In Tribute

WHAT IS A

by JOHN HENRY

IF I WERE asked to describe as briefly and popularly as I could, what a University was, I should draw my answer from its ancient designation of a *Studium Generale,* or "School of Universal Learning." This description implies the assemblage of strangers from all parts in one spot;—*from all parts,* else, how will you find professors and students for every department of knowledge? and *in one spot,* else, how can there be any school at all? Accordingly, in its simple and rudimental form, it is a school of knowledge of every kind, consisting of teachers and learners from every quarter. Many things are requisite to complete and satisfy the idea embodied in this description; but such as this a University seems to be in its essence, a place for the communication and circulation of thought, by means of personal intercourse, through a wide extent of country.

There is nothing far-fetched or unreasonable in the idea thus presented to us; and if this be a University, then a University does contemplate a necessity of our nature, and is but one specimen in a particular medium, out of which might be adduced in others, of a provision for that necessity. Mutual education, in a large sense of the word, is one of the great and incessant occupations of human society, carried on partly with set purpose, and partly not. One generation forms another; and the existing generation is ever acting and reacting upon itself the persons of its individual members. Now, in this process, books, I need scarcely say, that is, the *litera scripta,* are one special instrument. It is true; and emphatically so in this age. Considering the prodigious powers of the press, and how they are developed at this time in the never-intermitting issue of periodicals, tracts, pamphlets, works in series, and light literature, we must allow there never was a time which promised fairer for dispensing with every other means of information and instruction. What can we want more, you will say, for the intellectual education of the whole man, and for every man, than so exuberant and diversified and persistent a promulgation of all kinds of knowledge. Why, you will ask, need we go up to knowledge, when knowledge comes down to us? The Sibyl wrote her prophecies upon the leaves of the forest, and wasted them, but here such careless profusion might be prudently indulged, for it can be afforded without loss, in consequence of the almost fabulous fecundity of the instrument which these latter ages have invented. We have sermons in stones, and books in the running brooks; works larger and more comprehensive than those which have gained for ancients an immortality, issue forth every morning, and are projected onwards to the ends of the earth at the rate of hundreds of miles a day. Our seats are strewed, our pavements are powdered, with swarms of little tracts; and the very bricks of our city walls preach wisdom, by informing us by their placards where we can at once cheaply purchase it.

I allow all this, and much more; such certainly is our popular education, and its effects are remarkable. Nevertheless, after all, even in this age, whenever men are really serious about getting what, in the language of trade is called "a good article," when they aim at something precise, something refined, something really luminous, something really large, something choice, they go to another market; they avail themselves, in some shape or other, of the rival method, the ancient method, of oral instruction, of present communication between man and man, of teachers instead of learning, of the personal influence of a master, and the humble initiation of a disciple, and, in consequence, of great centres of pilgrimage and throng, which such a method of education necessarily involves. This, I think, will be found to hold good in all those departments or aspects of society, which possess an interest sufficient to bind men together, or to constitute what is called "a world." It holds in the political world, and in the high world, and in the religious world; and it holds also in the literary and scientific world.

If the actions of men may be taken as any test of their convictions, then we

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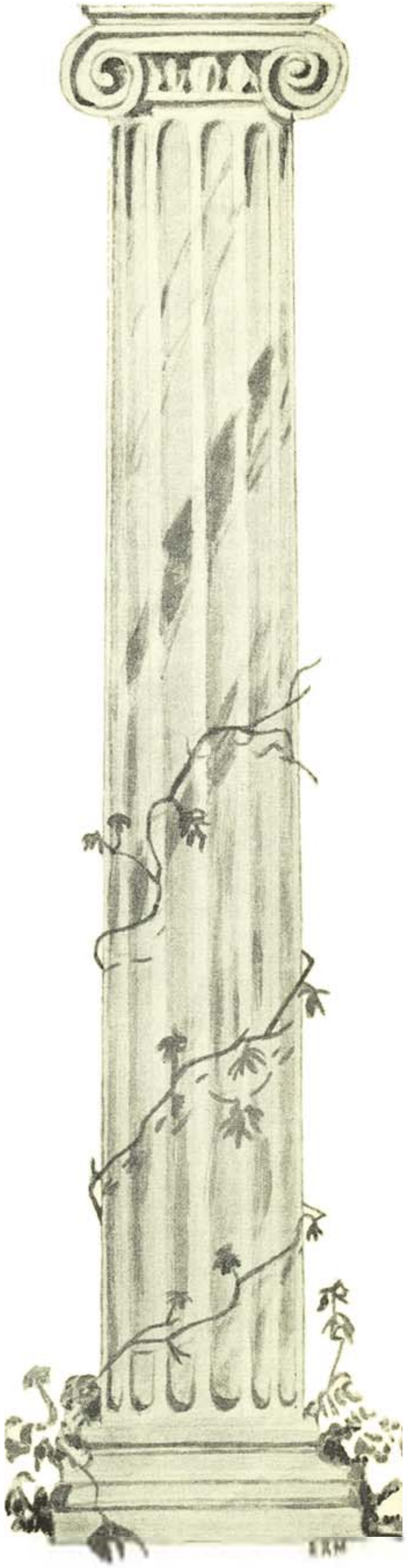
CARDINAL NEWMAN

have reason for saying this, viz.:—that the province and the inestimable benefit of the *litera scripta* is that of being a record of truth, and an authority of appeal, and an instrument of teaching in the hands of a teacher; but that, if we wish to become exact and fully furnished in any branch of knowledge which is diversified and complicated, we must consult the living man and listen to his living voice. I am not bound to investigate the cause of this, and anything I may say will, I am conscious, be short of its full analysis;—perhaps we may suggest, that no books can get through the number of minute questions which it is possible to ask on any extended subject, or can hit upon the very difficulties which are severally felt by each reader in succession. Or again, that no book can convey the special spirit and delicate peculiarities of its subject with that rapidity and certainty which attend on the sympathy of mind with mind, through the eyes, the look, the accent, the manner, in casual expressions thrown off at the moment, and the unstudied turns of familiar conversation. But I am already dwelling too long on what is but an incidental portion of my main subject. Whatever be the cause, the fact is undeniable. The general principles of any study you may learn by books at home; but the detail, the colour, the tone, the air, the life which makes it live in us, you must catch all these from those in whom it lives already. You must imitate the student in French or German, who is not content with his grammar, but goes to Paris or Dresden: you must take example from the young artist, who aspires to visit the great Masters in Florence and in Rome. Till we have discovered some intellectual daguerreotype, which takes off the course of thought, and the form, lineaments, and features of truth, as completely and minutely, as the optical instrument reproduces the sensible object, we must come to the teachers of wisdom to learn wisdom, we must repair to the fountain and drink there. Portions of it may go from thence to the ends of the earth by means of books; but the fulness is in one place alone. It is in such assemblages and congregations of intellect that books themselves, the masterpieces of human genius, are written, or at least originated.

The principle on which I have been insisting is so obvious, and instances in point are so ready, that I should think it tiresome to proceed with the subject, except that one or two illustrations may serve to explain my own language about it, which may not have done justice to the doctrine which it has been intended to enforce.

For instance, the polished manners and high-bred bearing which are so difficult of attainment, and so strictly personal when attained,—which are so much admired in society, from society are acquired. All that goes to constitute a gentleman,—the carriage, gait, address, gestures, voice; the ease, the self-possession, the courtesy, the power of conversing, the talent of not offending; the lofty principle, the delicacy of thought, the happiness of expression, the taste and propriety, the generosity and forbearance, the candour and consideration, the openness of hand;—these qualities, some of them come by nature, some of them may be found in any rank, some of them are a direct precept of Christianity; but the full assemblage of them, bound up in the unity of an individual character, do we expect they can be learned from books? are they not necessarily acquired, where they are to be found, in high society? The very nature of the case leads us to say so; you cannot fence without an antagonist, nor challenge all comers in disputation before you have supported a thesis; and in like manner, it stands to reason, you cannot learn to converse till you have the world to converse with; you cannot unlearn your natural bashfulness, or awkwardness, or stiffness, or other besetting deformity, till you serve your time in some school of manners. Well, and is it not so in matter of fact? The metropolis, the court, the great houses of the land, are the centres to which at stated times the country comes up, as to shrines of refinement and good taste; and then in due time the country goes back again home, enriched



In Tribute

AT GRADUATION

with a portion of the social accomplishments, which those very visits serve to call out and heighten in the gracious dispensers of them. We are unable to conceive how the "gentleman-like" can otherwise be maintained; and maintained in this way it is.

And now a second instance: and here too I am going to speak without personal experience of the subject I am introducing. I admit I have not been in Parliament, any more than I figured in the *beau monde;* yet I cannot but think that statesmanship, as well as high breeding, is learned, not by books, but in certain centres of education. If it be not presumption to say so, Parliament puts a clever man *au courant* with politics and affairs of state in a way surprising to himself. A member of the legislature, if tolerably observant, begins to see things with new eyes, even though his views undergo no change. Words have a meaning now, and ideas a reality, such as they had not before. He hears a vast deal in public speeches and private conversation, which is never put into print. The bearings of measures and events, the actions of parties, and the persons of friends and enemies, are brought out to the man who is in the midst of them with a distinctness, which the most diligent perusal of newspapers will fail to impart to them. It is access to the fountain-heads of political wisdom and experience, it is daily intercourse, of one kind or another, with the multitude who go up to them, it is familiarity with business, it is access to the contributions of fact and opinion thrown together by many witnesses from many quarters, which does this for him. However, I need not account for a fact, to which it is sufficient to appeal: that the Houses of Parliament and the atmosphere around them are a sort of University of politics.

As regards the world of science, we find a remarkable instance of the principle which I am illustrating, in the periodical meetings for its advance, which have arisen in the course of the last twenty years, such as the British Association. Such gatherings would to many persons appear at first sight simply preposterous. Above all subjects of study, Science is conveyed, is propagated, by books, or by private teaching; experiments and investigations are conducted in silence; discoveries are made in solitude. What have philosophers to do with festive celebrities, and panegyrical solemnities with mathematical and physical truth? Yet on a closer attention to the subject, it is found that not even scientific thought can dispense with the suggestions, the instruction, the stimulus, the sympathy, the intercourse with mankind on a large scale, which such meetings secure. A fine time of year is chosen, when days are long, skies are bright, the earth smiles, and all nature rejoices; a city or town is taken by turns, of ancient name or modern opulence, where buildings are spacious and hospitality hearty. The novelty of place and circumstance, the excitement of strange, or the refreshment of well-known faces, the majesty of rank or genius, the amiable charities of men pleased both with themselves and with each other; the elevated spirits, the circulation of thought, the curiosity; the morning sections, the outdoor exercise, the well-furnished, well-earned board, the not ungraceful hilarity, the evening circle; the brilliant lecture, the discussions or collisions or guesses of great men one with another, the narratives of scientific processes, of hopes, disappointments, conflicts, and successes, the splendid eulogistic orations; these and the like constituents of the annual celebration, are considered to do something real and substantial for the advance of knowledge which can be done in no other way. Of course they can but be occasional; they answer to the annual Act, or Commencement, or Commemoration of a University, not to its ordinary condition; but they are of a University nature; and I can well believe in their utility. They issue in the promotion of a certain living and, as it were, bodily communication of knowledge from one to another, of a general interchange of ideas, and a comparison and adjustment of science with science, of an enlargement of mind, intellectual and social, of an ardent love of the particular study, which may be chosen by each individual, and a noble devotion to its interests.

Such meetings, I repeat, are but periodical, and only partially represent the idea of a University. The bustle and whirl which are their usual concomitants, are in ill keeping with the order and gravity of earnest intellectual education. We desiderate means of instruction which involve no interruption of our ordinary habits; nor need we seek it long, for the natural course of things brings it about, while we debate over it. In every great country, the metropolis itself becomes a sort of necessary University, whether we will or no. As the chief city is the seat of the court, of high society, of politics, and of law, so as a matter of course is it the seat of letters also; and at this time, for a long term of years, London and Paris are in fact in operation Universities, though in Paris its famous University is no more,

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and in London a University scarcely exists except as a board of administration. The newspapers, magazines, reviews, journals, and periodicals of all kinds, the publishing trade, the libraries, museums, and academies there found, the learned and scientific societies, necessarily invest it with the functions of a University; and that atmosphere of intellect, which in a former age hung over Oxford or Bologna or Salamanca, has, with the change of times, moved away to the centre of civil government. Thither come up youths from all parts of the country, the students of law, medicine, and fine arts, and *employés* and *attachés* of literature. There they live, as chance determines; and they are satisfied with their temporary home, for they find in it all that was promised to them there. They have not come in vain, as far as their own object in coming is concerned. They have not learned any particular religion, but they have learned their own particular profession well. They have, moreover, become acquainted with the habits, manners, and opinions of their place of sojourn, and done their part in maintaining the tradition of them. We cannot then be without virtual Universities; a metropolis is such: the simple question is, whether the education sought and given should be based on principle, formed upon rule, directed to the highest ends, or left to the random succession of masters and schools, one after another, with a melancholy waste of thought and an extreme hazard of truth.

Religious teaching itself affords us an illustration of our subject to a certain point. It does not indeed seat itself merely in centres of the world; this is impossible from the nature of the case. It is intended for many, not the few; its subject matter is truth necessary for us, not truth recondite and rare; but it concurs in the principle of a University so far as this, that its great instrument, or rather organ, has ever been that which nature prescribes in all education, the personal presence of a teacher, or, in theological language, Oral Tradition. It is the living voice, the breathing form, the expressive countenance, which preaches, which catechises. Truth, a subtle, invisible manifold spirit, is poured into the mind of the scholar by his eyes and ears, through his affections, imagination and reason; it is poured into his mind and is sealed up there in perpetuity, by propounding and repeating it, by questioning and requestioning, by correcting and explaining, by progressing and then recurring to first principles, by all those ways which are implied in the word "catechising." In the first ages, it was work of

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Literary Features

IMPRESSIONS ON *Hopkins*

• by MARIA ELENA RUIZ

HOPKINS has been accused, time and again, because of his Catholic faith, of voicing the sentiment of the Church. He has been dubbed "a Catholic poet", just as Graham Greene has been called "a Catholic novelist"; and many of his critics who did not share his belief took up arms against him for this reason alone. Perhaps they would not admit it openly, for critics are a proud people and they themselves shun the idea of being criticized like plague—specially for a gross error in their inferences. Nevertheless, they committed this short-sightedness, even considering that it was done unconsciously. Hopkins' religion does not make him more or less of a poet. The measure of a poet is his poetry. To be fair to Hopkins we should affirm, like what a critic has said of Graham Greene, that his religion is not only a creed but also a way of life.

Hopkins believed that purely artistic judgment can be imposed on poetry, that literary work can be considered for its art value alone. This, however, does not make him a disciple of the art-for-art's-sake theory. He was very far away from it, for he considered purely artistic judgment inadequate when there is no moral effect, and that a work of art is also to educate and to be "standard". "It is by being known it works, it influences, it does its duty, it does good." Since a work of art is also to educate the public and "contribute to the glory of the State and the Church," it must naturally have an audience. To have an audience is what all poets ask for. The audience is essential to the art-world—and to the development of a poet.

Hopkins thought very highly of poetry. He knew its potentialities and its functions. Poetry, he said, must be of the highest quality. The form in poetry must be fully developed and exploited. There must be masterly execution to guarantee great poetry. The idea may be a great matter of poetry, but to make it lasting there must be full knowledge of the technique of the art. Only great ideas together with the most skillful execution produce great poetry: this is the blending of the form with the meaning.

Everything must be realized and the possibilities of form fully exploited. However, as Hopkins believed, a demand for absolute perfection is absurd, for perfection in a work of art can never be achieved but can only be approached. Truth can only be suggested, not stated nor proven.

Hopkins was very much influenced by Scotus, the great medieval thinker. Scotus believed that each individual has a distinctive "form": a *haecceitas*, or thisness, as well as a generic *quidditas*, or whatness. It was from Scotus that Hopkins got his "inscape". Every work of art has its own "inscape", or its own individuality and uniqueness. The working together of all the parts in a poem —the diction, the stanza, the meter, the sounds of the words, etc.—make up the "inscape". It is this unity in a poem that makes up the wholeness, and this wholeness makes the poem exist as it can exist in no other way. Because every poem has its own "inscape", and the characteristic of "inscape" is uniqueness, some poems are very obscure and very difficult to understand. Immediate clarity cannot be achieved at once. But Hopkins, despite this, never believed in sacrificing the "inscape" for intelligibility. To quote Louis Untermeyer speaking of Hopkins: "Behind the tortured construction and heaped-up epithets there is magnificence. In spite of the verbal excesses and idiomatic oddities, there is an originality of vision which is nothing less than startling." The oddities in a poem may make the poem unintelligible and ungraspable at once, but they do not lacerate and destroy it. Instead by its own uniqueness and oddness it has an originality, a particular perspective, which can exist in no other way except by being unique.

Since a work of art with emphasis on form cannot achieve immediate clarity, only the comprehension of the total idea and rhythmic pattern, the total sound pattern, rhyme, assonance, alliteration, i.e., the grasping of the work of art in its totality, grasped not gradually as part by part but in its wholeness, can make the poem clear. Hopkins believed in the existence and reality of "explosive" poetry. The quality of "explosive" poetry is an exact combination of sound and meaning.

In Hopkins' poetry there are series of musical dissonances. He worked out a scheme of prosody. He is considered an innovator in poetic structure. His poems are sometimes very obscure. But behind this obscurity and series of musical dissonances and scheme of prosody in his poetry is the marked consciousness of a very meticulous artist who saw that in a work of art there is a plan and an execution which must fit into the whole work of art. ♯

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long time; months, sometimes years, were devoted to the arduous task of disabusing the mind of the incipient Christian of its pagan errors, and of moulding it upon the Christian faith. The Scriptures indeed were at hand for the study of those who could avail themselves of them; but St. Irenaeus does not hesitate to speak of whole races, who had been converted to Christianity, without being able to read them. To be unable to read and write was in those times no evidence of want of learning: the hermits of the deserts were, in this sense of the word, illiterate; yet the great St. Anthony, though he knew not letters, was a match in disputation for the learned philosophers who came to try him. Didymus again, the great Alexandrian theologian, was blind. The ancient discipline, called the *Disciplina Arcani*, involved the same principle. The more sacred doctrines of Revelation were not committed to books but passed on by successive tradition. The teaching on the Blessed Trinity and the Eucharist appears to have been so handed down from some hundred years; and when at length reduced to writing, it has filled many folios, yet has not been exhausted.

But I have said more than enough in illustration; I end as I began;... a University is a place of concourse, whither students come from every quarter for every kind of knowledge. You cannot have the best of every kind everywhere; you must to to some city or emporium for it. There you have all choicest productions of nature and art together, which you find each in its separate place elsewhere. All the riches of the land, and of the earth, are carried up thither; there are the best markets, and there are the best workmen. It is the centre of trade, the supreme court of fashion, the umpire of rival talents, and the standard of things rare and precious. It is the place for seeing galleries of first-rate pictures, performers of transcendent skill. It is the place for great preachers, great orators, nobles and great statesmen. In the nature of things, greatness and unity go together; excellence implies a centre. And such, for the third or fourth time, is a University; I hope I do not weary out the reader by repeating it. It is the place to which a thousand schools make contributions; in which the intellect may safely range and speculate, sure to find its equal in some antagonist activity, and its judge in the tribunal of truth. It is a place where inquiry is pushed forward, and discoveries verified and perfected, and rashness rendered innocuous, and error exposed, by the collision of mind with mind, and knowledge with knowledge. It is the place where the professors become eloquent, and it is a missionary and a preacher, displaying his science in its most complete and most winning form, pouring it forth with the zeal of enthusiasm, and lighting up his own love of it in the breasts of his hearers. It is the place where the catechist makes good his ground as he goes, treading in the truth day by day into the ready memory, and wedging and tightening it into the expanding reason. It is a place which wins the admiration of the young by its celebrity, kindles the affections of the middle-aged by its beauty, and rivets the fidelity of the old by its associations. It is a seat of wisdom, a light of the world, a minister of faith, an Alma Mater of the rising generation. It is this and a great deal more, and demands a somewhat better head and hand than mine to describe it well.

Such is a University in its idea and its purpose; such in good measure has it before now been in fact. Shall it be ever again? We are going forward in the strength of the Cross, under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, in the name of St. Patrick, to attempt it. ♯

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CREATION

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whaddaya know, jerry. . . .

there is something in the october wind which tells me election is nigh. i smell money! i hope it's the real maccoy (not julian, please!), not just something made at home. you know, especially at a time like this, there are lots of people who make money at home. and they do get away with it.

let's forget the people for a while and talk about myself, me, joey. the ghosts of the people . . . er, i mean a host of people from the cemet. . . i mean, from my town—damn this big mouth of mine—are urging me to run for town mayor. i had a heck of a time making up my mind, jerry. running for town mayor in my hometown is no joke. our incumbent mayor is a veteran olympicker who has a stack of medals and trophies for being the fastest runner in the racetracks of olympia, wherever that is. in the last war, for instance, the japanese could not beat him in running. he was always farther than ten miles ahead! he was captain of the guerrilla force.

nevertheless, jerry, despite the dangers and risks of the suggested undertaking, i finally decided to run for town mayor. you know, can say with pride that i am a man whose only law is the voice of the people. it is said, vox populi, vox dei. the voice of the people is the voice of god. besides, i think i'm getting bigger around the waist. running for town mayor would be a good exercise.

every seasoned politician has a plan of strategy, jerry. well, here's mine.

i'll make a grand tour of france. . . . er, i mean our town, distribute handbills left and right, shake hands with everybody, kiss babies, especially 18 year-olds and above, have drinking sprees, and make great speeches, something to run like this:

"your interests shall be my beacon light. to serve you, i will willingly climb the highest mountains and cross the seven seas. and if need be, i will gladly shed the last drop of my blood, that you my people, may see the beautiful dawn of a bright tomorrow."

it's all baloney of course, jerry. you very well know, i don't even visit my wife if it rains. and when it comes to a showdown regarding my shedding the last drop of my blood, i'll tell them i'm willing to shed it on condition that i do not have to shed the first, second, third, fourth, etc., drops of my blood.

i'll tell them too, to vote for me, the man whom gold can never buy. at any rate jerry, they don't buy with gold nowadays. they use paper bills!

come election day, i'll be sitting pretty. victory will be as certain as the rising of the sun in the east and its setting in the north.

then, after my installation at the office of mayor, i hope they won't make it inflexible, i'm going to junket to mt. olympus and start practicing at the racetracks.

cute?

so long jerry.

your politicking pal,

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