

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

LOSS AND GAIN:
THE STORY
OF A CONVERT

With an Introduction and
Contemporary Criticism

Edited by TREVOR LIPSCOMBE

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Tradition is the extension of Democracy through time; it is the proxy of the dead and the enfranchisement of the unborn.

Tradition may be defined as the extension of the franchise. Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead. Tradition refuses to submit to the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who merely happen to be walking about. All democrats object to men being disqualified by the accident of birth; tradition objects to their being disqualified by the accident of death. Democracy tells us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our groom; tradition asks us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our father. I, at any rate, cannot separate the two ideas of democracy and tradition.

—G. K. Chesterton

Ignatius Critical Editions—Tradition-Oriented Criticism
for a new generation

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INTRODUCTION

Trevor Lipscombe

John Henry Newman possessed one of the finest minds England has ever produced. His keen intellect—made plain by his sermons, pamphlets, and books—dominated the religious landscape of Victorian England. His character, too, was without reproach. His conversion to Catholicism shocked many of his fellow Britons, but the *Times* of London took consolation in the fact that “[a]s a nation and a race we now boast to have contributed to Rome one of her greatest minds and one of her best men.”¹ In a very real sense, the Church of England became what Newman imagined it could be. In its turn, the Catholic Church, through its Second Vatican Council, embodied many of Newman’s arguments in favor of greater involvement of the laity in the life of the Church.

Newman was an Oxford student, became a fellow of Oriel College, and went on to become the vicar of the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin in Oxford. It was in Oxford, then, that Newman was trained and where his reading brought him ever closer to the Catholic Church. It is in Oxford that *Loss and Gain: The Story of a Convert* is set, a novel that is rich in history and theology. To appreciate the story fully, some understanding of the university’s long interaction with religion and the Crown is of benefit.

At the heart of the city of Oxford, where the High Street runs into St. Giles, stands the Martyrs’ Memorial. Overlooked by the hordes of camera-wielding tourists, the obelisk marks one of the most brutal events in Oxford’s long history: the burning, in October 1555, of the Anglican bishops of

¹*Times* (August 12, 1890).

Worcester and London, Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley. Contemporary accounts report Latimer encouraging his companion with the words "Play the man, Master Ridley" and assuring him, with a touch of gallows humor, that "we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." Latimer's words were prophetic. A shade over three years later, the Catholic Queen Mary lay dead and, upon the ascension of her half sister, Queen Elizabeth I, to the throne, England returned to the Protestant fold.

Bloody Mary and Good Queen Bess, as their nicknames suggest, have been favored differently by history. Certainly the early years of Elizabeth's reign were marked by a modicum of religious tolerance or, perhaps better, benign neglect. The priests imported by Mary or trained during her reign would soon die out and, with no new priests to replace them, Catholicism in England would wither. The Counter-Reformation changed this equation. The Jesuit mission to England began, where priests and brothers trained abroad came home and ministered to the Catholic faithful, playing a deadly game of hide-and-seek until, inevitably, they were captured. The best known of these daring, if quixotic, Jesuits was the Oxford scholar and convert Edmond Campion. His letter "Challenge to the Privy Council", called by his enemies "Campion's Brag", was a gauntlet thrown down that Elizabeth dare not ignore, for it spoke of a league of "all the Jesuits in the world" who would cheerfully be "racked with your torments or consumed by your prisons". After his seizure by priest hunters outside of Wantage, Campion was paraded through many of the most important towns on the way to London—which included Oxford. Bound by ropes, facing backwards on a horse, bearing the sign "Campion, the seditious Jesuit", he served as a chilling warning to the members of Oxford University what could happen to those who engage in religious dissent—just as Latimer and Ridley had done a quarter of a century earlier. Before the year was out, Campion was handed over to the butchers at Tyburn, where he was hanged, drawn, and quartered at the place where Marble

Arch now stands. Oxford, in terms of religion, was not a melting pot, but a crucible in which faith was forged.

Toward the end of Elizabeth's reign, when the country felt safer from Catholic revolt and invasion from abroad, policies changed. Those who did not attend the services of the Church of England were obliged to pay stiff fines, and the state coffers swelled when wealthy Catholics contributed to them. A "don't ask, don't tell" strategy evolved, leaving Catholics alone to pay the fines that enriched the state—at least until a new Catholic plot, real or imagined, took hold of the nation. Of these, there were many. The overall strategy, though, gave English Catholicism a particular flavor. Priests resided in the country estates of landed Catholic gentry and, in such a structured society, the Catholic gentry exercised much influence over the local church. This, combined with the difficulty of direct communication with Rome, led to an independent spirit among Catholics in England and these Old Catholics—those who endured in times of persecution and paid the fines during better times—felt alienated when the Catholic Church was formally permitted to exist once again in Britain and power and influence was ceded to the bishops.

The sea of faith remained troubled in the eighteenth century. This time, the Church of England was challenged not by external forces but from the flames of dissent within. John Wesley, his brother Charles, and George Whitfield cofounded the Holy Club while they were students at Oxford. Perturbed by the laxity, or apathy, of the Church of England, they sought to bring about a renewal of Christianity throughout the realm. Like-minded Christians gathered to hear the fiery, open-air sermons of John Wesley and sing the stirring hymns composed by Charles. They attracted crowds numbering five thousand to ten thousand. Members of this renewal movement studied the Bible together, visited the sick, brought alms to the poor, and spoke often of the Holy Spirit moving in their lives. Following this method, by which they became known as Methodists, England was evangelized. Whitfield crossed the Atlantic, as did John Wesley, and the First Great Awakening happened

in the newly formed United States. Benjamin Franklin, for one, went to hear Whitfield preach. In Britain, the movement gained great hold in the industrial north, as well as in the Principality of Wales. The Methodist movement caused uneasiness for some of the Anglican bishops; the use of lay preachers, for example, threatened the episcopal structure of the Anglican Church. Eventually, the Dissenters, as they became known, ceased to attend the services of the Church of England.

The close of the eighteenth century, just before John Henry Newman was born, presented problems to the government. The army was stretched thinly and had failed to keep some of the Colonies. Laws, though, were on the books that prevented Catholics from serving in the armed forces. The Dissenters, who no longer attended the Church of England services, fell under the same fine-paying penalties as the Catholics. And, to compound matters, there was an influx of Catholic immigrants from Ireland who labored on the canals, roads, and railroads that were integral to the success of the Industrial Revolution and key to Britain's phenomenal economic growth. The government saw the problems. In 1778, Parliament passed the Papists Act. Under its terms, Catholics who assented to take a modified Oath of Loyalty to the Crown were officially permitted to inherit land; they were allowed to serve in the army and navy and, in addition, life imprisonment for those found guilty of being Catholic priests was abolished.

Mild by modern-day standards, the Act caused uproar. John Wesley, by then in his seventies, thundered against it in *Defence of the Protestant Association*, foreseeing the "purple power of Rome advancing by hasty strides to overspread this once more happy land". Revolt followed. Lord George Gordon, the head of the Protestant Association (who eventually converted to Judaism), spoke vehemently against the new legislation. People bearing "No Popery" banners took to the streets in the last major public outcry against Catholics in England. By the time order was restored, the mob had burned Newgate Gaol to the ground, destroyed the Old Ship Tavern (where the Catholic

Vicar Apostolic of the London District of England, Bishop Richard Challoner, said Mass), 285 people died, and 21 were publicly executed for their part in the riots. Gordon himself was tried for high treason, but acquitted. These momentous events later inspired Charles Dickens to write *Barnaby Rudge: A Tale of the Riots of Eighty*, for whom the Gordon Riots serve as a backdrop, his only historical novel apart from his better known and more widely read *Tale of Two Cities*. In 1791, the Roman Catholic Relief Act was passed, which allowed Catholics openly to practice their religion, Catholic schools were permitted, and Catholics were finally admitted into the legal and medical professions.

John Henry Newman was born in London, on February 21, 1801, at a time when the religious landscape remained cloudy. He was the first of six children born to John and Jemima (née Fourdrinier).

Newman was a shy, studious boy who, apart from the Bible, also read the works of Sir Walter Scott, whose *Waverley* novels began to be published in 1814. (Newman would later describe Scott as "an instrument in the hands of God for the revival of Catholicity".) He studied at a private school in Ealing, on the western edge of London; by thirteen years of age, he was a proficient violinist. At fifteen, he had his first marked encounter with the Divine, described in his spiritual autobiography *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*. This first step on his religious journey gave him a lifelong certainty of the existence of God, and also the truth of some specific religious teachings. A year later, while Newman recuperated from an illness, a schoolmaster (Rev. Walter Mayers) introduced him, through books, to a more Evangelical and Calvinistic view of Anglicanism than Newman had been exposed to at home. It was this same year, 1816, that Newman understood God's will was for him to lead a celibate life.

Newman entered Trinity College, Oxford, on December 14, 1816. His father's bank financially collapsed in 1818 and so, had it not been for the scholarship (worth sixty pounds at that time) that Newman won, he could not have continued his

studies. With the family finances in poor shape, he felt pressured to do well in his final examinations—a career in law had been anticipated. But Newman, a sensitive young man, was emotionally strained by the pressure upon him. The resulting nervous breakdown caused poor performance in Oxford's Examination Schools. Rather than the double first in mathematics and classics that had been expected, he failed the former and obtained only a fourth-class degree in the latter. Undaunted, Newman studied for a fellowship by examination at Oriel College, which he won. He was elected fellow on April 12, 1822. News of his success was brought to him by the Oriel provost's butler, who found Newman at his lodgings in Broad Street, playing the violin.

Newman had decided not to study for the bar, but to follow a career in the church. He was ordained a priest in the Church of England, the ceremony being carried out at Christ Church on Trinity Sunday, May 19, 1825. Soon after, Newman became a curate in the parish church of St. Clement's in Oxford. The parochial work attendant on such a position was probably a draining experience for someone so reserved, especially given his nervous disposition. Newman still found time to write scholarly articles and, starting in 1826, to serve not only as a fellow but as a tutor at Oriel. As tutor, he would meet with a small group of students to discuss essays they had written, the books they had read, and to stimulate their intellectual development. Newman, though, regarded the post as primarily religious in nature, something closely akin to what nowadays we might call spiritual direction. It was, he believed, a fundamentally important relationship.

On February 2, 1828, Newman became the vicar of St. Mary's, the university church. Churchgoers packed the pews to listen to his "piercing yet tender" voice. His sermons at St. Mary's would eventually be published, in six volumes, indicating his widespread popularity and the influence he had. His faith continued to develop, and his connections to the Low Church and Nonconformists weakened. He resigned from membership of a Low Church group, the Bible Society, and was

dismissed from another, the Church Mission Society. To compound matters, he resigned as an Oriel tutor, for the new principal of the college did not view tutorials in the same religious light as Newman did. And, significantly, Newman began to read deeply into the writings of the early Church Fathers, as had Saint Edmund Campion before him, which was soon to have a profound consequence for Newman and for the Church of England.

On July 14, 1833, Newman's friend John Keble, irate at the government's proposal to slash the number of Irish Anglican bishops by ten, preached the sermon "National Apostasy" at St. Mary's. Newman was inspired and began to pen *Tracts for the Times*. These pamphlets would blossom into the Oxford Movement, and the Tractarians, as they became known, were the talk of the day. As the *Times* reported, "whenever Newman's pen took its turn all were roused from their tranquillity or their slumber."² For Newman had now left the low end of the Church of England and claimed for it a higher course. He began to view Anglicanism as one of the three branches of the Christian Church—the Catholic and Orthodox Churches forming the other two. He sought, both in the tracts and in his preaching, to find some basis for authority in the teachings of the Church of England. One example suffices: for Newman and the other Tractarians, the notion of apostolic succession was key. If the Church of England was truly a third branch of the church founded by Christ, then bishops of the Anglican Church should be able to trace their ordinations back to the first apostles. The vast majority of English bishops had willingly complied with Henry VIII's edicts—the lone dissenter was John Fisher, the bishop of Rochester, who was soon to wear the martyr's crown. For Newman, apostolic succession was a vital point on which authority in the Church of England rested.

Newman's readings of the early Church Fathers took him further toward Catholicism. The final tract that he wrote, *Remarks on Certain Passages in the Thirty-Nine Articles*, caused

²*Times* (August 12, 1890).

a firestorm. This Tract 90, published in 1841, explored the Thirty-Nine Articles, the statement of beliefs to which all Anglicans are to assent, and argued that these do not contradict Catholic theology. The intent was to convince readers that the Church of England was Catholic, rather than Protestant, in nature. The Oxford authorities would not tolerate this, and the university proctors censured the *Tracts*. Richard Bagot, the bishop of Oxford who famously supported the Act of Catholic Emancipation, asked the Tractarians to cease and desist publication, which they did.

Newman promptly moved to Littlemore, a small village on the outskirts of Oxford, about two and a half miles from the university. Ironically, it was Newman who had provided the impetus for the parish church to be built there in 1836, for Littlemore formed a distant part of the parish of St. Mary's. For two years he lived there austere with a few followers, including his lifelong friend Ambrose St. John. Newman published an article, "Retraction of Anti-Catholic Statements", albeit anonymously, under the title "Oxford and Rome", which was printed in the January 28, 1843, issue of *Conservative Journal* wherein he retracted anything he had written that was contrary to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. The intent was clear; in London on October 7, 1845, the *Times* reported rumors that Newman would soon leave the Church of England and declaimed that "a mind so highly gifted should be driven by its own energy to shiver on the verge of Popery is most lamentable."

Two days after the *Times* ran its article—on Thursday, October 9, 1845—John Henry Newman completed his religious journey and was received into the Catholic Church by the Passionist priest (now Blessed) Dominic Barberi. A number of Newman's Littlemore associates also became Catholics. Ambrose St. John had been received into the Church ahead of Newman on October 2; other acquaintances, such as Frederick Faber (who wrote the well-known hymns *Faith of our Fathers* and *There is a Wideness in God's Mercy*) followed in a few weeks. The *Times* regretted the loss of Newman,

reporting on October 14 that this "is not a time when we can afford to lose the piety, the learning, and the zeal by which Mr. Newman has been so eminently distinguished." Newman's sister Jemima had been forewarned by her brother of his impending conversion: "What can be worse than this? It is like hearing that some dear friend must die."³ Later that October, Newman travelled to Oscott College, where he was confirmed on November 1 by Nicholas (eventually Cardinal) Wiseman. Newman stayed at Oscott from February 1846 until October 1846, when he left for Rome to study for the priesthood. He was ordained on May 30, 1847, by Cardinal Giacomo Filippo Fransoni, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. He returned to England at the end of 1847, the national furor over his very public conversion having not yet subsided. The natural question, given Newman's powerful prose, was what would he write first? Few suspected it would be a novel.

But why would one of England's foremost preachers and most energetic pamphleteers begin his life as a Catholic by writing a novel?⁴ A partial answer is provided by the advertisement (what we might better call a preface) to the sixth edition of *Loss and Gain*, in which Newman reports that while staying at the Church of Santa Croce in Rome—a church famous for housing the *Titulus Crucis* (the inscription above the Cross referred to by the Gospel writers, proclaiming Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews)—he received a "[t]ale directed against the Oxford converts to the Catholic faith." Charlotte Crawford persuasively identified this as *From Oxford to Rome: And How It Fared with Some Who Lately Made the Journey*, a novel. Published anonymously, it was written by Elizabeth Furlong Shipton Harris, and its advertisement is dated Christmas Day 1846 (a second edition was published the following April). Under the influence of the Oxford Movement, Harris had swum

³ *The Letters and Correspondence of John Henry Newman during his Life in the English Church*, ed. Anne Mozley (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1891).

⁴ He would write another, *Callista*, a historical novel based in early Christian Rome, in 1855.

the Tiber and, now a Catholic, regretted her conversion. Her novel dissuaded and discouraged others from following her path. It tells of Eustace, a young Oxford student who becomes an Anglican priest but who later together with his sister Augusta, becomes Catholic. It ends with Eustace's death as a monk, with the implication that his individual intellect and will has been crushed under the authority of Rome ("the Roman Church commands the utter unreasoning submission of a soul denuded of its power"). Harris' novel deals sharply with Newman's Tract 90; castigates the six-volume *Lives of the English Saints*, produced by Newman's group at Littlemore; and—in a postscript—treats Newman's works harshly.

It is difficult to engage critically with a novel; the best strategy might be to reply in the form of a novel, and this is what Newman undertook—producing a story that is better written and far more even-handed than that of Harris. If this was indeed the motivating force for Newman, *Loss and Gain* must have been completed swiftly. He stayed at Santa Croce for only a few months, returning to England as 1847 waned, yet *Loss and Gain* appeared early in the new year. The advertisement to the first edition was dated February 21, 1848—Newman's forty-seventh birthday.

Another action spurred Newman. James Burns had been the publisher of many of the *Tracts for the Times*. He followed Newman's lead and was received into the Church in 1847, whereupon Burns felt it best to forgo publishing any Anglican or Anglo-Catholic material. In his letter published in the November 1898 issue of the *Irish Monthly*, Redemptorist priest Father Thomas Edward Bridgett claims that Burns was in financial difficulty, and that Newman wrote *Loss and Gain* to help Burns' new publishing efforts. In a footnote to his biography of Bridgett, fellow Redemptorist Father Cyril Ryder states he heard the same account from Ambrose St. John, Newman's close friend, fellow convert, priest, and Oratorian.

In the first issue of the *Rambler*, in January 1848, Burns announced that he had purchased new lithographic, copperplate, and woodcut presses and that he could undertake work

"from the commonest to the finest in these departments". In the March 15 issue of the same magazine—founded by and for lay Catholics—he proclaimed, "On Tuesday next will appear 'Loss and Gain: The Story of a Convert'." The book was published in a foolscap octavo format (approximately 6.75 × 4.25 inches), was clothbound, and was available at the price of six shillings, which, in today's currency, is about £25 (or \$40).

Loss and Gain was immediately controversial and, from a publisher's perspective, hugely successful. (Newman described the novel, in *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, as one of only three controversial things he had written.) The book was reprinted within its first year of publication and went through thirteen printings by 1881. In 1849, the story was serialized in the *Bengal Catholic Register*, a periodical based in Calcutta, India, and an American edition, published by Patrick Donahue in Boston, appeared in 1850. *Loss and Gain* would be translated into Italian (1857), French (1859), and German (1861), and a Dutch edition was published at Leiden in 1882.

Burns must have been pleased with the success, for his publishing company thrived, eventually becoming Burns and Oates (William Wilfred Oates also being a convert), currently an imprint of Continuum Publishing. Appropriately, Burns and Oates published Dennis Gwynn's standard biography of Dominic Barberi, who received Newman into the Church.

Reviews of the newly published novel were predictable, lining up on either side of the theological divide. The *English Review* claimed it was "at once odious and insolent", marked by a "marvelous flippancy of tone and painfully irreverential and unloving spirit". A dark purpose was hinted, for it was "calculated to work extensive injury among young men at our universities" and, in short, was "a most wicked book".⁵ While the *English Review* did not like the novel, its reviewer stopped short of personal remarks, unlike *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, which observed that "a tale of this kind—a book of jokes and gossip, of eating and drinking, of smartnesses,

⁵ *English Review* 10, no. 19 (September 1848): 54.

levities, and most probably personalities—appears a somewhat undignified vehicle for the opinions of one who has long been revered as a prophet and a saint.”⁶ In a similar vein, the *Ecclesiologist* proclaimed that “it is very sad that such a caricature of facts should come from such a man, and be decked out as if it were an argument.”⁷

Newman was not without supporters, however. The *Rambler*, after stating clearly that it was no lover of ecclesiastical controversy, thought *Loss and Gain* was “one of the most entertaining, touching, instructive, and profound books we have ever met with.”⁸ American essayist Orestes Brownson, who had been received into the Church only four years earlier, said in his *Review* that it “should be studied by all who would contribute something to our growing English Catholic literature, for it commends itself alike to good taste, sound judgment, and Catholic sentiment.”⁹

The book’s merit lies somewhere between the extremes of reviews. An American periodical, the *Metropolitan*, was more measured and edged closer to the truth. “It is not only a biting satire on Protestantism,” but “also and much more a delineation . . . of the sweetness, the beauty, the enrapturing attraction that the Catholic Church possesses.”¹⁰

There was stiff competition in terms of novels in 1848, which perhaps makes *Loss and Gain*’s success all the more surprising and indicative of the vital role of religion in Victorian society. The Brontë sisters were at their creative peak. The previous year had seen the publication of Emily’s *Wuthering Heights*, and Charlotte’s *Jane Eyre*, while 1848 saw the first publication of Anne’s *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Meanwhile, Dickens’ somber *Dombey and Son* and Thackeray’s scandalous *Vanity Fair* were also published in this same year.

⁶ *Fraser’s Magazine for Town and Country* (August 1848): 163.

⁷ *Ecclesiologist* 8 (August 1848): 388.

⁸ *Rambler* (March 11, 1848): 216.

⁹ Orestes Brownson, *Review* (October 1854): 526, in response to the American edition published in Boston by Donahue in 1854.

¹⁰ *Metropolitan* 2, no. 10 (November 1854): 625.

Loss and Gain is uncomplicated when compared to the involved plots and social messages of these contemporary novels. Kathleen Tillotson declares *Loss and Gain* to be one of several works of religious fiction published in the 1840s that introduced self-analysis into the English novel.¹¹ This is unjust: Newman’s book is the first Oxford or, more generally, campus novel. It also ranks as one of the early great Catholic novels. It has some similarities with a far better known novel, Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited*. This, too, begins at Oxford and ends with a conversion to the Catholic faith. Both are, in a certain sense, coming-of-age novels. Newman’s Charles Reding goes to Oxford and is drawn, slowly but surely, toward Catholicism. Waugh’s Charles Ryder, as an Oxford undergraduate, falls rapidly under the influence of Lord Sebastian Flyte and, through his family, comes to see firsthand the Catholic Church that he will eventually join.

Newman cautions, in the advertisement, that *Loss and Gain* is a novel, and that he has no particular identifications in mind. In *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, his spiritual autobiography, he reminds readers again that the characters in *Loss and Gain* are fictional; as the fine print of movies insists, any resemblance to people living or deceased is purely coincidental. That said, Charles Reding has much in common with the young Newman, which helps explain the swiftness with which the novel was written.

What comes across clearly when reading *Loss and Gain* is Newman’s erudition and wide reading. He quotes many a Latin author (Ovid and Virgil to name but two). That the Latin differs slightly from those of standard editions of these classic works suggests that Newman was quoting from memory—an impressive feat. But he also alludes to popular works, such as the novels of his contemporary Maria Edgeworth, the Anglo-Irish author who can lay claim to have written the first historical novel, *Castle Rackrent*.

Newman also displays a lighter side. For, having patiently explained diverse aspects of Anglican beliefs throughout the novel, he is playful at its close. Reding is in London and news

¹¹ Kathleen Tillotson, *Novels of the Eighteen Forties* (Clarendon: Oxford, 1954).

of his impending conversion has been printed in the newspapers; at such a tense moment in his life, he is beset by members of various fringe religious groups trying to convert him, captured by Newman in a way that deliciously combines satire with farce. The reader is left laughing as Charles may not be able to convert, not because of a new crisis of faith or because of a successful last-gasp attempt to dissuade him, but simply because he will never be able to make it out of his room.

Throughout *Loss and Gain* Newman, through Charles Reding and his circle, presents summaries of various positions set forth by Anglicans of his day. Freeborn, as his name suggests, is an Evangelical, and represents the early religious views of Newman. Bateman is a High Church Anglican, perhaps a representative of the Oxford Movement itself. Interpreting the Anglican Church as a branch of the church of Christ, Newman in his Tractarian phase saw no reason why the Anglicans could not reclaim parts of the medieval liturgy and church decoration as their own. Bateman typifies this, a man extraordinarily keen on the trappings and paraphernalia of the Catholic Church but who attempts to persuade Reding away from conversion. Bateman follows the Anglican Newman's *via media*. Reding's friend Sheffield, in contrast, flits from fad to fad but seemingly adheres to none; Newman calls him "viewy", what we might today describe as fashionable or trendy. And last we have Willis, who precedes Reding into the Catholic Church—possibly for the wrong reasons. Willis' headstrong conversion is emotional, and his initial happiness recedes to a certain sadness by the novel's end. Reding's path to Rome, on the other hand, is taken step by step, deliberately and thoughtfully, impelled toward Catholicism by his quest for the truth. Just as Newman retired to Littlemore for some time before joining the Church, so Reding, too, takes time away from Oxford before taking a step that, in Victorian times, could have cut him off from friends and family forever. The severing of such ties is the loss alluded to in the title.

And therein lies the difference between *Loss and Gain* and the novel it rebuts, *From Oxford to Rome*. As Newman's novel

ends, we see the two converts together, Willis and Reding. Willis is the seed that springs up rapidly when first planted, but withers when the sun comes out to scorch it; Reding is the seed that falls on good soil and will reap a hundredfold—as was Newman.

If Newman had anticipated that his conversion would bring him temporal peace, he would have been disappointed. In 1851, he let his pen loose on Giacinto Achilli, a former Catholic friar who had been suspended by the Church and who had come to England, where he worked for the Evangelical Alliance. Newman's attack was so strong that Achilli—described by the *Times* as a mountebank—sued for libel and won, though the damages (one hundred pounds) were relatively small compared to the court costs. Newman's supporters covered his legal expenses, though the verdict was eventually quashed on appeal. After the original verdict the *Times* had declared Newman's conviction a miscarriage of justice. The tables were turned on Newman some while later when Charles Kingsley, most famous for his novel *The Water Babies*, attacked Newman in print. The priest responded not with a lawsuit but with *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, published in 1864, a work hailed by many as a spiritual masterpiece. And in between, he composed *The Idea of a University* (1852), setting forth a blueprint for modern Catholic higher education, which would result in the formation of the University College in Dublin. A second novel, *Callista*, published in 1855, told of a young girl living in third-century North Africa under the persecutions of Christians by Emperor Decius.

On October 21, 1866, Newman received into the Church at the Birmingham Oratory the young poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, with whom he had corresponded and whom he had previously visited. At that time, Hopkins was pleased to see that Newman had a painting of Oxford, a bird's-eye view, hanging on the wall of his room. Hopkins wrote that Newman "made sure I was acting deliberately and wished to hear my arguments; when I had given them and said I cd. see no way out of them, he laughed and said 'Nor can I'".¹² The young poet

¹² Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges, September 22, 1866.

regarded the visit as “a great privilege”. Hopkins was part of a second wave of Oxford converts to the faith. The Catholic Club at the university, formed in 1878, was renamed the Oxford University Newman Society in 1888, a signal mark of honor. Hopkins—while serving as a Jesuit priest in the Oxford parish of St. Aloysius—was a founding member. Another early literary member of the Newman Society was Hilaire Belloc, one of the great writers and polemicists of the Edwardian period.

Later in life, accolades mounted. Newman was awarded the doctor of divinity degree, which gave the degree itself a modicum of respectability. He was also named an honorary fellow of Oriel (his name had been removed when he converted to Catholicism). And, in spite of the actions of Cardinal Manning (skewered by Lytton Strachey in *Eminent Victorians*), Newman was created cardinal deacon of San Georgio in Velabro by Pope Leo XIII in the consistory of May 12, 1879. Unlike most cardinals, Newman was not given charge of a diocese. His red hat was given as a mark of respect, and marks the only time in English history when that country had two cardinals. The *Times* informed its readers, “All England was delighted when Newman went to Rome, which, at his age and in his infirm health, was a service of danger, and came back with his long-due decorations.”

Newman spent his declining years at the Birmingham Oratory. He celebrated Mass for the last time on Christmas Day 1889, and his strength began to fail. He died some months later, on August 11, 1890, aged eighty-nine, of pneumonia, having received the last rites on the previous day. The inscription that he chose for his grave might well describe the spiritual journey of Charles Reding in *Loss and Gain*—*Ex Umbris et Imaginibus in Veritatem* (From shadows and images into the truth).

Newman was beatified by Pope Benedict XVI at Crofton Park in Birmingham on September 19, 2010, and the feast day of Blessed John Henry Newman is celebrated on October 9, the anniversary of the day in which he entered the Catholic Church and experienced his own loss and gain.

TEXTUAL NOTE

Novels seldom go through as many editions as Newman’s *Loss and Gain* has done. My intent is to produce a version of the novel that is readable. I have used here, as the basic text, the sixth edition, published in 1874, but have compared it throughout with the first edition published by Burns in 1848. By comparing the versions, I have removed typographical errors and misprints. I have taken the liberty of modernizing some archaic spellings (such as “shew” for “show”) and, in some instances, removed italics to improve readability. For any errors that remain, or that I have introduced, I take full responsibility.

CHRONOLOGY OF JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| February 21, 1801 | Born in London, the eldest of six children |
| December 14, 1816 | Enters Trinity College, Oxford |
| May 18, 1818 | Elected scholar of Trinity College |
| April 12, 1822 | Elected fellow of Oriel College, Oxford |
| May 19, 1825 | Ordained priest of the Church of England at Christ Church, Oxford |
| February 2, 1828 | Appointed vicar of the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford |
| July 14, 1833 | Keble preaches on "National Apostasy", which Newman thought of as the start of the Oxford Movement |
| September 9, 1833 | The first of the <i>Tracts for the Times</i> appeared |
| January 25, 1841 | Tract 90 is published |
| March 16, 1841 | Tract 90 is censured |
| January 28, 1843 | "Retraction of Anti-Catholic Statements" published anonymously under the title "Oxford and Rome" |
| October 9, 1845 | Newman received into the Catholic Church |
| May 30, 1847 | Ordained to the Catholic priesthood |

xxviii	<i>Loss and Gain: The Story of a Convert</i>
February 1848	<i>Loss and Gain</i> appears
November 5, 1851	Newman's trial for the libel of Achilli commences
January 31, 1853	The Achilli trial ends with Newman found guilty
1855	<i>Callista</i> is published
April 1864	<i>Apologia Pro Vita Sua</i> appears
May 1865	<i>The Dream of Gerontius</i> is published
March 15, 1870	<i>Grammar of Assent</i> appears
May 12, 1879	Newman receives the cardinal's hat in a consistory
December 25, 1889	Newman celebrates what would be his last Mass
August 11, 1890	Newman dies

The Text of
LOSS AND GAIN:
THE STORY
OF A CONVERT

LOSS AND GAIN: THE STORY OF A CONVERT

JOHN HENRY CARDINAL NEWMAN, OF THE ORATORY.

ADHUC MODICUM ALIQUANTULUM,
QUI VENTURUS EST, VENIET, ET NON TARDABIT.
JUSTUS AUTEM MEUS EX FIDE VIVIT.¹

¹ADHUC . . . VIVIT: See Hebrews 10:37-38: "For yet a little while, and the coming one shall come and shall not tarry; but my righteous one shall live by faith" (Revised Standard Version, Second Catholic Edition).

TO THE VERY REV. CHARLES W. RUSSELL, D.D.,
PRESIDENT OF ST. PATRICK'S COLLEGE, MAYNOOTH,
&C. &C.

MY DEAR DR. RUSSELL,—²

Now that at length I take the step of printing my name in the Title-page of this Volume, I trust I shall not be encroaching on the kindness you have so long shown to me, if I venture to follow it up by placing yours in the page which comes next, thus associating myself with you, and recommending myself to my readers by the association.

Not that I am dreaming of bringing down upon you, in whole or part, the criticisms, just or unjust, which lie against a literary attempt which has in some quarters been thought out of keeping with my antecedents and my position, but the warm and sympathetic interest which you took in Oxford matters thirty years ago, and the benefits which I derived personally from that interest, are reasons why I am desirous of prefixing your name to a Tale, which, whatever its faults, at least is a more intelligible and exact representation of the thoughts, sentiments, and aspirations, then and there prevailing, than was to be found in the anti-Catholic pamphlets, charges, sermons, reviews, and story-books of the day.

These reasons, too, must be my apology, should I seem to be asking your acceptance of a Volume, which, over and above its intrinsic defects, is, in its very subject and style, hardly commensurate with the theological reputation

²CHARLES . . . RUSSELL: Charles W. Russell was a theologian at the Maynooth Seminary in Ireland. He was offered, and declined, the bishopric of Down and the Archbishopric of Armagh. He also declined to be the first Apostolic Visitor to Sri Lanka (then Ceylon). Newman wrote that Russell "had more to do with my conversion than any one else", *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*.

and the ecclesiastical station of the person to whom it is presented.

I am, my dear Dr. Russell,

Your affectionate friend,

JOHN H. NEWMAN.

THE ORATORY, Feb. 21, 1874.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following tale is not intended as a work of controversy in behalf of the Catholic Religion, but as a description of what is understood by few, viz., the course of thought and state of mind,—or rather one such course and state,—which issues in conviction of its Divine origin.

Nor is it founded on fact, to use the common phrase. It is not the history of any individual mind among the recent converts to the Catholic Church. The principal characters are imaginary; and the writer wishes to disclaim personal allusion in any. It is with this view that he has feigned ecclesiastical bodies and places, to avoid the chance, which might otherwise occur, of unintentionally suggesting to the reader real individuals, who were far from his thoughts.

At the same time, free use has been made of sayings and doings which were characteristic of the time and place in which the scene is laid. And, moreover, when, as in a tale, a general truth or fact is exhibited in individual specimens of it, it is impossible that the ideal representation should not more or less coincide, in spite of the author's endeavour, or even without his recognition, with its existing instances or champions.

It must also be added, to prevent a further misconception, that no proper representative is intended in this tale of the religious opinions which had lately so much influence in the University of Oxford.

Feb. 21, 1848.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SIXTH EDITION.

A tale, directed against the Oxford converts to the Catholic Faith, was sent from England to the author of this Volume in the summer of 1847, when he was resident at Santa Croce in Rome. Its contents were as wantonly and preposterously fanciful, as they were injurious to those whose motives and actions it professed to represent; but a formal criticism or grave notice of it seemed to him out of place.

The suitable answer lay rather in the publication of a second tale; drawn up with a stricter regard to truth and probability, and with at least some personal knowledge of Oxford, and some perception of the various aspects of the religious phenomenon, which the work in question handled so rudely and so unskillfully.

Especially was he desirous of dissipating the fog of pomposity and solemn pretence, which its writer had thrown around the personages introduced into it, by showing, as in a specimen, that those who were smitten with love of the Catholic Church, were nevertheless as able to write common-sense prose as other men.

Under these circumstances *Loss and Gain* was given to the public.

Feb. 21, 1874.

PART I

Chapter I

Charles Reding was the only son of a clergyman, who was in possession of a valuable benefice in a midland county. His father intended him for orders and sent him at a proper age to a public school. He had long revolved in his mind the respective advantages and disadvantages of public and private education, and had decided in favour of the former. "Seclusion", he said, "is no security for virtue. There is no telling what is in a boy's heart: he may look as open and happy as usual, and be as kind and attentive, when there is a great deal wrong going on within. The heart is a secret with its Maker; no one on earth can hope to get at it or to touch it. I have a cure of souls; what do I really know of my parishioners? Nothing; their hearts are sealed books to me. And this dear boy, he comes close to me; he throws his arms round me, but his soul is as much out of my sight as if he were at the antipodes. I am not accusing him of reserve, dear fellow; his very love and reverence for me keep him in a sort of charmed solitude. I cannot expect to get at the bottom of him.

Each in his hidden sphere of bliss or woe,
Our hermit spirits dwell.¹

It is our lot here below. No one on earth can know Charles's secret thoughts. Did I guard him here at home ever so well, yet, in due time, it would be found that a serpent had crept into the heart of his innocence. Boys do not fully know what is good and what is evil; they do wrong things at first almost innocently. Novelty hides vice from them; there is no one to warn them or give them rules; and they become slaves of sin, while they are learning what sin is. They go to the university,

¹*Each in his . . . spirits dwell*: from John Keble's *The Christian Year*, "Twenty-Fourth Sunday After Trinity". Keble has "joy" rather than "bliss".

and suddenly plunge into excesses, the greater in proportion to their inexperience. And, besides all this, I am not equal to the task of forming so active and inquisitive a mind as his. He already asks questions which I know not how to answer. So he shall go to a public school. There he will get discipline at least, even if he has more of trial; at least he will gain habits of self-command, manliness, and circumspection; he will learn to use his eyes, and will find materials to use them upon; and thus will be gradually trained for the liberty which, any how, he must have when he goes to college."²

This was the more necessary, because, with many high excellences, Charles was naturally timid and retiring, over-sensitive, and, though lively and cheerful, yet not without a tinge of melancholy in his character, which sometimes degenerated into mawkishness.

To Eton,³ then, he went; and there had the good fortune to fall into the hands of an excellent tutor, who, while he instructed him in the old Church-of-England principles of Mant and Doyley,⁴ gave his mind a religious impression, which secured him against the allurements of bad company, whether at the school itself, or afterwards at Oxford. To that celebrated seat of learning he was in due time transferred, being entered at Saint Saviour's College;⁵ and he is in his sixth term from matriculation, and his fourth of residence, at the time our story opens.

At Oxford, it is needless to say he had found a great number of his schoolfellows, but, it so happened, had found very

² *self-command, manliness, and circumspection*: Robert Schwickerath, S.J., asks of this passage from Charles' father, in *Jesuit Education: Its History and Principles Viewed in the Light of Modern Educational Problems* (published in 1903), "Is not this a most pathetic confession of a great shortcoming of the Protestant system which renounces all inward government and direction of the soul?"

³ *Eton*: one of England's two best-known public schools (the other is Harrow). Situated just outside Windsor, the school was founded in 1440 by King Henry VI.

⁴ *Mant and Doyley*: Richard Mant and George Doyley were authors of a two-volume commentary on the Scriptures.

⁵ *Saint Saviour's College*: possibly Newman's counterpart of Jesus College, Oxford. Different colleges have different terms for who heads them. Both Saint Saviour's College and Jesus College have a principal.

few friends among them. Some were too gay for him, and he had avoided them; others, with whom he had been intimate at Eton, having high connections, had fairly cut him on coming into residence, or, being entered at other colleges, had lost sight of him. Almost everything depends at Oxford, in the matter of acquaintance, on proximity of rooms. You choose your friend, not so much by your tastes, as by your staircase. There is a story of a London tradesman who lost custom after beautifying his premises, because his entrance went up a step; and we all know how great is the difference between open and shut doors when we walk along a street of shops. In a university a youth's hours are portioned out to him. A regular man gets up and goes to chapel, breakfasts, gets up his lectures, goes to lecture, walks, dines; there is little to induce him to mount any staircase but his own; and if he does so, ten to one he finds the friend from home whom he is seeking; not to say that freshmen, who naturally have common feelings and interests, as naturally are allotted a staircase in common. And thus it was that Charles Reding was brought across William Sheffield, who had come into residence the same term as himself.

The minds of young people are pliable and elastic, and easily accommodate themselves to any one they fall in with. They find grounds of attraction both where they agree with one another and where they differ; what is congenial to themselves creates sympathy; what is correlative, or supplemental, creates admiration and esteem. And what is thus begun is often continued in after-life by the force of habit and the claims of memory. Thus, in the choice of friends, chance often does for us as much as the most careful selection could have effected. What was the character and degree of that friendship which sprang up between the freshmen Reding and Sheffield, we need not here minutely explain; it will be enough to say, that what they had in common was freshmanship, good talents, and the back staircase; and that they differed in this—that Sheffield had lived a good deal with people older than himself, had read much in a desultory way, and easily picked up opinions and

facts, especially on controversies of the day, without laying anything very much to heart; that he was ready, clear-sighted, unembarrassed, and somewhat forward; Charles, on the other hand, had little knowledge as yet of principles or their bearings, but understood more deeply than Sheffield, and held more practically, what he had once received; he was gentle and affectionate, and easily led by others, except when duty clearly interfered. It should be added, that he had fallen in with various religious denominations in his father's parish, and had a general, though not a systematic, knowledge of their tenets. What they were besides will be seen as our narrative advances.

Chapter II

It was a little past one P.M. when Sheffield, passing Charles's door, saw it open. The college servant had just entered with the usual half-commons for luncheon, and was employed in making up the fire. Sheffield followed him in, and found Charles in his cap and gown, lounging on the arm of his easy-chair, and eating his bread and cheese. Sheffield asked him if he slept, as well as ate and drank, "accounted as he was".¹

"I am just going for a turn into the meadow", said Charles; "This is to me the best time of the year: *nunc formosissimus annus*;² everything is beautiful; the laburnums are out, and the may. There is a greater variety of trees there than in any other place I know hereabouts; and the planes are so touching just now, with their small multitudinous green hands half-opened; and there are two or three such fine dark willows stretching over the Cherwell;³ I think some dryad inhabits them: and, as you wind along, just over your right shoulder is the Long Walk, with the Oxford buildings seen between the elms. They say there are dons here who recollect when the foliage was unbroken, nay, when you might walk under it in hard rain, and get no wet. I know I got drenched there the other day."

Sheffield laughed, and said that Charles must put on his beaver,⁴ and walk with him a different way. He wanted a good walk; his head was stupid from his lectures; that old Jennings prosed so awfully upon Paley, it made him quite ill. He had talked of the Apostles as neither "deceivers nor deceived", of

¹ *accounted as he was*: Cf. Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act I, scene I.

² *nunc formosissimus annus*: "Now the most finely formed year"; from Virgil, *Eclogues* 3.57.

³ *Cherwell*: The Cherwell (with the Isis or Thames) is one of the two rivers that flow through Oxford.

⁴ *put on his beaver*: i.e., a coat of beaver fur. Students were supposed to wear gowns at all times when out in public.

their "sensible miracles", and of their "dying for their testimony", till he did not know whether he himself was an *ens physiologicum* or a *totum metaphysicum*,⁵ when Jennings had cruelly asked him to repeat Paley's argument;⁶ and because he had not given it in Jennings's words, friend Jennings had pursed up his lips, and gone through the whole again; so intent, in his wooden enthusiasm, on his own analysis of it, that he did not hear the clock strike the hour; and, in spite of the men's shuffling their feet, blowing their noses, and looking at their watches, on he had gone for a good twenty minutes past the time; and would have been going on even then, he verily believed, but for an interposition only equalled by that of the geese at the Capitol.⁷ For that, when he had got about half through his recapitulation, and was stopping at the end of a sentence to see the impression he was making, that uncouth fellow, Lively, moved by what happy inspiration he did not know, suddenly broke in, apropos of nothing, nodding his head, and speaking in a clear cackle, with, "Pray, sir, what is your opinion of the infallibility of the Pope?" Upon which every one but Jennings did laugh out; but he, *au contraire*, began to look very black; and no one can tell what would have happened, had he not cast his eyes by accident on his watch, on which he coloured, closed his book, and *instanter* sent the whole lecture out of the room.

Charles laughed in his turn, but added, "Yet, I assure you, Sheffield, that Jennings, stiff and cold as he seems, is, I do believe, a very good fellow at bottom. He has before now spoken to me with a good deal of feeling, and has gone out of his way to do me favours. I see poor bodies coming to him for

⁵ *ens physiologicum* or a *totum metaphysicum*: loosely, a physical being or something entirely metaphysical.

⁶ *Paley's argument*: William Paley (1743-1805) was famous for his book *Natural Philosophy*. His works also include *Moral Philosophy* and *Evidences of Christianity*, which formed part of university studies at Cambridge (both were read by Charles Darwin).

⁷ *geese at the Capitol*: When the Gauls approached Rome, they moved so silently that no one heard them. But then they disturbed the Sacred Geese of the Capitol, who made noise sufficient to rouse the Roman defenses.

charity continually; and they say that his sermons at Holy Cross are excellent."

Sheffield said he liked people to be natural, and hated that donnish manner. What good could it do? and what did it mean?

"That is what I call bigotry", answered Charles; "I am for taking every one for what he is, and not for what he is not: one has this excellence, another that; no one is everything. Why should we not drop what we don't like, and admire what we like? This is the only way of getting through life, the only true wisdom, and surely our duty into the bargain."

Sheffield thought this regular prose, and unreal. "We must", he said, "have a standard of things, else one good thing is as good as another. But I can't stand here all day", he continued, "when we ought to be walking." And he took off Charles's cap, and, placing his hat on him instead, said, "Come, let us be going."

"Then must I give up my meadow?" said Charles.

"Of course you must", answered Sheffield; "you must take a beaver walk. I want you to go as far as Oxley, a village some little way out, all the vicars of which, sooner or later, are made bishops. Perhaps even walking there may do us some good."

The friends set out, from hat to boot in the most approved Oxford bandbox-cut of trimness and prettiness. Sheffield was turning into the High Street, when Reding stopped him: "It always annoys me", he said, "to go down High Street in a beaver; one is sure to meet a proctor."

"All those University dresses are great fudge", answered Sheffield; "how are we the better for them? They are mere outside, and nothing else. Besides, our gown is so hideously ugly."

"Well, I don't go along with your sweeping condemnation", answered Charles; "this is a great place, and should have a dress. I declare, when I first saw the procession of Heads at Saint Mary's, it was quite moving. First——"

"Of course the pokers",⁸ interrupted Sheffield.

⁸ *the pokers*: Oxford slang for the four university bedels, who carry long thin maces in processions.

"First the organ, and every one rising; then the Vice-Chancellor⁹ in red, and his bow to the preacher, who turns to the pulpit; then all the Heads in order; and lastly the Proctors. Meanwhile, you see the head of the preacher slowly mounting up the steps; when he gets in, he shuts-to the door, looks at the organ-loft to catch the psalm, and the voices strike up."

Sheffield laughed, and then said, "Well, I confess I agree with you in your instance. The preacher is, or is supposed to be, a person of talent; he is about to hold forth; the divines, the students of a great University, are all there to listen. The pageant does but fitly represent the great moral fact which is before us; I understand *this*. I don't call *this* fudge; what I mean by fudge is, outside without inside. Now I must say, the sermon itself, and not the least of all the prayer before it—what do they call it?"

"The bidding prayer", said Reding.

"Well, both sermon and prayer are often arrant fudge. I don't often go to University sermons, but I have gone often enough not to go again without compulsion. The last preacher I heard was from the country. Oh, it was wonderful! He began at the pitch of his voice, 'Ye shall pray'. What stuff! 'Ye shall *pray*'; because old Latimer¹⁰ or Jewell¹¹ said, 'Ye shall *praie*', therefore we must not say, 'Let us pray'. Presently he brought out", continued Sheffield, assuming a pompous and up-and-down tone, "especially for that pure and apostolic branch of it

⁹*Vice-Chancellor*: The chancellor is nominally head of the university, but is essentially an honorary appointment. The vice-chancellor is responsible for the day-to-day running of the university.

¹⁰*Latimer*: Hugh Latimer, Archbishop of Worcester, was born in 1485 and was burned at the stake for heresy in 1555 during the reign of Queen Mary. A memorial of the so-called Oxford martyrs Latimer, (Thomas) Cranmer, and (Nicholas) Ridley stands at Carfax, the central point of Oxford University.

¹¹*Jewell*: John Jewell or Jewel (1522–1571) was an early supporter of the Protestant church. He fled England when Queen Mary ascended to the throne and returned when her half sister, the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, became monarch. She appointed him Bishop of Salisbury. His 1562 work *Apology for the Church of England* was an attempt to rebut some of the arguments of Roman Catholics. His near-contemporary Anglican churchman Richard Hooker claimed that Jewell was the "worthiest divine that Christendom hath bred for some hundreds of years".

established'—here the man rose on his toes—'*established* in these dominions'. Next came, 'for our Sovereign Lady Victoria, Queen, Defender of the Faith, in all causes and over all persons, ecclesiastical as well as civil, within these her dominions, *supreme*,'—an awful pause, with an audible fall of the sermon-case on the cushion, as though nature did not contain, as if the human mind could not sustain, a bigger thought. Then followed, 'the pious and munificent founder', in the same twang, 'of All Saints' and Leicester Colleges.'¹² But his *chef-d'oeuvre* was his emphatic recognition of '*all the doctors, both the proctors*', as if the numerical antithesis had a graphic power, and threw those excellent personages into a charming *tableau vivant*."

Charles was amused at all this; but he said in answer, that he never heard a sermon but it was his own fault if he did not gain good from it; and he quoted the words of his father, who, when he one day asked him if so-and-so had not preached a very good sermon, "My dear Charles," his father had said, "all sermons are good." The words, simple as they were, had retained a hold on his memory.

Meanwhile they had proceeded down the forbidden High Street, and were crossing the bridge, when, on the opposite side, they saw before them a tall, upright man, whom Sheffield had no difficulty in recognizing as a bachelor of Nun's Hall, and a bore at least of the second magnitude. He was in cap and gown, but went on his way, as if intending, in that extraordinary guise, to take a country walk. He took the path which they were going themselves, and they tried to keep behind him; but they walked too briskly, and he too leisurely, to allow of that. It is very difficult duly to delineate a bore in a narrative, for the very reason that he is a bore. A tale must aim at condensation, but a bore acts in solution. It is only on the long-run that he is ascertained. Then, indeed, he is *felt*;

¹²*All Saints' and Leicester Colleges*: These are fictitious colleges, but Oxford has All Souls and Hertford, which are next to each other geographically. The feast of All Souls follows that of All Saints in the Roman Catholic calendar, while both Leicester and Hertford are county towns.

he is oppressive; like the sirocco, which the native detects at once, while a foreigner is often at fault. *Tenet occiditque*.¹³ Did you hear him make but one speech, perhaps you would say he was a pleasant, well-informed man; but when he never comes to an end, or has one and the same prose every time you meet him, or keeps you standing till you are fit to sink, or holds you fast when you wish to keep an engagement, or hinders you listening to important conversation—then there is no mistake, the truth bursts on you, *apparent dirae facies*,¹⁴ you are in the clutches of a bore. You may yield, or you may flee; you cannot conquer. Hence it is clear that a bore cannot be represented in a story, or the story would be the bore as much as he. The reader, then, must believe this upright Mr. Bateman to be what otherwise he might not discover, and thank us for our consideration in not proving as well as asserting it.

Sheffield bowed to him courteously, and would have proceeded on his way; but Bateman, as became his nature, would not suffer it; he seized him. "Are you disposed", he said, "to look into the pretty chapel we are restoring on the common? It is quite a gem—in the purest style of the fourteenth century. It was in a most filthy condition, a mere cow-house; but we have made a subscription, and set it to rights."

"We are bound for Oxley", Sheffield answered; "you would be taking us out of our way."

"Not a bit of it", said Bateman; "it's not a stone's throw from the road; you must not refuse me. I'm sure you'll like it."

He proceeded to give the history of the chapel—all it had been, all it might have been, all it was not, all it was to be.

"It is to be a real specimen of a Catholic chapel", he said; "we mean to make the attempt of getting the Bishop to dedicate it to the Royal Martyr¹⁵—why should not we have our

¹³ *Tenet occiditque*: from Horace, *Ars Poetica*. This is part of the penultimate line, which may be loosely translated as "whomever he seizes, he holds on to and kills him by reciting".

¹⁴ *apparent dirae facies*: "fearful shapes appear"; from Virgil, *Aeneid* 2.622.

¹⁵ *Royal Martyr*: a reference to Charles I, who made his headquarters at Oxford during the English Civil War. From 1662 to 1859, the *Anglican Book of Common*

Saint Charles as well as the Romanists?—and it will be quite sweet to hear the vesper-bell tolling over the sullen moor every evening, in all weathers, and amid all the changes and chances of this mortal life."

Sheffield asked what congregation they expected to collect at that hour.

"That's a low view", answered Bateman; "it does not signify at all. In real Catholic churches the number of the congregation is nothing to the purpose; service is for those who come, not for those who stay away."

"Well", said Sheffield, "I understand what that means when a Roman Catholic says it; for a priest is supposed to offer sacrifice, which he can do without a congregation as well as with one. And, again, Catholic chapels often stand over the bodies of martyrs, or on some place of miracle, as a record; but our service is 'Common Prayer', and how can you have that without a congregation?"

Bateman replied that even if members of the University did not drop in, which he expected, at least the bell would be a memento far and near.

"Ah, I see," retorted Sheffield, "the use will be the reverse of what you said just now; it is not for those that come, but for those who stay away. The congregation is outside, not inside; it's an outside concern. I once saw a tall church-tower—so it appeared from the road; but on the sides you saw it was but a thin wall, made to look like a tower, in order to give the church an imposing effect. Do run up such a bit of a wall, and put the bell in it."¹⁶

"There's another reason", answered Bateman, "for restoring the chapel, quite independent of the service. It has been a chapel from time immemorial, and was consecrated by our Catholic forefathers."

Prayer listed January 30, the anniversary of his execution, as the feast of Blessed Charles the Martyr.

¹⁶ *Ah, I see . . . bell in it*: Not for the last time, Sheffield mocks Bateman.

Sheffield argued that this would be as good a reason for keeping up the Mass as for keeping up the chapel.

"We do keep up the Mass", said Bateman; "we offer our Mass every Sunday, according to the rite of the English Cyprian,¹⁷ as honest Peter Heylin¹⁸ calls him; what would you have more?"

Whether Sheffield understood this or no, at least it was beyond Charles. Was the Common Prayer the English Mass, or the Communion-service, or the Litany, or the sermon, or any part of these? Or were Bateman's words really a confession that there were clergymen who actually said the Popish Mass once a week? Bateman's precise meaning, however, is lost to posterity; for they had by this time arrived at the door of the chapel. It had once been the chapel of an almshouse; a small farm-house stood near; but, for population, it was plain no "church accommodation was wanted". Before entering, Charles hung back, and whispered to his friend that he did not know Bateman. An introduction, in consequence, took place. "Reding of Saint Saviour's—Bateman of Nun's Hall"; after which ceremony, in place of holy water, they managed to enter the chapel in company.

It was as pretty a building as Bateman had led them to expect, and very prettily done up. There was a stone altar in the best style, a credence table,¹⁹ a piscina,²⁰ what looked like a tabernacle, and a couple of handsome brass candlesticks. Charles asked the use of the piscina—he did not know its name—and was told that there was always a piscina in the old churches in England, and that there could be no proper restoration without it. Next he asked the meaning of the beautifully wrought

¹⁷ *English Cyprian*: Archbishop William Laud (1573–1645). A student and later president of St. John's College, Oxford, Laud rose to become chancellor of the university and the Archbishop of Canterbury. He was accused of treason by the Long Parliament of 1640, was found guilty, and beheaded. His feast day in the Church of England is January 10.

¹⁸ *Peter Heylin*: Peter Heylin (1599–1662) wrote extensively on religious matters, though his best-known work is *Cosmography*, a study of the known world. He was a graduate and later a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford.

¹⁹ *credence table*: a small side table used during the liturgy.

²⁰ *piscina*: a basin for washing the Communion vessels.

closet or recess above the altar; and received for answer that "our sister churches of the Roman obedience always had a tabernacle for reserving the consecrated bread". Here Charles was brought to a stand: on which Sheffield asked the use of the niches; and was told by Bateman that images of saints were forbidden by the canon, but that his friends, in all these matters, did what they could. Lastly, he asked the meaning of the candlesticks; and was told that, Catholicly minded as their Bishop was, they had some fear lest he would object to altar lights in service—at least at first; but it was plain that the *use* of the candlesticks was to hold candles. Having had their fill of gazing and admiring, they turned to proceed on their walk, but could not get off an invitation to breakfast, in a few days, at Bateman's lodgings in the Turl.