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The Relationship of Tractarianism and Pre-Raphaelitism

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THE RELATIONSHIP

OF

TRACTARIANISM AND PRE-RAPHAELITISM

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of Master
of Arts in Loyola University

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Victorian Era: An Age of Doubt</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Tractarianism a Result of Doubt</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Medieval Idealism of the Pre-Raphaelites</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. The Relation of Pre-Raphaelitism and Tractarianism to Catholicism</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

It is the purpose of this study to show the relationship of the Tractarian Movement and of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement to the Catholic Church. First of all, it is necessary to look into the background of each by studying the century to which it belongs.

Most Anglicans were suffering from the deism of the preceding century which had created a mechanical universe for an absentee God and an all-pervading deadness in spiritual things. A reaction to this cold morality that was the shattered dream of their religion was inevitable.¹ The people of this Victorian Era had been affected by the Industrial Revolution which had transformed them from peasants with local markets into an industrial nation with world-wide connections.² Their industries led to new discoveries, new developments in the field of science, but the material and agnostic exponents of the new science did not always aid them. New schools of thought arose and confusion resulted; as Noyes says, "The practical achievements of science during the nineteenth century were accompanied by disastrously misleading methods of popular exposition."³

Likewise in the field of their religion was the mist of doubt and questioning, which was the disillusionment of the century. The English culture had been most united because of its religion, but in these distracted years it was fast toppling and something had to be done about it. At this time there still existed a definite prejudice against Catholics. As Newman so adroitly states it, in England the Catholics were still suffering from the persecution of prejudice, even though the Emancipation Act was helping them to lift their heads from the mire:

Our Prejudiced Man of course sees Catholics and Jesuits in everything, in every failure of the potato crop, every strike of the operatives, and every mercantile stoppage. . . . The Prejudiced Man applauds himself for his sagacity, in seeing evidences of a plot at every turn; he groans to think that so many sensible men should doubt its extension all through Europe, though he begins to hope that the fact is breaking on the apprehension of the Government.4

Then out of this unresolved havoc arose the Tractarian Movement and the great figure of Newman with the "Tracts For the Times," heralding the alarm to bring the people back to the Primitive Church.

This century of instability and conflict brought forth another movement—one in art and literature, the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. It is studied to see just exactly what use is made of the Catholic Church and her art of the Middle Ages.

Finally, in the last chapter, is an attempt to show the relationship of each of the Movements to the Roman Catholic Church. Each was to find peace in the Church, one from the fundamental Truths; the other

from the aesthetic Beauty found therein.

With the world turning to the materialism of the Industrial Revolution, the Church of England in a state of lethargy, the art world, too, reflected the times. Thus we hope to show how those seeking real Truth had to turn inevitably to the Catholic Church of the Middle Ages.
CHAPTER I

VICTORIAN ERA: AN AGE OF DOUBT

The Victorian Age, one of unprecedented expansion, alive with new activities, may in truth be termed a "Century of Revolution."\(^1\) Due to the great increase of available markets there was a revolution in commercial enterprise which rapidly advanced the use of mechanical devices in industry. It cannot be doubted that in many cases material wealth produced a hardness of temper and an impatience of projects and ideas that brought little financial return. However, it is to the credit of the age that intellectual activities were so numerous. The sixty years commonly accepted as the Victorian Age present many dissimilar features.\(^2\)

As Dawson so succinctly describes it:

... it was an age of crisis and widespread distress, when England was already overshadowed by the lowering cloud of an industrialism that was beginning to pollute the English air and to deface the English countryside. It shared some of the worst faults of the two ages between which it stood— the animal brutality of the past and the mechanical hardness of the future ... \(^3\)

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In order to understand the nineteenth century, we must know what went into its making as well as what came out of it. From the era of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, it inherited Democracy and Nationalism, a materialistic love of comfort, monopolist Capitalism, and alarming social problems. During this century England nearly trebled her population; with the increasing millions swarming into the growing towns, science, applied to industry, augmented the means of livelihood by producing abundant food and clothing, and by helping to prolong life through the conquest of death and disease. A child both of the French Revolution and of the Industrial Revolution, this age of phenomenal expansion and progress, with its mounting wealth and increased material well-being, was emphatically an age of emancipation. Its spirit is revealed in characteristic "isms."  

Although Queen Victoria actually came to the throne in 1837, the year 1832 is generally accepted as the beginning of the Victorian Era, mainly because in that year the First Reform Bill which placed the political power of England in the hands of the middle class, was promulgated as law. In this Act England took its first step in a series of statutes which changed its form of government from a landed aristocracy to an industrial democracy. Instead of being typical aristocrats like the Duke of Wellington and Lord Palmerston, the political leaders of the  

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5 Ibid., pp. 3-4.  
nation became members of the mercantile middle class like Sir Robert Peel and Gladstone, only to be succeeded in their turn by men sprung from the manual workers, such as Snowden and Macdonald. Political control passed from the landed nobility to a House of Commons dependent upon a restricted franchise. The Victorian Era brought the accomplishment of a revolution in importance equal to the French Revolution, of which it was an echo. This Victorian Revolution was industrial, extending its influence by the peaceful arts of manufacture, transhipment, communication, trade, and commerce, so characteristic of the modern world. At the beginning of the period, England was an agricultural country, able to feed itself from its own resources; however, at the close of this era, England now mainly industrial, paid by its manufactured goods for the food supplies which it imported in large quantities. This obvious, potent change from agriculture to organized mechanical industry brought with it changes in political, intellectual, and spiritual conditions which were even greater in importance and influence.7 Such development was demonstrated by the writers of the time who had a large share in the conflict between the authoritative spokesmen of revealed religion and the protagonists of scientific research which had so revolutionized modern thought.8

At this time was noticed an apparent cleavage rapidly growing between the two classes; one party consisted of the wealthy capitalists, who sought to increase productivity by more absolute control in workshops

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7 Ibid., p. 3.
8 Ibid., p. v.
or factories or by improved plant facilities; the other was composed of the manual laborers, now mere machinery, completely controlled by the capitalist who came between the worker and the consumer. Since neither class had as yet learned the value of organizing, confusion, anarchy, and open war between Capital and Labor prevailed. Capitalists, the owners of factories and heads of manufacturing and commercial undertakings, greedy for gain, set out for the conquest of markets. Individualists all, the manufacturers seeking only their own good, endeavored to remain sole masters of such fortune as they could gather. A result of this individualism was irregularity of production. Thus it happened that there was no steady progress in the advancement of trade, but instead, a series of violent convulsions. Wild booms of overproduction would bring on the consequent crisis of the panic of unemployment for thousands of workers who suffered from the bankruptcy among the masters. At such a time everybody and everything bore the air of suffering. As Wingfield-Stratford adroitly puts it: "The field was, in fact, set for such a struggle of all against all as certain ultra-Darwinians have imagined to be the order of the universe and the sole condition of progress."  

Thus we see that during the twenties and thirties, English industry was fighting a dour, bitter struggle to adapt new conditions to the attainment of honest livelihood. The social system of these decades was based

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upon the existence of a privileged, leisured upper class, alone able to evade the unremitting toil and cut-throat competition that were the lot of those outside this group.11

In like manner, a close relationship was established between the Industrial Revolution and natural science, particularly physics and chemistry. Natural science, which had been primarily theoretical and even metaphysical in the two preceding centuries was now drawn into practical service in the machine industry. During its main phase the Industrial Revolution received direct aid from such scientists as Davy, Faraday, Liebig, Bunsen, and Kelvin.

It had taken sixty years to inaugurate the Industrial Revolution in England; but now it advanced rapidly, developing to a greater extent the iron, coal, and cotton industries as well as introducing new industries, which led to the goal of machine mass production. England's population became more and more urban and less rural; yet agricultural change was, indeed, one of the outstanding features of the main phase of the Industrial Revolution. Along with this, Capitalism entered a new and extraordinarily expensive phase.12 Coupled with the abnormal development of Capitalism was the influx of cheap unskilled labor in every industrial city; these people had neither traditions . . . nor respect

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11 Ibid., p. 45.

for the traditions of others. In his Queen Victoria, Strachey gives a good description of the Victorian Era:

It was a time of faction and anger, of violent repression and profound discontent. A powerful movement which had for long been checked by adverse circumstances, was now spreading throughout the country. New passions, new desires were abroad; or rather old passions and old desires, reincarnated with a new potency: love of freedom, hatred of injustice, hope for the future of man. The mighty still sat proudly in their seats, dispensing their ancient tyranny; but a storm was gathering out of the darkness, and already there was lightning in the sky. But the vastest forces must needs operate through frail human instruments; and it seemed for many years as if the great cause of English liberalism hung upon the life of the little girl at Kensington.

Among the numerous circumstances making for change, the chief one was the growth of democracy. Around 1827 when the center of gravity in the constitution was shifted toward the middle classes, the Whigs came into power bringing a touch of Liberalism to the Government. As a result of this new state of affairs, the Duchess of Kent and her daughter, from being the proteges of an opposition clique, became assets of the official majority of the nation. From that time Princess Victoria was the living symbol of the victory of the middle classes.

As in other countries, the post-Napoleonic period was in England a time seething with new ideas, new hopes, but irritated by the government's repression. To the evils of the Industrial Revolution were added

15 Ibid., p. 59.
the confusion of political discontent, astonishing theorizing, and strange proposals for social betterment. Although the fury of revolutionary ardor was spent, the protesting voice of the English people, hearkening backward for deliverance from present ills, was never entirely silenced. The protest against governmental policies was obviously felt; still there was no revolution.\footnote{16} However, between 1810 and 1848 the English ruling classes lived in almost constant fear of some violent upheaval; yet the age represents the triumph of the middle classes.\footnote{17} Throughout the period the dominating ideas as well as the reactions against them, were those based on middle-class idealism, middle-class prosperity, with the whole system reaching its height in the sixties and seventies, when Queen, Lords, and Commons showed a singular homogeneity of thought and feeling—a middle-class monarch supported by an aristocracy identifying itself with the middle class. On the whole the literature of the period, according to Batho, "is literature about the middle class, for the middle class, by the middle class, even that written by the most violent critics of the edifice."\footnote{18} Yet, at this time there were two measures of immense importance for the whole theory of the relation between the State and the Church of England: the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, which had


\footnote{17} Quennell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 19.

prevented Dissenters from holding civil office; and Catholic Emancipation which permitted Roman Catholics the right of English citizenship.¹⁹

Throughout the nineteenth century there was established a self-satisfied estimate that man had reached an adult life in which his mature powers were engaged in the expansion of human competence, and the intensification of human force in the control of the visible order. There was a generally accepted notion that the modern movement, so securely directed in its broad, safe channel, so enriched with a constantly improving scientific technique, must necessarily continue until it had brought mankind to an unprecedented mastery of his material environment. The majority of men were so overwhelmed with the magnitude of this secularism that they did not realize how far it was leading them; they managed to forget certain pertinent but uncomfortable considerations which might disturb their complacency. This was plainly evident in their acceptance of the doctrine of biological evolution as taught upon a basis of naturalism. These modern achievements seemed to show man's inheritance in this world realized. To quote Peck in this regard:

The vigour and massiveness of his modern success could give no final assurance as to human significance, for secularism has no ultimate canons or criteria of significance beyond the positive human success, the value of which is here in question. And there was indeed no certainty that even the modern success would not ultimately cease, for the belief that science would prove adequate to all possible contingencies was quite gratuitous in minds lacking any faith in a supernatural purpose above and within human life.²⁰

¹⁹ Peck, op. cit., p. 14
²⁰ Ibid., pp. 150-2.
This view leads, of course, inevitably to disillusion, producing only a chaotic self-contradiction in which man's powers are crushed by false theories and by the circumstances which those theories have induced.\textsuperscript{21}

It was only natural that the Liberalism of Bentham should be accepted enthusiastically by many of the new industrialists. The subsequent rapid growth of British manufacturing, commerce, and capital called forth in Britain a great deal of speculation on the nature of wealth and the means of obtaining it. Economic Liberalism maintained that the greatest number could gain the greatest good by encouraging the business enterprise and industrial profit of the individual and that to attain the best fruits of such encouragement they should follow the policy of \textit{laissez-faire}. This would include freedom of trade, of contract, of competition, and free use of the laws of supply and demand, to be gained without interference from government or social groups. It was the aim of economic Liberalism to put the industrial middle class into political power and to permit them to change government and legislation in order that the demands of their own self-interest might be met. Members of these classes became confirmed in the belief that their financial gains were the result exclusively of their own individual efforts and that they might become more wealthy if they could gain control of the government in order that they might reform legislation in accordance with Liberal principles.\textsuperscript{22} Hayes describes this Liberalism:

\begin{multicols}{2}
\\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p. 53.
\textsuperscript{22} Hayes, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 68-71.
\end{multicols}
Liberalism during the middle part of the nineteenth century had intellectual, economic, political, and international aspects. Intellectually, it championed freedom of thought, extolled technology, natural science and "machine civilization," and treated religion as a private affair of the individual conscience. In economics, it stood for individualism, for freedom of occupation and profession, for freedom of trade, for freedom of contract between the individual employer and the individual worker, and for unrestricted competition in business and trade. As such it was hostile to economic privileges of the agricultural classes, to tariff protectionism, to guilds and trade unions . . . and to governmental regulation of commerce and industry.23

After 1830 the doctrine of utility exercised a much wider influence on public opinion, politics, and the national life of the people. This doctrine sways the majority of minds, consciously or unconsciously; and, despite the fact that it is frowned upon, nevertheless here is the effective philosophy of the Victorian society. This philosophy or rationalism couples with the new and powerful expression of the desire to understand what exists and to reduce it to some sort of a unity. We find this in Darwin's theories of living beings, and Spencer's theories in regard to the entire cosmos. The new geology through fossils led to this new biology in the case of Darwin's questioning the word of Moses; the new history treated the sacred documents, the Bible, as merely historical, doubting the authenticity and seeking proof of bias and human disabilities in the writings.24 Work in the technical fields, as Faraday's

23 Ibid., p. 73.
electro-magnetism, probably had little influence except that it reinforced the utilitarian movement and encouraged the idea of progress.

But the advance in the field of biology, as already mentioned, created a minor revolution. Some of these ideas are produced in Darwin's famous chapter, "The Struggle for Existence," where he states:

A corollary of the highest importance ... that the structure of every organic being is related, in the most essential yet often hidden manner, to that of all the other organic beings, with which it comes into competition ....

Again from Darwin we can conclude that as long as the scientist himself asserts that it is impossible to conceive this immense and wonderful universe as the result of blind chance and variations are in useless as well as useful directions, the design argument as applied to living things is unjustifiable. However, such a conclusion with the further explanation of the scientist's Natural Selection would tear down the story of creation as found in Genesis, would question the infallibility of the Holy Bible; to the theologians this was a virtual denial of western philosophy. Further implications of the doctrine were found equally destructive. Darwin's theory of evolution profoundly influenced man's ways of thinking in regard to nature and religion. Baldwin would add:

26 Batho, op. cit., p. 29


The world is no longer looked upon as a piece of mosaic work put together by a skilful artificer—as the old design theory looked upon it—but as a whole, a cosmos, of law-abiding and progressive change.29

As the only possible meeting ground between science and religion, Herbert Spencer seized upon the immanence of the Primal Cause. He carried over the Darwinian doctrine into his elaborations in ethics, sociology, and psychology; like all the first supporters of Darwin, Spencer was optimistic about the cosmic process and felt, as did many others, that evolution would result only in improvement. Essentially an agnostic, Spencer's conception of our relations with the First Cause deeply affected the thinkers of his day who were wrestling with the recurring problem of evil. Spencer himself says:

If Religion and Science are to be reconciled, the basis of reconciliation must be this deepest, widest, and most certain of all facts—that the Power which the Universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable.50

But man could not quench that yearning for Ultimate Knowledge that constantly troubled his mind; yet many were willing to accept agnosticism as the only answer to that great problem: it appeared the continual soul strife, "until it rests in Thee, O Lord." They did not seem to realize in this era that it was the one great Power of Christ they were actually seeking.


Probably the most enthusiastic of the evolutionists was Thomas Huxley who modified in several measures the still hypothetical theory of evolution. At a time when certain groups seemed to trust only to well-rooted opinion, he wrote in defense of objective truth. His idea is to face the world as it actually is:

We live in a world which is full of misery and ignorance, and the plain duty of each and all of us is to try to make the little corner he can influence somewhat less miserable and somewhat less ignorant than it was before he entered it. To do this effectively it is necessary to be fully possessed of only two beliefs—the first, that the order of nature is ascertainable by our faculties to an extent which is practically unlimited; the second, that our volition counts for something as a condition of the course of events. Each of these beliefs can be verified experimentally as often as we like to try. Each, therefore, stands upon the strongest foundation upon which any belief can rest, and forms one of our highest truths. 51

Another writer in favor of the exalted position of science was John Stuart Mill. In his work On Liberty, he states:

No one can be a great thinker who does not recognize that as a thinker it is his first duty to follow his intellect to whatever conclusions it may lead. Truth gains even more by the errors of one, who, with due study and preparation, thinks for himself, than by the true opinion of those who only hold them because they do not suffer themselves to think. 52

Mill found it difficult to accept anything that was beyond empirical knowledge; it seemed an impossibility for him to acknowledge the fact that an Omnipotent Creator could permit the presence of evil in the world. Mill puts forth this idea in his Three Essays on Religion:

The only admissible moral theory of Creation is that the Principle of Good cannot at once and altogether subdue the powers of evil, either physical or moral; could not place mankind in a world free from the necessity of an incessant struggle with the maleficient powers, or make them always victorious in that struggle, but could and did make them capable of carrying on the fight with vigour and progressively increasing success. 53

Science was brought in really close contact with the problem of the basis of morality when evolutionary suggestions began to be applied to the practical side of religion, the side of ethics. Man's relation to his code of conduct is thus given by Dampier-Whetham:

If the moral law has been delivered to mankind once for all . . . there is no more to be said. Man has a perfectly valid reason for his ideals of conduct, and has not to do but obey. . . .

But, if we are not sure about Sinai, we are driven to feel for other ground. . . . Either, with Kant, we must accept the moral law of our consciences as an innate "categorical imperative" . . .

Dampier-Whetham then offers the other alternative:

Bentham, Mill and the utilitarians looked for a naturalistic basis in the securing of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." 54

"Morality has arisen because it is socially useful; that is the Darwinian account," according to Baldwin. 55 With the main thesis of evolutionary ethics, moral instincts are chance variations preserved and deepened by natural selection; those races and peoples which make


some effort to preserve them are gaining an advantage over those that do not; however, competition occurs between individuals as well as between races. It was here that the contrast between the moral law and the selfishness apparently necessary for success in the life struggle impressed contemporary writers; they seemed to feel that morality could have but slight chance against personal self-interest. The Darwinian theory itself was being conveniently stretched to include almost any possibility. Superficial thinkers accepted "the survival of the fittest" as a justification for the rule of might; aggression by a nation or by an individual took on the aspect of duty.

With the growth of democracy elementary education became generally accessible. In speaking of the conditions of the day, Trevelyan states:

The cause of Adult Education received its first stimulus from the Industrial Revolution in the desire of mechanics for general scientific knowledge, and the willingness of the more intelligent part of the middle class to help to supply their demand. It was a movement partly professional and utilitarian, partly intellectual and ideal.

With the Education Acts, making a certain measure of education compulsory, there rapidly was produced an enormous reading public; a vast body of people who heretofore had little or no access to literature were now reached by it, and in turn influenced its character. Lowering the price of printing and paper increased the demand for books, so that the production was multiplied.

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The general literary level was elevated; it was an age "of spacious intellectual horizons, noble endeavor, and bright aspirations." Almost all of the great Victorian writers endeavored in some way "to move, instruct, or inspire the huge, unleavened mass of society." Along with this the Sunday schools had served to create numbers of new readers and to stimulate in the middle classes a further desire for education. New weekly magazines replaced the monthly periodicals with a wide circulation. Books were in great demand; they were circulated by libraries, book societies, Sunday schools, and parishes. Popular authors were making fortunes from the sale of their works. Approximately half the population, now nearing fourteen millions, could read.

Within certain limits, the Victorian Age was conspicuously religious; at least, it was extremely earnest. The bourgeois revolution accomplished by the Reform Bill produced effects on the religious as well as on the secular side of national life. Like the Throne and the aristocracy, the Church of England was believed to be in danger from the triumphant Liberalism which was in the ascendant in the country. A parliament of laymen attempted to correct certain minor abuses and studied a more equitable way of distributing church funds. Finally, a crisis was reached that began the train of ecclesiastical revolution. Catholic Ireland had

37 Albert, op. cit., p. 454.
for a long time been governed by a staff of Protestant bishops, who in the
eyes of the majority of the people were not only heretics but symbols of
a detested tyranny, a constant source of irritation to them. In 1833,
when the Government announced its intention of suppressing ten of the
bishoprics of the Irish Church, after Lord Grey had warned the bishops to
set their house in order, it was considered an act of national apostasy.40
The broad effect of the changes was to widen the basis of the State, and in
consequence to loosen the ties which bound the Established Church and State
together. Now the Commons in Parliament could no longer be said to repren-
sent the laity of the Church. Although conformity to the usages and rites
of the Church of England was not required of the legislators of the nation,
the State, in virtue of the Establishment, still retained legislative
authority over the Church. Up to this time the national character of the
Church of England had been almost universally emphasized by the clergy;
Church and nation were regarded as convertible terms, but now the difference
between the two was being accentuated. Anxiety and unrest had for some
time been felt in ecclesiastical circles.41 The crisis came when the
Government's intention in relation to the Irish Sees was announced; then
Mr. Keble, author of the Christian Year, thundered against it in impas-
sioned terms from the University pulpit. This sermon gave the signal for
a new crusade, conducted not by arms, but by tracts.

41 Vernon F. Storr, The Development of English Theology in the
It was noticeable that the official heads of the Established Church in the early part of the nineteenth century were insignificant as leaders of religious opinion; they seemed to think more of privileges than of the Church's mission. The Anglican Church has been described as the praying section of the Tory party—most of the bishops were Tories, because since 1785 a long succession of Tory Prime Ministers had selected the bishops. Some of these men had been college tutors; some had served the party politically; some were relatives of noblemen who owned rotten boroughs. In the ordinary parish, the clergymen were respectable, kindly men who did little, but all that was expected of them. 42

Young depicts this Victorian history:

Early Victorian history might be read as the formation in the thirties of a Marxian bourgeoisie which never came into existence, the re-emergence in the forties of a more ancient tradition, a sense of the past and a sense of social coherence, which never fulfilled its promise, and a compromise between the two which possessed no ultimate principle of stability. 45

Throughout, the period shows an inextricable weaving of threads, of factions which seems leagues apart in philosophy. Rationalism, Evangelicalism, utilitarianism, the Oxford Movement, materialism, agnosticism revolve strangely around one another, at one time agreeing, at another time attacking. Each helps to make the literature of this period


one of enormous vitality and of continual conflict. Moral sense, the social conscience, which animated the middle class, is the binding force of the period; the need for self-justification ran through everything.

The English of this age worshipped both God and Mammon. In some manifestations of the Victorian mind there is an aspect of horror, while other confusions seem to have a charming naivety. Whatever the political or religious aspect, the age throughout was one of reform, often the result of the popular theories. As the Catholic Emancipation appeared to some a grave mistake, so did the Factory Acts seem outrageous heresy to the Utilitarians. On the whole, however, the period was one of unthinkable progress economically. The difficult times up until 1848, indescribably cruel for some, evoked a revolutionary spirit. Later an unparalleled prosperity and an astonishing increase in the population once more pointed toward progress. This developed a superficial optimism and profound complacency which apparently killed the incipient sentiments of revolution. The difficulties that arose after that period were soon overcome or accepted in better spirit, but the seed of distrust had been planted. Thus it remained an age of doubt. 44 In giving her reasons for the disillusionment of the era, Batho relates:

But perhaps the main reason for the Victorian characteristics was the spiritual discomfort of the age; hardly anybody of clear vision or artistic sensibility could accept the implications of the God-Mammon worship which pervaded most of the century, the idea that to make money through industry was itself a virtue, and together with the repression of natural enjoyment (which militated

44 Batho, op. cit., pp. 32-5.
against amassing riches), the virtue most pleasing to God. Emotionally, perhaps, they would have liked to belong to the Church, but in all intellectual honesty, they could not. Materialism, however, did not satisfy them. . . . It was not an age of scepticism so much as an age of muddle. The Victorians were floundering along to something, valiantly, energetically, but they were floundering; they looked into their hearts and wrote, but what they found in that treacherous organ was a confusion which their heads could not clarify.45

The acknowledged truth found in early Victorian literature appears at first sight to consist of little more than all those dogmas which a victorious middle class had imposed on the nation. At this time we find English society poised on a double paradox which its critics, within and without, called hypocrisy. Its practical ideals were not in accord with its religious professions, while its religious belief took issue with its intelligence.46 In this tone Young succinctly describes mid-Victorian days:

One of the last survivors of the mid-Victorian time spoke of those years as having the sustained excitement of a religious revival. . . . Not for a long time had the English character seemed so upright, or English thought so formless, as in that happy half generation when the demand for organic change was quiescent, the religious foundations were perishing, and the balance of land and industry was slowly toppling.47

As has been shown, early Victorian thought is regulated by the conception of progress; so we see that the late Victorian thought is overshadowed by the doctrine of evolution. But the idea of progress had been forced to accord with the dominant Protestant faith; nevertheless,

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46 Young, op. cit., p. 16.  
Evangelicalism was too prone to explain all by natural causes. It did not show evidence of vitality and fecundity, of energy attributable to a Vital Principle within, of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the living Church should; growth and adaptation to a changing world cannot be explained by purely natural causes. On the other hand, the life of the Catholic Church during this period is strong in the survival and eventual triumph of the Papacy, in the close-knit organization and functioning of the hierarchy, in the energy of outstanding bishops and priests, in the spontaneous activity and loyalty of great Catholic laymen. Religious activity is further evident in the Oxford Movement.48

A period of tremendous intellectual activity, the nineteenth century advanced remarkably along material lines as a result of an application of mind to the mysteries of nature. Mastery over nature has in itself a spiritual significance, but the nineteenth century not only turned its back upon the supernatural, it likewise employed its mental powers to discredit the supernatural. This, too, meant intellectual activity. It had its new systems--political, economic, and social--and it was eloquent in their defense. It borrowed from Christianity to build its utopias. Although its leaders were logical and illogical, rational and sentimental, they did a great deal of thinking.49

As in all periods of quickened life in a nation, Individualism, with its unbridled thinking, its unmixed self-consciousness, had now

48 Corrigan, op. cit., p. 6.
49 Ibid., p. 75.
become one of the ruling ideas of public and personal life, since it was found to be quite in harmony with the common political and social opinion. The glorification of individual freedom to act as it pleased, independent of the interests of the whole, ruled the internal politics of the State, of trade, and of all social questions. Now for the great part of the era, the utilitarian tradition of Mill held the center of the field; it was the philosophy in office. Although this simple Victorian rationalism held the center, it was assailed on many sides; the rest of the intellectual history of the time is a series of reactions against it: the first of these was the Oxford Movement and the newer medievalism of Newman; then from Ruskin descend those who may be called the Pre-Raphaelites of prose and poetry. Actually the study of Victorian literature abounds in such typical attacks on scientific rationalism. While the upper classes were utterly pagan, the middle classes were emerging from a state of damaged Puritanism. There was not so much a taste for Catholic dogma, but simply a hunger for dogma. We see the Oxford Movement as a revolt against the Victorian spirit in one particular aspect of it. They saw that the solid and serious Victorians were fundamentally frivolous, because they were fundamentally inconsistent.

A preliminary glance at the literature of the period once again warns us that in collating an age with its literature, we must always

remember that the best minds may very well be in reaction against their age. We see here the constant fight for righteousness against cruelty and smugness which was waged by the chief figures of the time; their urgent protests are indicative of the age. There is scarcely a writer of influence who shared the supposed Victorian self-gratulation; on the contrary, they were nearly all in rebellion against it, loudly indignant or tortured with doubt. Perhaps the return to "medievalism," the cry of "back to the Middle Ages" heard so frequently, may be attributed to a more common reaction against the ideas and realities of the era. This thread was woven through much of the thought of the period, but always as a protest against actual conditions, intellectual or physical. The internal revolution in the Anglican Church figures as the most important center of intellectual ferment in early Victorian days. 52

Accordingly there likewise entered nineteenth century literature a rejuvenating reaction from a land where the past was still in the soil, Italy. With the appearance of the Rossettis came the Dantean relief for which England so mysteriously yearned; for them it meant actually something which would antedate Raphael: the mystic fervor of Dante and Perugino, the religious art of the Catholic ages. 53 Two centuries of intellectualism had produced such an intolerable state of society that there occurred a spontaneous turning to a social order and art which had


been produced by an immortal Christianity. In many ways it was a blindly
popular return of these Victorians from the superficial optimism of the
times to the consoling shadows of the Catholic Church of their ancestors.

As Alexander so aptly expresses it:

It meant the effort to revive the shriveled culture of the non-
Catholic world by contact with a Catholic culture without any
disposition to reaffirm belief in supernatural principle that had
produced that culture. 54

We can watch both these movements, the Oxford and the Pre-Raphaelite,
so widely different, tiring of the current rationalism and searching in
their respective ways for Truth and Beauty. In this era man, relinquishing
his traditional creeds, accepted, all unwittingly, false doctrines that
he might live the more intelligently; instead he discovered he had been
blinded by error and found himself very close to despair. Science had
changed not only man's ways of living but had distorted his ways of
thought; it had trampled down to apparent nothingness the steadfast belief
in the exhilaration of the dogma of Love and had substituted the enervating
whirl of the god of Industry. Although springing from far different causes,
both the Oxford Movement and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement were counter-
attacks against the new, uninspiring, mechanistic philosophy—scientific
materialism.

54 Calvert Alexander, S.J., The Catholic Literary Revival
CHAPTER II

TRACTARIANISM: A RESULT OF DOUBT

I am but one of yourselves,—a Presbyter; and therefore I conceal my name, lest I should take too much on myself by speaking in my own person. Yet speak I must; for the times are very evil, yet no one speaks against them.

Is not this so, do we not all confess the peril into which the Church is come, yet sit still each in his own retirement, as if mountains and seas cut off brother from brother?¹

This passage echoes the spirit of alarm with which the Tractarians viewed the state of the Church of England; however, these conditions must be traced into past times. The tearing asunder of Western Christian unity in the sixteenth century by the Protestant Revolt brought on drastic results in later days, consequences entirely unforeseen by the so-called Reformers. Much of Europe, discard the infallibility of the Pope for the "infallibility" of private judgment of the Bible, found themselves led to still further disintegration into many sects, with numerous controversies as to dogmas and usage among the Reformers themselves, carrying down to their posterity. Moreover, as the authority of private interpretation of the Bible had been substituted for the authority of Rome, likewise, the authority of the State was gradually substituted for the authority of the Church. In order then, that the Church should escape

poverty and disestablishment, it was necessary that it should identify itself with the government. Apostolic succession, a governing hierarchy, and a sacramental system ceased to be a part of the English Church. Now in the nineteenth century historic Christianity was slipping into still greater insignificance.\(^2\) This is brought out very forcefully in one of the Tracts:

\[\ldots\] We cannot but see, that there is a great struggle going on between good and evil; and that, while we trust true Religion is increasing, it cannot be denied that Infidelity and Opposition to lawful authority, whether of God or man, is increasing likewise. And especially, as regards our own Church, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that she has many and powerful enemies, both visible and invisible, and that wicked spirits and wicked men are seeking to undermine and overthrow her. The thought of these evils on all sides will naturally lead us to Him, Who alone can protect us from them.\(^3\)

Such was the religious situation in England in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when the Anglican Church was practically dead spiritually, and what spark of religious fervor remained to her was either just non-Catholic or anti-Catholic. Men, dominated by the prejudice of Protestantism, viewed the Mass as an act of idolatry, the veneration of the Blessed Mother of God and the saints as blasphemy, the Pope as the Anti-Christ. The Church of England was, theologically, thoroughly Protestant; it was, politically, the mere servant of the State, exercising practically no influence for social justice.\(^4\)


\(^3\) "Tract 14," p. 6.

\(^4\) Ross, op. cit., p. 5.
Arnold felt that no human power could save the Church of England in 1632; Whately thought it a difficult task to preserve it from utter ruin; Knox held that the Church was worn out. They deemed the bishops as men who amassed wealth for their families, and who had attained place and influence by editing Greek plays or by minor offices. Now in the face of revolutionary clouds, they stood by, helplessly bewildered, able to give neither sound counsel nor kindly aid.  

In the midst of this apathy arose a reaction against the horrors of the French Revolution and the tyranny of the times. When the Anglican Church seemed most subservient to the Government, when it appeared most thoroughly Protestant, a few Oxford scholars raised their voices in stirring protest against such tendencies. This is manifest in the first Tract published:

If then we express our belief in the existence of One Church on earth from Christ's coming to the end of all things, if there is a promise it shall continue, and if it is our duty to do our part in our generation towards its continuance, how can we with a safe conscience countenance the interference of the Nation in its concerns? Does not such interference tend to destroy it? Would it not destroy it, if consistently followed up? How may we sit still and keep silence, when efforts are making to break up, or at least materially to weaken that Ecclesiastical Body which we know is intended to last while the world endures, and the safety of which is committed to our keeping in our day? How shall we answer for it, if we transmit that Ordinance of God less entire than when it came to us?

When in 1817 Newman came up to Oxford, no one would have predicted that within a few years the dry bones of the Church of England would have

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6 "Tract 1," p. 3.
new life given them—still less would anyone have chosen the shy, awkward youth as the moving spirit in a Catholic Revival. The Oxford Movement has been considered a revival within the Anglican Church of the Roman Catholic doctrines which the English had always retained in their Prayer Book; such doctrines of great importance as the Apostolic succession, the priesthood, the sacraments, the Divine Presence, had lost in the last century prominence in the Established Church. This Movement, the first and only time that England seemed to make a definite turn about, was a transition after the Napoleonic wars, when educated Englishmen were endeavoring to come to some decision as to whether they should be romantic or scientific while ordinary people were hemmed in by an industrial age. Leslie describes it as:

... a deliberate turning back of the clock when men wistfully recalled mediaeval time and even tampered with works made in the sixteenth century, when England had broken from the Pope and the Holy Roman Empire as far as both presented a United Christendom.7

But the great obstacle, historically, that stood in the way of the Oxford Movement was the Reformation. Donaldson regards it "as a great reaction from the growing and deadening blight of a false liberalism: a protest against Erastian ideas of the office and very being of the Church."8

The Oxford Movement, not one of mere theorizing, distinctly practical as well as theological, was concerned with great questions of

religious principle—as defining the Church; seeking to discover whether it is a reality or a mere manner of speech; how it may be recognized above its counterfeits; what comprises its basic constitution; its main teachings, its shortcomings, and need for reformation. In one of the Tracts this need for amendment is set forth:

These remarks are written, in the hope that those who read will ask themselves honestly, whether they have not been guilty of neglecting the proper observance of the Ember days: and whether the revival of the primitive custom of keeping them might not be attended with a great national blessing; whether it might not be a means under God of averting the dangers which surround us. Many are now lamenting that we have in some respects lost sight of that "godly discipline," which the Church orders for the good of her members. But ought we not to seek a restoration of what is lost, as well as lament for it; and seriously set ourselves to the most effectual way of gaining what we need? And again, many are crying out against the faults of the Church; but have any a right to do so, till they themselves have tried every means in their power of amending what they feel to be an evil? And can we say, that we have tried every means, as long as an Institution like that of which I have been speaking, so edifying, and so likely to gain a blessing, is so generally neglected?9

Besides these theological aspects, the Movement was also marked by a deep earnestness on the practical side of genuine Christian life. It was, above all, moral, marked by a deep seriousness and reverence for good.10

In a world that was not religious to any extent, the Oxford Movement boldly stood for "the religion of Sacraments, external worship, organization, and all those embodiments of the religious spirit which


people had begun to look upon almost with contempt. Chesterton terms it a rational Movement:

... It was an appeal to reason: reason said that if a Christian had a feast day he must have a fast day too. Otherwise, all days ought to be alike; and this was that very Utilitarianism against which their Oxford Movement was the first and most rational assault.

It was eminently an intellectual Movement with its first leaders among the most distinguished scholars of the University, all men with eminent intellectual ability, greatly concerned with the problem of finding an adequate, satisfactory basis for their religious faith. To do this they delved deeply into history as Cecil states:

It is the particular distinction of the Oxford Movement among efforts after a nobler life that it was rooted in history as no other movement has ever been. In ecclesiastical historians England was, as Newman saw, singularly deficient.

However, to find the roots of the Oxford Movement, one must go to the country parsonages of Gloucestershire and Devon; Dawson describes it:

... by the banks of the Windrush and the Dart. It was there that the first links were forged of the chain that was to draw the Anglican tradition out of the rut of conventionality and Erastianism in which it had stuck so long.

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12 Chesterton, *op. cit.*, p. 45.


Entering into any spiritual epoch like that of the Oxford Movement brings us into the presence of men whose spirits are still alive and have the ability to move us. One of the strong points in the Tractarians’ favor is that they had men of the first rank as their spokesmen, like Keble, Pusey, and Newman, men who knew their own mind. To these leaders’ names may also be added that of Hugh James Rose, and William Palmer and others. But the men of genius, the writers of real force were the three Oriel men, actually with less experience and learning than Rose, Palmer, and the others. These bolder, keener spirits pierced more deeply into the real conditions of the times. Not disposed to smooth over and excuse what they thought hollow falsehood, to put up with fancy compromises and half-measures, to be patient toward apathy, negligence, or indolence, they had more in them of the temper of warfare than the others. It is quite apparent that they were indignant that the Anglican Church was being lost by selfish stupidity; they felt the country needed some plain speaking to combat the enemy against the Church in its very household.16

The first of these, Keble, born at the close of the eighteenth century, son of a Gloucestershire rector, was of a family in which traditional High Church principles animated a very sincere and somewhat Puritan form of religion. John Keble, now of strong, impressive character, armed with the training of his father, scholar and fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, gained a scholarship in December, 1806, at the same college when but fourteen. In less than seven years he had obtained

16 Church, op. cit., pp. 96-97.
a double First Class, and was made Fellow of Oriel. Even though he was quite young, great deference was paid to Keble in the Common Room; this he retained throughout his lifetime. Although he was admired for his brilliant mind, it was actually his saintly nature which was admired most. Inclined to be reticent, on occasion he could become most ardent in his zeal; his quiet courtesy when needed could turn to serious rebuke. A courageously sincere character, Keble would, when a question arose, think it out according to the principle of religious justice as he saw it, then tenaciously hold to his opinion, acting with the strength of one who knows no fear. 17 Dawson tells of him: "It is in Keble that the moral ideal of Tractarianism finds its fullest expression." 18 He was doubtlessly looked to for advice—this is evident in his letters of counsel, his sermons, and it is the whole spirit of his work, The Christian Year. Cornish states:

... He moved in a narrow path, securely; holding fast to the apostolical tradition according to the ancient Anglican acceptation of it, and to the belief that the Church of England, though fallen on evil days, had God's blessing, and that the saints of that communion had died or were living in God's favour. It was the knowledge of Keble's stability in one set of opinions, which is also evidence of want of elasticity of mind and narrowness of view, that made so many turn to him as an oracle. 19

18 Dawson, op. cit., p. 16.
19 Cornish, op. cit., p. 216.
Pusey, another great leader of the Movement, was born in 1800 of rich, cultivated landowners; his father was the youngest son of a vis-count, while his mother was also of noble birth. His was a religious, Evangelical home. From his early years he displayed great receptive ability and a gentle amiability which accompanied him through life. From Eton he entered Christ Church; as Fellow of Oriel in 1825, he came in contact with Newman, but it was not until later years that they became intimate friends. Although his sympathies had been mainly High Church, he was carried into the Tractarian camp by his longing for holiness.

To speak of the Tractarian Movement is to speak as of one subject—that of the life and activities of John Henry Newman. Born in Old Broad Street, London, on February 21, 1801, Newman, the son of a London banker, was baptized in the Church of St. Benet Fink on April 9. As a child he spent his time at Grey's Court, Ham, near Richmond. In 1808, he was sent to a private school at Ealing, maintained by Dr. Nicholas of Wadham College, Oxford. During his eight and a half years at this school, he took little part in games, but he was still looked upon as a leader, often being asked by the other boys to act as arbitrator in their disputes. As a child he was familiar with the Bible, due to the religious training which he received at home. In 1816 Newman was entered as a commoner of Trinity College, and the following June he came into residence. In 1818 Newman was elected scholar of Trinity. At this time he planned to take law

20 Brilioth, op. cit., p. 125.
as his profession, but later he turned to Holy Orders. Gaining the Oriel Fellowship seemed to make up for his previous lack of scholastic success; this is characterized as a turning point in his life. It was as a Fellow that Newman came into intimacy with Pusey, Froude, and other Tractarians. In 1824, at Pusey's suggestion, Newman, after his ordination, took the curacy of St. Clement's. His life after that was closely enjoined in the Tractarian Movement which brought his ultimate entrance into the Church he had been seeking.  

Two years after the birth of one Tractarian leader, another was born—Richard Hurrell Froude, beloved by all who knew him. Froude went to Eton, and in 1821 to Oriel where he was under Keble's tutelage; in 1826 he was elected Fellow. Froude was College Tutor from 1827 to 1830 with Newman and Wilberforce as colleagues. In 1831 his health failed and a year later he toured the south of Italy with Newman. Speaking of Froude, Cornish observes:

... He was master of the hearts of his friends; and though he could not compare in loftiness of intellect and authority with Newman, nor with Keble in steadiness of character, nor in learning and industry with Pusey, his audacity and combativeness, his uncompromising love of what he held to be truth, his brilliancy of reasoning power... his poetic insight and wide reach of imagination marked him as a man of unusual gifts. Froude was less moved than Newman, much less than Keble, by personal and historical associations: he was more hard-headed, but also more impulsive, assertive, and paradoxical... Whilst Keble worshipped in the sanctuary of the past, and Newman carefully and with tears gathered up the elements of his belief, and steadfastly refused to look forward or to take any step without sure footing, Froude, irresponsible,

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fearless, careless of respectabilities and conventions, will have no half-truths or half-measures, exposes fallacies, breaks idols, tears open shutters. . . . Froude accepted the notions of a hierarchical system, sacerdotal power, the authority of tradition, the excellence of virginity, the principle of penance and mortification. . . .

As Froude lay dying, he compared himself to the man who had performed one good act in his life and that was to make Newman and Keble understand one another. This is an important contribution, because these two minds and wills with Hurrell's sympathy, brought on a new current of spiritual activity which created a vast change in the religious life of England.25 According to Corrigan, Froude, had he lived, would surely have preceded Ward, Oakeley, Ambrose St. John, and Newman into the Roman Catholic Church; for he hated the anti-Roman aspect of the Reformation, its rejection of Tradition, its contempt for the medieval past, its fawning on the secular power, its scurrilous invective against Catholic devotions.24 He quite openly displayed his devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, to our Blessed Mother, and to the saints; he spoke his admiration of Christian asceticism and voluntary chastity. In these respects he found his counterpart in Newman. The feeling of chivalrous adventure which adds charm to the beginnings of the Oxford Movement, comes mainly from Froude, the soul which never had time to ripen.


23 Dawson, op. cit., p. 15.

24 Corrigan, op. cit., p. 154.
In these men we have the nucleus of the Tractarian leaders.

Dawson remarks concerning them:

That Keble, Newman and Froude were the joint authors and creators of the Oxford Movement few, if any, students will deny, but it is a much more difficult matter to determine their relative importance. Each of them played an essential part, but no one of them could have realized himself without the cooperation of the rest. Froude alone would have gone up like a rocket and left nothing behind him but a shower of sparks. Keble alone would have been a Conservative country clergyman who wrote pleasing religious verse and came up to Oxford to vote against reform. Newman alone could certainly have done something, but who can say what?25

Again let us quote Dawson:

As the friendship between Keble and Froude prepared the way for the Oxford Movement, so that between Froude and Newman made it a reality. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of Froude's influence on Newman during the years from 1829 to 1836 which saw the inauguration of the movement and the ripening of Newman's own genius.26

From 1828 to 1835, Keble, Newman, and Froude were all converging toward action that had a definite purpose. As the dogmatic principles took a firmer hold of his mind and the Anglican Church seemed more and more threatened by the political agitation surrounding it, Newman's spirit constantly arose within him. During this time the political course of events was causing disturbance. Liberalism had taken its place in first rank; the Anglicans were highly intolerant of the Emancipation of Catholics. Oxford was disturbed by the general unrest; the heads of houses were divided amongst themselves. Both 1831 and 1832 saw still

25 Dawson, op. cit., p. 12
26 Dawson, op. cit., p. 25.
greater agitation. Revolution in France agitated assaults against the Church at home. These things deeply impressed the Oxford group who by this time had a bond of feeling.27

Newman brought the ideas of the Oxford Movement to a systematic completeness which could reach culmination only in the Roman Catholic Church. He fixed the birthday of the Movement on the fourteenth of July, 1835, the anniversary of the capture of the Bastille, the commemoration of a Movement which had sent priests and consecrated kings flying from their churches. Newman himself had just returned from a trip to Sicily, memorable because a dangerous fever nearly cost his life; memorable, too, for it was at this time that he wrote his hymn so well known, "Lead Kindly Light."28 Speaking of the beginning of the Movement, Newman tells us:

When I got home from abroad, I found that already a movement had commenced, in opposition to the specific danger which at that time was threatening the religion of the nation and its Church. Several zealous and able men had united their counsels, and were in correspondence with each other. The principal of these were Mr. Keble, Hurrell Froude . . . Mr. William Palmer of Dublin and Worcester College . . . Mr. Arthur Perceval, and Mr. Hugh Rose.29

It was on this July day, then, that Keble preached his famous Assize Sermon. When the number of bishoprics was lessened in Catholic

28 Cecil, op. cit., p. 52.
Ireland, Keble considered this an act of apostasy. Thus the author of the *Christian Year* thundered violently his political sermon directed at Lord Grey and the Liberal Ministry—this sermon which sounded the signal for the new crusade of the Movement. Following the Assize Sermon was a meeting at Hadleigh; Hurrell Froude was there, but Newman and Keble only in spirit. The others who attended this incendiary meeting were Rose, William Palmer, and Perceval—but these men did not prove to be the main leaders as the group progressed. It was then that a plan of campaign was decided upon, and so in the following September Newman published the first of his Tracts. In this volume their purpose is stated:

The following Tracts were published with the object of contributing something towards the practical revival of doctrines, which, although held by the great divines of one Church, at present have become obsolete with the majority of her members, and are withdrawn from public view even by the more learned and orthodox few who still adhere to them.50

Because of the variety and distances of the residences of these men, they found meeting a difficulty at first. As Newman says, "Universities are the natural centres of intellectual movements."51 Therefore, Oxford became the natural center for them—Oxford once again coming into its own as a haven of religion. While they were still planning what should be done for the betterment of the Church of England, Newman began action:


51 Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
I . . . had out of my own head begun the Tracts; and these . . . were looked upon by Mr. Palmer's friends with considerable alarm. The great point at the time with these good men in London,—some of them men of the highest principle, and far from influenced by what we used to call Erastianism,—was to put down the Tracts. I, as their editor, and mainly their author was, of course, willing to give way. Keble and Froude advocated their continuance strongly, and were angry with me for consenting to stop them. Mr. Palmer shared the anxiety of his own friends. . . .

Early Newman recognized that the work of a hundred and fifty years had to be undone in the English Church to return to the Anglicanism of the seventeenth century, while Froude soon began to disown the Reformation of the sixteenth century. So many were questioning the English Church and so many intellectuals had strong opinions on the reformation that was needed now in the nineteenth century that Newman felt tracts would be the solution so that they could air their views without consigning the responsibility to any particular party.

For a long time tracts had been the most familiar form of religious propagandism; many people made it their business to deliver tracts to homes, through the mail, or to those chance acquaintances; but this was something different—the clergy and the educated were the distributors of these tracts. Newman explains some of his tactics in spreading his propaganda:

... I called upon clergy in various parts of the country, whether I was acquainted with them or not, and I attended at the houses of

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32 Ibid., p. 65.

friends where several of them were from time to time assembled. I do not think that much came of such attempts, nor were they quite in my way. Also I wrote various letters to clergymen, which fared not much better, except that they advertised the fact, that a rally in favor of the Church was commencing. I did not care whether my visits were made to high Church or low Church; I wished to make a strong pull in union with all who were opposed to the principles of liberalism, whoever they might be.  

Some of the Tracts were not good, but they served their purpose as bulk to keep the subject before the people. They were "learned, wise, and good, but not calculated to take hearts by storm." These Tracts, fast becoming the watchword and symbol of an enterprise which was soon to become a remarkable one, were circulated by post, by hand, by young clergymen who would bring them to their neighbors and parishioners at almost any time of the day. An immense correspondence ensued; everyone was put to work in the furthering of the Tracts, whether he was one of the more educated or of the very poor class. Great changes and movements have been begun in various ways; some in secret, underground communication, some in daring acts of self-devotion or violence, some in the organization of an institution, some in the persistent display of a particular temper and set of habits, in popular preaching—but that a religious revolution could be begun and kept moving through tracts, characterizing the entire Movement, was an unheard of phenomenon. The Tracts, clear, brief, stern appeal to conscience and reason, sparing in words, utterly without rhetoric, were intense in purpose. Church epitomizes: "They were like the short, sharp,


rapid utterances of men in pain and danger and pressing emergency."\textsuperscript{56}

But there were practical difficulties. The bookseller did not like tracts, considering them litter that merely occupy space, encumber accounts, and in general, not a paying proposition. However, apparently for conscience sake, Messrs. Rivington undertook the London publication. To make it convenient for the publishers the Tracts were to come out with the monthlies. They were to be written anonymously. But the difficulty was that the only one who could write tracts was the greatest reader of such things, Newman himself. He urged the others to contribute, but they wrote mainly sermons and treatises.

In Volume 3 of the Tracts, we are definitely told that they were written to alarm, to make people realize that unsound principles were attacking the very being of Anglican teaching. They were written "to startle all who heard" into serious thought and action.\textsuperscript{57} Accordingly, the writers of the Tracts followed their studies of the early Fathers and of the Anglican divines of the seventeenth century. As a result each advocated a restoration of Catholic customs and doctrines which had not been used to any extent since the Revolution of 1688. Although handling different aspects of it, the writers took the same general viewpoint. Thus had been begun this great project which had for its aim the rousing of the Established Church from its lethargy, the strengthening and purifying of religion. This not too popular appeal addressed itself only to

\textsuperscript{56} Church, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 98.

\textsuperscript{57} "Tracts," Vol. 3, p. iv.
the few, providing inspiration and instruction for the teachers. The first Tracts bear the date, September 9, 1855. The beginning pamphlet contained a simple exhortation to consider the form and meaning of the Ordination Services, with the implication of Apostolic succession. Within a year Pusey became one of the agitators, his learning providing the party with a name—the "Puseyites." He later wrote a valuable Tract discussing the meaning and purpose of Baptism. In his Apologia, Newman mentions Pusey's "great learning, his immense diligence, his scholarlike mind, his simple devotion to the cause of religion" as manifested in his Tracts on Fasting and Baptism and in his Library of the Fathers. Newman felt certain that without Pusey the Tractarians would have had little chance of resisting Liberal aggression. But Pusey, Professor and Canon of Christ Church, had vast influence, not only because of his deeply religious nature but because of his position and family connections, all of which eased his relations with University authorities. 38

However, Newman, as the center of all this Tractarian activity, was still in search of a final human authority on matters of dogmas. Of the twenty Tracts published in 1854, nine were written by Newman. Although the authorship was to have been kept secret, it was not difficult to ascertain Newman's style, at least for the more intelligent readers. Cornish relates: "The Tracts aimed at plainness of style, and were addressed, some

Newman opened an attack which was rapid and unreserved. In the first part of the Movement, the Tracts consisting of short addresses on fly leaves (thus the name Tract suitable to the type of work), were termed Popery and Methodism. It was quite apparent that the Church was rapidly becoming the mere tool of the State. As the importance of the Movement grew, Catholic doctrines and practices were adopted—rigorous fasting, auricular confession as well as other practices common in the Catholic rule of life. For instance, one of the Tracts discussing the advantage of public prayer observes:

But notwithstanding this great care that our Church hath taken to have daily prayers in every parish, we see by sad experience, they are shamefully neglected all the kingdom over; there being very few places where they have any Public Prayers upon the Week-days, except perhaps upon Wednesdays and Fridays; because it is expressly commanded, that both Morning and Evening Prayers be read every day in the Week, as the Litany upon those.

In his works, Newman set forth the doctrines of baptism, of the Apostolical succession, and of the Holy Eucharist in unhesitating terms. Such subjects as dissent, interpretation of the Bible, fasting, prayers for the dead, controversy with the Roman Catholic Church, rationalism in religion, daily prayers in church were treated; the teachings of the Primitive Church and the Anglican divines were appealed to, and large extracts from authorities were compiled. Newman tells of his studies in dogmatic teaching:

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... I was confident in the truth of a certain definite religious teaching, based upon this foundation of dogma; viz., that there was a visible Church, with sacraments and rites which are the channels of invisible grace. I thought that this was the doctrine of Scripture, as of the early Church, and of the Anglican Church. ... In 1834 and the following years I put this ecclesiastical doctrine on a broader basis, after reading Laud, Bramhall, and Stillingfleet and other Anglican divines on the one hand, and after prosecuting the study of the Fathers on the other; but the doctrine of 1833, was strengthened in me, not changed. When I began the Tracts for the Times I rested the main doctrine, of which I am speaking, upon Scripture, on the Anglican Prayer Book, and on St. Ignatius's Epistles.

(1) As to the existence of a visible Church, I especially argued out the point from Scripture, in Tract 11, viz., from the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. (2) As to the Sacraments and Sacramental rites, I stood on the Prayer Book. I appealed to the Ordination Service, in which the Bishop says, "Receive the Holy Ghost"; to the Visitation Service, which teaches confession and absolution; to the Baptismal Service, in which the priest speaks of the child after baptism as regenerated; to the Catechism, in which Sacramental Communion is receiving "verily and indeed the Body and Blood of Christ"; to the Commination Service, in which we are told to do "works of penance"; to the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, to the calendar and rubricks, portions of the Prayer Book, wherein we find the festivals of the Apostles, notice of certain other Saints, and days of fasting and abstinence.41

In a few months, however, the Movement had developed into something far more significant than a mere rally in defense of a divine, ancient institution against the attack of the State. The question arose, What was the Church of England that she had the right to stand against the State? It was because she could trace her authority back to the Apostles, ordained by Christ Himself—such was the claim. This is the explanation given in Faber:

She bore on her shoulders the weight of accumulated error; she was shackled by her subordination to the civil power; the purity of her doctrine had been sullied by the self-confident imagination

41 Newman, op. cit., p. 74.
of the Reformers. Nevertheless, she was still the Catholic and Apostolic Church, no vain creation of human fancy, but the daughter of God, the bride of Christ, the mother of souls. 42

This answer brought on a wide range of dispute and research, which led to much enlivened enthusiasm. The Tractarians found themselves confronted by contestants on all sides—the Evangelicals, the Latitudinarians, the Roman Catholics. The Evangelicals objected to the identity of the Church of England with the undivided pre-Reformation Church as well as to the emphasis that was laid on the sacraments. The Latitudinarians felt that the answer was mechanically superstitious. To the Roman Catholics, it was a heresy, because the only truly Apostolical Church is the Roman Catholic Church. 43 The Tracts then defined their stand on Apostolical Succession in the English Church:

When Churchmen in England maintain the Apostolical Commission of their Ministers, they are sometimes met with the objection, that they cannot prove it without tracing their orders back to the Church of Rome; a position, indeed, which in a certain sense is true. And hence it is argued, that they are reduced to the dilemma, either of acknowledging they had no right to separate from the Pope, or, on the other hand, of giving up the Ministerial succession altogether, and resting the claims of their pastors on some other ground; in other words, that they are inconsistent in reproving Popery, while they draw a line between their Ministers and those of Dissenting Communions. 44

Later in the same Tract, we find:


43 Ibid., p. 340.

Let me add a word on the usage of the Primitive Church. We know that the succession of Bishops, and ordination from them, was the invariable doctrine and rule of the early Christians. Is it not utterly inconceivable, that this rule should have prevailed from the first age, everywhere, and without exception, had it not been given them by the Apostles?

The Tract then states the question of an opposing side:

But here we are met by the objection, on which I propose to make a few remarks, that, though it is true there was a continual Succession of pastors and teachers in the early Church who had a divine commission, yet that no Protestants can have it; that we gave it up, when our communion ceased with Rome, in which Church it still remains; or, at least, that no Protestant can plead it without condemning the Reformation itself, for that our own predecessors then revolted and separated from those spiritual pastors, who, according to our principles, then had the commission of Jesus Christ.

The answer of necessity is fundamentally weak as are always the answers of those blinded by error:

Our reply to this is a flat denial of the alleged facts on which it rests. The English Church did not revolt from those who in that day had authority by succession from the Apostles. On the contrary, it is certain that the Bishops and Clergy in England and Ireland remained the same as before the separation, and that it was these, with the aid of the civil power, who delivered the Church of those kingdoms from the yoke of Papal tyranny and usurpation, while at the same time they gradually removed from the minds of the people various superstitious opinions and practices which had grown up during the middle ages, and which, though never formally received by the judgment of the whole Church, were yet very prevalent. . . . The Church then by its proper rulers and officers reformed itself. There was no new Church founded among us, but the rights and the true doctrines of the ancient existing Church were asserted and established.

In the next statement, the author seems to forget that the bishops and clergy of England were usurping unlawful authority:

. . . In the year 1554, the Bishops and Clergy of England assembled in their respective convocations of Canterbury and York, and signed a declaration that the Pope or Bishop of Rome had no more jurisdiction in this country by the word of God, than any other foreign Bishop. . . .
The final sentence condemns the whole Tract:

The people of England, then, in casting off the Pope, but obeyed and concurred in the acts of their own spiritual Superiors, and committed no schism.45

It is interesting to note that Newman tells us: "I was amused to hear of one of the Bishops, who on reading an early Tract on the Apostolic Succession, could not make up his mind whether he held the doctrine or not."46

On the whole, to many the Tracts seemed exceedingly dull. It is told that Newman smiled on hearing that a great scholar used them in order that he might rest his mind from the excitement of the Greek subjunctive! Newman and Keble led off the Tracts. "Tract 9," suggesting the shortening of church services, was written by Hurrell Froude. In "Tract 15" and "Tract 19" Newman and Palmer introduced the Apostolic Succession. A court chaplain, Perceval, author of "Tract 36," on the English Sects, divided the groups into those who teach too much and those who teach too little of the Truth. Other Tracts were really reprints of Non-jurors and Caroline divines. Pusey attached his initials to "Tract 18" on Fasting; this gave his name to the enraged Evangelicals. This was another reason the name "Puseyite" was attached to the party; it was spoken of so frequently that the Bishop of Worcester forbade the use of the word in church. Newman made his "Tract 71" a counter-shield to the Roman thrust

46 Newman, op. cit., p. 69.
of Wiseman. "Tract 78" is the joint work of Manning and Marriott. With "Tract 90," 'Remarks on certain passages in the 39 Articles,' Newman aroused the storm and there was no Tract 91!47

Two of the tracts which were greatly discussed and aroused much opposition were 80 and 87, published in 1838, written by the quiet, retired poetical Isaac Williams. The subject was 'Reserve in communicating Religious Knowledge.' He was endeavoring to point out that serious attention must be given religious truth in order to know and understand it. From this he would draw the conclusion that the emotional, unintellectual methods of conversion--

... the display and, as it were, advertising of the Atonement to minds unprepared by discipline, the stress laid by some religionists upon promiscuous preaching, general religious education without catechising, the subordinating of worship to exposition, the use of extempore prayer and popular services, the theory of the 'open Bible,' the 'speculative mind' in religious inquiry, the literal and critical interpretation of Scripture, the ignoring of a mystical sense in the sacred history, poetry, and discourses,—all this is unscriptural and uncatholic, out of harmony with the methods prescribed and followed by the early Church.

... The spirit of the times was the spirit of Anti-Christ; arrogance must be met by a call for humility, illuminism by obscurantism, since the darkness of reverence and mystery is better than the dazzle of false light.48

"Tract 89" of Keble's, 'On the Mysticism attributed to the Early Fathers of the Church,' would probably have attracted even more attention than it did, if it had not been for the publication of "Tract 90." In these Tracts the Church of England as the past three generations had known

47 Leslie, op. cit., pp. 46-47.
it, was condemned in every respect and the trend was in the general direction of the Roman Catholic Church. These reformers scandalized the quiet settled folk of the laissez faire type; they aroused to great anger and perturbation the heads of universities, the bishops and all those in authority. To others it seemed a breaking down of the wall between England and Rome; but to Newman it was merely an application of Anglican formularies in the church doctrine.

As "Tract 1," published in September 1833, looked back to primitive tradition, "Tract 90," published in February 1841, looked to the growth of tradition and its expansion into the modern Roman Catholic Church. The progress of the Movement had been consistent; the last Tract was merely an outgrowth of the first. A feeling of suspicion and distrust of the Tractarians on the part of the authorities of the Church and the University arose, and before long the storm broke. Newman did not look for the violence of emotion that it aroused; but Ward, although he was anxious that it be published, expected that "Tract 90" would start a veritable war. The bishops anathematized this system of reform and the Tractarian teaching, while in the Oxford Common Rooms the talk consisted of nothing except this final Tract.

Keble's sermon and the Tracts were probably little more than the crystallizing of the hitherto quiet sentiment in favor of Catholicism.

As Baker states it:

The Oxford Movement did not reveal its full potentialities immediately, but in time it had insisted on the doctrine of Apostolical Succession, on the importance of the Sacraments (with Mass as the central act of worship), on confession and absolution. It led to the
establishment of monastic institutions, to some practice of celibacy among the clergy, and to hope for reconciliation with Rome.49

To the leaders of the Oxford Movement, the Anglican Church seemed to have been delivered over, bound hand and foot, into the power of a hostile ascendancy, into a Parliament which heeded little the sacredness of religion. The pervading spirit of innovation had crept into the very portals of their Church; therefore, pamphlets on Church reform abounded. There was complete dissatisfaction with the abuses, corruptions, and errors of the Anglican Church. With all this, Newman warned the Anglicans that the lack of organization and intellectual basis in Evangelicalism would be swept into oblivion by the impending encounter between Catholic truth and Rationalism. The spirit of Luther would have to give way to the spirit of Hildebrand and Loyola.50

In most countries the religious revival all over Western Europe had led to a new relation between Church and State. But the basis idea of the Oxford Movement was that the State had usurped the rights of the Church and that the Church should be free to express her own doctrines and to maintain her own discipline. During the last half of the eighteenth century, England as well as other Protestant countries lost the real spirit of Christianity—it seemed to lose the character of a spiritual religion, to explain away the mysteries of religion, to reduce its


dogmas as matters of little importance. Newman turned to the fourth century
to make the Established Church a part of the Catholic Church. He looked for
an Athanasius or a Basil in England. But Ward says, "Perhaps there was some
subconscious presage that he himself might be destined to take the place of
those great champions of truth in the nineteenth century." The clergy of
the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had claimed that the Evangelical
Church was a part of the Catholic Church, but in the eighteenth century this
idea fell into disrepute. It was to this former status that the Tractarians
sought to return the Church of England. This was something new in Oxford
and in England—to have these intellectuals turn their backs on promotion
and preferment to give their lives to what seemed to the worldly, a hopeless
enterprise.

Early in the Movement the really powerful stream of thought which it
contained had separated itself in some degree from the conservative High
Churchmen, and turned itself away but it did not know exactly whither it
was going. Although principles and ideals were plain, it was difficult to
see the practical outcome. Newman and Froude developed a distinctively
philosophical and intellectual element in contrast to the primarily practical
element in the Movement. In 1836, Newman gave a series of lectures in St.
Mary's. This was a systematic attempt to make a public definition of the
theory of the Anglican Church which the Movement would advocate—this he
called the "Via Media" between Protestantism and the popery of the Catholic
Church. These sermons, together with Froude's Remains, edited by Newman

and Keble in 1858, two years after Froude's death, were a great link with the Tracts in furthering the progress of the Movement. The Tractarians were so unconscious of promoting Catholicity in the Church of England that one of their aims was to check its growth in England. They aimed to give their Church new vitality and unity by stressing the doctrines which were ultimately those of the Roman Catholic Church. With Newman, Pusey, and Keble, Anglicanism was the lineal descendant of the Church of Augustine—they took this from the divines of the seventeenth century. For the most part they disliked and distrusted Rome and certainly had no intentions towards such inclinations. However, a history of the Tracts shows how this tendency first came into being. 52

Another of the questions that arose was, Exactly how far back must the new Reformers go? The Evangelicals would tell them to go to Christ and the New Testament. But the Tractarians could hardly accept this answer; they felt that they should go to the earliest centuries of Christianity to the Apostles, and then to the saints and Fathers—to the time when the Church was still undivided. Newman and the Tractarians felt that this pattern was held intact more in the Church of England than elsewhere. They thought that the word of God needed authoritative interpretation, which could be found in the writings of the Apostles as well as the early Christian Fathers, and in the Ecumenical Councils of the Church held at various times from the fourth to the seventh centuries. 53 The Tractarians

possessed all the moral earnestness and religious emotion of the Evangelicals as well as an intellectual power, analysis, and exposition, a thing almost unknown in England.

Newman explains his confidence in his work:

I had a supreme confidence in our cause; we were upholding that primitive Christianity which was delivered for all time by the early teachers of the Church, and which was registered and attested in the Anglican formularies and by the Anglican divines. That ancient religion had well nigh faded away out of the land, through the political changes of the last 150 years, and it must be restored. . . . No time was to be lost, for the Whigs had come to do their worst, and the rescue might come too late. 54

Between 1833 and 1843, Newman's life at Oxford was on the whole one of eager ecclesiastical propagandism, but after Froude's death in 1836, it was propagandism of a less confident nature. Hutton says of Newman:

... He was deeply convinced that the Anglican Church had a great work to do; that she had ignored her true work; that she had gone to sleep at her post; that she needed awakening to the duties she had neglected; and that if once she could be induced to claim her true position, not as an establishment, but as a Church, she might take a proud position in the Church of Christ. But in spite of the ardour . . . of his propagandism . . . the irony with which he met his foes, the enthusiasm with which he supported his friends, there was probably not a month during the whole decade in which he was not more or less engaged in trying to define his position, to make out precisely what the theology of his Church really was, where he was standing, whose authority was in the name of which he spoke. He was deeply convinced that, in regard to the worship of the Virgin Mary, and the invocation of saints, Rome was in the gravest error. He thought the Reformers in still graver error in their view of the Sacraments. He had work to pilot himself and his party along that "Via Media" which they wished to regard as the true theology midway between Rome and Protestantism. 55

54 Newman, op. cit., p. 68.
Newman insisted the articles were anti-Roman but not anti-Catholic. He pointed out that they condemned the abuses, not the uses of the Mass and Purgatory. At first the Tracts seemed innocent enough with the writers too well-meaning to stir up any strife, but their effect was so strong that counter-reply assumed more power. In their enthusiasm the Tractarians insisted that their bishops should join the on-rush; but by 1845, Archbishop Howley had issued a charge calling for no changes. Even though authorities condemned Newman and Pusey, they never dared to face them. The old bishops had neither the imagination nor the grace to realize the dynamic power behind the new Movement.

Tractarianism was not wholly influenced by a love for ecclesiastical authority in the Church of Rome, but they were also influenced by a love for the saints of the Catholic Church, and for the saintly ideal of perfection as realized in monastic life. They could not find such excellent examples of practical piety in the Anglican Church--their saints fell short of the heroic piety in the unceasing warfare against the evils of the world as found in the Roman hagiology. The glorying in the Cross of Christ as preached by St. Paul could not find a counterpart in the post-Reformation Anglican Church as in the lives of such great Roman Catholic saints as St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier, and St. Francis of Assisi.56

After about fifty Tracts had been published and the Movement had been attacked, the character of the Tracts changed. That the Tracts had been attacked is evidenced in Volume 3, when we are told that they have

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56 Ward, op. cit., p. 143.
been erroneously called 'intemperate' and 'violent.'

Then they turned into sustained argumentative treatises, and promised to form deeper, fuller Anglican theology as set down by the clergy of the seventeenth century. Since their interpretation of Catholicism had been vigorously contested, they were led to trace its descent back through the "Via Media" to the early Fathers. They had to prove that this descent was genuine—thus the Roman question arose. The appearance of the English translations of the Fathers in 1856 brought into a more prominent light the patristic element in this new school of thought. Of these studies Newman says:

... I fancied that there could be no rashness in giving to the world in fullest measure the teaching and the writings of the Fathers. I thought that the Church of England was substantially founded upon them. I did not know all that the Fathers had said, but I felt that, even when their tenets happened to differ from the Anglican, no harm could come of reporting them... If there was anything in the Fathers of a startling character, this would be only for a time; it would admit of explanation, or it might suggest something profitable to Anglicans; it could not lead to Rome.

Later, however, Newman admitted that the study of the Fathers led him from the Anglican Church to the Roman Catholic Church; it is, therefore, quite evident that the patristic tendency in the Tracts should be found in them as it colored the opinions of the editor, and should lead the way for the changed attitude towards the Catholic Church and against the English Reformers.

58 Ward, op. cit., p. 141.
59 Newman, op. cit., p. 80.
Still there was another theory to which Newman hoped to cling tenaciously—this is his explanation of the Branch Theory:

The Catholic Church in all lands had been one from the first for many centuries; then, various portions had followed their own way to the injury, but not to the destruction, whether of truth or of charity. These portions or branches were mainly three:—the Greek, Latin, and Anglican. . . . Each branch was identical with that early undivided Church, and in the unity of that Church it had unity with the other branches. . . . Thus the middle ages belong to the Anglican Church, and much more did the middle ages of England. The Church of the twelfth century was the Church of the nineteenth. Dr. Howley sat in the seat of St. Thomas the Martyr; Oxford was a medieval University. Saving our engagements to Prayer Book and Articles, we might breathe and live and act and speak, as in the atmosphere and climate of Henry III's day, or the Confessor's, or of Alfred's.60

But this was short-lived, like the "Via Media," which, after four years, in 1841, appeared unworkable; all that was left for Newman was to turn to the Catholic Church, which heretofore he had deemed the abode of anti-Christ. In 1845, Newman preached his last sermon, retiring to Littlemore where he ponderously struggled through the lonely steps of his ultimate conversion to the Roman Catholic Church. Pusey and Keble remained loyal to the Anglicans, but with the departure of Newman and so many of the others, the Oxford Movement had only to turn Romeward or die.

As there had come into being a circle at Oxford who realized a need for unity in the war against the material trends of their times, so, too, there arose a group in the art world who were disturbed by the ennui in their field of their fellow painters, and who, like the Tractarians, felt that nineteenth-century thought needed the refreshing influence of the Middle Ages. These men came to be known as the Pre-Raphaelites; it is

60 Ibid., p. 94.
their organization, resultant of a desire to extricate themselves from the grasp of industrialism, as well as from the intense copying of Raphael, that we shall consider in the next chapter.
CHAPTER III

MEDIEVAL IDEALISM OF THE PRE-RAPHAELITES

A world steeped in materialistic doctrines and practices, glorifying drab mechanisms, wearied by the turmoil of the Victorian Age, disconcerted certain artists and poets as well as the Oxford scholars. However, the artists we are to discuss found the theological contests of the Church of England outside their scope of interest; they were not concerned with the doubts of the English clergy; they paid little attention to historical criticism and science.¹ This group, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, proposes a decidedly definite stage in the development of English art. The study of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement in England at the peak of the nineteenth century opens avenues of controversy in the ethics of art—more so than most other phases of modern painting.

Pre-Raphaelitism, a revolt against the approved canons of early Victorian art, was established in 1848 by three brilliant young painters, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Everett Millais, and William Holman Hunt, and represents the desire of a group of zealots to fight against the art world of the day and to show that things in that same art world were all wrong.

¹ Brooke, op. cit., pp. 128-131.
It has been said that the first step in the Brotherhood was taken when D. G. Rossetti wrote to Ford Madox Brown requesting to be received as a student, since there was such a delay in entering the painting-school of the Royal Academy in 1848. The immediate impulse of the founding of the Brotherhood, however, was a book of engravings from the frescoes by Gozzoli, Orcagna, and others in the Campo Santo at Pisa; when Hunt and Rossetti chanced on this book at Millais' home the kindling point was reached. The three original members associated with the group the following artists: the sculptor, Thomas Woolner; the painter, James Collinson; the artist and critic, F. G. Stephens; and William Rossetti, who was the literary man of the group. These artists wanted to leave the world of their day, a world debased through money-seeking, disturbed with both physical and mental ugliness, upset by dry criticism of history and futile contentions of doctrine—for the world of a former day, that world which believed in a spiritual life, which understood love and forgiveness, the beauty of poverty, that world which was filled with a joy in the arts and all Beauty.

Although the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood started at a definite time, it belonged to something older than itself by more than half a century.

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4 Brooke, op. cit., p. 132.
When it actually found its name in 1848, it was merely the "pictorial expression" of influence which had already begun in literature, and might have been begun in painting if it had not been for the traditions and training of the Royal Academy. Forsyth speaks of it as a "reaction and protest against the conventional, unideal, untrue, and feeble spirit of the art around them." The old, conventional classicism had reached its very lowest depth. But more than a revolution in the ideals and methods of painting, the Pre-Raphaelite Movement was a single wave in a great reactionary tide against artificial authority, tradition, and convention in every department of life. They turned their venom on Raphael merely because his work had turned into a pattern for nineteenth century artists who were now producing a form of art which had come to mean the elimination of all truth. Housman says, "... the will and the power to use their own eyes, away from all traditions was their means of self-discovery; and its courageous application gives the whole complexion of their revolt." 

Raphael expresses the elimination of all accidentals and superfluities in the expression of an ideal type of humanity, rather deifying the human race with a great deal of symbolic significance; his gracious, dignified serenity of style has never been surpassed. Raphael produced such excellent

7 Housman, loc. cit.
work that for three hundred years painters closely copied his subordination of details for the main work; the nineteenth century artists had come to stereotype Raphael until he no longer represented anything living. Housman speaks of the situation, "... Art was a coffin in which Raphael lay em­balmed." Therefore, the Pre-Raphaelites aimed not at getting rid of the real Raphael, but at his corpse. In doing this their first step was to find themselves.

It might have been the clear vision of youth, still unshackled by convention; it might have been the happy accident that put Lasinio's book of engravings in their path; or it might have been the fact that they had been born at the cross-roads in the curves of progress—all these together might have stirred the small group of fiery idealists to break from tyranny to the view that the world of Beauty was theirs to regenerate. It is certain, however, that they came at a time when social and political revolutions had opened the path for them.

In 1848 there were four young students in the Royal Academy who were destined really to form the nucleus of this group—John Everett Millais and William Holman Hunt in the Life-school, Thomas Woolner in the Sculpture-school, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti in the Antique-school. The oldest of the group was Woolner, born in 1825, while the youngest was Millais, born four years later than Woolner. With the exception of Rossetti these capable, ambitious

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8 Ibid., p. 6.
young men all had exhibited something which had gained recognition. They held meetings joined by two other youthful Painter-students, James Collinson, and Frederic George Stephens, and William Michael Rossetti, not an artist. Thus these seven men who formed the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, condemned the frivolous art of the day and attempted to put forth solid, fresh thought or invention through personal observation and intimate study and strict adherence to Nature. They intended to reside in the same house and to have property in common, but this proved an impossibility as time went on. At the start they composed a creed by drawing up a list of those whom they considered Immortals according to the lasting work they had done; Christ headed this list, followed by Shakespeare, Keats, Shelley, Byron, Washington, Kosciusko, Joan of Arc, Mrs. Browning, and others. They condemned British art that was usually represented by miles of wall space covered with canvases as easy to forget as they were to look at; they felt this true of all the works of the day with the exception of Turner, Mulready, and, perhaps, Maclise.

As the name Pre-Raphaelite implies, they admired the early Italian art, notably the early Florentine religious painters like Giotto, Ghiberti, Bellini, and Fra Angelico. They found in these men "a sweetness, depth, and sincerity of devotional feeling, a self-forgetfulness and humble adherence to truth" which were lacking in the sophisticated art of the day. There was a time in the history of Christendom that Art and Piety went hand-in-hand:

11 Beers, op. cit., p. 283.
this was the day of Dante, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Francis of Assisi, and
the great Flemish and Italian artists of the Middle Ages. These artists
realized a fundamental truth—that it is religion that creates art, since
religion handles the most commanding realities, sensitizing the whole soul
to imaginative Beauty. Therefore, religion creates the soul for art; it is
God in religion that makes the soul beautiful.12

Hunt condemned modern artists who are innovators only and who do not
mold with the care and minuteness of detail of the artists of old. He would
advocate that art which bore the freshness of the Middle Ages when tribula-
tion brought humility to Italy, and the spiritual life was enkindled with
the fire of the zeal of St. Francis of Assisi. This art, developed under
trial and simplicity, was earnest in vital expression. Calm ease of daily
living and the leisure of the Middle Ages brought joys and beauties which
make up the vocabulary of the painter's tongue. Hunt felt that, as the deg-
radation of art is a sign of disease in society, the principle of their
reform was a sound one and that it was time that somebody found a remedy for
the puerile, doting art of the day. The Pre-Raphaelites aimed to show that
art should interpret the beauty of the world, not merely in every natural
form, but in every pure principle of human life, a beauty that the lay person
would not see without the experienced aid of the artist. In the thirteenth
century all the best accomplishment of the people was linked with the achieve-
ment and progress in art. Hunt claimed,

... If artists' work misguides men, making them believe that there is no order in creation, no wisdom in evolution, decrying the sublime influence as purposeless, we shall indeed be a sorry brook of men. 15

The most important phase of Italian art during the thirteenth century, developed at Florence, starts with Cimabue, who began painting not long before the middle of the century and whose great work was accomplished in the second part. That nature was made a subject in their art is shown in the workers in Mosaic, occupied in the famous baptistry at Florence around the middle of the century, who, while they followed the Byzantine rules of their art, introduced some innovations which followed nature more closely; life and nature went back into art once again. One of the well-known artists of these times was the friend of Dante, Giotto, whose work is still considered worthy of study. It has been said that what Dante did for poetry and Villani for history, Giotto did for painting. Giotto, whose name was Ambrogio de Bondone, sometimes called Ambrogiotto, but shortened to Giotto, was born just at the beginning of the last quarter of the thirteenth century. His genius was apparent when, at the age of twenty, commissioned to finish the decorations of the upper church at Assisi, he broke so completely with Byzantine formalism that he is considered the liberator of art and its "deliverer from the chains of conventionalism into the freedom of nature." 14


Filled with these same medieval artistic ideals, the nineteenth century Pre-Raphaelites in 1849 contributed to the Royal Academy Exhibition pictures which gained some notice; then in the next year the Illustrated London News carried an article in which the initials P. R. B. were explained and in which some information about the men and their aims was given. As a result, much criticism from the art world ensued. Art critics exert an enormous influence not only on the lives of the public but also on that of the artist; contemporary journalistic comment repeatedly has destroyed the possibilities of art and artists. Such hostility drove Rossetti from public exhibition; Millias, until he had attained a position in the Academy, was recognized not as a genius but more as a felon with no noble purpose; Madox Brown, although an artist of high standing and exalted promise, was met with a contempt which prevented his gaining any sort of fair livelihood. Hunt tells us that he likewise received such treatment whenever he tried to project any new ideas.

John Everett Millais' Pre-Raphaelite days date from 1849 to 1859, during which time he produced a large number of important works, many ranking as masterpieces of the English school. Endowed with great artistic power, Millais' record soon became one of continued success, hampered by no adverse circumstances as we find in the career of Holman Hunt, suffering no neglect as did Madox Brown. Millais was not only an artist supremely gifted by

16 Hunt, op. cit., p. 489.
nature, but he received a complete training which gained him recognition from both critics and public. Just nineteen when he had the good fortune to fall under the influence of Rossetti and Hunt, and although a ready convert to their doctrines, it is quite probable that had he not been intimate with these young zealots, Millais might have slipped into the conventional prettiness of early Victorian art. In 1849 when the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was in its infancy, Millais was looked upon by his associates as the champion of the Movement:

... a strong and fit champion he was, quick to feel the truths that they desired to promulgate, eager to enter the fray, far better equipped and more accomplished technically than either Hunt or Rossetti, and equally alive with them to the charm of poetry in art... 17

Although Thomas Woolner, the celebrated sculptor and poet, was an original Pre-Raphaelite, he was rather of the intellectual and poetical point of view. His work with the Brotherhood was almost entirely of a literary character; no doubt, he was attracted by Rossetti's poetic genius. 18

Swinburne, too, described as the "cunningest of English metrical artists," entered the Brotherhood as a litterateur. 19 In his poetry the imagery is crowded, super-abundant, likely to bewilder and exhaust the reader by the extravagant use of comparisons, metaphors, and hyperboles. Pre-Raphaelite symbolism is not conspicuous in Swinburne; but characteristic of

17 Percy H. Bate, The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters (London: George Bell and Sons, 1899), p. 54
19 Beers, op. cit., p. 540.
him is a fondness for microscopic detail at the expense of the obvious, natural outlines of the subject. In Swinburne this habit comes from an excessive impressibility from all forms of sensuous beauty. As Rossetti stands for the Italian romanticism and Morris for the Scandinavian, Swinburne stands for the spirit of French romanticism. He revived in English verse a number of old French stanza forms, such as the ballade, the sestina, the rondel. A classical scholar who writes easily in Latin and Greek, Swinburne has contributed to critical literature freely, advocating the principles of romantic art in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. His prose is as lyrical as his verse. His critical work is found to be full of insight and his judgment in matters of poetical technique almost always right. 20

Burne-Jones, another of the Pre-Raphaelites, excels not so much in his power of composition as in his power of expression. He does not have Rossetti's dramatic force, realism, or noble materialism; but in the expression of soul, particularly through the face, Burne-Jones is superior to Rossetti.

Winwar discusses Hunt and his work:

Hunt, self-contained, fervent, and hard-working, set the example for patient industry and well-defined aims. No hardship was too great for him to endure for his art's sake. Imbued with strong religious feeling, he seemed, like the mediaeval artist, to approach his work kneeling. His vision, however, was always keen to the actuality of things; and if, even in his early youth, he aimed to inculcate a moral lesson, that lesson was one which the simplest could understand. Symbols strewed his

20 Ibid., pp. 542, 550.
work, sometimes obvious, sometimes only for such eyes as Ruskin’s to perceive and interpret. Never would he descend to the trivial.  

Earnestness and humility can be noticed in the work of Hunt. Some of his are valuable records of English rural life and still life. His paintings of the peasant children are unaffected, yet filled with humorous truth. He shows simple love in portraying the brightness and bloom of summer fruit and flowers.  

Rossetti did not pretend to be a philosopher, yet his ideas were lofty. He handled art, beauty, song, youth, age, sin, hope, with dexterity, still faithfully following the conditions of poetical expression. Cazamian describes the language of Rossetti in his masterpiece, The House of Life:  

His language is the instrument of a music more often liquid than sonorous: it is coloured or, more often, bathed in a pale spirituality; it rings with an eloquence that is powerfully implicit, and at the same time has a suggestive appeal to all the susceptibilities of the soul.  

Rossetti was the prophet of a natural idealism, based upon the frank acceptance and pursuit of the highest earthly good, subject only and absolutely to moral, spiritual law. He stood apart from the intellectual struggles of his era, seldom troubled by philosophical controversies, alike indifferent to theological speculation and historical discovery. Rossetti reaches his highest in interpreting the experiences of the human soul when  

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21 Winwar, op. cit., p. 18.  
23 Legouis and Cazamian, op. cit., p. 1210.
he portrays the immortal love of Dante for Beatrice.

The Pre-Raphaelite theory, sternly realistic, kept the young artists from copying the antique, and turned them to nature; they were to take their easels out of doors for landscape background; in figure painting they were to use living models and paint them as they actually were without any deviation. In their revolt against conventionality, accusing the English school of painters of falling into a thoroughly insincere manner, the Pre-Raphaelites held that the English genre school, originated by Hogarth, a firm naturalist, had degenerated in the hands of later artists like Wilkie, Leslie, and Mulready, into a school of painting characterized by conventional optimism and trivial humor, whose works appealed less to the mind and eye than to the heart. Benson explains it thus:

They felt that the disadvantage of the appearance of a painter like Raphael, with the inimitable perfection of technique and tranquil sublimity of conception, was that he had influenced too deeply the art of his successors, and tended to destroy originality of design. They maintained that artists ought to paint things as they saw them, and not as they thought Raphael would have seen them.24

If Pre-Raphaelitism possessed no other virtue than that of protestation, it served a good purpose in art. In itself mainly devotional or appertaining to what is termed as high art, the Movement was in reality the outcome of the spirit working in art that had begun to work in the world of thought, essentially a sceptical movement.25 Rossetti, ignoring the science,


and caring nothing for the contending faiths of the present, began a new phase of that ever-recurring Movement both in poetry and painting. Morris followed Rossetti into the realm of the past, but separated himself more determinately from a present he detested—for years he never touched a single political, religious, scientific, or social interest of his own day. Rossetti did not adhere to the past this strictly. However, what interest he took in the present was in its arts, not in its theological, critical, or scientific work. Likewise, Holman Hunt, Millais, and afterwards Burne-Jones, as artists, flung away the traditions which ruled the art of their times, and returned to the early Italian painters for the spirit in which they conceived their art and the duty they felt they owed it. These men filled their pictures with thought and imaginative symbolism, but doing this they held to the limits of a careful and steady obedience to truth—truth both to their subjects and to nature. From these endeavors arose a fresh, living movement of art in painting and drawing. Likewise filled with a similar spirit, the new poetry arose.26

The possibility of art depends upon a people's idea of God; art depends upon religion and religion upon our thought of God. Christian art, the mission of faith to the paganism of beauty, portrays the Christian idea of God as the indwelling ground, thought, and speech of Nature, that makes art not only possible but inevitable in Christianity; it is a Christian necessity to interpret that voice of the ever-present God. The Pre-Raphaelites realized that the

26 Brooke, op. cit., pp. 132-133.
greatest art of the past has been Christian art and that to have great art in the future, it must continue in this Christian vein. They also realized that a great Christian art will never be possible until the condition of its existence in the Middle Ages is once again realized. All modern art, starting as modern from the thirteenth century, all this modern art of the truly great sort is really, implicitly Christian. However, it is not necessarily Christian merely to reproduce a scene from the New Testament, or from the history of the Church. It is the true Christian feeling that counts; the soul of the artist must grasp the Christian principle he is trying to portray. To paint an exact picture of the Crucifixion, one must have suffered and experienced the joy and relief the burdened soul finds in the Cross. 27

When we speak of the era before Raphael, the Pre-Raphaelite period, it would necessarily have been the Middle Ages, Medieval. Before Raphael there was a school of painting which was very realistic and remarkable; this school came into existence a little after the true religious spirit of the Middle Ages had begun to weaken. It sought the emotion of beauty as well as the emotion of religion, but as yet it was not fully influenced by the Renaissance; it was not Greek, nor was it pagan. "It sought beauty in truth, studying ordinary men and women, flowers and birds, scenery of nature or scenery of streets; and it used reality for its model." 28 It is true that

27 Forsyth, op. cit., pp. 154-164.
28 Hamilton, op. cit., p. 147.
it was less romantic than the school that came after it; but, on the other hand, it was very great and even noble. Up to the time of Raphael, artists had sought truth and sentiment before beauty; after that time the painters put beauty first and the old painters were neglected to the extent of almost being forgotten. For this reason Ruskin declared that since Raphael's death Western art had been on the decline; those painters who came after Raphael were not as great as those before his time. Now the nineteenth century Pre-Raphaelites sought truth to life as well as beauty; they endeavored to mingle both with mystical emotion. At first this was a new movement in art only, particularly in painting and drawing, distinguishing it from literary art; but since these arts are actually very closely connected, a new literary movement took place in harmony with the new movement in painting. It was their idea to write both poetry and prose according to the same aesthetic motives which seemed to have inspired the school of painters before the time of Raphael.29

For its purpose art has to distinguish between that which, clean in spirit, is productive of virtue and that which is flaunting and productive of ruin to a nation. In view of this, Hunt explains the purpose of the Pre-Raphaelites:

For the consideration of those who come after us, ere I give up my record of our Pre-Raphaelite purpose, I must reiterate that our determination in our reform was to abjure alliance with reclassicalism, . . . and to supplant the cramped dogmas founded on these fashions of devoting

our allegiance to Nature, and to magnifying her teachings for further inspiration. We never refused admiration to Raphael nor to his still more prodigious elder contemporaries, Michael Angelo and Leonardo de Vinci, neither did we refuse whatever vital teaching there was in any ancient master or school.  

Housman says, "... I would describe Pre-Raphaelitism as an endeavor to express romance in terms of nature, with great intensity of individual feeling, and with a strong sense of character." English Pre-Raphaelitism was but a phase, a passing revival, full of weakness and mannerisms in its mode of execution; however, what it stands for is something which in one form or another, will forever recur in the evolution both of poetry and of painting.

Pre-Raphaelitism came at a time that was ripe for change; not only in England, but in Germany, in France, and even in Italy an analogous influence to the Pre-Raphaelite practice was springing up in all directions. Like the world of science and religion, the world of art was experiencing a wave of tradition-questioning. Conventionalities were being forgotten; the study of nature and natural fact was advancing by leaps and bounds. At this happy conjunction of things the Pre-Raphaelites shaped their ideas, little by theory, much by instinct and sympathy, borrowing a great deal from ancient art. Although Pre-Raphaelitism began as a method of work it later became a method of feeling, a question of sentiment. The word itself soon grew into

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use almost synonymous with medievalism—this connotation is frequently used today. It was a different type of medievalism—the modern spirit added to the ancient form, with a bias overwhelming and unfortunate towards an unwholesome view of life.  

Throughout the early Pre-Raphaelite epoch, from Cimabue, in 1240, to Perugino, the master of Raphael, 1446, the impulse of naturalism may be observed to be adjusting itself, through much crudeness of expression, many blunders, solecisms of taste, errors of selection, to the great spiritual passion of Christianity which was still warm in the heart of the thinking world. The artists before Raphael had worked in often more than partial ignorance of the positive rules of art; they were not affected by conventional rules. The nineteenth century Pre-Raphaelites had the same aim as those of the earlier century—truth; they used the same process, exactitude of study from nature, but their practice was different. It was not the Pre-Raphaelite intention in any way to imitate antique painting as such. Their aim, however, was to surrender no advantage which the knowledge or inventions of the nineteenth century could afford to their art. Ruskin stated:

They intend to return to early days in this one point only—that, as far as in them lies, they will draw either what they see, or what they suppose might have been the actual facts of the scene they desire to represent, irrespective of any conventional rules of picture-making; and they have chosen their unfortunate though not inaccurate name because all artists did this before Raphael's time, and after Raphael's time did

55 Quilter, op. cit., p. 76.
not this, but sought to paint fair pictures, rather than represent stern facts; of which the consequence has been that, from Raphael's time to this day, historical art has been in acknowledged decadence. 55

The principal ground on which the Pre-Raphaelites have been attacked, is the charge that they wish to bring us back to a time of darkness and ignorance, when the principles of drawing, and of art in general, were comparatively unknown; this attack is founded on the assumption that although for some unaccountable reason these artists are not altogether equal to Raphael, yet on the whole they are in a state of greater illumination than the artists who preceded Raphael. 56 The Pre-Raphaelites are perfectly accurate in placing the division of time with Raphael, the separation between medievalism and modernism; even their opponents accept this. Ruskin drew the dividing line:

I say that Classicalism began, wherever civilisation began, with Pagan Faith. Mediaevalism began, and continued, wherever civilisation began and continued to confess Christ. And lastly, Modernism began and continued, wherever civilisation began and continues to deny Christ. 57

Ruskin holds that we are one with the faithful of all times, but in our own particular way we do deny Christ; he calls this Modernism. In earlier centuries, the thirteenth for instance, one would find painted on the walls stories of the Evangelists and other saints as well as pictorial accounts of

57 Ibid., p. 197.
the Bible; the furniture would be made to confess Christianity; windows would proclaim it. Nineteenth century homes, however, were filled with paintings of cupids, graces, florals, but not scenes from the Bible or the lives of Christ and His saints. Future generations will think we were all born pagans, if they study any of our furnishings. This is what Ruskin means when he says that modernism denies Christ. Pointing to the government of the Middle Ages, Ruskin admits that there were corrupt politicians in that day as well as in the nineteenth century, but the cunning and violence of wicked men were restrained by the Christian principles used in that day, by the confessed fear of God, and by acknowledged authority of His law. He very succinctly states it:

You will find that all treaties, laws, transactions whatsoever, in the middle ages, are based on a confession of Christianity as the leading rule of life; that a text of Scripture is held, in all public assemblies, strong enough to be set against an appearance of expediency; and although, in the end, the expediency might triumph, yet it was never without a distinct allowance of Christian principle, as an efficient element in the consultation.38

Regardless of the errors that were committed, at least there was always found an open avowal of Christ. The British Parliament of the nineteenth century would be disgusted with the slightest attempt to introduce the authority of Scripture in any political consultation. That is denying Christ; it is intensely, peculiarly, modernism.

The great, broad fact, then, distinguishing modern art is that all ancient art was religious, while all modern art is profane. In all ancient art religion was its first object, with luxury or pleasure second. The case

38 Ibid., p. 203.
is just the opposite with modern, profane art—private luxury or pleasure first, religion second. Anything which makes religion its second object, makes it no object at all. The person who offers God a second place actually offers Him no place at all; on the other hand, he who makes religion his first object, makes it his whole object; God's work is the only work he has. This is the great distinction between modern, profane art and ancient, religious art. Uniquely does Ruskin pay his compliments to Catholicity:

Perhaps there are some of you here who would not allow that the religion of the 15th century was Christianity. Be it so, still is the statement true . . . that art was great because it was devoted to such religion as then existed. Grant that Roman Catholicism was not Christianity—grant it, if you will, to be the same thing as old heathenism,—and still I say to you whatever it was, men lived and died by it, the ruling thought of all their thoughts.⁵⁹

Ruskin refers to the Latin Vulgate found in the Edinburgh Library, a thirteenth-century Bible, beautifully written in manuscript, each book beginning with illuminated letters containing three or four figures, illustrative of the book itself. This represents a man's giving his whole lifetime to such work as writing and ornamenting a Bible; the constant Scripture reading and thinking which such labor involved would naturally tend to make a man serious, thoughtful, and a good workman because he was always expressing those feelings which were the ground-work of his whole being. Ruskin stresses his point:

Now you will not declare—you cannot believe,—that Angelico painting the life of Christ, Benozzo painting the life of Abraham, Ghirlandajo painting the life of the Virgin, Giotto painting the life of St. Francis,

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 206.
were worse employed, or likely to produce a less healthy art, than Titian painting the loves of Venus and Adonis, than Correggio painting the naked Antiope, than Salvator painting the slaughters of the thirty years' war? If you will not let me call the one kind of labor Christian, and the other unchristian, at least you will let me call the one moral, and the other immoral, and that is all I ask you to admit. 40

When the complete purpose of art was moral teaching, it naturally took truth for its first object; beauty and the resulting pleasure took second place. Then, when it no longer had moral teaching for its purpose, beauty was taken for its first object and truth for its second. The old artists endeavored to express the real facts of a subject or event as their chief purpose in a work. They constantly asked themselves, How would this actually have occurred? What would these persons have done under these circumstances? Once they would conceive the idea of the working of the event, they would paint the picture with only a secondary regard to grace or beauty—in contrast to the modern painter who would take the beauty first and unite with this as secondary, truth. Ruskin challenges:

Let those who are interested in the history of Religion consider what a treasure we should now have possessed, if, instead of painting pots, and vegetables, and drunken peasantry, the most accurate painters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had been set to copy, line for line, the religious and domestic sculpture on the German, Flemish, and French cathedrals and castles; . . . 41

These medieval artists painted from nature things as they were, or from imagination things as they must have been. It is true that their art was conventional and imperfect, but they considered it only as a language wherein

40 Ibid., p. 208.
to convey the knowledge of certain facts. This manner of treating all subjects was persisted in by the greatest men until the close of the fifteenth century. Art has declined because it has lost its moral purpose. Ruskin states: "In mediaeval art, thought is the first thing, execution the second; in modern art execution is the first thing, and thought the second." While medieval principles led up to Raphael, modern principles led down from him. It is, then, this sense of the true over the beautiful in the moral purpose that the Pre-Raphaelites were trying to adopt in their work. Every landscape was painted in the open air to give it the touch of actuality; every Pre-Raphaelite figure was a true portrait of some living person; each tiny accessory was painted in like manner.

One of the chief reasons for the violent opposition which the school has received from other artists is the fact that the cost of care and labor demanded is very great in contradistinction to the slovenly, imperfect style of the other nineteenth century artists. The Pre-Raphaelite school aimed at faithful reproduction of the actual without selection or omission; they would not take the features from several models to produce one work; having found the one model answering most nearly to his conception, the Pre-Raphaelite would paint him faithfully. More than a revolution in the ideals and methods of painting, the Pre-Raphaelite Movement was a single wave in a great reactionary tide—the ever rising protest and rebellion of the

42 Ruskin, Lectures on Architecture and Painting, p. 215.
nineteenth century against artificial authority, against tradition and con-
vention in every department of life. This reaction in painting was against
the careless, slap-dash, sketching-in of objects, opposing itself to all
slurring-over; they would have no dead spots, no despised places. They
wanted to have their pictures all alive, tingling with interest in every part
of them. The Pre-Raphaelites gave loving attention to facts which hitherto
had been slighted by artists. They began by painting blades of grass, trees,
leaf by leaf, dew-drops, insects, textures of wearing apparel, individual
hairs of a man's head and beard, the kind of weather, the time of day, all
the accidents and incidents of background as well as foreground. This
individualistic treatment of romantic and ideal subjects is a marked char-
acteristic of the Movement. 44

The Brotherhood was definitely Christian; however, Swinburne claimed
it to be lacking in depth of thought. On the other hand, this study of
Christian art is shown in their work. Rossetti was of a pronouncedly relig-
ious family, sometimes deliberately appearing at an Anglican service
especially in his younger days. Holman Hunt's art is decidedly Protestant.
Burne-Jones and Morris had thoughts of being clergymen until Rossetti influ-
enced them. Some of the productions that might come to notice are Rossetti's
"Girlhood of Mary Virgin," "Ecce Ancilla Domini," "Found," "Beata Beatrix,"
"Dante's Dream," and "The Blessed Damozel"; Madox Brown's "The Last of
England," "The Entombment," and "Romeo and Juliet"; Holman Hunt's "Christ in
the Temple," "The Scapegoat," and "The Light of the World"; Millais' "Eve of

44 Housman, op. cit., pp. 7-8.
St. Agnes," "A Huguenot," and "Ophelia." Although these are among the most familiar to the public, they are but a small fraction of the product of that fruitful thirty years, not counting the later and important work of G. F. Watts and E. Burne-Jones, to say little of James Collinson and others who fairly claim the shadow of the Pre-Raphaelite wing. It was in the spring of 1849 that the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood held their first "private view" with three important pictures, Rossetti's "Girlhood," Hunt's "Rienzi," and Millais' "Lorenzo and Isabella," signed and monogrammed with the initials of the Brotherhood after the painters' names. The first appeared at the Free Gallery, Hyde Park Corner, then under the management of the Association for Promoting the Free Exhibition of Modern Art; the other two at the Royal Academy, where they were favorably hung. Rossetti's picture was sold to the Marchioness of Bath on "private view" day for eighty pounds, and Hunt's "Rienzi" found a purchaser soon afterwards. "Lorenzo and Isabella," which sold for one hundred pounds in 1849, was bought in 1885 for over one thousand pounds by the Corporation of Liverpool.45

Wood says of the Pre-Raphaelites:

Just as Leonardo and Michaelangelo gathered up and combined the discordant elements of the strife around them into a noble harmony of art, so did the Pre-Raphaelites attune and interpret the diverse forces of their own revolution when they felt its import most acutely, and least knew whither it would lead them.46


46 Ibid., pp. 121-122.
Pre-Raphaelitism gave the utmost play to individual methods, even to idiosyncrasies; each was able to paint his own impressions, his own ideals; there was no need for imitation of one artist by another. Each Pre-Raphaelite painter is worthy of the name, intensely individual in quality; each artist must make his own contribution to the sum-total of artistic truth; each must paint the single aspect of life around him as it is presented to his mind. Pre-Raphaelite art takes hold of the eternal truths of the Christian faith, humanizing its whole cycle of history and legend in the atmosphere of the real, present world. Drawing their first principle of religion from the beauty and glory of the natural world, and the intrinsic dignity and sacredness of human life, the Pre-Raphaelites re-incarnate Christ in every bit of noblest manhood of human life; their Virgin Mary lives again in every pure girl that wakes to the solemn charm of womanhood. In all the triumphs and degradations of humanity, in all its sufferings, they re-discover God; they do not have the correct aspect of God, perhaps, but God is evident in the quickened conscience of a growing world, and in the invincible instincts of human pity and love. Wood tells us:

Millais sees a young Christ in the delicate boy with the wounded hand in the dreary and comfortless carpenter's shop. Hunt sees a crucified Christ in the tired workman . . . amid the calm sunlight of eventide. Rossetti sees a risen Christ in the noble poet whose great love could conquer death and enter upon the New Life in the present hour. The true Pre-Raphaelitism does not take the halo from the head of the Christ of history; but it puts the halo on the head of every suffering child, of every faithful man and woman since the world began. It is not that the historic Christ is less divine; but that all humanity is diviner because He lived and died.47

47 Ibid., p. 201.
The prophetic symbolism which brings to mind in every incident of the Saviour's life the whole scheme of sacrifice and redemption, dominates all the greatest Pre-Raphaelite work. In Rossetti's "The Passover in the Holy Family," in Millais' "Christ in the House of His Parents," and in Holman Hunt's "Shadow of Death," is the suggestion of the inevitable Cross with a forceful urgency that points at once to the universal significance of the history of the Passion. The Pre-Raphaelites, returning to Nature, found it welling over into them from her perennial fires of life, day by day kindling and fanning their imagination into creative power so that all subjects became new in their hands. This is evident in Millais' "Carpenter's Shop" in which the scene is realized as it was to the smallest detail. All conventions are thrown aside in this work. It is a poor carpenter's room—bench, lathe, table, tools, furniture. All are painted directly from the things themselves as they stand open to the country. Joseph is shown as a working man, Mary as ethereal faced, Christ as the loving Child, and John the Baptist as the helper—all are such persons as might have been seen by passers-by in the streets of Nazareth. Keeping rigidly to reality is the dress of the poor and the very shavings on the floor. But symbolism is also used; the life, mission, and death of Christ are shadowed in the scene and its accessories. Even the landscape outside, with the sheep wandering on the hills, is symbolic of the great Shepherd of souls. Also symbolic is the fact that Mary, with sorrow in her face, is binding the hand of Christ—symbolic, of course, of the Crucifixion and Redemption. Millais mingles the mystic with the real in this picture. Another picture stressing this
symbolism so characteristic of the Pre-Raphaelites, is Holman Hunt's "Scapegoat." The acted parable with its depth of meaning, the animal sent into the wilderness laden with the sins of the people, is concentrated in the slow, heavy-burdened Syrian goat who labors under the spiritual weight through the salt crust of the Dead Sea shore; this symbolic element is the soul of the picture. But the animal, itself, is painted from nature with extreme reality—not a light or a shade on the waters of the Dead Sea, not a branch on the shore, not a stunted shrub, not a cliff or valley on the sunbaked mountains of Moab which was not painted with the most seeing eye and with the most accurate pencil, at the actual scene. Brooke was shown a water-color of Rossetti's which Ruskin had hanging near his bed in Denmark Hill—"The Passover in the Holy Family." It shows a rude porch, supported by unhewn doorposts made of young trees, Zacharias sprinkling the wooden lintel, the blood of the lamb Joseph had brought, trickling down one of the posts of the porch, near which the Boy Jesus is standing, looking thoughtfully at the bowl of blood which is in His hand. While Elizabeth is lighting the pyre, Mary is gathering bitter herbs, and John is fastening for departure the shoes which he was unworthy to loose. Figures, faces, the whole drawing is steeped in symbolism. They give the idea of the dwelling of a poor family on the slopes of Nazareth. Scarcely a knot on the wood of the rude porch, scarcely a fold of the garments of the figures which has not a meaning addressed to the Christian supernaturalism—all are as close as possible to reality. 48

48 Brooke, op. cit., pp. 156-158.
It has been imputed to many Pre-Raphaelite paintings that their symbolism is too elaborate. This charge may have some weight in the pictures of Holman Hunt, but it may be balanced by the consideration of the close, deep thought, the prolonged spiritual fervor which has been unexampled since the Italian Pre-Raphaelites, in which each masterpiece is steeped, and which surely brings a claim upon such intelligent study so that anyone who knew anything about Christian symbology could interpret the details for themselves. Both Rossetti and Hunt present the conception of the dual truth of Christianity, the necessity of suffering and the assurance of final victory. It is not merely the victory over suffering as Protestants teach, but rather victory through suffering, which is according to Catholic ethics. It is remarkable that the Pre-Raphaelites find as much inspiration for the thought of victory through suffering in the incidents of Christ's childhood as in the consequent story of His Passion. In "Bethlehem Gate," the Holy Family fleeing from the massacre of the Holy Innocents, Rossetti places at the side of the Blessed Virgin an angel bearing a palm branch, the symbol of deliverance and reward. 49 Wood praises them: "Above all other qualities of Pre-Raphaelite painting, it is the instinctive perception of 'cross-like things' that gives nobility and tenderness to the work of Rossetti and his colleagues." 50 The Pre-Raphaelites did not take the conventional heroes, muscular warriors; they

50 Ibid., p. 225.
were concerned with inward conflicts, not outward foes. Wood calls them "the knights-errant of a new chivalry,—to whom moral righteousness is a higher thing than physical courage; self-conquest a nobler triumph than the routing of armies."  

Ruskin tries to warn the Pre-Raphaelites of nodding:

It is not, however, only in invention that men over-work themselves but in execution also; and here I have a word to say to the Pre-Raphaelites specially. They are working too hard. There is evidence in failing portions of their pictures, showing that they have wrought so long upon them that their very sight had failed for weariness, and that the hand refused any more to obey the heart.

Quilter laments that this Movement did not go all the way through to complete success. He says:

Had the leaders only been true to themselves, had they been more fortunate in their partners and disciples, and less bitterly attacked and injudiciously applauded, there might have grown up in England from this movement the most magnificent art of modern times, for never before, and certainly never since, had so bold, and, on the whole, so successful an attempt been made to weave together in one strand of meaning and beauty the loveliness of the outside world and the emotions and interests of humanity.

Any new artistic movement would have been hailed with acridity; the Pre-Raphaelites were no exception. For example, Charles Dickens called loudly for the imprisonment not only of Millais and the other Pre-Raphaelites, but, because of his connections with them, of Ford Madox Brown as well. The charge alleged against them was blasphemy; it was the injustice of this

51 Ibid., p. 252.
52 The Works of Ruskin, op. cit., p. 388.
53 Quilter, op. cit., p. 6.
attack that first attracted Ruskin. 54 Millais portrayed Christ, obedient to His mother and foster-father; anything so very personal was considered blasphemous, indecent, and something unheard of in those days. No one really likes to picture the Redeemer to any extent; here was Millais showing the Blessed Virgin kissing her Son. These Victorian Protestants held the Mother of God as someone far away in the mystical distance whom one never mentions. To bring so distinctly into the foreground such ideas as the obedience, the family affection, the early occupations of the young Christ was disturbing. Millais was forcing on the public the idea that Christ was man as well as God. 55 Artists like Burne-Jones and Rossetti may be said to represent rather the Catholic side of the religion of art. This is particularly true of Rossetti. Forsyth says of him: "He does not display the Protestant principle of vigorous truth as he does the Catholic passion of profound love." 56

The Pre-Raphaelites did not desire to confine themselves to realistic subjects—this is shown in the medieval pictures of Rossetti; no antiquarian attempt is noticeable to reproduce the exact surrounding that must have been in the original scene. They did not question the convention which medi evalises the scenes of the Gospel story; they made it their business to "conceive

55 Ibid., p. 240.
56 Forsyth, op. cit., p. 170.
a subject in a serious and lofty way, and then to see that the details were presented with a strict and austere veracity."\(^5^7\) Elaboration of detail was not an essential part of the principles of the Brotherhood; it was undertaken mainly with the idea of arriving at a perfection of technique. It was the fidelity and simplicity of early art rather than its archaic character, which attracted the Brotherhood.

In the early days of the Brotherhood, there ensued a time of boundless aspiration, enthusiastic companionship, and vivid discussion. Each of the men who composed this group of rather poor people whose festivities were of necessity simple, even if he did not project great works of his own, appreciated to its full poetry and art. It is thought that Rossetti had a greater acquaintance with the poetical literature of Europe than any other living man; his knowledge of literature seemed an inexhaustible store-house. It was his dominant influence which held the attention of the Brotherhood closely upon art and literature. The Brotherhood held that purity of mind and heart was a necessary condition for good work; they tabooed all that was gross or sensual. It is said about them that they probably had little respect for purely conventional morality, but that they had a deep-seated desire for nobility of life and aim.\(^5^8\)

Among the Pre-Raphaelites the intellectual bias was as strongly marked as the artistic—of the original seven promoters of the Movement three have subsequently made their names in literature. It was proposed

\(^{5^7}\) Benson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 21.

\(^{5^8}\) \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 22-23.
and accomplished in the public propaganda of the Pre-Raphaelites to issue a monthly magazine for the promulgation of their principles. It was ultimately decided that the publication should be called **The Germ**. Accordingly, in January, 1850, the first number, forty-eight large octavo pages, illustrated with etchings, appeared. The primary tenet with regard to art was thus enunciated in the preface: 'The endeavour held in view throughout the writings on Art will be to encourage and enforce an entire adherence to the simplicity of nature.' Some of those who contributed to this first number were Woolner, Hunt, Tupper, Brown, Patmore, William Rossetti, and the two greatest poets of the Movement, Dante Gabriel and Christina Rossetti; Dante Gabriel rendered "My Sister's Sleep," a characteristic example of his earliest manner, while Christina gave "Dreamland" and another short lyric. The public at large did not support the venture. The second number, issued in February, though no less interesting and significant in subject-matter, increased the scant support not at all. It was an expensive project for these young zealots and they had to consider what should be done. Mr. Tupper, to whose care the printing had been entrusted, came to the rescue, giving the publication a new lease on life under the name of **Art and Poetry**. But this proved unsuccessful, too; after the April number, the issue was, with great misgiving, abandoned. However, it was here that Rossetti's "The Blessed Damozel" appeared.

A still deeper and more abiding influence from the literature of the past was fast becoming ascendant in the mind of the Pre-Raphaelite leader. The love of Dante had been nurtured in Rossetti from his youth; now it increased and swayed him as a direct, urgent spiritual power. Wood says:
It has been said that no ascendancy of a great poetic personality over one born in a later age has been more potent and fruitful in art than that of Dante Alighieri over Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Of Rossetti's poems which treat directly of Dante, the most important is "Dante at Verona" in which Rossetti in eighty-five stanzas relates the legendary and historical incidents of Dante's exile as given by the early biographers. Dante is present in practically all of Rossetti's works; we see this particularly in a picture like "Beata Beatrix" and in a poem like "The Portrait" where he compares his own love to that of Dante's for Beatrice. Rossetti's ballads and ballad-romances, like "The Blessed Damozel," "The Bride's Prelude," "Rose Mary," and "The Staff and Scrip" all, permeated with the medieval spirit, are art poems, rich and pictorial.

However, William Morris claimed that he was the Pre-Raphaelite most thoroughly steeped in medievalism. He was not attracted by the past three centuries with its ugly factories, railroads, unpicturesque poverty, and selfish commercialism. He loved to imagine Chaucer's London, a regenerated Middle Age, as Beers says:

"... without feudalism, monarchy, and the medieval Church, but also without densely populated cities, with handicrafts substituted for manufactures, and with medieval architecture, house decoration, and costume." 60

Morris dealt particularly in the field of decorative art. Although Rossetti persuaded him to paint, he was never particularly successful in

59 Wood, op. cit., p. 98.
60 Beers, op. cit., p. 316.
drawing the human face and figure. Burne-Jones usually made the figure

designs for Morris' stained glass and tapestries.

We see, then, in these Pre-Raphaelites a desire for bettering
the conditions of this great Industrial Era. Like the Tractarians they
had been wearied by the harsh, shallow clang of commercial success. Yet,
where the Oxford scholars of Newman's day were sincerely seeking the
ultimate Truth which alone could resolve the havoc of spiritual doubt,
the Pre-Raphaelites were rather in quest of truth as an artistically
stabilizing force—a force which would introduce law and order into a
confused aesthetic world.
CHAPTER IV

THE RELATION OF PRE-RAPHAELITISM AND TRACTARIANISM TO CATHOLICISM

Both Pre-Raphaelitism and Tractarianism, as heirs of the Industrial Revolution, sought inspiration in the Middle Ages, a term practically synonymous with Catholicism; however, in scope those movements were radically different. Some authors have felt that one was an off-spring of the other, but this view is difficult to hold since their motives in seeking inspiration in the Church of the Middle Ages were entirely different. The Tractarians were in quest of the primitive Church which some of them ultimately found to be the Roman Catholic Church; Pre-Raphaelites, looking for Truth in art, turned likewise to the Middle Ages, more by accident than by will as in the case of the Tractarians.

Sharp claims that the study of medieval art was the outcome of the ecclesiastical revival which was brought about by the Oxford Movement and that primarily the Pre-Raphaelite Movement received its stimulus from this Tractarian Movement. He feels that in this way religion and art in the nineteenth century were brought together. To him such men as Holman Hunt and Dante Rossetti were merely following in the footsteps of Newman, Pusey, and Keble.¹

¹ Sharp, op. cit., pp. 41-42.
Ruskin intimates this apparent connection in a letter:

Let me state, in the first place, that I have no acquaintance with any of these artists, and very imperfect sympathy with them. No one who has met with any of my writings will suspect me of desiring to encourage them in their Romanist and Tractarian tendencies.

Ruskin feared that the members of the Brotherhood, influenced by their love of medieval art, might tend toward the Catholic Church; this, to his mind, would surely lead to the destruction of their art. Actually, James Collinson, a man of ascetic piety, did fall from the "fold" and did become a Catholic. Caine suggests that Catholicism is essentially medieval and it would be rather difficult for one to be a "medieval artist" without becoming possessed of that strong religious sentiment which is so definitely Catholic. Since religion and art were closely knit in the Middle Ages, it was natural that Rossetti himself should be greatly influenced, and, at times, should seem to have a Catholic attitude toward spiritual things.

It is true that Rossetti was in his youth attracted to the Church of his father, naturally, but Constance Julian tells us that this "early attraction to religion eventually gave place to the sensuous life of his day. The pure idealism of youth was destroyed; soul and body were wrecked by indulgence and dissipation."

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2 Ruskin, Arrows of the Chace, p. 87.
4 Constance Julian, Shadows Over English Literature (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1944), p. 44.
If Pre-Raphaelitism had placed Rossetti in the footsteps of the Tractarians, he might have acted differently when asked to bear the cross of his wife's death. He did not follow his leader, Dante, in this respect:

But, instead of the sincere repentance of Dante and the following of his love into spiritual realms, Rossetti fell more deeply than before into sensual entanglements; sought forbidden communications with her soul at the hands of mediums; and fell into strange delusions as the years went by. . . .

It is regrettable that there was not more of an influence on Rossetti as might have been provided by the Oxford Movement. His was a soul racked with mental torture, never quite able to reach the goal of Truth. To quote Constance Julian again:

Rossetti had not the vision and the will, which the sacraments of the Catholic Church would have given him, to face the terrible and difficult crisis of forbidden love. He fell because the imperfect Christianity of his mother and sister was to one of his temperament insufficient to inspire resistance to temptation. Just before his death Rossetti longed for the grace of confession and absolution, but his chloral-weakened will was not strong enough to resist the scornful surprise of the agnostic friends who surrounded him, and the knowledge of the grief that such an act would have caused his mother and sister.

Benson speaks of Rossetti's religious views:

... It is difficult to say exactly what Rossetti's religious views were. The religious element was very strongly developed in the family. ... There is no evidence that he concerned himself with the considerations of Christian doctrine, and he would probably have regarded theologians as people who were engaged in attempting to define the Unknowable. He was, no doubt, a free-thinker, and held an agnostic position. ... I should regard Rossetti as having a strong belief in God and the unseen world, though without definite

5 Ibid., p. 45.

6 Ibid., p. 47.
conceptions of what lay behind the veil, and a considerable im-
patience of attempts at precise definition. 7

Although greater poets and greater painters than Dante Gabriel
Rossetti lived in the nineteenth century, his work still carries great
weight in the world of modern literature. His later productions fall
short of the lofty spiritual ideal found in his youth; this was probably
a result of religious indifference in maturity. Bingham succinctly re-
marks:

He tried to blend Italian traditions with English conservatism.
To a certain extent he revealed the treasures of medievalism to a
modern materialistic world. Nevertheless, the rich Catholic faith
which his father had abandoned must have been a sorry loss to the
younger Rossetti. Even Dante does not possess the same appeal when
read through indifferentist eyes, and one wonders how much wealthier
art might have been were Rossetti able to refresh his innate mysticism
at the same fount as did his great namesake. 8

Although never inside the fold of the Catholic Church, Christina
Rossetti, however, lived the austere life of one in a cloister. Hers
was a delicate, refined nature, sensitive to a great degree of all beauty
around her, able to love passionately, but admired for her complete self-
restraint. Like the other Pre-Raphaelites, she was not seeking the one
true religion; she satisfied herself with scrupulous adherence to the
Anglican Church. Reilly says of her:

Newman's equal and Keble's superior in spiritual passion, dowered
beyond either with the poet's singing voice, and utterly Catholic
at heart despite her Anglicanism, Christina Rossetti belongs to that

7 Benson, op. cit., p. 224.
8 James Ford Bingham, "The Centenary of Rossetti," America, 59,
glorious choir which includes Southwell and Crashaw, Vaughan and George Herbert. With her as with them what was believed as true was admired as beautiful; imagination and intellect were as one.

It is true that in Christina Rossetti the religious fire of the Middle Ages burned rapidly in her lyrics; she had the keen austerity of the great Middle Ages of Faith, but actually she could only brush the surface of Catholicity. Elizabeth Belloc states:

Christina Rossetti was equipped in full measure with the true artist's sense perceptions, and they lend peculiar force and color to her descriptive writing. But beyond a certain point in her spiritual landscape, and indeed in her everyday life, these perceptions were not allowed to go. Some instinct in her feared that unknown region where unrestrained sense would carry her if she yielded. Perhaps the example of her brother's sensual and tragic life confirmed her resolution. It is where the mystic in her drives back the artist that much of her most characteristic work is written.10

It has been questioned why Christina Rossetti never became a Catholic, with her Italian background, her deep devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, to the Blessed Virgin, and to many saints. In an article, Anne Fremantle refers to the longing that must have been Christina Rossetti's:

Indeed, as her brother William goes on to tell us, she disliked any evidence of Christianity, yet in her obituary of Cardinal Newman she seems to have realized something of what she was missing. 'Yea, take thy fill of love because thou didst choose love not in the shadows but the deep.'11

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10 Elizabeth Belloc, "Christina Rossetti," The Catholic World, 155, September, 1942, p. 676.

But all were not as deeply religious as Christina Rossetti. Typical of the agnosticism prevalent in a certain type of Pre-Raphaelitism was Swinburne; Shane Leslie develops this thought of him:

Perhaps no single writer did so much to instill an easy-going agnosticism in the name of beauty, or a subversion of moral sense in the name of love. Now catching to the mind that prefers jingles to truth were lines like: 'Thou hast conquered O pale Galilean, the world has grown gray from thy breath.'

One cannot but regret that all that passionate flood of words was devoted to the two themes, that there was no God and that the body was wholly worshipful and adorable.12

It was tragic that he had no sublime theme; he tried to build beauty and patriotism on a foundation without God, and says Leslie, "though he achieved marvels, his beauty was sterile and his very message of patriotism fell wingless. ..."13

As a group the Pre-Raphaelites were not concerned with religion. Brooke says: "Doubts did not trouble them at all. They either believed or disbelieved."14

These remarks of Hunt's show one aspect of Pre-Raphaelitism:

Once, in a studio conclave, some of us drew up a declaration that there was no immortality for humanity except that which was gained by man's own genius or heroism. . . . Our determination to respect no authority that stood in the way of fresh research in art seemed to compel us to try what the result would be in matters metaphysical, denying all that could not be tangibly proved.15

13 Ibid., p. 556.
14 Brooke, op. cit., p. 151.
In later years, however, Hunt admitted the puerile atheism in these statements of their over-wrought youth. Again to quote Hunt:

> With grateful reverence for the noble creations of previous artistic nations in all their diversity, and recognition of the value to be gained from their technical teaching, our object was to be enslaved by none, but in the fields of Nature and under the sky of Heaven frankly to picture her healthful beauty and strength. In reverting to this question, it cannot be too clearly reasserted that Pre-Raphaelitism in its purity was the frank worship of Nature, kept in check by selection and directed by the spirit of imaginative purpose.¹⁶

Although many charged the Pre-Raphaelites with receiving their impetus from the Tractarian Movement and in that way of turning to Rome, William Rossetti very painstakingly assures the public that this is not a justifiable accusation. The Catholic Church merely happened to be in possession of the type of art they wished to study; they admired the symbolism of the Church, but were not interested in its fundamental principles. Rossetti endeavors to answer the question as to their ulterior aim:

> Assuredly it had the aim of developing such ideas as are suited to the medium of fine art, and of bringing the arts of form into general unison with what is highest in other arts, especially poetry. Likewise the aim of showing by contrast how threadbare were the pretensions of most painters of the day, and how incapable they were of constituting or developing any sort of School of Art worthy of the name. In the person of two at least of its members, Hunt and Collinson, it had also a definite relation to a Christian, and not a pagan or latitudinarian, line of thought. On the other hand, the notion that the Brotherhood, as such, had anything whatever to do with particular movements in the religious world—whether Roman Catholicism, Anglican Tractarianism, or what not—is totally, and, to one who formed a link in its composition, even ludicrously, erroneous.¹⁷


Rossetti proceeds to tell that the Pre-Raphaelites valued moral and
spiritual ideas and tried to live good lives, but in their work they did
not "limit the province of art to the spiritual or the moral." 18 Then
Rossetti, too, explains their purpose:

1. To have genuine ideas to express; 2, to study Nature attentively, so as to know how to express them; 3, to sympathize with
what is direct and serious and heartfelt in previous art, to the
exclusion of what is conventional and self-parading and learned by
rote; and 4, and most indispensable of all, to produce thoroughly
good pictures and statues. 19

Some of the men outgrew the Brotherhood—for instance, Rossetti,
Brown, Millais—but Knight says of them:

The wistful retrospective gaze of the founders, who saw in those
early painters who preceded Raphael the everlasting merits of a
sincerity, of truthfulness, and a face-to-face vision of Nature,
as well as a direct and generally true reproduction of what they
saw, was an unspeakable gain to the art of England, to the century
in which they lived, and which they adorned. 20

Thus, while the Pre-Raphaelites admittedly had nothing whatever
to do with particular movements in the religious world, the Tractarians,
on the other hand, were definitely religious, and delved deeply into the
truths of the early Fathers' statements, and ultimately led themselves to
the Roman Catholic Church. The Tractarians themselves in order to prove
their Anglican validity turned to the Fathers. In doing this they saw the
need of the same knowledge being given the laity. Accordingly, the works
were gathered; Liddon discusses this:

18 Ibid., p. 135.
19 Loc. cit.
20 Knight, op. cit., p. 112.
With the rise of the Oxford Movement, the Fathers naturally assumed what to that generation was a new degree of importance. It was impossible to recall men's minds to the teaching and principles of the Primitive Church of Christ without having recourse to those great writers who were the guides and exponents of its faith. . . . It was natural for the Tractarians to honour the Fathers of the Church. 21

The Tractarians felt that the Anglicans had not paid sufficient attention to the Fathers, and that as a result the Roman Catholics had taken possession of them. "To claim continuity with the Primitive Church and be ignorant of its representative writers was impossible; and yet what if the Fathers did witness for Rome after all?" 22 Both Newman and Pusey felt that to overcome this the people should learn these works not merely in part but in entirety as a literature. The works of the Fathers were satisfying; the people would find that they answered the need for good spiritual reading. Liddon states:

But more especially do the Fathers attest the existence of Catholic agreement in a great body of truth in days when the Church of Christ was still visibly one, and still spoke one language; and thus they also bear witness against the fundamentally erroneous assumptions of modern times, that truth is only that which each man troweth, and that the divisions of Christendom are unavoidable and without remedy. 23

As has already been mentioned in a previous chapter, the Tractarians studied the Church's use of the sacraments as viewed by the Catholic Church. They put forth in the Tract on Baptism the idea of the Mystical


22 Ibid., p. 415.

23 Ibid., p. 417.
Body, that "we be grafted into Christ."\textsuperscript{24} The whole idea of the teaching in St. Paul's epistle of "Now not I, but Christ in me," is given here in this Tract, as these Anglican clergy had learned it from their study of the Fathers:

To the ancient Church, and those who have followed her teaching, it is exactly what was to have been expected; for since Baptism is the instrument whereby God communicated to us the remission of sins, justification, holiness, life, communion with the Son and with the Father through the Spirit, the earnest of the Spirit, adoption of sons, inheritance of Heaven, all which our Lord obtained for us through His Incarnation and precious Blood-shedding, it is obvious that all these gifts, and whatever else is included in the gift of being made a "member of Christ," must be spoken of as having been bestowed upon Christians, once for all, in past time at their Baptism. It remains for those, who have ceased to regard Baptism as the instrument of conferring these blessings, to account for the Apostle's language upon their views.

Again in their study of the Fathers, they reiterated how in the early Church the hours of the day were consecrated to God, to the recalling of His Passion and death and later His Resurrection: "they longed for His coming; they suffered in His Passion; they rose with Him from the tomb; they followed His Ascension; they awaited His return to judge the quick and dead, and to receive them to His kingdom."\textsuperscript{25} Too, the Tract teaches:

\begin{itemize}
\item \ldots He fed them in the Eucharist; He washed away their sins in Baptism; and Baptism was to them Salvation, and the Cross, and the Resurrection, because He opened their eyes to see not only the visible minister, but Himself working invisibly; not only the water, but the Blood; and the Holy Spirit, the third witness, applying the Blood, through the water, to the cleansing of the soul.
\end{itemize}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[25] Ibid., p. 172.
\item[26] Ibid., p. 174.
\item[27] Ibid., p. 175.
\end{footnotes}
In the introduction to "Tract 90," Newman shows his sincerity in the growing distrust of the so-called Reformation:

There is but one way towards a real reformation,—a return to Him in heart and spirit, whose sacred truth they have betrayed; all other methods, however fair they may promise, will prove to be but shadows and failures.28

It is remarkable that both Pusey and Newman preached on holiness in their sermons. This was the subject of Pusey's first sermon as well as the first of Newman's Parochial Sermons. Liddon remarks: "The movement in which they both took so leading a part was, before all things, a call to 'holiness.'"29

"Tract 90" quotes the "Articles" to point out the true Church; what is being outlined, is, as a matter of fact, the Roman Catholic Church. Article XIX says: 'The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men [in which] . . . the Sacraments be duly ministered, according to Christ's ordinance. . . .' Then the author of the Tract goes on to show that this is the definition of the One, Holy, Catholic Church diffused throughout the world. He quotes St. Clement of Alexandria who called the Church the "congregation of the elect"; Origen, who described the Church as "the assembly of all the faithful"; St. Ambrose, who spoke of "one congregation, one Church"; St. Isidore, St. Augustine, St. Cyril, Pope St. Gregory, Bede, Alcuin, St. Bernard, Albertus Magnus, Pope Pius II—all are referred to in endeavoring to show the One, truly Apostolic Church, which, of course, led the Tractarians right to the door of St. Peter.30

28 "Tract 90," p. 5.
29 Liddon, op. cit., p. 144.
30 "Tract 90," p. 17.
"Tract 90" displays a decidedly desperate groping for the true Church; it intimates that the Tractarians themselves are conscious of the fact that a middle path can no longer be:

... it is a duty which we owe both to the Catholic Church and to our own, to take our reformed confessions in the most Catholic sense they will admit; we have no duties toward their framers.

In giving the Articles a Catholic interpretation, we bring them into harmony with the Book of Common Prayer... Then Newman applies the coal that really set the fire aglow:

If then, their framers have gained their side of the compact in effecting the reception of the Articles, let Catholics have theirs too in retaining the Catholic interpretation of them.

The Protestant Confession was drawn up with the purpose of including Catholics; and Catholics now will not be excluded.51

It was William George Ward, the most aggressive fighter of all the Tractarians, who actually led the way to Rome: Newman was still pondering his struggles of faith. Although the Oxford Movement has not led to a wholesale return of intellectuals to the Catholic Church, it has served to increase the number of conversions of individual intellectuals to the Catholic Church; it served to strengthen the position of Catholic Christianity in the modern world. Constance Julian says of the great leader of this movement:

That the Church stands indestructible in England we owe in great measure to this noble priest. As St. Paul was chosen as God's instrument, and used his literary genius, his understanding and imaginative vision to ray the Christian message across the ancient world, so has the Almighty used the kindred powers of Newman to throw new light

51 Ibid., pp. 80-83.
across the sin-confused and troubled modern world from a land which the clear shining of his Faith reheartened and revived.32

Constance Julian speaks further of the outstanding converts brought into the Church as a result of Newman's work:

His influence has been immense not only in England but in America and Australia; converts innumerable followed in his path. Outstanding of these was the joyous Chesterton, tempting his opponents into mazes of unsuspected logic in which they found themselves hopelessly entangled. His influence aroused the super-refined and talented Gerard Manly Hopkins to make the great quest, and later to lay his genius as a poet at the Church's feet and to become her priest. Because of the real and increasing number of converts ranking high in intellectual and social worlds the puzzled world is waking up. Is it possible that all these are beguiled and misled? Or is it that right reason and the only true solution of the problem of existence are with the Church?55

It was not long before the Tractarian Movement was shown to have Rome-ward tendencies, as Abercrombie remarks in his article in the Dublin Review:

In spite of its affinities with the insular High Church, the Oxford Movement was early seen (by some of its supporters as well as by its antagonists) to have a 'Romeward' tendency: an observation which is confirmed by the fact of so many converts brought, in the last hundred years, along the Oxford road to Rome.34

The writer of this article is endeavoring to convey the thought that the awakening to the Liturgy of the Catholic Church by the present-day Anglican clergy may "direct her back toward that true centre of unity from which she has been separated for so long."55

32 Julien, op. cit., p. 89.
Newman, himself, was occupied so much of the time with the study of
the Fathers that he could not help but find the true Church once the actual
grace was offered him. In speaking of his work on St. Athanasius, Newman
says:

The annotated Translation of the Treatises of St. Athanasius was
of course in no sense of a tentative character; it belongs to another
order of thought. This historico-dogmatic work employed me for years.
I had made preparations for following it up with a doctrinal history
of the heresies which succeeded to the Arian.36

Although the Tractarians started to prove that theirs was the true
Church, it was their serious, thoughtful study of the Fathers that ultimately
reversed their views. Ward speaks of the change:

The change in the character of the movement became more and more
apparent. The Church of England had been the central object of interest from 1833 to 1838. The 'Church of Rome' had been only a feature
in the historical controversy which defined her position. By 1841
the proportions were reversed. . . . In this new condition of things
it was more than ever necessary to vindicate a Catholic interpretation
for the Anglican formularies.37

In order to prove that they were correct the famous "Tract 90" was
written—to vindicate the Thirty-nine Articles and to show that they could
accept a Roman Catholic interpretation. Ward tells us:

Newman had gone to history. He had realised that the Articles were
a compromise, and that their framers had hoped to get the Catholic party to subscribe them in spite of their Protestant rhetoric.38

All this study was bound to affect Newman; Isaac Williams discusses
the change gathering over Newman:

36 Apologia, p. 99.
38 Ibid., p. 72.
We lived daily very much together; but I had a secret uneasiness, not from anything said or implied, but from a want of repose about his character, that I thought he would start into some line different from Keble and Pusey, though I knew not in what direction it would be. [Often he would sigh...]. It seemed to speak of weariness of the world, and of aspirations for something he wished to do and had not yet done.59

Finally, influenced by his study of the Fathers and the primitive Church, Newman took the step which was of such great import to the many who were to follow him to Rome. In a short note to Isaac Williams, Newman briefly tells his intention of entering the Catholic Church:

My Very Dear Williams,

I do not like not to send you just a line, though I know how it will distress you. Father Dominic, the Passionist, is coming here to-night on his way to Belgium. He does not know of my intentions, but I shall ask of him the charitable work of admitting me to what I believe to be the one true fold of the Redeemer. He is full of love for religious men among us, and believes many to be inwardly knit to the Catholic Church who are outwardly separate from it. This will not go till all is over. . . .

This is a short letter, but I have a great many to write.

Ever yours affectionately,

J. H. N. 40

This great Oxford leader had found the one true Church at last. Catholics of his day were not all the intellectuals he had known in his companions at Oxford; but that mattered little to this erudite scholar if they were of the same fold as of the great Athanasius and of the eminent


40 Ibid., p. 127.
Fathers of the Church. "He seems ... to see the Catholic Church of history as one great whole in which the Fathers are collected at one end and Pope Gregory XVI stands at the other."  

Newman looked upon the Catholic religion as a haven of peace where the present-day acceptance of material over spiritual matters may not be considered. He would agree with the Catholic doctrine of uniting theology and science. He speaks of theology as contemplating "the world not of matter but of mind; the Supreme Intelligence; souls and their destiny; conscience and duty; the past, present, and future dealings of the Creator and the creature." In view of this, Newman holds that theology, as the philosophy of the supernatural world, must be in harmony with science, the philosophy of the natural world.  

Again in his *Idea of a University*, Newman stresses the assurance that is brought one who studies and accepts the doctrines of the Catholic Church:  

He who believes Revelation with the absolute faith which is the prerogative of a Catholic is not the nervous creature who startles at every sound, and is fluttered by every strange and novel appearance which meets his eyes. . . . He is sure, and nothing shall make him doubt, that, if anything seems to be proved by astronomer, or geologist, or chronologist, or antiquarian, or ethnologist, in contradiction to the dogmas of faith, that point will eventually turn out, first, not to be proved, or secondly, not contradictory, or thirdly, not contradictory to anything really revealed, but to something which has been confused with revelation.  

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It is true that the Tractarians were a product of their disturbed era, but as Dawson says:

They possessed, to a far greater extent than is usual in England, a common body of intellectual and spiritual principles which can be disentangled from the political and ecclesiastical circumstances of the time and which remains of vital importance for the religion of the modern world. 44

These same principles are carried over today in a like manner by later members of the Oxford Movement. They, too, feel that continual longing for Truth that kept gnawing at the very core of this Movement as Gertrude Donald so succinctly states in the preface of her book:

... The Tractarian desire for Unity and Authority in the Church awakened a want in their hearts which no revival in the Church of England could supply; and their successors still find the same lack, and take steps to fulfil their desire in the same way, as the Oxford converts did. 45

The Road to Rome was a lonely one, even though in a short time it was traversed by many scholars who gave up livings, curacies, intended careers. What they gained, of course, was of inestimable value. Such men as Coffin, Patterson, Wilkinson, Ward, Manning, Wilberforce, and others down to the later men like Benson and Chesterton followed this Road. Many of Newman's day became well-known in the Catholic Church:

Robert Coffin became Superior of the Redemptorists at Clapham and afterwards Bishop of Southwark. Frederick Faber and John Bernard Dalgairns were famous as writers and preachers at the London Oratory, of which Father Faber was the Superior. Frederick Oakeley was a Canon

44 Dawson, op. cit., p. 152.

of Westminster and Missionary Rector at Islington, and became a popular writer among Roman Catholics. Mr. Meyrick joined the Society of Jesus. Mr. Lewis became well known by his Life of St. Theresa.46

To this group should be added Robert Wilberforce, who also worked with Newman during Tractarian days; after he became a Catholic he went to Rome to study for the priesthood but died before ordination and was buried in Santa Maria Sopra Minerva opposite the Academia, where he studied. Cardinal Newman certainly had his prayer granted; if he was not able to bring all his Oxford associates to the true Church of Christ with him, he at least significantly affected many of them; and that same influence has travelled over the whole world throughout the following years. His earnestness for the salvation of his associates is evident in the closing of his Apologia:

And I earnestly pray for this whole company, with a hope against hope that all of us, who once were so united, and so happy in our union, may even now be brought at length, by the Power of the Divine Will, into One Fold and under One Shepherd.47

It is in his poem The Dream of Gerontius that Newman seems to express the quest of the Tractarians for the God of the One, True Church:

There will I sing, and soothe my stricken breast,
Which ne'er can cease
To throb, and pine, and languish, till possest
Of its Sole Peace.
There will I sing my absent Lord and Love:—
Take me away,
That sooner I may rise, and go above,
And see Him in the truth of everlasting day.48

46 Ward, op. cit., p. 84.
47 Apologia, p. 320.
Reilly likens Gerontius to the great Cardinal, himself:

... in Gerontius, the good man, facing the end hopefully, trustfully, you have seen Newman, standing alone, the protagonist, as every man must be at the last, of his own life's drama.49

It is true that the Anglicans were seeking answers to their myriad questions on religion—answers which could be found only in the Catholic Church. Corrigan describes the conditions in the Catholic Church in the nineteenth century:

The Catholic Church in the nineteenth century claimed to be the 'One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church' of the Nicene Creed as reworded in A. D. 331. Her unity is best manifested in the Papacy, not so much because of the virtues or merits of the popes themselves as on account of the spontaneous loyalty and obedience which united clergy and laity throughout the world with the Holy See. . . . In the nineteenth century there was, as always, much hidden holiness, and the list of its men and women who attained to eminent sanctity is a long one. The Church may be criticized for not being what her Founder never intended she should be, and thousands or millions of her children may fail to use their liberty to conform their lives to the divine plan but only when, if this were possible, the saints desert her will she no longer be the Church she claims to be. In the nineteenth century she welcomes the test of sanctity. She can fearlessly submit to be judged by her 'fruits.'50

The Catholic Church of the nineteenth century can boast of its saints just as the Church of the Middle Ages to which both the Pre-Raphaelites and the Tractarians had turned. Many of the great names of the thirteenth century bear the title of 'saint'—alongside Charlemagne, Barbarossa, and Innocent III stand the hallowed Gregory, Boniface, Bernard, Francis, Louis, and Thomas, whose power was in their saintliness. This same sanctity remains with the Church of the present day. Dawson very adroitly points out:

50 Corrigan, op. cit., p. 45.
Thus history is not unlike Dante's journey through the other world. If we enter deeply into a spiritual epoch like that of the Oxford Movement, we find ourselves in the presence of men whose spirits still live and have power to move us. For the men who count in the end are not the successful men who rode triumphantly on the crest of the wave of change, like Napoleon, but those who are indifferent to success or failure, who despise quick results and preserve their spiritual integrity at all costs. It is they who are the real judges of the world.51

Truly did the Tractarians profit by their intense study of the Middle Ages and of the principles of that Church of the Middle Ages—the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church, the Roman Catholic Church. Likewise, the Pre-Raphaelites found what they were seeking—truth in art, which they discovered in the Catholic Church of the Middle Ages. Where the Tractarians were in quest of Christ for His love of Truth and His True Church in order to find peace and happiness in the midst of their century's chaos, the Pre-Raphaelites were merely in search of Christ's teaching of Truth for the aesthetic pleasure it would add to their work. The Tractarians found eminent interest in the theological questions of the day—such an interest as to consume their whole lives and ultimately bring them to the Catholic Church; the Pre-Raphaelites were not concerned with such vital points, and had no interest in the beautiful Liturgy of the Church except as a model for their artistic interpretations. The one has left us a great heritage in the Church today; the other prefers to remain separate from Catholic principles.

In conclusion: the materialistic yoke of the Liberalism which resulted from the Industrial Era bore heavily on nineteenth-century England. Revolt against this oppression spread to the religious views, and soon a

51 Dawson, op. cit., p. 2.
group of Oxford scholars arose to sound the alarm of National Apostasy when the number of Irish Protestant bishoprics was lessened. Immediately they put their intellectual talents into use and began writing tracts, preaching sermons, and, in general, endeavoring to bring the English people back to the Primitive Church. In their intensive study of the Fathers and the Liturgy, they found that it was not the Catholic Church that was erring, but the ones who had broken away, the Anglicans. Thus Newman and some of the others studied themselves into the One, True Church. It was a lonely path for these Oxford scholars to tread in view of the ridicule of a world traditionally prejudiced against Catholics, a world satisfied in its lethargy of soul, a world concerned only with the advancement of material things over spiritual. But they remained adamant in their purpose, giving up much in the line of intellectual advancement and high positions in universities as well as in the Church of England. They had delved into the fundamental principles underlying the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church; now they were reaping the glorious results of conversion and the peace that such renunciation brings. Theirs was a battle that has won for them renown in the spiritual world and the undying gratitude of all those who have come after them and who because of their struggles, have found it just a bit easier to leave the Church of England for the often despised fold of the Catholic Church.

This century of distorted thought patterns, too, fostered as another of its many revivals, the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. In this Movement, Rossetti and his fellow Pre-Raphaelites, wearied of the stagnation in the
art of their time, turned to the day of Dante, which, of course, brought them to the Church of that era, the Roman Catholic Church. Theirs, however, was an artistic sympathy with the beauty of Truth in the Catholic Church; they accepted the Catholic art but not Catholic ethics. Chesterton says of them, "They used the mediaeval imagery to blaspheme the mediaeval religion." Both Movements found the Catholic Church a rich source of material, ascetic for one, aesthetic for the other; both sought relief from the restricting habits of mechanism of the distracted years of their century. But Rossetti and his associates continued in the intellectual rejection of faith that accounted for the spiritual vacuity of their time. Newman and his followers, refusing to countenance the lethargic condition of their church, found peace in the "Eternal Years" of Rome.

52 Chesterton, op. cit., p. 68.
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The thesis submitted by Sister Mary Henrietta Barker, B.V.M., has been read and approved by three members of the Department of English.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

May 27, 1948

Date

Signature of Adviser