

THE CARDINAL'

TO attempt the biography, however modest, of a public man, and an ecclesiastic at that, during his lifetime, or at least during his tenure of office, is, for obvious reasons, no easy task. Mr. Dingle, who, we are told on the wrapper, is 'a publicist of wide experience.' has had the courage to attempt the task on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the Cardinal of Westminster, and he has laid English-speaking Catholics under a debt of gratitude.

One need not be suspected of flattery for saying that the general feeling of English Catholics towards their leader in these past thirty years is one of filial veneration and genuine affection. To the younger generation he is synonymous with the history of the Church in this country as they have known it, whilst in the longer memories of their fathers he is justly appraised as the successor of three great men, and in some respects as one to whom it has been given to surpass their work. *Multi congregaverunt divitias* . . . the treasures of Catholic England, so warily and carefully brought out from their hiding holes by Wiseman and Manning and Vaughan, have been freely opened to a more universal appeal and a greater place in the nation's life under the beneficent rule of the present Archbishop of Westminster.

Providence gives to each age the pastors it needs—or deserves—and with the final close of what may be called the mentality of the Penal Times in England, and the beginning of an age of expansion and of Catholic Action, there has come to the See of Westminster and to the effective leadership of the Church one eminently fitted to that period of fuller development. It may be said that Cardinal Bourne found the Catholic Church still looked upon by the majority of Englishmen as one of their many sects; he has lived to see Her unique and universal character if not

¹ *Cardinal Bourne - i Westminster*, by Reginald J. Dingle. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 5/-.)

always recognized. at least more generally suspected. And though many men and ninny factors have surely contributed to this relaxation of insularity and to this drawing of hearts towards their Queen and Centre, it is but natural that we should **look** for one key to this success in the wise and vigilant government of the *Praeses Perpetuus* of the Hierarchy, whose task it has been to direct and to moderate the forces which have gone to make the change.

In the opening chapter, Mr. Dingle has skilfully touched (almost too briefly) on the salient traits in the Cardinal's character, certainly the most interesting and the most psychological part of this little book, which disclaims the title of a biography. In it may be found the answer to many prejudices and criticisms on the part of those who have not easily understood either the Church or the Cardinal.

In England a Cardinal was, and still is, in certain circles, something half comic and half terrifying, not quite to be taken seriously, yet Felt to be the emissary of a foreign power. Or, again, save in the case of Manning, who had worn gaiters before he assumed the Purple, a Catholic Bishop is unfavourably contrasted with those who bear the approved hall mark of a British seat of learning in the Establishment. and who can distinguish more easily between Jane Austen and Trollope than between substance and accidents. It is well brought out in this book how the culture of His Eminence is above all that befitting a pastor of souls, but. like everything truly Catholic, at the same time humane, broad, solid and above all *living*, linking the classical and ecclesiastical tradition of the past with the changes and needs of the present. Then that other so important function of the British Cardinal is explained and vindicated; the statesmanship and diplomacy which, though it may sink to the depths of pettiness and intrigue when manipulated by small men, is nevertheless a great and necessary instrument in the wielding of the Church's influence on society, based **as it is**, we are reminded, on the virtue of Prudence. It is the fashion nowadays to belittle this virtue, and indeed the error can well be understood when the distinction is forgotten between what St. Thomas

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contemptuously dismisses as *prudential carnis* and the magnificent supernatural virtue which governs and directs **our** doings under the influence of the Holy Spirit. **This is the** diplomacy which the Catholic Church has made **her own**, even if some of her members may at times have stooped nearer to the other. This is that which has been the only one known to His Eminence Francis Cardinal Bourne, and which he has wielded with French finesse, Roman patience and British courage.

We are glad to see the prominence given by Mr. Dingle to the blend of influences in His Eminence's education, for we think that this is one of his most distinctive marks, that cosmopolitanism of outlook and understanding set in a character and temper essentially English. His Eminence can never be regarded as foreign, either in blood or outlook, yet from his early contact with France, and from his Irish strain, though still more from his Catholic Faith, he derives assets which are a decided advantage when dealing with the Primates of the Church of England, or, on the other hand, with the experts of the Foreign Office.

Due prominence is given to such crucial questions as Education, for which the Cardinal has waged so long a battle in the most vital of all the interests of souls *adulescentium fingere mores*; combining again that firmness of principle with the elasticity of touch which we have noted. There is a most interesting chapter on Social Questions which shows how unflinchingly, though with sanity and balance, His Eminence has followed in the splendid traditions of Manning on behalf of the working man, though he **has** been solicitous to correct both extremes, spurning the **popularity** of a demagogue as well as the comfortable illusions of *laissez faire* . . . And, very sensibly, **we** are given throughout the volume the actual words of His Eminence, **so that** the man himself is revealed to us in his own mellow **wisdom** and in the characteristic moderation, so different **from** compromise, which causes him to speak without fanaticism, without flurry, but as one having authority, **those things** which are becoming, sound doctrine. Interesting **too** are the chapters on Church and State, on the

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Great War, where the Church's real doctrine on the difficult subject is sanely stated. We see throughout that His Eminence is one in touch both with principles and with the realities of life which modify their concrete application, qualities essential to an administrator, though to use this word of His Eminence without qualification would be misleading; he is much more than that.

Delicate questions are touched upon frankly, such as Ireland and . . . Malines. May it be permitted to us to commend Mr. Dingle's appreciation of the Cardinal on both these matters? . . . But His Eminence stands out, and we are glad to say it, above all in what he must needs be by nature of his office, *Forma gregis*, the shepherd, the teacher and the pattern of his flock. We refer not only to the speeches here culled from his utterances on such grave matters as Doctrine and Morals, and his ever practical application to the needs of England; we speak, though hesitatingly, of a more intimate matter, which, however, is palpable throughout his sermons and conferences, and which those who have been privileged to penetrate his native reserve and delicacy have seen and felt at close quarters—his intense and simple spirituality, formed on the pattern of the gentle St. Francis de Sales, yet, like all true spiritual life, adapted and moulded to his own personality.

It is this quiet and peaceful trust in Providence which has brought His Eminence through so many public crises and guided him in matters which else would have sunk to a human level; his faith in prayer, his love of the contemplative life which he has encouraged before everything else, his homely, practical, kindly insistence on the 'little virtues' and on the supreme importance of union with God as the *sine qua non* of all work for souls and the secret of all true success, these are surely the greatest things in a great career, as the world may well call it, though it be unable to understand the mainspring that underlies such honours.

The book will make interesting and perhaps illuminating reading for many, who will now feel that they know the Cardinal better. There is much interesting matter in the reference to the Modernist trouble and in the Cardi-

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nal's estimate of Newman, also in the shrewd and sympathetic analysis of the English character, of its virtues and its dangers. In all this we see, as Mr. Dingle says, a man who is not a mere 'intellectual' (thank God!), but who possesses the much greater gift of intelligence, and whose observations are both apposite and original. We could wish, with the author, that some systematized collection of His Eminence's spirituality were forthcoming, so adapted as it would be to the present day. And we only regret, in the book itself, the absence of more representative photographs. But that is a faint qualification indeed. And to the Eminent Subject of the sketch we can respectfully say in the words addressed to him by the Holy Father himself, '*Vivas, floreas*, surrounded by the crown of thy sons.'

A. DE ZULUETA.