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THE CONSERVATIVE MIND OF NEWMAN

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People say to me, that it is but a dream to suppose that Christianity should regain the organic power in human society which once it possessed. I cannot help that; I never said it could. I am not a politician; I am proposing no measures, but exposing a fallacy, and resisting a pretence. Let Benthamism reign, if men have no aspirations; but do not tell them to be romantic, and then solace them with glory; do not attempt by philosophy what once was done by religion. The ascendancy of Faith may be impracticable, but the reign of Knowledge is incomprehensible. The problem for statesmen of this age is now to educate the masses, and literature and science cannot give the solution.

—John Henry Newman, "The Tamworth Reading Room" (1841)

NEWMAN, indeed, was no politician. His only important essay directly touching upon politics is "Who's to Blame?" (1855), provoked by the English disasters in the Crimea; otherwise, politics in his writings is only a faint shadow of theology and the theory of knowledge. But real conservatism, too, transcends politics. Newman was a consistent Tory, devoted to the principle of aristocracy and the concept of loyalty to persons; yet this is not his important contribution to conservative thought. Suffused with that sense of the vanity of worldly things which is highly characteristic of great conservatives, he dealt with the problem of society only because the Benthamites and other radicals seemed determined to force him and his allies into political controversy.

Starting then with the being of a God, (which, as I have said, is as certain to me as the certainty of my own exis-

> tence, though when I try to put the grounds of that certainty into logical shape I find a difficulty in doing so in mood and figure to my satisfaction,) I look out of myself into the world of men, and there I see a sight which fills me with unspeakable distress. The world seems simply to give the lie to that great truth, of which my whole being is so full. . . . The sight of the world is nothing else than the prophet's scroll, full of 'lamentations, and mourning, and woe.'

So he wrote in the *Apologia pro Vita Sua*. This sensitive and subtle man lived in an age, however, in which Caesar claimed the things that are God's; and so Newman spent his life in arguments and struggles abhorrent to his contemplative nature.

Through Tractarianism, Newman exerted some immediate conservative influence upon English society, helping to buttress the Church of England against the wave of legislation introduced by Utilitarian and Nonconformist reformers after 1832. But for the student of conservative general ideas, these matters are not so important as the philosophical principles which Newman enunciated after he left Oxford for the Oratory of St. Philip Neri at Birmingham. His theory of knowledge and his idea of education: these are conservative concepts that, susceptible of universal application, continue to illuminate social controversies in modern British and American society. Politics, any discerning observer soon finds, stretches upward into the problems of ethics, and ethics, in turn, is surmounted by the problems of religious faith. Newman continues the philosophical chain in which Hooker and Burke had been the strongest links: the line of English thinkers who knew that society subsists upon faith. This conviction is clear in Newman's early sermons and essays, but it attains fruition in *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845), *The Idea of a University* (1853), *A Grammar of Assent* (1858), and *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (1864). Most cogently, perhaps, it is expounded in "The Tam-

worth Reading Room," which was published in the *Times* in February, 1841, and reprinted in *Discussions and Arguments* (1872). As a framework for the description of Newman's conservative ideas, "The Tamworth Reading Room" serves very well.

Sir Robert Peel, who fought with all his energies to save the Conservative party from extinction after 1832, brought upon himself the obloquy of the two greatest conservatives in Victorian times. "Peel was an example of the mistake of supposing that even the highest practical abilities are sufficient, without philosophical insight, to save a politician from grave errors," Lord Hugh Cecil writes. "The weakness of the practical mind is that while it clearly sees the actual existing circumstances of the case, it has small power of foresight." The strong practical manufacturer of Tamworth compounded away, in the Tamworth Manifesto (1834), all the real principles of political Toryism, said Disraeli; and in his address at the opening of the Tamworth Reading Room in 1841, Peel surrendered the intellectual premises of old England into the hands of the Utilitarians, said Newman. Cobden was shrewd when he "did not wholly despair of Peel"; for quite as Sir Robert was persuaded of the case for free trade, so this defender of religious establishments let his own mind be captured by the metaphysical and educational principles of Utilitarianism, the concepts of Bentham and of Brougham. Conservatism, political and spiritual, had to be rescued from a guardian thus seduced; and while Disraeli freed Toryism from the Peelites and re-established the line of demarcation between parties, Newman reaffirmed the venerable religious opposition to the Baconian idea of "knowledge as power" and to the Utilitarian ambition that education might become an instrument for material aggrandizement.

At the opening of the Tamworth Library, Peel had declared (in the homiletic vein he often exercised) that men must be educated, or they will be vicious, and Useful Knowledge is the

instrument of their redemption; that "physical and moral science rouses, transports, exalts, enlarges, tranquillizes, and satisfies the mind"; that science is a neutral ground on which men may meet regardless of politics and religion. This is the view Brougham expounded at the inauguration of London University. Physical Science will be even a source of consolation and pleasure at the hour of death. Disciples of Bentham (though embellishing their preceptor's arid prose with an imagery at once amatory and evangelical), Brougham and Peel spoke of knowledge as a means of obtaining power over nature, and improving men morally; of education, as practical training for success in this endeavor. But they wholly omitted religion, and its science of theology, from their scheme. Religion is controversial: therefore it has no place in public instruction, they believed—even Sir Robert, the champion of the Church of England. Their concept of knowledge and education, Newman saw, is shot through with fallacies.

For secular knowledge is not the principle of moral improvement; nor is it the direct means of moral improvement; nor the antecedent of moral improvement. Secular knowledge is not a principle of social utility, nor a principle of action. Without personal religion, secular knowledge commonly is a tool of unbelief. Conviction is not produced by the logic of words, nor by the accumulation of facts. Physical science cannot bring certitude, for the most plausible scientific theories are no more than probable suppositions founded upon such scanty facts as we are able to grub together in our fumbling human way. Men are not going to be good because they have been taught assorted facts, or because they have been instructed in the art of doubting. True knowledge is not the product of orderly reason, of Benthamite logic, of data carefully weighed; no man bases his actions upon these abstract grounds. Bentham and Mill themselves, though they profess a system of principles rigidly scientific, in reality build their logic of words upon presuppositions

and experiences of which, likely enough, they are not themselves conscious. No, knowledge is not the result of an instruction in physical and moral science. Like virtue, knowledge really is the product of a subtle process which men apprehend imperfectly at best; this is what Newman later called the Illative Sense.

> In morals, as in physics, the stream cannot rise higher than its source. Christianity raises men from earth, for it comes from heaven; but human morality creeps, struts, or frets upon the earth's level, without wings to rise. The Knowledge School does not contemplate raising man above himself; it merely aims at disposing of his existing powers and tastes, as is most convenient, or is practicable under circumstances. It finds him, like the victims of the French Tyrant, doubled up in a cage in which he can neither lie, stand, sit, nor kneel, and its highest desire is to find an attitude in which his unrest may be least.

Thus practical knowledge leaves man in torment. The heart is not reached through the reason. Dread of the unseen is the only known principle of subduing moral evil, but this is left quite out of consideration by Utilitarian educators. Scientific facts do not relieve modern man's boredom, nor offer him a hope above the vanity of human wishes. "If in education we begin with nature before grace, with evidences before faith, with science before conscience, with poetry before practice, we shall be doing much the same as if we were to indulge the appetites and passions, and turn a deaf ear to the reason." Without a foundation of first principles, science itself is worthless—a meaningless accumulation of unrelated facts. Our first principles are not obtained by heaping together data, after Bacon's method, and drawing inferences. "Life is for action. If we insist on proofs for everything, we shall never come to action; to act you must assume, and that assumption is faith." Reason does not impel our impressions and our actions; it *follows* them.

If, then, we do not form our lives, or even our sciences, upon a logic of words or a museum of specimens, what actually is the source of our first principles, of our governing motives? What precisely is this Illative Sense of Newman's? In *The Grammar of Assent,* he defines it briefly thus: "It is the mind that reasons, and that controls its own reasonings, not any technical apparatus of words and propositions. This power of judging and concluding, when in its perfection, I call the Illative Sense." Here we have a use of "sense" parallel to "good sense," "common sense," "a sense of beauty"; it is a uniform faculty which, however, may be employed in different measures, may be attached to particular subject-matters, which employs a method of reasoning above logic (resembling modern mathematical calculus in its principle), and is the ultimate test of truth and error in our inferences. It varies in its force and purity from one individual to another, and true intellectual improvement consists in the strengthening and perfecting of the Illative Sense. As the phrase implies, the Illative Sense is characterized by impressions that are borne in upon us, from a source deeper than our conscious and formal reason. It is the combined product of intuition, instinct, imagination, and long and intricate experience. Yet the Illative Sense is not infallible in any man: assumptions which are an act of the Illative Sense may be founded upon mistaken elements of thought, and thus lead to error. We must correct our own particular Illative Sense by reference to Authority; for Authority, which is a sort of filtered collective Illative Sense, provides the purgation of individual error. As Newman wrote in his essay on John Keble (1846), "Conscience is an authority; the Bible is an authority; such is the Church; such is Antiquity; such are the words of the wise, such are hereditary lessons; such are ethical truths; such are historical memories, such are legal saws and state maxims; such are proverbs; such are sentiments, presages, and prepossessions."

In the physical sciences, it is true, the common test of probability is physical fact, submitted to the physical senses and tested by them. But history, ethics, and similar studies must be undertaken and tested by the Illative Sense and by Authority.

> In such sciences, we cannot rest upon mere facts, because we have not got them. We must do our best with what is given us, and look about for aid from any quarter; and in such circumstances the opinions of others, the traditions of ages, the prescriptions of authority, antecedent auguries, analogies, parallel cases, these and the like, not indeed taken at random, but, like the evidence from the senses, sifted and scrutinized, obviously become of great importance.

So Newman wrote in *The Development of Christian Doctrine.*

If, then, the Illative Sense is the ultimate sanction of belief and action, what shall we say of the Utilitarian concept of knowledge? Blind to the very existence of the Illative Sense, Bentham's disciples omit from their calculations the cardinal principle of wisdom; and with it they omit religious faith. Vaguely cognizant that religious truth cannot be apprehended by any of their methods—and defiantly certain that, upon their tests, theology cannot be a science—Utilitarians studiously ignore faith. But religion, even considered merely upon utilitarian grounds, is the great prop of society, the consolation of lonely man, the sanction of justice, the deterrent of evil. There is no substitute for religion in any of these concerns. Thus the Utilitarians—and Sir Robert Peel, insofar as he is their convert —undermine the fundament of their utilitarian order.

> How sad that he who might have had the affections of many, should have thought, in a day like this, that a Statesman's praise lay in preserving the mean, not in aiming at the high; that to be safe was his first merit, and to kindle enthusiasm his most disgraceful blunder! How pitiable that such a man should not have understood that a

> body without a soul has no life, and a political party without an idea, no unity!

Utilitarianism is a philosophy of death: its morbidity is the consequence of Bentham's emphasis upon Doubt. With Descartes, Utilitarians doubt all things in heaven and earth; and this is consummate folly. For Doubt is a surly, envious, egotistic emotion, a bitter denial of everything but the sullen self; and one learns nothing by doubting. Doubt never can be wholly assuaged in many things, but we must manage to live despite our doubts (which are a condition of our imperfect temporal nature). "We must make up our minds to be ignorant of much, if we would know anything. And we must make our choice between risking Science, and risking Religion." The man who cultivates practical training at the expense of improving his Illative Sense makes a sorry bargain. Deny the Illative Sense, and doubt is inescapable; admit it, and one may climb from doubt to certitude.

> Doubt itself is a positive state, and implies a definite habit of mind, and thereby necessarily involves a system of principles and doctrines all its own. Again, if nothing is to be assumed, what is our very method of reasoning but an assumption? and what our nature itself? . . . Of the two, I would rather have to maintain that we ought to begin with believing everything that is offered to our acceptance, than that it is our duty to doubt of everything. The former, indeed, seems to be the true way of learning. (*A Grammar of Assent.*)

Belief follows action: Coleridge had said the same thing. But Newman does not imply that, in most cases, the intellect can perceive truth intuitively. The Illative Sense, which resolves doubt, is more than intuition.

> We know, not by a direct and simple vision, not at a glance, but, as it were, by piecemeal and accumulation, by a mental process, by going round an object, by the comparison, the combination, the mutual correction, the continual adaptation, of many partial notions, by the employment, concentration, and joint action of many faculties and exercises of mind. (*The Idea of a University.*)

This union and concert is a matter of training; and thus Newman, having shown that Utilitarian principles of education are *not* a way to genuine knowledge, is led to describe the true educative process.

It is no paradox that the adversary of Liberalism was the noblest exponent of liberal education. If "Liberalism" was an odious word to Sir Robert Peel, to Newman it was anathema. He first heard that word, he said, in connection with the opinions of Byron and his admirers. "Afterwards, Liberalism was the badge of a theological school, of a dry and repulsive character, not very dangerous in itself, though dangerous as opening the door to evils which it did not itself either anticipate or comprehend," Newman was to write in *Apologia pro Vita Sua*. "At present it is nothing else than that deep, plausible skepticism, . . . the development of human reason, as practically exercised by the natural man." In religion and in politics, the essence of Liberalism is private judgment; and to Newman, who venerated authority, judgment of grave questions according to one's own petty personal understanding was an act of flagrant impiety, approaching diabolic possession, the sin of spiritual pride. Liberals postulate the supremacy of human reason (that is, of the dry logical reason which Bentham exemplified), and hold Christian humility in contempt; they believe fatuously in the natural goodness and infinite improvability of man, and thus threaten the traditional buttresses of society.

But liberal education is another matter: this is a use of "liberal" far more ancient and more pure, a true understanding of liberty, which is freedom to live within the compass of God's ordinances, not freedom to doubt and demolish. Liberal edu-

cation is the intellectual training of free men. No Victorian was better suited to define liberal education than was Newman, the exemplar of traditional liberal learning at its highest, the light of Oxford. Possessed of a mind marvellously capacious and inquiring, though operating (to its advantage) within the confines of a majestic intellectual tradition, Newman "is perhaps the only Englishman [Mr. G. H. Bantock observes in a recent number of the *Cambridge Journal*] to question the whole basis of contemporary 'civilization,' and raise the deepest problems of the relationship of the individual ego to the external world." Professor Crane Brinton, discussing Newman's searching criticism of scientific methods and assumptions, goes so far as to call him a Pragmatist in the twentieth-century sense. But Dr. Brinton seems to confuse William James's conviction that particular facts are all, with Newman's belief that scientific theories, *per se*, cannot bring certitude. If in any sense Newman was a pragmatist, it is in the old meaning of that word—which, properly understood, expresses "the genius of Anglicanism," according to Paul Elmer More:

> Rightly understood it may be said that among philosophers Plato was the supreme pragmatist, in so far as he sought to defend his belief in "Ideas" as facts more real than the objects of nature by showing that there is a spiritual intuition larger, deeper, more positive and trustworthy, more truly scientific, than the clamorous rout of physical sensations.

The really speculative, catholic, and liberal mind of Newman, aware that "the problem for statesmen of this age is how to educate the masses," turned to consideration of the discipline which makes men at once servants of God and masters of themselves.

"If virtue be a mastery over the mind, if its end be action, if its perfection be inward order, harmony, and peace, we must

seek it in graver and holier places than Libraries and Reading-rooms," he wrote in his overwhelming rebuke to Peel. Education, at heart, is a *discipline*, not a pleasure nor a consolation nor an alternative to idleness. Education itself cannot teach virtue, but the discipline which accompanies true education is like the discipline which virtue, too, requires. And the root of education is the study of theology; of virtue, religious faith. The first four discourses of *The Idea of a University* are devoted to proving that theology is indeed a science, indispensable to any sound system of knowledge; then Newman considers the general question of what higher education ought to be. His immediate endeavors here—the attempt to establish a Catholic University in Dublin—came to nothing; their ultimate influence, to more than most educationists realize.

The problem of the age was indeed the education of the masses; but with that precise problem, Newman does not deal directly. When he writes of education, it is the training of the leading elements in society. As a Tory, he knew that leadership must precede any mass-movement; the leaders provided, the problem is two-thirds solved. Both leaders and masses, however, require an education founded upon religious principle, an intellectual discipline which recognizes what the Utilitarian pedant does not, that

> The various busy world, spread out before our eyes, is physical, but it is more than physical; and, in making its actual system identical with his scientific analysis, such a Professor as I have imagined was betraying a want of philosophical depth, and an ignorance of what a University Teaching ought to be. He was no longer a teacher of liberal knowledge, but a narrow-minded bigot. (Third Discourse.)

The Edinburgh Reviewers, who would remodel universities upon a narrow scheme of utilitarian efficiency, are in reality the

most illiberal of men. They are unaware that "Religious Truth is not only a portion, but a condition of general knowledge. To blot it out is nothing short, if I may so speak, of unravelling the web of University Teaching."

To describe a University is easier than to define adequately a liberal education. (Newman's most moving description, probably, is that which concludes "What is a University?" in *The Office and Work of Universities.*) By a liberal discipline, says Newman in Discourse V, a "habit of mind is formed which lasts through life, of which the attributes are, freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom; or what in a former discourse I have ventured to call the philosophical habit." Liberal studies are especially characteristic of a university and of a gentleman—as opposed to *servile,* the employment in which the mind has little part. We do wrong if we claim too much for this discipline:

> Its direct business is not to steel the soul against temptation or to console it in affliction, any more than to set the loom in motion, or to direct the steam carriage; be it ever so much the means or the condition of both material and moral advancement, still, taken by and large, it as little mends our heart as it improves our temporal circumstances.

It cannot directly instill virtue: "Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then you may hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and human reason to contend against those giants, the passion and the pride of man." At its best, it remains a method, a discipline, for teaching the mind right reason and modesty of intellectual aspiration. "A young man of sharp and active intellect, who has had no other training"—Newman remarks in *Lectures and Essays on University Subjects*—"has little to show for it besides a litter of ideas heaped up into his head any how."

Liberal education brings *order* into an active intellect; the university can hardly hope to do more.

> This process of training, by which the intellect, instead of being formed or sacrificed to some particular or accidental purpose, some specific trade or profession, or study or science, is disciplined for its own sake, for the perception of its own proper object, and for its own highest culture, is called Liberal Education.

Not Learning or Acquirement, but Thought or Reason exercised upon Knowledge, is the end of intellectual training; and as for Knowledge proper, that is its own end. The real aim of education is "the clear, calm, accurate vision and comprehension of all things, as far as the finite mind can embrace them, each in its place, and with its own characteristics upon it."

This idea of a university, and of educational ends, may seem infinitely remote, perhaps, from the shape that training of the intellect has assumed in the English-speaking world. Newman's own Catholic University expired; Oxford and Cambridge and the Scottish universities gradually accepted many of the Utilitarian innovations; and the new provincial universities of England, situated in the swollen industrial towns, generally endeavored to imitate the pattern of the University of London, commended in 1827 and 1828 by Brougham and by Lushington. As for the developing system of state-supported public education (the first subsidy had been granted in 1842), it tended steadily to adopt a character secular and utilitarian. The Benthamites were determined that the state must become the universal educator; substantially, they succeeded. The Benthamite ideal—secular, uniform, universal education prescribed by the state, free and compulsory (a coupling of words suggestive of the democratic despotism that the Philosophical Radicals disregarded)—began to be realized in 1870. The process had commenced earlier in America.

"By their system of state education all would be thrown into the same mint, and all would come out with the same impress and superscription," Disraeli had said in 1839.

> They might make money, they might make railroads; but when the age of passion came, when those interests were in motion, and those feelings stirring, which would shake society to its centre, then . . . they would see whether the people had received the same sort of education which had been advocated and supported by William of Wykeham.

The notions of Gradgrind, mingled with a Rousseauistic sentimentality, have come to dominate state-supported education in both Britain and America; and now that the age of passion is here, a part of the thinking public seems to be waking in alarm to the menace of quasi-education divorced from religious principle.*

Conservative thinkers, however, ought to be judged not simply by what they failed to avert, but more by what they preserved. Newman has kept in the mind of innumerable professors and teachers and educated men an ideal of education which continues to struggle (perhaps with unaccustomed success, in some quarters, at present) against the degradation of learning into technical training, against the intolerant secularization of universities and schools, on behalf of conservative spiritual values. Into an age shadowed by the industrial proletariat, in

*How thoroughly the educational convictions of Newman have been forgotten or quashed among twentieth-century educationists may be suggested by the following two desultory observations:

1) A hundred years after Newman went to Dublin, the Director of the Department of Education at Oxford was Mr. M. L. Jacks, an ardent disciple of Rousseau and John Dewey, eager for "integrated" schooling to dominate the whole child, based upon the pleasure-principle—and, incidentally, Mr. Jacks is one of the last of those Liberals whom Newman detested.
2) In the monthly journal *Tomorrow*, a reviewer some months ago objected to Canon Bernard Iddings Bell's book in the tradition of Newman, *Crisis in Education*, on the ground that Dr. Bell seems to think education ought to produce Christian gentlemen. (The phrase is Dr. Arnold's, of course, but Newman has a better claim to the method.) The implication was, apparently, that Christians and gentlemen are lamentable anachronisms in the democratic United States.

which schools sometimes are scarcely more than jails to contain children until the law allows them to work, Newman's books have preserved the concept of an education designed for liberal gentlemen, without whom any society stifles. In America, at least, the parochial schools, and the colleges and universities endowed by religious bodies, still are vigorous in influence; and most such foundations, whether they admit it or not, find in Newman the best expression of their educational theories.

One of the fiercest conflicts of first principles in the nineteenth century, Newman wrote in 1858, was over whether government and legislation ought to be of a religious character, or not; "whether the state has a conscience; whether Christianity is the law of the land; whether the magistrate, in punishing offenders, exercises a retributive office or a corrective; or whether the whole structure of society is raised upon the basis of secular expediency. The relation of philosophy and the sciences to theology comes into question. The old time-honoured theology has, during the last forty years, been vigorously contending with the new; and the new is in the ascendant." The new is in the ascendant still, nearly a century later. But that such grim Utilitarian expediency still is restrained by the ancient religious view of society—this is Newman's bequest, in greater part than many historians of ideas acknowledge, to modern civilized life.

The period of Benthamism, says Dicey in his *Law and Opinion in England*, commencing about 1825, came to an end between1865 and 1870; it was followed by the period of collectivism. If Derby and Disraeli ushered in the age of collectivism, it was because they perceived, sooner than the Liberals, that Benthamism was a sterile thing, a dry and withered branch, as Newman had declared; and already the yellow leaves were fluttering down from it. Utilitarianism, in motive, was an apology for the industrial expansion of England; and that process accomplished, as a conscious social force Utilitarianism shrivelled, though it left its premises to Marxism and Fabianism and

social planning and the age of industrial corporations. A similar decay of Utilitarian theories seems now to be in process in America, from similar causes.

It was a genial and humane Liberal, Walter Bagehot—the best critic of his own time, and an admirer of Newman—who understood that the old order of things was being effaced not so much through the agency of democracy, in itself, as by a tremendous social force that converts modern nations into states close-knit and sensitive to novelty, like Athens or Florence: the nineteenth-century triumph of government by discussion. Discussion it was that broke the cake of custom in Christendom, that engulfed Burke's prejudice and prescription, that subverted men's ancient aversion to relinquish the ways of their ancestors. The era of Disraeli and Gladstone, of Newman and Mill, a time of speeches and sermons and parliamentary excitement, represented a revolutionary phenomenon—the swift alteration of society by the immediate influence of public opinion and debate. Democracy was the fruit of public discussion, not its seed. "Since Luther's time there has been a conviction more or less rooted, that a man may by an intellectual process think out a religion for himself, and that, as the highest of all duties, he ought to do so," Bagehot remarks in *Physics and Politics*.

> The influence of the political discussion, and the influence of the religious discussion, have so long and so firmly combined, and have so effectually enforced one another, that the old notions of loyalty, and fealty, and authority, as they existed in the Middle Ages, have now over the best minds almost no effect.

This is the Private Judgment against which Newman inveighed, knowing a presumptuous private judgment, like sour Doubt, for the enemy of every honorable loyalty. "Toryism is loyalty to persons," Newman said; and religion is loyalty to the faith of our fathers.

Referring to Bulwer Lytton's comparison of democracy to the yawning grave, Bagehot observes that this analogy is equally apt for Discussion. "Once effectually submit a subject to that ordeal, and you can never withdraw it again; you can never again clothe it with mystery, or fence it by consecration; it remains for ever open to free choice, and exposed to profane deliberation." Private judgment and free discussion, the indispensable postulates and chief supports of Liberalism, were made possible in the nineteenth century by a cheap press (soon to be cheap and nasty), speedy communication, and urban concentration of population; thus the chief European nations obtained the advantages of the ancient city-states, and were exposed to the dangers of public opinion as they had been experienced there. Newman, like Disraeli, in his defense of tradition, authority, and old loyalties, swam against this roaring current; and the success which Newman and Disraeli experienced in rousing popular sympathy for prescriptive verities (this force taken into account) was heroic. In a time when the fountains of the great deep seemed to be broken up—an age much like that of Greece in the fifth century—Disraeli had the subtlety to weld the fragments of conservative political instinct into a robust party, and Newman had the wisdom to arm the Christian mind against the conquering host of utilitarians and materialists.

Discussion and private judgment, rather than the physical sufferings which Marx predicted, have provided the stimulus to incessant experiment and alteration throughout the past century and a half. Marxism has been embraced by many not because they suffer, but because it is a new field for protest and private judgment. Is the voracity of discussion indeed as insatiable as the appetite of the grave? If it is, then are permanence and continuity impossible for modern society? Three checks upon the empire of unbridled discussion seem possible: the deliberate revival of the concept of traditional wisdom, the growth of public boredom with talk and with change itself, and the coming of

catastrophes which teach men to distrust their own opinions. The latter two contingencies appear to be impending in our generation; but either of them is a merciless disciplinarian; and the conservative who hopes to spare society an age of misery needs must endeavor to resuscitate that political faith which is not mere personal interest, that wisdom beyond physical "facts" which supplants doubt by assent—the system of Disraeli and the creed of Newman.

THE INDIAN FEATHER

By THOMAS MABRY

"YOU may as well go on and go," his father said, sitting up a little and shoving another pillow behind him. "I'm not all that sick."

At the other end of the room his mother was pulling down the ivory-colored shades one by one. She looked at him over her shoulder and her eyes said he is very sick indeed and if you had any consideration for me you would not be going off somewhere.

"It's just for the afternoon," he said quickly, turning his face away from the tall windows that were closed against the spring sunshine. In the dimmed room his father's bed had resumed its consequential air. An extra quilt lay folded over the sturdy foot and the carvings of the high headboard twisted and turned in fixed and sculptured ambiguity.

His mother came back and stood beside the bed and her fingers smoothed a pillow's white monogram.

He watched her small hand finally come to rest on his father's arm. Then he said, "But I'll be glad to stay if you want me to . . . if there's anything you want me to do for you down at the factory."

His father smiled. "No sense in your sitting around down there on a sunny Saturday afternoon," he said, "without a blame thing to do."

The room's even light warmed, burgeoned to yellow and paused. It glowed intensely for a moment and sank back suddenly to grey again, and he felt the whole outside rush of shadow against the drawn shades. ". . . Besides," his father was saying, "Kirk is more likely to stay sober if he's with you.