

The Comrade

Gerald Mallet, '44

The little tin soldier stands faithful there
As he has stood for many years,
His once shiny suit is now worn bare
And cobwebs swing from his ears.

His tiny face seems to be strangely sad
And his eyes reflect no glow,
But still, still he waits for that little lad
Who played with him long ago.

What has become of that little boy
With the wild and tumbling hair
Waiting alone is the soldier toy
But the little lad's gone somewhere.



Newman's Idea of a University

Frank O'Connor, '41

(All quotations in this essay are from *The Idea of a University*; Longman's, Green, and Co., 1905.)

When the Irish bishops rejected the state universities in 1847, on the ground that they were godless institutions, they were confronted with the task of establishing a Catholic university. The idea was strongly opposed not only by anti-Catholics but also by many Catholics. What appeared to be the final blow was the refusal of the government to recognize the degrees of the university. But a man was to enter the picture who would take up the battle and tell the world in no uncertain terms what such a university should be and why it should be established. That man was John Henry Newman, a priest and an Anglican convert. Dr. Newman was appointed rector of the new university, and he immediately began the task of establishing it on a firm basis. While engaged in this work he gave a series of nine Discourses in which he set forth the basic principles on which a university should be founded. These were subsequently published under the title of *The Idea of a University*.

First of all, a university is a place where universal knowledge is taught. From this it follows that its subject is on the one hand, intellectual, not moral; and, on the other, the diffusion and extension of knowledge rather than its advancement. If the object of a University is science and philosophical discovery, then there is no reason why it should have students; if religious training is its objective, then it cannot be the seat of literature and science. Such is the idea of a university in its essence and independently of its relation to the Church. Without the assistance of the Church, however, it cannot preserve its integrity, for the Church is its infallible guide in intellectual education.

To those who criticize him for taking part in the undertaking and to those who condemn it, Dr. Newman explains how Catholic educational conditions are most unsatisfactory in their present state, and he adds that the work has been commended by an institution which has guided the destiny of peoples in all places and at all times from the earliest centuries. That institution is the Papacy. When it has spoken there is no place for demur.

At this time there existed in both England and Ireland universities in which there was no chair of theology. This state of affairs was defended by many writers with seemingly plausible arguments. Dr. Newman nullified these arguments when he wrote: "A University, I should lay down, by its very name professes to teach universal knowledge: Theology is surely a branch of knowledge: how then is it possible for it to profess all branches of knowledge and yet to exclude from the subjects of its teaching one which, to say the least, is as large and as important as any of them?" (p. 19). How theology is treated among university subjects is a most important matter. Theology is, without any doubt, a branch of knowledge, for it has existed through all the ages and is universal. Without it all other knowledge is futile. What credence can we give to the discoveries of science if they are not viewed in the purifying light of theology? "If the various branches of knowledge, which are the matter of teaching in a university, so hang together, that none can be neglected without prejudice to the perfection of the rest, and if theology be a branch of knowledge, of wide reception, of philosophical structure, of unutterable importance, and of supreme influence, to what conclusion are we brought

from these two premisses but this? that to withdraw theology from the public schools is to impair the completeness, and to invalidate the trustworthiness of all that is actually taught in them" (p. 69).

It has been said that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing; but a great deal of knowledge, without religion, is a far more dangerous thing. Refusal to recognize theological truth often results in the perversion of the other sciences, and they assume powers which they are not capable of exercising properly alone. Painting, sculpture, architecture and music are special and necessary attendants of religion. The art of painting will serve to illustrate what has been said. At first, owing to its inability to imitate the beauty of angels and saints which it has never seen, its want of skill became the instrument of reverence and modesty; but as it attained its full dimensions as an art, it rather subjected religion to its own ends than ministered to the ends of religion. It tainted its heavenly object with the earthly and unseemly forms which it has created. Thus the Church had to exert itself to guard this servant that the world might not gain an advantage over it, for the tendency of "other knowledge" is to encroach on the territory of religion if theology is not there to defend its boundaries.

The students of a university should be considered as well as its studies, and in this connection arises the question "whether and in what sense its teaching, viewed relatively to the taught, carries the attribute of Utility along with it" (p. 99). A university should attempt to enlarge the range of studies which it professes for the sake of its students. The students will not be able to pursue every subject which is open to them, but they will be the gainers by their contact with those who represent the whole circle. "They learn to respect, to consult, and to aid each other. Thus is created a pure atmosphere of thought, which the student also breathes, though in his own case he pursues only a few sciences out of the multitude. He profits by intellectual tradition, which is independent of particular teachers, which guide him in his choice of subjects and duly interpret for him those which he chooses. He apprehends the great outlines of knowledge, the principles on which it rests, the scale of its parts, its lights and its shades, its great points and its little as he cannot otherwise apprehend them. Hence

it is that his education is called Liberal" (p. 101).

A philosophical habit is the result of such a training and this is the main purpose of a university in its treatment of its students.

What is the end of liberal knowledge? It is a very tangible, real and sufficient end, although it cannot be separated from knowledge itself. Knowledge is its own end, not merely a means to something beyond it. It may resolve itself into an art, and terminate in a mechanical process and in tangible fruit; but it may also on the other hand, turn to that reason which informs, and becomes a philosophy. In the first case it is called useful knowledge, in the second, liberal. Useful knowledge tends to particularize, and in proportion as it tends to be particular it ceases to be knowledge. The principle of real dignity in knowledge, its worth and *desirableness*, is the germ of a scientific or philosophic process within it. For this reason it comes to be an end in itself and is called liberal. "Not to know the relative disposition of things is the state of slaves or children; to have mapped out the Universe is the boast, or at least the ambition of Philosophy" (p. 113).

It is claimed that useful knowledge has done its work and that liberal knowledge has fallen far short of its mark. It is true that useful knowledge has achieved its object—it aimed low and it has fulfilled its aim. Liberal knowledge aimed high and has also fulfilled its aim, for knowledge is its own end. Objectors may say that it has failed because it does not make man better, but it is a mistake to burden knowledge with religion and virtue, for these are not its real end. The aim of knowledge is "To open the mind, to correct it, to refine it, to enable it to know, and to digest, master, rule and use its knowledge, to give it power over its own faculties, application, flexibility, method, critical exactness, sagacity, resources and eloquent expression" (p. 122).

Among the qualities and characteristics of the intellect in which its cultivation consists is that of the relation of intellectual culture or learning to mere knowledge. Learning is the enlargement of the mind through acquired knowledge. This enlargement does not consist in the passive reception into the mind of a number of new ideas hitherto unknown to it, but in the mind's digesting these ideas and assimilating them into the substance of its previous thought. Thus a man may have a great store of knowledge, but if

he does not establish relations between concepts he has little claim to the title of "learned".

Our next consideration is one which is most pertinent to present day conditions and has been debated at great length. It is that of the relation between a liberal education and the professions. The utilitarians ask: Why waste all this time spent on philosophy and dead languages when it could be put to a much better use in preparing a man to take his place in the world and to earn his living? On the surface this argument seems to be a sound one, but under close scrutiny it will collapse. For example: A man who earns his living by physical toil does not develop those parts of his body which are most necessary for his work and neglect those which are not so necessary. He knows that in order to do his best work his whole body must be developed and kept in the best possible condition. Now take a man whose means of livelihood is his intellectual development. It can be readily seen that he who has the most widely developed intellectual faculties is in a better position to serve his fellow man than he who knows nothing outside the compass of his own profession. Liberal education, then enables a man to look down, as from a height, on the less noble occupation of earning a living and helps him to choose that occupation for which he is best fitted. It enables him to be at home in any society; he has common ground with every class. All of this may be summed up by saying that he knows how to live.

Man is a creature of the senses; his whole life is spent in the battle with the sensual appetites. When he has been severely wounded in the fray, religion heals him and strengthens him for further combat. But the enemy knows that he will weaken and waits patiently for another opportunity to renew his attacks. Intellectual cultivation, while it does not supply religious motives and is not meritorious of heavenly aid and reward, can help man to avoid the pitfalls of sin. It expels the excitements of sense by the introduction of those of the intellect. Nor is that all: knowledge, the discipline by which it is gained, and the tastes which it forms, have a natural tendency to refine the mind and give it a disgust and abhorrence of the enormities and excesses of evil. A cultivated intellect will form an ethical character even when the influence of religion is entirely lacking.

One other subject remains for consideration, and that is the duties of the Church towards knowledge. Human reason is the object of an intense training in a university course, with the result that reason becomes a highly developed faculty. Now if reason is allowed to rely upon itself without guidance on the part of the Church, it is almost certain to err, and the precious gift of faith will be placed in jeopardy. If the Church does not perform her duty, Revelation is likely to sustain two injuries at the hands of the masters of human reason. The first is the ignoring of theological truth completely, under the pretense of not recognizing differences of religious opinion—a situation which will arise only in countries or under governments which have abjured Catholicism. The second, and the more subtle one, is a recognition of Catholicism, but with an adulteration of its spirit. Human reason has three great objects: God, Nature and Man. Since the theology is not being considered here, the latter two remain. These form two books: the book of nature, called science and the book of man, called literature. These two constitute nearly the whole subject matter of liberal education and may respectively subserve the two injuries mentioned above. With regard to physical science, there can be no real conflict between it and religion, for both come from the same Divine Author, whose works cannot contradict each other. The harm is done when the scientist forgets this fact and relies on his own unaided reason to explain phenomena which do not admit of an explanation except in the light of Christian Truth. This is where the Church steps in and shows that what may appear to be a contradiction of Divine Truth is, in reality, no contradiction at all.

Literature is a mirror in which every phase of man's existence can be seen, his thoughts, words and deeds are reflected in the written page as truly as an image is reflected in a mirror. The literature of any nation shows man both at his best and at his worst, and it is only through literature that we are enabled to study man. We cannot expurgate it completely; therefore we must adopt some means which will prevent any harmful effects from following its study. This is where the work of the Church begins. She does for literature in one way what she does for science in another; each has its imperfections, and she has a remedy for each. "She fears no knowledge, but she

purifies all; she represses no element in our nature, but cultivates the whole." Under her guidance everything is made to serve a higher end, the end of man,—God's eternal glory.



Haledictory

James McGaughey, '40

In the presence of a welcome audience, of parents, relatives, and friends, St. Dunstan's gladly, but yet with a feeling of sadness, imparts to the members of the graduating class her last words of advice—advice always founded on sound judgement and long experience. Realizing the need for Christian leaders throughout the world today, she rejoices in having made ready her graduates to go forth, as a great educator has said "not as the youth of medieval times, clothed in steel and armed with shield and sword to rescue the holy places from the hands of the infidel, but upon an equally perilous mission, armed no longer with material weapons, but with armored souls, disciplined by truth and virtue, to rescue invisible sanctuaries of mind and heart from the prince of darkness". Entertaining a feeling of love for her sons almost equal to that of a mother for her child, and knowing full well the trials and difficulties which they will meet in life, St. Dunstan's shares with us that note of sadness which tinges the joy so much in evidence today.

Today is our day; today we stand on the threshold of a new life; tomorrow we wend our way to that ship upon which we must embark for life's dangerous and storm-tossed voyage. What a different life will be ours henceforth. From the life free from worldly responsibilities, the life of peace and happiness which we shared in our homes, at school, and for the past four years under the tender care of our Alma Mater, we pass into a world where peace and happiness exist only in the soul, and then only when we bear our responsibilities in a truly Christian manner.

It is our duty as true sons of St. Dunstan's to live our lives according to those Christian principles which have been so firmly implanted in our minds during the years that we have spent within her walls, and to teach them to