

CURRENT THEOLOGY

CHRISTIAN CO-OPERATION

One of the most striking characteristics of the religious scene today is the assertion of a growing will among Christians to work together for a more human and Christian world-order, in the face of concerted, organized, and implacable forces that threaten to destroy the possibility of it. Christian co-operation among men of different creeds in the interests of social reconstruction is a fact. The fact, of course, is simply massive in England. In the United States it has nowhere near the same proportions, but it is likely that it may assume them.

The fact posits an essentially theological problem, that is being increasingly felt as such by theologians. One of them writes: "The Catholic heart warms to such high and noble endeavor; the Catholic theologian knows it involves association with heretics and scents danger and difficulty. This attitude of the theologian, if left vague and confused, can cause misunderstanding: to the layman, full of the possibilities of fruitful co-operation, it can seem retrograde, unhelpful, suspicious of his zeal and enthusiasm in a good cause."¹ It is, consequently, not surprising that a layman writes: "One of the next tasks in theology is, it seems to me, to clear up the principles of that co-operation of men of different creeds which is required by the common good of temporal society."²

Moreover, it has been pointed out by the Editor of *Blackfriars* that the task is not at all simple: "The whole question . . . demands careful and precise theological expression to show how far collaboration is possible. . . . And many scattered theological principles must be synthesized."³ Nevertheless, it is imperative that the task be accomplished. There is real danger in confusion of thought on the doctrinal positions and the cultural issues involved, that would necessarily issue in action, either hesitant and therefore ineffective, or precipitate and therefore injurious.

It might well be expected that THEOLOGICAL STUDIES should make some contribution to this vital and complex problem, at least in its theoretic aspects. Such is our wish. In the present issue, Father John LaFarge, S.J., undertakes a position of the problem. Other writers will later discuss its various aspects, historical, theological, canonical. My intention here is simply to summarize recent thought on the subject, with a view to affording some documentation to the discussion. Our interest at the moment is solely in

¹W. Butterfield, "Co-operation with non-Catholics," *Clergy Review*, XXII (1942), 160.

²J. Maritain, "The Achievement of Co-operation Among Men of Different Creeds," *Journal of Religion*, XXI (1941), 364.

³"Christians and Unity," *Blackfriars*, XXII (1941), 452.

question of "Christian co-operation," as it has come to be almost technically called, to distinguish it from the larger, even more complex and difficult question of "Christian reunion."

The distinguished Redemptorist, Father Francis M. Connell, treats the subject in an article entitled "Catholics and 'Interfaith' Groups."⁴ His general theme may be put thus: "In the United States up to comparatively recent times there was little danger of indifferentism to any great extent among Catholics. On the contrary, they were rather inclined to distrust adherents of other denominations and even to question their sincerity. . . . In recent years a strong reaction against the spirit of mutual distrust and antagonism has taken place among both Catholics and non-Catholics. . . . Now, however, the important question arises, whether some Catholics in their laudable efforts to be broadminded and charitable toward the members of non-Catholic religious bodies, are not becoming unduly tolerant toward their doctrines. Is not the pendulum swinging from bigotry to indifferentism? The question has its most practical application in the matter of 'Inter-faith' or 'Three-faith' meetings."

The author initiates his discussion by recalling the "two basic principles" that must regulate the association of Catholics with non-Catholics. The first is "Christ's fraternal law of charity," which becomes operative "particularly by striving zealously and prudently for their conversion." The second is "the fundamental doctrine that Catholicism is the only true religion, and that its acceptance is obligatory by divine law on all mankind." Consequences of this principle are the exclusion of *communicatio in sacris*, the refusal to assist the propagation of heresy, and, above all, the rejection of the fundamental tenet of indifferentism.

The author points out that "wisdom and prudence are needed to balance properly the requirements of both principles, for undue emphasis on one can easily lead to the violation of the other." In the past, he says, charity was the more endangered; at present, Catholic exclusivism seems to be threatened, notably by interdenominational organizations and meetings, whereof the "National Conference of Christians and Jews" is cited as a typical example.

In discussing the lawfulness of participation by Catholics in these "inter-faith" meetings, Father Connell naturally begins with the well known canon 1325, §3. "The main problem centres about meetings and associations of an intermediate character—those which are not professedly and primarily devoted to the discussion of religious topics [nor yet entirely secular and civil in character], but which are concerned with matters that naturally invite the expression of religious ideas. Such are, in general, assemblies and organizations that occupy themselves with moral and social questions."

⁴*Ecclesiastical Review*, CV (1941), 336-53.

They receive a tripartite judgment. They are neither intrinsically wrong nor at variance with the practice of the Church; they can produce good effects—contacts resulting in conversions, the promotion of peace and charity; but from them may result "spiritual dangers." The first danger is that of apostasy; the second is that of mixed marriages. "However, the main objection to interdenominational organizations and meetings is their dangerous tendency to encourage indifferentism." There is danger, first, lest Catholics put credence in the theory of indifferentism, especially on hearing it proposed by "persons of intelligence and integrity," in the absence of protestation by Catholic representatives. There is danger, secondly, lest Catholic participants be of the sort "who cannot be trusted to appear before an interdenominational group and give a correct and complete account of the Church's teachings on the very subjects that are most likely to be brought up, such as tolerance, the relation of Church and State, the scope of the Church's authority." Of this Catholic ineptitude the author cites several examples. The third danger is in the fact that "a Catholic (particularly a priest) concedes to representatives of other religions in their religious capacity a place of equality with himself." Wherefore "simple people" are liable to conclude to the indifferentist theory.

The author's judgment on the existent situation in the United States is quite definite: "I am fully convinced that . . . ordinarily the association of Catholics with non-Catholics in such organizations and meetings is a grave menace to the faith of our people. . . . and that whatever good they may be producing is far outweighed by their disastrous spiritual consequences."

If they are to be allowed, he continues, four suggestions should be followed out in order to obviate the dangers: careful selection of competent participants, the entering of protests by Catholics against statements contrary to Catholic belief, the education of the laity in the purpose and significance of such meetings, and obedience to episcopal policies in the matter.

Furthermore, to show the attitude of the Holy See, the author cites several well known utterances apropos of the "reunion of Churches" movement,⁵ maintaining that "they are legitimately quoted in relation to interdenominational activities in our land, inasmuch as they indicate the vigilant concern of the Church to ban anything that might induce indifferentism." The article concludes with a double warning: first, that there is "little personal advantage to us in such assemblies; the advantage is on the other

⁵His references are to the decisions of the Holy Office in 1864, 1865, and 1919, forbidding participation by Catholics in the "Society for the Union of Christendom"; to a letter of the Holy Office of November 8, 1865; to the prohibition of Catholic participation in the Lausanne Conference in 1927; to *Mortalium Animos*; to the letter of Leo XIII to Archbishop Satolli, September 18, 1895 (*Coetus in Federatis*).

side"; secondly, that the charge of being "narrow, intolerant, illiberable," if made in consequence of the Church's exclusive claims, has to be accepted.

Father Connell chose to develop at length the consequences of one of the principles governing Catholic co-operation with non-Catholics—the principle, namely, of Catholic exclusivism. No one will question the prudence of his timely warnings. There is, however, a question of fact that needs to be further investigated, namely, the actual effect on Catholics of the present co-operative movement. Judgments differ. For instance, writing sometime ago, and apparently having in mind the 1940 Convention in Washington of the "National Conference of Christians and Jews," Msgr. H. T. Henry said: "It would seem that there has been no feeling amongst Catholics that such a movement would be misunderstood by ill-instructed Catholics."⁶ Supposedly, there would be even less danger of misunderstanding on the part of well-instructed Catholics.

However, even leaving intact all of Father Connell's positions, the view suggests itself that his article should be completed by a corresponding development of the consequences of the other principle that regulates Catholic association with non-Catholics—namely, the principle of charity, especially in its applications to the concrete, total situation existent in the world (and not only in America) today. He has admirably pointed out the dangers to Catholic faith and life involved in cooperation with non-Catholics. There is room for an exploration of the dangers to human life, national and international, involved in the failure of Catholics to co-operate with non-Catholics in the sphere of social reconstruction—dangers so great as to create a necessity for such co-operation. This necessity would not, of course, justify oblivion of the dangers to which co-operation exposes Catholic faith. It might, however, furnish the requisite *ratio proportionaliter gravis* for incurring them, while at the same time spurring the teachers of the faithful concertedly to set up safeguards against them.

Father Connell rightly lays down, as an essential safeguard, the education of the laity in the purpose and significance of organizations and meetings for co-operation between Catholics and non-Catholics. The suggestion should be broadened; actually, what is required is a whole program of instruction, notably with regard to the great idea which Leo XIII constantly put forward, the mission of the Church in the temporal order. I am inclined to think that the purpose and significance of Christian co-operation will not be grasped, nor the danger of indifferentism obviated, unless the movement is seen by the people against a larger doctrinal background, and in the light of a genuine appreciation of the realities of the present world crisis. At any rate, it is sufficient at the moment to suggest that here is perhaps

⁶"Our Separated Brethren," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, XL (1940), 1177.

the most urgent practical problem underlying the issue of Christian co-operation. On the success of such a broad, yet concrete, educative program ultimately depends both the legitimacy and the effectiveness of co-operation with non-Catholics. In its absence or failure such co-operation would be imprudent, even disastrous. Even the decisive factor that in the practical order legitimizes and sanctifies and assures efficacy to Catholic co-operative efforts, namely, the permission of the Bishops, depends on their practical judgment with regard to "prevailing conditions," as Father Connell points out. A vital question, therefore, is: What conditions can we make prevail in Catholic minds (and in non-Catholic minds, too)?

A COMMON CHRISTIAN GROUND?

In regard to the whole problem of co-operation the thought stimulated in England by the "Sword of the Spirit" movement is important.⁷ The Sword's work has moved increasingly in the direction of co-operation ever since the publication on December 21, 1940, of the joint letter to the *Times* in which the leaders of the Christian communions in Britain pledged themselves to support, on the one hand, the Pope's Five Peace Points, and, on the other, the Five Social Standards, taken from *The Churches Survey Their Task*, a report of the Oxford conference of the Church of England, held in 1937. The theological implications of the whole movement were not slow in being realized, and discussions have multiplied. We may review a few of the more important ones.

Writing in the *Clergy Review*,⁸ Dr. W. Butterfield adverts to a certain newness in the problem presented nowadays:

"Co-operation in worship—'communicatio in sacris'—is treated at length in our theological textbooks. But this is not quite the question at issue today. As I see it, the precise kind of co-operation visualized and contemplated at the present moment is nowhere explicitly discussed in our books of theology; we have to explore Papal documents, apply established principles, in our search for guidance." Therefore, "in all diffidence" he proposes his own thought. (Interesting is his recognition of the need for diffidence.) Perhaps it might be useful to quote his own summary:

"(1) There can be no co-operation in worship, no 'communicatio in sacris,' no such attempt at 'reunion in faith' as is condemned in *Mortalium Animos*. But such co-operation is not visualized at the present moment.

"(2) There can be no co-operation which may lead to fundamentalism, indifferentism, or weakening of the purity and strength of faith.

⁷Cf. A. C. F. Beales, "The Sword of the Spirit," *Month*, CLXXVI (1940), 203-8; Barbara Ward, "The Sword of the Spirit," *Clergy Review*, XIX (1940), 377-88; Barbara Ward, "The Sword of the Spirit. After One Year," *ibid.*, XXI (1941), 187-92.

⁸"Co-operation with Non-Catholics," *Clergy Review*, XXII (1942), 160-5.

"(3) There can be no co-operation on a so-called 'common Christian basis.' What has been said [cf. *infra*], and, from another angle, the teaching of the *Mortalium Animos*, make it abundantly clear that no such common basis does or can exist. What we may appear to have in common is not Catholic, and in any case is far too elusive to form any practical basis for common action. We must put away any idea of joining with non-Catholics as Christians, or of working with men who have the same or similar beliefs as ourselves. The true faith can have nothing in common with heresy.

"(4) The only basis for co-operation is that Catholics and non-Catholics can work together for certain common objects which they both desire. On this basis of common interest we may co-operate to promote a more perfect observance of the Natural Law and to preserve certain Christian ideas, principles, institutions, beneficial to Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Such co-operation is lawful on two conditions. First, its manifold dangers must be effectively guarded against. To this end Pius X would seem to direct that Catholics who take part in such co-operation should themselves be organized to receive the necessary Catholic formation and guidance from Ecclesiastical Authority. (Hence co-operation with non-Catholics can never be purely a lay undertaking.) Secondly, Catholic Bishops must exercise adequate and positive vigilance over such co-operation. [Though not, as he has said, to the point of "oppressive domination."]

"With these safeguards and for such objects co-operation between Catholics and non-Catholics is lawful.

"Is it necessary? In England we profess to have put our hand to the creation of a new world order founded on Christian principles. We cannot do this alone. The lesson of the past is that a purely Catholic effort is unequal to the task.

"Is it practicable? Many of our bishops, with Cardinal Hinsley at their head, seem to think so."

The most personal part of Doctor Butterfield's essay is in the third point above. He says elsewhere in his article that "if co-operation there be, it cannot be founded on a 'common Christian basis.' We cannot work with our non-Catholic brethren on the ground that we are both Christians, or that we believe the same things. We have no common Christian ground. . . . We co-operate not because we have a common faith, but because we have a common object. The distinction is critical and decisive." In support of this contention, Dr. Butterfield adduces the fact that "the words [used by both Catholics and non-Catholics to express their belief, like "charity," "faith," "Christian," etc.] may be the same, but the connotation of these words is very different" (p. 162), because each is set in a very different universe of discourse. The author, moreover, refers to the *Singulari Quodam*

of Pius X, in which, speaking of co-operation in economic matters between men of different denominations, "the Pope does not allude to the points of dogma on which they might agree, but rather to their common interest in the good order of human society (*disciplina societatis humanae*) and in the welfare of the State (*prosperitas civilis*)."

The author distinguishes two classes of "common objects" for whose achievement Christian co-operation is legitimate. The first is "a better observance of the Natural Law." The second embraces "certain things which can be described as Christian . . . a number of common possessions derived from the treasury of the revealed Christian religion . . . remnants of the Christian tradition . . . Christian ideas, Christian principles, Christian institutions, [which] Protestants no less than Catholics cling to with deep conviction, or at least with deep feelings of piety." Examples are given: the sacredness of the Person of Christ and of the Bible, public reverence for the Trinity and the Apostles' Creed and Sunday worship, the existence of denominational schools and of faculties of theology in universities. Co-operation for the preservation of these things may be called Christian "because the object of the co-operation is Christian." It is legitimate when undertaken and conducted in obedience to the Church.

Doctor Butterfield's central view was later challenged by Father Maurice Bévenot, S.J., whose work on the text and theology of St. Cyprian is well known.⁹ He first recalls the "caution [needed] in formulating the principles that must govern [Christian co-operation]. If the danger of indifference is the more obvious one, the danger of misapplying abstract principles to the concrete situation is one that is no less real. A mistake here may not only alienate from us men of goodwill who will sense at once any lack of appreciation of the realities involved, but it may create among Catholics an uneasiness of mind, or impose on them obligations which are unwarranted."

Father Bévenot, therefore, judges it "important, at the outset, not to allow currency to the slogan: 'We have no common Christian ground with the non-Catholics.'" His chief reason is that the slogan, "on a closer examination, appears to be unfounded."

He makes an antecedent consideration to the effect that, "in the ontological order as God sees it, there is after all a real common basis between us over and above our common humanity, and therefore a basis which may rightly be called 'a common Christian ground,' " consisting in the fact of valid baptism outside the Church, and, as a consequence, the supernatural life of grace; "for," he adds, "he would be rash indeed who denied it wholesale to our non-Catholic brethren."

Father Bévenot admits, however, that this consideration is not decisive:

⁹"No Common Christian Basis?" *Clergy Review*, XXII (1942), 266-9.

"The question is one of co-operation on the human plane, where in practise what is all-important are the thoughts and beliefs which are to guide us in our common action." The question, therefore, is "whether we have in common with non-Catholics thoughts and beliefs which are specifically Christian, beliefs which are on the supernatural plane, beliefs that are founded on Faith. This is clearly the crux." His own answer is in the affirmative, based on "the Church's belief that true faith can exist outside her flock." He is careful to say "true Faith," not "*the* true Faith." Since the point is delicate, he should be allowed to speak for himself: "If the life of supernatural grace exists outside the Church, then it presupposes the existence of supernatural Faith: the embracing of truths revealed by God because He and no other revealed them. It implies, though the implication will not ordinarily be explicitly formulated, an attitude of mind and will which is ready to accept God's word whatever else He may say or have said. But it does not necessarily imply that the believer knows all that God has revealed, nor that he knows where he might find out; it is even compatible with a rejection of part of what God has revealed, if he is honestly persuaded—however erroneously—that God did not reveal it. It is true that the Catholic Church is the God-appointed and unique instrument for the enlightenment of mankind as to His revelation, and that is why theologians are at such pains to show that Faith outside the Church is due, at least *reductive*, to her activity, along with the influence of grace. But that only brings out more clearly the Church's belief that true Faith can exist outside her flock."

This true faith, he continues, will not be empty of content: its content will be "truths which God really *has* revealed, and not merely things which He is thought to have revealed, but has not. They will be truths manifestly to be found in the Bible, but also, and quite as much, truths which were not thrown aside (as so many were) when the home of Faith was left behind, and which have been traditionally preserved in greater or less degree since."

Wherefore he concludes: "If this is true, and no one can reasonably call it into question, it is difficult to understand why such truths, such Christian principles which are held by so many non-Catholics in common with us, cannot form 'a common Christian ground' between us." Moreover, he suggests a weakness in Doctor Butterfield's case: if there are common objects for which Catholics and non-Catholics strive, *each acting on the motivation of his beliefs*, why emphatically deny that there is any common basis for the common striving? He does not admit the validity of Doctor Butterfield's reasons for the denial. First, because "*Mortalium Animos* is not to the point here. It condemns Catholic co-operation in the effort to form a federation of the different denominations, because this would be an implicit denial of the perennial unity of the Church, and would give to

many articles of the Faith a purely optional character. Nothing of this is relevant to the present question."

Moreover, he does not admit that the possibility of a common Christian ground is destroyed, as Doctor Butterfield implied, "by the coherence, the interdependence, the unified harmony and oneness of Catholic dogma." It may be true that the word "Charity" has not the same meaning to Catholic and Protestant, but only in a certain sense. And for this reason he considers unwarranted the assertion of Doctor Butterfield that Catholic and non-Catholic may, for example, co-operate toward the relief of the poor "while differing utterly in [their] conception of charity." It seems gratuitous to Father Bévenot to introduce a distinction between Catholic and Protestant charity into the Holy Father's celebrated words: "that universal love which is the compendium and most general expression of the Christian ideal, and which therefore may serve as a common ground also for those who have not the blessing of sharing the same faith with us."

In conclusion, Father Bévenot makes the point that the assertion of "a common Christian basis" cannot reasonably be understood as implying that *all* differences between Catholics and non-Catholics have been resolved.

I think that this controversy—which, incidentally, comes up in private discussions whenever the subject of Christian co-operation is broached—points to the existence of a real problem. Hardly any formula is more used today than "a common Christian ground"; it is, therefore, imperative that its legitimacy, and its content, be scrutinized.

M. Maritain makes an interesting contribution to the problem in an article contributed to the *Journal of Religion* as part of a symposium on "The Next Task in Theology." Since the article appears *verbatim*, but with an extended introduction in M. Maritain's book, *Ransoming the Time* (Chapter V: "Who is My Neighbour?"), it may be better to look at this latter, more complete, presentation of his thought.¹⁰

The essay is characterized by that admirably delicate intellectual charity, born of a profound reverence for truth, which is characteristic of M. Maritain's writings on such subjects. In spite of an equally wanted lack of lucidity, the major lines of his thought stand out. His general question is simply put: ". . . whether the diversity of religious creeds, an evident historical fact, is an insurmountable obstacle to human co-operation." Moreover, his general *Problematik* is equally simple: on the one hand, it is historically evident that religious differences have fed and sharpened conflicts between men—conflicts as serious as the religious issues that divide souls; on the other hand, it is equally evident that, despite these differences, good

¹⁰"The Achievement of Co-operation Among Men of Different Creeds," *Journal of Religion*, XXI (1941), 364-72; *Ransoming the Time* (Scribners, 1941), Chapter V: "Who is My Neighbour?", pp. 115-40.

fellowship, brotherly intercourse, and a spirit of union must be established between men in temporal, human society, and in the earthly commonwealth.

Thereupon rises the particular problem: "how can the peace of that temporal society be lastingly assured if first in the domain that matters most to the human being—in the religious and spiritual domain itself—relationships of mutual respect and mutual understanding cannot be established?" M. Maritain adverts to the fact that the problem is being acutely felt today. He adverts, too, to the danger involved in the task of solving it—the danger namely, of some yielding of dogmatic integrity, some subordination of religion to temporal interest. And he indicates the essential difficulty: the irreducible heterogeneity of the various worlds of religious thought, created not merely by divergence in doctrine, but more fundamentally by a plurality of points of view. His own intention is to show "how the paradox of fellowship I am at present examining can be solved for me, a Catholic, from the point of view of a philosophy which takes into account the data of Christian theology."

As a prelude to his solution he discusses "The Catholic Doctrine concerning the Status of Non-Catholics before God," outlining with great brevity the Catholic concept of the economy of salvation: revelation, the Church, the nature of faith and the intellectual freedom it accords, the primacy of loved based on faith, and finally the axiom, "There is no salvation outside the Church." Given its brevity, and M. Maritain's irenic purpose, the discussion is satisfactory in its statements. But the question is too difficult for any brief discussion of it to be entirely satisfactory. For instance, M. Maritain speaks of non-Catholics in good faith, who do not reject the interior graces God offers to all men, as "belonging to the Soul of the Church." That particular formula, however, is nowadays commonly discarded, as unrevealing of the realities of the case, and open to misunderstanding; it was rejected by the dogmatic commission that did preparatory work for the Vatican Council.

Moreover, M. Maritain gives this interpretation of the phrase famous since the days of Origen and Cyprian: "All it means to us is that there is no salvation outside the Truth, which, explicitly or implicitly, is freely offered to all." True enough, but hardly adequate. I think that not even the simplest paraphrase of that difficult axiom should leave unsaid the fact that for us the Truth has assumed a corporate form, in Christ, and in His Body, the Church. It would seem better, as P. de Lubac has suggested, that the seeming rudeness of the phrase be tempered simply by giving it a positive turn: "It is by the Church alone that salvation has come to humanity, and by the Church alone it comes to the individual."¹¹ Such a positive formula

¹¹H. de Lubac, S.J., *Catholicisme*. Les Aspects Sociaux du dogme (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1938), pp. 174-9.

affords a better starting-point for irenic development of the implications of the axiom, by simple exposition of the Catholic concept of the economy of salvation—that it is corporate in its very essence. And such an exposition, in these days of "ecumenism," would seem to stand a better chance of making itself intelligible. At all events, one must accept the justice of M. Maritain's warning, that our possession of the truth is not the occasion for pride, for a supercilious, domineering, or patronizing manner; rather, it is of its nature a burden, a responsibility, an occasion for tears of repentance.

In discussing the basis of good fellowship between men of different creeds, M. Maritain distinguishes two levels on which that fellowship should exist, the spiritual and the temporal.

On the spiritual level, he says: "This basis is not of the order of the intellect and of ideas, but of the heart and of love. It is friendship, natural friendship, but first and foremost mutual love in God and for God." And since love goes out simply to persons, not to their ideas, what it effects "is not a fellowship of beliefs, but the fellowship of men who believe." It entails, too, a certain "friendship between minds," which can exist in spite of differences, and issues in "a fraternal dialogue, [in which] there must be a kind of forgiveness and remission, not with regard to ideas—ideas deserve no forgiveness if they are false—but with regard to the condition of him who travels the road at our side."

M. Maritain insists on the supernatural character of this friendship of charity: it is a love that "goes first to God and then to all men," and is distinct from merely human benevolence, as it is distinct from an easy tolerance, easily bought at the price of faith. One of its powers is to help us "to recognize whatever beliefs other than our own include of truth and dignity, of human and divine values," without sacrifice of our own integral truth: "It is not supradogmatic, but suprasubjective. It does not make us go beyond our faith, but beyond ourselves. In other words, it helps us to purify our faith of the shell of egotism and subjectivity in which we instinctively tend to enclose it. And it also inevitably carries with it a sort of heartrending, attached, as is the heart, at once to the truth we love and to the neighbour who is ignorant of that truth." In this sense it is a power toward the effecting of a mutual understanding, a true fellowship, but a fellowship that "cannot involve any less intangible, more definite, more visible communion, expressed in the order of the speculative and practical intellect by some community of symbol or sacred ritual."

On the temporal and profane level, however, the case is different. Here the effort toward union between men can and must assume an exterior form, and express itself in common activities, in "co-operation for concrete and definite purposes, whether it be question of the common good of the political community to which we all respectively belong, or of the common

good of temporal civilization as a whole." On the temporal plane the love of charity, which is a religious bond of union, appears as "civic friendship, which is a natural virtue, that must, however, be leavened by charity." The state of the world today, M. Maritain points out, urgently demands the cultivation of this virtue, "so little understood by the sectarian liberalism of the nineteenth century and by the paganism of the present."

Charity must be its root. And its result must be real co-operation for the good of temporal society. Here, however, the ultimate problem arises: "How can such common action be possible without common principles, without a certain basic community of doctrine?"

M. Maritain rejects "the illusion of seeking for the basis and purpose of good fellowship [and of co-operation] in a common minimum of doctrinal identity—a common minimum which would be seen gradually to shrink to nothing while we discussed it, like the wild ass's skin in Balzac's story." His solution is put in terms of the Scholastic doctrine of analogy: "Now, in order to do the same terrestrial work and pursue the same temporal goal, there must be a *certain community* of principles and doctrine. But there need not necessarily be—however desirable and obviously more effective this might be in itself—a strict and pure and simple *identity* of doctrine. It is sufficient that the various principles and doctrines between themselves should have some unity and community of similarity or proportion or, in the technical sense of the word, of *analogy*, with regard to the practical end proposed." The end proposed, he continues, is of the natural order; it will not be achieved in a form exactly expressive of the concept had of it by different men, but it will be achieved in a real form.

Given, then, this analogical likeness of principles, men of different creeds will be able to "co-operate—at least as regards the primary values of existence in this world—in a constructive action involving the right ordering of the life of temporal society and earthly civilization and the moral values inherent therein." M. Maritain gives examples: for instance, a Thomist and a Barthian, while clashing in theology and philosophy, could converge in practice on questions of civilization, and the defense of the human person.

In searching out the "analogical" likeness of thought between men of different creeds, M. Maritain begins with the fact that "the primary and fundamental likeness between us is the acknowledgment of the fundamental and primordial ethical value of the law of brotherly love, however much this law may have different theological and metaphysical connotations for us, according to the religion or school of thought to which we belong." But, he continues, this law, if analyzed, reveals certain implications: "the existence of God, the sanctity of truth, the value and necessity of good will, the dignity of the person, the spirituality and immortality of the soul." These truths, he says, "correspond to spontaneous perceptions of our reason

and to primary tendencies of our nature; but they are not understood in an identical and univocal way by believers in the various religions of humanity." Nevertheless, their common acceptance creates "a community of similitude and *analogy*" in doctrine sufficient for the order of action and of terrestrial civilization. And consequently, men who hold these implications of the law of brotherly love may come together, not on the basis of a minimal identity of doctrine, nor yet on the basis of an equivocation, but on the basis of a true, though analogical community of ideas and principles. And on this basis they may co-operate toward the reconstruction of human society.

In this sense, therefore, I suppose that M. Maritain would distinguish the question debated by Dr. Butterfield and Father Bévenot, "Is there a common Christian ground?" His answer would be: There is no univocally common ground (it is such a "common ground" that Dr. Butterfield would seem to be rejecting); there is, however, a real common ground (as against Dr. Butterfield's theory of "utter difference"), but a ground that is only analogically common, yet sufficient for the purposes of practical co-operation towards human ideals of the natural order. Reinforcing this common intellectual ground are the love of charity (establishing human union on the religious plane) and civic friendship (cementing the proper bond of human society on the terrestrial plane of temporal life).

THE ENDS AND PURPOSES OF CO-OPERATION

It is quite clear that M. Maritain conceives the common basis of co-operation to be the analogical similitude of doctrine among believers with regard to certain truths of the natural order, which are accessible to reason as such, though they also form part of the Christian tradition. It is no less evident that he conceives co-operation to be directed to ends that are *per se* of the natural order, though subordinated to a higher order: his co-operation is a common constructive action "involving the right ordering of the life of temporal society and earthly civilization," though naturally in this task "ethical and spiritual values are involved, which concern the believer as such."

There has been some discussion of this question of the ends of co-operation. Writing in the *Clergy Review*, in a note expressly concerned with the question of *cooperatio in sacris*, Canon Mahoney touches on the broader question of co-operation, and reaches this conclusion: "Collaboration with non-Catholics is, therefore [he has cited the *Sertum Laetitiae*, and the Fifth Peace Point of Pius XII], desired by the Holy See, not indeed for the purpose of seeking agreement on a minimum of fundamental revealed doctrine, nor with the idea of communicating with them in religious worship as the outcome of basic agreement, but *purely within the sphere of the natural law*,

particularly in its social applications as taught during the last fifty years in a series of papal Encyclicals."¹²

Dr. Butterfield, in the article already cited, disagrees with this limitation of the sphere of co-operation. In a further note,¹³ he maintains as legitimate the extension of the scope of co-operation to certain Christian objectives: for example, reverence for the Person of Christ, the Bible, the Cross, etc. Papal recommendations, he says, are not to be understood *sensu negante et exclusivo*: "On the contrary, to my mind, the trend of papal pronouncement seems rather to extend co-operation beyond the confines of the purely natural order." It would embrace, he continues (citing *Singulari Quadam*) ends that are for "the general welfare," for "any morally permissible advantage," among which certainly are to be found "Christian things." On the other hand, he admits that what may be licit in the way of co-operation may not be expedient. The former is determined in the light of principles; the latter, "from a courageous testing in practice of the lawful possibilities," under episcopal guidance.

On his side,¹⁴ Canon Mahoney reiterates the fact of "the prudence and discretion of the Holy See in limiting the plea for co-operation to social reconstruction." His own position, he says, is that "of a disciple seeking to discover the truth on a subject which is nowhere explicitly discussed in our theological books." He suggests two lines of inquiry, necessary to its exploration, the one of a practical, the other of a speculative, order. "The first is to determine more closely the matters, in addition to social reconstruction, which can be the subject of collaboration with the minimum risk of stressing our differences with non-Catholics. . . . The second and more professedly theological line of enquiry is to examine with care the precise meaning of certain papal utterances bearing upon this question." He cites an example in *Mit Brennender Sorge*: ". . . the believer has an inalienable right to profess his faith and put it into practice in the manner suited to him. Laws that suppress or make this profession more difficult contradict the natural law." The question is: "What is the meaning of the word 'believer' in this context? Can it mean that, in some sense or other, everyone has the inalienable right to profess and propagate a false religion? Or, seeing that the letter was addressed to the German hierarchy in union with the Apostolic See, are we to interpret these phrases accordingly? Both views are possible, though I prefer the second, but it cannot be doubted that the papal allocution on Christmas Eve, 1941, refers to 'faith,' and 'believer' in the widest possible meaning of these words." One must agree that this exact

¹²Notes on Recent Work: Moral Theology and Canon Law," *Clergy Review*, XXII (1942), 79.

¹³Correspondence, *Clergy Review*, XXII (1942), 335-6.

¹⁴Correspondence, *Clergy Review*, XXII (1942), 239-40.

determination of the sense of what have been termed the "liberal" views of our Holy Father is of cardinal importance in this whole discussion. There is no doubt about the fact that His Holiness desires co-operation;¹⁵ but the basis and extent of his desires must be accurately defined, and the practical possibilities of their realization in particular contexts (for us, in the United States, and in its different regions, where, of course, different conditions prevail) must be explored, not least by an exploration of non-Catholic sentiment.

AN IMPORTANT AGREEMENT

A significant, and, at least for the time being, a definitive statement of the bases and scope of co-operation in the British scene was contained in the "Joint Statement on Co-operation," issued by the Joint Committee of "Religion and Life" and the "Sword of the Spirit," on May 28, 1942. Before attempting to estimate the authority of the document, it may be well to reproduce it—a rather full reproduction being justified by its theological, as well as practical, significance:

"Meetings have recently been held between representatives of the "Commission of the Churches for International Friendship and Social Responsibility," and representatives of the Roman Catholic organization entitled "The Sword of the Spirit," to explore the possibilities of co-operation between Christians in promoting the application of Christian principles to national and international life. The following Joint Statement was drawn up and agreed to by all the representatives on January 24, 1942. On February 5 the Statement was approved by the Executive Committee of the "Sword of the Spirit." On April 15 the "Commission of the Churches" (which has now set up the organization referred to in section 4 below, under the name "Religion and Life") gave a general welcome to the Statement, approved the establishment of a "Joint Standing Committee of Religion and Life and the Sword of the Spirit," and agreed that the Statement should be issued on the authority of the Joint Standing Committee. . . .

"(1) We agree that a compelling obligation rests upon all Christian people in this country to maintain the Christian tradition and to act together to the utmost possible extent to secure the effective influence of Christian teaching and witness in the handling of social, economic, and civic problems, now and in the critical post-war period.

¹⁵This is not the place to collate the pertinent texts; but one may be quoted: "It will be a triumph indeed if the American people, with its genius for splendid and unselfish action, should thus lay the foundations of a better world, solving once for all this old and thorny [social] question, and still keeping to the safe paths which the light of the Gospel reveals to us. If this fortunate result is to be achieved, our forces must not be weakened by disunion; we must join them, and so add to their effectiveness. It is only by united and concerted action that we can foster great schemes. For that reason, We are impelled by charity to invite here the co-operation of those whom Mother Church mourns as separated from her communion" (*Sertum Laetitiae*, trans. by Msgr. R. A. Knox; cf. AAS, XXXI [1939], p. 643).

"We are all profoundly impressed with the increasing danger that in our generation the Christian heritage, in which we all share, may be lost, and that our country may increasingly slip into accepting pagan standards and ideals. Believing, as we do, that the Christian Revelation has an intrinsic claim upon mankind, and that it is also the preserver of human society from excesses and errors, we feel that all Christians are bound in duty and charity alike toward their fellow-countrymen to oppose the present tendencies to set Christianity aside and to treat it as a matter of private concern without relevance to the principles which should guide society.

"(2) We agree that there is a large area of common ground on which, without raising ultimate questions of Church order and doctrine which divide us, full co-operation is possible and is already taking place. [Here, as "the first clear definition of a large common area," reference is made to the Ten Points of the *Times* letter of December 2, 1940; and, as "relevant to the common obligation we accept," other documents are cited, including the social Encyclicals of the Popes from Leo XIII onwards.] Over this whole field, collaboration among Christians, already in progress, ought to be encouraged.

"(3) We agree that organised Christianity, to fulfill its proper function, must everywhere be secured in certain essential freedoms. Full freedom must mean freedom to worship according to conscience, freedom to preach, teach, educate, and persuade (all in the spirit of Christian charity), and freedom to bring up children in the faith of their parents. The Christian life is one lived in and through membership of a religious society, and its corporate nature and its constitutional freedom and independence must be recognised and guaranteed by the State.

"(4) Our purpose is to unite informed and convinced Christians all over the country in common action on broad lines of social and international policy. [Here mention is made of existent organizations for this purpose: "The Sword of the Spirit," and the newly-formed "Religion and Life."]

"The crisis of civilisation, and the possibilities open to Christians in the period of reconstruction in the national and international field, make it essential that all this work of Christian co-operation should be greatly intensified and extended.

"(5) . . . Linked by this Committee [the Joint Committee referred to in the preamble], the two Movements will work through parallel action in the religious, and joint action in the social and international field."¹⁶

The authority of the document was rather well defined on the occasion of its issuance, at a reception to meet Cardinal Hinsley and the Archbishop of Canterbury. Dr. Fisher, Bishop of London, Chairman of the Joint Stand-

¹⁶I cite from *The Sword of the Spirit*, Bulletin No. 46 (June 4, 1942), p. 3.

ing Committee, who presided at the reception, in a broadcast address said: "It is not an official pronouncement of any of the Churches concerned, but it has the goodwill of a joint Anglican and Free Church Commission and of the Roman Catholic Church, and it has today been warmly commended by the Archbishop of Canterbury, as Chairman of the Commission of the Churches, and by Cardinal Hinsley, as President of the *Sword of the Spirit*."¹⁷ The Archbishop of Canterbury said: "This is not an official activity of the Churches as such. It ought to be pointed out what is the basis of our action. . . . It is not a reunion of the Churches in all that tends to separate them. What is contemplated is parallel action in the religious field, joint action in the social and economic field. There are well understood difficulties which cannot easily be overcome. . . . The common ground for joint action was the natural law, as reinforced by Christianity."¹⁸

Cardinal Hinsley is quoted as saying: "It is a consolation to me to take part in this meeting, because it seems to me that here is a response, and a very strong response, to the appeals that the Popes have made from Leo XIII down to our present Holy Father for joint action among men of good will in support of those fundamental principles of social order which are now being so violently attacked."¹⁹ The *Universe* reports: "In endorsing the Joint Statement the Cardinal said that it might be that in a few instances the phraseology of the Statement was not all that he would desire, but he added: 'As it stands, I approve it, and I hope we shall see from this time on a great increase of co-operation and a vast amount of help from those who associate themselves with either one side or the other—'The Sword of the Spirit' or the 'Religion and Life' movement."²⁰

In appraising the document in the *Clergy Review*, Canon Mahoney states: "The document, therefore, as such, does not enjoy the official character of a statement issued by the Hierarchy—for example, that on the justice of the war authorized by all the bishops and printed in the Catholic press, 16 September, 1939. On the other hand, it is 'warmly commended,' 'endorsed,' 'approved,' by the Ordinary of the diocese in which it was issued, and has the implied approval of all those Ordinaries who have welcomed the "Sword of the Spirit" into their dioceses. To proceed from the familiar to the unfamiliar, the document seems to us to have the character of a text issued not only with the Ordinary's *Imprimatur* but with his commendatory preface as well: neither an *Imprimatur* nor a commendatory preface necessarily implies that everything in the text is positively approved."²¹ It should be

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 2: "Postscript by the Bishop of London."

¹⁸I cite from the *English Catholic Newsletter*, No. 134 (June 6, 1942), p. 2.

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰*Universe* (June 5, 1942), p. 8.

²¹"Christian Co-operation," *Clergy Review*, XXII (1942), 295.

noted that in their Advent Pastorals for 1941 both the Archbishop of Birmingham and the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle gave considerable space to Christian co-operation, explaining its aims, its necessity, its advantages and dangers; and they gave it their full approval, as organized by the "Sword of the Spirit."²² The Archbishop of Liverpool has also been explicit in his approval. In fact, the sentiment of the English Hierarchy has been remarkably unanimous.

The Joint Statement itself, and particularly the comments made upon it, strongly support the contention that, for the time being at any rate, co-operation between Catholics and non-Catholics in England is explicitly based on the ground of a common acceptance of the natural law, and is to be directed towards objectives in social, economic, and international life that are made peremptory by the natural law. Canon Mahoney interprets the whole incident in this sense.²³ Two articles in the *Universe* by Catholic members of the Joint Committee (Father John Murray, S.J., Editor of the *Month*, and Mr. Richard O'Sullivan, K.C.) enforce the point, though the former writer also tentatively suggests the possibility of a more specifically Christian common ground.²⁴

There seems to be a feeling among some that these possibilities may develop, but for the present the difficulties are too imposing. And it should be noted that difficulties are felt no less strongly on the non-Catholic side. The limitation put to the objectives of co-operation was perhaps as welcome, in general, to the non-Catholic as to the Catholic representatives. As a matter of fact, it should satisfy both sides; for, as Canon Mahoney points out: "There is objective equality in co-operating with non-Catholics for a recognition of the natural law, since this common ground is approachable by the light of unaided reason."²⁵ Historically, of course, it was the Incarnate Word who freed human reason from the captivity of ancient darkneses, and cleared its field of vision both horizontally and vertically—down into the uniqueness of the human personality, and out into the community of nature that makes all men one. But today, at any rate, the natural laws of human life are luminous. Their light is shared by all men who have not completely lost contact with the Christian tradition that has mediated them. And it is difficult to see why that light cannot be a common source of illumination to all Christians, that brings into focus at least the general lines of the reconstructive task that calls for their common effort.

The theologian who views the movement toward Christian co-operation

²²These two Pastorals are quoted in part in *The Sword of the Spirit*, Bulletin No. 35 (December 11, 1941), pp. 3, 4.

²³*Loc. cit.*

²⁴Fr. J. Murray, S.J., "Co-operation: What It Means," *Universe* (May 29, 1942), p. 7; R. O'Sullivan, K.C., "The Church and the Nation," *ibid.*

²⁵"Christian Co-operation," *Clergy Review*, XXII (1942), 298.

as it exists in England cannot fail, I think, to be impressed by the exact theological intelligence, as well as the great practical tact, that preside over it. This is in greatest part due, of course, to the excellence of its leadership. There is a remarkable clarity of thought, an uncompromising integrity in the maintenance of Catholic truth, which are supported by a genuinely religious and prayerful spirit and protected by a real sense of the dangers to which Catholic faith is exposed. At the same time, doctrinal exactness is joined to a greatly courteous charity, which excludes any tendency to ally orthodoxy with undue suspicion, complacency, or rudeness. Above all, there seems to be about the whole movement a certain freshness and victorious spirit, which recalls the words of Pius XII in his Jubilee message: "The Church today cannot completely return to the primitive method required by the small primitive flock. She cannot without being untrue to herself retain to herself and carry on the forms of life and activity of those earlier days. No, there cannot be for the Church any going back. There can be for the human soul who studies her history only a desire to go forward to more victories."

There are some who see, as the victory of the future whose seeds are being planted now by the movement toward Christian co-operation, the achievement of Christian reunion. But it is hardly possible at the moment to explore the relationships between these two movements.²⁶

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CHRISTIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

Somewhere in Syria, the year being 1910, Arab workmen unearthed a mass of ancient silverware. One of the objects was a squat beaker which came in time to be the subject-matter of a lively scientific and literary controversy. Competent scholars and amateurs took sides, popularizers and propagandists aroused the interest of wide reading circles. During the last two decades various expositions have given prominence to the so-called Great Antioch Chalice and still further increased the knowledge of this interesting object. Yet many questions regarding it have not yet received a definitive answer. Unfortunately, in the English language few publications of real scientific value saw the light, so that many false impressions have received currency. We must, therefore, welcome the sane, though not very extensive, survey of the whole controversy which was made by H. Harvard Arnason

²⁶On this question, cf. Anon., "That They All May Be One," *Blackfriars*, XXII (1941), 102-7; Vincent McNabb, O.P., "The Joint Letter on the Five Peace Points," *ibid.*, pp. 124-31; Henry St. John, O.P., "Spadework for Reunion," *ibid.*, pp. 132-44; Anon., "Christians and Unity," *ibid.*, pp. 451-4; Henry St. John, "Collaboration and Reunion," *ibid.*, 471-7.