force, the fervour, the terse energy of Cardinal Newman's verse at its best."[43] His early poetry conveys something of that freshness which belongs to ancient Chinese poetry.[44] These lyrics have the qualities of several of the Lyrical Ballads: simplicity of thought and direct appeal to the individual humanity. Some times they reveal the suavity of Herbert and at other times the depth of Donne.

If we compare Milton and Newman as religious poets we find that Milton blends asceticism with passion which Newman never does. Newman with his secure faith charts the course of his life towards the permanent Truth. Unlike Milton, Newman puts aside his classical learnings for he loves his faith more and hence concentrates on the Christian view of earthly splendours and of life eternal. His poems are intensely personal. Rightly has Robert Bridges passed the comment that every poem is an intimate echo of the poet's life. Newman's early poems are also the results of the meditations of an over-earnest young pilgrim. They display the poet's love to weave telling, genuine, spiritual images of beauty and realism.

Notes

[1] Matthew Arnold, "The Study of Poetry," English Critical Texts ed. D. J. Enright and Ernst Chickera (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1975) 260.

[2] E. Batho and B. Dorbee, The Victorians and After (London: The Cresset Press, 1938) 76.

[3] J. M. Cameron, "Newman and Liberalism," Cross Currents 30. 1 (1980): 154.

[4] John Henry Newman, Development of Christian Doctrine (London: Longmans, 1845).

[5] Elisabeth Ann Noel, An Edition of Poems of John Henry Cardinal Newman (Diss. University of Illinois, 1956, U.M.I, 1989) 143-144.

[6] Richard D. A. Hick, Victorian People and Ideas (New York: W. W. Norton and Co, 1973) 269.

[7] Richard D. A. Hick 269-270.

[8] Geoffrey Tillotson, " English Poetry in the Nineteenth Century," An Inaugural Lecture Delivered at the University of London (1945): 1-17.

[9] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 152.

[10] John Henry Newman, "Prospects of the Anglican Church," Essays Critical and Historical. Vol. 1 (London: Basil Montagu Pickering, 1871) 272.

[11] Geoffrey Tillotson, Newman (London: Rupert Hart Davis, 1957) 18.

[12] Geoffrey Tillotson, A View of Victorian Literature (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978) 54.

[13] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 144-145.

[14] John Henry Cardinal Newman, Verses on Various Occasions (New York: Longmans, 1900) 197.

[15] John Henry Cardinal Newman, Verses 198.

[16] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. xviii.

[17] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 244-261.

[18] The Times 12 August 1890: 7.

[19] John Henry Newman, Memorials of the Past (Oxford: 1832) title page.

[20] John Henry Cardinal Newman, Verses 3-4.

[21] John Henry Newman, Apologia pro Vita Sua, ed. Maisie Ward (London: Sheed and Ward, 1989) 1.

[22] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 198-199.

[23] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 90-91.

[24] John Henry Newman, "The Parting of Friends," Sermons on Subjects of the Day (London: Longmans, 1898) 406-408.

[25] Elizabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 197.

[26] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 160.

[27] John Henry Cardinal Newman, Verses 202-207.

[28] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 39-41.

[29] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 6-7.

[30] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 30-31.

[31] A free Adaptation of Iliad. xviii. 125.

[32] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 27.

[33] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 22-24.

[34] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 43-44.

[35] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 45-46.

[36] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 28-29.

[37] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 49-52.

[38] Cándido de Dalmases, Ignatius of Loyola, trans. Jerome Aixalá (Gujarat Sahitya Prakash Anand, 1985) 80.

[39] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 66-67

[40] John Henry Cardinal Newman, Verses 9-11.

[41] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 6-7

[42] John Henry Cardinal Newman, Verses 9-11.

[43] Wildrid Ward, The Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman. Vol. 2. (London: Longmans, 1912) 356.

[44] Sebastian Redmond, "Newman: A model for the Literary," The Clergy Review (London. Oct. 1945) 461-465.

2. THE SHAPING OF THE PILGRIM MUSE

2.1. Poetic theories of the early nineteenth century

The poetic theories which were prevalent in the early nineteenth century played a major role in Newman's poetic beliefs. In such a century, so divided yet so distinguished, poets could not be poets in the manner in which Goethe and Keats were. The poets of the century were keenly aware that the world stood most in need of reform. The twin perceptions on which the Victorian writers rooted the aesthetic imperative was that a world without faith would be chaotic and faith without imagination would be a delusion. Tennyson, Arnold, Swinburne, Hopkins were all sensitive to the stress of the time. They felt that lacking such an aesthetic perception, modern man would be without guidance in a chaotic world which in turn would lead to a meaningless existence.

Newman tried to capture the educative influence of poetry to refine and to purify the native passions of the soul. Thus he brought it into harmony with divine reason. Early Victorian poetic theory emphasized the fact that poetry was a matter of insight into reality. It was considered a question of moral values. This view of poetry at the service of reason, morals and religion was pervasive. Their poetic theory emphasized the responsibility of the poet to capture his own insight into the condition of the world around him. It recognized the relation between poetry and experience of life. The world of things and particularly the world of men with their feelings, aspirations and actions were the raw materials of poetry.

Though the post-Romantic theorists distinguished the immediate end of poetry as pleasure, they were also concerned with its relation to morals and society. The early Victorians

wanted the poet to be the model of their age, its teacher and guide. The poet was to be a mediator between the soul and the Infinite. Poets were both seers and men of genius, and poetry was considered to be a regenerating force. It was conceived as an effective social and moral force. Moral values conditioned the ideal of beauty. Carlyle wanted all literature to have 'a didactic character,' and the poet to 'instruct.' Proctor called poetry a 'moral science' and G. H. Lewes called it, 'the phasis of a religious Idea.' These beliefs of the time were in concord with Newman's aspirations for the ideal. He was one of the 'chief justices' of early Victorian poetic theory. [1] Poets such as Keble, Patmore and William Allingham spoke about the practical values of poetry.

To withstand the growing disbelief of the modern era, earnest men such as Carlyle, Keble and Newman called upon literature for the support of a faltering religion. As the Church was threatened by the liberal spirit, Newman and his Tractarian colleagues recognized the efficacy of poetry in making revealed truths emotionally appealing to minds disposed to scepticism. Carlyle found in poetry "another form of Wisdom of Religion," [2] Keble "the ordained vehicle of revelation," [3] and Newman, "the utterance of the inward emotions of a right moral feeling." [4] But while for Carlyle and for the majority of critics in the Victorian period, poetry was 'end-religion' itself, Keble and Newman held on to the traditional recognition of poetry 'as a means.' [5]

Keble's aesthetic orientation was a 'dialectic of being.' Here the divine insured both the validity of the genuine poet's vision and the lines of analogy drawn between the real world and the world of appearances. He considered artistic insight to be true if the poet was sincere to the vision revealed. Most Victorian critics repudiated Keble's view. As a result there appeared 'a dialectic of becoming.' What was emphasized here

was the need for psychic integrity.[6] The individual poet had to determine his own integrity first in order to define the unity of the universe. While the 'dialectic of being' found its sanction in a realm of existence 'beyond the natural horizon,' the 'dialectic of becoming' found its place within the world of flux. Man is to find significance in the world of here and now. According to this theory, poetry was essentially a process. Matthew Arnold remarked that life was the province of poetry and that existence was a becoming.[7] Frederick Rogers in his exposition of the Victorian aesthetic position spoke of the true poet as one who struggled to find a solution in nature which harmonized everything. Newman agreed with this opinion.[8] Ruskin's view of "the organic fuctioning of the whole man"[9] as the basis for genuine artistic vision was almost universal throughout this period. For a critic of this period, morality was an aesthetic term which referred to the ability of the artist to know by intuition the relative disposition of things and also to perceive subjectively and objectively.

The view that marked the criticism of the period from Carlyle to Arnold was that poetry was a function of the imaginative reason: it was an intellectual disposition. Hence Newman spoke of a 'right moral feeling' which placed "the mind in the very centre of that circle from which all the rays have their origin and range.[10] This intellectual disposition enabled the poet to be his own law, his own teacher and his own judge. Carlyle was of the opinion that a healthy poetic nature wanted no moral law. Newman's views on the nature of poetry depended on the contexts in which he spoke. Thus as a theologian, he wrote, 'Poetry does not address reason.'[11] In Nature and Grace, he remarked that poetry involved, 'human nature exerting the power of reason.' He also contended that poetry and literature "refined the mind by making it what it

was not before."[12] He stated poetry's function with respect to a religion of assent to be ancillary, while with respect to the religion of the gentleman it had to be primary and inclusive as it is synonymous with both religion and science. In this latter sense poetry assumed the function of religion.

The excessive rationalism of the eighteenth century made philosophy disreputable. So in the nineteenth century, poetry was called upon to defend the religious spirit which needed a reinterpretation. The new cult which arose out of poetry's support of religion was humanistic. G. H. Lewes considered the poet as the high-priest of the spirit of the age, for the artist served not only the Infinite but also the finite. Carlyle, Newman and Arnold agreed with the critics of the time that the new cult of the religion of poetry originated as the result of the synthesis of all life and that poetry must assume a religious role. They believed that poetry taking a religious role would lead man to a spiritual haven. The critics were of the opinion that literature in general, and poetry in particular, took the role of religion in a modern age of spiritual bankruptcy.

The early Victorians considered any preoccupation with rhetorical technique as a failure of the faculty of imagination. But they hardly added anything to what had been observed by Wordsworth or Coleridge. Only Ruskin among them emphasized the value of imaginative perception. Carlyle considered imagination important only as a means of insight. The Victorians looked to poetry for the expression of feeling. Both Keble and Newman depicted feeling in their poetry but showed no concern for the art of the poem. They considered the essence of poetry to be 'feeling or 'imagination' or 'expression.' As a result none achieved a technique distinctly his own. The poets found complete expression in the simple lyric form. They made use of the common speech of the time as

the diction for their poetry. With them diction received a new dignity and beauty. There was a wide variety of practice in rhyme, syllabic equivalence, stanzaic structure and prosodic abstractions but it added very little which was essential to the history of English poetry.

The early Victorians described the effect of poetry as a sort of catharsis of emotion. In a world of crumbling values, only the ideal world of imagination held the promise of a haven where the disillusioned could put their trust. So they wanted poetry to provide spiritual exaltation and consolation. Even though, like the Romantics, the early Victorian poets had a new way of looking at things, they practised a certain independence in their censure of the peculiar errors of the Romantics. But they accepted the central insight of Romantic experimentalism and recognized moral stability as the precondition for mature poetry.

The Romanticist relies upon emotion, intuition and imagination, as is seen in Wordsworth and Coleridge. With Newman, it was always Cor ad cor loquitur [13] -- heart speaks to heart -- first, and then followed by thought. Heart speaking to heart is the very essence of Romanticism. Newman sensed the heart-beat of the Divine in human souls, in the beauties of nature, and interpreted their mysteries in the light of Christian symbolism. While Newman's own preferences for the poetry of his contemporaries were often romantic and subjective, his own poetry was largely conceived in the neo-classical spirit. The Classicist uses reason, intellect, facts and restraint. Examples of it could be seen in Alexander Pope, Bolingbroke or Swift.

Newman's literary preferences showed that he delighted in the Greek and the Roman classics and owed a great debt to them. He acknowledged Cicero to be his model. The Virgilian rhythm haunted his prose. He was well acquainted with the writings

of Homer. The works of Gibbon and Hume fascinated him. Among the Augustans, Locke influenced him. The neo-Classicists whom he admired were Addison, Pope, Berkley, Cowper and Crabbe. He admired the manifestation of benevolence and the firm moral fibre in the novels, and the poems of Scott and Southey. Though Newman disapproved of Byron both as a man and as a poet, he admired the third canto of Childe Harold. He read Wordsworth with a certain approval though he was against his pantheism. Among the Victorians, he liked some poems of Tennyson, and Life and Death of Jason by William Morris. He admired Mrs Gaskell and Anthony Trollope. He appreciated Thackeray's insight into human pride and frailty in his novels. He admired the stylistic felicities of Jane Austen.[14]

While with the Victorians the romantic synthesis of the heart and the head broke down, with Newman it was not so. He was a reactionary against Victorian compromise where religion and morals were concerned. But as a literary artist, he was a master of compromise between two literary outlooks directly opposed to each other, the Augustan and the Romantic. He tried to strike a balance between adherence to classical precedence and untrammelled personal expression. In his attitude to books, he was truly Augustan. Eighteenth century writers imbued with the spirit of Virgil, Dante, Milton and Goethe contemplated man against a background vaster than himself. Newman was well-versed in the classics of antiquity and was familiar with the eighteenth century literature of England. He allowed his ideas to grow so as to mould men slowly into a 'perennial' philosophy. The writers of the final decades of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries whom he imitated, pointed to a period of urbane and classical elegance in writing, a time of harmony, decorum and proportion. This explains Newman's self-conscious, and self-corrective attitude. His introspection, his psychological approach, his

preoccupation with fundamentals, his urbanity, his idealism, all of these breathe something of the Augustans. His prose and poetry clearly and gracefully display thoughts with Augustan 'primness' and elegance. Thus Newman was both an Augustan and a Romantic.

The nineteenth century witnessed what seemed to be the collapse of the traditional Christian Community with the result that there were many who were in quest of a mode of vision which would be truly Christian in its outlook on life and society. Here appeared Newman with his belief in the power of religion to 'cleanse' the sick soul without Aristotle's catharsis. The Victorian age has not been completely hospitable to the Christian vision of the world. Hence the individual must use his own subjective intuition into the meaning of creation. Such was Newman's vision. The poet became the new priest as he bestowed fresh meaning on the outworn forms of earth and of human society. Carlyle echoed the same view. For this very reason, Shelley made poets 'the unacknowledged legislators of the world,' and Coleridge linked the Secondary Imagination by analogy to the Primary Imagination, with the 'eternal act of creation in the infinite I am.' In each of these cases, the role of the poet as creator of meaning is being stressed, for the subjective approach to the meaning of the symbols places the responsibility for that meaning, directly upon the poet.

At the same time, Newman was the one man in the last two centuries who could have delivered modern poetry from the bondage of subjectivism which secular Romantic thought imposed upon it, for he was both an Augustan and a Romantic. Moreover he was a Platonist and an Aristotelian. In his theological and literary views, he was a ∮ Platonist who had affinity with the Alexandrian Platonists but his epistemology was primarily Aristotelian. As a child he saw the vision whole and learnt

as he grew up how to divide it into parts. Hence he remarked: "Alas! What are we doing all through life, both as a necessity and as a duty, but unlearning the world's poetry, and attaining to its prose." [15] His Apologia proves emphatically that he was born a Platonist and became an Aristotelian through his education. But he chose poetry to be an expression of his staunch beliefs, his inner self and placed it at the service of religion.

The following section highlights Newman's poetic theories and the religious framework of his poetic views.

2.2. Evolution of Newman's poetic theories

The views Newman, the pilgrim poet held on the nature and function of literature and poetry changed from time to time. Thus we find a movement of growth in the ideas on poetry, expressed in his various essays. He spoke on poetry mainly in his essays: Poetry With Reference to Aristotle's Poetics, Prospects of the Anglican Church, John Keble; in his lecture On the Characteristics of Poetry, and in his lectures in The Idea of a University, especially in the essays on Literature, Christianity and Letters, and English Catholic Literature. These essays and lectures enable us to realize why Newman chose to be the kind of poet that he was, without conforming to the ideas of other poets, even though he was endowed with genuine poetic gifts.

The earliest essay Newman wrote on poetry was Poetry With Reference to Aristotle's Poetics. [16] It was written in 1828 but was published in 1829 and is usually referred to as the 1829 Essay. At the time Newman was moving away from the rationalism of the Oriel Noetics -- a group of Fellows of Oriel College noted for their extreme liberal tendencies. They considered no religious tenets important unless reason showed it to be so.

Newman was fearful of the usurpation of reason. At the time he wrote this Essay, he held a moralistically didactic view of poetry and this was evident in the poems of this period. It was part of his reaction against liberalism and so there is an over-emphasis on the moral element in his theory of poetry, as well as in his practice of it.

In the 1829 Essay, Newman questioned the importance given to plot in Aristotle's Poetics and ignored the Aristotelian doctrine of catharsis. He treated Aristotle's concept of tragedy in a Romantic rather than in a Classical manner. Newman changed Aristotle's objective and realistic conception of a poet's function into an inventive and idealist one. He did not agree with Aristotle's emphasis on plot. For Aristotle plot determined the excellence of a dramatic work, but Newman felt that the actual beauty of Greek tragedy did not arise from the 'correctness of the plot,' but from 'characters, sentiments, and diction.' [17] In his opinion, plot was but the vehicle used to introduce the persons of the drama and it was not the principal object of the poet's art, while Aristotle wanted the action to be 'of a certain magnitude,' an action which was in itself a set of symbols, Newman chose a subjective direction. There was no sense of economy in Aristotle, as Newman used the term by referring to 'the economy of the fable.' Although Aristotle was not concerned with spiritual qualities in the realm of ideas, Newman still looked for spiritual qualities in Aristotle. Newman's emphasis was upon the spirit of beauty which should permeate every part of the composition. For Newman, plot was an economical or sacramental representation of that spirit and so it had to be interpreted subjectively. In Newman's view Aristotle's treatment of dramatic composition was more an exhibition of 'ingenious workmanship' [18] than 'a free and unfettered effusion of genius.' [19] What appealed to Newman was the Romantic doctrine

of genius and inspiration. Here he was one with Wordsworth who thought of poetry as 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings,' and with Coleridge whose emphasis was on character rather than on plot. Like these poets, Newman preferred suggestion, irregularity and vagueness to Greek clarity and form. Again like the Romantics, he exalted personal expression and genius over law and pattern. Newman's treatment of Aristotle's doctrine of ideal imitation was Romantic as well. He emphasized the ideal, conceived in a Romantic pseudo-Platonic fashion as a realm of perfection. He concluded that the plays which possessed the most perfect plots were not necessarily the most poetic. This idea was reinforced by his own emphasis upon spontaneous expression. These views led him to combine religious enthusiasm and lyric intensity as joint criteria for good poetry.

Newman wanted poetry to be an admixture of Aristotelianism, Platonism, Evangelicalism and Romanticism. Hence for him poetry:

> . . . while it recreates the imagination by the superhuman loveliness of its views, it provides a solace for the mind broken by the disappointments and sufferings of actual life; and becomes, moreover, the utterance of the inward emotions of a right moral feeling, seeking a purity and a truth which this world will not give.[20]

In his view of the nature of poetry, as representation of the ideal, Newman took the stand of the Christian Platonist. He would have none of the profane muse; thus making poetry the utterance 'of a right moral feeling,' and 'seeking a purity and a truth,' beyond what this world could give, Newman Platonically rejected the world of the senses. In his opinion, a poetical mind would create eternal forms of beauty and perfection,' [21] in contrast to the common place conceptions

of ordinary minds. At this time, Newman's Evangelical upbringing did not encourage poetry that would be simple, sensuous and passionate, with no moral fibre. Yet his letters at this time were full of delightful descriptions of the beauties of nature.

In Newman's opinion, the poet was in a 'right moral state of heart,' [22] when actual grace was granted to him by God. The work of art recognized the correspondence between man and God. Keble too wanted poets to be concerned with unchanging universal truths. It was for this reason that Newman considered the end of poetry was to give pleasure to the imagination by 'the superhuman loveliness of its views' and to provide consolation to those disappointed by the sufferings of life. In this function, poetry became the expression of the inward emotions of a right moral feeling, which would result in a purity and truth which were not of this world. This was Newman's version of the Aristotelian catharsis. This reminds us of Arnold's demand for consolation from poetry. This view of Newman was typical of the early Victorian period.

It was because the poet approximated to Divine perfection, that the poetical mind was one that was full of the eternal forms of beauty and perfection. Such a mind would have empathy with what was great and splendid in the physical and moral world. In this shift from poetry to 'the poetical mind,' Newman repeated the Coleridgean distinction between the Primary and the Secondary Imagination. For Newman the artist selected the 'great and splendid' and transformed them into a higher substance. For him if art was to be true, it had to convey the dignity of the ideal in the physical world. This emotional-moral conception of art led Newman to form the view that poetry was founded upon 'correct moral perception.' As good poetry delighted in eternal things, it spoke the language of dignity, emotion and refinement. [23] Further, for Newman,

'A moral state of heart' was 'the formal and scientific condition of a poetical mind.'[24] Thus he tried to determine the quality of a poem in relation to the moral character of the poet.

Newman considered poetic talent, "the originality of right moral feeling," which he defined as "the power of abstracting for oneself, and is in thought what strength of mind is in action." [25] According to him 'originality' would activate the world of beauty, grace, purity, refinement and good feeling [26] and thus reconstruct the world. Here he emphasized the synthetic power of the Secondary Imagination. In Newman's view, 'originality' was a qualitative power which enabled the poet to transform ideas and sensations, and reshape them into expressions, concommitant with his moral character. According to Coleridge's theory of Imagination, 'originality' was the vitalizing power of the Secondary Imagination. Poetic talent was the power to abstract the correct moral stimuli. Newman was of the opinion that moral stimuli could be ideally perceived and if so originality and poetic talent would be one.

When Newman wrote this 1829 Essay, he had already studied Butler's Analogy of Religion from which he derived the idea of analogy and the doctrine of probability. The argument from analogy led Newman to view Nature as a symbol of spiritual reality. So in the Apologia, he spoke about 'the Sacramental system,' which was the doctrine that the material phenomena were both types and the instruments of real things unseen.[27] Keble expressed this same doctrine in The Christian Year. A Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. The Sacramental system appeared to be the central important ingredient in Newman's conception of poetry. Thus his poetic theory, with its emphasis on correct moral perception was developed analogically as correspondence between man and God.

He further spoke of the special grace of the writers of the New Testament and of those who had absorbed their spirit. Thus it was evident that Newman regarded poetry in a manner that was meant to approximate the mystery of the Sacrament. The emphasis upon grace suggested the idea of the mystery which was attached to the creation of great poetry, wrought through supernatural inspiration. This accounted for the particular nature of revealed religion and the 'peculiar grace of mind' of the Biblical authors. His conception of poetry was also an elaboration of the traditional idea of divine inspiration. Yet he related inspiration to grace in terms of the mystery of the Sacrament in Christ and the Church. Thus God gave supernatural assistance through divine inspiration.

It was because of its nature that 'actual grace' enabled man to perform spiritual actions. Hence Newman felt that an immoral man could still write moral poetry just as the moral state of a priest does not affect the efficacy of the sacrament. The 'virtuous and divine nature' to which he referred was the strength of actual grace and due to this the poet was in a 'right moral state of heart.' However, the work of art was not a tool of Divine Power. It was a way of recognizing the correspondence between man and God. It was for this reason that the artist, through his art, recreated the imagination by its superhuman loveliness. Because of its supernatural nature, poetry provided comfort to minds weighed down by the disappointments and the sufferings of this earthly life.

When he spoke of 'A moral state of heart' as 'the formal and scientific condition of a poetical mind,' [28] Newman transferred to the heart the moral judgement which he had previously reserved for the mind and the imagination. Because of the divine nature within him even a bad man could write a moral poem because even motives that were not the purest could lead to good actions. Newman seemed to maintain that there was

a moral universe behind the poem and the poet, regardless of the moral character of the poet. Thus he found a moral value in some poems even when the poet was destitute of correct moral perception. Despite these possibilities the poetry of a vicious mind would be debased while poetry founded upon right moral feeling, would be centred at that point from which all good proceeded. [29]

Newman did not approve of Byron's moral state of heart and felt that the incidental beauty of his poems did not redeem their 'unworthy' substance. In his opinion, poems were immoral when 'unworthy' substances were introduced into their subject matter. Like Arnold after him, Newman too indicted Lucretius for his moral incompetence. [30] Victorians as a whole did not approve of Byron and Tractarians generalized the character of poets on the basis of their writings. Newman considered that Hume and Gibbon had 'unpoetical minds,' [31] and deplored the 'unpoetical end' in Dryden's "Alexander's Feast."[32] For Keble and Newman the term 'poetic' stood for what was imaginative, aesthetic, mythic and moral. In Newman's opinion, Spenser, Milton, Cowper, Wordsworth and Southey approximated to this moral centre. [33] To Keble, the true object of poetry was to raise men above the state of sin and to recreate the ideal and he tried to awaken the poets to this task. Hence he disapproved of Byron who lingered over passion and vice.

Being well-versed in Greek literature, Newman was aware of the two views held by the Greeks as to the proper end of poetry. The traditional view was that poetry had a direct moral purpose. Hence the primary function of a poet was that of a teacher. Homer was thought of as the great teacher, who laid down rules needed for the conduct of life rather than as an inspired poet who charmed the imagination. Obviously Newman took his place along with Homer, in his passionate commitment to right conduct in human life. Aristotle for the first time

attempted to separate the theory of aesthetics from that of morals. He severed himself from the older and more purely didactic tendency of the Greeks. Though he did not altogether cast off the earlier influence, he did not allow the moral purpose of the poet and the moral effects of his art to take the place of his artistic end. If the poet failed to produce aesthetic pleasure, he failed in the specific function of his art.

The Aristotelian doctrine, handed down to modern times, often took a tinge of Roman thought which combined both the ethical and the aesthetical aspects. Thus in his Apologie for Poetrie, Sir Philip Sidney stated that the end of poetry was 'delightful teaching,' following the Ars Poetica of Horace, rather than that of Aristotle. The Elizabethans in general, concurred with Sidney's view. In the course of time Dryden brought about a change in this view when he wrote in the spirit of Aristotle that he considered delight to be the chief end of poetry and that it instructed only as it delighted. Arnold attempted to judge poetry by its moral content rather than by its technique and form. But Newman was concerned also with the moral character of poets. In this essential link between art and morality, between the character of the artist and the worth of his art, what was most evident was the Tractarian tone. These were fundamental positions both of the Tractarian and of the Victorian poetics as a whole. Keble wanted a poet to choose his subject worthily, and to be courageously and consistently loyal to it. The poetical pleasure was to awaken a moral feeling by way of association. Newman appreciated Southey's portrayal of characters, keeping in mind 'the doctrine of future life.'[34] Newman's delight in poetry revolved round those aspects of life which would endure, and his efforts were directed towards letting men see the transitoriness of life, set against eternity.

In the 1829 Essay Newman placed poetical talent in a religious frame of reference. Hence he considered the Bible as a literary product specifically founded upon correct moral perception. In his opinion Christianity was poetical as it unfolded a world of revelation full of symbols to delight the mind and enkindle emotion. Here his religious and poetic theories merged into one. He spoke of 'Revealed Religion' as especially poetical, because its disclosures would engage the intellect and present a beauty to satisfy the moral nature.[35] These disclosures provided ideal forms of excellence in which poetical minds delighted. They transported us to a realm of sublime views and pure feelings. Thus Newman found an intimate relation between right moral feeling and true poetry. Hence his assertion that religion itself was the truest poetry. In his opinion, 'With Christians, a poetical view of things' was ' a duty.'[36] Newman's poetic sensibilities and mystic vision brought home to him the supernatural beauty of Christianity. It placed before men sublime views, divine favour and a noble mission. These would require the practice of Christian virtues which were poetical, qualities such as meekness, gentleness, compassion, contentment, modesty, along with other humane virtues.[37] Here Newman equated great poetry with the kind of inspiration he found in Christianity. He formed a theory of writing in which the poetry should express the deep religious, moral and Platonic feelings of the subconscious.

The Bible, the early Fathers of the Church, the Prayer Book, the Church Liturgy and the Sacraments exercised a great influence on Newman's mind. These had a better cleansing effect for Newman than the catharsis/Aristotle had spoken of. Newman's poems and writings reveal the intimate hold the Bible had on him. He found the poetry of the Bible most moving. The books of the Bible were inspired by a pure and lofty faith and they in turn inspire the same noble sentiments on its readers.

In his opinion even ordinary human beings were no longer imperfect men, but beings endowed with divine favour. Keble also considered poetry and religion to be one in essence.

Newman's vision of the world was that of a Christian Platonist. The Christian conception pointed him to a higher life and a spiritual universe. Platonism taught the view that the visible world was a veil which held from our view the invisible world which was real and unchanging. The invisible world called us to its hidden presence as would a pale reflection in a mirror. Thus Platonism was similar to the Christian conception which discerned and contemplated the spiritual universe at the very heart of the concrete reality. Newman's spiritual outlook was deeply affected by these concepts and they inspired his poems, sermons and writings. To Newman, the present life with all its attractions was fundamentally deceptive because it veiled the only reality that mattered to him. Hence like Shelley in Adonais, Newman would have said: "Life, like a dome of many coloured glass, / Stains the white radiance of Eternity, ..." Finally, the only crowning presence which dwelt in the world was that of God. Like a sage, Newman tried to lead men to that world of invisible realities which lay at the deeper level of experience. With the help of religion and with his extraordinary sensitivity, insight and genius for reflection, Newman communicated his experience in a totally unique way.

In the 1829 Essay on Poetry, Newman also explicated his views on the technical and practical side of writing poetry. Newman and the Tractarians considered a concern for technique indecorous. They were exponents of reserve and were not concerned with apparent superficialities. The outward forms of poetry were only important to Newman, in so far as they revealed a deeper meaning. Using a telling metaphor he wrote of poetic technique as a 'metrical garb'[38] which was but the

outward expression of the music and harmony which the poem contained. In his opinion the poet's nature led to contemplation rather than to communication. According to him the obscurity in his lyric utterance could spring from the contemplative nature of the poet, the intensity of his feeling, the originality of his perceptions and his disregard for genius. [39] This would account for a certain want of accuracy and for a certain obscurity in Newman's own practice as a poet. He was also aware of the fact that obscurity could also spring from defects in the power of clear and eloquent expression. Newman belonged obviously to the former group of poets. The true poet was never interested in language for its own sake and so the language would be simple and concise. The early Victorians never approved of eloquence in poetry. The Tractarians wrote mostly lyrical poetry which were examples of the poet's contemplative habit of mind. This would require a certain sympathy in the reader. At the same time Newman admitted a need for technical skill and the power of illustration in literary composition.[40]

In Keble's opinion, the poet unburdened himself of profoundly religious impulses by the exercise of imagination. But in communicating religious knowledge, the poet should use 'due religious reserve' because of the sacredness of the subject. He wanted veiled modes of utterance to prevent outpourings from being vulgar, profane and merely emotional. He considered self-control to be the proof that the poet was mastered by a Higher Power. He thought that modesty, reserve and consistency were trustworthy tests of true and genuine feeling in the poet. In his opinion poetry served as a 'safety valve' for pent up feelings. Reserve could be practised by the laws of cadence and rhythm. Keble found that the allegorical forms in Shakespeare and Spenser suited the true reserve a poet ought to feel.

Newman found the power of expressing meaning in a logical manner important. The poet had to have a command of language in order to convey the exact shade of meaning to his readers. Newman like Wordsworth before him, scorned the idea of diction as external embellishment. Skills in the art of composition were to be nurtured only as a means to an end. Newman gave due credit to Pope for combining the grace of 'an inward principle of poetry' which supplied him with 'the beautiful and splendid to work by.' [41] Virgil's style was identified with his conceptions and 'the harmony of the verse' and Milton echoed 'the inward music' of his thoughts.[42] In Newman's opinion Moore's style was ornamental, Cowper's and Walter Scott's 'slovenly,' while Sophocles wrote without studied attention to style. He considered Homer's poems 'manly, simple,' 'energetic and varied.' [43]

Newman lived in an age beset with the temptation to obtain the approval of the public. Yet he held to his views that poetry must satisfy the moral nature and that talent for composition was "no essential part of poetry, though indispensable to its exhibition" [44] and that revealed religion was especially poetical. A firm Christian morality was essential in Newman's scheme. Hence he stood apart and sang in a strain all his own, those truths which he believed in and experienced and which he hoped for in a world to come.

The view of poetic inspiration held by Newman and Keble indicated their desire to enlist great literature in their attempt to rekindle the ethical and religious imaginations of their contemporaries. It was Romanticism with a difference. Yet he conveyed much of the Romantic spirit into his remarks on the classics in his Essay. When literary and religious issues met, there was a strong moral tone in his judgement.

Though the 1829 Essay lacked a fresh outlook on poetry, Newman occasionally passed pronouncements of literary insight

unusual in his day. For example, though Byron's prestige as a poet was at its height when he wrote the Essay, Newman was ahead of many of his contemporaries in regarding the poetry of Byron for the most part as eloquent rhetoric. He considered it a fault of the day that it mistook eloquence for poetry. [45] At the same time he regarded poetical eloquence, in the technical sense of the term as more or less necessary and explained what it consisted of. He considered 'image' as the basic element in poetry which expressed intense emotions and feelings of the heart.

In the 1829 Essay, Newman did not accept the Romantic doctrine of man as essentially good. He did not agree with Rousseau's view of the noble savage, with potentials for improvement until an earthly paradise was attained. In Newman's view, nothing short of revealed religion could change man or the world. So feeling the tremendous stress of reality at the heart of things, and in his search for a warmer and deeper understanding of man, he moved away from the philosophy of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century England. He incorporated a philosophy quite distinct from the former and modified his view of literature as well as that of religious truth. Unlike the extreme Romanticists, Newman broke away from neither the Classical nor the Christian traditions but tried to recapture both in his search for truth.

With his ever developing intellectual and religious outlook, Newman moved away from his early Romantic literary ideals. Thus, though he retained some of his early views, at a later time he did admit those who lacked correct moral perception to the circle of poets. His definition of poetry as something ideal was not only neo-Platonic and Coleridgean but it also echoed the taste of the eighteenth century school. The 1829 Essay with its serious and persuasive tone, its independent and disrespectful attitude towards old authority,

its enthusiasm for originality, imagination and its tendency to assimilate all poetry to the quality of the lyric, is a good example of early Victorian criticism.[46]

In his sermon of 1831, on The Danger of Accomplishments, Newman deplored the tendency of poetry and literary composition to make men 'trifling and unmanly' by separating feeling from acting.[47] He wanted feeling and action to go hand in hand. Hence what he did not accept was 'the mere literary ethos' and 'the mere poetry.' He always made clear his commitment to religion over literature. In The Idea of a University he stated that knowledge in itself was never enough and that only religion could cure the radical diseases of the human heart. He also distanced himself from an Arnoldian reliance upon 'culture' alone to overcome the moral anarchy.

Newman wanted poets to be seers and to confront the agents of error and sin. In the essay of 1839, Prospects of the Anglican Church,[48] the poetry he espoused was one in which the quest for an 'inner paradise' was given Romantic expression. To him the measure of his religion and his poetry was 'the spiritual awakening of spiritual wants,'[49] and not the inherited forms in which the spirit expressed itself in the past. As a result, his poetry moved away from the traditional language of English Christian poetry. He believed truth to be constant and he also believed that it dwelt in our conscience and heart, while its manifestations changed with the changing times.

In this essay on Prospects of the Anglican Church, he declared that poetry was mysticism, for in his view the mysticism of the ancients and poetry of the moderns penetrated below the surface of things. It had the power to transport men from the material to the invisible world.[50] Thus both mysticism and poetry served the same religious purpose. In this essay he gives due credit to Coleridge for instilling a higher philosophy into inquiring

minds, to Walter Scott who, through 'fantastic fiction' and Wordsworth who through 'philosophical meditation,' appealed to the same high principles and led their readers in the same direction.

Wordsworth, Coleridge and Newman were Romantics but Newman's Romantic outlook differed greatly from that of his predecessors. Newman did not accept Wordsworth's concept of Nature. He accepted the doctrine of economy as the divine mode of revealing sacred truths and thus joined the group of the neo-Platonists. Both Wordsworth and Newman saw with the 'inner eye' the deeper core of truth. But what mattered to Wordsworth was the visible world and the world of physical sensations. Newman found the unseen world as real to him as were natural surroundings to Wordsworth. To Wordsworth the life of Nature and the life of sensations were essential to 'see into the life of things.' For Newman these worlds were psychological and theological. Nevertheless, Newman shared with Wordsworth some qualities of a 'childhood visionary.'

Newman did not approve of the claims of the poetic imagination Wordsworth and Coleridge advocated, neither did he trust their concept of symbolism. For Newman Christianity was more than a set of symbolic truths. Newman found in Christ and the Church the 'Object Correlative.' This phrase of Newman was later taken up by T. S. Eliot.[51] Newman tried to control the subjective inner world and established a connection between the desiring mind and what he termed the true 'Object Correlative' or the reality to those inner needs. For Newman, religion became his poetry. It satisfied completely his intellectual, emotional and aesthetic needs.

The mystical strain in Alexandrian philosophy and Romantic poetry brought Wordsworth, Coleridge and Newman in parallel directions in the quest for an 'inner paradise.' They reacted against a secularized philosophy in the Church, against Bethamism and political economy in the society. Hence both the Romantics and Newman turned to mysticism which had the power to enable men to reach the invisible world. In his quest for an 'inner paradise,' Newman

turned to Christianized Platonism which nourished his belief in the autonomy of conscience. But Wordsworth and Coleridge accepted a secularized Christianity that placed less emphasis upon ethical imperatives and upon the knowledge of God. Coleridge's neo-Platonist idealism was similar to Newman's Christian idealism. They both believed in the division between the visible and the invisible world. Wordsworth, Coleridge and Newman looked for the subjective experience of the mind, that 'serene and blessed mood' in which the husks of things dropped away and nature was transcended. Thus they focused their attention on 'the living mind' as the 'cornerstone of belief.'

The objective of Tractarian aesthetics was to establish a strong link between poetry and religion. Coleridge who defined Imagination in religious terms and likened it to the Infinite act of creation was an early influence on Tractarian poetics. Like Coleridge, the Tractarians regarded religion and aesthetics as kindred fields. This was the basis for a religiously developed Tractarian aesthetics. Coleridge contributed to Newman's 'spirit afloat' in bringing together aesthetic and religious concepts and terminology. Thus the Tractarians were the recipients of a Romantic aesthetic heritage which concerned itself with the nature of artistic creativity and the nature of the artist. But the Romantics did not emphasize the role of religion as much the Tractarians and especially as Newman did.

Newman found the teachings of the Church and every aspect of nature an occasion for worship. This urged him to use his talents in religious pursuits which included the writing of poetry. Thus his understanding of religion made his poetics inextricable from worship. God speaking and urging within was Newman's view of the inner power of the religious poetic impulse and in him it was expressed in suppressed intensity. Hence, Newman combined Biblical and religious allusions to convey his message.

In 1846, in his essay on John Keble, [52] Newman expressed

views similar to those expressed in his 1829 Essay on Church and her poetry. In the essay on John Keble, written shortly after his entrance into the Catholic Church, Newman's own logic became poetical, in the reference to the rituals of the Church. To him the Church herself was 'the most sacred and august of poets' and her discipline of 'the affections and passions,' her ordinances and practices a 'cleansing' of the sick soul, in the Aristotelian sense. [53] In the Church he found a poet, full of music 'to soothe the sad and control the wayward.' [54] The story of the Church and her saints would feed the imagination of the Romantic, and was rich in symbol and imagery. For him the Church and her liturgy were "a fulfilment of some dream of childhood, or aspiration of youth." [55] The Church inspired the poets born to her to write hymns and to compose chants and thus for Newman the aesthetic unity of poetry was analogous to the divine unity of the Church. It was she who inspired him to write hymns, compose chants, and poems in her honour, and to guide her people to serve her and to live a life worthy of her. In this essay on John Keble when he commented that poetry was the refuge of those who had not the Catholic Church to repose upon, [56] he made clear that he had no use for Matthew Arnold's substitution of poetry for religion.

In the lecture of 1849, On the Characteristics of Poetry, [57] Newman spoke of poetry as the science of the beautiful which refined and cultivated the mind. He did not approve of Milton poeticizing evil and making Satan the hero in Paradise Lost; neither did he approve of Byron's attractive portrayal of Cain. [58] The Romantic leaning in him accepted the view that poetry was the perception, and the poetical art the expression of the beautiful. He wanted the beautiful to consist of harmony, proportion and poetic justice. He did not approve of tragedy as he found no poetic justice there, for evil was not adequately punished. He desired poetry to move the

affections, as the saints were moved by the beauty of the Supreme Being. For him, sublimity and imagination were the great ingredients of poetry. In a Platonic consideration of artistic beauty, he praised Southey's Thalaba.[59] Like Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley, he sought a more emotional and imaginative conception of poetry. According to him true poetry partook of gentleness, simplicity, sweetness and even playfulness. Newman felt that though melancholy could exist, misanthropy had no place in true poetry.[60]

Three decades after his 1829 Essay, there was a remarkable change in his attitude towards poetry. The lectures of 1855 and 1858 published in The Idea of a University contain his later views on poetry and literature. His lecture on Literature[61] contains the most mature expressions of his literary theory. By this time he had arrived at a clear and consistent point of view. Many of his earlier points of view were thoroughly assimilated into his general theory. The early influences of Johnson and even Plato were discarded, bringing him closer now to Coleridge and Mill. He learnt from them and made their ideas his own and developed them consistently with his own philosophy. At this time, in his opinion, the author of a creative work had to have two points to consider. First of all, he had to have something to say and secondly he ought to know how to say it. He had to be master of them both, with the result that in the work of art they were inseparable.[62]

In this lecture, Newman placed inspiration above mere 'workmanship.' Giving examples of great poets like Homer, Shakespeare and others, he showed how inspiration brought forth poetical outpourings from the core of their hearts.[63] He considered poetry "the fire within the author's breast which overflows in the torrent of his burning, irresistable eloquence; it is the poetry of his inner soul."[64] What he tried to show was that literature expressed not objective but

subjective truth. Hence it was essentially personal, for thoughts and ideas belonged to the person, and the symbols conveyed these thoughts. According to him scientific study was 'objective' because it dealt with 'things' and not 'thoughts' and it took the external world as an end in itself and not as a vehicle for invisible ideas.[65]

In place of Aristotle's emphasis upon plot, Newman preferred a subjective or 'poetic' treatment in which the plot was a sacramental representation of 'the fire within the author's breast,' instead of a 'thing' possessing its own objective value. According to Newman, poetry transcended things and passed on to that moment when the light of the senses was suspended. For him, the purpose of literary symbols was to convey what lay in the mind of the poet just as the purpose of religious symbols and of the whole natural order was to convey economically what lay in the mind of God. For both of these devotional poets, Keble and Newman, poetical forms of thought and language were channels of supernatural knowledge to mankind. Poetry was a gift of great importance to religion, for it was the poetic mode of vision which made it possible for man, while still on earth, to reach the knowledge of God. Hence they felt that poetry was indeed mysticism.

Aristotle considered the poet to be a 'maker,' and his poem 'a thing made,' but for Newman, speaking in his lecture on Literature, poems were 'born, not framed;' they were 'a strain rather than composition.'[66] The Dream of Gerontius, more than any other of his poems, exemplifies the genesis of poetry which wells up in free flowing inspiration, uncrafted, yet fully developed. When Newman felt that he might die soon and would attain that Beatific Vision for which his soul always longed, the insatiable desire of his heart for that lasting union with God gushed forth in unparalleled poetical eloquence in his poem The Dream of Gerontius.

There was still a touch of moralism about the conception of poetry, as expressed in his lecture. Through the words of the poets were expressed what was common to the race of man. Poets brought mankind together and became spokesmen and prophets of the human family. But this was far from the earlier rigid moral purpose demanded of the poet in the 1829 Essay. In a note added to this Essay in 1874, Newman confessed that he had outgrown his idea of poetry. He now recognized that the 1829 Essay had omitted one of the essential conditions of the idea of poetry, namely, its relation to affections. Now for him, poetry was the gift of moving the affections through the imagination, and its object was the beautiful. Thus the poet while conveying his message or vision ought to move the affections of men.

In The Idea of a University Newman stated that to be fully aware of the poetic beauty around us, like children we had to be aware of the immeasurable, the impenetrable and the mysterious around us and gaze at it, without imagining that we could comprehend it. Thus for him, poetry was an experience of the imagination and the affections, an intimation from a Platonic supersensible realm of being. This view was limited as it left out much genuine poetry. It was only one way of conceiving poetry and poetic experience. In contrast to Newman's view, Arnold's Preface of 1853, looked to poetry for an experience of those perfections which the world could not give. On the whole, Newman denied to literature that power of grasping universal and objective realities which Matthew Arnold saw in the great writers. For Newman reality was absolute knowledge and that lay beyond the power of literature, which was the record of 'sinful man.' Literature according to him, cultivated one's taste, strengthened one's judgement, imparted poise and grace to one's mind and released one from prejudice. But for him, only the Church could give insight into

the real nature of the world and its destiny, into religious objectives and experiences.

In course of time Newman came to hold the opinion that literature was the untutored movement of the reason, imagination, passion and affections of the natural man, "the noble, lawless savage of God's intellectual creation." [67] Hence literature could also express the sinful condition of man, the beauty and the fierceness, the sweetness and the offensiveness of the natural man. In the 1829 Essay, Newman had stated that revealed religion and the Christian virtues were especially poetical. So the maturity of his views is evident here. At this time, he wanted literature to embrace human nature in its manifold character and did not exclude works of genius for moral reasons. This could be due to a fusion of the Augustinian view of human nature and his reflection on the problem of inspiration and its relating to the doctrine of grace. Though Newman was of one mind with Shelley on many points in the 1829 Essay, the main difference between them lay in their doctrines of inspiration. While Shelley equated poetic genius with inspiration, Newman had held the view that exercise of the poetic imagination was a natural function, which could be linked to personal purity or personal profligacy.

Imagination was not that strong a word for Newman when he wrote his 1829 Essay, but it was so by 1870, when he wrote the book The Grammar of Assent . By that time imagination had become for him the prime instrument of religious perception. In this work we find Newman reacting against mere Platonism. It was not the 'notional' but the 'real' that seemed right to him now, because the former involved an act of the theological intellect while the latter involved the religious imagination which spoke through images and symbols, and affected not only the intellect but also the emotions and

thus the whole person.[68] Newman had developed the Romantic theological tradition of Wordsworth and Coleridge with sensitivity, skill and brilliant reasoning. Yet he did not want to be a poet in the sense that they were and to make use of the gift of a myth-making capacity. Newman considered his poetic work to be of a sacred nature and emphasized the importance of imagination in coming to a belief in Christ. He wanted this to be the highest function of the imagination and after that was accomplished, it could devote itself to poetry.

Newman's opinion of literature was in keeping with the whole Greek and Christian view of man. His view was also Romantic, religious and other worldly, but his view of prose and his practice were both Classical. In fact he synthesized in himself the best in these various outlooks and thus stands out not only among his contemporaries but even among writers of twentieth century. The ruling idea of his literary works is the Christian conception of man but the conclusions he drew from this traditional view were clearly his own. Newman's contribution was a view of literature which is the blended might of humanism and religion. Realizing the need for this blended might in his own day, he worked whole heartedly to create an atmosphere in which it could be achieved.

Hence Newman's works echo the nobility and saintliness of his character and they aim at guiding men by the same 'Kindly Light' which he followed with a rare singleness of purpose. Every artist has a unique vision. This he expresses while the other vision he overlooks. The vision that Newman had was Christian Platonic. As a result, his text was the World Beyond. The main objective of his works was to help men to follow the light of his vision which was to live a noble Christian life in this world, that it might prepare them to be worthy heirs of the world which lay behind the visible reality. The world of today stands in need of humanism and religion in its own

legitimate place, for at present culture makes but a poor show without its counterpart religion.

The following chapter attempts to throw light on the poetic traits of the pilgrim.

Notes

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[55] John Henry Newman, Essays Critical and Historical Vol. 2. 443.

[56] John Henry Newman, Essays Critical and Historical Vol. 2. 442.

[57] John Henry Newman, "On the Characteristics of Poetry" 1-5.

[58] John Henry Newman, "On the Characteristics of Poetry" 2-3.

[59] John Henry Newman, "On the Characteristics of Poetry" 3-4.

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[61] John Henry Cardinal Newman, "Literature. A Lecture in the School of Philosophy and Letters, 'The Idea of a University ed, Martin J. Svaglic. 201-221.

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[65] Martin J. Svaglic, ed. The Idea of a University 206-207.

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[67] Martin J. Svaglic,ed. "English Catholic Literature," The Idea of a University 221-247.

[68] John Henry Newman, An Essay in Aid of A Grammar of Assent. intro. Nicholas Lash (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979) 15.

3. TRAITS OF A POET IN THE PILGRIM

An inborn aptitude for literature was a remarkable characteristic of Newman even from early childhood. He started composing verse during play time at school at Ealing. His childhood activities showed that he was a very imaginative child whose happiest refuge was his own mind. Feeling and imagination were two strong elements of his character. He loved music, poetry and drama. The cadences of his prose and the lyrical strain of the poem The Dream of Gerontius bear witness to his fine musical ear. Newman expresses his romantic love of music in the poem "The Isles of the Sirens."[1] Finding the strains from the captain's guitar agonizingly romantic he writes:

> Cease, Stranger, cease those piercing notes,
> The craft of Siren choirs;
> Hush the seductive voice, that floats
> Upon the languid wires. (1-4)

An example of that unity of opposites which was a distinctive feature of Newman's mind and character is also seen in the poem. He was both an artist and an ascetic:

> Weak self! with thee the mischief lies,
> Those throbs a tale disclose;
> Nor age nor trial has made wise
> The man of many woes. (9-12)

Thus he transports his pilgrim soul from every sensuous pleasure to the adoration of the Ultimate.

On his Mediterranean journey, he speaks about the singing in Roman Churches: "The voices are certainly very surprising, . . . they have the art of continuing their notes so long and

equably, . . . the notes are clearer, more subtle and piercing, and more impassioned than those of an organ." [2]

Newman's love of music is also evident in that beautiful passage in the University Sermons where he speaks of music as an outward and earthly judicious handling of doctrine under which great wonders unknown are represented or embodied:

> There are seven notes in the scale; make them fourteen; yet what a slender outfit for so vast an enterprise! What science brings so much out of so little ? Out of what poor elements does some great master in it create his new world! Shall we say that all this exuberant inventiveness is a mere ingenuity or trick of art, like some game or fashion of the day, without reality, without meaning ? We may do so; and then, perhaps, we shall also account the science of theology to be a matter of words; yet, as there is a divinity in the theology of the Church, which those who feel cannot communicate, so is there also in the wonderful creation of sublimity and beauty of which I am speaking. To many men the very names which the science employs are utterly incomprehensible. To speak of an idea or a subject seems to be fanciful or trifling, to speak of the views which it opens upon us to be childish extravagance; yet is it possible that, that inexhaustible evolution and disposition of notes, so rich yet so simple, so intricate yet so regulated, so various yet so majestic, should be a mere sound, which is gone and perishes ? Can it be that those mysterious stirrings of heart, and keen emotions, and strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence, should be wrought, in us by what is unsubstantial, and comes and goes, and begins and ends in itself ?

> It is not so; it cannot be. No; they have escaped from some higher sphere; they are the outpourings of eternal harmony in the medium of created sound; they are echoes from our Home; they are the voice of Angels, or the magnificat of Saints, or living laws of Divine governance, or the Divine Attribute; something are they besides themselves, which we cannot compass, which we cannot utter;— though mortal man, and he perhaps not otherwise distinguished above his fellows, has the gift of eliciting them.[3]

The pilgrim poet's love of music finds in this passage a beautiful analogy. The poet lingers over the wonders of musical expression and suggests that inspite of its limitations human nature contains within itself elements capable of expansion into infinite and eternal meaning.

Newman was also a keen observer of the world around him. His delicacy of perception enabled him to receive impressions from the outside world and his mental agility transformed them into something beautiful. He had a marvellous power of visualization and portrayed persons and places with unusual realism. His descriptions of the beauties of nature during his Mediterranean journey glow with the colour and shade of the pictures of Turner. Here is a passage where Newman describes to his mother the sensuous glories of the country side in Devonshire:

> What strikes me most is the strange richness of everything. The rocks blush into every variety of colour, the trees and fields are emeralds, and the cottages are rubies. A beetle I picked up at Torquay was green and gold as the stone it lay upon, and a squirrel which ran up a tree here just now was not the pale reddish-brown to which I am accustomed, but a bright brown-red. Nay,

> my very hands and fingers look rosy, like Homer's Aurora, and I have been gazing on them with astonishment. All this wonder I know is simple, and therefore, of course, do not you repeat it. The exuberance of the grass and the foliage is oppressive, as if one had not room to breathe, though this is a fancy—the depth of the valleys and the steepness of the slopes increase the illusion—and the Duke of Wellington would be in a fidget to get some commanding point to see the country from. The scents are extremely fine, so very delicate yet so powerful, and the colours of the flowers as if they were all shot with white. The sweet peas especially have the complexion of a beautiful face. They trail up the wall mixed with myrtles as creepers. As to the sunset, the Dartmoor heights look purple, and the sky close upon them a clear orange. When I turn back and think of Southampton Water and the Isle of Wight, they seem by contrast to be drawn in Indian ink or pencil. Now I cannot make out that this is fancy; for why should I fancy ? I am not especially in a poetic mood. I have heard of the brilliancy of Cintra, and still more of the East, and I suppose that this region would pale beside them, yet I am content to marvel at what I see, and think of Virgil's description of the purple meads of Elysium. Let me enjoy what I feel, even though I may unconsciously exaggerate.[4]

His letters during the Mediterranean tour abound with such sensuous descriptions. The invasion of locusts in his novel Callista is a fine imaginative description.[5] Newman's poem The Dream of Gerontius portrays his Dantean power of describing supernatural experiences. In his love for the supersensuous and in his love for symbols he is Platonic.

Newman always expressed ecstasy over colour and scent. In The Dream of Gerontius he mentions 'ecstatic odours.' As he got better

in his Sicilian illness and took tea, he wrote of his reaction: "I could not help crying out with delight."[6]

Newman was over and above a student of human nature. His primary concern was that of the whole person, of mind, soul and body forming a unity. This also led him to discern the nature of the world in which man finds himself. His vision of a world made miserable by sin in the Apologia reveals the hidden poet speaking in prose. For Newman, to look upon the world was to be conscious of its very nature:

> To consider the world in its length and breadth, its various history, the many races of man, their starts, their fortunes, their mutual alienation, their conflicts; and then their ways, habits, governments, forms of worship; their enterprises, their aimless courses, their random achievements and acquirements, the impotent conclusion of long-standing facts, the tokens so faint and broken of a superintending design, the blind evolution of what turn out to be great powers of truth, the progress of things, as if from unreasoning elements, not towards final causes, the greatness and littleness of man, his far-reaching aims, his short duration, the curtain hung over his futurity, the disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, mental anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin, the pervading idolatries, the corruptions, the dreary hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race, so fearfully yet exactly described in the Apostle's words, "having no hope and without God in the world,"—all this is a vision to dizzy and appal; and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution.[7]

These lines communicate the nature and meaning of man. It is the artistic representation of the growth of a soul steeped in the universal emotions of hope and fear, sadness and joy. The simple

words used here are delicately and sensitively adjusted with intense powerful feelings and imagination which is captivating and delightful.

The aesthetic aspects of Newman's temperament left their mark on his style. His interest in the forms of nature revealed to him a constant mirroring of its own moods in the temper of man. This motivated his meditations on the passing away of all things with time and at the same time the continuation of life on earth. His sermon The Second Spring draws a picture of the revival of Catholicism in England pointing out its parallels from nature. The sermon is a lyrical effusion which radiates rare beauty and music:

> We have familiar experience of the order, the constancy, the perpetual renovation of the material world which surround us. Frail and transitory as is every part of it, restless and migratory as are its elements, never-ceasing as are its changes, still it abides. It is bound together by a law of permanence, it is set up in unity; and, though it is ever dying, it is ever coming to life again. Dissolution does but give birth to fresh modes of organization, and one death is a parent of a thousand lives.[8]

The long introductory succession of 'r's in the first two sentences enhances the effect of the opening harmonies innate in the sermon. These stand in contrast to the tranquil simplicity at the close of the second sentence which is gentle 'still abides.' Then the theme continues quietly by a chain of phrases of pure, magical beauty:

> Each hour, as it comes, is but a testimony, how fleeting, yet how secure, how certain, is the great whole. It is like an image on the waters, which is ever the same, though the waters ever flow. Change upon change -- yet one change cries out to another, like the alternate Seraphim, in paise and in glory

> of their Maker. The sun sinks to rise again; the day is swallowed up in the gloom of the night, to be born out of it, as fresh as if it had never been quenched. Spring passes into summer and through summer and autumn into winter, only the more surely, by its own ultimate return, to triumph over that grave, towards which it resolutely hastened from its first hour. We mourn over the blossoms of May, because they are to wither; but know, withal, that May is one day to have its revenge upon November, by the revolution of that solemn circle which never stops--which teaches us in our height of hope, ever to be sober, and in our depth of desolation, never to despair.[9]

The lines have an unusual poetic power and unique perfection. Ordinary words are made use of with rare distinction and harmony. Here we find the poet, the musician and the master of prose blended into one inseparable whole. The poet makes use of analogy, similes, visions and metaphors.

As the poet ponders over man's mortality and on the winter which overtakes him, the poet is transported to a vision of the second temple which rises above the ruins of the old:

> Man rises to fall; he tends to dissolution from the moment he begins to be; he lives on indeed in his children, he lives on in his own name, he lives not on in his own person. He is, as regards the manifestations of his nature here below, as a bubble that breaks, and as water poured out upon the earth. He was young, he is old, he is never young again. This is the lament over him, poured forth in verse and in prose, by Christians and by heathen. The greatest work of God's hands under the sun, he, in all the manifestations of his complex being, is born only to die.[10]

The sermon enchants with an emotion which runs along all its

harmonies and it is a poem. Like Walter Scott, Newman arrays his thoughts in the most natural language and avoids common place terms of the current usage.

Matthew Arnold has written aptly of the pilgrim poet as a preacher:

> Who could resist the charm of that spiritual apparition, gliding in the dim afternoon light through the aisles of St.Mary's, rising into the pulpit and then in the most entrancing of voices, breaking the silence with words and thoughts which were religious music — subtle, sweet, mournful ? I seem to hear him still saying, "After the fever of life, after weariness and sickness , fightings, and despondings, langour and fretfulness, struggling and succeeding; after all the changes and chances of this troubled, unhealthy state, at length comes death, at length the white throne of God, at length the beatific vision."[11]

Newman's preaching melted into poetry and its effect was that of sacred music. With the fervour of a prophet and an apostle Newman reproduced the image of this world and the next through his sermons. J. C. Shairp, professor of poetry at Oxford was of the opinion that Newman's "sermons were poems if by poetry is meant the highest and most impassioned thoughts conveyed in perfect melody of words."[12]

The unique coalescence of the artist, the poet and the musician in Newman crowned the efforts of the philosopher and the theologian as he grew up. The beauty of his soul and his poetic genius are evident in the blessing which he gave to the Congregation of the Church of Birmingham Oratory:

> You ask for my blessing, and I bless you with all my heart, as I desire to be blessed myself. Each one of us has his own individuality, his separate history, his antecedents and his future, his duties, his responsibilities, his solemn trial and his eternity. May God's grace, His love,

> His peace, rest on all of you, united as you are in the Oratory of St. Philip, on old and young, on confessors and penitents, on teachers and taught, on living and dead. Apart from that grace, that love, that peace, nothing is stable, all things have an end; but the earth will last its time and while the earth lasts, Holy Church will last, and while the Church lasts, may the Oratory of Birmingham last also, amid the fortunes of many generations one and the same, faithful to St. Philip, strong in the protection of Our Lady and all Saints, not losing as time goes on its sympathy with its first fathers whatever may be the burden and interests of its own day, as we in turn stretch forth our hands with love and with awe towards those, our unborn successors, whom on earth we shall never know.[13]

These words convey the beauty and the spiritual aroma which resided in the saintly heart of the pilgrim poet. The very essence of his nature, its cravings, its inner strength, its weariness and its pathos in its trying earthly pilgrimage are summed up here in incomparable music. Thus his poetic genius was not confined to poetry alone. Poetic elements were an integral part of the person and found their outlet in manifold ways.

Though endowed with these qualities which characterize a poet, if Newman did not care for poetic perfection it was because he had other priorities. He preferred perfection of life rather than perfection of art. His poem "The Pilgrim"[14] written in 1831 illustrates his passionate resolve to devote himself completely to his pilgrim ministry:

> There stray'd awhile, amid the woods of Dart,
> One who could love them, but who durst not love
> A vow had bound him ne'er to give his heart
> To streamlet bright, or soft secluded grove.
> 'Twas a hard humbling task, onwards to move

His easy-captured eyes from each fair spot,
With unattach'd and lonely step to rove
O'er happy meads, which soon its print forgot:--
Yet kept he safe his pledge, prizing his pilgrim-lot.
(1-9)

Thus the rapture Newman felt at the sight of visible beauty, he subordinated to the task of a pilgrim and kept himself safe from the temptation to love dearly what Wordsworth felt he could not but love too well. Hence he did not dwell on earthly things with the warmth of personal affection and he distrusted changing beauties and worldly splendours. The pilgrim in him passed on beyond the delight of the senses and the tangible beauty spread around him in the visible world to the adoration of the Ultimate hidden in the heart of concrete reality.

Notes

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[4] Ann Mozley, ed. Letters And Correspondence. Vol. 1. 242-243.

[5] Cardinal Newman, Callista, intro. Alfred Duggan (London: Burns and Oates, 1962) 94-99.

[6] Ann Mozley, ed. Letters And Correspondence. Vol. 1. 427.

[7] Maisie Ward, ed. Apologia pro Vita Sua 162.

[8] John Henry Newman, "The Second Spring," Sermons Preached on Various Occasions (London. Longmans, 1908) 163-164.

[9] John Henry Newman, Sermons Preached on Various Occasions 164.

[10] John Henry Newman, Sermons Preached on Various Occasions 165.

[11] Matthew Arnold, Essay on "Emerson" Discourses in America (London, 1896) 139-140.

[12] John Campbell Shairp, "Aspects of Poetry," Lectures Delivered at Oxford (Clarendon Press, 1881) 438-464.

[13] Qtd. in J. Lewis May, Cardinal Newman (London: Hazell, Watson and Viney Ltd. 1929) 255.

[14] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 55-56.

4. THE PILGRIM PRAYER

The beginning of the second stage of Newman's pilgrim journey coincided with his voyage to the south of Europe. This voyage was a voyage of exploration into his own pilgrim heart. At this time it was not yet clear to the poet what lay ahead of him and of the specific task that God was summoning him to accomplish. Yet an echo of some kind of presentiment of what was in store at the end of the voyage is reflected in the sonnet "Angelic Guidance." [1] In this happy sonnet the pilgrim expresses his belief in the companionship and guidance of the angels on his pilgrim path. He experiences that the angel, his 'unearthly Friend' (1) is at his side every moment of his pilgrimage and even: "stoops to attend / My doubtful-pleading grief;--or blunts the might / Of ill I see not;--" (5-7). Further his experience on the journey is that: " to the thoughtful mind / That walks with Him, He half unveils His face" (10-11).

The poem blends harmoniously Newman's innermost beliefs and intuitive consciousness of providential care where all unknown to us, we are led by the hand of God and His ministering angels. Thus the pilgrim feels secure that his terrestrial pilgrimage is sheltered under the beneficient care of God. Newman with his uncommon advantage of combining a religious and an artistic sensibility did not blindly grope like Shelley even though he was still behind a veil. He used beautiful images of the vision, the dream, the half-veiled face, the shadow, the 'foot-prints' and the 'vesture-skirts of light,' all of which were significant elements for the guidance of the pilgrim.

Newman's experience of the hidden presence of God in

people and in the holy Bible is also brought out through such poems as "Transfiguration"[2] and "Behind the Veil."[3] The poem "Behind the Veil" ends with this prayer to recognize God hidden behind human frailties:

> Lord, grant me this abiding grace,
> Thy Word and sons to know;
> To pierce the veil on Moses's face,
> Although his speech be slow. (9-12)

Pilgrim as the poet was, he often made use of the journey motif in his poems. In the poem "Our Future"[4] the pilgrim asks:

> Did we but see,
> When life first open'd, how our journey lay
> Between its earliest and its closing day,
> Or view ourselves, as we one time shall be,
> Who strive for the high prize, such sight
> would break
> The youthful spirit, though bold for Jesu's sake.
> (1-6)

Newman's poetry and his spiritual classic Apologia prove beyond doubt that his spiritual vocation was a journey through ideas and faith experience towards his ultimate goal, the Beatific Vision. His intuitive insight into spiritual realities, and of human nature made it clear to him that a whole-hearted spiritual quest would involve great sacrifices which would be trying even on the most energetic and zealous apostle of Christ. As the poems were a history of the development of his ideas and feelings or in other words, as they were steps forward on his journey, he depicts them in all sincerity:

> But Thou, dear Lord!
> Whilst I traced out bright scenes which were to come,
> Isaac's pure blessings, and a verdant home,
> Didst spare me, and withhold Thy fearful word;
> Wiling me year by year, till I am found

A pilgrim pale, with Paul's sad girdle bound. (7-12)

The poet looked forward to life at Oriel college, his home and the enjoyment of an unruffled and quiet life. But what life unrolled for the poet was not 'Isaac's pure blessings' (9): peace, honour, prosperity, and domestic bliss.[5] The poet was lured step by step to follow the Lord ever more closely. The poem ends on a prophetic strain as the pilgrim looks to the future and finds himself: "A pilgrim pale, with Paul's sad girdle bound" (12). Yet what this devotee would hold on to, on his pilgrim way is faith which 'serves and adores,'[6] and he exhorts his pilgrim companions and himself in the poem "The Gift of Perseverance:"[7]

> Shroud not the soul from God, nor soothe its needs;
> Deny thee thine own fears, and wait the end !
> Stern lesson! Let me con it day by day,
> And learn to kneel before the Omniscient Ray,
> Nor shrink, when Truth's avenging shafts descend !
> (10-14)

The poet has set his face from the start: "Towards thy [his] Redeemer Lord"[8] like the Biblical prophets and his aim on the way is: "To tend and deck His holy place,/ And note His secret word."[9] Thus he hopes to reach 'Heaven's glorious path.[10] The poet follows those apostles "who use the world, yet not abuse" it and "have their heads below, their hearts above" such as St. Paul whose "letters wear the garb of heaven."[11] The pilgrim poet knows what lies in store for him on his journey. He conveys this in the poem "The Saint and the Hero:"[12]

> The Saint's is not the Hero's praise;--
> This I have found, and learn
> Nor to malign Heaven's humblest ways,
> Nor its least boon to spurn. (9-12)

Hence from his pilgrim tent he beckons his companions in the poem "Isaac:"[13] "So we move heavenward with averted

face, / Scared into faith by warning of sin's pains; / And Saints are lower'd, that the world may rise" (12-14). In the poem entitled "Israel"[14] the poet asks the pilgrims: "For who dare sit at home, and wait to see / High Heaven descend, when man from self is called / Up through this thwarting outward world to Heaven?" (12-14). Instead the pilgrim poet and his companions wait only for a catharsis or a purgation as is expressed in the poem "Hope:"[15]

> . . .and now we wait
> The second substance of the deluge type,
> When our slight ark shall cross a molten surge;
> So, while the gross earth melts, for judgement ripe,
> Ne'er with its haughty turrets to emerge,
> We shall mount up to Eden's long-lost gate. (9-14)

So this is what they aim at, on their pilgrim journey to "mount up to Eden's long-lost gate."[16] This undoubtedly would involve many a sacrifice on their part but the pilgrim poet has decided to make it to his goal.

Yet with all his firm decision to work on the Lord's behest and to lead his pilgrim companions to the heavenly city, the poet experiences intermittently his own unworthiness and helplessness and cries out in despair: "I ne'er shall reach Heaven's glorious path."[17] It is then no wonder that his journey to Sicily turned out to be a time of preparation for taking up a holy leadership. The richly verdured heights of Sicily exercised a mysterious power over the poet's soul and provided for him an atmosphere to meditate on the state of his soul and that of the pilgrim humanity around him. That sense of catharsis experienced here by the poet emboldens him for the future task.

The poem "The Pillar of the Cloud,"[18] generally known by the first phrase with which it begins: "Lead Kindly Light,"

is born from a situation of crisis and change. The poet does not see the path he must take as a true Christian pilgrim. Thus weighed down by uncertainties, he cries out in an intense, agonizing state in darkness, asking for supernatural guidance.

The poem portrays the most sincere sour-searching, ever done by a poet, and his present vagueness of plans. Due to the lack of direction, the action is handed over to the 'Kindly Light,' as the poet finds himself 'amid the encircling gloom'(1). As the 'gloom' takes over 'encircling' him, the poet does not find a way out: " The night is dark, and I am far from home" (3). The poet experiences 'the dark night of the soul' when he is 'far from home,' which adds intensity to his pain and to his experience of the spiritual wilderness in a foreign land. He is a pilgrim in a strange circumstance both physically and spiritually.

The reference to sight sharpens the experience of darkness: "I do not ask to see / The distant scene--one step enough for me" (5-6). He prays for just enough light to be led on step by step in the 'encircling gloom.' The bare minimum to go on is all that he longs for and does not desire for more, to see 'the distant scene'. The imagery used to set the prayer in a desperate and forlorn atmosphere is most appropriate. The image of 'encircling gloom' portrays the picture of the poet as enclosed by gloomy darkness which swallows him up. Here is where the poet prays for light. Light in darkness is the most powerful image for any one meditating alone in time of trouble.

The imagery of the dark night refers to the sleepless, feverish nights when the poet had prayed for the light of day, and also to the night of past pride and to the confusion of faithlessness. Newman is also painfully reminded of the former delusive lights of the concepts advanced by the Noetical school at Oriel, and his preference for intellectual excellence over moral values during those years. He now

realizes that he had strayed from the pilgrim path for a time. The poet bares his soul in humble confessions and helplessness: "I loved to choose and see my path" (9), "I loved the garish day" (11), "Pride ruled my will" (12). These are his sins. The poet knew what self-will could lead one into, as he writes in the poem "Moses."[19] He takes the example from the Old Testament prophet as this poem shows:

> Moses, the man of meekest heart,
> Lost Canaan by self-will,
> To show, where Grace has done its part,
> How sin defiles us still. (5-8)

This realization leads him on in prayer:

> Thou, who hast taught me in Thy fear,
> Yet seest me frail at best,
> O grant me loss with Moses here,
> To gain his future rest! (9-12)

The poet's attitude of humble confession and constant prayer are in keeping with the practice of the Church. The poet acknowledges, 'O Holiest Truth' "But my foot slipp'd; and, as I lay, he came, / My gloomy foe, and robbed me of heaven's flame. / Help Thou my darkness, Lord, till I am light."[20] The pilgrim is made aware of his need of God's help in his weakness and approaches the throne of Heaven in humble submission.

The certainty of the possessive 'my path' (9) gives way to the dependence of 'Lead Thou me on' (10) and his prayer now is 'remember not past years' (12). Now he would no more follow any 'garish' light, that is any delusive light, as in the previous days, which distracted his single-hearted attention and devotion to the Lord on his journey towards Him.

A full and mature realization comes to the poet of his own state of mind. Against this realization is set the men of his country, also pilgrims but who have not yet attained an awareness of their disintegrating plight due to the

increasing liberalism which might sweep away the very fabric of society at any moment. The poet feels powerless against this vast spreading trend of the time, and hence feels the weight of inward powerlessness and darkness.

In the third stanza, the focus shifts to the guiding light and he hopes that the 'Kindly Light,' would lead him on. The blessings of the 'Kindly Light,' in the past are recalled: "So long Thy power hath blest me" (13). With the first line of the third stanza there is a lightening, which is expressed partly by the use of the word 'still,' at the end of the line: "sure it still / Will lead me on" (13-14). It is an affirmation of hope, echoing the sound as well as the sense of the word 'still.' Here the lines convey hope, a sort of confidence that the 'Kindly Light' 'Will lead' him again. The refrain of the first stanza 'Lead Thou me on!" is changed in the third stanza to: 'Will lead me on.' The poet's torment is calmed down by a sense of sustaining communion experienced in the past years. A confession of his guilt followed by a confidence in the Providence, fills him with hope.

The geography of the wild places, such as the rocky heights, sandy water courses, the barren tracts of land in parts of Sicily might have inspired the imagery of the following line. The poet blends the Sicilian scenes with English landscapes: "O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent" (15). The 'moor' and 'fen' are obviously English landscapes while the 'crag' and 'torrent' are clearly Sicilian. The poet is an English pilgrim who finds himself now in a Sicilian natural scenery, and his illness here prepares him for a spiritual leadership worthy of Heaven's knight. Henceforth, he would follow the 'Kindly Light' no matter where it leads him to and no obstacles would hold him back. That beam of light which emanates from the Lord, would in fact be a search light for him and would keep his attention on the right path and on

the holy means to bring him to his true destination. The poem makes it clear that the poet has to go a very difficult route: "O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent" (15), but his concern for the future changes into a trustful prayer for God's guidance, as was granted to the Jews on their journey to the Promised Land. Here his self-surrender is complete and he hands himself over to the Lord, to be the Lord's guide to a great nation such as England of the nineteenth century in its pilgrimage.

Newman's illness at Sicily was his experience of the celestial messenger touching his lips with 'the coal from the altar,' [21] thus freeing him from the bondage of doubt, unworthiness, self-consciousness, and fear, annointing him to deliver the message of the eternal Truth. His trust in Providence becomes complete and now from the deeper harmonies of his inner depth comes the assurance that God: 'Will lead him on' (14). Now the poet is ready to take up the task. With his inherent faith in God, he affirms God's supreme sway in his life and the true necessity of his longing for home in spite of his rootedness in mortality.

The poet now believes that the 'Kindly Light' will lead him to the 'morn' which is a metaphor for Heaven. There he would once again enjoy 'those angel faces smile' (17). For Newman Heaven is associated with his own early childhood at Ham, his beloved home: "Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile" (18), for even as a child, the poet was a visionary. As childhood departed the poet also lost that beloved home and he now longs for the eternal Home. He nostalgically longs for the comfort and assurance he experienced as a boy. As a boy he dreamt of Grey Court house a paradise[22] peopled with angels and so the reference bears personal childhood connotations; and at a deeper level it refers to his eternal Home--Heaven.

Some commentators speak of a confusion in the imagery and

remark that the poet confesses as a fault his love of the day in the second stanza while in the third, he prays to Heaven to send him its light as a boon.[23] But it is not so. What the poet rejects in the second stanza is his youthful self-will and his love of intellectual excellence that turn him aside to see objects lit by its 'garish' light. What the poet prays for in the third stanza is a very different light by which he would see and understand things as is destined by the Divine. It is the pure dawning light, the true light of Everlasting Day, as he also refers to in The Dream of Gerontius: " And see Him in the truth of everlasting day" (863).

The movement of the poem is on a fluctuating time. In the first stanza, the verbs used are in the present tense, 'night is dark,' 'am far from home,' 'do not ask to see,' setting the traveller in the gloomy background. Verbs used in the second stanza are in past tense, 'was not ever thus,' 'loved to choose,' 'loved the garish day,' 'pride ruled ' evoking deeds of the past life. In the final stanza, the past and the future are brought together, 'hath blest, 'Will lead,' past blessings are remembered and future graces are hoped for. This progression of tenses is one of the reasons for the obvious appeal of the poem.

The title of the poem, "The Pillar of the Cloud" sets it firmly into its scriptural context, and calls to mind powerfully, the exodus of Israel. Here in the poem Newman himself is the Anglican Moses. The Christian is like one of the sons of Israel, journeying from Egypt to the Promised Land. For the Israelities: "the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them along the way."[24] For them 'the pillar of cloud' was a daytime guide. The poet chooses this symbol when the scene of the poetical journey is in darkness, to throw the main focus of the poem on the sure and 'Kindly Light,' which guides the traveller. God dwells in the

cloud, and though He reveals Himself, He is still hidden. The poet adds an article 'the' to the phrase and makes it "The pillar of the Cloud" which implies that it is the same God who continues to extend His own guidance to His people. 'The cloud' would stand for God while 'the pillar' would mean that beam of light which is of the Lord. The title is a reminder to the Christian that it is a grave mistake to try to walk a path of his own choice in his pilgrimage when 'the pillar of the cloud' is always there to guide and to encourage. The poet's inclusion of the article 'the' has another connotation which would imply that the poet himself feels commissioned to be 'the pillar of the cloud' for the English nation to guide it through the wilderness of the modern waste lands of baffling philosophies and irreligious existence.

The poem is a record of that hallowed disposition, in which men conquer their misgivings in a quiet surrender to the inner light and the Unseen Power. The poet implies that every man is a pilgrim like himself who advances through the darkness of error towards the truth of an Eternal Light. The poem with its refrain: 'Lead thou me on,' confirms the poet's profoundly personal intuition of truth. The image of divine light in the poem stands for Christ first and foremost and then for the Church, both of which were Newman's ways in 'homing' Heaven. The poem with its sincere avowal: "I donot ask to see / The distant scene--one step enough for me," with its nostalgia for the 'angel faces,' seen in childhood, and its unquenchable hope to find them again hereafter, would always strike a responsive chord in every human heart, regardless of what faith he practices. Perhaps one of the reasons for the universal and lasting appeal of the poem is because all human beings are travellers--pilgrims, though not on the <u>via Ecclesia</u>.

The Victorians on the whole cherished the last two lines, for history shows us that there was high mortality among the

young in the Victorian period. The bereaved parents remembered their children when they read these lines. The poet himself would have in mind his own youngest sister, Mary. The metaphor of the angels is appropriate, as there are accounts of Victorianchildren dying with exemplary resignation. It is said that Queen Victoria in listening to the poem on her deathbed found great assurance that she would soon be reunited to her husband. The last two lines were especially consoling to her.

The poem is an intensely personal expression of strong faith and strong emotions, reaching back to the poet's past, into his guilt, his repentance, his bereavement and his physical suffering. It is also a most suitable reflection for any one experiencing life to be a journey in the dark, but one that is guided to its true haven. Images of journey, of light in darkness, of home, of new morning and rebirth are used here. The strongest image of the poem, however, is that of the pilgrim moving in faith through the darkness, and the recollection of the assurance of God's light experienced in the past. In his recent illness at Sicily, it was a great comfort to the poet to see the light of day after long, dark sleepless nights and he would soliloquize: "O sweet light! God's best gift."[25]

The words of a single syllable are woven in the lines to a haunting effect and powerful design. As is characteristic of all his poetry, the words are very simple. The words in the poem weave the ideas of uncertainty as 'encircling gloom,' a sense of intellectual sufficiency as 'garish day' and the guidance of Providence as 'Kindly Light.' The short lines are memorable and sustaining--'One step enough for me;' and the refrain with its archaic, 'Thou' inserted among the strong monosyllables, 'Lead thou me on!'. The musical quality of the poem does not allow for any more bold imagery. The words have the freshness and the fineness of a great poem and it is the

most tender of pilgrim songs. It could be compared to the "Mason Song" of Goethe, in its sublime sadness and invincible trust. Both are psalms of life in which faith leads the pilgrim on, heroically to the day beyond.

The Victorians lost in a spiritual wilderness, in the midst of powerful developments of material resources and who lived in a world of uncertainties, and who were path-finders, read in its cry their own individual cry for guidance and for light. To them the imagery of finding one's way in the dark appealed tremendously. But as for Newman he expressed through the poem his renewed humility and willing resignation to be led on by the divine light due to the experience he had during his illness at Sicily. The same imagery retains afresh its magic hold on the hearts of modern men, who also bear the weight of inward struggles in the twentieth century and hear in it their own cry, their groaning for light and guidance. Hence the intense reality and the indescribable charm of the lines continue to lay their magic hold on hearts. These lines continue to have a powerful and incantatory effect on people.

The appeal for guidance is born out of the heart of an unquenchable hope. The world longs for guidance down through centuries, and men 'will' go on hoping till the very end. Hence this prayer is the translation into language of the most appropriate expression of the human desire for supernatural guidance. This could be one of the reasons also why the poem is generally known by that significant phrase: 'Lead, Kindly Light,' instead of its title " The Pillar of the Cloud." As such, the magnetism of the poem would stand the test of time, for it continues to formulate for contemporary men, 'amid the encircling gloom,' their unrest and their need for spiritual help. The poem has been translated into Latin, Arabic, Welsh, German and many other languages. Thus its popularity can be well assessed. Even Mahatma Gandhi, living in an entirely

different milieu at a later time, experienced the spiritual power inherent in the poem. Hence he wrote to a correspondent who found it hard to believe in God, to make Newman's poem "The Pillar of the Cloud," his prayer.[26]

Newman used simple though telling images in his poetry and they are varied. He found it an apt medium for expressing solemn thoughts, elevated emotions, and for conveying his basic beliefs and philosophy. Recurring images in the poems are that of journey, traveller, light in darkness, shadow, cloud, veil, prison, lyre, music, angels, new morning, rebirth; metaphors for heaven and so on. The two most significant images for the poet were those pertaining to 'home' and 'light.' The image of home brings out his home-loving features, and his need for a shelter in this turbulent world. The Grey Court house at Ham, with its comfort and security, was a mine of psychological strength for him. 'Home' and 'Sea' are two opposite pairs of images, used in the Apologia as well. The poem "Memory" centres round the 'home' image and is connected with one of his earliest memories.

At the age of five, he lay looking at the lighted candles on the windows at Grey Court house[27] which he could recall even as an old man. Thus both images were connected with significant childhood experiences, and they held some psychological effect over him. The image of 'light,' was the dynamic pole that urged him onward in his journey. In "The Pillar of the Cloud," there is portrayed the images of 'Kindly Light' and 'encircling gloom.' The poet waited in his bright, warm English home, till he felt assured that a light beckoned him to sail into the dark. The line: "The night is dark and I am far from home" recalls the dark nights of his physical illness. The Dream of Gerontius has the image of 'lone night-watches' in the lowest deep which once again is the reminder of his illness. During his fever, he was purified by a searching and guiding light. The soul

sings a sad perpetual strain until the 'morn' when it would see the Lord, 'in the truth of everlasting day.' The last lines convey the idea that after the 'night trial,' the Angel would wake the Soul 'on the morrow,' which is a reminder of the last two lines of "The Pillar of the Cloud." In The Dream of Gerontius, the life of grace is also compared to light.

A scanning of the poem reveals that, what at first seems to be an iambic pentameter, is not so simple as we take it to be. We notice the stress that is laid on the first three words — 'Lead, / Kindly Light'. Hence we would prefer it to be read rather as a choriamb which gives the lines its fluidity. Newman's knowledge of the Classical and English verse patterns helps him to blend various metres of different tongues to a more complex harmony. The heavy stress on the first syllable 'Lead', tends to give 'Kindly' just a gentle touch, as if the poet means the word 'Kindly' to sound gentle and soothing for one who is forlorn, and is in the dark. The stress on the first syllable provides the emphasis with which a singer should begin the hymn. In the fourth foot of the basic pattern, or the second foot after the choriamb, in the first line, the poet blends together 'the' and 'en' of the phrase 'the encircling gloom,' thus giving an evidence to his musical taste. The poem is given over forty musical settings and though musical tastes have changed considerably since it was first set to music, the poem retains its former popularity and will continue to do so.

Critics consider the poem to constitute "its author's surest title to a place in the ranks of that goodly company, the hymn writers of the universal Church." [28] Professor Saintsbury considered it a great poem and felt that it ranked with any piece of sacred verse elsewhere.[29] J. Lewis May considered "The Pillar of the Cloud" a more beautiful poem than Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar."[30] It achieved great popularity as a hymn in the poet's own day. When Fr. Faber's hymn "The Eternal Years" and Newman's "The Pillar of the Cloud" are

placed side by side, the image of the traveller who longs to see by faith just far enough to take a step, is the image that portrays most people's experience. The lasting significance in what the poet sings, the spiritual agony with which he seeks heavenly guidance, the last touching reference to his paradise on earth, an earthly symbol of his heavenly Home, are all woven together skilfully in haunting melody that transcends time and place.

If "The Pillar of the Cloud" portrays the pilgrim's heart-rending cry for supernatural guidance to lead him onward in his journey, the poem "Desolation"[31] is the divine response the poet receives. The title "Desolation" is paradoxical as the poem is a refutation of desolation. The poet aims at helping the pilgrim who is in desolation to pass through that stage and to experience God's presence and protection in his life. The poet communicates this fundamental Christian truth that God is especially close to us in times of desolation. It is one of those typical Victorian poems which is Scripture based. Such poems enabled the poets to convey Biblical message most persuasively.

By portraying instances from the life of Christ, the poet develops the central idea of the poem. The Biblical characters such as Nathaniel,[32] the dejected Apostles at their prayer in the upper room,[33] the disciples on the road to Emmaus,[34] and Peter's mother-in-law[35] experienced the Lord's intervention, and protection over them. The poet asks the pilgrims to look up to these instances and to draw courage for their Christian warfare even during the worst of circumstances for:

> . . .when thou liest, by slumber bound,
> Outwearied in the Christian fight,
> In glory, girt with Saints around,
> He stands above thee through the night. (9-12)

This image of the Lord and his Saints, standing in watch over the wearied, slumber-laden Christian pilgrim is a consoling image to human hearts. A Heavenly army watching over the exhausted and broken down pilgrim on his way till every earthly combat is resolved has a regenerating force inherent in it.

The crowning imagery of the poem which is of the glorified Lord, with His saints hovering over the Christian pilgrims is drawn with extraordinary skill and poetic feeling. The image is an invention of the poet from his knowledge of the Christian doctrines and from the beliefs of the Church. There is something of St. Augustine in Newman's literary creations. For Newman the aspects of things unseen were luminously clear and he tried to impart tremendous significance to them. As a result the poem attains its supersensuous realism in this stanza .

The last stanza does not refer to the miracle Christ performs to save the fear-struck apostles in the boat.[36] Instead it is Newman's own message for his fellow pilgrims:

> . . .on a voyage, when calms prevail,
> And prison thee upon the sea,
> He walks the wave, He wings the sail,
> The shore in gain'd, and thou art free. (17-20)

In their pilgrim voyage when the boat lies becalmed and they are unable to make any progress on the journey Christ comes to restore the movement forward. He "wings the sail / The shore is gain'd." When the pilgrims are weary and are in a situation like the woman in Padraic Colum's poem "An Old Woman of the Roads," when they face the temptation to build a house and settle down, are at the point of losing sight of their spiritual quest, Christ comes in and gets the storm going. All that a pilgrim should do is build a cairn and continue the journey to its last port.

With his keen psychological insight, Newman adapts the miracle of calming the waves to portray Christ's intervention

when the pilgrim's desolation has depressed his soul and becalmed his forward movement. He depicts a Christ who supplies divine energy to drive the pilgrim forward on his journey. Newman tells the pilgrim that the storms of life are often hidden blessings because they speed the journey towards the goal.

A temptation for the weary pilgrim often is the lure of the calm, when they desire to settle down and build a lasting dwelling place in the quiet, to enjoy 'bright scenes', and "Isaac's pure blessings and a verdant home."[37] But Newman tells the pilgrim that Christ will lead him forward "with Paul's sad girdle bound"[38] out of the calm back into the storms of life.

Even in the poem "Epiphany-Eve,"[39] written earlier, there occurs this image of 'gale' which would further the pilgrim journey despite the impediments:

> Or, when day-light blessings fail,
> Transport fresh as spice-fraught gale,
> Sparks from thee, which oft have lighted
> Weary heart and hope benighted. (64-67)

There are also images of 'light' and 'sparks' which refer to Christ who would also light up the beaten paths of the pilgrims.

Though both Keble and Newman made constant use of Biblical stories and incidents in their writings, their treatment of these themes differ. While Keble delighted more in the play of fancy, Newman aimed at getting at the heart of the particular objects and conveyed the supernatural message it contained. His poems are marked by his unique and individual experience of faith and of the Unseen World. Like George Herbert, Newman was deeply devoted to the English Bible and the English liturgy.

However difficult the path may seem as the poem "Humiliation" [40] depicts, the pilgrim poet considered it his:

. . .happier fate
The Saviour's Cross to share
This my hid choice, if not from heaven,
Moves on the heavenward line. (7-10)

The direction of his pilgrimage is heavenward, and he prays: "Cleanse it, good Lord, from earthly leaven / And make it simply Thine" (11-12). In the poem "Warfare" [41] the poet reminds the pilgrims of the attitude they must have: "O man of God! in meekness and in love, / And waiting for the blissful realms above" (9-10), to be found worthy to be numbered among the elect of Heaven.

In the poem "The Power of Prayer," [42] the poet writes: "All may save self:--but minds that heavenward tower / Aim at a wider power, / Gifts on the world to shower--" (8-10). As the poet begins to feel commissioned with such a mission, he sensitively searches for the signs from the Lord as the poem "Semita Justorum" [43] describes:

So now, whene'er, in journeying on, I feel
The shadow of the Providential Hand,
Deep breathless stirrings shoot across my breast,
Searching to know what He will now reveal,
What sin uncloak, what stricter rule command,
And girding me to work His full behest. (9-14)

Due to his own lack of inner strength, the poet longs for the Lord's support as is shown in the poem "Consolation." [44]

When I sink down in gloom or fear,
Hope blighted or delay'd,
Thy whisper, Lord, my heart shall cheer,
"Tis I, be not afraid!" (1-4)

Even with all his firm resolve to serve as an ambassador of Heaven, the pilgrim was also weak and fragile like any of his companions. Hence it is that this frail pilgrim calls upon Mary, mother of Christ who has been the greatest of pilgrim

leaders and who has ever been a sure guide to pilgrims on their way, to help and to guide him and his companions on their way home:

> Such art thou, Holy Mother, in the creed and in the worship of the Church, the defence of many truths, the grace and smiling light of every devotion. In thee O Mary, is fulfilled, as we can bear it, an original purpose of the Most High. He once had meant to come on earth in heavenly glory, but we sinned; and he could not safely visit us, except with a shrouded radiance and a bedimmed Majesty, for He was God. So He came Himself in weakness, not in power; and He sent thee, a creature, in His stead, with a creature's comeliness and lustre suited to our state. And now thy very face and form, dear Mother, speak to us of the Eternal; not like earthly beauty, dangerous to look upon, but like the morning star, which is thy emblem, bright and musical, breathing purity, telling of heaven, and infusing peace. O harbinger of day! O hope of the pilgrim! lead us still as thou hast led; in the dark night across the bleak wilderness, guide us on to our Lord Jesus, guide us home.[45]

The prayer the pilgrim poet makes seems to energize him with a Heaven sent strength and power. This leads him forward on his pilgrim journey and he even takes up the responsibility of leading his fellow pilgrims. The following chapter traces out the pilgrim leader.

Notes

[1] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 70-71.

[2] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 106-107.

[3] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 107-108.

[4] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 130.

[5] Bible, Genesis 26: 1-33.

[6] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 62-63.

[7] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 63-64.

[8] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 67-68.

[9] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 67-68.

[10] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 67.

[11] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 174.

[12] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 75.

[13] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 118-119.

[14] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 119-120.

[15] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 122-123.

[16] Bible, Genesis 3: 1-24.

[17] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 67-68.

[18] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 152.

[19] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 88-89.

[20] John Henry Cardinal Newman, Verses 199.

[21] Bible, Isaiah 6: 6-7.

[22] Wilfrid Ward, The Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman. Vol. 1. 29.

[23] Joseph J. Reilly, Newman as a Man of Letters (New York: Macmillan, 1925) 112.

[24] Bible, Exodus 13: 21.

[25] Ann Mozley, ed. Letters And Correspondence Vol.1. 422.

[26] The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi Vol. 37. (New Delhi: The Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1970) 347-350.

[27] William Barry, Cardinal Newman (London: Hodder and

Stoughton Ltd, 1927) 22-23.

[28] Elisabeth Hassell, "Newman's poems," Blackwoods, Edinburgh Magazine, (1870) 285-301.

[29] Cambridge History of English Literature Vol. 12. 170.

[30] J. Lewis May, Cardinal Newman (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1945) 238.

[31] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 156.

[32] Bible, John 1: 45-49.

[33] Bible, Luke 24: 36-39.

[34] Bible, Luke 24: 13-35.

[35] Bible, Matthew 8: 14-15.

[36] Bible, Matthew 8: 23-27.

[37] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss 130.

[38] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss 130.

[39] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss 49-52.

[40] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss 112.

[41] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss 137-138.

[42] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss 173.

[43] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss 174-175.

[44] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss 170.

[45] John Henry Cardinal Newman, "The glories of Mary for the Sake of Her Son," Discourses Addressed to Mixed Congregations, new impression (London: Longmans, 1902) 358-359.

5. THE PILGRIM LEADER

5.1. Acceptance of the Pilgrim leadership

Certainly Newman was not only a pilgrim but felt called to be a leader of the pilgrims. The pilgrim prophet had already foreseen the Catholic Revival coming on even before its official launch. As a sincere and committed member of the Church of England he writes:

> I do verily believe that some such movement is now going on, and the Philistines are to be smitten, and, believing it, I rejoice to join myself to the army of rescue, as one of those who lapped with the tongue when the rest bowed down to drink.[1]

Through the poem "Sensitiveness"[2] he portrays how he has made up his mind to take up the task to forward the cause of religion regardless of his shrinking personality: " Time was, I shrank from what was right' (1), "But now I cast that finer sense / And sorer shame aside" (5-6). The poet is ready at the Lord's behest:

> So, when my Saviour calls, I rise,
> And calmly do my best;
> Leaving to Him, with silent eyes
> Of hope and fear, the rest. (9-12)

The Oxford Movement, also known as the Tractarian Movement was brought about by Newman and his companion intellectuals of the Oxford circle. It began in July 1833 and Newman remained the leader for twelve years. Newman, Keble, and Richard Hurrell Froude formed the first 'triumvirate' of the Movement. They fought for Apostolic Christianity and tried to defend the

authority of the Anglican Church independent of the State. Newman felt that if England allowed the Church to become just an organ of the State and not divinely instituted by Christ to teach man the truth, then all that was good and true in England would die. Newman and his companions of the Movement represented a new social order, imbued with a new seriousness. Newman felt commissioned to refine the Church and to elevate it to be superior to the spirit of the age, harmonized with higher values.

The champions of the Movement under the leadership of Newman tried to perfect and preserve what had been really valuable in the art of the early Romantics. With weapons of genius, he fought the spirit of the age with an utterly Hebraic devotion, to the one God. Hence he did not join that group of poets who wrote poetry as their primary calling. Newman's poetry was written to support the Church, to encourage a renewed burst of poetic activity of a religious nature similar to the one accomplished by Donne in the seventeenth century.

5.2. Lyra Apostolica

In the second stage of Newman's pilgrim journey the publication of Lyra Apostolica took place in 1836. The most prolific time of writing poetry in Newman's pilgrimage occurred between December 1832 and June 1833 during his Mediterranean journey. He wrote of these particular poems: "we have hopes of making an effective quasi-political engine, without every contribution being of that character. "[3] His poems also mirror the worshipper who feels keenly the call and the challenge of a holy life.

He spoke of the composition of poetry during this time, "they burst from me," [4] and "when thoughts come into head, it is impossible to resist the temptation of fixing them."[5]

They are spiritual and personal reflections, Biblical themes and concern on issues which would give rise to the Oxford Movement. The original plan of the Lyra was to insert a small number of 'ecclesiastical fireworks' among a large number of purely personal and religious poetry and this was what Newman provided. He wrote the Lyra poems under the spell of a mission and it is poetry of the pilgrim militant as well as Tractarian devotion.

This anthology consists of one hundred seventy poems by various Tractarian poets such as Newman himself and John Keble, Isaac Williams, John William Bowden, Richard Hurrell Froude, Robert Wilberforce. Newman wrote one hundred and nine out of the total number of poems. These poems of Newman are very different in style and contents from those published in Memorials of the Past, yet form a link between the poems of the earlier stage and the ones of the final stage. They form part of the pilgrim's life story. Many of the early concerns of the pilgrim were developed during these years. The reason for the shift in the style and the change in content could be traced to the increasingly secularized culture of the nineteenth century England.

The very title of the anthology Lyra Apostolica conveys the Tractarian blend of religious and Romantic sensibilities. The common Romantic image of the lyre suggests the poet to be an inspired singer and both Coleridge and Shelley used this image. But the lyre of Newman the pilgrim, was an apostolic lyre which was in harmony with the Apostolic Church and promoted its cause unlike the other imperfect lyres. The apostolic quality of the anthology points to that sense of artistic identity and vocation established during the first stage of Newman's pilgrim journey. Every one of his poems in this anthology bears witness to the fact that he had already made up his mind to champion the cause of religion. As a result

the poems are austere in style, devotional, often polemical in nature and their titles are unvarnished presentation of religious values. The poems communicate tremendous energy of will and earnest emotions for the spiritual combat with the forces of evil. He made the utmost use of the possibility that poetry and religion could combine in a didactic mode. Lyra Apostolica turned out to be one of the most popular books of religious poetry published in the nineteenth century and many volumes had their titles inspired by Lyra Apostolica. [6]

Newman first expressed the sentiments of the Movement in poetry. Both the Tracts for the Times and the Church of the Fathers were conceived and executed after the Lyra Apostolica. Newman took up in his poetry those scientific, rationalistic and political circumstances of the day which affected the Church. He wanted the poems to be instrumental in recommending important Christian truths to the readers as these truths seemed to have been forgotten.[7] Hence he writes in the poem "Zeal and Love:" [8] "Awake! thy easy dreams resign" (3) and continues:

> Dim is the philosophic flame,
> By thoughts severe unfed:
> Book-lore ne'er served, when trial came,
> Nor gifts, when faith was dead. (9-12)

Such poems did have an influence on the reading public. The poet's intense feelings about the Church, his sense of urgency in renovating its conditions and his own firm religious convictions were infectious.

These poems give us a glimpse of the conditions of the Church in the nineteenth century, unveil the source of Newman's amazing inner strength and enlighten us as to why he chose a narrow pilgrim path, considering every earthly loss incurred as a gain in the long run. His novel Loss and Gain is autobiographical as well where this point of loss and gain is

concerned.

Through his poems Newman spoke to the men of his age set on material prosperity, easy living and all that gratified the flesh, a language long unheard. He insisted on the reality of the matters of faith, urging his readers to crush their lower motives, to press home strength of character, to safeguard moral and religious values.

At this time, Newman still believed that the Church of England had preserved the deposit of Apostolic faith in the Thirty-nine Articles. Hence he writes in the poem "Sacrilege:" [9]

> Blest is a pilgrim Church!--yet shrink to share
> The curse of throwing down.
> So will we toil in our old place to stand,
> Watching, not dreading, the despoiler's hand. (15-18)

In one of his letters, Newman writes:

> I believe God has not . . . abandoned this branch of His Church He has set up in England, and that, though for our many sins He has brought us into captivity to an evil world, and sons of Belial are lords over us, yet from time to time He sends us judges and deliverers as in the days of Gideon and Barak. [10]

The puritan tinge in the poems is a studied reaction against the complacency of the religious attitudes and the compromising spirit of men in general. Newman responded to his pilgrim call strictly and wanted the others to do the same. He fought for the Church's independence from the hold of the Government. It was Prime Ministers like Brougham and Melbourne, not the Bishops of the Church who were the last court of resort on management of the discipline and doctrine of the Church of England. Newman felt this was inappropriate. In the poem "Conservatism," [11] the poet asks:

How long, O Lord, how long
Shall Caesar do us wrong,
Laid but as steps to throne his mortal power ?
While e'en our Angels stand
With helpless voice and hand,
Scorned by proud Haman, in his triumph-hour. (7-12)

He writes in "The Backward Church:"[12]

Wake, Mother dear, the foes are near,
A spoiler claims thy child;
This the sole refuge of my fear,
Thy bosom undefiled. (1-4)

In the poem "Persecution," [13] the Church laments: "The world has cast me forth" (9) and speaks of the priest: "He bears to men my mandates high, / And works my sage behest" (11-12). There is no doubt in Newman's mind he would be one of those who: "Shalt join his sacred band" (14), for he asks: "Dim Future! shall we NEED / A prophet for Truth's Creed ?"[14] In one of his letters to his aunt Mrs. Elizabeth Newman he asks for prayer for his pilgrim mandate:

> . . . that we may not lose or abuse our opportunities or gifts, but may do the work which He means us to do, and that manfully; that we may have a single aim, and a courageous heart, and may be blessed inwardly in our own souls, as well as prosper in the edification of the Church.[15]

The pilgrim priest had set out to defeat liberalism and communicated tremendous energy of will for the following of Christ. In the poem "Liberalism,"[16] he depicts his uncompromising attitude towards free thinkers: "Ye cannot halve the Gospel of God's grace; / Men of presumptuous heart!" (1-2) and continues in the same strain:

And ye have caught some echoes of its lore
As heralded amid the joyous choirs;

Ye mark'd it spoke of peace and chastised desires,
Good will and mercy,--and ye heard no more;
But, as for zeal and quick-eyed sanctity,
And the dread depths of grace, ye pass'd them by. (7-12)

He finds them even at their best only as 'doubters' (14) regardless of the fact that they are 'Statesmen or Sages' (16). But the poet is all too aware of his and his fellow pilgrim's mission. What God wants of them he depicts in the poem "Declension:" [17]

He wills that she [Church] should shine;
So we her flame must trim
Around His soul-converting Sign,
And leave the rest to Him. (21-24)

Through his poems Newman the pilgrim aimed at reviving unsparing spirituality. Hence the poems and their titles are straight forward expounding of religious values. The poem "The Watchman" [18] radiates courage and presents the pilgrim set afire to save the Church from its impending doom:

Faint not, and fret not, for threaten'd woe,
Watchman on Truth's grey height!
Few though the faithful, and fierce though the foe,
Weakness is aye Heaven's might. (1-4)

Even though Newman and his companion pilgrim defenders of faith are few while the new enemies of the Church--the fast spreading liberalism, rationalism, scepticism, a mere scientific creed and political creed--form formidable obstacles, he is strengthened by the examples of religious history as this same poem illustrates:

Moses was one, but he stay'd the sin
Of the host, in the Presence bright;
And Elias scorn'd the Carmel din,
When Baal would match Heaven's might. (17-20)

The pilgrim is also aware that the language of religion is

paradoxical:

Time's years are many, Eternity one,
And one is the Infinite;
The chosen are few, few the deeds well done,
For scantiness is still Heaven's might. (21-24)

Heaven's ways differ from that of the ways of the world.

Newman, the spiritual Achilles of the nineteenth century religious revival rages war against the irreligious tendencies of the day, for as he writes he did 'love His precepts more.' [19] In the poem "The Course of Truth," [20] the poet is reminded how Christ at his resurrection revealed:

His secret to a few of meanest mould;
They in their turn imparted
The gift to men pure-hearted,
While the brute many heard His mysteries high, (8-11)

and 'crouch'd' even then, so too at the present time it is they: "His Saints their watch-flame bear, / And the mad world sees the wide-circling blaze, / Vain searching whence it streams, and how to quench its rays" (16-18). Thus he feels strengthened that the flame of Christ cannot be quenched by worldly efforts. He advises: "Christian! hence learn to do thy part, / And leave the rest to Heaven." [21]

In the poem "External Religion" [22] the poet views the Church in the past: "When first earth's rulers welcomed home / The Church, their zeal impress'd" (1-2), which was unlike that of the nineteenth century rulers who: "But craving wealth, and feverish power, / Such service now discard" (9-10). The poet knows that in the roll of life: "The loss of one excited hour / A sacrifice too hard!" (11-12). So in "The Progress of Unbelief" [23] the pilgrim protests against the enthronement of the new idols such as science and technology at the cost of religious faith: "But I will out amid the sleet" (8), that is against men who are 'self-trusting' (6) and who

'a household Baal rear' (7).

Some of his letters also give vent to similar ideas. In one of his letters to Mrs. J. Mozley he writes of:

> Those wretched socialists on the one hand, then Carlyle on the other — . His view is that Christianity has good in it, . . . picking and choosing of its [Scripture] contents . . . . Then,. . .you have Arnold's school, . . . giving up the inspiration of the Old Testament or of all Scripture . . . . Then your have Milman, clinching his 'History of the Jews' by a 'History of Christianity,' which they say is worse; . . . . Then you have all your political economists, who cannot accept. . . the Scripture rules about almsgiving, renunciation of wealth, self-denial, and Church, and then your geologists, giving up part of the Old Testament. All these and many more spirits seem uniting and forming into something shocking. . . .[24]

Such trends of the time forced this earnest, and devout pilgrim to swim against the currents, working to bring about a spiritual renewal, risking and gradually losing all that he held dear in this life in that heroic effort.

Men such as Disraeli, Tennyson and Dickens felt proud of the fact that the sun never set on the British flag. But Newman with his deep insight was 'warn'd of earth's unhealthy ground' and so could discern beneath the prosperity of society "canker-worm, / And sudden-whelming storm."[25] He realized that wealth and world-power are not necessarily a token of divine favour and the poem "England"[26] illustrates this:

> Tyre of the West, and glorying in the name
> More than in Faith's pure fame!
> O trust not crafty fort nor rock renown'd
> Earn'd upon hostile ground;

Wielding Trade's master-keys, at thy proud will
To lock or loose its waters, England! trust not still.
(1-6)

He pleads with his native land that wealth is the cause of crime and that it is man's snare and warns her:

Dread thine own power ! Since haughty Babel's prime,
High towers have been man's crime.
Since her hoar age, when the huge moat lay bare,
Strongholds have been man's snare.
Thy nest is in the crags; ah! refuge frail! (7-11)

He concludes that it is not colonial power and wealth but it is Heaven's mercy and the few God-fearing men who are in the land that protect it from God's avenging hands:

He who scann'd Sodom for His righteous men
Still spares thee for thy ten;
But, should rash tongues the Bride of Heaven defy
He will not pass thee by;
For, as earth's kings welcome their spotless guest,
So gives He them by turn, to suffer or be blest.
(13-18)

Hence men should not defy the bride of Heaven, the Church, for no mortal can wield any power against the invincible might of Heaven.

In the poem "Faith Against Sight" [27] the pilgrim emphasizes the need for faith even in a scientific age:

Then fear ye not, though Gallio's scorn ye see,
And soft-clad nobles count you mad, true hearts!
These are the fig-tree's signs;--rough deeds must be,
Trials and crimes: so learn ye well your parts,
Once more to plough the earth it is decreed,
And scatter wide the seed. (7-12)

Knowledge of human failure prompts the pilgrim to warn his companion pilgrims to read the lessons hidden behind the Word

of God in the Bible and to interpret the signs of the time in the light of God's Word. The ways of God are expressed in the poem "The Hidden Ones:"[28]

God sows in waste, to reap whom He foreknew
Of man's cold race;
. . . . . .
He waits, by scant return for treasures given,
To fill the thrones of heaven. (27-28,31-32)

In "Christmas without Christ,"[29] the pilgrim leader asks his dear country men:

O Britons! now so brave and high,
How will ye weep the day
When Christ in judgement passes by,
And calls the Bride away!
Your Christmas then will lose its mirth,
Your Easter lose its bloom:
Abroad, a scene of strife and dearth;
Within, a cheerless home! (9-16)

Through the launching of the Oxford Movement Newman tried to avert such a fate from his beloved nation. He considered Biblical characters such as Moses, Peter, Paul, to be collaborators in his present struggle. His passionate wish to model his reforming mission after the example set by Paul in his struggle to guide the early Church is reflected in the poem "St. Paul," [30] for a voice proclaims: "St. Paul is at thy side" (14).

Though the pilgrim is full of zeal to accomplish his mission, he has to practise patience and prays for it in "Zeal and Patience:" [31]

Lord! who Thy thousand years dost wait
To work the thousandth part
Of Thy vast plan, for us create
With zeal a patient heart. (13-16)

With all his zeal for the Church, Newman yet feels the weight of the burden of sin in the world. He also experiences his own unworthiness as an instrument of Divine to bring about a spiritual regeneration. The Poem "The Brand of Cain" [32] reflects this:

I bear upon my brow the sign
Of sorrow and of pain;
Alas! no hopeful cross is mine,
It is the brand of Cain. (1-4)

So the prayer the pilgrim makes is:

Saviour! wash out the imprinted shame;
That I no more may pine,
Sin's martyr, though not meet to claim
Thy cross, a saint of Thine. (9-12)

This sense of sinfulness and unworthiness which Newman experienced within himself was symbolic of the spiritual condition of England. Changes in social values, the security of economic progress which science and technology brought about, distanced men from God. So the poem "The Scars of Sin" [33] is a confession that he is 'scann'd' (5) by the Unseen:

Erst my good Angel shrank to see
My thoughts and ways of ill;
And now he scarce dare gaze on me,
Scar-seam'd and crippled still. (9-12)

Hence he cries out in distress in the poem "Absolution:" [34]

O Father, list a sinner's call!
Fain would I hide from man my fall--
But I must speak, or faint--
I cannot wear guilt's silent thrall:
Cleanse me, kind Saint! (1-5)

This confession of the poet's inadequacy and unworthiness is a familiar one in spiritual writing. The last stanza imparts to him the graces of the sacrament of penance as the

priest announces:

> Look not to me--no grace is mine;
> But I can lift the Mercy-sign.
> This wouldst thou? Let it be!
> Kneel down, and take the word divine,
> Absolvo te. (16-20)

The poem depicts the importance of repentance and the sacramental graces of the Church to fortify the individual soul against human weaknesses. The poet tries to convey the fact that such an armour is necessary to fight evil.

The poem "Temptation" [35] is a heart-rending cry to the Lord for His help to conquer evil:

> O Holy Lord, who with the Children Three
> Didst walk the piercing flame,
> Help, in those trial hours, which, save to Thee,
> I dare not name;
> Nor let these quivering eyes and sickening heart
> Crumble to dust beneath the Tempter's dart. (1-6)

The lyric passion inherent in the lines is similar to that of St. Augustine. As the pilgrim strives for a unique perfection and as he falls short, he cries out in self-accusation as is depicted in the poem "A Blight:" [36]

> So now defilement dims life's memory springs;
> I cannot hear an early-cherish'd strain,
> But first a joy, then it brings a pain--
> Fear, and self-hate, and vain remorseful stings:
> Tears lull my grief to rest,
> Not without hope, this breast
> May one day lose its load, and youth yet bloom again.
> (8-14)

The poet regrets the fact that in his youth he had ignored the inner voice which gave him intuition into the nature of the world. Yet he hopes that some day when Christ would ease his

heart-pangs, then he would enjoy peace and serenity.

As his sense of unworthiness intensifies he cries out in the poem "Bondage:" [37] "I ne'er shall reach Heaven's glorious path" (9); and requests:

> Then plead for one who cannot pray,
> Whose faith is but despair,
> Who hates his heart, nor puts away
> The sin that rankles there. (13-16)

Though the language remains simple, the imagery becomes frightening--'instant wrath,' 'fiery day,' sin that 'rankles' in the heart--evoke fear and repentance. This is done with the intention of turning men away from their sinfulness.

The poem "Samaria" [38] mirrors hope for the remnant of God's people, as it had been in the past:

> Israel had Seers; to them the Word is nigh;
> Shall not the Word run forth, and gladness give
> To many a Shunamite, till in His eye
> The full seven-thousand live ? (9-12)

Like the prophet Elisha who brought to life the dead son of the Shunamite woman, and restored her gladness, [39] so too the chosen ones of Christ would further His vast designs bringing back spiritual renewal to the Church.

The pilgrim finds consolation in the poem "Vexations:" [40]

> This be my comfort, in the days of grief,
> Which is not Christ's, nor forms heroic tale.
> Apart from Him, if not a sparrow fail,
> May not He pitying view, and sent relief
> When foes or friends perplex, and peevish thoughts prevail? (6-10)

The weapon the poet recommends is:

> Then keep good heart, nor take the niggard course
> Of Thomas, who must see ere he would trust,

Faith will fill up God's word, not poorly just
To the bare letter, heedless of its force,
But walking by its light and amid earth's sun and dust. (11-15)

This is what the pilgrim poet does and what he admonishes other pilgrims to do, to walk by faith through bright and dark days.

In the poem "The Religion of Cain,"[41] the poet speaks of the time when: "Kings used their gifts as ministers of Heaven" (5) and portrays the present times:

'Tis alter'd now;-- . . .
Each stands alone, Christ's bonds asunder torn;
Each has his private thought, selects his school,
Conceals his creed, and lives in closest tie
Of fellowship with those who count it blasphemy.
(7,9-12)

The poet requests his companions to 'spare reasoning' and reminds them: "Thus the Apostles tamed the pagan breast,/ They argued not, but preach'd; and conscience did the rest" (17-18). Thus Newman draws inspirations from Biblical characters and also from the Fathers of the early Church such as Saints Gregory Nazianan, Athanase, Basil and others.

Newman, the pilgrim leader and his companion pilgrims of the Movement accept their mission and try to bring about a pentecost to turn the hearts of men towards their God. In the poem "Pusillanimity," [42] he writes:

And so on us at whiles it falls to claim
Powers that we dread, or dare some forward part;
Nor must we shrink as cravens from the blame
Of pride, in common eyes, or purpose deep;
But with pure thoughts look up to God, and keep
Our secret in our heart. (7-12)

In the poem "Day-Labourers,"[43] Newman portrays the human race as 'day-labourers' while Christ alone has accomplished His

task fully. The Jewish leader:

> E'en Moses wearied upon Nebo's height,
> Though loth to leave the fight
> With the doom'd foe, and yield the sun-bright land
> To Joshua's armed hand, (3-6)

was unable to let the people enter the Promised Land. Even that great king:

> . . . David wrought in turn a strenuous part,
> Zeal for God'd house consuming him in heart;
> And yet he might not build, but only bring
> Gifts for the Heavenly King; (7-10)

and only his son Solomon could build the temple for Yahweh. Hence Newman feels neither he nor his companion pilgrims may be able to accomplish the task in full:

> List, Christian warrior! thou, whose soul is fain
> To rid thy Mother of her present chain;--
> Christ will avenge His Bride; yea, even now
> Begins the work, and thou
> Shall spend it in thy strength, but, ere He save,
> Thy lot shall be the grave. (13-18)

Such pilgrim fervour may not always be palatable. This Newman knew and yet he did strive incessantly to instil in the men of his time pure zeal through his poetry. However, in his day Newman's poetry had considerable influence on the Victorians.

The nineteenth century was a world of new loves and lost causes and the age with its distress, anxieties, struggles and fears are reflected in the poems of the Lyra. The appeal of the volume springs mainly from the awareness on the part of the poet of sin and guilt, fear of death and the state of the soul weighed down by trials and tribulations. The poems convey the humility of the spiritual struggle of a troubled soul summoned with a divine mission. The concept of self-surrender is writ large in the poems. They breathe the determination of a

reformer of the Church. This volume of poetry made clear that devotion is both worship of God and zeal for his Church. The poems of the Lyra are the heralds of the religious reformation of nineteenth century England.

Some of the poems have a unique power, others a fierce ring, and a prophetic strain in their attack on the contemporary scene. The language is simple, in keeping with the reserve propagated by the Tractarians. As the general practice in the case of religious poetry is to use simple language and an unadorned style, Newman conforms his practice to the traditional ways. According to Keble what a Christian lyricist "sets before us must be true in substance and in manner marked by a noble simplicity and confidence in that truth by a sincere attachment to it, and an entire familiarity with it.[44]

That power house from which the pilgrim leader draws unfailing and spiritual sustenance for his awesome task on the journey is the Sacrament of the Eucharist, as the poem with the same title [45] reveals:

> When'er I seek the Holy Altar's rail,
> And kneel to take the grace there offered me,
> It is no time to task my reason frail,
> To try Christ's words, and search how they may be;
> Enough, I eat His Flesh and drink His Blood,
> More is not told-- to ask it is not good. (1-6)

Having experienced the spiritual bliss and strength the Eucharist imparts to faith-filled souls, the pilgrim comments: "Hence, disputants! The din, which ye admire,/ Keeps but ill measure with the Church's choir" (11-12). The ways of thinking of the adherents of reason and of the liberals do not fall in line with those who live by faith in the Church's teachings.

This leader of the pilgrim's spiritual vocation was also taking a journey through ideas. Through his study of the

development of Christian Doctrines and Apostolic Christianity, he had to try and find his own way on the pilgrimage. Newman who loved his Church with an extraordinary affection and considered it his home tried to interpret the Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican Church in a Catholic spirit and published Tract 90. The censuring of the Tract by the Bishops of the Church of England affirmed their rejection of being 'Catholic.' This reaction of the Bishops revealed to Newman the loss of Apostolicity of the Anglican Church which appalled him. He found himself at the end of such unquenchable enthusiastic activities and writings during the Oxford Movement, a misunderstood and defeated leader. In his own words: "A pilgrim pale, with Paul's sad girdle bound.[46] It did break: "The youthful spirit, though bold for Jesu's sake." [47]

In one of the earlier poems "Jeremiah"[48] Newman in a prophetic strain had asked the Lord to spare him from taking a leading position on his pilgrimage:

"Woe's me!" the peaceful prophet cried
"Spare me this troubled life;
To stem man's wrath, to school his pride,
To head the sacred strife!" (1-4)

The poet had expressed clearly in the words of the prophet, his love for a quiet, untroubled life:

"O place me in some silent vale,
Where groves and flowers abound;
Nor eyes that grudge, nor tongues that rail,
Vex the truth-haunted ground!" (5-8)

But as in the case of prophet Jeremiah, this pilgrim prophet too had to experience:

If his meek spirit err'd opprest
That God denied repose
What sin is ours, to whom Heaven's rest

Is pledged, to heal earth's woes ? (9-12)

At this point in his pilgrimage Newman experienced desolation. In trying to find his way on the pilgrim path and in his effort to lead others in the right path, this leader experienced unimaginable heartbreaks, misunderstandings, revilings and the loss of all that he had held so dear. It was a hard task exchanging his religious mother, his own beloved Anglican Church for the Church of Rome to which he had no natural attraction. Hence like the old woman in Padraic Colum's poem who longed to have a house of her own,[49] the poet wanted to cling on to his beloved Anglican Church, to Oxford which was also a home to him and to his dear friends in the Anglican Church. It was a humbling task on his pilgrimage to take this step to enter the Roman Catholic Church. He retired to Littlemore but he delayed the last step. One of his pilgrim followers a woman gave her feelings about Newman's apparent abandonment of the pilgrimage. He reports her reactions:

> In a singularly graphic, amusing vision of pilgrims, who were making their way across a bleak common in great discomfort, and who were even warned against, yet continually nearing, "the king's highway," on the right, she says, "All my fears and disquiets were speedily renewed by seeing the most daring of our leaders, (. . .) suddenly stop short, and declare that he would go on no further. He did not, however, take the leap at once, but quietly sat down on the top of the fence with his feet hanging towards the road, as if he meant to take the time about it, and let himself down easily."[50]

Notes

[1] Ann Mozley, ed. Letters And Correspondence. Vol. 2.130.

[2] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 109-110.

[3] Ann Mozley, ed. Vol. 1. 281.

[4] Ann Mozley, ed. Vol. 1. 319.

[5] Ann Mozley, ed. Vol. 1. 338.

[6] G.B. Tennyson, Victorian Devotional Poetry (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981) 124.

[7] G.B. Tennyson, Victorian Devotional Poetry 120.

[8] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 58-59.

[9] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 138-139.

[10] Ann Mozley, ed. Vol. 2. 130.

[11] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 142.

[12] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 60.

[13] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 61-62.

[14] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 73-74.

[15] Ann Mozley, ed. Vol. 2. 131.

[16] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 139-140.

[17] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 140-141.

[18] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 77-78.

[19] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 109-110.

[20] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 93-94.

[21] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 123-124.

[22] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 146-147.

[23] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 169.

[24] Ann Mozley, ed. Vol. 2. 300.

[25] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 115.

[26] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 87-88.

[27] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 155.

[28] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 43-44.

[29] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 94-95.

[30] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 159.

[31] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 157.

[32] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 57-58.

[33] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 68-69.

[34] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 80-81.

[35] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 129.

[36] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 115.

[37] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 67-68.

[38] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 153.

[39] Bible, 2 Kings 4: 11-37.

[40] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 162.

[41] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 158.

[42] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 165.

[43] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 135-136.

[44] John Keble,"Sacred Poetry," XIXth Century English Critical Essays, ed. Edmund D. Jones (London: O.U.P, 1928) 203.

[45] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 151.

[46] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 130.

[47] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 130.

[48] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 91-92.

[49] Padriac Colum, "An Old Woman of the Roads."

[50] Maisie Ward, ed. Apologia pro Vita Sua 147.

6. SAILING IN COMPANY

People played a vital role in Newman's spiritual life. He loved them, appreciated them and needed them. He needed human ties and the circle of friends. When the bond with the University and the Church was torn asunder, he retired to Littlemore in company with some of his friends. One of the major reasons for the heartaches he experienced at the collapse of the Oxford Movement was that great loss of his closest friends and companions in the Anglican Church. Hence his valedictory sermon to Oxford, to the Church of England and to his Anglican friends, is soaked in pathetic passion and in the pathetic tenderness of his 'fever-troubled' [1] heart. His longing to hold on to his old and valued friends, in spite of the theological differences, is clearly expressed even in the title of the sermon The Parting of Friends. The pensiveness of tone which pervades this sermon reveals the pain which the poet experiences at the loss of such human ties. In his solemn lament there resides an almost painful emotional tension. Such is the closing of the sermon:

> And, O my brethren, O kind and affectionate hearts, O loving friends, should you know anyone whose lot it has been, by writing or by word of mouth, in some degree to help you thus to act; if he has ever told you what he knew about yourself, or what you did not know; has read to you your wants or feelings, and comforted you by the very reading; has made you feel that there was a higher life than this daily one, and a brighter world than that you see; or encouraged you, or sobered you, or opened a way to the inquiring, or soothed the perplexed; if what he has

> said or done has ever made you take interest in him, and feel well inclined towards him; remember such a one in time to come, though you hear him not, and pray for him, that in all things, he may know God's will and at all times he may be ready to fulfil it.[2]

The style and sound of these words are slow, weary, faltering, sighing, rising only to fall again in weakness, doubt and blank despair. These melancholy phrases lay bare the inmost fibres of his loving heart. The mysterious stirrings of his heart because he had to part with his friends, his family, the Anglican Church and his beloved University; the keen emotion he felt and the strange yearnings he experienced as expressed in this mournful passage, he was never to overcome.

In fact the poem "My Birthday"[3] written in 1819 mirrors the importance of human ties in the poet's life: "No friend in view, and sadness o'er my mind / Throws her dark veil "(51-52).

There were many changes in his life. He changed from a young intellectual liberal to a serious Evangelical. Later he changed over from his Evangelical peculiarities. Newman's leaving the Anglican Communion was a long and painful 'death-bed' [4] experience. In this process the intellectual and the emotional factors mixed together, acted on each other. He went through immense psychological stress before the painful birth process in the Roman Catholic Church occurred. Thus this tender-hearted yet tough pilgrim, a lover of solitude, who still lived on the strengths of many and great friendships has described his leaving Littlemore as 'going on the open sea.' [5] At this time on his pilgrimage, Newman parted with all that his heart loved and turned his face towards a foreign land.

In the third stanza of the poem "Reverses"[6] the poet portrays friendship as the most precious and as the most fragile of earthly possessions in comparison to the might of nature and the splendour of civilizations. The lines are

tinged with the pain of parting from Hurrell Froude, one of his closest friends, whom he would lose very soon by the unrelenting hand of death:

> And when thine eye surveys,
> With fond adoring gaze,
> And yearning heart, my friend——
> Love to its grave doth tend. (13-16)

The lines mirror the tenderness and the evanescence of this fragile gift and hence the consequent melancholy inherent here. The poet considers true friendship a spiritual thing which is nourished by tender love and strong loyalty. To the poet, when a true friendship dies, something spiritual in man dies along with it which has a right to immortality. Hence in his opinion the separation of friends by death is far more desirable than other worse partings: "He lives to us who dies, he is but lost who lives."[7] A friend who dies, however, lives in human memories while a friendship lost or betrayed cannot be restored to its first tenderness and loyalty.

The poem "David and Jonathan "[8] depicts the theme of friendship. The well-known friendship in history between David and Jonathan was cut short by death. Both David and Newman are sharers in similar pangs of pain by the untimely death of their cherished friends. The last twelve lines of the poem "Separation of Friends "[9] are especially tinged with the by-gone beauty of friendship as they are written after the death of Hurrell Froude. The lines tremble with a certain wistfulness and pain. His 1829 essay Poetry with Reference to Aristotle's Poetics shows his attitude to friends: " Even our friends around are invested with unearthly brightness—— no longer imperfect men, but beings taken into Divine favour, stamped with his seal, and in training for future happiness."[10] Hence it was perhaps that he felt the pain of parting from friends so keenly.

The poem "Thanksgiving"[11] which is a votive offering to the Lord gathers up in gratitude his prayer:

> I praise Thee, . . . [for]
> Blessings of friends, which to my door
> Unask'd, unhoped, have come;
> And choicer still a countless store
> Of eager smiles at home. (5, 13-16)

This poem reveals both his need for friendship and his need for home.

Newman disclosed his personality in his words. Such was his use of the word 'home.' The pilgrim poet thanks God in this poem "Thanksgiving" for "a countless store / Of eager smiles at home" (15-16). His home-loving feature is another trait of his need for human bonds. The sonnet entitled "Home"[12] was written after the poet had experienced the affectionate ties which enveloped the family of Frederick Rogers at Blackheath. Even after a period of fifty-seven years, Newman wrote to Rogers: " I ever loved and felt attached to your home and family . . . ." [13] To Newman the pilgrim who soon departed for his Mediterranean tour, the experience was:

> Where'er I roam in this fair English land,
> The vision of a Temple meets my eyes:
> . . . . . .
> The same, and not the same, go where I will,
> The vision beams! ten thousand shrines all in one.
> . . . . . .
> ... ? And I through distant climes may run
> My weary round, yet miss thy likeness still.
>
> (1-2,10-11,13-14)

Newman who was proud of being an English man, breathing an English air, expresses his affection both for his home and for England in the poem "Memory."[14] Thus he writes:

> My home is now a thousand miles away;

Yet in my thoughts its every image fair
Rises as keen, as I still linger'd there,
And, turning me, could all I loved survey. (1-4)

The pilgrim expresses nostalgia for his home and his home-land, England. Incidently, Robert Browning's poem "Home Thoughts from the Sea" written while the poet was at Sicily expresses similar feelings.

His affectionate memories of his own home provided a warm and cherishable background for his home in a religious context. His sermon "The Church a Home for the Lonely,"[15] illustrates home as 'inner world' opposed to the 'outer world.' Man wants a shelter or a sanctuary from the outer world. He wants a home in which to place his thoughts and affections, a secret dwelling which may soothe him amidst the troubles of this world. To Newman the pilgrim, the Church was a 'heavenly home in the midst of this turbulent world,'[16] where God dwells with his angels and saints and where we can take shelter and draw strength. Hence the Fathers of the Church, saints and angels were all part of the eternal home for Newman. Outside Church history these men, and angels have no importance but they were heroes to this pilgrim. For Newman great men were only those who did great things for God. Hence he wrote poems on Biblical prophets and apostles, saints and Fathers of the Church.

This pilgrim poet loved solitude only to commune with heavenly powers "and to fix the soul on heaven,"[17] to hear 'angelic choirs,' and to experience 'the bliss' that attends a pilgrim life on its way to its spiritual fulfilment. Although Newman was not a solitary man, he experienced angels to be his most important, constant, life-long companions. In the poem "Guardian Angel,"[18] he addresses it:

My oldest friend, mine from the hour
When first I drew my breath;
My faithful friend, that shall be mine,

Unfailing, till my death. (1-4)

He considered St. Michael 'champion high' and 'guard secure,' a 'ready guide' [19] of the Church in her war and also of each individual soul who struggles with evil power. He believed the Church's teaching about Michael, the Archangel and writes in the same poem "St. Michael:"

And thou, at last,
When Time itself must die,
Shalt sound that dread and piercing blast,
To wake the dead, and rend the vaulted sky,
And summon all to meet the Omniscient Judge on high.
(16-20)

In the "Relics of Saints," [20] the poet writes:

"The Fathers are in dust, yet live to God."—
So says the Truth; . . . . . .
Sophist may urge his cunning tests, and deem
That they are earth; --but they are heavenly
shrines. (1-2,7-8)

The poet believes that he would be united once again with his dear departed in eternity as he writes of his sister in the poem " A Picture:" [21]

When in due lines her saviour dear
His scatter'd saints shall range,
And knit in love souls parted here,
Where cloud is none, nor change. (61-64)

So the poet waits for his loved ones and his 'first friends on earth' [22] for a time patiently: " a little doubt below, / All will soon be plain."[23] The poet waits to join them as he writes in the poem "To Edward Caswall:"[24]

The happy infants of the second birth :—
. . . . . .
Thoughts from above, and visions that are sure,
And providences past, and memories dear,

. . . . . .

And recognize each other's faces there.

(24, 26-27, 29)

The pilgrim poet does not want a solitary life even in heaven and looks forward to : "the morn those angel faces smile / Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile."[25]

Though the poet valued ancient Greece and the great classical heroes, he passes on from the heroes of the classical antiquity to the saints of Christianity and from the sages of Greece and Rome to the Fathers of the Church as is seen in the Poem "The Greek Fathers: "[26] He models his life on their saintly lives:

Let heathen sing thy heathen praise,
Fall'n Greece! the thought of holier days,
In my sad heart abides;
For sons of thine in Truth's first hour
Were tongues and weapons of His power,
Born of the Spirit's fiery shower,
Our fathers and our guides.
All thine is Clement's varied page;
And Dionysius, ruler sage,
In days of doubt and pain;
And Origen with eagle eye;
And saintly Basil's purpose high
To smite imperial heresy,
And cleanse the Altar's stain.
From thee the glorious preacher came,
With soul of zeal and lips of flame,
A court's stern martyr-guest;
And thine, O inexhaustive race!
Was Nazianzen's heaven-taught grace;
And royal-hearted Athanase,
With Paul's own mantle blest. (1-21)

Newman does not rest content with the happiness of the creature state but he wants its completion and fullness. For him our lasting and real home is heaven and God Himself. He considered every good below only as footprints or at most the image of what is in fullness and perfection in eternity. Even musical sounds are said to have escaped from some higher sphere: "they are echoes from our Home; they are the voice of Angels, or the magnificat of Saints."[27] Yet the poet reminds in the poem "The Elements"[28] it is God: "Who holds for us the keys of either home, / Earth and the World to come" (34-35). Though God is the only shelter of man, the poet always makes it clear that our duties lie in this world.[29]

Newman's vocation to the Oratory as a Catholic priest is another example of his need for people. The poem "The Greek Fathers" with the names of his historical friends in the faith is very like his last tribute to his friends in the Oratory in the Apologia. This moving defence of his religious life he concludes with a prayerful lyric revealing his tender gratitude for their friendship. His gentle lyrical tribute to the friendship of Ambrose St. John which shadows his loneliness is tender and affectionate. In this closing prayer, he envisions a time when they would all be brought together at the end of their pilgrimage in the Celestial City:

> I have closed this history of myself with St. Philiph's name upon St. Philip's feast-day; and having done so, to whom can I more suitably offer it, as a memorial of affection and gratitude, than to St. Philip's sons, my dearest brothers of this House, the Priests of the Birmingham Oratory, AMBROSE ST. JOHN, HENRY AUSTIN MILLS, HENRY BITTLESTON, EDWARD CASWALL, WILLIAM PAINE NEVILLE, and HENRY INGATIUS DUDLEY RYDER? who have been so faithful to me; who have been so sensitive of my needs; who have been so indulgent

to my failings; who have carried me through so many trials; who have grudged no sacrifice, if I asked for it; who have been so cheerful under discouragements of my causing; who have done so many good works, and let *me* have the credit of them;-- with whom I have lived so long, with whom I hope to die.

And to you especially, dear AMBROSE ST. JOHN; whom God gave me, when He took every one else away; who are the link between my old life and my new; who have now for twenty-one years been so devoted to me, so patient, so zealous, so tender; who have let me lean so hard upon you; who have watched me so narrowly; who have never thought of yourself, if I was in question.

And in you I gather up and bear in memory those familiar affectionate companions and counsellors, who in Oxford were given to me, one after another, to be my daily solace and relief; and all those others, of great name and high example, who were my thorough friends, and showed me true attachment in times long past; and also those many younger men, whether I knew them or not, who have never been disloyal to me by word or deed; and of all these, thus various in their relations to me, those more especially who have since joined the Catholic Church.

And I earnestly pray for this whole company, with a hope against hope, that all of us, who once were so united, and so happy in our union, may even now be brought at length, by the Power of the Divine Will, into One Fold and under One Shepherd.[30]

Notes

[1] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 95-96.

[2] John Henry Newman, "The Parting of Friends,"Sermons on Subjects of the Day (London: Longmans, 1898) 409.

[3] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 6-7.

[4] Maisie Ward, ed. Apologia pro Vita Sua 99.

[5] Maisie Ward, ed. Apologia pro Vita Sua 99.

[6] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 121-122.

[7] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 110-111.

[8] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 110-111.

[9] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 179-180.

[10] John Henry Newman, Essays Critical and Historical Vol. 1. 23.

[11] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 45-46.

[12] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 56-57.

[13] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 279.

[14] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 81-82.

[15] John Henry Newman, Parochial and Plain Sermons. Vol. 4. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987) 842-851.

[16] John Henry Newman, Parochial and Plain Sermons. Vol. 4. 842-851.

[17] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 254.

[18] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 198-199.

[19] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 209-210.

[20] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 135.

[21] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 34-37.

[22] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 179-180.

[23] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 179-180.

[24] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 207-208.

[25] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 152.

[26] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 99-100.

[27] John Henry Newman, "The Theory of Developments in Religious Doctrine," Oxford University Sermons (London:

Rivingtons, 1890) 346-347.

[28] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 175-176.

[29] John Henry Newman, Parochial and Plain Sermons. Vol. 4. 842-851.

[30] Maisie Ward, ed. Apologia pro Vita Sua 190.

7. SIGN POSTS ON THE PILGRIMAGE

Newman's poems are indeed sign posts on the pilgrimage and show the direction he was taking. The poems unveil the guiding ideas or principles which lead him on to his goal. There is a clear pattern of unity threading through the body of the work and that unity is the poet's spiritual quest. Poems such as St. Bartholomew's Eve, [1] "Solitude" [2] and "Epiphany-Eve" [3] manifest the pilgrim's preoccupation with spiritual realities, his quest after the Truth and the themes of angels, faith and that of death. Memorials of the Past [4] was intended only for his immediate circle and this is addressed to members of the family. The poem "My Birthday" [5] reveals the pilgrim's early sense of the transience of life while "A Birthday Offering" [6] addressed to his brother Frank conveys his awareness of a spiritual vocation. The poems composed for his departed sister Mary such as "Consolations in Bereavement," [7] "A Voice from Afar" [8] and "A Picture" [9] point to that Celestial City towards which the pilgrim poet journeys. The undercurrent in the reflections of the first two poems is resignation to God's will. There is neither the battering of Donne nor the pessimism of Tennyson or Arnold. The first among the above mentioned poems portrays death not as a victor over sickness and decay, claiming its victim, but as a glorious conqueror over Time, the Destroyer. Without bitterness and without questioning, the poet makes sad remembrance of his sister who has gone to her heavenly dwelling. "A Voice from Afar," conveys deep and quiet feeling and is most simple in its tenderness.

The pilgrim as he advanced on his journey was exposed to scientific and social changes as well as to religious controversy. He noticed that holy shrines were replaced by stock exchanges, industries and other evidences of growing

materialism. Hence he became more and more conscious of what was in his view,the vital issue$: the nation's spiritual vocation. The poem "Wanderings," [10] has these lines:

I went afar; the world unroll'd
Her many-pictured page;
I stored the marvels which she told,
And trusted to her gage.
Her pleasures quaff'd, I sought awhile
The scenes I prized before;
But parent's praise and sister's smile
Stirr'd my cold heart no no more. (5-12)

During his tour in the Mediterranean, he was delighted by historic sites and beautiful scenes and the variety of famous men who had lived and performed heroic events there. But the pilgrim's thoughts of these were intertwined with his thoughts of the Biblical prophets, apostles and the Greek Fathers of the Church who were his real models. Hence he was becoming gradually detached from the narrow circle of home and family and drawn towards the concerns of the Church.

The tour was in fact a great weaning experience for the pilgrim. His spiritual journey was turned completely towards his ultimate goal, absolutely placing his trust in Providence. This single-minded quester began to concentrate more and more on the spiritual world.

The poem "Substance and Shadow" [11] deals with the pilgrim's Christian Platonic vision of the world which forms the nucleus of his poems as a whole. Newman wrote this poem at the sea coast. The tidal waves that rise and fall might have brought to his mind the imperfect and fleeting nature of earthly goods and life itself.

This sonnet contains ancient as well as original wisdom, and expresses it in clear and lofty terms. Today Mankind worships 'An idol substance' (3) which has the power to hurt

man while it has no power to save him ultimately. The octave of the sonnet depicts modern men who live in the midst of illusions, considering these to be the realities. In the beginning of the poem, the poet depicts modern men of science who 'grope in learning's pedant round' (1). They mistake 'fantasies of sense' (2) or sense perceptions to be the only source of knowledge, which to the poet is but idolatry. The Bible often uses the word 'idol' to refer to false gods. Modern men of science create false gods of science and technology to replace the God who alone is the 'Substance' or the only Reality. Even though scientific facts have great power in themselves, they are but 'shades of being' (4) and unsubstantial things, when weighed against the Ultimate Reality. Limited scientific experiments and sense perceptions are but 'poor show' (7), as they have no 'Truth' or 'Life' (7) in themselves. They have no ultimate control over destiny, yet men can use the creations of their genius to injure or to heal themselves in their 'brief trial-ground' (5), which is this life. He uses the word 'sane' as a verb meaning to restore to emotional or psychological health. Man's worship of scientific and material wealth alone, without the balance of spiritual health, was to Newman a form of insanity. But it has no power to destroy 'Truth' or 'Life'--God and life are immortal. Hence the ultimate control lies not in the 'idol substance' but in the only 'Substance' which is God.

The sestet portrays human nature created in the image of God: "Son of immortal seed, high-destined Man!" (9). Hence men should be conscious of their high fortune and should refrain from misusing their 'dread gifts' (10). Men must not assume the place of the Creator but use their God-given gifts to understand the meaning and purpose of life. When men make use of the inventions of their genius to serve a higher purpose, with the help of Heaven, they would not be frustrated by earthly

obstacles and would fulfil their high-destiny. The poem embodies Newman's rejection of the mechanical philosophy prevalent in the ideas and programmes of the utilitarians. He used Victorian caution to remind men as to what in fact is the reality of their lives.

The words that form the keystones to the edifice of the poem, and the ones on which certainties are to be found are all given in capitals—Truth, Life, Man, Heaven. If 'Man,' who is 'high-destined,' realizes this fact, he would then find the 'Truth,' which would impart 'Life' to him and lead him to 'Heaven' where he would realize his immortal nature and high destiny. The title of the poem "Substance and Shadow" expounds the poet's philosophy in a noteworthy manner. There are also phrases in which we get echoes of Wordsworth and his "Ode on Intimations of Immortality." The line 'Each mind is its own centre,' has echoes of Milton's Paradise Lost.

The poem is well composed, following the Petrarchan sonnet pattern. It has the underlying iambic pentameter pattern, but the poet's knowledge of the classical verse forms enabled him to use variations from the set patterns to give the nuances of his thought its fitting expression. Thus variations are used for better outcome. There is choriambus—an iamb and a trochee combined to make a metrical foot of two stressed syllables, enclosing two unstressed syllables—/ ∪ ∪ /. For example, 'Stirring or still' is a choriamb. / So are 'Son of immortal seed.' 'Home to itself,' 'Aided by Heaven.,' 'unthwarted still.'

As is the usual practice with Newman, here too the sound accompanies the sense and helps to convey it in an apt manner. The idealism of the poem is expressed in the sound pattern. The octave has deep [U] and [O] sounds prevailing which convey a sense of man's groping in the shadows, but the four lines of the sestet have [ɔ] and [a] sounds, while the last couplet

culminates in {i} sound. The poem is an example of the poet's thorough grip on the verse forms.

The sonnet conveys to us Plato's theory with regard to substance and shadow which was likewise Newman's own belief. Newman wrote: "For Thou art Thyself the seat and centre of all good, and the only substance in this universe of shadows, and the heaven in which blessed spirits live and rejoice."[12] Even his epitaph written by himself expresses this philosophy, Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatum-- from shadows into reality. This belief of the poet has parallels in the eastern philosophy. The Hindu philosophy considers life as Maya or unreality. As a child, Newman imagined life to be a dream,[13] and the pilgrim conveys this idea of the impermanence and insubstantiality of the world on different occasions.

As the poet was the zealous guardian of religious values, many of the poems breathe intense fervour and passion to champion the cause of religion. "Progress of Unbelief"[14] is a sonnet which glows with genuine and fervent indignation at the then prevalent irreligious tendencies of his country. The poem was written in 1833 after the introduction of the Reform Bill in 1832. It was a time when men began to legislate what belief should be and what it should not be. The Bible as a Holy Book was being replaced by books of science and reason.

Though Newman wrote the poem at Corsica aboard the ship, the fact that back home in England, the Government was using religion for political expediency greatly disturbed him. His deep concern about this lent to his poems the qualities of passion, zeal and intensity reminiscent of the prophets in the Old Testament. The State began to take precedence over the Bishops on the management of the Church of England. The eroding religious values of his native land kept his mind preoccupied with thoughts of reconciling the struggle between spiritual theory with the new utilitarian and liberalistic tendencies of

the age.

Overwhelmed by the increasing faithlessness of his beloved country, he begins the poem, referring to autumn which is in contrast with the time of the year when he writes it: "Now is the Autumn of the Tree of Life" (1). It is an echo of Shakespeare's Richard II: "Now is the winter of our discontent." Thus in the month of June, he refers to autumn, making it clear to the readers that even though it might be spring or summer in nature, the soul of England experiences but autumn. Men think that with the progress that they have achieved, summer will last forever.

In this poem faith is personified as the 'Tree of Life' (1). The poet uses the metaphor of autumn to describe the shedding of the dogmas of faith from human minds and hearts in the same manner in which the autumnal leaves fall and die: "Its leaves are shed upon the unthankful earth" (2). Like the autumnal leaves the dogmas of faith fall 'upon the unthankful earth,' for men are ungrateful for these life-giving precepts on which their civilization is built. The metaphor of 'leaves' whirling in the wind portrays a picture of utter chaos and confusion. Such is the state of England, deprived of its faith. The dogmas of faith have become 'a prey to the winds' strife' (3) that is, a prey to the modern attitudes of men. They lack religious sensitivity, are 'Heartless' and hence do not realize that they need religious faith, when material prosperity fails them. Men live in their smug complacency, irrespective of what happens to religious doctrines—they "close the door, and dress the cheerful hearth" (5) and are comfortable. The poet conveys the fact that economic and industrial progress have made them 'self-trusting' (6) and in their luxurious homes they set up for themselves 'a household Baal,' (7) a false god of progress.

The poet brings out the imbalance in the life of the

country where the material progress is contrasted with religious retrogression. The result is that religious values are in danger of complete disappearance. The imagery drawn upon Nature, from the season and from the Bible adds to the keenness and seriousness of the situation. Personifications, metaphors and figures of speech are made effective use of, to portray a vivid and a realistic representation of the faithless state, in the octave of the sonnet.

The sestet portrays the poet's firm decision to work against the growth of non-belief: "But I will out amid the sleet, and view" (8). Even the syntax of the line conveys the poet's daring out alone for the task of accomplishing his mission of eradicating the non-religious tendencies of the men of his time. The force in the line reflects the impelling powers that drive the poet to action. The poet stands in contrast to those who in the octave "close the door, and dress the cheerful hearth" (5). The language is rich and suggestive. Even in the most adverse of circumstances, 'amid the sleet,' he would unflichingly and staunchly work to curb the power of 'Unbelief.'

Next, Faith is depicted as "shrivelling stalk and silent-falling leaf" (9), for faith withers away from the hearts of men and disappears quietly. But as they are 'of choicest scent and hue' (10) to the poet, he goes on to lament the faithless state of his country: "for she, once pattern chief / Of faith, my Country, now gross-hearted grown, / Waits but to burn the stem before her idol's throne." (12-14). The country has become bloated up repulsively with materialistic and utilitarian ideas and has grown coarse and unrefined. The adjectival phrase 'gross-hearted' illustrates emphatically the state of degradation in which his country lives. The concluding lines form the anticlimax. The poet's religion and his country are at crossroads, for the country would sooner do

away with faith than lose material benefits: "burn the stem before her idol's throne" (14). Losing its faith, the country takes refuge in ancient idol worship and it rears 'a household Baal,' while the pilgrim poet wanted his country, England "to be the 'Land of Saints' in this dark hour, and her Church the salt of the earth." [15]

Hardly has any poet sung under such strong personal sorrow at the dishonouring of Faith by an unbelieving generation. As far as this pilgrim is concerned, in 'the Autumn of the Tree of Life,' compromise should not be the order of the day. It is impossible to miss the fervent indignation that burns within the poet, and he strains forward to war with disbelief. The sound echoes the sense especially in the last two lines, which predominate in deep [ɔ] sounds when his country reaches almost to the end of its faith. The poet uses sound devices to effect slow reading and to impress upon the reader's mind the deteriorated state of contemporary men.

The poems of the second stage in the pilgrim's journey, in general, revolt against the shallow popular religion. Newman exuded vitality and his poems pierce through 'joint and marrow,' disturbing the self-complacency of confident men with their swift shafts. The poems reflect Newman's troubled spirit, his anxieties and fears and his need for the men of the times to be chastened and disciplined in spirit and body.

Among one of the strikingly grave lyrics of Newman, we find "The Two Worlds." [16] This poem illustrates how consistent his religious outlook had been through the crushing events of his long storm-tossed life. Here we discern the earnest youth who wrote the poem "Solitude," still a single-hearted pilgrim, with his mind set absolutely on the end of the quest which is depicted in a mystical vein in The Dream of Gerontius. "The Two Worlds" portrays the main stay of his life which saved him from breaking down. That of course was his unshakable belief

in the sole reality of the invisible world, placed against this world of flux and transience. His hope for a heavenly recompense outweighed his earthly disappointments.

There is a wistful melancholy in the lines, for the world of Newman seems to be 'out of joint' with the times. The poem illustrates how at the very moment when the poet experiences the pain of renouncing: "The tender memories of the past, / The hopes of coming years" (19-20), he is also deeply conscious of a hundredfold reward. Being caught up in this world of human travail, the poet begins the poem with a heart-rending prayer: "Unveil, O Lord, and on us shine / In glory and in grace" (1-2). Then the poet places the two worlds in their bewildering juxtaposition: "This gaudy world grows pale before / The beauty of Thy face" (3-4). It is only the 'Kindly Light' of the Lord that can give an insight into the nature of this 'fairy ground' which deceives us with the promise of happiness here and now: "Till Thou art seen, it seems to be / A sort of fairy ground, / Where suns unsetting light the sky" (5-7). This last line was a powerful warning to his country men who gloried in the splendour of their colonial days, conscious that the sun never set in the British Empire, spread so far and wide. Even such a mighty Empire like that of Great Britain of the nineteenth century, was nothing but an unreal Empire that had only a short duration of existence.

The poet prays for the 'keener' and the 'purer beam' of the light of the Lord to transcend our vision so that we get an insight into the heart of the truth, that the Lord alone is our only true Home, so bright amidst the shadows of this world. The poet already having discovered that Home by faith, is enlightened on the nature of this world:

> Its noblest toils are then the scourge
> Which made Thy [Christ's] blood to flow;
> Its joys are but the treacherous thorns

Which circled round Thy [Christ's] brow. (13-16)

The poet uses contrasting images to make the meaning clear and vivid. In the first stanza the 'the gaudy world' grows 'pale' and here the 'noblest toils' are 'scourge'[s], 'Its joys' are but 'the treacherous thorns.' In his search for pleasures, man weaves 'the treacherous thorns' which 'circled round' the 'brow' of Christ at His passion. The poet depicts the human mind and its hidden motives which though seemingly noble, hide within it those treacheries for which Christ died to atone. Therefore the poet makes a confession to the Lord:

And thus, when we renounce for Thee
Its restless aims and fears,
The tender memories of the past,
The hopes of coming years,
Poor is our sacrifice, whose eyes
Are lighted from above;
We offer what we cannot keep,
What we have ceased to love. (17-24)

Yet we know that the renunciation and the sacrifice that the poet made on his pilgrim journey to the Lord did cost him all that he held most dear in life.

The poem is highly subjective. The pilgrim poet was able to resign himself to God's will and say 'Poor is our sacrifice' even when he had not ceased to love the things he had sacrificed. But he transcended his experiences of failures and it looks as if the agonizing prayer which the pilgrim had made in 1833 for 'Kindly Light' in the poem "The Pillar of the Cloud" is granted him lighting up his beaten tracks with the vision of Heaven. Hence this world after imposing its cross upon him becomes once more the herald of that other world.

In Meditations And Devotions written in 1855, we find earlier echoes of this poem written in 1862. The pilgrim reflects:

> I know, . . . and from sad experience I am sure, that whatever is created, whatever is earthly, pleases but for the time, and then palls and is a weariness . . . . From mere prudence I turn from the world to Thee: I give up the world for Thee — I renounce that which promises for Him who performs. [17]

Newman had the habit of seeing reality as being composed of two opposite elements. In his own character and thoughts we find a balance between opposites. He had opposite qualities and dispositions which it is not easy for one and the same individual to harmonize to a high degree.[18] Thus intent on the world to come, he was yet interested in what was going on here below. He was endowed with keen senses, attached to his earthly environment and had sound knowledge of classical history and literature. Though he loved classical knowledge, he loved his more faith and put some restraints on his interest in the Classics. In his Mediterranean journey while being in the midst of a rich classical tradition, he turned to Bible and the Christian tradition, which points to an eternity to which the whole creation moves on its earthly pilgrimage. The poet would use every God-given gift including a fine art like music, as the poem "The Isles of the Sirens," [19] portrays:

> Music's ethereal fire was given,
> Not to dissolve our clay,
> But draw Promethean beams from Heaven,
> And purge the dross away. (5-8)

"The Elements" and "Judaism" are two tragic choruses which portray the Sophoclean spirit effectively. J. M. Flood has commented that in these poems Newman, "possessed the Greek spirit to a degree scarcely ever shown by any other English poet." [20] With their Aeschylean and Sophoclean spirit, these poems reflect a Greek austerity and gnomic concentration, in tune

with Newman's own verse habits. The choric model enhances his disciplined plainness and he uses the free movement of the Greek choric verse. These two poems are examples of the highly imaginative faculties that the poet possessed.

These poems are also examples of Newman's knowledge of classical literature. A chorus by its very nature comments on the action and teaches the audience. Newman being a pilgrim teacher, uses this dramatic device to instruct. The people of his time with their classical education would grasp the teaching when they read it. If not for this didactic purpose he would have preferred to bury his knowledge of the Classics.

In " The Element" [21] the poet depicts man's ability to tame the brute forces of the earth:

> Man is permitted much
> To scan and learn
> In Nature's frame;
> Till he well-nigh can tame
> Brute mischiefs, and can touch
> Invisible things, and turn
> All warring ills to purposes of good.
> Thus, as a god below,
> He can control
> And harmonize, what seems amiss to flow
> As sever'd from the whole
> And dimly understood. (1-12)

Next he gives a criticism of the claims of science. Even though science has solved many of the riddles of Nature, existence and calamities, it is unable to understand fully or to explain totally the tragedy in the elements. The poet finds that only 'One Hand has sway' (15) over the elements and that is God's. The poet cautions man to realize his feebleness, for even when he is 'fully skill'd,' he 'Still gropes in twilight dim' (27). Here we get an echo of Aristotle's reference of man to bats. Aristotle remarked that the

difficulty is not in the facts but in us: "For as the eyes of the bats are to the blaze of days, so is the reason in our soul to the things which are by nature most evident of all."[22] Man who 'gropes' in darkness is 'Encompass'd:' "By fearfullest powers / Inflexible to him" (29-30). This helps him to discern his powerlessness and turn to God in wisdom, for He alone: "Holds for us the keys of either home / Earth and the world to come" (35-36).

God's infinite creative and preservative powers are unfathomable and the achievements of science can never succeed in resolving the mystery of the universe. The cosmic enigma is wrapped up in the ineffable transcendent mystery which lies beyond the range of science. In the poem "Warnings"[23] the poet gives the context of contemporary dispute between science and religion and asks: "Can science bear us / To the hid springs / Of human things? ". (7-9) The poet knows that the providential warnings by which God prepares souls for sorrow can be comprehended by imaginative insight which in fact is the true guide to the "hid springs / Of human things ?" Then in an unusual stanza pattern, which is almost 'Browningesque,' in a deliberately difficult cadence he asks"Are such thoughts fetters / While Faith disowns / Dread of earth's tones' (13-15). The poet reaches the conclusion that it is only Faith which is able to read 'on the wall' 'Heaven's letters' (17-18) that is the signs sent by God to human beings. This is a Biblical reference to the prophetic writing on the wall during a great feast given by Belshazzar.[24] Newman implies that many such divine warnings are given to the men of the time but even the Victorians needed an interpreter like Daniel of old who could read and understand God's ways.

"The Elements" could be compared with one of the great choruses of Sophocles in Antigone. The poem is also faintly suggestive of a chorus in the Choephoroe of Aeschylus. The poem testifies to the poet's skill in comprehending Aeschylean moods. It is characteristic of Newman. It is Newman striving after the 'One Hand alone' which holds sway over the elements and it is he who

reaches out and feels in the darkness of this world the touch of the Divine Hand which stretches out to lead him to certainties beyond what this world can offer.

"Judaism" [25] is another tragic chorus in the the Greek spirit. Here the poet draws exceptional analogy between the Jewish people and the outcast Oedipus Coloneus. Aeschylus himself, noted for the scope and grandeur of his conceptions and style, would have been delighted to have written what Newman writes on the Jewish race. The comparison of the Jewish race with that of Oedipus Coloneus is faultless.

The poem begins with a magnificent apostrophe to the Jewish race: 'O Piteous race!' (1) because this once chosen people of God, have now become the symbol of God's rejected people. As a result they are 'aged blind / Unvenerable' (5-6) and wander from place to place, banished from their heritage, through their sins. The poet's reference to the distinguished figure of Oedipus Coloneus of Sophocles as the symbol of God's rejected people, in their woeful destiny, is indeed remarkable. Like him, they too bear a curse with them, are no where at home and carry their sad present while at the same time they nurse a mysterious hope for the future. The poet compares the Jewish race to Oedipus Coloneus thus:

> I liken thee to him in pagan song,
> In thy gaunt majesty,
> The vagrant King, of haughty-purposed mind,
> Whom prayer nor plague could bend:
> Wrong'd, at the cost of him who did the wrong,
> Accursed himself, but in his cursing strong,
> And honour'd in his end. (7-13)

These lines form the best possible summary of Oedipus, the hero of the two major Greek tragedies. Here we find the strange contrast in which the Sophoclean irony delights--though Oedipus is king of all men and seems to be the happiest, he is

the most afflicted of men. The Greek hero in his woeful dignity carrying an inherent curse, resembles a Jew who is destined to wander. Both the pitiable protagonists are trapped by tragic destiny.

The poet mentions the 'Proffer of precious cost' (28) by Christ which was His own very life to appease Heaven and thus to save the suffering race. It did not prevail against the pride of the Jewish nation. This lamentable event brings to the poet's mind the irreligious attitudes and the ignoble life situations of the men of his time. Such distressing state of events inspired this tragic chorus.

The poems of the journey were composed by Newman in response to the challenge of championing the cause of religion and they were woven in and out of his response to Sicily too, showing the intertwining of his reaction to natural beauty, classical and Christian history, the state of the Church and a sense of nemesis and summons to action. This is the reason why he wrote at Ithaca of Exodus and why his thoughts centred round Moses instead of on Ulysses. Even the tragic choruses are intertwined with spiritual reflections.

There are poems of the journey in which a historian's interest mingles with that of a lover of classical beauty and with that of a Romantic's love of nature. The poems also reflect something of Newman's preoccupation with the illusory nature of life, earthly glories, and mirror the world of the spirits and of the life to come. The best among such poems are "Reverses," "Messina," "Corcyra" and "Memory."

In the first two stanzas of the fine lyric "Reverses,"[26] the poet blends images of nature beautifully and most effectively with symbols taken from history:

When mirth is full and free,
Some sudden gloom shall be;
When haughty power mounts high,

The Watcher's axe is nigh.
All growth has bound; when greatest found,
It hastes to die.
When the rich town, that long
Has lain its huts among,
Uprears its pageants vast,
And vaunts--it shall not last !
Bright tints that shine, are but a sign
Of summer past. (1-12)

These form instances of the decay of splendour at its height, and they are appealing due to their universality. Images of contrast are used to illustrate the fleeting nature of earthly goods and worldly achievements. Thus against 'full' 'mirth' there is 'sudden gloom;' 'haughty power' and 'the Watcher's axe' face each other; 'all growth' but 'hastes to die.' Natural surroundings and built-up civilizations are alike impermanent. Nature and human art are sign posts which point to the decay of growth and splendour.

The third stanza forms the climax. Here friendship is portrayed as the most precious and as the most fragile of earthly possessions in comparison to the might of nature and the splendour of civilizations. In the poet's opinion true friendship cherished by loyal hearts affects human lives more keenly than the overthrow of great empires.

Such poems are remarkable for the grandeur of their stylistics, the purity of taste and the radiance of the total impression. The poem "Reverses" has a striking monosyllabic vigour. It is hard to find short poems that equal these qualities. Swinburne, the great pre-Raphaelite poet-critic commented that the poems of Newman have 'a genuine lyric note' and spoke highly of the Victorian's poetry.[27] The early lyrics and The Dream of Gerontius have a unique beauty, while the "The Pillar of the Cloud" and some of his religious lyrics are

among the most direct and passionate expression of strong feelings.

At the sight of the historic Mediterranean sea, the setting of Greek and Roman Epic songs, Newman's love for classic scenes could not be restrained. The past civilizations remind him of the decay of empires yet his heart is moved by the land of classical beauty. In the poem "Messina,"[28] he rebukes himself for the attraction he feels: "Why, wedded to the Lord, still yearns my heart / Towards these scenes of ancient heathen fame ?" (1-2) The pilgrim's all-embracing power of understanding prevents him from surrendering to the doctrine of the sole sufficiency of man which marks the humanism of Renaissance. He realizes the fatal flaw of the neo-pagan philosophy which stops at the human level.

By the time the poet comes to the latter part of the poem, he attains true wisdom and is able to read in the growth and decay of these civilizations each individual's history. He is moved to 'sympathy with Adam's race:'

> 'Tis but that sympathy with Adam's race
> Which in each brother's history reads its own.
> So let the cliffs and seas of this fair place
> Be named man's tomb and splendid record-stone,
> High hope, pride-stain'd, the course without the prize. (10-14)

They had built up splendid civilizations, which are demolished to the grounds. They stand as sepulchres-- "man's tomb and splendid record-stone"--which are 'pride-stain'd ' and are reminders of 'the course with out the prize.' The living walk over the tomb of those ancient actors and warriors. Thus past and present merge in a piercing experience of desolation and beauty. The past is the reminder to the poet of the transience of every worldly achievement. The Christian pilgrim pauses to reflect at this sight:

> The past and the present! Once these hills were full of life! I began to understand what Scripture means when speaking of lofty cities vaunting in the security of their strongholds. What a great but ungodly sight was this place in its glory ! and then its history; . . . [29]

Faithful to the Petrarchan sonnet tradition, the poet presents the problem in the octave. The tone of the poem is revealed at the very outset by the telling question with which the poem begins. The octave portrays the 'restless' yearning of the poet for those pagan lands, their 'sweet arts' and their 'mad deeds' which are spectacular in human eyes. The sestet resolves the problem, for the poet finds the answer that every individual born of 'Adam's race' must face the growth and the decay of every earthly splendour.

As the poet moves on by the ancient Greek islands, he is reminded of the Greek City-States and of the classical poets and philosophers who sang of its glory. In the poem "Corcyra,"[30] the poet writes of the once famous race who 'on the sea held sway' (4), causing 'a hundred states to drown' (6). Once again it is a reminder to the poet that every 'history' is 'spent and run' (9).

Hence the historian's interest is turned to solemn reflections on the eternal fate of each long vanished actor in those once sensational scenes. The poet envisions himself walking over their tombs. The past history of these ancient towns summons up the ghostly present for the poet: "while pondering the fierce deeds then done,/ Such reverence on me shall its seal impress / As though I corpses saw, and walk'd the tomb" (12-14). The poet finds in the fleeting nature of worldly splendours some cleansing morals for mankind. Civil war causing defeat could also be a reference to eighteenth century England which faced civil wars in its colonial empire.

Between 1780 and 1790 the two empires established were India and Australia. This poem was written in 1833 and the empire in decay may refer to China. These were uncertain times and were not the time of the great nineteenth century imperialism which came later. Such musings may have inspired this poem written as the Lenten season approached with its call to repentance.

The poem possesses a macabre beauty and it also foreshadows The Dream of Gerontius. Among the poems that achieve a marked refinement and simplicity and are very compact with concise expression, together with their messages for men, are "Desolation," "Zeal and Patience," "Declension," "Sympathy," "Humiliation," "Sensitiveness," "Warnings," "The Age to Come," "Hora Novissima," "The Witness" and "Flowers Without Fruit."

In the sonnet "Memory," [31] as in "Corcyra," the light that plays on the present scene is a gleam from the world of spirits. In "Memory," the poet portrays the present as the prophet of the future. The power of memory which he possesses is the pledge of its might in the days to come, when he the pilgrim would have gone the way from whence none returns:

> And so, upon Death's unaverted day,
> As I speed upwards, I shall on me bear,
> And in no breathless whirl, the things that were,
> And duties given, and ends I did obey.
> And, when at length I reach the throne of Power
> Ah! still unscared, I shall in fulness see
> The vision of my past innumerous deeds,
> My deep heart-courses, and their motive-seeds,
> So to gaze on till the red dooming hour. (5-13)

Looking forward to the end of the quest, the pilgrim offers up a prayer: "Lord, in that strait, the Judge! remember me!" (14). In fact, what happens hour by hour is that the living hastens

on to join the ranks of the dead who are still alive at a different level.

An air of loneliness and melancholy broods over the Mediterranean poems. The visions of departed earthly glories and empires laid in the dust lend to the poems the voices of the grim warnings of the Old Testament prophets. In their religious realism these poems remind us of Crabbe with a touch of Bunyan and reflect Cowper in their homely diction. The poems of the voyage are full of spiritual content, sincerity and a unique fervour. Often times his extraordinary zeal glows warmly through the veil of his restraint, constant ardour for God's people and solicitude for their vocation runs through the whole of his poetic being.

Newman, the pilgrim had the most appreciative eye for the sensuous beauties of nature. It was in his quest for the beauty of the Unknown that he was instinctively drawn towards the unlimited variety of sights and sounds of nature. His highly sensitive soul responded with wonderful immediacy to the rich variety of nature's loveliness manifested in its various seasons, flowers, birds, animals, scents, music and colours.

In the poem "Nature and Art" [32] he sings of the glories of living creation set against the 'dull' lifeless works of art produced by man. He pours out his heart in sorrow in the poem, for the beauty of nature he had to leave behind. He loved the 'wooded hills,' the plain fields, the herds of cattle 'The leaves rustling in the breeze' (37), the songs of birds, the sunbeam that 'glides along' (41), the insect that "Floats softly by, or sips the flower" (43). The poet sang of 'the dewey rain' that 'descends' the 'brisk showers the welkin shroud' no less the 'angry brow' that 'Frowns' from 'the red thunder-cloud;' 'hailstorm' that 'pelts' and 'lightning' that harms nature. But for Newman who held a sacramental view of nature, its beauty was but another step towards the experience of the

overwhelming beauty of the Creator. Hence it was 'living Nature' with its outward and visible sign of the divinely Invisible that inspired Newman's art.

In the poem "The Trance of Time,"[33] the poet writes of 'The season-measured year,' with its 'fairy guise' which inspired his imagination. But unlike some other poets, for example Sarojini Naidu, who ascribed no mystic importance to nature and who was thrilled in the loveliness of its seasons, Newman found nature beautiful and breath-taking, yet a veil, holding back great truths of a higher life.

He has recorded the rhythms of the seasons in nature. Spring which sings of heaven, 'the summer flowers' (5), 'the autumn's bowers' (7), 'rich autumnal lights' (17), and 'winter's social ring' (18), were dear to him. All the same he was aware: "Long days are fire-side nights, / Brown autumn is fresh spring" (19-20). So the changes in nature and all discriminations of seasons did not affect him, for he could 'antedate,' 'Heaven's Age of fearless rest' (32). The poem also expresses the truth of the transience of life and that this world is but a shadow which would pass out of existence in a short duration like 'the short-lived four' seasons of the year. Man has nothing of lasting value, 'no owner's part' in this transitory world.

Poems such as "Heathen Greece" and "To Edward Caswall," illustrate clearly that Newman drew a certain sustenance from the Romantics. The heroine of Newman's novel Callista, being weary of life in tropical Africa, sang this song "Heathen Greece" [34] in wistfulness and with great longing to have a vision of those cool Grecian islands. Through her song, the poet paints for us the beautiful Grecian islands, its seas, rivers, mountains and 'Elysian' fields, with the sensibilities of a Romantic. The song reflects the beauty of the singer, the cadence of her soft voice and the wistfulness that overpowers

the sad heroine.

The places mentioned in the poem are portrayed with realism. The poem is born out of his marvellous power of visualization. The poet describes 'the Islands of the Blest' (1) that 'stud' 'the Aegean Sea' (2), and 'the deep Elysian rest' (3):

> It haunts the vale where Peneus strong
> Pours out his incessant stream along,
> Where the craggy ridge and mountain bare
> Cut keenly through the liquid air, (4-7)

'array'd' in their 'pure tints.' The 'craggy ridge and mountain bare' 'Scorn earth's green robes' because they 'change and fade,' while the former 'stand in beauty undecay'd' and are at the same time 'Guards of the bold and the free.'

The poem excels in rhythmic beauty, and even the visual appeal of the poem is admirable. This is one of such poems of Newman which expresses a melancholy and a sensuous emotion in a penetrating melody which is all his own. Poems such as these bear witness to his profound and original genius. John K. Ryan places it side by side with Poe's "The City in the Sea."[35]

In the lyric "To Edward Caswall,"[36] Newman lingers in the enchanting company of nature. The poet describes the beauties of nature, in its richest, luscious and rapturous state. The description of each flower and blossom, mirrored in the stream is perfect:

> Once , o'er a clear calm pool,
> The fulness of an over-brimming spring,
> I saw the hawthorn and the chestnut fling
> Their willing arms, of vernal blossoms full
> And light green leaves: the lilac too was there,
> The prodigal laburnum, dropping gold,
> While the rich gorse along the turf crept near,
> Close to the fountain's margin, and made bold

To peep into that pool, so calm and clear:—
As if well-pleased to see their image bright
Reflected back upon their innocent sight;
Each flower and blossom shy
Lingering the live-long day in still delight. (1-13)

The poet makes the best use of metaphors and personifications here. These lines could be compared with the best in Wordsworth and they are transparent and amazingly fluent, like the 'over-brimming' spring itself.

The title of this beautiful poem may come as a surprise. But the works of Newman, both in prose and poetry have such awkward titles. As he, the pilgrim had embarked on the bold task of correcting the times, he gave his works cold titles, suggesting straight forward paths to the men of his times who looked for what pleased the senses forgetting their higher call as human beings. Neither did he seek after any literary fame. As a result we see his occasional works along the pilgrimage bearing titles which are as plain as the idea he intended to convey through them. Hence the poem written for Edward Caswall has the title "To Edward Caswall."

It was for his sisters that Newman wrote the poem entitled "My Lady Nature and Her Daughters."[37] In this poem he compares the delight ladies take in dress, dances, and their round of homely tasks with the beauties and activities of nature. It speaks about nature but much more about ladies. The poet finds the graceful mirth of ladies the loveliest sight on earth. He also depicts the 'lighter moods of mind' of Lady Nature, in her birds and beasts and their antics and sports.

Next the poet speaks of the 'birth of Poesy' (73) in nature's lap, and of the natural resorts the wealthy men enjoy from the bounty of Lady Nature. But 'work-day souls' (82) turn not to 'High-born Nature' but to 'lady-lighted home' (88) to regain their strength and to befriend their humble lot amidst

a rude and unkind world. Though Lady Nature bears her sway amidst the spheres, it is her daughters, the ladies, who rule over hearts.

While for Hopkins, " The world is charged with the grandeur of God," nature with all its delights left Newman's heart longing for God. For he realized that the blessings of nature could offer no lasting satisfaction to his heart. Newman and Francis Thompson are of the same view. Thompson wrote: "Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my drouth."[38] Newman could be compared with Rabindranath Tagore for whom also nature was an unending source of inspiration and a symbol of divine grace and beauty. But Newman was cautious of the beauties of nature lest they tear him apart from God. Yet both these poets use images from nature to symbolize their yearning for a union with the Divine.

In his early poems qualities such as simplicity of thought and direct appeal to the individual humanity are expressed. They also have a romantic fragrance and an energy peculiar to Byron and Shelley.[39] Newman employed his genius to give a poetic flavour to the demands of a religious call to live a life of total commitment and painful sacrifice.

To think of Newman the poet, is to think of the saintly mystic, who wrote "The Pillar of the Cloud" and <u>The Dream of Gerontius</u>; or those serious sombre hymns of <u>Lyra Apostolica</u>. He is generally regarded as a poet who made it his vocation to emphasize the necessity of transcending the temporal world and entering into a timeless, eternal zone where one would be one with the Creator, and rightly so.

The light verse does reveal a happier side to the pilgrim in contrast to the holy and ascetic side of his temperament. His humour flashes through his work from time to time, all throughout his long span of life. His semi-comic album verses convey qualities of wit blended with logical designs. Further,

he obviously had the capacity for stanzaic invention too. An album verse, he wrote in 1829, "Opusculum" [40] has these lines:

Fair Cousin, thy page
is small to encage
the thoughts which engage
the mind of a sage
such as I am. (1-5)

The next stanza reads:

'Twere in teaspoon to take
the whole Genevese lake,
or a lap-dog to make
the white Elephant sac-
-red in Siam. (6-10)

These lines portray the comic element brought out through astonishing logical wit.

It was a pursuit of young ladies of the time to make gentlemen write verses in their albums. Newman would write them with a light touch and evident humour. The album verse "Seeds in the Air" [41] ends thus after pointing out how the poetic Muse could be nourished:

All this is a fiction;
I never could find
A suitable friction
To frenzy my mind.
What use are empirics?
No gas on their shelf
Can make one spout lyrics
In spite of oneself! (25-32)

Newman composed "A Rhyming Letter" [42] in 1863. The nonsense technique here conveys as usual what is common to his light verse, a spontaneity and seeming effortlessness. It is a letter of thanks to Miss Charlotte Bowden who had sent him a cake baked by her:

Who is it that moulds and makes
Round, and crisp, and fragrant cakes ?
Makes them with a kind intent,
As a welcome compliment,
And the best that she can send
To a Venerable Friend?
One it is ,for whom I pray
On St. Philip's festal day
With a loving heart, that she
Perfect as her cakes may be.
Full and faithful in the round
Of her duties ever found;
When a trial comes, between
Truth and falsehood cutting keen;
Yet that keenness and completeness
Tempering with a winning sweetness.
Here's a rhyming letter, Chat,
Gift for gift, and tit for tat. (1-18)

This letter of thanks shows clearly that even in later years Newman's playful wit and his sense of fun never deserted him. T. S. Eliot's "A Practical Possum" composed in 1947, as a letter to a girl who had sent him a lavender bag, found its earlier echo in Newman's "A Rhyming Letter." Such verses and the one "Valentine to a Little Girl" [43] reveal how much the pilgrim cared about people and how they brought him the love of God.

Newman's light verses offer us a glimpse into the workings of a mind that could see, not only the serious, the awe inspiring and the glory of the world to come, but also the comic side of life, its sense of nonsense. Far from being a stern and gloomy fanatic who shunned contact with his fellow men, Newman delighted his friends, being alert even to the trivial things, and imparting a humourous note to more serious matters. But this is not the popular image of Newman seen by most Newman

scholars. Many of them seem to be unaware of this lighter side of his temperament.

Something in the rhyme, the rhythms, the syntax and the imagery of these light verses reminds us of nursery rhymes—the nonsense poetry that children love so dearly.

Newman, the pilgrim was at the same time both an introvert and an extrovert, an idealist and a man of action; he was serious and yet endowed with a fine sense of humour. He considered human life on earth as a means to reach Eternity. His pilgrimage was a progress towards God.

Notes

[1] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 244-261.

[2] John Henry Cardinal Newman, Verses 3-4.

[3] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 49-52.

[4] John Henry Newman, Memorials of the Past (Oxford, 1832).

[5] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 6-7.

[6] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 22-24.

[7] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 33-34.

[8] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 42-43.

[9] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 34-37.

[10] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 72-73.

[11] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 71-72.

[12] John Henry Newman, "God The Sole Stay for Eternity" Meditations And Devotions (New York: Harrison, 1988) 101.

[13] Maisie Ward, ed. Apologia pro Vita Sua 1.

[14] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 169.

[15] Anne Mozley, ed. Letters And Correspondence. Vol. 1. 353.

[16] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 209.

[17] John Henry Newman, "God The Sole Stay for Eternity," Meditations And Devotions 100-101.

[18] Ching Yao-Shan, Unity of Opposites: A Chinese Interpretation of Newman. (Manila: Ateneo University Publications, 1987) 234.

[19] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 79-80.

[20] Qtd. in Charles Frederick Harrold, John Henry Newman: An Expository and Critical Study of His Mind, Thought and Art (London: Longmans, 1945) 274.

[21] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 175-176.

[22] W.D. Ross, trans. The Works of Aristotle's Metaphysics. Vol. 1. 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948) 993-b10.

[23] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 125-126.

[24] Bible, Daniel 5: 1-30.

[25] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 178-179.

[26] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 121-122.

[27] Wilfrid Ward, The Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman: Vol. 2. 356.

[28] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 124-125.

[29] Ann Mozley, ed. Letters And Correspondence. Vol. 1. 350.

[30] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 105-106.

[31] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 81-82.

[32] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 25-27.

[33] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 30-31.

[34] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 201-202.

[35] John K. Ryan, "Newman as Poet," Thought 20 (1945): 645-656.

[36] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 207-208.

[37] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 39-41.

[38] Francis Thompson, "The Hound of Heaven," The Golden Treasury, F. T. Palgrave (U.S.A: The New American Library, 1953) 377-381.

[39] Sebastian Redmond, "Newman: A Model For the Literary": The Clergy Review 25. 10 (Oct. 1945) 461-465.

[40] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 41-42.

[41] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 54-55.

[42] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 210.

[43] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 189-191.

8. JOYS OF THE PILGRIM

Newman's spiritual maturity coincided with his maturity in years and his conversion to the Roman Catholic Church. An ardent love which embraces God and all creation and a gentleness which softens the energetic zeal of his earlier stage are aspects of his maturity. His poetry, which is a history of the development of his spirituality on his pilgrim journey, radiates new warmth and joy. This changed tone is reflected both in his sermons and in his poetry. His faith is mellowed and softened by this time. The pilgrim has come to realize more fully the evanescent and fragile nature of spiritual treasures and he has become more tranquil. The following passage is evidence of this changed mood:

> The physical nature lies before us, patent to the sight, ready to the touch, appealing to the senses in so unequivocal a way that the science which is founded upon it is as real to us as the fact of our personal existence. But the phenomena, which are the basis of morals and religion, have nothing of this luminous evidence. Instead of being obtruded upon our notice, so that we cannot possibly overlook them, they are the dictates either of Conscience or of Faith. They are faint shadows and tracings, certain indeed, but delicate, fragile, and almost evanescent, which the mind recognizes at one time, not at another,— discerns when it is calm, loses when it is in agitation. The reflection of sky and mountains in the lake is a proof that sky and mountains are around it, but the twilight, or the mist, or the sudden storm hurries away the beautiful image, which leaves behind it no memorial of what it was. [1]

A pilgrim of rare spiritual insight and seer into the nature of the world and its human hearts and minds that the poet was, he reached a realm of divine serenity at this stage in his journey.

As a result the shrill, controversial and militant tone of the Lyra Apostolica was replaced by a cooling calm. The poem " Candlemas" [2] written in 1849 reflects this inner calm:

The Angel-lights of Christmas morn,
Which shot across the sky,
Away they pass at Candlemas,
They sparkle and they die. (1-4)

Candlemas is the feast of the presentation of the Lord in the temple of Jerusalem to fulfill the law of Moses.[3] It marks the close of the Christmas festival of light. Candles are blessed in the churches and lighted as a symbol of welcoming Christ the light, to enlighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people. The next stanza refers to the promise made by the Holy Spirit to Simeon the righteous and devout old man that he would not die before he had seen Christ.[4]

Comfort of earth is brief at best,
Although it be divine;
Like funeral lights for Christmas gone
Old Simeon's tapers shine. (5-8)

The next reference is to the season of Lent which is a time of penance and abstinence in preparation to the great feast of Easter:

And then for eight long weeks and more,
We wait in twilight grey,
Till the high candle sheds a beam
On Holy Saturday.
We wait along the penance-tide
Of solemn fast and prayer;
While song is hush'd, and lights grow dim

In the sin-laden air. (9-16)

Then follows the reference to Simeon's prophecy of a sword piercing Mary's soul.[5] It is a reference to the passion and crucifixion of Christ which would be the sword in his mother's soul:

And while the sword in Mary's soul
Is driven home, we hide
In our own hearts, and count the wounds
Of passion and of pride. (17-20)

Time passes away, so too the liturgical year passes away. Thus Christmas, Candlemas and Easter pass on. The last stanza also gives evidence to the devotion the pilgrim poet felt for the Blessed Virgin Mary. Her motherly protection he experienced in the difficult days of his adaptation to the Catholic Church on his pilgrimage towards the Celestial City:

And still, though candlemas be spent
And alleluias o'er,
Mary is music in our need,
And Jesus light in store. (21-24)

The last line once again portrays another of his favourite images. Jesus is the light that lightens up his pilgrim path and leads him on, towards his goal. The poem is rich in symbol, imagery, in gentle and delicate feelings.

A calm serenity, replacing his earlier strident judgements is also reflected in other poems. In "Valentine to a Little Girl,"[6] the poet employs a gentle lyric tone as he explains the name comes from 'lineage high' (14):

And it tells of gentle blood,
Noble blood,--and nobler still
For its owner freely pour'd
Every drop there was to spill
In the quarrel of his Lord. (16-20)

Hence this pilgrim poet would have a certain affinity with this

martyr for he too lived a kind of martyrdom on his pilgrimage, giving up all he loved to embrace a way of life in which he was constantly misunderstood and frustrated. The poet continues:

> Valentine! I know the name,
> Many martyrs bear the same;
> And they stand in glittering ring
> Round their warrior God and King,--
> Who before and for them bled,--
> With their robes of ruby red,
> And their swords of cherub flame. (21-27)

These men who died for Christ are Newman's standard-bearers. He places the name of Valentine among the army of other chivalrous martyrs such as St. Denys, St. George who are: "Knights without reproach or fear" (29) and who are of noble descent. They are now: "beneath the eternal sky, / And the beaticfic Sun, / In Jerusalem above" (35-37). Hence the pilgrim poet ends singing on his way: "Valentine is every one; / Choose from out that company / Whom to serve, and whom to love" (38-40).

An aroma of peace and contentment imbues the poems written at this time, for the pilgrim had reached a path of certitude on his journey. The poems on Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Philip Neri mirror sentiments of devotion. They have an indescribable brightness and a radiant cheerfulness. These hymns are set to music of the poet's own composing which has been compared to the music of Beethoven and Mozart.[7]

Unlike in any of the earlier poems, in later poems such as "The Pilgrim Queen" and "The Queen of Seasons," Newman assumes the role of a gentle medieval knight. The pilgrim is full of chivalry for his lady love, a Queen who is far above him in status. Like a courtly lover from the Middle Ages, he seeks no selfish or earthly gains, neither has he in mind any ambition to win the lady's hand in marital relationship. He

bears her a spiritual yet tender love and devotion. However simple language and diction, the poems have a deeply devotional quality.

"The Pilgrim Queen" [8] begins with a description of the lady. The very word 'lady' suggests that she is no ordinary woman. She emanates radiance yet her humility is evident; she is described as sitting on the ground. Distinct from the mortal human race the 'Rays of the morning' (3) sun circles her round. The morning sun, with its bright beams has built for her a royal throne, fit for a unique Queen, without equal or rival. She is addressed in the usual medieval style: "Save thee, and hail to thee, / Gracious and fair" (5-6). By using the imagery of both morning and evening together: "Rays of the morning / circled her round" (3-4), "In the chill twilight" (7), the poet emphasizes the fact that his lady is above nature and the natural order of things. She is an immortal being. Neither 'chill' nor 'twilight' -- the effects of times and seasons -- can touch her in any way. In fact, she lives far above the decaying order of creation.

Having introduced this supernatural lady, the poet then describes her desolate state. He uses apt images to throw light on her isolated circumstances. The lady reveals her royal status which is immediately followed by the imagery of the 'rifled' (13) 'garden and store' (14). She being a Queen has an 'heir' but the 'foes' (15) have stolen him. The allusion here is to the Reformation, when the Protestants declared that the Bible and Christ are enough for salvation and banished Mary, the Queen from her place of honour. In reality, Mary, the mother of Christ, ought to be the Queen of England as King Richard II had dedicated the land to Mary during the Peasants' Revolt. She had been acknowledged its Queen until the Reformation diminished her role.

The poet then describes Protestant beliefs and practices.

References to the Old Testament of the Bible are made to trace the royal lineage of Christ (19-20). In spite of their avowed loyalty to Christ the King, the Protestants were cold-hearted in their attitudes towards Him, and built palaces 'of ice' (21). Here the reference is to the Protestant churches which were bare and cold with no colours, no flowers and no candles, only the Ten Commandments, sound grim and severe: "You shall not kill! , You shall not . . . , You shall not . . . , "[9] were written on their walls, depicting the merciless and the judgemental aspect of God rather than His caring and redeeming love. As a result "when summer came, / it all melted away " (23-24).

In the eighteenth century, during the age of Enlightenment, 'summer' succeeded the Protestant winter. Men began to think that good and evil are relative and that man is the measure of his own good. They regarded the Bible like any other book and believed no more in its inspired character. Thus their previously professed faith in God's word in the Bible 'melted away.'

The next reference in the fourth stanza is to the nineteenth century at the beginning of which there took place the French Revolution followed by anarchy and the defeat of religion. Later came the era of colonialism and along with that came a sort of restoration of religion. But the first and foremost interest of men in the days of colonial expansion was commercial gain and benefit. They used religion to gain access to new territory. They conquered lands and carried on trade to amass wealth for themselves. In the name of religion they traded God for gold. They did 'barter' God who is beyond all price: "For the spice of the desert, / and gold of the stream" (27-28). The trading of God for gold is a reminder of the betrayal of Judas who sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.[10] Mary the Queen, was neglected by the Protestants in their preaching of Christ in foreign lands.

The following stanza is almost a love passage:

I look'd on that Lady,
and out from her eyes
Came the deep glowing blue
of Italy's skies;
And she raised up her head
and she smiled, as a Queen
On the day of her crowning,
so bland and serene. (33-40)

Here Newman is the typical medieval knight who loves his lady with a pure and passionate love. As his lady is a Queen of both the visible and the Invisible World, his knightly love for her is a spiritual love.

The last reference in the poem is to 'the second spring' when Catholicism would make its revival in England. 'The giants' 'failing' (43) is a prophecy about the decline of the mighty Protestant Establishment. At the time of the Catholic revival, the veneration of the saints would be renewed and Mary would 'rescue' her home England, and re-establish her Queenship over it. The pilgrim's devotion to the Blessed Virgin and to the saints, particularly to Peter and Philip Neri, founder of the Oratory is reflected here in the words of Mary:

I am coming to rescue
my home and my reign,
And Peter and Philip
are close in my train. (45-48)

Mary the Queen would be followed by Peter, Philip and the saints when she comes to re-establish her reign in her kingdom. Here there are echoes of Newman's sermon, The Second Spring delivered to the Bishop's of England in 1852. The poem is a sweet and gentle hymn in praise of Mary. The setting of line metre and rhythm are so arranged that it may be set to music.

"The Queen of Seasons" [11] is another outpouring of the tender love and devotion the pilgrim had for Mary the Queen of time and season. Once again, the poet in the role of the medieval knight sings the praises of his heavenly Queen. The devotion to Mary, the mother of Christ is a special feature in Catholic celibacy. Like the previous one this poem comes under love-poetry. The poem is compact with meaning. It begins with a reference to the creation and to the Incarnation of Christ, followed by personifications of the universe. The reason for the 'innocent' (12) smile of the universe and its 'rich bloom' (13) at its creation and for the delight that God took in His creation was because man had not yet committed sin. The poet speaks of man's inability to fathom the inexhaustible resources of God to create a still better and a still more beautiful world. The poet speaks of a creation of God that would always stand out special and singular, making the reader curious about such an incomparable creation.

It is only in the fifth stanza that he mentions his 'glorious Queen' (40), to whom the seasons with their riches and beauties are no comparisons. The poet's Queen has: "The freshness of May, / and the sweetness of June " (33-34), harmoniously blended together with the glowing warmth of July and the magnanimity of August, the month that brings in the harvest endowing men with its plenteous gifts: "And the fire of July / in its passionate noon, / Munificent August" (35-37). After the harvest September is serene, warm and glowing with no troublesome winds, yet it cannot be compared to the beauty of the Queen he portrays. While she contains in herself the bounties and beauties of these months, she is untouched by any of the troublesome aspects of these seasons.

The poem concludes by giving the reason why the Church dedicates the month of May to Mary:

O Mary, all months,

and all days are thine own,
In thee lasts their joyousness,
when they are gone;
And we give to thee May,
not because it is best,
But because it comes first,
and is pledge of the rest. (41-48)

The word 'pledge' points to a promise of good times during the seasons and also to a time of regeneration of the Catholic faith in the poet's native land.

These poems are good examples of what Newman believed poetry should be:

> . . . it is the fire within the author's breast which overflows in the torrent of his burning, irresistible eloquence; it is the poetry of his inner soul, . . . and his mental attitude and bearing, the beauty of his moral countenance, the force and keenness of his logic, are imaged in the tenderness, or energy or richness of his language. . . . They [the poems] are born, not framed; they are a strain rather than a composition; and their perfection is the monument, not so much of his skill as of his power. 12

In poems such as these, Newman gives unrestrained expression to his romantic, religious sensibilities. It shows us how far he had travelled between when he wrote his 1829 Essay on Poetry and when he wrote these poems. These poems are the lyrical expressions of a more intense and emotional personality than that expressed in his early pre-conversion writings. He seems to find more joy now in his pilgrimage.

In almost all of the writings of the convert poets we find that their adherence to Catholic beliefs does bring about a serenity which they lacked in their earlier writings.

Catholicism seems to impart a sort of liberation to them, freeing them to express their sentiments of love and devotion. Such were the cases with Lionel Johnson, Coventry Patmore and others who glow with warm blooded enthusiasm in their poems of the Catholic days, in comparison with the severity of the Anglican days.

As he progressed on his pilgrim journey, Newman seemed to have attained a holy indifference which is considered a higher spiritual state. In his Anglican days Newman seemed to be somewhat negative and pessimistic which contrast with the calm sober joy which radiates in his Catholic poems. The poem "A Martyr Convert"[13] makes it clear that he seemed to be more and more aware of the face that:

> This mystery of life;
> Where good and ill, together blent,
> Wage an undying strife.
> For rivers twain are gushing still,
> And pour a mingled flood;
> Good in the very depths of ill,
> Ill in the heart of good. (6-12)

The pilgrim poet also seemed to have accepted this paradox of religion. In the freshness of his love for God he preached both by word and deed. "The mysteries of the world above" (31). He turned his gaze more steadily to the end of the quest when this earthly sojourn would finish and to the time when he would receive his eternal reward: an inseparable union with Christ, the Lord of his heart.

The pilgrim rejoices not only before the shrine of Mary, mother of Christ but also before the shrine of Philip Neri, founder of the Oratory. He sings in the hymn "St. Philip Neri in His Mission: "[14] "Still are we Philip's children dear, / And Peter's soldiers true" (3-4) and writes how the saint lured "the noble and the young / From Babel's pomp and pride" (23-

24). Walking in the footsteps of the saint, the pilgrim too unveils the bright lustre of his God to the pilgrims around him on the pilgrimage. The happier side of the pilgrim reveals that this prayer in the hymn "St. Philip in His God,"[15] is answered at this stage:

> Jesu, to Philip's sons reveal
> That gentlest wisdom from above,
> To spread compassion o'er their zeal,
> And mingle patience with their love. (29-32)

Again in "St. Philip in His School, "[16] Newman salutes his patron:

> This is the Saint, who, when the world allures us,
> Cries her false wares, and opes her magic coffers,
> Points to a better city, and secures us
> With richer offers. (5-8)

Such was the mission the pilgrim poet embraced for the sake of his God. He laboured to make the men of his time aware of the vanities that surround man in this beguiling world:

> Thus he conducts by holy paths and pleasant,
> Innocent souls, and sinful souls forgiven,
> Towards the bright palace where our God is present,
> Throned in high heaven. (17-20)

As Newman grew older, and closer to the end of his pilgrimage, he once again gives evidence of his constant loyalty to his quest, although he travels the narrow and less trodden paths of life. He writes in the hymn "St. Philip in his Disciples:"[17]

> I ask not for fortune, for silken attire,
> For servants to throng me, and crowds to admire;
> I ask not for power, or for name or success,
> These do not content me, these never can bless.
> Let the world flaunt her glories ! each glittering prize
> Though tempting to others, is nought in my eyes. (1-6)

This tireless and unfailing pilgrim laboured to guide his

fellow pilgrims safely through this world of divided aims and despairing creeds on to the threshold of the Eternal City.

The poet also approaches the Lord in humble confession as he feels that he has not always achieved that perfection for which he has ever striven:

> I'm ashamed of myself, of my tears and my tongue,
> So easily fretted, so often unstrung;
> Mad at trifles, to which a chance moment gives birth,
> Complaining of heaven, and complaining of earth.
>
> (25-28)

Yet he revives his confidence at the shrine that Philip, his patron would extend his saintly protection over him. As a result he would succeed in following St. Philip's spiritual path:

> So now, with his help, no cross will I fear,
> But will linger resign'd through my pilgrimage here.
> A child of St. Philip, my master and guide,
> I will live as he lived, and will die as he died.
>
> (29-32)

He does not give up his quest but renews his resolve despite the impediments that lie along his way.

Newman, the pilgrim poet as he approaches his spiritual home, reminds his companions of the unprofitableness of earthly advancements and achievements when weighed against a heavenly recompense. The sermon "Worship, A Preparation For Christ's coming," throbs with hidden and deep meaning. This sermon foreshadows in a way the rejections the pilgrim would experience on his journey. Yet it also points to that anchor on which his earthly life rested in holy resignation. The fleeting years and the recurring liturgical seasons alike speak of a new heaven and a new earth for the elect of the Eternal Kingdom. For the pilgrim it is only faith in Christ which unlocks the gates of the Celestial City:

Year after year, as it passes, brings us the same warnings again and again, and none perhaps more impressive than those with which it comes to us at this season. The very frost and cold, rain and gloom, which befall us forebode the last dreary days of the world, and in religious hearts raise the thought of them. The year is worn out; Spring, Summer, Autumn, each in turn, have brought their gifts and done their utmost; but they are over, and the end is come. All is past and gone, all has failed, all has sated; we are tired of the past; we would not have the seasons longer; and the austere weather which succeeds, though ungrateful to the body, is in tone with our feelings, and acceptable. Such is the frame of mind which befits the end of the year; and such the frame of mind which comes alike on good and bad at the end of life. The days have come in which they have no pleasure; yet they would hardly be young again, could they be so by wishing it. Life is well enough in its way; but it does not satisfy. Thus the soul is cast forward upon the future, and in proportion as its conscience is clear and its perception keen and true, does it rejoice solemnly that "the night is far spent, the day is at hand," that there are "new heavens and a new earth" to come, though the former are failing; nay, rather that, because they are failing, it will "soon see the King in His beauty," and "behold the land which is very far off." These are feelings for holy men in winter and in age, waiting, in some dejection perhaps, but with comfort on the whole, and calmly though earnestly, for the Advent of Christ. . . . And such, too, are the feelings with which we now come

> before Him in prayer day by day. The season is chill and dark, and the breath of the morning is damp, and worshippers are few, but all this befits those who are by profession penitents and mourners, watchers and pilgrims. More dear to them that loneliness, more cheerful that severity, and more bright that gloom, than all those aids and appliances of luxury by which men nowadays attempt to make prayer less disagreeable to them. True faith does not covet comforts. [18]

"True faith does not covet comforts." Such are the examples set before the pilgrim by his heroes, the saints and the great men of God on their earthly pilgrimage.

This pilgrim who sought only the Fairest and dedicated his heart without reserve to the Ideal, sang of the Perfect City. His poems, those canticles of faith, righteous living, holiness and love for the Ultimate soar beyond earth, beyond the verge of time and space. His call was a homesickness for heaven that harmonized his thoughts so perfectly with angels, saints, and joys known only to the lovers of the Light. It set him apart as singer of the Ultimate and the Perfect City. That Spiritual City in which the prophets and philosophers, the scholar saints, martyrs, the followers and crusaders of the Light live in praise of their Master, was constantly before our pilgrim. Hence he pressed forward to find in God, a final resting place as he tried to mould men's consciences. He taught those who erred that God pardons the dark sins of human hearts and told them that belief in God is the prerequisite for salvation. Like Plato before him, Newman, the pilgrim strained to pass from the shadows of this world to the immortal substance which is God Himself.

Notes

[1] John Henry Cardinal Newman, The Idea of a University (London: Longmans, 1929) 514.

[2] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 183-184.

[3] Bible, Luke 2: 22-40.

[4] Bible, Luke 2: 25-35.

[5] Bible, Luke 2: 34-35.

[6] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 189-191.

[7] Edward Bellasis, "Cardinal Newman as a Musician," The Month 173.327 (Sept.1891) : 1-23.

[8] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 185-186.

[9] Bible, Exodus 20: 13-15.

[10] Bible, Matthew 26: 14-15.

[11] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 188-189.

[12] Martin J. Svaglic, ed. The Idea of a University 210.

[13] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 202-203.

[14] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 191-193.

[15] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 195-196.

[16] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 204-205.

[17] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 205-206.

[18] John Henry Newman, "Worship, A Preparation for Christ's Coming," Parochial and Plain sermons (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987) 951-958.

9. A GLIMPSE OF THE BEATIFIC VISION

9.1. The theme of death

Newman, the pilgrim was acutely aware of the transitory nature of this visible world which he considered the outward shell of an eternal kingdom. In his view, this life received a dignity and value from the prospect of the next life for which it is meant to be a preparation. Intent on the world to come, he was given glimpses of the realities of eternity, time and again in the long span of his earthly pilgrimage. Endowed with mystical intuition and transcendent vision, the poet was able to go beyond death and discover the unknown realms which lie behind the visible phenomenon. The mystery of death which alone would enable the soul to attain that ultimate union with the Divine was uppermost in his mind. Even the early poems such as "My Birthday," [1] "Birthday Offering" [2] and the "The Trance of Time" [3] point to man's mortality and to the higher life which awaits him upon resurrection from the dead. Poems like "Consolations in Bereavement," [4] "A Picture" [5] "A voice from Afar," [6] written at his sister Mary's death and "Separation of Friends" [7] deal with not only death but also point towards the Beatific Vision. In "Separation of Friends," the poet writes:

> Not that earth's blessings are not all outshone
> By Eden's Angel flame,
> But that earth knows not yet, the Dead has won
> That crown, which was his aim. (5-8)

Death was a vivid concept in Victorian times due to the high mortality rate of the time. Hence the works of many writers portray this social concern. A number of poems and novels of the time have death as a theme. Thus Tennyson's In Memoriam, some of Browning's dramatic monologues and such works as The Ring and the Book and Hopkin's The Wreck of the Deutschland

reflect a concern with death. Translations of Dante's work were popular during this time. Southey's poetry with the themes of death and judgement exercised a considerable influence on Newman. Scripture and the traditions of the Church pertaining to death and judgement form recurrent themes in Newman's poems. Unlike the medieval culture that gave prominence to death as a memento mori and the nineteenth century sentimentalization of death such as shown in In Memoriam, for Newman God alone mattered:

> It is face to face, 'solus cum solo,' in all matters between man and his god. He alone creates; He alone has redeemed; before His awful eyes we go in death; in the vision of Him is our eternal beatitude.[8]

According to Christian beliefs, death is the consequence of sin and as a blessing in disguise it reunites the holy soul to all holy God. The poem "Waiting for the Morning,"[9] depicts that mid-state of a higher level of existence than the earthly one. Here the soul waits in quiet appealing trust till it is cleansed of every stain and is made worthy to partake of that Celestial Life.

"Waiting for the Morning," portrays a state of paradisal repose, a comfort for someone mourning the loss of a dear one. The poet draws aside the veil that separates the present life from the life to come, providing men with glimpses of their personal hopes and fears, of memories of their loved ones, assuring them of eventual reunion.

The poem begins with a welcome imagery of rest which provides a relief to the mourners that their loved ones are at peaceful repose after a care-worn life. Hence there is no reason for 'loud-voiced grief' (3). The poet uses open-ended imagery which would provide considerable freedom for the reader to draw fitting and consoling pictures about the state of existence of their deceased relatives and friends. They

rest at 'the mountain grots of Eden' (5), the choice of the words are remarkable. Eden is supposed to be the first delightful abode of man, the word 'grot' stands for grotto or ornamental cave and it conveys also a feeling of 'limbo' or 'Hades' where the deceased souls wait for entrance into a still higher state of life.

The reference to the river that waters the garden of Eden [10] implies the idea of fostering life, for these souls are taken care of till they are raised to a holy state of life. There is no indication of any suffering or any disturbance such as that which mortals face in their earthly existence: "They at eddying pool or current deep / Shall never more grow pale" (9-10). Such souls are no more at the mercy of time that brings along with it change and decay, and the torments of life on earth have no power over them. An ethereal atmosphere prevails about them and:

> Posted along the haunted garden's bounds
> Angelic forms abide,
> Echoing, as words of watch, o'er lawn and grove,
> The verses of that hymn which Seraphs chant above.
> (15-18)

The words woven together and their sounds have a magical power to soothe--'sounds blend,' 'waters glide,' 'Angelic forms abide,' 'Seraphs chant'--in the mid-state between life and eternity. Together with the beautifully achieved 'tone colour,' the intense emotion in the heart of the poet too adds to the main force of the poem. The repeated use of [iz] sounds adds to the soothing sense. The alternate use of short and long lines in the poem gives a kind of rocking sensation which is also meant to give a pleasant feeling.

This poem is more imaginative and less concise than many of Newman's poems. The poet crafts together feelings, imagination and expressions, bringing out something haunting

and harmonious which flows like a smooth-running stream. The result is a balming effect on hearts that are tormented by the loss of dear ones. Tennyson's poem "Lotos-Eaters" mirrors something of the same blissful state as described by Newman. It may be presumed that Tennyson was familiar with Newman's poem as it was a favourite with the Victorians. Newman experiences the emotion of regret which brings tears and the emotion of resignation which transcends it, having in mind his own deceased sister Mary.

Newman's first title to the poem was " Rest," which highlights the idea of restful repose. His final choice of title "Waiting for the Morning" highlights the idea of pilgrims who have almost reached the goal. This poem foreshadows the grand requiem, The Dream of Gerontius .

9.2. Themes of the invisible realities

The poem entitled " Angelic Guidance" [11] illustrates the pilgrim's belief in a ministering spirit. The poem "Guardian Angel" [12] depicts his belief that it will be with him from birth, through life, through death, and will deliver his soul to purgatory. When he achieves Beatific Vision it is the Guardian Angel who will lead him to his Heavenly Home at the end of his pilgrimage. When the pilgrim deals with the world of invisible realities in his masterpiece The Dream of Gerontius, the true poetry of his soul comes out. Heaven seems to lie about him like a known kingdom and its bright denizens walk with him through many a thorny path. There are several poems of the 1850s and 1860s anticipatory of the Beatific Vision towards which the pilgrim poet was advancing. Poems such as "The Golden Prison," [13] and "For the Dead" [14] speak of the last things death, judgement, purgatory and heaven. The novel Callista written in 1856 was Newman's major attempt before

The Dream of Gerontius to create in literary form, the presentation of a heroic Christian death with some resemblances to Southey's romances which he admired.

Death and afterlife were subjects which were ever uppermost in the pilgrim's mind. In one of his sermons of 1832 "The Lapse of Time,"[15] the poet has given a summary of the poem. Here he speaks of the awful moment of death, the judgement on the soul when its fate is decided before it begins a new life. Many of his sermons foreshadow the same theme. In one sermon he writes:

> . . . , and it [the soul] submits itself to things of time so far as to be brought to perfection by them, that, when the veil is withdrawn and it sees itself to be, where it ever has been, in God's kingdom, it may be found worthy to enjoy it.[16]

The visible world the pilgrim considered a beautiful veil[17] and spoke of it as a screen between him and the true world.[18] He cautions us in a sermon preached in 1837, "The Invisible World,"[19] lest the visible world prevents us from seeing the true, Invisible World. In the climax of the sermon he uses a simile drawn from the visible world to describe the Invisible:

> In the spring season . . . there is a sudden rush and burst outwardly of that hidden life which God has lodged in the material world . . . . This earth, which now buds forth in leaves and blossoms, will one day burst forth into a new world of light and glory, in which, we shall see Saints and Angels dwelling.[20]

As time went by and as the pilgrim was nearing the end of his journey, he committed himself more completely to the Invisible World. Though fleeting yet the mystical experience of the Invisible World which the pilgrim poet had, made it clear to him the shadowy and the pale nature of worldly grandeur as

the poem "The Two Worlds," [21] illustrates. The pilgrim poet reminds his fellows that their only true and lasting joy lies in the Invisible World. Hence in The Dream of Gerontius, the poet's passionate concern is that we apprehend the existence of the Invisible World, timeless and immaterial which lies unseen about us now and will be revealed after death. He wants us to emphathize with the experience of a dying person. The need to prepare ourselves to encounter the Infinite Goodness and Great Judge is also brought out in this poem.

9.3. The Dream of Gerontius : the masterpiece

9.3.1. The techniques used

Newman made skilful use of various literary traditions such as the literature of meditation, the medieval hymn and the medieval and Scriptural dream-vision in the composition of The Dream of Gerontius. The discipline of meditation developed by spiritual directors has as its suitable subjects, the hour of death, the day of judgement and the glory and eternal bliss of Heaven. The practice of meditation played an integral part in the creation of the works of a number of seventeenth century poets, notably Donne, Herbert, Southwell and Crashaw. But it is his own personal experience of the traditional practice which fed Newman's poetic conception and made him write in terms of the internal drama of the soul. The poem bears all the marks of a meditative poem concerned with death. He portrays in symbols and in dramatic scenes the world beyond the temporal senses.

The dream vision used by the writers of the Middle Ages expressed spiritual truths for the reader. Dante gave this tradition its supreme form in The Divine Comedy. The Bible has familiarized men with the literary form of the dream vision

and Newman, being well acquainted with the Bible, could have learnt the use of visions and dream from the Scriptures alone. But it was the medieval writers who greatly developed this technique. Although, Newman's Gerontius does not return like their characters, the poet aims at the same effect as that of a dream vision. It is also possible that Newman viewed death in the Shelleyan sense of awakening from the dream of life. In one of his sermons, Newman comments:

> We should consider ourselves to be in this world in no fuller sense than players in any game are in the game; and life to be a sort of dream, as detached and as different from real external existence, as a dream differs from waking; a serious dream, indeed, as affording a means of judging us, yet in itself a kind of shadow without substance, a scene set before us, in which we seem to be, and in which it is our duty to act just as if all we saw had a truth and reality, because all that meets us influences us and our destiny. [22]

Newman was familiar with the great medieval Latin Hymn De Die Mortis [23] by Saint Peter Damian. This is an example of the medieval dream vision. This could have influenced the first section of The Dream of Gerontius. The first two stanzas of De Die Mortis seem very close to the beginning of Newman's poem. But the shallow Victorian religious sensibility is only a faint substitute for the emotional quality in Damian, born out of the intense realism of the medieval imagination.

9.3.2. A unique poem

Newman depicts in dramatic form the passage of the soul from life to death and the initial experiences of the afterlife. Gerontius the protagonist of the poem is the

representation of all those who attempt to live life according to God's will, inadequate though their efforts may be. The experience of Gerontius is a projection of the pilgrim's own experience to come and thus has considerable significance for many of its readers. A topic such as immortality and the state of the soul after death was Newman's domain. No poem in the language is so daringly explicit as The Dream of Gerontius [24] in the use of revelation, of metaphysics and in its psychological analysis.

In the poem, Newman portrays the great mystery of how the spirit feels when its fleshly tie to earth is severed. He makes the last moments of a Christian visible, palpable and luminous --the rending of the soul from the body,the first experiences after death, the Judgement and the catharsis that follows. Thus in the poem we follow the soul through its last agony and through its ethereal flight and take leave of it as does its Guardian Angel, at its place of purification. The poet depicts each stage of the amazing progress of the Soul with a realism which makes this drama a psychological and spiritual marvel. Revealing the ineffable, the poem rises to the unforgettable incantation characteristic of great poetry. The poet's discovery of the unknown realm of Hades clearly and emphatically accounts for the singular power he possesses both as a poet and as a mystic. He makes this unique Christian meditation on death an epic oratorio. Newman's piercing insight, mystical intuition, transcendent vision, the broad sweep of imagination along with the poetical inspiration of religion, produced this unique poem in just twenty two days.

The poem falls into three scenes. The first scene focuses on the death experience of Gerontius which consists of his physical sensations and dreadful fears. In the second scene, Gerontius finds himself undergoing new sensations after death which is made comprehensible by his awareness of the Angelic

presence. The five hymns of praise by the Angels before the Beatific Vision, form the greatest truths of Christian revelation. The moment of Judgement reveals to Gerontius that he is saved even though he has to undergo purgatorial suffering. The last scene of the poetic-drama portrays the nature of Purgatory and the purgatorial suffering that would cleanse the soul until it is made worthy of Heavenly Fellowship.

The nine hundred lines of the poem are wrought out in a single unity, in the midst of great variety. Each of the varied characters--living, the Spirits, the Guardian Angel, the Angel of the Agony, the five Choirs of Angelicals, the demons, the souls in Purgatory--and Gerontius himself speaks in its own personal way. All have their authentic voices and for each a verse form is used that is admirably suited to it.

As in the Prometheus Bound of Aeschylus, so in The Dream of Gerontius the principal character is everything and the attendant figures occupy only a minor sphere. Gerontius himself takes up our interest so totally that we hardly notice the accessories to the drama. He is brought face to face with what medieval preaching styles the Four Last Things: death, judgement, purgatory, hell or heaven. Gerontius is not just Man in general but he is, in particular, the representative of that noble group of men whose outstanding characteristics are holy resignation to the Divine Will and an ardent love of God.

The setting of the poem is in a Christian atmosphere of hope. Although a believer, Gerontius is a man of the world and, therefore the dread of dying, the fear of annihilation, judgement and punishment are uppermost in his mind in the opening section of the poem. These fears wield unnerving power in the mind and soul of the man at the moment of his death. The poet deals with these fears with psychological, spiritual and

poetic penetration and masters them with simplicity. Through the example of Gerontius, the pilgrim poet tells the world that at death we are neither finished nor diminished but are most truly ourselves. Those who die with faith in the Lord are refined by His love which transforms and unites us into His perfect love and light.

9.3.3. The deathbed scene

The poem begins with Gerontius on his deathbed as he recognizes the summons of God to cross over the boundaries that keep him away from his final Home: " Jesu, Maria--I am near to death" (1). Yet the fear of perpetual extinction overtakes the dying man. So the opening lines convey the acuteness of Gerontius' assertion of self which renders dying and judgement more real. Self must be asserted before it begins a process of disintegration and Gerontius must move out of the prison-house of his living self. The opening lines portray a firm sense of the personal relationship between Gerontius and his God.

The dominant subject of this section is the personality of Gerontius. He has to accept the fact that death is imminent to him: "And thou art calling me; I know it now" (2). This line focuses on an experience which is beginning to become real to the old man. He tries to define the intuition that dawns on him by using negatives, which is a skilful technique used by the poet: "Not by the token of this faltering breath" (3). The phrase 'faltering breath' denotes an unknown experience and the poet makes it clear that Gerontius finds the process of dying hard. The poet conveys the struggle of the dying man in the verse form with its alternately rhymed lines of iambic pentameter and particularly in the trochaic substitution at the beginning of lines 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 13, and 21. Fear

overwhelms the faith of Gerontius and his prayer put in parenthesis only highlights the fact that it is subservient to the dominant fears. Gerontius is brought to this awareness of his separation from this life by "this new feeling never felt before" (6).

Even though dying is an unknown experience, Gerontius tries to define it and it becomes clear that he must confront his immediate disintegration. As it becomes more and more clear to Gerontius that his end is approaching fast, there is this stark statement of the paradoxical horror: "That I am going, that I am no more" (8). The prayer preceding this line hardly gives any hope and 'no more' is placed against the assertive 'I am.' The unperceivable quality of the experience of dying is heightened by the phrase, 'strange innermost abandonment' (9). The person is at the point of leaving this mortal frame. Hence both from the depths of distress and from the realization of a need for God's help, springs the prayer: "(Lover of souls! Great God ! I look to thee)" (10). As the experience of dying deepens there is the image of 'emptying out' signifying total 'voiding:' "This emptying out of each constituent / And natural force, by which I come to be" (11-12).

As Gerontius realizes his spiritual disintegration, he also perceives his spiritual needs. The 'visitant' 'knocking his dire summons' intensifies the feeling of impending collapse. The lines that follow capture this ultimate sense of self-loss: "As though my very being had given away, / As though I was no more a substance now, / And could fall back on nought to be my stay" (18-20), and Gerontius appeals to his God: "(Help, loving Lord ! Thou my soul refuge, Thou)" (21). The loss of personal contact is brought out. He discerns the passing away of all transitory things and experiences,the vanishing of every external support. He must: " drop from out

the universal frame" (23) and the dying man experiences panic once again even more deeply. This is best conveyed in negative terms. He has to return to that 'shapeless, scopeless, blank abyss' (24), conveying the lack of observable and measurable quality of this experience. It is an experience and it cannot be seen. Here Gerontius reaches the terrifying climax of self-awareness which in turn forces him to break out of his 'self' and to turn to others for help. This is the path that would lead him to his Creator at his moment of death. Resistance ends here and Gerontius lets his self become part of a cosmic process. Thus the final line here, is prayer in a single line of hexameter: "So pray for me, my friends, who have not strength to pray" (28).

The sufferer's bewilderment is suspended here by the prayers of the priest and his assistants who call on saints, angels, martyrs and virgins for help. These form a kind of refrain to the words of Gerontius and show that he is close to death. The rhythms of the litany and the prayers complement the cycles of existence as the Prayer Book, the Church Calendar and the Sacraments parallel the course of the year and of a man's life. Gerontius has no regrets at leaving his friends or his earthly home. The reason for this is that Newman's religious attitude differed greatly from the contemporary Victorian attitude towards death and human ties. What we find for example in Tennyson's In Memoriam is a longing for communion with his departed friend Hallam who symbolizes the very essence of the life after death but we find Gerontius' attention is focused on God.

The lines that follow show that Gerontius is not a coward but an armed Christian who displays his vigorous courage. As admonished in the Scripture: "Let your loins be girded,"[25] so Gerontius addresses his soul: "Rouse thee, my fainting soul, and play the man; / And through such waning span . . . / Prepare

to meet thy God" (42, 43, 45). The poet wishes the soul to receive the grace of the incarnation, passion, death and resurrection of Christ and also of the Holy Spirit's strengthening grace to endure this trying yet passing hour. The poet sustains the emotional tone of the whole poem through effective use of recurring passages of Scripture, prayers and litanies. The skilful use of liturgical prayers and litanies by those assisting at the deathbed scene, such as: "Be merciful, be gracious; spare him Lord" (50), heighten the growing tension as the soul confronts death. The alternative use of Latin and English lines is especially effective in its suggestion of traditional faith fused with personal feeling.

By his selection and portioning out of traditional elements of liturgy, Newman emphasizes the differing perspective between Gerontius and those who pray for him. The first two speeches of the assistants contain adapted portions of the litany of the saints. The third with references to Old Testament figures still conforms to the general structure of the litany while Gerontius continues the dialogue with his own soul.

Since Gerontius can no longer join in traditional prayer the assistants alter the ora pro nobis in the original text to 'pray for him' in lines 30-41. Newman's adaptation of the Creed does not adhere to the rigid form required by the liturgy but preserves the liturgical cadences. Here through rhetorical structures Newman once again contrasts the dying man with those mortals still bound to time.

In lines 72-107 Gerontius accepts the doctrines of his faith, even though the sense of disintegration he experiences overwhelms him and threatens his faith in God. He strives to believe the dogmas of his Christian faith, for if his faith fails he would perish everlastingly. Lines 76-79 reflect the lack of ease Gerontius feels. The syntax of the line 76 has

'Firmly' placed before the pronoun 'I' with the adverbial emphasis indicating the great effort that is being made. This is strengthened immediately in the second adverb 'truly.' It looks as though Gerontius is trying to convince himself that he believes in the unity and Trinity of God and in the 'Manhood' of the Second Person of the Trinity. The intellectual declaration of faith in this section brings about a balance between subjectivity and objectivity, producing tensions since Gerontius is still very much at the mercy of his self. It is still his self that dominates the declarations of Faith and Hope.

In lines 80-83 Newman puts the dying man in control of his faith. The pronoun 'I' is placed before 'trust' and 'hope' that are declared 'most fully.' Hope like faith is at the theological and intellectual level but by the end of the prayer Gerontius discovers hope which involves the whole person. At the most testing moment of his life, Gerontius journeys gradually and painfully from accepting the dogmas of his Christian faith intellectually and theologically to a totally different apprehension of what this faith means.[26] He accepts wholeheartedly the fundamental beliefs of Catholicism, that is, the Triune God, Man's salvation through the Sacrifice of the Incarnate God, the Church as the institution of God and the expression of His will, the efficacy of the Mass and the communion of the saints. His emotion, his reason and his deepest moral sense are involved in this passionate but gradual acceptance of his faith, and its expressions speak to his imagination through their images and symbols, thus arousing the creative energy which is expressed in the poem.

The metrical pattern used here supports the external reality to which Gerontius commits himself. The alternate use of Latin and English stanzas provides a repeated pattern of

indirect warnings. This is supported by the trochaic metre with its incantatory effect. The English echoes medieval Latin Metre, as in the hymn: Dies irae, dies illa. [27] Line 105 echoes the Requiem Psalm 129 De profundis. The sadness of the Good Friday liturgy keeps recurring: Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus (104).

Lines 92-95 show a continued struggle to bring together a wholehearted emotional commitment to match his intellectual commitment to faith. The initial attempt to personalize the relationship with God: "I" "Thou" is finally distanced into a third person relationship: 'Him alone,' 'His Creation' and 'His own.' Yet the tension between the dying self and an intellectually created self is growing. Lines 96-97 sharpen this awareness. The word 'joy' is a significant intrusion. The trochaic thud of the line is at odds with the lightness of real joy and the words 'besets,' 'pain' and 'fear' provide the dominant impressions. The directly personal role of Gerontius is changed in line 97 to the passive object of 'besets.' Yet the tension between subjectivity and objectivity still persists even through lines 98-99.

In lines 100-107 Gerontius seems to have subdued his self and he offers adoration to the Holy Trinity. At this point Gerontius seems ready to die, but the struggle is renewed. The lines that follow show his emotional disintegration and they also show the purifying process which Gerontius undergoes to discover a wholehearted acceptance of Faith. The verse form reflects this disintegration, that sense of horror returns again now. The trochaic metre now shifts to iambic pentameter, initially rhymed. As Gerontius' faith starts to suffer, the rhyming structure becomes intermittent, and his distress is similarly reflected in the metrical collapse between lines 112 and 129. Though pentameter is reasserted at intervals, the verse form evades metrical control in the most trying moments

of Gerontius' suffering, as in lines 114 and 124. What Newman tries to convey through this metrical versatility is the dominant sense of self once again rather than of God.

The senses of Gerontius are shaken by pain and by his human terror of death once again. In line 108 'I can' is immediately negated, showing that Gerontius has lost God here again with the result that he is only aware of his own self: "That sense of ruin, which is worse than pain" (109) horrifies him. He is here the passive object of: "That masterful negation and collapse" (110). His personality still struggles for identity. Line 111 is so worded that Gerontius is able to observe his own fall: "as though I bent / Over the dizzy brink" (111-112). The sketch of the dying descent is skilfully worded. The dying man's constant emotional involvement contrasts with the attempt to become detached in lines 72-106. Newman using 'infinite' in line 113 portrays the never ending nature of the fall over an 'infinite descent,' and a frightening picture with its unlimited associations and the placing of the word 'Or worse' in line 114. Infinity is presented as a continuous process with the use of the continuous verb form: "Down, down for ever I was falling through" (115). Moment by moment the process of dying becomes a more acute reality. The cognizable structured outline established with 'solid frame work' (116) is immediately destroyed in the shapelessness and in the vagueness of 'vast abyss' (118). The punctuation details are crucial. The continuous line movement arrives at its worst point by ending mid-line at the full stop in line 118, so that the reader feels that suffering is at an end. But it is not so, what follows is a more active adjective 'crueller' that emphasizes the experience of the passive participant in this process.

The last lines of the dying Gerontius express terror and isolation from which is born a real consent to Faith. Newman

meticulously achieves a sense of dread in line 119: "A fierce and restless fright begins to fill" (119). The poet meaningfully describes the soul of Gerontius as a 'mansion' (120) which is spacious enough to accommodate the fears and anxieties that keep growing. Once again, the full stop at mid-line in line 120 persuades the reader to think that the worst is over. But the process recommences with 'And, worse and worse.' Now there are new physical manifestations of the 'bodily form of ill' (121) and its attack on the senses. Yet in the midst of the dreadful horror, there is a movement towards control that is reflected in the metre. Iambic pentameter reasserts itself in line 120, 122 and 123 with a trochaic substitution beginning with line 123 to capture the disgust of 'tainting.' The hostile powers try to take away his hope in the Lord in these last moments of his existence. Seized by the terrifying sense of dissolution and by an awareness of the loathsome beings hovering near him, threatening his salvation, Gerontius prays again with rising urgency. He begs Christ to send him 'Some Angel' (127) help. The weak triple rhymes of lines 127-129 make his speech cohesive.

The poet uses prose rhythm in the last line to refocus Gerontius in the direction of God, as he yields to Faith totally. Both urgency and conviction are expressed here. It is then that Gerontius turns to the incarnate suffering Christ, who was strengthened by an Angel in His agony, in the Garden of Gethsemane. Gerontius on his deathbed is also in need of supernatural help. In the poem "Guardian Angel" [28] written in 1853, the pilgrim poet had expressed his mystical conviction that the Angel will be by his side at the moment of his death:

> And thou wilt hang about my bed,
> When life is ebbing low;
> Of doubt, impatience, and of gloom,
> The jealous sleepless foe. (33-36)

Such supernatural help is given to the protagonist. Gerontius at this moment passes from the theological, intellectual Faith to the one involving both the mind and the heart. His Faith in the opening section of the Creed is weakened by his sense of self. Later he confronts his self and his fears and works through the ensuing collapse to discover what genuine Faith means. Thus Faith prevails over the power of his enemies. When his relationship with Christ becomes personal and when he shares His 'agony' (128) Gerontius is ready to die.

Newman handles metre most skilfully in the poem. It is as varied as the context demands. It is quickened in time as Gerontius struggles to arouse his fainting energies. The firm rhythms that Gerontius uses at the affirmation of the Creed disintegrate as he confronts the loss of personal identity which stands as security for our earthly individuality. The consequent sense of panic, dissolution and scepticism has to be purged away in order to make it possible for Gerontius to be enlisted into the long line of those who lived by Faith 'in things not seen.' It moves more swiftly still when the anxious friends pour out their prayers of supplications. The metre changes again when Gerontius is aflame with hope and Faith and when his energies begin to ebb, the metre falls to a subdued measure.

In contrast to the terrifying experience of Gerontius when 'physicality' begins to appear alien, there are the voices of assistants who call on strong heroes of the Scripture as their points of reference. His friends at his deathbed catalogue the many physical and spiritual dangers from which God had delivered his people in the past.

The unvarying repetitions of the litany parallel the cyclic motion of human existence: 'Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.' [29] This cycle is meant to make irrelevant any notion of lasting individual achievement on earth. It is true that

a man's Faith can redeem him but the combined efforts of mankind do not lessen the demand on any other soul who seeks salvation after them. Hence it is that the assistants relate God's help to men of Faith in the past in a non-chronological order. Thus we see Newman placing Job before Isaac, Isaac before Lot, and Daniel before David. Though history gives the illusion of progress, for the individual all earthly accomplishments other than what prepare him for Heaven are ultimately futile. A devout soul must accept this inevitable cycle and live the holy life for its own sake.

Using contrasts skilfully Newman achieves amazing results. The chant of the assistants, low and solemn, is full of tender hopefulness. It falls softly on Gerontius' feeling of collapse which is fearful. It has a consoling effect on his desperate effort to cling to consciousness. In his agonized prayers for help at a time he is wild with horror and dismay, the chants of the assistants strengthen and encourage Gerontius and comfort his dying. The description of death in the poem is not like the stark images of an atheistic existentialist. Hence the 'emptying out' (11) is not into the void but into the hands of the Lord (147-148).

In lines 146-148 Gerontius seems to surrender at his dying moment all the pain and the fears of his life and most of all his own self, into the hands of his God. After the agony of fear, the metre falls back into an inert cadence which conveys the weariness of Gerontius: "Novissima hora est; and I fain would sleep. / The pain has wearied me . . . . Into Thy hands, / O Lord, into Thy hands . . . ." (146-148).

Newman is in close touch with both the worlds. He perceives that the keenest of the challenges even for the noblest of men comes at the last hour when his senses fail him. With this realization comes Gerontius' final surrender. The classic words of the Christian ritual are heard in sonorous

cadences, at this surrender in lines 149-169, which begins: "Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc mundo ! / Go forth upon thy journey, Christian soul! / Go from this world! . . ." (149-151), and it is meant to strengthen and to accompany the soul at its journey to the Seat of Judgement. Thus the first scene of the poem closes with the death of Gerontius and his soul is escorted out of this life with the power of the Church. The poet puts into the lips of the priest at the deathbed, words which are both startling in their power and are greatly persuasive as a deathbed exhortation. These words release the dying soul to enter upon his journey to the next world.

In the poem death brings home to us the thinness of the crust which separates the personal consciousness from utter collapse. The reality of death will convince even the most faithful man of his utter impotence, and his absolute need for the constant care of Mightier Beings. For the first time Gerontius realizes his utter incapacity even to cling to the breath which sustains his being.

The finest part of the poem is the early soliloquy of Gerontius when he finds himself face to face with Infinity. The whole of this soliloquy is so real and so plausible that we accept it as the natural continuation of his earthly life. The feelings of desperation and agony in the deathbed scene, intertwined with the prayers of the priest and the assistants are expressed through supple and powerful blank verse. Though the poem portrays the death of a devout Christian, it is more than death; it is the experience of dying, which is a supreme psychological phenomenon that would remain as a factor of deep interest apart from its spiritual value.

Newman's imaginative insight supports throughout the poem--the dying man's feeling of surprise at the dire 'visitant' (13) knocking at the door, the sense of fear that follows him in varied forms, the gradual slipping away of the

senses, the void of nothingness which yawns below, that awful sense of losing consciousness, the struggle to retain that hold at any cost, the vague threat felt by evil presences, and then the final collapse. Very few literary works in English equal the depth of psychological penetration portrayed in the first part of this poem. The compelling depiction of the states of feeling during the supreme crisis of body and spirit, when the spirit abandons the body to reach its ultimate destiny is a unique poetical experience.

In his 1829 Essay Newman defined poetry as an 'unfettered effusion of genius' [30] which is an intensely personal poetry and Gerontius is perhaps the most personal of all. If Newman believed poetry should express personal emotions he believed as strongly that it should serve a moral and religious purpose. Gerontius is not merely a dying man but a devout Christian believer. His psychological perceptions which unify the poem are inextricable from his Faith. His passage from this world to the next follows the pattern set out in Orthodox Christian doctrine but the expression of this doctrine, the way it governs versification and the image patterns reveal Newman's own creative skill.

9.3.4. The ethereal journey

The journey of the soul after its departure from the body is depicted in the second scene. The creative genius in Newman is given its finest and most subtle expression here by his unique power of divining the unknown by the known. The poet's mystic soul searches out the depths of the unknown which is beyond experience. Feeling, as a means of comprehending the poem begins to fade with the death of Gerontius. From now on, the sense of hearing is made to carry the action. As a result the tension becomes less painful.

The concept of the temporal and sensory perception provides the keynote. Time and senses symbolized in the poem are two of the three great temptations facing mortal man. They are the world and the flesh. Time and sensation assume a drastically altered nature after the death of Gerontius. This alteration explains the transition from mortality to immortality. There probably is no where in English literature a more effective effort to realize the thoughts that overwhelm a soul separated from the body than the one shown in The Dream of Gerontius. The suggestion of the annihilation of space and time in this new life is conveyed as are all the sensations of the disembodied spirit.

The scene begins with the awareness in the soul of Gerontius of 'a strange refreshment' (171). After the sonorous cadences of the prayers for the dying, there is the rise and fall of the pentameter lines in blank verse that are skilfully employed and harmoniously fit the subdued calm of the deathbed chamber from whence the soul has just departed. The words of Gerontius: "I went to sleep, and now I am refresh'd" (170), and the harmoniously flowing lines that follow remind us of the lyrical quality of Tennyson. Lines 170-210 depict Gerontius as freed from the compulsive desire to reassure himself of spatial and temporal sensations. As a result he becomes more truly himself. His transition from earthly identity to celestial essence is shown by the dropping of the part of that identity which is his name. From now on in the poem his part becomes that of the Soul.

In this section of the poem as the heavenly perspective is introduced Newman uses metaphysics and theology in the description of the disembodied Soul. The poet's use of these means is sure and impressive. When the soul of Gerontius passes out of the body it feels light and free as if it were itself for the first time. In the deep stillness it hears 'no more

the busy beat of time' (175). It remembers as in a dream the voice 'He's gone' (179) and a sigh going about the room, the voice of the priest raised in prayer : Subvenite (181) and the other voices joined in prayer. The Soul continues to have a lingering affinity with the earth still. The voices that resound in his ears are: "but thin and low, / And fainter and more faint" (182-183).

Along with this fading affinity with the earth, the Soul also suffers a certain delusion that it still remains in the body. Yet all the fears of the body are laid to rest and the Soul experiences a newness, a certain self-possession and new understanding: "for I possess / A sort of confidence which clings to me" (196-197). This new realization comes to the Soul that it is now unable to speak or move and perceives that the vast universe where it has dwelt is quitting the Soul. The Soul feels that either it or the universe is rushing away 'on the wings / Of light' (214-215) and hence experiences the distance between it and the universe 'million miles apart' (216). The Soul realizes that all spatial boundaries are melting though it is not given a certitude as to how the change is being brought about: "is this peremtory severance ?" (217):

> Or am I traversing infinity
> By endless subdivision, hurrying back
> From finite towards infinitesimal,
> Thus dying out of the expansive world ? (220-223)

When the Guardian Angel takes the soul of Gerontius in hand and speaks to it, the Soul is sure that it is no longer in the body. Now the Soul has no fear either of falling into sin or of being 'clasp'd by such a saintliness' (313). As the Angel explains it, the Soul cannot now "Cherish a wish which ought not to be wish'd" (328). Now the Soul fears neither to meet God nor to be judged. Fear of death and judgement is an earthly trial which has helped to guard Gerontius from serious sin.

This holy fear has 'forestall'd the agony' (376). Gerontius faces his judgement with trust and confidence in the mercy of God.

With Gerontius, finding himself in the palms of the Guardian Angel, Newman drifts past the height of his imaginative flight. The soul of Gerontius being carried over among the Choirs of Angels to prostrate before the Seat of Judgement is a noble conception. Now, Newman having portrayed all that his study of human emotions, his insight and poetic fancy have revealed to him, relies on the teachings of the Church to transform the psychological drama into a spiritual one. Newman makes use of the doctrines and the rituals of the Church throughout the poem--the various litanies, the act of Faith, the ascent to the Judgement Seat, the Guardian Angel, Angelicals, demons, Purgatory, etc.

The Guardian Angel holds the office of interpreter as Virgil to Dante. The Guardian Angel tells the Soul that the solid frame of things do not exist for it any more. Instead it now lives in 'a world of signs and types' (526). The poet presents the Soul in such a condition of being in which it transcends human experience and the spirit becomes the medium of sensation. So once the Soul pierces the veil and reaches the world beyond, it is in a world unlike Milton's where the supernatural worlds are founded upon heathen rather than upon Christian tradition, nor is it in a world that Dante describes where history and landscape mingle in his Purgatorio, but in a world which resembles Calderon's autos sacramentales, which is at once an allegory and an act of faith. Here Newman avoids any visual representation of the unseen World. This heightens the atmosphere of awe and mystery which surrounds the poem.

Patterning is used in the lay out of the Angel's words in lines 236-257, and the lines of the Guardian Angel brim over with joy as it announces: "My work is done" (236), "the crown

is won, / Alleluia" (240-241).

On the other shore of life, time has existence only in the mind. Gerontius now is a resident of eternity. Following this transition there occurs a change in the verse form of his speeches. After his death Gerontius speaks in blank verse as though he were adopting the greater freedom of the world beyond. Blank verse is a more progressive metre than recurring rhyme, and it better fits a Soul newly liberated from its earthly cycle. At this moment however, the transformation of Gerontius from mortal to immortal has not reached its conclusion.

Further, the utterances of the Angelical Choirs which also rhyme, reveal that true immortals do not make any progress like the mortals. An Angel has a life that knows no change "through those cycles all but infinite, / Has had a strong and pure celestial life" (261-262). It is not an Angel's portion to take part in that: "shifting parti-colour'd scene / Of hope and fear, of triumph and dismay, / Of recklessness and penitence" (285-287). These lines describe most beautifully and poignantly man's life on earth which is but 'a shifting parti-colour'd scene' that has no stability and permanency. Human life on earth is a flux composed of 'hope,' 'fear,' 'triumph,' 'dismay,' 'recklessness,' penitence,' and it is but 'dreary' 'history' and a 'life-long fray!' (288). These lines convey Newman's insight into and his knowledge of human lives in their day-to-day strivings and his ability to portray it vividly and touchingly. The Angel's description of man's empty history recalls the fifth chapter of Newman's Apologia which speaks about the endless series of failures of man's earthly efforts and hopes. Even the crisis of faith which Christ seemed to have suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, as well as the summary of his teachings to men are highlighted by the fifth Choir of Angels, 'to suffer and to die' (813), is

the common lot of all humanity.

When it meets the Eternal face to face, the Soul reaches a sense of that knowledge and understanding of which St. Paul speaks. [31] That sense of wholeness and the knowledge of self which comes over the Soul puts everything in perspective as is conveyed through lines 307-312. Thus the Soul becomes a new creation--'whole of heart,' 'self-possess'd,' 'full content, 'apprehensive,' [32] 'discriminant,' with 'no temptation' to 'intoxicate,' nor even 'terror.' Such is the transformation that comes upon the Soul which has shed its mortal frame. Therefore the Soul loses the capacity for freedom of choice and sin: "You cannot now / Cherish a wish which ought not to be wish'd" (328-329).

The poet depicts the journey of the Soul from this transitory life to Life Everlasting as a gradual liberation from time and senses which elevates the Soul to a new state of being. The time-bound man is freed from this state through the sacrifice of Christ but he can only achieve this freedom through death. Newman makes use of rhetorical differences to let us comprehend the contrast between mortal and immortal time. The poet conveys the actions that take place after death --the journey of the Soul to the Judgement Seat, the explanations of the Guardian Angel on this journey, the glimpse of the Beatific Vision, the entrance into the Purgatorial state --as taking place in an infinitesimal fraction of time in lines 337-343. Not even before the passing away of a moment in man's time divided 'into its million-million-millionth part' (339) since Gerontius died, the ethereal journey and the celestial experiences of the disembodied Soul take place. The way in which spirits measure 'the flow of time' (345), is different from that of men: "For spirits and men by different standards mete / The less and greater in the flow of time" (344-345). Time is no longer measured by the sun, the moon and the stars nor

by recurring seasons nor by clocks but it is measured "by the intensity of the living thought alone" (354) and time grows or wanes by the intensity of individual thought. For spirits 'time is not a common property' (356) and each mind 'is standard of his own chronology' (360). "And memory lacks its natural resting-points / Of years, and centuries, and periods" (361-362). The Guardian Angel explains to the Soul the particular nature of heavenly time in lines 344-364.

Newman describes the afterlife as one which is supersensuous. It is a world of signs and types which embody holy truths. Though the Guardian Angel carries the Soul along, it does not see the Angel but only hears its voice which is 'a heart-subduing melody!' (235) The Soul cannot differentiate the senses: hearing, touch, sight, taste or smell. Through the faculties of his imagination, the poet describes with exactness what words can convey--the feelings of the Soul on its strange journey. The Angel clarifies the Soul's puzzling mode of perception in lines 525-530, as it clarified previously the Soul's puzzling relationship to time. The Soul has no real physical attributes such as a living mortal has: touch, taste and hearing. The Soul is given perception which seems to come through bodily sense organs only in order that the 'stern solitude' (531) may not prove too much to bear.

The Soul is now wrapped and swathed in dreams 'that are true, yet enigmatical' (537). It resembles the comprehension of a man who has lost a hand or foot and yet seems to suffer in the missing member. Although the Soul has lost the entire body it still perceives in terms of space and time, of pain and pleasure, and of sensation of odour, taste, touch, and hearing. It is "As ice which blisters may be said to burn" (545). The Soul has not regained what it has lost 'new-made and glorified' (556) and hence the Angel explains to the Soul: "the belongings of thy present state, / Save through such symbols, come not home

to thee" (538-539). The poet creates through the power of imagination a living, pulsating experience of the life to come. This adds to the power of the poem and speaks for the originality of it.

At this intermediary sensory state, Gerontius is blind and lacks that 'princely sense' (523) of sight "which binds ideas in one, and makes them live" (524). For Newman, sight that binds ideas into one stands for rationally proven ideas. Here the Guardian Angel reveals that the Soul would remain blind until the Beatific Vision and even its Purgatory "which comes like fire / Is fire without its light" (562-563).

It is already explained that the essence of Heaven consists in bearing 'to gaze on the unveil'd face of God.' So it follows that except for a single piercing glimpse of the Lord at its Judgement, the Soul must remain blind until it is purified by the purgatorial fires. In "The Pillar of the Cloud," [33] the poet had confessed his love of the 'garish day' (11), and his choice of seeing his own path which obscured the "Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom" (1). Here in this poem, the Guardian Angel symbolizes the 'Kindly Light' and serves as the Soul's eyes in its darkness. This poem depends not so much upon the eye as upon the ear and this is because the poem is projected through the consciousness of a sightless man.

The disembodied Soul has its own real, personal existence with the capacity of thought, memory and love even though it will not be a complete man till the resurrection. When such a full restoration takes place, the Soul would experience that sense of refinement which belongs to ethereal beings: "An Angel's deathless fire, an Angel's reach of thought" (753).

The liberation of Gerontius from his senses is also traced by Newman in even greater detail than his departure from time. If time limits and defeats a man's aspirations, the senses

betray him even at the cost of his soul. As early as 1818 he had written in his poem "Solitude" [34] how man's mortal perceptions harken to "the earthly din / Of toil or mirth" (19-20), letting him miss the angelic voices which beckon from above. It is the senses alone that give Satan his power over the mortal man as lines 480-484 convey. So the lines dealing with the sensory transformation of Gerontius are less subtle than those dealing with the temporal. We may notice the use of the phrase 'a traitor nestling close at home' (481). Though 'a traitor,' Satan has comfortably settled down and has 'kept the keys' (483) of the senses. Man in his ignorance and in his search for sensual pleasures, unlocks his heart 'to the deadliest foe' (484).

As the Soul speeds towards its Judge, it encounters good and evil spirits. The demons wild in hell with their 'fierce hubbub' (390) and 'sullen howl' (393), are shown convincingly in lines 436-439. The interlocutory blasphemies of the demons are not the mechanical reproduction of a symphony but bear the coarse distinction of a living performance.

The potential for dramatic conflict is transferred in the second scene to the demons. In lines 450-457 the staccato rhythms of the demons threaten the measured exposition of the Angel and reassert all that the Soul has discarded, the fear of physical disintegration and: "The mind bold / And independent, / The purpose free" (440-442).

In his mystical insight Gerontius realizes that it is only in the case of sinful men:

> Those fallen ones show so majestical.
> But, when some child of grace, Angel or Saint,
> Pure and upright in his integrity
> Of nature, meets the demons in their raid,
> They scud away as cowards from the fight.
> Nay, oft hath holy hermit in his cell,

Not yet disburden'd of mortality,
Mock'd at their threats and warlike overtures;
Or, dying, when they swarm'd like flies around,
Defied them, and departed to his judge. (486-495)

Newman understood the potential for evil and the darker side of human heart. His demons are unlike those of Milton's in Paradise Lost full of grandeur and power. Newman reduces his demons to devils whose power over the souls of the upright is limited.

It is true that Newman's demons are not Milton's great lords who in majestic splendour debate in golden pandemonium. Newman's demons resemble elemental and inchoate beings whose thoughts sink down in blind opposition and whose glory has vanished with no traces. For their role, in the case of the soul of Gerontius demands only such a portrayal. The overpowering potential for evil as exemplified in the evil presences in Paradise Lost is not what Newman's poem demands. Richard H. Hutton has remarked rightly: "I know no more powerful conception anywhere of impotent restiveness and restlessness." [35] Those critics who turn away from Newman's demons prefer the grand Miltonic fiends and sympathize with the melancholic grandeur with which Byron reproduces the Miltonic idea of a fallen spirit in his Heaven and Earth.

The comic parts of Doctor Faustus by Marlowe and The Screwtape Letters by C. S. Lewis, demonstrate the concept that the demonic is a burlesque activity mimicking and playing upon human weakness. Even in Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral, the demons are ridiculous and disgusting while they present the most deadly temptation. To demand more dignity and a better tune for the devil than the one assigned by Newman seems to be a Romantic illusion. The critics who seem dissatisfied with Newman's demons forget that the choruses of the demons are deliberately made 'sour' and 'uncouth dissonance' (400) in

contrast to the dialogues of Gerontius and the Guardian Angel. Newman uses this device to throw relief on both sides. The choruses of the demons are filled with such discord as are fitting to their spirit of malevolence. The demonic choruses are irregular, in harsh rhythms and are in short clacking lines. In contrast to this the cadenced harmony of the angelic verses is most graceful and appealing.

Newman uses images of sense perceptions in some beautiful lines which are successful as they rely on imagery having to do with sound. In the case of the Angels, Newman uses melodious lines based on the sense of hearing. After having passed through the House of Judgement, the Soul is struck by the first sounds it hears : "The sound is like the rushing of the wind-- / The summer wind among the lofty pines; / Swelling and dying, echoing round about" (664-666). Musician that Newman was, he had a keen aural sense and handled harmonies and dissonance well. The Angel chants a hymn of triumph; a 'fierce hubbub' (390) warns that the demon throng hovers around the Judgement Seat. Their 'restless panting' (436) breaks out in stanzas uncouth, turbulent, preterhuman and grim as in medieval mysteries. The contrast between the graceful harmonies of the Angelic Choirs and the cacophonous dissonances of the demons is masterful. Newman also calls upon the sense of smell, depicting the foul odour of the demons as "Some bodily form of ill" (121) that taints "the hallow'd air." He uses a subtle image of decay and foulness when he describes the demons as 'beasts of prey' (437).

The Soul hears the Angels sing the story of God in relation to Man and the Angels. They describe the nature of sinful Man and pure Angels and show the greatness of God and His ways. While the Spirits decide timelessly their choice of God, Man sways backwards and forwards among the things of sense and time. Man compromises with the material world and thus loses

his power to control it. He finds himself in the midst of corruption that torments his own heart. The result is that: "He dreed his penance age by age" (648). What ultimately brings about his redemption from sin is 'the Almighty's breath' (652) that is poured out on him. In contrast to man, in spirits good or evil, there exists: "No growth and no decay / 'Twas hopeless, all-ingulfing night, / Or beatific day" (679-681).

Newman presents three modes of temporality--cyclical, progressive, eternal. On earth, there exists a progression in history. A man must die but Man remains and evolves. For immortals there is no progress because of infinite completeness. The varied metres and rhyme schemes in the poem reinforce these distinctions. Through their repetitions and litanies, the life cycle that runs its course and returns again and again to its beginning is suggested. On the other hand, the Angelic discourse makes use of the ordering patterns of rhyme to define an unchanging existence which is harmonious rather than static. Both these patterns differ from the less-fixed blank verse of Gerontius who has left his mortal dwelling but has yet to achieve his final rest in heaven. As a result, the Guardian Angel converses with Gerontius in blank verse but returns to rhyme in various hymns which are not directly addressed to Gerontius.

While Gerontius journeys to the Throne of Judgement the five Angelical Choirs give a detailed account of man's fall, redemption by Christ and return to grace. Their hymns explain man's biological and spiritual fall. So man: "Who once had Angels for his friends,/ Had but the brutes for kin" (638-639). It takes time for him to be restored back to his former wholesome self which involves a progression from creation to Judgement. Placing this account side by side with the journey of the Soul, Newman tries to show that the passage from life through death and particular Judgement represents this

sequence in miniature, and portrays in lines 698-701 the cost man has to pay. Before attaining, the final bliss he must suffer in body and soul, endure the pangs of death and the chill felt at the fading out of the senses which give him his identity as a living being. The soul must face God alone at the last and be consumed by His love. After the mystic cleansing of purgatory the soul would be aflame with selfless and pure love for the Divine alone as its only choice. The result is perfect holiness. Therefore, like the soul of Gerontius, all good Christian souls could join in changeless eternity when all journeys are ended on that final Day of Judgement when time stops forever.

As he approaches the Judgement Seat, with the help of the Guardian Angel, the soul of Gerontius learns the nature of the Divine and his own unworthiness to be in the company of the holy souls in Heaven. The Soul longs for at least a glimpse of the Divine Presence even though its own imperfections loom large before it. When the Angel explained to the Soul that it is blind and that even its purgatory would be 'fire without its light' in lines 561-563, the Soul asserts: 'His will be done!' (564). At the same time the Soul makes known the hope that it had nourished in life that it would be able to have at least a sight of God to strengthen it before it would be "plunged amid the avenging flame' (569). The Angel does assure the Soul that it would have "that sight of the Most Fair" (582) for a moment and the effect of it 'will gladden' the Soul 'but it will pierce'the Soul as well (583). Only then would the Soul realize the depth of the Divine Love against which it has failed and its consequent unworthiness to be in the Divine Presence. But the Soul does not even have any fear of Judgement now and looks forward to it 'With a serenest joy' (373). The Angel explains the reason for this as a foreboding granted to the Soul: "Straight from the Judge, expressive of its lot" (386). Thus

there is no more the fear of punishment due to the self-knowledge the Soul gains after its departure from the body.

The Guardian Angel informs the Soul that the brief vision of the Lord would 'gladden' (583) because even 'a lightning-flash' (578) would imprint on the Soul the immeasurable love of the Lord. This would 'pierce' (583) the Soul keenly and it would be made aware of its imperfections. God's love like refining fire would inflame the Soul as it did to Saint Francis of Assisi who was given a vision of the Crucified with the result: "that the Master's very wounds were stamp'd / Upon his flesh; and, from the agony / Which thrill'd through body and soul in that embrace" (589-591), the Angel tells the Soul to: "Learn that the flame of the Everlasting Love / Doth burn ere it transform . . . ." (592-593). Fire is the symbol of love and so we speak of hearts aflame with love. So the Angel warns the Soul that to come into the presence of God's love is to be refined by fire.

Newman does not express himself to any extent through imagery in his attempt to build the imaginative structure of the poem. In describing the journey of the Soul, Newman avoids sharp, vivid, highly specific imagery as used by Dante, Donne and Herbert in their religious poetry. For Newman the environment of the spirit could not be brought alive by sensory images. The relative absence of sensory imagery underscores the immaterial nature of the mysterious regions beyond earth. In his romantic love of place, Newman paints in the words of the Angel a picture of the Everlasting Home which awaits the Soul in lines 616-627. Heaven is no earthly temple or palace. We are made aware of an immaterial Heaven where the House of Judgement is made up of living, immortal beings who sing hymns continually in their Maker's praise.

Amidst 'a grand, mysterious harmony' (740), the Soul approaches for a single vision of 'the face of the Incarnate

God' (708) which the Angel informs the Soul: "Shall smite thee with that keen and subtle pain; / And yet the memory which it leaves will be / A sovereign febrifuge to heal the wound" (709-711). And the Soul longs for this vision but the result of it would be that the Soul "wilt be sick with love, and yearn for Him" (721). The Angel further informs it: "There is a pleading in His pensive eyes" (726) that will pierce the Soul 'to the quick, and trouble' it and that the Soul 'wilt hate and loathe itself (727-728). Consequently the Soul's 'verierst, sharpest purgatory' (737) would be its longing for God along with its realization of its unworthiness before the all Holy.

The Angelical Choirs surround Gerontius and his Guardian Angel as they pass beyond the blasphemous laughter and wailing of the demons. They approach the stairs which lead to the Presence-Chamber, where the Angels of the Sacred Stair hymn their song. We are made aware of the harmonies of Heaven through the words of the Soul: "But hark! a grand mysterious harmony: / It floods me like the deep and solemn sound / Of many waters" (740-742). As the Soul approaches the 'veiled' presence of God and as the Judgement is close at hand, it hears the voices raised in prayer around its corpse on earth. As Gerontius encountered death, he had begged Christ to send such an Angel to strengthen him as it had done previously in Christ's own agony. Now in the first 'million-million-millionth part' (339) of a moment after the death of Gerontius, the Angel of the Agony does pray for him. Here the style combines mysticism with imagery to link the threshold of the Eternal with the agony of death.

At the court of the Eternal Presence where peace and joy prevail, the intervention of the Angel of the Agony conjures up the anguish of Gethsemane, and once again supports the mounting tension, pleading for a tormented and suffering Soul and instilling even in the readers a deep sense of sadness.

Here the poem regains the old spell of the opening scene, the intensity. The Angel of the Agony who was present with Christ when He was: "Lone in that garden shade, bedew'd with blood" (882), intercedes with Christ to have mercy on the soul of Gerontius, "by that shuddering dread which fell on" (825) Christ. The Angel continues the prayer in a sort of litany of the holy name of Jesus pointing out the agony Christ suffered to redeem this Soul.

As this prayer ends, the Soul cries out: "I go before my Judge. Ah!. . . ." (837). This brief moment of Judgement expresses a sharp realization both of shock and of joy. The potential dramatic climax of the poem occurs in this single line. The expression 'Ah! . . . . ' speaks eloquently of the unutterable moment of Judgement and clearly adds an element of joy to this daunting experience. It also conveys the intuitive realization of the awesome majesty of the Lord of Love and, consequently, the profound ingratitude of sinful man and the willing acceptance of the need for expiation by the Soul.

The Angel's words mirror joy and praise: "Praise to His Name!" (838) and it is very close to the last broken, earthly utterance of Gerontius, rhetorically: "O Lord, into Thy hands. . . ." (148) and is also close to the prayer of the priest: "Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc mundo!" (149) Amid the intercessions that ascend to the throne of God and the pleadings of the Angel of the Agony, Gerontius obtains a quick vision of the Lord whom his soul loves. That one moment of the Beatific Vision does soothe by its sweet remembrance the coming period of anguish when the Soul would be purified for its complete union with God.

The poet is meticulous about using the most appropriate adjective and uses 'eager' to capture the urgent wish of the Soul to reach Christ: "The eager spirit has darted from my hold"

(839). The fears and doubts that pervade the self and the Faith of Gerontius are no more there, instead the urgent desire for Christ is paramount in the Soul now. So in line 840, the poet uses the adjective 'intemperate' to explain the love of the Soul, for its love now is a love without boundaries which goes beyond self to embrace the Beloved.

To depict the moment of confrontation of a human soul with its Creator is a great challenge for any poet or writer. Newman captures most effectively the moment of contact between the Soul and Christ in this poem. He portrays this moment not by a direct confrontation but by using the Cross and the 'sanctity' (842) of Christ as his media. The Soul experiences a revelation of glory as well as a pang of pain. The Cross is represented in its directly active role and not as a passive image of crucifixion. The link between the Cross and Gerontius is built up in the Angel's Miltonic blank verse: "And circles round the Crucified, has seized,/ And scorch'd, and shrivell'd it; . . . ." (844-845). Verbs of total control and destruction are used: the sanctity 'seized,' 'scorch'd' and 'shrivell'd' the Soul. The suffering here is part of a process in which the Soul willingly becomes 'passive,' "and now it lies / Passive and still before the awful Throne" (845-846), having shed self and moving on to the 'happy, suffering' (847) state. The purgatorial paradox is completed as Gerontius surrenders to the destructive yet vitalizing process, in line 848: "Consumed, yet quicken'd, by the glance of God." Thus the Soul is spiritually invigorated.

Gerontius does not speak in the poem of specific sinful acts but, instead, he is keenly aware of the impure personality that he has come to be. He longs to purify himself and willingly accepts the change that must take place within his own

personality, for he comes to this realization that his self must be subordinated to Christ's love. So he accepts with joy the passivity of the purgatorial state and pleads passionately in his poignant lyric to be taken to the place of purgation.

Gerontius is heard in the poem for the last time in lines 849-864. The fluid lyrical structure of the metre mirrors his final contentment. Several of the lines have at their beginning trochaic substitutions that capture the note of total acceptance--'Take,' 'There,' 'Told,' 'Love,' and there is a simplicity in the frequent monosyllables of the two-foot lines. The metrical range of this section is seen in the introduction of one single line of hexameter which marks the end of Gerontius' lyric and leaves the final stresses on 'Him,' 'truth' and 'day' (864). As the Soul accepts fully the need for a passive role, a state of being rather than action, so it is: 'let me be' (850), as he lets himself be the object: "Take me away . . . ." (849). The Soul reconciles itself willingly to pain now: "And there in hope the lone night-watches keep" (851). It is 'hope' that would carry the Soul through suffering which is best described as 'lone.' Gerontius, and for that matter each individual, must suffer alone. The paradox of the situation is brought out: "There, motionless and happy in my pain" (853) the Soul affirms.

In his last lines Gerontius communicates the nature of his pain. It is the suffering of love, waiting to be fulfilled:

> There will I sing my sad perpetual strain,
> Until the morn.
> There will I sing, and soothe my stricken breast,
> Which ne'er can cease
> To throb, and pine, and languish, till possest
> Of its Sole Peace.
> There will I sing my absent Lord and Love:-- (855-861)

It is a love-lament. The verbs 'throb,' 'pine,' 'languish' are

words of longing and love. The total abandonment of self takes place at this point when the Soul realizes the truth that an end to suffering can come only by a total possession by the Beloved, "possest / Of its Sole Peace." So in pain born out of extreme longing for its 'absent Lord and Love,' the Soul would wait to be made fit for that Heavenly Fellowship with God. Newman succeeds in capturing the emotions of human love and anguish in this last lyric by Gerontius. Now the Soul is sure of its eternal reward, for it will "see Him in the truth of everlasting day" (864). Thus the lyric ends with a heart-healing hope, though the lines are strained out of a sad and yearning melody.

9.3.5. The Purgatorial scene

Newman's sketch of purgatory differs from that of Dante's with its flames and physical suffering. The emphasis of the purgatory described by Newman in the poem is on love and regeneration, not on punishment; on a willing acceptance of suffering which heals. The most excruciating pain of purgatory is the separation of the soul from God. The dual action of suffering and joy which fills the Soul because of the inflowing love of God, cleanses it and prepares it for ultimate salvation. Newman's visualization of purgatory is analogous to that of Catherine Of Genoa.[36] Even the imagery is much the same. Both Catherine and Newman use the symbolism of 'fire' and 'water.' The characteristics that are found in Gerontius at his entry into purgatory are the same, namely, insight, acceptance, suffering and joy. Newman skilfully portrays the paradox of this purgatorial state, that at the same moment of suffering Gerontius also passes through a process of love which as it destroys, revivifies, enlightens, brings understanding and 'the truth of everlasting day' (864).

Newman tries to eliminate the popular misunderstanding about the doctrine of purgatory. Hence here in the poem he places his focus on the spontaneous human realization of unworthiness before the presence of all Holy God and on the pain of the separation of the Soul from God, but with a hope for future Fellowship in the Heavenly City. In Newman's poem, fire exists only as the burning presence of the love of God which the unpurified soul cannot yet endure.

As the Angel carries the Soul to the penal waters of purgatory, once again we hear in the poem ethereal harmonies for a soul which has resolved all its discords: "the golden prison ope its gates / Making sweet music" (865-866). The souls in purgatory receive the soul of Gerontius with a hymn composed of Psalm 90. This Psalm refers again to cyclic time. Purgatory is a place where Man must wait to free himself from sin in preparation for eternal joy. The holy souls in purgatory throb, pine and languish at their distance from God. The paraphrase of this Psalm chanted by the souls in purgatory with its mention of the Lord being the 'refuge' of His people 'in every generation' (872), sets the atmosphere of love and resignation to which Gerontius surrenders his soul. It is tinged with hope mingled in sadness. Newman gives an altered version of the Psalm here to fit the poetical setting.

The poem begins like a personal commentary on the Office for the Dead and it ends in a similar manner by returning to Biblical and liturgical sources. The last speech of the Angel which is brief is preceded by this paraphrase of Psalm 90. Newman successfully attains that serenity of lines which mingles its rhythms harmoniously with Biblical texts.

Newman portrays the transformation of a Christian soul as a gradual casting off of its earthly chains rather than as a horrifying and abrupt change. At this most difficult time, the soul is not alone but is in the soothing presence of its

Guardian Angel. Both the terror of death and the trial of purgatory seem very realistic within the context of a devout Christian's earthly existence. The Angel soothes the fear in its final lyric beginning with the lines: "Softly and gently, dearly-ransom'd soul, / In my most loving arms I now enfold thee" (885-886). The lyric quatrain provides 'Softly and gently' a consolation to the suffering Soul in purgatory since pains will be brief. Gerontius 'without a sob or a resistance' (890) enters the penal waters to live out his night ~~of~~/trial and to await the morning. The Soul would be ministered to by Angels and supported by the prayers of the faithful. The farewell of the Guardian Angel with which the poetic drama closes is a strain of solemn and tender pensiveness. The lines are beautifully rhymed. The last lines of the Valedictory 897-900 by the Guardian Angel have two levels of meaning. The 'bed of sorrow' (898) is both the deathbed and the purgatorial fire. The very same Angel who met Gerontius after the 'night of trial' (899) which was death, promises that it will also welcome his fully-redeemed soul on the 'morrow' (900) of Resurrection. Thus the poem ends on a quiet assuring note and the perfect chord of Hope, after passing beyond the bounds of space and time.

The poet conveys through the poem his clear perception and belief that holiness is worth any sacrifice and any suffering. To be united with the Lord in eternity is a joy beyond comparison and even millenia of anguish is a cheap price paid for such a supernatural experience.

Some critics think that, had Newman conveyed the glory of Resurrection and Ascension to complete the theology, the close would have been more majestic. But Newman, not writing a Salvation History, confines the poem to the experience of death and transition to purgatory. Hence the poet strikes the right chord of perfect hope and leaves the Soul and the reader to

await that future time when the Eternal condescends to 'come and wake' him 'on the morrow' (900).

9.3.6. The marvel of reconciliation of twin vocations

Newman's greatest success in the poem is in developing the main character in whom we see our future selves as we encounter the Ultimate. Though there is literature dealing with the occasion of death and with the afterlife, there is hardly anything written about the experience of the encounter of a soul with the Infinite after the moment of death, and of the unexplored regions of Eternity. The poem bears a Dantesque idealism and keen vision. Its figurative and emotional features are very real. The moods expressed, the element of struggle and fear, the theme of elegy and the circumstances of its inception blend into a harmony. Towards the climax of the poem, the poet relies increasingly on the insights of the Church to complete the drama--the litanies, the rituals and the doctrines take over--but it is Newman's own personal insight which creates the unity. Yet the intensity of the poetry is felt much more keenly when the poet makes use of the appeal to psychology than to the matters of Faith.

The successful communication of the message of the poem is brought out by effective artistry. The poet makes use of suitable metre, fitting liturgy and introduces the poetry of dogma to bring about the desired artistic effect. At times the use of blank verse has a Miltonic grandeur. The poem abounds in skilfully managed contrasts. The frequent contrasts between the metre and the tone of the different sections are very effective in avoiding monotony and in contributing effectively to each particular section. The contrasts alone are ample evidence of Newman's amazing grasp of his subject.

The prosody bends and flexes to the meaning with supple

and subtle ease; the rhythm is stately at times, pleasing at other times, despairing as the situation demands, hopeful when Faith enters, awesome and solemn at the Heavenly Presence, anguished at the separation from the Divine and calm and resigned for the final valediction that brings the poem to a close. Its ministerial office being over for the time being, the Angel ends the hymn in a tone that all is well.

The colloquy between Gerontius and the Guardian Angel forms the dramatic element. The monotony of the dialogues is relieved from time to time by the choral hymns of the Seraphs whom they pass by on the journey to the Throne of Judgement. The dialogues are also interrupted by the malevolent utterances howled at the Soul by demons who would fain hinder its journey. The lack of sensuous details in the poem is well suited for the desired effect of the poem, since the local habitation and the solid frame of things have fallen away at the point of death. The action then takes place in a world of signs and types which embody heavenly Truths. Through human language the poet expresses the inexpressible in flashes of supersensuous vision. Newman's mastery over the language reflects itself from beginning to end, displaying a solemn harmony of its own, especially in the speeches in blank verse. The whole poem is grave and subdued in tone and is somewhat bare of ornament but is weighty with thought.

The focus of the poem on the movement of the soul of Gerontius in a growing, developing experience carries the reader to a climax of understanding and identification. Thus the poet exercises an unusual boldness of imagination in the poem. The individuality of the soul of Gerontius is the factor that gives the poem the stature of experience and that which avoids its becoming an expression of abstract statement. The pilgrimage of Gerontius from beginning to end is one of individual feeling, emotions and ideas. At first there is his

agony accompanied by the sense of disintegration: "That masterful negation and collapse / Of all that makes me man; . . ." (110-111), followed by that total resignation: "Into Thy hands / O Lord, into Thy hands. . . ." (147-148). Then the new sense of wholeness is born and there comes a new kind of existence which he does not fully understand. This is followed by the supportive, loving companionship of the Angel, the mounting foreboding as the moment of Judgement approaches, and finally the ultimate comprehended joy and suffering as the Angels sing and the deathbed litanies reproduced constitute one, single intentional movement which is both spiritually and artistically meaningful. The artistic confirmation of the poem lies in this mounting effect which finds its culmination in complete self-abandonment.

The most original contribution of Newman in The Dream of Gerontius is the psychological penetration into the mind of a dying man. The stanzaic variety and the occasional grandeur of the blank verse are also to be noted. Here Newman gives in poetry of a high order as exact an expression as may be hoped for, of deeply mysterious doctrines. The doctrines of judgement, reward and punishment after death are difficult to treat even in the abstract language of theology. The difficulties become greater still when they are transferred to the concrete realm of poetry. Yet from the first grave and solemn scene about the bed of the dying man, through the passage of the Soul to the Judgement Seat, and on to the close in purgatory, there is no faltering in the sureness with which the poet writes. There is no loss in the light that he throws upon his subject. Throughout the poem, the appeal is never to the eye but partly to the ear and partly to the emotions. Where as Dante touches and sees the things of the other world, for Newman, it is enough to feel them.

As Newman deals here with his most cherished aspirations

and beliefs, he brings to the best creative fusion the riches of his poetic self, his imaginative faculties and the mysticism of his religious Faith, not neglecting the insights and virtues of his mature years both as a poet and as a pilgrim. The personality of the poet pervades the poem as he expresses his beliefs about the earthly pilgrimage, leading to death, the judgement and purgatory.

Newman's theory of the multi-levels of personality involving all the layers of the psyche which must be reached in the process of purgation is also well developed in the poem. Thus The Dream of Gerontius summarizes in an effective way the ultimate conviction of the poet based on a lifetime of dedicated search. Though Newman takes over the deathbed convention as he finds in medieval poetry and in the literature of meditation, he goes on to a climax of celebration of the love of God and of pain, as prayer and joy as he had learned from Francis de Sales and from his own insights.

The poem is described as a metrical meditation on death and afterlife. Personal meditation of the soul is strongly supported by the liturgical framework. It is in fact the realization by means of a loving heart and poetic imagination, of the state of a just soul at and after death. Gerontius typifies not a particular soul but each one of those souls which may be fortunate enough to face a merciful and loving God. It is a unique meditation on death and also a musical evocation of a lofty yet sensitive soul. It is written out of intense personal feeling which communicates power to the poem. The poet himself forms his technique to communicate the experience. Newman lets his imagination go beyond the boundaries of human consciousness and conveys spirit as the medium of physical sensation which transcends all human experience.Those qualities of Newman that could vitalize dead pages and lift the mediocre into excellence, that

exquisiteness of touch that is human and majestic, quelling and imperial are found in the rhetoric and ecstasy which are colloquial and sublime in The Dream of Gerontius.

The metre in the poem is always appropriate to the thoughts expressed. The poem is an example of exquisite musical variety on a firm basis of unity. The music of the verse changes delicately with the themes, emotions and thoughts. It is a lofty work from a technical point of view, and a modern work for voices and orchestra. The delicacy of Newman's ears to sounds is shown by the changes of the verse-music which is made up of accent, pause and rhythm to fit the varying feelings of the work:

Jesu Maria--I am near to death,
And Thou art calling me. (1-2)

These two lines have the two-beat rhythm. The measure of the metre begins with the first accent.

The system of verse notation helps the metrical study of the poem. In the speeches of Gerontius we find the greatest metrical versatility. At times the speeches are in the form of dramatic monologues but the interaction of Gerontius with the Angel is in dialogue. Though the basic form of his speeches is blank verse, in the moments of deepest intensity the verse form adapts. The second form of primary rhythm based on three beats in the measure is effectively used. This is found in the song of the demons:

Low-born clods
Of brute earth,
They aspire (401-403)

The contrasting chants of the demons are meant to produce the effect of taunts, with two-foot lines based on three beat rhythms, intended to produce drama both on paper and for the ear. The interior, non-visual drama of the poem is compensated by a firm reliance on the words and the differing sound effects

and rhythms of the verse forms.

The poem is a series of lyrics, and each lyric voices its own feelings and is sensitively tuned to that feeling. Thus the poem reveals Newman not only as a poet but as a musician, examples of whose love of music abound in the poem. The songs of the Angelicals though severe in their classic restraint, are realistically fervent and could be compared to any of the choral odes in Sophocles. The iambics and the grave lyrics of the poem, especially the one by Gerontius after his Beatific Vision, and the last lyric by the Guardian Angel have the peculiar and serious harmony of sounds which can be found in Newman's best speeches and lyrics. In his own words:

> The sound is like the rushing of the wind--
> The summer wind--among the lofty pines;
> Swelling and dying, echoing round about,
> Now here, now distant, wild and beautiful;
> While, scatter'd from the branches it has stirr'd
> Descend ecstatic odours. (664-669)

Newman handles the various techniques with skill and consistency and with an appeal to the emotions and to the ear. Its power is akin to that of music and it reaches completion when set to music, as Elgar did through his oratorio of the poem. As the poem depends on hearing, Newman himself proposed to Sir Edward Elgar that it could easily be set to music. Inspired by this poem Elgar put it into music and described his oratorio as a work into which he had put his whole soul. His oratorio won great acclaim and still provides satisfaction and aesthetic enjoyment to the audience by its amalgamation of aesthetic and religious emotions. It is also performed as a dramatic poem set to music by Fernand Laloux in 1951.

His autobiography Apologia ends with only a scanty reference to his inevitable death, but nine months later he wrote this poem which vividly describes a death and afterlife

that could easily be thought to be his own, even though he lives another twenty five years. Newman continues the significant home imagery of the Apologia in the poem. He wrote in the Apologia of his leaving his position at Oxford and the Church of England for a new home, the Catholic Church. In the poem Gerontius leaves his earthly home to reach his final Home. After the soul's departure from the body, the Angel speaks: "I come, / Taking it home" (238-239), and the last words of the Angel of the Agony are: "and bid them come home to Thee, / To that glorious Home" (835-836). The poem is more than the dream of a dying Christian. It is Newman the pilgrim's triumphant vindication of his entire spiritual life. His firm belief that the Catholic way of life will lead the obedient soul through the temptations and trials of this earthly pilgrimage to a glorious resurrection in Heaven is given beautiful expression in The Dream of Gerontius. This poem alone would ensure his place among the rank of great poets.

In depth of spiritual insight and emotion Newman's poem equals that of Dante. Among these poems which depict life after death, The Dream of Gerontius can be placed on an equal rank with the Dies Irae, and Michaelangeo's Last Judgement in ecstasy of imagination, and akin to Goethe's Faust in spirit and substance. According to Maurice Francis Egan a comparative study of The Dream of Gerontius with the Purgatorio of Dante, Book III, Milton's Paradise Lost, D.G.Rossetti's The Blessed Damozel, and Tennyson's In Memoriam, would show that Newman's poem excels in solemn purity, terseness, beauty of expression and musical cadences.[37]

In Milton's poem of heaven and hell, man is not beyond this world. In Dante's poem, he is everywhere throughout Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso, in relation to his life and works. In Newman's poem nothing of this world is seen other than the saving of soul. The Soul is seen before the Creator and Judge.

In no other poem beyond the veil, is man so prominent. The Dream of Gerontius takes place where the Soul is, where human beings love and suffer but without the solid frame of things, and alone the Soul utters its beliefs. The outward world is removed like a veil hiding us from God. That vision of the Unseen is the life of a Christian and a pilgrim. Such a Beatific Vision is the end of the quest and the crowning glory of the pilgrimage.

Even the great fathers of poetry who have written of death have avoided the supernatural mystery of death. Thus the ghost of Agamemnon in the Odyssey and the spirit of Hamlet's father tell us each the occasion and consequence of his death, but are silent about what dying itself felt like. The departed soul of Faust also remains silent as good Angels and evil spirits contend for its possession.

Newman puts the poem into dramatic form and it bears resemblance to a Greek tragedy in form, for example to Prometheus Bound of Aeschylus. In both of these poems the protagonists are of great importance and stand in a definite relation to the Eternal. In the case of Newman, the character exudes peace and acceptance, while Aeschylus has a figure of revolt. In both these dramas the characters are limited, there are constant changes in the metre to suit the changes of mood and lack of action. To Aeschylus the lofty tragedian and to Newman the Catholic pilgrim, what they write are not mere fictions but the Ultimate Truth which transcends nature ever mingling with it. What they write belongs more to liturgy than to literature. Newman strips away the physical and takes man's soul as his stage. The characters of his drama live within it and throb to the vibrations of the Eternal as did the pilgrim poet himself during his life long quest for the Beatific Vision.

The Dream of Gerontius was applauded as a great poetic achievement. Here the pilgrim and the poet are in the most

creative unison. The warmth of Newman's death notices reflected the evident popularity of the poem which came out in twenty nine separate editions by 1894. It could be compared in popularity with In Memoriam. Aubre de Vere described the poem as: "one of the noblest in the language."[38] Even Newman's well known antagonist Charles Kingsley could not but be impressed: "I read the Dream with awe and admiration."[39] Gladstone derived comfort from the poem on his deathbed, having written of it in 1868 that it is "the most remarkable production. . . since the unapproachable Paradise of Dante."[40]

The popularity of the poem was well established in the Victorian era. Periodicals referred to it as ' a noble drama' remarkable for its unique sincerity. Swinburne admired it for its force, its fervour and its terse energy. An article in The New England Magazine after Newman's death in 1890, spoke of it as the greatest poem in the language.[41] The Harvard Monthly spoke of The Dream of Gerontius as Newman's supreme effort in poetry and considered it one of the noteworthy poems of the century and a work of the highest poetic imagination; its scope is tremendous: "a drama with immortality for its subject, saints and angels for its persons, and infinity for its scene. . . ."[42] Sir Francis Doyle found that Newman wrote like a prophet, and felt that the poem gives us a sense of "that painful wrestling with the powers of the universe" and of "intercommunication with something higher and deeper than man."[43] C. F. Harrold stated that it was the culmination and summary of Newman's poetic achievement, the fruit and experience of almost a lifetime. He considered this the poem which finally gave Newman major stature in the Victorian mind.[44] R. H. Hutton referred to it as one of the most unique and original poems of the nineteenth century.[45] The poem was widely praised even by those not in sympathy with Newman and

even by those who were far removed from Newman in his aesthetics.

Between 1885 and 1905, 75,000 copies of the poem were sold and it was also included in Newman's anthology Verses on Various Occasions, which extended to seven editions by 1890. In Newman's lifetime itself it was translated into French in 1869 and into German in 1885. In England its fame grew with Elgar's oratorio in 1900 and continued to earn popularity during the first decade of this century. That most popular Victorian work, Tennyson's In Memoriam reached only nineteen separate editions in twenty seven years while Newman's poem was already in its twenty third edition in 1888, twenty two years after its first appearance in book form. Although taste in poetry has undergone considerable change, the fact remains that The Dream of Gerontius is an unusual poem and its message conveyed artistically, is an example of Newman's poetry at its best.

By the late twentieth century The Dream of Gerontius comes to mean Elgar not Newman and scant attention is paid to the range and power of its poetry. In the zenith of his poetic writing Newman's success rested on the fusion of the devotional and the doctrinal into an extensive artistic unity. It is ironic then that it is in the hymns of "Praise to the Holiest"[46] and "Firmly I believe and truly"[47] that his work is most widely remembered. The literary achievement of the poem was felt largely in the nineteenth century. Some of the reasons for the loss of interest in the poem may be found in the rejection of Victorian verse forms, changing religious attitudes and preference for a remote approach to one's own death. Today there is a tendency to consider a poem to be distorted by a message. Just as the Victorians perceived only half of the poem which is its message, so the modern reader and critic seem to perceive only the other half of it which has the intense

lyrical expression. But it was Newman's belief that both halves are needed to make a perfect artistic whole. Unfortunately, it is rarely read now-a-days and is frequently undervalued.

Notes

[1] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 6-7.

[2] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 22-24.

[3] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 30-31.

[4] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 33-34.

[5] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 34-37.

[6] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 42-43.

[7] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 179-180.

[8] Qtd. in Edward E. Kelly, Sermon Preached at the Catholic Chaplaincy of the University of Birmingham in honour of Cardinal Newman (15 June 1975) 1-6.

[9] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 182-183.

[10] Bible, Genesis 2:10.

[11] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 70-71.

[12] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 198-199.

[13] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 199-200.

[14] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 206-207.

[15] John Henry Newman, "The Lapse of Time," Parochial and Plain Sermons. Vol.7. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987) 1409-1415.

16 John Henry Newman, "The Greatness and Littleness of Human Life," Parochial and Plain Sermons. Vol. 4. 861-868.

17 Anne Mozley, ed. Letters And Correspondence Vol. 1. 161.

18 Anne Mozley, ed. Letters And Correspondence. Vol. 1. 213.

19 John Henry Newman, "The Invisible World," Parochial and Plain Sermons. Vol.4. 852-860.

20 John Henry Newman, Parochial and Plain Sermons. Vol.4. 857-858.

[21] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 209.

[22] John Henry Newman, "The Greatness and Littleness of Human Life," Parochial and Plain Sermons. Vol. 4. 861-868.

[23] John Mason Neale, trans. Medieval Hymns and Sequences : a translation of Latin Hymns (1854).

[24] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 211-241.

[25] Bible, Luke 12:35.

[26] John Henry Newman, An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent, Nicholas Lash, intro. (London, 1979) 15-93.

[27] Dom Gasper Lefebure, "Liturgy of the Dead," The Saint Andrew Daily Missal (Belgium: Abbey of St. Andrew, 1959) 1582-1584.

[28] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 198-199.

[29] Prayers for Ash Wednesday.

[30] John Henry Newman, Essay Critical and Historical Vol.1. 7.

[31] Bible, 1 Corinthians 13:12.

[32] Newman uses this word 'apprehensive' in a non-traditional sense, related to 'understanding' rather than to 'worry.'

[33] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 152.

[34] John Henry Cardinal Newman, Verses 3-4.

[35] Richard H. Hutton, Cardinal Newman (London: Richard Clay and Sons Ltd, 1890) 248.

[36] Saint Catherine of Genoa, Treatise on Purgatory, trans. Charlotte Balfour and Helen Douglas Irwine (London, 1946).

[37] Maurice Francis Egan, intro. and notes Dream of Gerontius (London: Longmans, 1906) 1-8.

[38] Aubrey de Vere to JHN, ALS (Autographs, Letters and Sources) Birmingham Oratory, VC 75, 6 March 1868. 23.

[39] Charles Kingsley to William Cope, ALS Birmingham Oratory, VC 75, 2 January 1868. 14.

[40] Ian Ker and Thomas Gornall, ed. Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman (Oxford: 1978) 24. 7.

[41] John F. Genung, "John Henry Newman as a writer,"

New England Magazine. Vol. 3. Oct. 1890. 202.

[42] Robert Morse Lovett, "Cardinal Newman's Poetry," Harvard Monthly 9 Feb. 1891. 197-200.

[43] Sir Francis Doyle, "Lecture 3," Lecture Delivered Before the University of Oxford 1868 (London: Macmillan, 1869) 91-124.

[44] Charles F. Harrold, Newman (New York: Longmans, 1945) 272.

[45] R. H. Hutton, Cardinal Newman, 2nd ed. (London: Methuen, 1891) 244.

[46] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 234-236.

[47] Elisabeth Ann Noel. Diss. 213.

10. CONCLUSION

The end of 1820s and the beginning of 1830s when Newman wrote most of his poems, were times when Keats, Shelley and Byron were dead and when there was a virtual silence on the part of Wordsworth and Coleridge. At this time poets such as Tennyson and Browning had not yet been recognized as great poets. Newman working along with the Tractarian poets such as John Keble, John Mason Neale and Stephen Hawker belonged to the group of devotional poets. Newman, the pilgrim did combat with interior struggles and with thoughts of his unworthiness to take up the pilgrim leadership. Hence his poems reflect the spiritual strain he went through. But there is nothing of the battering of God in his poetry, neither does it express any of the doubts of the metaphysical poets. Newman's poetry differs from that of Donne in which there is the fulness of mental strife and intense emotional reaction to the spirit of scepticism. Newman never questioned God nor sank into scepticism.

This pilgrim poet was the one who prepared the way and set in motion the spiritual renaissance of the England of his time and who summed up in himself the religious and literary splendour of it. He restored to religious life the vitality of its earlier days by making use of reforms which were more refined, intellectual, humane and benevolent. It was Newman the believer who helped the Catholic poets to be inspired by the dogmatic religion and to give vibrant expressions to it. The association of beauty with religious devotion which the Oxford Movement brought about helped in liberating art from the Benthamite philosophy of utility. It was mainly through its religious associations that sensuous beauty eventually gained a place in the scale of Victorian values more or less comparable to that which it had among the Romantics. The visible Church

with its mysticism and aura of transcendental sublimity stirred the soul to such responses as was found in the later devotional poets. The religious and the aesthetics were blended.

The Victorians in general accepted a Church speaking through liturgy and symbol. They considered poetry a mode of religious experience and believed in its power of guiding and attuning the mind to worship and prayer. Newman by his religious and devotional poetry helped the Catholic artist to understand the Church which recognized the primacy of the intellect as well as the claims of the heart. Penetrating the core of faith, Newman found answers to those agonizing questions raised by the crumbling of a society in transition on its pilgrimage towards God. He was clear about what the purpose of life was, the need to hold on to religious and moral values, the meaning of death, the question of life after death and so on. It was he who prepared the way for the other poets of the Catholic literary revival such as Hopkins, Hawker, De Vere, Patmore, Alice Meynell, Francis Thompson, Lionel Johnson and Dawson. Like him, they manifested a common concern with the deeper realities of life. Newman's poetry also prepared the way for poetry of high intensity. Christina Rossetti was deeply influenced by his beliefs and practices. Following the example of Newman, these poets gave to the nation religious poetry of unwavering faith in God. But their experience of faith found poetic expression based on personal aesthetics and religious reactions.

Our study of Newman, the pilgrim poet leads us to the conclusion that the divine spirit in Newman, his search for the Ultimate Truth, his spiritual endeavour to explain the significance of life and death, far transcended his urges to become merely a poetic poet.

Infact, Newman's poetry is an interior journey to the world of eternal values. To him poetry was a means of

communicating experiences of a spiritual and aesthetic nature from a higher level of consciousness. He believed that human spirit is capable of transcending the body. What modern poets lack is deeper aesthetic vision. More truth than poetry has always troubled the poets who believe in vision synthesized with poetic values. No doubt physical science has searched the cosmos and has not found the trace of soul-force anywhere. Though some poets manage to compromise, entertain or mystify, this is not what Newman meant to do. It is not less reality that he wanted to dive into but more of the Reality behind the reality.

He insisted that moral values are as real as any other and they must be regarded as actually integral in any sane scheme of human life. Poetic values must qualify, as he thought, for existence in a crude world. If it cannot be shown that there are real values in the world of struggling men, then they may be values of Archangels and not of men: some synthetic realism must be found out for us then--neither extreme idealism nor extreme neutralism serves our purpose. This is what Newman actually wanted to do, to synthesize idealism, or as a matter of fact spiritualism, with the unavoidable and the inevitable realities that surround men in the work-a-day and live world.

Further we find that art in Newman's poetic creations blends with ethics as in its origin and it is one with religion, which was again looked upon by Newman as an art form, intended as the medium of this same passionate desire for loss of self in the greater process of which we are all a part. The effect of the message thus delivered is always to set the universal above the particular, to emphasize the larger relations for matching the unity of the self in the universal whole.

Newman's poetry was indeed a creative as well as a divine dream which is the process of reconstructing the ordinary representation of the world in keeping with an expanded view of life which is actually a creative fusion of two views of the

world, each of which may seem to the other as a dream.

It is to be deplored that the world has passed through the path of the multitude and lost its real meaning. Thus a modern poet's task has been, from the Victorians to the present day to prettify, to ornament and distort with make-believe, and this is to be poetry and the creator is to be the poetic poet in the negative sense of the term. Departing from such a path Newman sought unfrequented yet fundamental arenas so that he does not become a mere poetic poet nor belong to a group of poetasters.

A real artist is one whose habit is to view the world from the vantage point of different states of human soul, more or less removed from the standardized state of ordinary living, and who has a special technique for representing the wider experience by fusion with the narrower, to the aim that his vision may be shared.

Infact, the revealing mood in Newman displays the saint of the man in him. But that saint was also a Quester--the quest was for the Ideal, the Eternal. Newman's Quest Eternal on his pilgrimage, as revealed in his poems occupies its place as an outstanding Sign Post of the complex age. Admittedly, a poem is not written with ideas only as modern critics say, but they are not written only with words either. Unless there is a happy coalescence of poetic passion with a wider vision, it comes to nothing. Also, it must grow from within and have the essential unity of evolutionary growth. In his wholehearted quest for the Eternal, Newman's poems display a unique depth.

We cannot, therefore, relegate Newman's poetry to oblivion by contemporary poetics or fashions in poetic criticism, but in terms of that higher adequacy which modern critics miss, the adequacy of poetic vision. From his pilgrim watch-tower Newman had thought and felt deeply about the human situation like the great Romantics, worked, unlike them. He

also saw and spoke as an acute thinker and searcher for Truth than as a mere poet. The monumental sublimity of his ideas created an intensity of vision that can only be compared with that of Plato and the spiritual writers.

Hence in order to have a better understanding of Newman who remains a pilgrim poet, we have tried to explore his vision of the world, of man, of life and of the purpose of life.

The governing principal of Newman's life was that he was placed on earth to save his soul and to be a guide to others to lead them to that Ultimate Union with the Divine. He saw Life as a Pilgrimage towards the Divine, or the Beatific Vision and Union with the Almighty.

While Newman's extensive prose works develop and expand his beliefs on the pilgrimage to God, it is in his relatively small output of poetry that he expresses the passion he felt about his spiritual journey. It is also through poetry that he tries to extend spiritual guidance to souls that are heavenward bound. Through his poetry he beckons the doubting and the faltering across the dark frontiers of this world into the light and warmth of the Blessed Vision of Peace.

Most of his poetry is out of fashion because contemporary poets reject the idea that good poetry must be didactic and carry a message or lesson. For Victorian poets like Newman and also for its readers poetry must combine beauty of expression with depth of insight and worthy content. For this pilgrim poet, the poetry of the Scripture and the Invisible Sea of Eternity are his and to these he gives expressions in some of his imperishable lines. Indeed some of his poems are little gems, rough diamonds even if not polished and great.

Newman's belief that it is the Church herself which makes her children poetical exemplifies the aesthetic position he holds as a pilgrim poet. His lifelong preoccupation with the reality of the Supernatural and the beauty of the life to come

which awaits the pilgrim humanity finds its superb expression in The Dream of Gerontius . In this his crowning poetic achievement the pilgrim devotee and artist are one and the poem completes a pattern of pilgrim poetic unity. The pilgrim who sets out on his journey with this prayer: "I RISE and raise my clasped hands to Thee !" and invokes Heavenly guidance on his pilgrimage: "Thus I set out;- Lord ! lead me on my way!" attains an assurance of the triumph of his spiritual quest: the Beatific Vision, in this poem.

As Newman examines his own intellectual awareness in the Apologia, so he investigates his perception of the soul's spiritual identity in his poetry. He reaches the climax of his spiritual search in his poetic-drama, The Dream of Gerontius . His journey towards the Divine through poetry culminates in this poem in which he offers that revelation of the sacred which poets seldom attain in a lifetime. A poet with an out of the common run of his peers he touches the centre of Dantean approach to poetry and unravels the mysteries that lie beyond death.

"The Pillar of the Cloud" and The Dream of Gerontius are first class poetry deserving of a lasting place in English literature. Taken as a whole, the poetry of Newman is primarily of interest as a fascinating study of a man's spiritual tenacity during a long life. The spiritual and the psychological facets found in this poetry are of great interest, revealing as they do the soul of a saintly man. The enduring value of his poetry is in its having the power to awaken in us just that 'poetical view of things' which he reckoned to be no more than one's duty as a Christian. Newman's poetry has influenced many readers regardless of caste and creed differences, who set high value on spiritual guidance, for example, Mahatma Gandhi.

There is at any rate no doubt that the heroic refusal of

Newman to fall in line with the more accepted fellow poets of the Victorian age at the cost of his Christian pilgrimage vision, will definitely place him at par with the uncompromising spiritual literary geniuses of all times and of all countries. This pilgrim poet will ever remain as an image of a noble soul clothed in moral grandeur and as a symbol of the triumph of soul over materialistic, hedonistic and fleshly urges of human life on its journey towards the Divine. From this point of view, Newman, the pilgrim poet and the man has a relevance in this age of collapsed values.

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