THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE CERTITUDE OF FAITH

 ACCORDING TO

 JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The certitude of faith in its supernatural and psychological dimensions. Certitude as a complex, reflex, notional assent, and its characteristics. The relation between the psychological and supernatural dimensions of faith. The justification of certitude - how probable evidence leads to the unconditional assent of certitude?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE ERROR OF RATIONALISM</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nineteenth Century: the age of rationalism. Newman's encounter with rationalism influences the course of his justification of certitude. The two forms of rationalism which Newman encountered: Richard Whately at Oxford and William Froude during his days as a Catholic. The common error of both forms of rationalism, and Newman's approach to the justification of certitude.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE UNIVERSITY SERMONS IN DEFENSE OF CERTITUDE</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University Sermons: Newman's justification of certitude in light of his response to the rationalism of Whately. Three interpretative principles of the University Sermons. The relationship between faith and reason. How faith in its certitude goes beyond the probability of its evidence - the moral disposition and love. The University Sermons and Newman's emphasis of the moral factors involved in the process of arriving at certitude.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE GRAMMAR OF ASSENT IN DEFENSE OF CERTITUDE</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Grammar of Assent; Newman's justification of certitude in reaction to the rationalism of William Froude. The error of Froude: certitude is rational and an immoral use of ones intellect-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. CONCLUSION: NEWMAN'S JUSTIFICATION OF CERTITUDE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The moral disposition and the Illative Sense are two factors developed by Newman in his reaction to rationalism to justify how man can make an assent of certitude upon evidence which is merely probable. This is Newman's justification of certitude and it unfolds two consequences - his well-balanced concept of faith and his highly personal notion of faith.
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

When a man makes the assent of faith, does he do so with a confidence and an assurance that excludes all fear of doubt - in short, does his faith possess certitude? John Henry Newman was particularly interested in this question, and, from an investigation of his writings on faith, it appears that he is of the opinion that faith does possess such a certitude. But going further than this, Newman claims that this certitude is perfectly valid and justifiable, and completely in harmony with the psychological processes of the human person.

Newman begins by accepting the certitude of faith as a fact of experience; he never attempted to prove or demonstrate the existence of this certitude. He observed it in others and saw it within the depths of his own being. In the Apologia Pro Vita Sua, Newman describes the certitude that came to him through his conversion to Catholicism.

I have been in perfect peace and contentment; I have never had one doubt. I was not conscious to myself, on my conversion, of any change, intellectual or moral, wrought in my mind. I was not conscious of firmer faith in the fundamental truths of Revelation, or of more self command; I had not more
fervour, but it was like coming into a port after a rough sea; and my happiness on that score remains to this day without interruption.

It was the certitude of faith that freed him from doubt and brought him an enduring peace. Newman never questioned the existence of this reality.

Faith is also a supernatural reality and Newman always insisted upon the supernatural dimension of faith. The vision of faith, which relates man to the three divine persons and is the only way he can come to know God as He is, is by its very nature absolutely gratuitous, a gift of grace. Faith is not something that man can achieve by himself, but it is freely given by the grace of God who has chosen him to believe. As such the ultimate certitude of faith is supernatural. The certitude of faith, an effect of divine grace, is primarily based upon the authority of God. Ultimately a man does not believe because he can prove the object


4 Ibid., p. 127.
of faith, but solely because God has revealed it.

The absolute and perfect certitude of divine faith does not rest on reasoning or human motives, but solely on the fact that God, the Eternal Truth who cannot deceive nor be deceived, has spoken. The Word of God is the ultimate certitude of faith.

Now certitude is not a quality that is restricted to supernatural faith, for a man can have many natural certitudes. There are many truths other than supernatural realities to which a man can give an assent of certitude. Certitude, then, is a natural phenomenon in harmony with the psychological structures of the mind. The assent of certitude can be given to such a concrete proposition as, "I shall die one day," "Britain is an island," or "There is a war on in Vietnam." Since faith is an assent to propositions signifying concrete realities, its certitude has a counterpart in the ordinary psychological processes of the mind. This is the psychological dimension of certitude.

Newman's analysis of the nature of certitude on the psychological dimension is contained primarily in the Grammar of Assent. Here Newman describes certitude in terms of assent with certitude being radically an assent without doubt - an unconditional assent. In order to understand the nature of certitude as assent, it is first necessary to understand what Newman means by assent.

Assent is the unconditional acceptance of what has already been apprehended as true. This apprehension of the

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truth is the necessary concomitant of assent, and the condition under which assent is given. Assent, being based upon apprehended truth, like truth itself admits of no degrees; it is an "either, or" reality. Either you assent to a proposition or you do not; there is no in the middle. Newman never really defined assent, but he did give several descriptions of it in the Grammar of Assent such as, "an adherence to a proposition without reserve or doubt", and, "the unconditional acceptance of a proposition as true." 

Assent, although it does not admit of degrees, is further diversified and can be classified according to real, if it is an assent to a proposition representing concrete reality, or notional, if assent is given to an abstract proposition. Viewed from the point of view of consciousness, assent can also be classified as simple and complex assent. Simple assent is implicit and unconscious, given without direct knowledge or full advertance of the mind. On the other hand, complex assent, being a deliberate assent to a simple assent, whether notional or real, is a reflex

7 Ibid., p. 174.
8 Ibid., p. 172.
9 Ibid., pp. 8, 172, and 259.
10 Ibid., pp. 9, 35, and 75.
11 Ibid., pp. 188-89, and 210.
and conscious assent.\textsuperscript{12}

The nature of the certitude of faith can only be understood if it be examined under its aspect as a complex assent. Newman distinguished between simple and complex assent. Simple assent is the non-reflex acceptance of a proposition,\textsuperscript{13} the person assents to a truth, but he is not reflectively aware that what he is doing is assenting to a truth. He accepts the proposition as true without reflecting upon what he is doing. That simple assent to Newman is not certitude is quite evident for in the Grammar of Assent he contrasts the two.\textsuperscript{14} Simple assent is called "material certitude" the matter from which certitude flows, the basis of certitude.\textsuperscript{15} In order to become a certitude simple assent must be reflected upon and made conscious.\textsuperscript{16} Although it is not certitude, simple assent is the basis and foundation of certitude.

As a conscious reflex assent to a simple assent, certitude does not exclude simple assent, but includes it.\textsuperscript{17} Certitude is a complex act which is made up of reflex assent and simple assent.\textsuperscript{18} However, it is this conscious reflex aspect,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12}Ibid., pp. 190, and 194-95.
\item \textsuperscript{13}Newman, Grammar of Assent, p. 189.
\item \textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 210.
\item \textsuperscript{15}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{16}Ibid., pp. 211-12.
\item \textsuperscript{17}Ibid., pp. 190, and 194-95.
\item \textsuperscript{18}Ibid., p. 216.
\end{itemize}
its quality of being a complex assent, that distinguishes
certitude from simple assent and is the essential element
in certitude. As Newman defined it, certitude is "the per-
ception of a truth with the perception that it is a truth,
or the consciousness of knowing as expressed in the phrase
'I know that I know'.\(^{19}\) Certitude is therefore an assent
to a truth with the awareness that what one is assenting to
is true; it is always a reflex act.

As a reflex assent certitude is an assent to a notion-
al proposition. The predicate of a reflex assent is always
the abstract term "true". For example, "that I shall die
one day is true", is a reflex assent, and, since its predi-
cate is a general term, it is a notional assent.\(^{20}\) Certi-
tude then is also a notional assent with the proposition to
which this assent is given being either real or notional.
On the psychological dimension, therefore, it is of the na-
ture of the certitude of faith that it be a complex notional
assent to truth. Certitude combines the keenness of simple
assent and the persistence of reflex assent and it is as such
a very complex act.\(^{21}\)

Certitude is an assent to a truth with the awareness
that what one is assenting to is true. Since the object of

\(^{19}\)Ibid., p. 197.

\(^{20}\)Ibid., p. 214.

\(^{21}\)Ibid., p. 216.
certitude is truth, it has the quality of being correct; it is a "right conviction with a consciousness of being right."\(^{22}\) It is a law of the mind to seek truth and, when it finds it, to take possession of it and never let it go. Having found truth the mind rests in truth and, therefore, when the mind reaches certitude, it persists in that state. Certitude is persistent and never fails; this is the characteristic of certitude which Newman called its indefectibility.\(^{23}\) Newman affirmed this characteristic to show that the assent of certitude is reasonable, not a mere extravagance of the intellect,\(^ {24}\) and that the mind which is made for truth, "can attain truth, and, having attained it, can keep it, can recognize it, and preserve the recognition."\(^ {25}\) It is this persistence, the quality of indefectibility which assures endurance, that indicates the truth of a certitude. If a certitude persists, it is true; if it does not persist, then it is false. Newman did not mean to say that there are no false or mistaken convictions or that certitude is infallible.

Newman quite clearly held that some certitudes were false, and that certitude does not possess nor need infallibility.\(^ {26}\) Having insisted that it was wrong to confuse the

\(^{22}\text{Ibid., p. 221.}\)
\(^{23}\text{Ibid.}\)
\(^{24}\text{Ibid.}\)
\(^{25}\text{Ibid., p. 222.}\)
\(^{26}\text{Ibid.}\)
two, Newman made this distinction between certitude and infallibility. Certitude is a disposition, not a faculty, of the mind relative to a definite and particular proposition, whereas infallibility is a faculty and relates the mind to "all possible propositions in a given subject-matter."\textsuperscript{27} Infallibility is a general gift applicable to every particular case that may arise, but certitude is directed to a definite concrete proposition.\textsuperscript{28} To say that a man possesses certitude is not to affirm therefore that he possesses infallibility.\textsuperscript{29}

That certitude is not infallibility is also evident from the fact that a man's certitudes are often false and mistaken and have to be changed.\textsuperscript{30} Certitudes can be false and as such they are faults, but they are faults not because they are supposed certitudes but because they are founded on faulty reasoning. As an assent certitude is always preceded by a process of reasoning which presents truth to the mind. If there is any error in certitude it is the reasoning that

\textsuperscript{27}Ibid., p. 224.
\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., p. 225.
\textsuperscript{29}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., p. 223. "It is a fact of daily occurrence that men change their certitudes, that is, what they consider to be such, and are as confident and well-established in their new opinions as they were once in their old."
is at fault and not the assent, for it is a law of the mind to give assent to what reasoning presents as true.\textsuperscript{31} Mistaken certitudes which result from false reasoning do exist, but this does not constitute a proof that certitude is itself a perversion or extravagance of man's nature.\textsuperscript{32} To deny the reasonableness and validity of certitude because of the existence of mistaken certitudes would be like dispensing with all clocks just because some of them go wrong from time to time.\textsuperscript{33} When it came to distinguishing between true and false certitude Newman admitted that there was no interior, immediate test, although indefectibility, a characteristic of certitude, served as a kind of negative test - if the certitude does not persist, then it is false.\textsuperscript{34} But perhaps the best safeguard against false certitude is that it be given only after careful examination and investigation.

In its perfection, then, certitude is quite obviously a very complex reality. As an indefectible reflex notional assent based upon examination and investigation, certitude, in its highest expression, is rather demanding. Because of its own high demands and the restriction of the limited subject - matter to which the assent of certitude can be given, genuine certitude is not as common as one might expect,\textsuperscript{35} but that certitude exists on the psychological level is beyond

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., p. 229.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., p. 233.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., pp. 255-56.
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., pp. 236-37.
a shadow of a doubt to Newman.\textsuperscript{36}

Certitude, then, according to Newman, can be said to have two dimensions, one supernatural and the other psychological. However, the two, being distinct but not separate, exist as two aspects of a single reality - that reality being the relationship which exists between the three divine persons and the human person. The supernatural dimension is not something added to the psychological, rather it is a transformation of the psychological. That the two dimensions are inseparable is clear from Newman's analysis of the relation between the supernatural and the natural. So intimately are they connected that it would be vain to attempt a solution of the problem on the supernatural level without any reference to the parallel problem on the natural plane.\textsuperscript{37} The supernatural certitude of faith is a process parallel in reality to natural certitude.

Thus there is an analogy between the two dimensions of certitude.\textsuperscript{38} Newman considered the solution of the natural or psychological problem (how the mind arrives at natural certitude) as an indispensable guide in the solution of the same problem on the supernatural dimension.\textsuperscript{39} Therefore, an analysis of certitude on the psychological dimension is the

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., p. 239.


\textsuperscript{38}Newman, Grammar of Assent, pp. 239-40.

\textsuperscript{39}Boekraad, Personal Conquest of Truth, p. 35.
basis for an examination of the certitude of faith in its totality, as a psychological and supernatural reality.

As an unconditional assent, certitude goes beyond the probability of the evidence which can be brought in support of it. This is partially due to the fact that the evidence provided by the inferential process which precedes the assent of certitude is always conditional and probable. Certitude grows out of probabilities and Newman clearly saw this.

My argument is in outline as follows: that that absolute certitude which we were able to possess, whether as to the truths of natural theology, or as to the fact of a revelation, was the result of an assemblage of converging and converging probabilities, and that, both according to the constitution of the human mind and the will of its Maker, that certitude was a habit of mind, that certainty was a quality of propositions; that

\[40\text{Ibid.}\]

\[41\text{To say that certitude goes beyond the probability of the evidence which can be brought in support of it is not to say that faith is an irrational process. Rather it emphasizes the unique character of the act of faith - that it is an act of the whole person and not merely an assent to a proposition that is logically conclusive and totally demonstrable. Newman, Grammar of Assent, p. 179. Assent for Newman is unconditional; it is an "either, or" reality - but inference is always conditional and the best inferential process can only provide evidence which is probable. The unconditional assent of certitude is based upon inference which is conditional and evidence which is probable. The force of the personal assent of certitude is stronger than the probability of the evidence warrants. The assent of certitude seems to rise higher than its source and go beyond the probability of its evidence. This seems to be the point of Newman's argument against Locke's degrees of assent in the Grammar of Assent, pp. 162-179. Locke holds that it is illogical and immoral to "carry our assent above the evidence that a proposition is true" to have "a surplusage of assurance beyond the degrees of that evidence." Newman, Grammar of Assent, p. 163. Newman disagrees with this position and seems to hold that the assent of certitude does go beyond the degrees or probability of the evidence.}\]
probabilities which did not reach to logical certainty, might create a mental certitude;...

The certitude of faith, like all certitude, is founded upon evidence which of itself can only give probability.

Now how can this unconditional assent of certitude which exceeds the influence of its evidence be validly given? Such an operation seems more like sentiment, superstition, or prejudice than valid activity of a rational being. The man enamored of reason is quick to question the validity of such an activity as certitude. Because it does not flow directly from the evidence it seems to be unjustifiable or at least based upon very shaky grounds. Newman was very much aware of this difficulty and, through his encounter with the rationalism of his day, he was forced to meet this objection - that the certitude of faith or certitude in any matter was invalid and unjustifiable.

It is his answer to the rationalism of the nineteenth century that led Newman to his justification of certitude, particularly the certitude of faith. In order to justify this certitude, Newman had to show how the mind could go beyond the probability of the evidence to a certain assent. It was obviously not within the capacity of evidence to produce an

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42 Newman, Apologia, p. 20.

43 The certitude of faith for Newman is an assent based upon probable evidence. Newman finds this assent in many concrete matters and believes it to be justifiable. Newman, Grammar of Assent, p. 176. Going further he clearly states that certitude is grounded upon evidence which of itself can only give probability. "I prefer to rely on that of an accumulation of various probabilities; but we both hold (that is, I hold with him), that from probabilities we may construct legitimate proof, sufficient for certitude." Newman, Grammar of Assent, p. 411.
unconditional assent of certitude upon its own power. No sort of evidence can force a man to assent with certitude, in faith or in any matter. There must be some other factor or factors that enter into the formation of the assent of certitude. Since it is such a unique act involving the whole person perhaps these "other factors" can be found within the person. This is how Newman chose to approach the problem. In order to show how certitude could go beyond the probability of the evidence, Newman looked within the person.

It is, then, the purpose of this thesis to examine the personal elements that enter into certitude, showing how Newman developed them through his encounter with rationalism, in order to justify how certitude goes beyond the probability of its evidence. Because of the close relationship between the natural and the supernatural, and since the supernatural dimension transforms the psychological dimension in certitude, this thesis shall be limited to an examination of faith in its psychological dimension. As a result it will be seen how Newman justified the certitude of faith in its totality, on the psychological and supernatural dimension.
THE ERROR OF RATIONALISM

One of the predominant spirits of the age in which Newman lived was that of rationalism. An unbounded confidence in the power of human reason is one of the characteristic notes of the Nineteenth Century. Following in the traditions of the Eighteenth Century, the Rationalistic Age, the Nineteenth Century produced various forms of rationalism. It was the age of the philosophical deists, the historical liberals, and the scientific naturalists. This was Newman's century,


2 John F. Cronin, Cardinal Newman: His Theory of Knowledge, (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1935), from pp. 10-16, Cronin traces the development of these three phases of English rationalism and their influence upon Newman. To some extent this threefold division of Rationalism is an over simplification. In an article on "Rationalism" in Hastings, Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, (Vol. X, pp. 580-83), it is pointed out how difficult it is to trace the history of rationalism and to order the rationalists in a strict historical order. "The threads cross too much". (p. 581). However, the article views rationalism as an element of negative criticism rooted in a rival religion, or a new school of philosophy or science. (pp. 580-81).
the nineteenth; his life, from 1801 to 1890, almost spanned it. Rationalism was the spirit of the times in which Newman lived, and any attempt to explain his thought without taking this into consideration is bound to be inadequate.

Newman was a man of his times, but in no sense could it be said that he let himself be passively molded by them. Always keenly sensitive, Newman was especially aware of the thought patterns of his own day. He saw the value of human reason; yet he could also see the danger involved in exaggerating its power. Being a controversialist by nature, Newman could not remain silent in the face of error. He always felt it his duty to speak out in the defense of truth even when it seemed to put him in opposition to his own times.

We are ourselves necessary parts of the existing system, out of which we have individually grown into being, into our actual position in society. Depending, therefore, on the times as a condition of existence, in wishing for other times we are, in fact, wishing we had never been born. Moreover, it is ungrateful to a state of society, from which we daily enjoy so many benefits, to rail against it. Yet there is nothing unbecoming, unmeaning, or ungrateful in pointing out its faults and wishing them away. 3

Fashioning the times as well as being formed by them, Newman was indeed "one who shaped the spirit of his age as much as he was shaped by it." 4


4 Boekraad, Personal Conquest of Truth, p. 68.
The spirit of rationalism, therefore, meet with Newman's opposition. To Newman rationalism was one of the major errors of his time, and he opposed it whenever he encountered it. He engaged in this struggle against rationalism throughout his entire life. He encountered it at Oxford as an Anglican, also in his reading of the philosophy of John Locke, he had to face it in his correspondence with the British scientist William Froude, and in Paley's *Evidences for Christianity*. In its various forms rationalism constituted one of the major problems of Newman's intellectual life. Some authors even go so far as to see the struggle as the unifying theme of Newman's life. Wilfrid Ward maintains that


6Newman's response to Paley's approach to Christianity is most adequately expressed in Newman's own words: "If I am asked to use Paley's argument for my own conversion, I say plainly I do not want to be converted by a smart syllogism; if I am asked to convert others by it, I say plainly I do not care to overcome their reason without touching their hearts.", *Grammar of Assent*, p. 425.

7Cronin, *Newman, Theory of Knowledge*, p. 24, "It remained in the forefront of his thought from the time of his conversion from it in 1828 until years later when he received the Cardinal's hat."

8Boekraad, *Personal Conquest of Truth*, p. 26, "This moreover is precisely that which gives such a unity to his life, namely, the struggle against a Liberalism which either considered faith as a necessary conclusion to a chain of logical arguments, or, conversely, put religion back into the realm of pure sentiment."
this idea was the unifying thought of all his works.\textsuperscript{9} Newman himself, in a discourse on the day on which he received the Cardinal's hat, summed up his Catholic life as an endeavor to resist the spirit of rationalism in religion.\textsuperscript{10}

It was his encounter with rationalism that influenced the course which Newman’s justification of certitude took. Rationalism attacked certitude as being invalid. Newman encountered this attack in two forms. The first of these exaggerated the principle of strict logical reasoning so much that it practically excluded the existence of any other process in man. This type of rationalism puts the truths of revelation to the test of pure reason, and only those truths that survive this rigid examination remain credible. In this system there is really no place for the reality known as faith; it is entirely unnecessary. Reason alone is sufficient. To Newman these men exercised a dangerous and false liberty of thought:

\begin{quote}
... subjecting to human judgment those revealed doctrines which are in their nature beyond and independent of it, and claiming to determine on intrinsic grounds the truth and value of propositions which rest for their reception simply on the external authority of the Divine Word.
\end{quote}


Subjecting the facts of revelation to the strictest logical processes, that of formal reasoning and logical demonstration, this approach, if consistently pursued, will lead to the total destruction of revealed religion. Instead of revealed mysteries which lead the mind beyond the scope of its strict logical reasoning powers, the facts of revelation are reduced to truths which are merely conclusions of a formal reasoning process. In such a system faith is reduced to a conclusion of a logical syllogistic reasoning process. The credibility of the truths of faith, then, is only as strong as the evidence which reason brings to support them. But, in reality, the evidence which reason provides is always probable and open to new findings. To subject faith to such a reasoning process places faith in the realm of the probable and makes certitude impossible. The only valid approach to reality is through reason and demonstration; such a rationalism leaves no room for any of the moral or personal elements in man.

The second type of rationalism which Newman encountered is a form of scientific rationalism. It is characterized by an extreme devotion to the physical sciences. The influence of science during the Nineteenth Century was overwhelming,


and, Newman, ever conscious of the world in which he lived, was aware of the good and bad points of this scientific trend. Conscious of the unity of truth, Newman realized that the growth of scientific knowledge was inevitable and good. But, on the other hand, he was also aware that the scientists had fallen into some false views concerning the power of reason.

The scientist, approaching reality through experience and observation, works with evidence that is probable and concludes only as the evidence permits. Living in a world of theories and probabilities the scientist is always open to new discoveries and hence he can rarely, if ever, assent to any proposition with absolute certitude. To do so would be going beyond the probability of the evidence and this, for the scientist, is an irrational procedure. This method is perfectly valid when applied to scientific matters, but it is definitely invalid when applied to matters, such as faith, which are beyond the scientific order. In Newman’s day, and still in the modern world, there was a tendency for the scientist to extrapolate, to apply his discipline to subjects outside the realm of science. When the scientific discipline, which only concludes to probabilities and theories, is applied to faith, it reduces faith to probability and opinion and makes certitude impossible. The reasoning is as follows: since it is beyond the rational power of scientific reasoning to conclude to certitude, the assent of certitude is irrational and beyond the intellectual processes of the mind.
Not only does this form of rationalism deny the certitude of faith, but it denounces certitude in any realm of human endeavor as being irrational and unintellectual.

This encounter which Newman had with rationalism is a growing and developing experience. Consequently there is a certain progression in the rationalism which Newman encountered. In attempting to show this progression, the influence exerted upon Newman by the thought of two men shall be traced. The two men are Richard Whately and William Froude. Each represents one of the two forms of rationalism which Newman encountered, and each represents a different period in his life.

In the Apologia Pro Vita Sua Newman mentions several propositions subscribed to by Oxford rationalists during his university days. Four of them read as follows:

1. No religious tenet is important, unless reason shows it to be so.
2. No one can believe what he does not understand.
3. No theological doctrine is anything more than an opinion which happens to be held by bodies of men.
4. It is dishonest in a man to make an act of faith in what he has not had brought home to him by actual proof.

These four propositions are illustrative of the Oxford rationalism which Newman was to encounter and oppose. This is representative of the first form of rationalism mentioned.

before; one of its leading exponents was Richard Whately. After Whately had captured Newman's mind for a brief period, their relationship ended with the two in disagreement. The years, from 1825 to 1828, in which Whately was to exert an influence over Newman are specified by Newman himself.

The years I speak of as those of my intimacy with him were from 1825 to 1828, during the first of which I was his Vice-Principal at Alban Hall. His influence over me ceased altogether in 1828, being superseded by that of Mr. Keble and Mr. Froude...

This encounter with Whately was one of the first influences to which Newman was subjected as a Fellow of Oriel.

Whately was greatly enamored of the value of reason, especially the force of formal logic. A few phrases from his book on logic give an illustration of his type of thinking, "The most appropriate intellectual occupation of man, as man, is evidently reasoning," and again, "The judgments of common sense are conjectural." For Whately the correct way to

15 See p. 17.
16 Sylvester Juergens, Newman on the Psychology of Faith in the Individual, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1928), Juergens points out that Whately was one of the best known spokesmen of the Liberal school at Oxford. Further on he cites two of the four propositions mentioned above in the text as tenets of the Oxford Liberals of Newman's day, pp. 3-4.
20 Ibid., p. xii.
true knowledge was through formal reasoning and logical demonstration. It was upon these lines that he was to exercise an influence upon Newman.

Originally Newman had been attracted to the Evangelical approach to religion, "but soon he was dissatisfied with it in his heart, because it was too vague, too 'misty' in its views."21 Newman's mind demanded more than a religion of sentiment and emotion; such a religion was too shallow for him; he wanted to penetrate the depths of reality and grasp the real meaning of things.22 In the logic of Whately, Newman saw a means of adding clarification and precision to his religious thought. So from Whately he learned formal logic, and "to think for himself and to write cautiously and clearly."23 Newman describes this influence in the *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*.

> He, emphatically, opened my mind, and taught me to think and to use my reason......He had done his work towards me or nearly so, when he had taught me to see with my own eyes and to walk with my own feet.24

As a result of this influence of Whately, Newman was drawn out of the narrow views of religion in which "Evangelicalism"

22 Ibid., p. 90.
naturally tended to confine him. 25

But Newman eventually found that he could not go all the way with Whately. The realization of the excellence of reason had brought Newman an increase in candor and reality, but such a gain was not without its dangers. Newman began to feel that the prize had been purchased at the price of a loss of reverence and depth. He was himself drifting into a rationalism which he did not like.

The truth is, I was beginning to prefer intellectual excellence to moral; I was drifting in the direction of liberalism. I was rudely awakened from my dream at the end of 1827 by two great blows—illness and bereavement. 26

Newman himself realized that he and Whately were too different to remain on the same line for very long. 27 After 1826, when Newman resigned as his Vice-Principal at St. Albans, their paths began to take different directions. The formal break between the two came in 1829 over the matter of Peel's re-election at Oxford. 28

Newman's break with Whately constituted his definitive

26 Newman, Apologia, p. 11.
27 Ibid., p. 8.
28 Ibid., p. 11.
split with the proponents of rationalism. Once and for all he broke with the forces of Oxford rationalism. This experience at Oxford had a profound effect upon Newman, for it brought him face to face with the conflict between religious faith and rationalism. It was this crisis that "brought home to him strongly the opposition between rationalism and the religious 'ethos'." Newman chose the religious "ethos", and it was a choice that was to determine the course of the rest of his life. It was this choice that made him a lifetime opponent of rationalism. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of this experience which Newman had at Oxford. It exposed to him the fallacies of rationalism and the danger of the unmitigated application of reason,

29 It seems that not all agree completely on Whately's position. Douglas Ehninger in an introduction to Whately's Elements of Rhetoric, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1963), states "Whately himself was by profession a churchman and by dedication a life-long defender of religion against the attacks of rationalists and the scepticism of science", p. ix. Ehninger, in a footnote, goes on to associate Whately with the Tractarian movement, "Through close friendship with Pusey, Keble, Hawkins, and Froude he was associated with the Tractarian movement, although not himself a Tractarian in the strict sense of the term." R.W. Church, however, speaks of Whately as being one of the most prominent of the liberal writers, The Oxford Movement, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1922), pp. 4-6. Boekraad also places Whately in the camp of the rationalists of the Liberal School, Personal Conquest of Truth, pp. 73-74. Whatever be the merit of Ehninger's appraisal of Whately, it seems quite clear that Newman considered Whately responsible for a Liberalism in religion which influenced Newman himself for a short period, Apologia, pp. 11-15.


31 Ibid.

32 Ibid., p. 33.
in the form of logical demonstration and formal inference, to matters of religion and revealed truth.

This encounter with Whately represents Newman's conflict with rationalism while he was in the Anglican Church. His direct encounter with the next man, William Froude, begins in the period in which Newman seriously was thinking of becoming a Catholic. For the most part they continued their correspondence until Froude's death in 1879. Froude was a representative of the second form of rationalism mentioned in this chapter. Newman's correspondence with this man is also a very good illustration of his encounter with rationalism during his days in the Catholic Church.

Unlike Whately, Froude was not a churchman, but a scientist. In matters of religion he was somewhat of a free-thinker. His whole approach to reality was through the scientific method. He did not see how the mind could go beyond probability in its judgments. The certitude of faith always was to remain an enigma to him. In their correspondence Newman attempted to show Froude that the human mind could and did go beyond probability to certitude. Froude, however, was

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33 G. H. Harper, Cardinal Newman and William Froude, A Correspondence, (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1933), pp. 14-15. Harper cites that Newman's correspondence with the Froudes began around 1844-45. Most of the early letters were addressed to Mrs. Froude, but they seem to have been written to William as well.

34 Davis, Newman, Faith and Certitude, p. 250. The author states that Froude was representative of that school of rationalism which applies reason too strictly to matters of faith and religion.
not to be shaken from his strong convictions and he remained a religious sceptic until his death in 1879.\textsuperscript{35} 

Despite their intellectual differences, the relationship between Newman and Froude always remained warm and friendly. Froude was not a scoffer nor an iconoclast, but an English gentleman, and "the gentleman counted much with Newman."\textsuperscript{36} He was not a tough minded scientist on the warpath against religion, rather, he possessed a sincere desire to discover whatever truth there was in religion.\textsuperscript{37} As a result, Newman and Froude were always open and respectful of one another's positions. Ever since Newman took the Froudes into his confidence in his own religious trials there remained a close bond between him and the entire family. Newman was largely responsible for Mrs. Froude and four of the Froude children's conversion to Catholicism. This proved to be a great trial for William, but it never caused any real strife between Newman and him. Such was the relationship of the two men who argued so forcibly about the evidence for religious faith and the possibility of its certainty.

Their entire correspondence revolves around the question

\textsuperscript{35}Harper states: "In spite of his softness of personal manner, Froude never relinquished his 'tough minded' attitude, and to the end of his life he remained firmly agnostic, sceptical even of the possibility of absolute certainty in secular as well as religious matters."; \textit{Newman, Froude Correspondence}, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid., pp. 10-11.

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid.
of the evidence for faith and its certitude. As a scientist Froude first examined the evidence and then concluded accordingly. To him the credibility of one's judgments were only as forceful as the evidence which one could bring in support of it. Taking a dictum from Faraday, Froude subscribes to the following statement:

... the force of certainty of our conclusions ought to be proportioned to the force of the evidence by which they are supported.38

In effect, this made all our judgments probable, more or less so as the evidence was stronger or weaker. This is the context in which Froude subscribed to Butler's phrase, "To us, probability is the guide of life."39 The human mind could never go beyond probability in its search for truth.

For Froude there was no possibility of any real certitude. In no realm of thought could the human mind arrive at a certain conclusion. Such certitude was not only beyond the domain of Theology for Froude, but it also exceeded the limits of the knowledge of the ordinary facts of experience. He did admit that some conclusions were more certain than others but, until the day he died, he insisted that "there is an element of uncertainty in all."40 The reason for such uncertainty is due to the fact that the mind judges on evidence,

38 Ibid., p. 133.
39 Ibid., p. 125.
40 Ibid., pp. 119-20.
which is never absolutely conclusive, and therefore its judgments can never be unconditional or truly certain.

According to Froude any attempt of the man of faith to claim a certitude beyond the probability of the evidence is nothing but prejudice and "an instance of an immoral temper or of an immoral use of the faculties."\textsuperscript{41} Faith always remains in the realm of probability. For Froude the only type of faith that is worthwhile is one that fully realizes the doubtfulness of its conclusions, yet "acts nevertheless confidently on the best and wisest conclusion it can form..."\textsuperscript{42} Faith and doubt are concomitant. The best the mind seems to be able to arrive at is a fairly certain opinion. To claim that faith reaches certitude is nonsense. The mind, according to Froude, can never arrive at certitude about anything. Our conclusions always must remain probable and the mind must be ever open to accept new evidence.

Both forms of rationalism, Whately's brand and the type that Froude represents, attack certitude because it produces an assent which goes beyond the probability of its evidence. Assent is thus made proportionate to the evidence. Evidence becomes the all important element in assent; if the evidence is there, then the mind will be overwhelmed and assent will automatically follow. But since the evidence provided through the inferential process is always conditional, more or less credible, subject to modification, and admitting

\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 121-22.
\textsuperscript{42}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 122.
degrees, then, the assent, proportionate to such an inference, will also be conditional and subject to degrees. The possibility of an unconditional assent, and therefore a real certitude in faith, or any matter, is denied.

Newman vehemently opposed this aspect of rationalism. He knew that he possessed certitude within his own mind, and he knew that the ordinary believer possessed a similar certitude. He proposed to show that this certitude was valid. To do this, he had to show how the mind could go beyond the probability of the evidence to a certain assent. This meant showing that evidence was not the all important element in the assent of certitude, and that other factors, factors within the person, entered into the process of arriving at certitude. What these factors are shall be seen in the following chapters.
Newman's encounter with rationalism was a progressive and developing phenomenon; so also was his answer to rationalism's attack upon faith and his defense of certitude. As a result, the explication of Newman's endeavor to rescue faith and its certitude from the error of rationalism is a rather complex and burdensome task. Admittedly the division of Newman's life into two specific periods, his Anglican days and his life as a Catholic, greatly oversimplifies the progression of his thought. However, for the sake of consistency, and in order to show the development involved in his thought, the same procedure shall be followed in tracing Newman's justification of certitude.

In answering Whately's brand of rationalism, which subjected the truths of faith to the test of strict reason, Newman purposed to show that faith, although it is reasonable, is not a reasoned act directly proportionate to its evidence, and that other factors enter into the complex act of faith which enable it to go beyond the probability of its evidence. The purpose of this chapter shall be to examine Newman's justification of faith and its certitude which evolved during his
struggles with rationalism as an Anglican. Newman's reply to this type of rationalism is contained primarily in his Oxford University Sermons.¹

Before going into further detail on the notions of faith and certitude found in the University Sermons, it will be useful to give a few interpretative principles. First of all, Newman's method in the Sermons is experimental.² The University Sermons are a laboratory in which Newman tested and worked out his thought on faith and its relatedness to reason. His thought contained therein was the outcome of accidental writings strung out loosely over a period of about ten years, from 1831 to 1841.³ Newman does not even start out with a tentative definition of faith.⁴ He begins with experience and with faith and its certitude as facts existing within himself and others.

A second principle flows from the first. As pointed out, the University Sermons extend over a period of years. Consequently, the notion of faith found in them is not a static one

¹Newman's answer to Whately's type of rationalism in the matter of faith is contained primarily, but not exclusively, in the Oxford University Sermons (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1918). Much is contained in his Parochial and Plain Sermons (London: Longmans, Green and Co., eight volumes, 1920-24), his Lectures on Justification (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1924) and in the two volumes of the Via Media (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1923).


³Ibid., p. 37.

⁴Ibid., "They (University Sermons) are an exploring expedition into an all but unknown country and do not even venture on a definition of either Faith or Reason on starting."
but progressive and evolutionary. An isolated passage cannot be taken as Newman's notion of faith in the University Sermons. His thought on faith is definitely progressive, and it cannot be adequately understood if separated from its evolutionary framework. In the University Sermons, Newman's notion of faith grows in accuracy and precision, yet with the last one in 1841 the notion is still incomplete and unfinished. It has yet to be polished by the thought of the Grammar of Assent.

In light of this evolutionary nature of Newman's thought on faith in the Sermons, the concrete situation in which this thought develops becomes most significant. In order to appreciate the full dimensions of his thought, one has to be fully cognizant of the existential condition which produced it. Newman was keenly observant and always open to the concrete situation. His thought can never be completely isolated or abstracted from concrete realities. At times it is difficult to say which influenced the other the most, whether the form

5Ibid., p. 38, Elbert specifies this progression as a gradual lessening or decrease in Newman's opposition to reason. He states that in the University Sermons Newman emphasizes the practical aspect of faith while neglecting its explicitly reasoned side, (p. 79). While it is true that Newman emphasizes the moral aspect of faith, especially in the earlier sermons, it is equally true that in his later sermons he speaks of faith as an exercise of reason. Toward the later sermons it is evident that Newman accepts faith as a reasonable, but not reasoned, act.

6Ibid., "That Newman's notion on faith were still incomplete in 1841, is altogether evident; it required the Grammar of Assent to give them their final form."

7Ibid.
of his thought was specified by the concrete situation or vice-versa. Awareness of the concrete nature of Newman's thought is the third interpretative principle which must be kept in mind in order to understand the notion of faith presented in the University Sermons.

The problems with which Newman is faced in the University Sermons are rather complex. First of all he is reacting against Whately's rationalism, encountered by Newman at Oxford, which subjected the truths of faith to the proof of reason. Newman strongly reacted against this type of rationalism. Faith could never be completely subjected to reason, to do so would reduce faith to a reasoned act, a conclusion of a syllogism. Newman saw the error of this position and opposed it. In the University Sermons, Newman attempted to show how faith and reason are distinct and yet very much related at the same time. In germ, Newman's thesis was that, although faith is a reasonable act, an exercise of reason which can go beyond the probability of its evidence to a kind of certitude, nevertheless it is not a reasoned act. Newman proposed to show that faith is reasonable, but not reasoned.

The affirmation of the distinction between faith and reason introduced another problem, and, that is, how faith can be reasonable and yet demand less evidence than reason. This

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8 Ibid., p. 40, "In the University Sermons, therefore he proposed to complete this conception. He does this principally by comparing faith to reason itself, showing us, in how far it deviates from the reasoning process and how these deviations are to be accounted for without infringing on the reasonable character of faith."
question involves showing how faith can go beyond the probability of its evidence to an assent of certitude. Newman attempts to solve this problem in the University Sermons through the operation of love and what he calls the moral dispositions. Herein lies the heart of Newman's defense of certitude in the University Sermons, but before delving into this matter, it will be revelant to examine Newman's analysis of the relationship and distinction between faith and reason.

In examining the University Sermons, it is seen that one of Newman's primary concerns is to ascertain what precisely is the relationship between faith and reason.9 Newman's concern for this problem grows out of his own encounter with rationalism. Whately, along with the trend of the times, overemphasized the value of reason, and Newman reacted by toning down the role of reason. In the beginning of the sermon The Usurpations of Reason, Newman plays down the value of reason in religion and faith.10 This seems to be Newman's first reaction to rationalism, and it is quite natural. Rationalism overemphasized reason; Newman's response was to deemphasize it. However, Newman did not wish this deemphasis

9John H. Newman, Fifteen Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1918). In an early sermon entitled "The Usurpation of Reason", Newman proposes "to make some remarks upon the place which Reason holds in relation to Religion.... (p. 58). From the titles of two later sermons, "Faith and Reason, Contrasted As Habits of Mind" (p. 176) and "The Nature of Faith In Relation to Reason" (p. 202, it is evident that this is a topic of special concern to Newman in the University Sermons.

10Ibid., pp. 55-56.
to degenerate into a denial of a place for reason in religion and faith. Reason does have a place in matters of faith; and it is his intention to find out exactly what is reason's role in faith.\(^{11}\)

In relating faith and reason, it is quite evident that more than anything else Newman wishes to affirm that there is a definite distinction between the two. Newman, in one of his earlier sermons (1831),\(^{12}\) maintains that any existing opposition between faith and reason is due to a failure to understand the distinction between the two.

This opposition between Faith and Reason takes place in two ways, when either of the two encroaches upon the province of the other.\(^{13}\)

When faith is imposed upon the realm of reason, and when reason encroaches upon the province of faith, a warfare between faith and reason follows. A true and proper distinction has to be maintained if the two are to exist together in harmony.

The affirmation of the distinction between faith and reason is a simple task; the delineation of the distinction is a more complicated and involved matter. In 1831, Newman's distinction between faith and reason is quite simple and yet rather imprecise. Faith seems to be relegated to man's moral nature,\(^{14}\) while reason is located in man's intellectual nature.

\(^{11}\)Ibid., p. 63.
\(^{12}\)Ibid., "The Usurpations of Reason", p. 54.
\(^{13}\)Ibid., pp. 58-59.
\(^{14}\)Ibid., p. 59.
But the expression of this distinction is very imprecise, and therefore the distinction remains rather nebulous.

With his sermon *Faith and Reason, Contrasted as Habits of Mind* (1839), the distinction seems to become somewhat clearer. Faith and reason do not seem to be quite as independent of one another in Newman’s mind as they were in 1831. Faith should not be considered independent of reason or as a completely new mode of arriving at truth; the gospel does not alter the constitution of our nature but elevates and adds to it.\(^{15}\) While affirming the role of moral dispositions in faith,\(^ {16}\) Newman denies that faith is but a moral quality.\(^ {17}\) He seems to be less willing to emphasize the moral aspect of faith than he was in 1831. More emphasis is given to the intellectual aspect of faith, the very factor he seemed to play down in 1831.

The expression of the distinction is much clearer than it was in 1831. Faith, unlike reason, is not the conclusion of a process of reasoning.\(^ {18}\) "Faith, then is not the same method of proof as Reason."\(^ {19}\) Because it is supernatural, faith is, therefore, something higher than reason.\(^ {20}\) The truths of reason are arrived at through experience; faith comes through testimony. "As then testimony is distinct from

experience, so is Faith from Reason."\(^{21}\)

In another sermon delivered in 1839,\(^{22}\) Newman again insists upon the distinction between faith and reason. Here he grants faith a certain autonomy, maintaining that it is complete in itself and not dependent upon any process of reasoning previous to it.\(^{23}\) Although the distinction between faith and reason is affirmed, faith, in this sermon, is quite definitely spoken of as an exercise of reason.\(^{24}\) "Thus Faith is the reasoning of a religious mind..."\(^{25}\) Newman wishes to justify the validity of faith as an exercise of reason and takes great pains to defend it against such charges as being "illogical", "a faulty exercise of Reason", and "the reasoning of a weak mind."\(^{26}\) Faith is an exercise of reason, yet it is "distinct from what are called philosophical inquiries, intellectual systems, courses of argument, and the like."\(^{27}\) Although it is a process of reason, faith is not a formal

\(^{21}\) Ibid.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., p. 202 This sermon entitled "The Nature of Faith In Relation to Reason" was delivered just a week after the sermon "Faith and Reason, Contrasted As Habits of Mind" previously cited.


\(^{24}\) Ibid., p. 207.

\(^{25}\) Ibid., p. 203.

\(^{26}\) Ibid., p. 208.

\(^{27}\) Ibid., p. 212.
logical reasoning process. Faith is not the reasoning of demonstration, and, as a result, "it will ever seem to the world irrational and despicable..." However, whatever the objections, faith is a process of reason and is in accord with the psychological constitution of the human mind.

Faith, as a principle of belief, is therefore something entirely natural, i.e. perfectly in accord with human nature. It is not something extravagant or irrational "as if it were a mere fancy or feeling, which some persons had and others had not" (P.S. I, 190) and it must and does find a legitimate place among the other modes of man's pursuit of truth.

At this point, it is quite evident that Newman holds that faith is "rational", in accord with human reason; faith is "reasonable". It is equally certain that by "reasonable" Newman does not mean "reasoned", that is, proven by a process of strict explicit demonstration. For Newman, faith is "reasonable" but not "reasoned".

So far it is evident that faith is a rational process distinct from the logical process of demonstrative reason, but

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28 Elbert, Evolution of Newman's Faith, p. 40. "Faith stands opposed to a process of explicit reason, that is, neither in its nature nor in its grounds, does it take on the character or form of a logical process of demonstrative reasoning."

29 Newman, University Sermons, p. 218.

30 Elbert, Evolution of Newman's Faith, p. 22.

31 Ibid., p. 16.

32 Ibid., p. 22.
exactly upon what is this distinction based? It is the answer to this question that introduced the second problem which Newman faces in the *University Sermons*, how faith is able to go beyond the probability of the evidence in the assent of certitude? Newman puts his finger upon this when he describes what he calls the popular view of the distinction between faith and reason.\(^33\) The reasoning of demonstration requires strong evidence; in fact, the evidence of demonstration is so overwhelming that the conclusion arrived at demands acceptance as true. Faith seems ready to accept less evidence than demonstrative reasoning, and it seems to be quite content to make its assent upon much weaker evidence that reason demands.\(^34\) That faith for Newman does require some evidence is certain,\(^35\) but it does not require nearly the evidence found in formal demonstration.\(^36\)

How can this be? How can faith require less evidence than reason and still claim to be rational and conformable to reason? Newman poses this question himself and gives the answer. The answer is that faith works on what Newman calls antecedent considerations and, because of this, it requires


\(^{34}\)Ibid.


less evidence than reason does.

Faith, then, as I have said, does not demand evidence so strong as is necessary for what is commonly considered a rational conviction, or belief on the ground of Reason; and why? For this reason, because it is mainly swayed by antecedent considerations. 37

These antecedent considerations seem to be certain presumptions, "previous notices", "prepossessions", and (in a good sense of the word) "prejudices", 38 which are present within the mind of the believer previous to the act of faith. The rational grounds of faith are in the mind of the individual. 39

As a result of these antecedent considerations the mind is, as it were, predisposed to believe even before it receives the evidence, 40 and, for that reason, it can assent upon evidence which is less conclusive than needed for logical demonstration. The antecedent considerations thus supply for the deficiency of the evidence and maintain faith as a reasonable act. 41

37 Ibid., p. 187.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid., p. 264.
40 Elbert, Evolution of Newman's Faith, p. 64. Elbert points out that in his work Two Essays on Biblical and On Ecclesiastical Miracles (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1918), Newman states that antecedent probability can but recommend the evidence to our attention (p. 246). Elbert himself states, "Predispositions and presumptions, even when they are in accord with a religiously-trained conscience, can give nothing more than subjective probability more or less great (p. 64)."
41 Ibid., p. 62.
These antecedent considerations are, in turn, rooted in and derived from the predisposition of the individual for the reception of religious truth. Newman refers to this predisposition as a "presentiment of mind" or a "moral disposition". Antecedent considerations are the products of the mind of the individual who possesses moral dispositions favorable to accepting religious truth. That moral dispositions are operative in faith seems quite evident to Newman. The external evidence for the credibility of revelation is the same for all men, yet why is it that some men believe and others do not? It cannot merely be due to the evidence, for it is the same for all: there must be something within the person influencing his acceptance or rejection of religious truth. This is the work of the moral disposition. The man with favorable moral dispositions will be predisposed to accept the evidence for revealed truth; the man of bad moral dispositions will be equally biased in his rejection of it.

In the judgment of a rightly disposed mind, objects are desirable and attainable which irreligious men will consider to be but fancies.

42 Ibid., p. 63
43 Newman, University Sermons, p. 213.
44 Ibid., p. 239.
45 Juergens, Newman, Psychology of Faith, pp. 164-65. "They believe on grounds within themselves, not merely or mainly on the external testimony on which religion comes to them." Also see Newman, University Sermons, p. 264, where he states that the rational grounds of faith are in the mind of the individual.
46 Newman, University Sermons, p. 191.
Mere evidence alone is not the formative factor in faith, rather it is the evidence received with favorable moral dispositions.\textsuperscript{47}

The importance of the moral disposition in the act of faith is seen by the central place which Newman gives it in the \textit{University Sermons}. Faith is an act of reason "done in a moral disposition".\textsuperscript{48} It is an act of reason which is the product of a religious mind.\textsuperscript{49} The moral disposition is the precise factor which distinguishes faith from a process of explicit reasoning and logical demonstration and gives it its specific character.\textsuperscript{50} It is the moral disposition which gives "likelihood" to the message. "In fact, it is the crux of the question of the nature of faith."\textsuperscript{51}

As the distinguishing factor between faith and explicit reasoning, it is the presence of the moral disposition which enables faith to accept less evidence than reason. Little evidence seems to be required if the right moral dispositions

\textsuperscript{47}Elbert, \textit{Evolution of Newman's Faith}, p. 67. The moral dispositions seem to be rooted in conscience. Conscience as internal authority of faith creates the predisposition for faith. A precise analysis of the relationship between conscience and the moral disposition would be very enlightening, but such an endeavor goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

\textsuperscript{48}Newman, \textit{University Sermons}, p. 239.

\textsuperscript{49}Ibid., p. 203.

\textsuperscript{50}Elbert, \textit{Evolution of Newman's Faith}, pp. 41 and 43.

\textsuperscript{51}Ibid., p. 41.
are present. A correct moral judgment provides the circumstances in which a faint proof may be more availing than a strong one. In fact, when a man is longing for a revelation from the depths of his heart, he requires very feeble evidence -- almost none at all. Newman, in support of this viewpoint, recalls St. Paul's definition of faith as "the substance of things hoped for (Hebr. 11:1). "Faith is the realization that what one hopes and wishes to be is true, not "the realizing of things proved by evidence."

Its desire is its main evidence; or as the Apostle expressly goes on to say, it makes its own evidence, "being the evidence of things not seen."

In such a view of faith the evidence is subordinated to the mind and not the mind to the evidence, which is as it should be. Because of the moral disposition, the role of evidence in faith is limited. The person is not limited by the probability of the evidence; he can go beyond it. In faith, the evidence is subordinated to the moral disposition.

By placing it in such a secondary position, Newman does not mean to deny the value of evidence in faith. For Newman faith is always grounded in evidence. If faith is to remain

52 Juergens, Newman, Psychology of Faith, p. 197.
53 Newman, University Sermons, p. 191.
54 Juergens, Newman, Psychology of Faith, p. 163.
55 Newman, University Sermons, p. 190.
56 Ibid.
57 Ibid., p. 191.
reasonable, it must be grounded in evidence. That Newman demands some evidence for faith is fairly certain. The nature of this evidence is not quite so clear, at least not in the University Sermons. That it is not the evidence of formal demonstration seems rather evident. What it consists of positively speaking is a matter of some confusion, a confusion which Newman does not seem to be able to resolve clearly in the University Sermons. Though the precise nature of this evidence is somewhat obscure, the necessity of some evidence to maintain the reasonableness of faith is demanded by Newman's notion of faith.

Though the precise nature of this evidence brought to bear in behalf of faith is obscure, there is one characteristic which it possesses about which Newman seems to be certain,

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58 Juergens, Newman, Psychology of Faith, p. 212. "Newman does not hold that mere internal evidence alone can practically prove the divinity of Christianity. There must be at least enough external evidence to ascertain the existence of what claims to be a supernatural revelation."

59 Ibid.

60 Contributing to this confusion is Newman's seemingly scornful attitude towards traditional apologetics and miracles. Newman admits that apologetics does have a limited service in creating faith (see Juergens, Newman, Psychology of Faith, p. 214); however, he greatly laments the exaggeration of this science (see Newman, University Sermons, pp. 195-96). As for miracles, Newman accepts them as evidence (see Juergens, Newman, Psychology of Faith, p. 197 and Newman, University Sermons, p. 199); however, he does not grant them the conclusiveness that many apologists of his day gave to them (see Flanagan, Newman, Faith and the Believer, Westminster: Newman Bookshop, 1946). Newman's clearest analysis of what he means by the evidences of Christianity does not come until his last chapter of the Grammar of Assent.
and that is that in itself the evidence of faith is but probable.\footnote{Elbert, \textit{Evolution of Newman's Faith}, p. 57.} The ground of faith seems to be probability. Probability is its life.\footnote{Newman, \textit{University Sermons}, p. 200.} Faith is "created in the mind, not so much by facts, as by probabilities..."\footnote{Ibid., p. 191.} The evidence upon which faith is grounded remains in the realm of probability.

How then can faith, which is grounded in evidence that cannot go beyond probability, be certain? How can it be any more than mere opinion? Newman's intention was to affirm that faith is a certain knowledge,\footnote{Ibid., p. 298. Here Newman denies that faith judges and decides "in the way of opinion".} but whether he actually does this in the \textit{University Sermons} is another matter.\footnote{Elbert, \textit{Evolution of Newman's Faith}, p. 81.} It is true that by itself probable evidence can only produce opinion. Of itself probability cannot produce stability and certitude. That safeguard which gives stability to faith is love of
It gives faith discipline and "protects it from bigotry, credulity, and fanaticism." Love seems to clear the air and remove the chaos that usually results from probability. Faith gains its direction, firmness, consistency, and precision from love. By granting a firmness and consistency, love gives faith a kind of certitude.

This theory of certitude is perhaps the weakest element in Newman's notion of faith at this time. Newman intends to teach that faith is certain, but does his notion of love adequately explain the certitude of faith? That he really rescues faith from opinion and probability is doubtful. His thought on the notion of certitude is not as developed as it will be later on in his life. At this period of his life, Newman's conception of faith differs little from an opinion; "whatever certitude is possessed is merely subjective in character and springs not from evidence, but from love."

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66 Newman, University Sermons. This is Newman's answer in the University Sermons. "The safeguard of faith is a right state of heart. This is what protects it from bigotry, credulity, and fanaticism. It is holiness, or dutifulness, or the new creation, or the spiritual mind, however we word it, which is the quickening and illuminating principle of true faith, giving it eyes, hands, and feet. It is love which forms it out of the rude chaos into an image of Christ;..." p. 234.... "It acts, because it is Faith, but the direction, firmness, consistency, and precision of its acts, it gains from Love." p. 250. According to Elbert, p. 81, this is also Newman's answer in the Via Media, pp. 87-88.

67 Ibid., p. 234.

68 Ibid., p. 250.


70 Ibid.
Love does not seem to be a satisfactory explanation of the basis of certitude in faith.

Such basically is Newman's notion of faith in the University Sermons and his answer to the form of rationalism which he encountered as an Anglican. His primary reaction against rationalism is to de-emphasize reason affirming all the while that faith is reasonable, although not reasoned. Faith is not a reasoned act and, as such, it is distinct from reason. However, faith is a rational and reasonable act, for it is grounded in reason and based upon evidence. Although based upon evidence, evidence is not the only, nor the primary, factor upon which the certitude of faith is based. Faith is a certain knowledge, an assent which goes beyond the probability of the evidence which is brought to support it. In the University Sermons, Newman shows how two other factors, the moral disposition of the believer and love, influence the process of certitude and enable the mind to give an assent which goes beyond the probability of the evidence. Both of these factors are rooted within the moral nature of the person. The explanation of the operation of the moral disposition and its influence in the process of arriving at an unconditional assent in faith is one of the most important observations which Newman makes in the University Sermons. In reacting against the Anglican rationalism, Newman, in the University Sermons, de-emphasized reason and stressed the moral factors within the person which enable faith to go beyond its evidence to an unconditional
assent of certitude. However, the University Sermons do not contain Newman's final word on the justification of certitude. As pointed out, his theory on the role that love plays in arriving at certitude is very inadequate. Newman's more mature thought on the justification of certitude will not come until the Grammar of Assent in 1870.
In the *University Sermons*, Newman faced the errors of Whately and the Anglican liberals; defending faith against rationalism, he attempted to show that, besides rational, there was a highly personal side to faith and its certitude, namely the moral dispositions. Newman insisted upon the reasonableness of faith and its certitude in the *University Sermons*, yet he was forced to face the issue again in his controversy with William Froude over the rationality of the certitude of faith. The purpose of this chapter shall be to show how in the *Grammar of Assent*, Newman, reacting against the rationalism of Froude, justified certitude as a valid intellectual process of the mind.

Froude insisted that real certitude, in any realm of thought was an invalid process of the mind and an immoral use of one's faculties. In the *University Sermons*, Newman did not sufficiently explain how the certitude of faith was in harmony with the ordinary reasoning processes of the mind. Rooting the certitude of faith in love, as he does in the *University Sermons*, Newman did not very satisfactorily maintain the reasonableness of faith from the point of view of its certitude.
The inability of Newman's theory of love as the safeguard of faith to justify the certitude of faith was pointed out in the last chapter. Newman did adequately maintain the reasonableness of the act of faith and affirmed its certitude, but, as to the explanation how this certitude squared with the rational processes of the mind, his thought was clearly inadequate at the time of the University Sermons. This inadequacy more and more became evident to Newman through his correspondence with the English scientist, William Froude.

Froude insisted that the mind could not arrive at real certitude in any realm of human thought and judgment. Judgments were dependent upon evidence, and Froude maintained that even evidence which seemed most convincing and most conclusive might itself be found wanting.¹ According to Froude's mentality, there was almost a moral obligation to doubt every proposition and conclusion.² His doubts were sacred to him, and he felt that they deserved "to be cherished as sacredly as our beliefs."³ It was invalid for the mind to give an unconditional assent to any proposition, and, therefore, the achievement of permanent certitude became an impossibility.

It was this teaching of Froude that brought home to Newman the insufficiency of his own explanation of the certitude

²Ibid.
³Ibid., p. 121.
of faith. Insisting upon the fallacy of Froude's mode of thinking, Newman clearly saw that it was erroneous, but he did not think it such an easy matter to show how it was so. In a letter dated January 2, 1860, Newman, quite candidly admits that he finds it difficult to answer Froude, and that he is dissatisfied with anything he has written upon the matter so far. Froude's objections to the reasonableness of certitude has the disconcerting effect of pointing out the weaknesses and inadequacies of Newman's own explanation of the certitude of faith. The University Sermons did not produce an adequate explanation of the reasonableness of the certitude of faith, and neither did Newman's correspondence with Froude.

Although Newman did not work out a satisfactory justification of the certitude of faith in his correspondence with Froude, these letters did give the inspiration and direction to his answer which was to come in the Grammar of Assent. As early as 1860, Froude urged Newman to set down an argument in behalf of the certitude of religious belief. What Froude was really urging Newman to do was to write the book which ultimately appeared as the Grammar of Assent. The inspiration

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4 Ibid., p. 127. "I think it is a fallacy - but I don't think it easy to show it to be so."
6 Ibid., p. 129.
7 Ibid., p. 21.
for the Grammar of Assent grew out of the dialogue on certitude which was carried on in the correspondence between Newman and Froude.

The direction which the answer was to take, no less than the inspiration, can also be traced to the Newman, Froude correspondence. In the light of his correspondence with Froude, Newman saw, once and for all, that it was impossible to attempt to justify the reasonableness of the certitude of faith on scientific principles. If Froude, being a scientist who based his whole approach to reality upon the principles of science, was a sceptic denying any type of real certitude, then, it was quite evident that the justification of the certitude of faith was not to be grounded in a rigoristic application of scientific principles.

The strict scientific approach depended too much upon the value of the external evidence and not enough on the internal aspects of certitude. Newman saw that certitude, an unconditional assent, was a highly personal act and that, in addition to evidence, other elements, factors of a more personal nature, entered into the process of arriving at certitude. This is the approach that Newman chooses to follow in the Grammar of Assent. He looks within the person to see what it is that enables the mind to make an unconditional assent in the face of probable evidence. In this manner he attempts to show how the resulting certitude is valid.

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8 Ibid., p. 133.
reasonable, and perfectly in accord with the processes of the mind. This is how Newman hopes to justify certitude in the Grammar of Assent.

The existence of the certitude of faith, a phenomenon experienced in himself and through the observation of others, was not questioned by Newman in the Grammar of Assent, but accepted as an undeniable fact.9 It was the justification of this certitude, a "manifesto" of its validity and reasonableness, that Newman proposed in the Grammar of Assent. He was particularly interested in showing that the certitude of the ordinary uneducated believer, in spite of his lack of knowledge of scientific proofs, was a valid and reasonable certitude.10 Newman saw that the certitude of faith was not unlike the certitudes, themselves not subject to scientific proof, which the mind possesses in many other concrete matters such as the certitude with which the mind assents to the proposition, "I shall


10 Edmond D. Benard, A Preface to Newman’s Theology (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1946), p. 172. In the Grammar of Assent, Newman is not primarily concerned with the scientific proofs of Christianity, nevertheless he does not deny them as Benard points out, "Newman does not deny the traditional proofs for the existence of God, nor does he depreciate scientific apologetics; he simply maintains that the faith of a man unversed in these matters is both certain and valid." It is a question of understanding the main purpose of the Grammar of Assent.
die." In approaching the problem in the Grammar of Assent, Newman is concerned with showing the validity of the mind's certitude in concrete matters.\(^{11}\) The certitude of faith, being such a concrete certitude, at least from the psychological viewpoint, is a valid process of the mind, rational and, therefore, reasonable. In the Grammar of Assent, Newman proposes to lead the reader through a very tedious and slow process to a justification of the reasonableness of certitude.

Froude's type of rationalism, which gave inspiration and direction to the Grammar of Assent, in denying certitude made assent proportionate to inference. According to Froude the degree of the assent was directly proportionate to the force of the evidence provided through the inferential process. Through his own scientific observations, Froude, seeing that evidence was always probable and open to change, came to believe that the mind could arrive at no certain conclusion in any realm of thought. That Newman saw a flaw in this analysis of the mind's operation is evident in the Grammar of Assent from his attack upon John Locke who held a similar position. Locke maintained that there were degrees of assent and "that the strength of assent given to each proposition varies with the strength of the inference on which the assent follows;..."\(^{12}\) To go beyond the probability of the evidence to a certain conclusion was for Locke, as it was for Froude, an invalid

\(^{11}\)Flanagan, Faith and Believer, p. 92.

process. According to Locke, it is not only illogical, but immoral to "carry our assent above the evidence that a proposition is true."\textsuperscript{13} Newman could not go along with this analysis. To him this interpretation of the relationship between inference and assent seemed "theoretical and unreal."\textsuperscript{14}

Through his own observation of experience, Newman realized that in many concrete matters the mind gave its unconditional assent even when the evidence was not absolutely conclusive or logically demonstrative. Such concrete propositions as "Britain is an island," or "I shall die," are adhered to by the mind with certitude even though only probable arguments can be brought in support of them.\textsuperscript{15} These propositions cannot be proved conclusively or demonstrated logically, yet the mind assents to them with certitude. Trusting the operation of the mind which experience taught him to be real, Newman, in opposition to Froude and Locke,\textsuperscript{16} believed that this certitude which went beyond the probability of the evidence was justifiable and in accord with the rational processes of the human mind. Experience taught that an inferential process which produced only probable evidence could produce an unconditional assent of certitude. It was this that

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 163.
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 164.
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 294-301.
\textsuperscript{16}Flanagan, Faith and Believer, p. 93. According to Flanagan's interpretation, Newman agrees with Locke and Froude that such certitude goes beyond the evidence, but he differs with them in that he holds it to be justified.
led Newman to the heart of his explanation of certitude, the
distinction between inference and assent.

The distinction between inference and assent was the foun-
dation upon which Newman built the rest of his explanation of
the defense of certitude. That this was a key insight can be
seen from Newman's own evaluation of it.

At last, when I was up a Glión
over the Lake of Geneva, it struck
me: "You are wrong in beginning with
certitude - certitude is only a kind
of assent - you should begin with
contrasting assent and inference."
On that hint I spoke, finding it a
key to my own ideas. 17

The importance which this distinction played in Newman's thought
in the Grammar of Assent can be seen in the first chapter where
he outlines the method and purpose of the book. 18 An under-
standing of his analysis of assent and inference is essential
to the understanding of Newman's justification of the reason-
ableness of certitude.

From an examination of Newman's analysis of inference and
assent, it is evident that he considered the two to be both
related and distinct. They are related in this, that inference
is a necessary condition of assent and precedes it; acts of
assent require previous acts of inference as "sine qua non"

17 John H. Newman, Autobiographical Writings, ed. by H.
Tristam (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1957), p. 270 taken from
an article by J.D. Bastable, The Germination of Belief within
Probability According to Newman, Philosophical Studies,

conditions. However, their relationship is not one of cause and effect. A cause should be proportionate to its effect, but, as pointed out, in many cases the assent goes beyond the inferential process. If the relationship were one of cause and effect, the effect would be greater than the cause in many cases. An act of assent requires an act of inference, but there does not exist a relationship of strict proportionality between the two. Assent can go beyond inference and here is the basis of the distinction between the two. Inference is always probable and conditional, but assent can go beyond the probable evidence to an unconditional acceptance of the proposition. Assent is unconditional, whereas inference is conditional.

Newman’s analysis of assent and its relation to certitude was explained in the first chapter, now it remains to explicate his notion of inference. Inference is a process of reasoning, either implicit or explicit, whereby the mind proceeds from premises to conclusions and the conditional adherence to that conclusion. In the Grammar of Assent, Newman distinguished three phases of inference, natural, informal and formal.

Formal inference is a process of verbal reasoning, not as opposed to mental reasoning, but as attempting to express,

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19 Ibid., p. 20.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid., p. 8.
22 Ibid., pp. 263-64.
as adequately as possible, the reasoning in words. Logic and syllogistic reasoning are the scientific expression of this type of inference. The more abstract and notional the proposition involved in this type of reasoning process are, the more effective does this reasoning become. Formal inference, whose most adequate expression is found probably in mathematics, is more at home in the realm of mental abstractions. But, since the "abstract can only conduct to abstract," this reasoning process breaks down in the matter of ascertaining concrete facts. In concrete facts, formal inference can only conclude probabilities and for two reasons: "first because its premises are assumed, not proved; and secondly because its conclusions are abstract and not concrete." Formal inference cannot lead the mind to certitude in concrete matters.

23 Ibid., p. 264.
24 Ibid., p. 265. "... in other words, the nearer the propositions concerned in the inference approach to mental abstractions, and the less they have to do with the concrete reality, and the more closely they are made to express exact, intelligible, comprehensible, communicable notions, and the less they stand for objective things, that is, the more they are the subjects, not of real, but of notional apprehension, -so much the more suitable do they become for the purposes of inference."
25 Ibid., p. 278. Newman points out that even mathematics can be subject to imperfections in its process of investigation.
26 Ibid., p. 266.
27 Ibid., pp. 268-69.
28 Ibid., pp. 278-79.
The method by which the mind is able to become certain of what is true in the concrete is through that reasoning process which Newman referred to as informal inference. Informal inference is a reasoning process which converges toward a conclusion from probabilities which "arise out of the nature and circumstances of the particular case which is under review." The premises of this mode of reasoning are concrete and individual, varying with different minds, and they cannot be reduced or converted to the abstract premises upon which formal inference is based. In this reasoning process, the conclusion is not actually attained, but, as it were, foreseen and predicted; its premises do not "touch it logically," but "converge to it."

Though this is the process of inference that reaches truth in the concrete, it does not supersede formal inference, but is "one and the same with it." Informal inference, however, is no longer in the realm of abstraction, but reaches into the realities of the concrete and individual case. Furthermore, informal inference, more or less

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29 Ibid., p. 288.
30 Ibid., p. 293.
31 Ibid., p. 288.
32 Ibid., p. 321.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
implicit,\(^3\) consists of several acts and is recognized by a process, which distinguishes it from natural inference, another mode of arriving at truth in the concrete.

Natural inference, which reasons from concrete facts to concrete facts without any medium between the antecedent and the consequent,\(^3\) is an instinctive process of reasoning in the concrete. Contrasting the two, natural inference seems to be less conscious than informal inference.\(^3\) In fact, natural inference is almost totally unconscious and non-reflective,\(^4\) therefore, it is difficult to express exactly its nature. Since informal inference is the most proper way to truth in the concrete, little more will be said of natural inference.

Returning to informal inference, it, like all inference, is conditional to the extent that its conclusions are dependent upon its premises.\(^4\) Informal inference is the most adequate process of arriving at truth in the concrete, however, since it remains conditional, it is not assent, for assent is always unconditional. This being the relationship between inference and assent, how then does the mind, in concrete matters, move through informal inference which is

\(^{37}\text{Ibid.}\)

\(^{38}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 330.}\)

\(^{39}\text{Francis Bacchus, How to Read the "Grammar of Assent," The Month (CXLIII, February, 1924), p. 113.}\)

\(^{40}\text{Newman, Grammar of Assent, p. 332.}\)

\(^{41}\text{Ibid., p. 293.}\)
conditional to an assent which is unconditional and certain?

This basically is the question, how does the mind arrive at truth in the concrete, with which Newman began the Grammar of Assent. Up to this point he has merely expressed the problem in terms of inference and assent. Assent, in concrete matters, is preceded by informal inference whose conclusions are conditional to the extent that they are probabilities converging toward a truth. In making a judgment of truth in the concrete, the mind moves from the evidence of converging probabilities to an assent which is unconditional and certain. Obviously the evidence, which is only conditional, cannot of itself produce a certain assent, the connection between conditional inference and unconditional assent must be found elsewhere.

For Newman the answer was found in the activity of the living mind which can read the evidence, and then look beyond to a point which the evidence can indicate, but which it cannot quite reach.\(^{42}\) It is not the argument that reasons, rather, it is the mind - the whole man.\(^{43}\) Although the evidence itself cannot demand certitude, the mind can interpret the evidence and see the true answer.\(^{44}\) Therefore, certitude is not generated by the evidence, but by the activity of the living mind.

\(^{42}\)Flanagan, Faith and Believer, p. 95.

\(^{43}\)Newman, Grammar of Assent, pp. 318 and 353.

\(^{44}\)Flanagan, Faith and Believer, p. 103.
mind which can recognize the necessary connection between the accumulation and convergence of the evidence and the truth of the conclusion.\footnote{Ibid., p. 101.}

This faculty by which the living mind arrives at certitude in concrete matters Newman calls the Illative Sense.\footnote{Ibid.}

\[\text{I have already said that the sole and final judgment on the validity of an inference in concrete matters is committed to the personal action of the ratiocinative faculty, the perfection or virtue of which I have called the Illative Sense...} \text{\footnote{Newman, Grammar of Assent, p. 345.}}\]

The Illative Sense is the sole "criterion" for discerning truth in the concrete.\footnote{Ibid.} It is the Illative Sense which accumulates the probable evidence, perceives the probabilities as a whole,\footnote{Ibid., pp. 301 and 321.} recognizes that the conclusion toward which they converge cannot be other than true,\footnote{Flanagan, Faith and Believer, p. 101.} and then judges the conclusion to be true. Through the operation of the Illative Sense the mind passes from probable evidence to a judgment of truth in the concrete.\footnote{Newman, Grammar of Assent, p. 321.}

Going beyond the premises, the Illative Sense leads the mind beyond the probability of the evidence to the conclusion

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of a truth. This is not to say that the Illative Sense needs no evidence. However, the evidence, which is provided through informal inference, is always probable and can never of itself conclude to a truth. Probable evidence can only tend toward a conclusion. As the polygon, which is inscribed in a circle tends to become that circle as its sides are diminished, but vanishes before it coincides with the circle, never gets beyond a tendency to become a circle so also probable evidence never gets beyond the tendency to conclude to a truth. But the Illative Sense can lead the mind beyond this tendency to a conclusion to a truth. In comprehending the premises, the Illative Sense perceives the legitimate conclusion in and through the premises; it reaches a conclusion above and beyond the probable evidence. Through the Illative Sense the mind can arrive at truth in the concrete. It can do this be-

51 Flanagan, Faith and Believer, p. 105. Newman never denied that the Illative Sense needed evidence to function. Flanagan speaking of the Illative Sense has this to say, "It acts under the influence of the evidence, and judges whether or not the truth of the conclusion is demanded by the presence of that evidence, which it grasps not in its distinct parts but taken as a whole." (p. 105). However, the evidence with which it functions is probable and for that reason Newman insists that the chief external evidences for Christianity are not miracles, but the cumulation of converging probabilities. Juergens, Newman, Psychology of Faith, p. 217.


53 Ibid., p. 301.

54 Ibid., p. 316.
cause it has the power to lead the mind beyond the probability of the evidence and to release it from a slavish dependence upon its premises. In concrete matters the mind can go from conditional inference to unconditional assent, it can go beyond probability to certitude and the reason it can is due to that intellectual power known as the Illative Sense.

That Newman considered the Illative Sense an intellectual function is quite clear for he refers to it as the power of judging and concluding in its perfection.\textsuperscript{55} It is not just a feeling or moral quality, but a ratiocinative faculty,\textsuperscript{56} a valid function of the mind. The Illative Sense, as an operation of the intellect, is a faculty of knowing, a capacity for knowledge.\textsuperscript{57} Being an intellectual function and a power of knowing, the conclusions of the Illative Sense are not merely practical, but judgments of truth. Therefore, the Illative Sense is a rational operation, perfectly in accord with the reasoning processes of the mind, whereby the mind concludes to a truth in concrete matters. The Illative Sense is the justification of the mind's arrival at truth in the concrete.

Not only is the Illative Sense an intellectual process, but it is a highly personal judgment. Newman himself describes

\textsuperscript{55}Ibid., p. 353.
\textsuperscript{56}Ibid., p. 345.
the activity of the Illative Sense as a personal action.\textsuperscript{58}

To act like a person means that one's actions express the innermost uniqueness of his individual concrete existence. As a person one is unique; there is no other like him - no one to replace him. So personal is the judgment of the Illative Sense that it is individual to each man.

It is seated in the mind of the individual, who is thus his own law, his own teacher, and his own judge in those special cases of duty which are personal to him.\textsuperscript{59}

The judgment of the Illative Sense is somewhat unique with each man, reflecting his own individuality and personality and for this reason Boekraad describes the Illative Sense as being emphatically personal.\textsuperscript{60}

As a highly personal activity, another aspect of the Illative Sense can be inserted here, and, that is, that the judgment of the Illative Sense is always free. This, in turn, leads to a second function of the Illative Sense, its role as the sanction of assent. To say that the Illative Sense is the sanction of assent is not to say that it provides reward and punishment, but that it provides the motive for the free

\textsuperscript{58}\textit{Newman, Grammar of Assent}, p. 355. Flanagan also gives evidence to the fact that Newman considered the Illative Sense to be an operation of a personal nature, \textit{Flanagan, Faith and Believer}, p. 105.

\textsuperscript{59}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 254.

assent of the person. The Illative Sense can function as a sanction precisely because it leads the mind to truth and to refuse assent in the face of obvious and evident truth is a violation of the faculties of the mind. When confronted with truth a man has a duty to assent;\(^6\) in fact, Newman considered it a fundamental law of the mind to assent in the face of truth.\(^6\) This is not a destruction of man's freedom, but its highest expression, for a man is most free when he chooses the truth. By leading the mind to truth and then inducing its assent, the Illative Sense becomes the bridge by which the mind passes from conditional inference to an unconditional assent to truth in the concrete.

Unconditional assent in the concrete is thus a valid operation of the mind; it is rooted in the mind, in the intellectual power of the Illative Sense, and is therefore perfectly in harmony with the rational activity of the human mind. From the psychological point of view, faith is also an assent to truth in the concrete, and from this point of view its rationality is also rooted in the Illative Sense. Therefore, the assent of faith is rational and in accord with the reasoning processes of the mind, but a rational process that is highly personal.

The mind, then, can go beyond the probability of the evidence to a certain conclusion, because of the activity of the

\(^6\)Newman, Grammar of Assent, p. 412.

\(^6\)Ibid., p. 347.
Illative Sense, which is a personal judgment. Certitude is thus justified on the basis of the judgment of the Illative Sense which is interior and within the person. In the Illative Sense Newman has a personal intellectual factor which justifies the rationality of certitude and answers the rationalistic objections of Froude and others that certitude is irrational - an invalid process of the mind. Such basically is Newman's justification of certitude in the Grammar of Assent.
CONCLUSION: NEWMAN'S JUSTIFICATION OF CERTITUDE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The purpose of this thesis has been to show how Newman justified the certitude of faith. Approaching the problem from the point of view of the analogy between the psychological and supernatural, the psychological aspect of certitude was viewed as the analogue and basis of the supernatural reality of the certitude of faith. The justification of the certitude of faith has, then, been limited to a justification of the psychological process by which man arrives at certitude, in faith and any other realms of thought. But a justification of the psychological aspect of certitude is indeed a justification of the certitude of faith in its totality. By justifying the assent of certitude to truth as a natural process, one provides the basis for the justification of the assent of certitude to supernatural realities.

In order to justify the assent of certitude on the psychological dimension, Newman had to show how man could go beyond the probability of the evidence to an assent of certi-
tude - how conditional inference could produce an unconditional assent. Since the evidence which inference produced was only probable and could not effect the unconditional assent of certitude of itself, there must be other factors involved in the process of arriving at certitude. In attempting to show how man could go beyond the probability of the evidence to a certain assent, Newman looked for other factors which were involved in certitude. By justifying the process whereby man could give unconditional assent upon conditional inference and probable evidence, he would thereby be justifying certitude in its psychological dimension. Therefore, the discovery and explication of these other factors were essential to Newman's justification of the certitude of faith.

In his writings in defense of the assent of faith against rationalism, Newman came up with two such factors which enabled man to go beyond the probability of the evidence to an assent of certitude. These two factors, already explained in the text, are the moral disposition and the Illative Sense. Both factors are realities that are internal and within the person making the assent of certitude, and both are presented by Newman as elements which enable a man to go beyond the probability of the evidence to an assent of certitude. The moral disposition is a personal state or frame of mind which predisposes a person to believe and enables him to assent on probable evidence - to accept less evidence than reason does.¹

¹See Chapter III, p. 42.
On the other hand, the Illative Sense is that personal intellectual judgment which leads one from probable evidence to an unconditional assent of certitude. Both the moral disposition and the Illative Sense are elements which are internal and personal. In its psychological dimension, then, certitude is not justified primarily by the weight of the external evidence, but by the internal personal factors that are involved in the process of arriving at certitude. As the justification of certitude in its psychological dimension, the moral disposition and the Illative Sense are, therefore, the justification of the certitude of faith in its total dimension.

From the development of the moral disposition and the Illative Sense in his defense of certitude, two other important consequences are observable. The first is that Newman in his defense of certitude always tried to maintain a balance between the intellectual and moral aspects of faith. It is true that at times, in order to meet the demands of the concrete existential situation, he emphasized one aspect more than the other, but never to the extent of denying the other.

In the University Sermons with the elements of love and, especially, the moral disposition, Newman emphasized the moral aspects of faith. The reason for this is quite clear. Whately and the Oxford rationalists had exaggerated the intellectual and rational aspects of faith (so much so that
they actually destroyed faith), Newman, therefore, in answering this error had to play down the intellectual or rational aspect of faith and emphasize the moral. The existential situation demanded such an answer. But even in the University Sermons, Newman also insists upon the rational and intellectual aspect of faith. Maintaining that faith is truly an exercise of reason, Newman describes it as the "reasoning of the religious mind." He takes great pains to defend faith against charges of being irrational and unintellectual. Although Newman emphasizes the moral aspects of faith in the University Sermons, it is evident from his insistence upon the reasonableness of faith that, in his notion of faith, he is seeking a balanced concept involving an interplay between the moral and intellectual aspects of man.

In the Grammar of Assent with the explication of that personal intellectual power of judging and concluding truth which he calls the Illative Sense, Newman tends to emphasize the rational and intellectual aspects of faith. Again the background or environment in which he is writing specifies the emphasis of his response. Here Newman is defending certitude against the rationalism of Froude who maintained that certitude, in faith or any other realm of thought, was irrational and an immoral use of man's intellectual powers. In

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3 Ibid., p. 203.

4 See Chapter III, p. 37.
answering this type of objection, Newman quite naturally emphasized the intellectual aspect of faith; he was trying to show that its certitude was intellectual and rational. However, in emphasizing the intellectual aspect of faith, Newman, attempting to maintain a balanced notion of faith, does not fail to mention the moral aspects of faith. The Illative Sense is itself uniquely personal and individual involving man totally, in his moral as well as intellectual powers. Toward the end of the Grammar of Assent, Newman restates the importance of the predispositions of the mind, the moral disposition, when he sets down specimens of the state of mind which he demands of those who would seriously inquire into the truth of Christianity.5

Therefore, neither in the University Sermons, nor in the Grammar of Assent, did Newman separate the moral and intellectual aspects of faith. Because of the concrete situation he might have emphasized one more than the other, but he always sought a balance, affirming that faith was both an intellectual and moral act - an activity that involved the total man, a response of the whole person.

This leads to the second consequence which can be drawn from Newman's development of the moral disposition and the Illative Sense in his justification of certitude, and, that is, that Newman's notion of faith, from the point of view of the believer, is a commitment of response involving the whole

5Ibid., pp. 417-18.
person—all the phases of his being. Certitude engages man in his intellectual and moral powers; for Newman this means that the whole person is involved in the assent of certitude. Newman never defined faith in terms of a personal commitment, but throughout his writings in the defense of faith and its certitude, he describes faith in personal terms. The moral disposition and the Illative Sense are both factors that illustrate Newman's consciousness of the personal nature of faith and its certitude. There is little doubt that for Newman faith and its certitude were deeply personal activities.

Indeed, it was through the personal qualities of the moral disposition and the Illative Sense that Newman justified the certitude of faith on the psychological dimension. This justification of certitude on the psychological dimension showed that certitude involved man in the total dimension of his being—his moral and intellectual capacities, in order that man might go beyond the probability of the evidence to an assent of certitude. As the foundation and basis of the supernatural reality of faith, whose ultimate certitude is the Word of God, the justification of the psychological dimension is indeed a justification of the certitude of faith in its totality, the psychological and supernatural dimensions. Such, in summation, is the manner in which Newman justified the certitude of faith and defended faith and its certitude against the errors of rationalism.
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