

CURRENT THEOLOGY

THEOLOGICAL OPINION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF DOGMA

Interest in the controversy on the development of dogma, which was outlined in the September issue of *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES* (pp. 471-91), has by no means abated during the intervening months. In this paper we shall try to present, as completely as possible, the quite extensive recent literature.

I

Some months ago, there was published an exchange of letters between Mgr. de Solages, recently confirmed in his reappointment as rector of the Catholic Institute of Toulouse by Pope Pius XII, and Père M.-J. Nicolas, formerly a professor in the same Institute and now Provincial of the Dominicans in the province of Toulouse.¹ These letters are concerned with a critical study of P. Daniélou's widely discussed article in *Études* of April, 1946 and of the two collections, *Sources chrétiennes* and *Théologie*. The author of this critical study was P. Labourdette, editor of the *Revue Thomiste*.²

Mgr. de Solages describes, as an unfair "procès de tendances," P. Labourdette's method of criticising, from the view point of orthodoxy, two collections of eighteen volumes without discussing them in detail. It is quite understandable, Mgr. de Solages feels, that P. Labourdette should have been disturbed by P. Daniélou's article in *Études*; a sharp reply in the *Revue Thomiste* against a certain few unrestrained statements of this article would have been quite legitimate; but why not have stopped there?³

Two classes of statements, easily distinguishable in P. Labourdette's critique, are singled out by Mgr. de Solages. The first class comprises unmitigated praise of the two collections, *Sources chrétiennes* and *Théologie* for their insistence on the following: (1) the need of a theology more conscious of the richness of its sources and of the many phases of its historical development; (2) the need of presenting theology as the dynamic solution of vital modern problems instead of presenting it as a series of abstract formulas covering dead issues; (3) the need of historical treatment even in

¹ De Solages and Nicolas, "Autour d'une controverse," *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique*, XLVIII (1947), 1-17.

² Labourdette, "La théologie et ses sources," *Revue Thomiste*, XLVI (1946), 353-71.

³ De Solages, *op. cit.*, p. 4: "Il est manifeste que le P. Labourdette vise surtout l'article des *Études* du P. Daniélou. J'aurais parfaitement compris, de la part de la *Revue Thomiste*, une réplique assez vive à quelques formules un peu désinvoltes de cet article: c'était dirai-je, de bonne guerre, mais pourquoi ne pas s'en tenir là?"

the most speculative sciences, such as Scholastic theology; (4) the need of vitalizing influences from a spiritual climate in the formation of any theology; (5) the need of recognizing the inadequacies and partial relativisms of various theological systems and syntheses.⁴

The second class of statements, singled out by Mgr. de Solages, descry an attitude which would combine the following characteristics: (1) a concept of theological wisdom as fluctuating and incapable of definitive acquisitions; (2) the pseudo-philosophy of relativism, inspired unconsciously by the historical method and engendering an outlook which replaces the metaphysical notion of speculative truth with the more modest notion of historical truth as the expression, more or less complete, of the mentality and the human experience of an era or a group; (3) subjectivism, whereby one places the highest value of any study in its function of "witness" to a rich and vibrant experience, while a quite secondary importance is attached to logical coherence and intellectual content; (4) an undue depreciation of intelligence, as being incapable of attaining truth.⁵

Mgr. de Solages is deeply troubled by the imputation of such convictions, particularly to P. de Lubac,⁶ without objective corroboration. Since the only concrete justification of P. Labourdette's fears of relativism is based on P. Bouillard's book *Conversion et grâce*, Mgr. de Solages devotes the rest of his letter to a vindication of certain disputed passages of P. Bouillard from the charge of relativism.⁷

The ground-work of his vindication is built on quotations from previous writings of his own, published before the present controversy and before he ever read P. Bouillard's book:

Even educated Christians, for the most part, do not take it into account that Christian thought at any given moment of history is the synthesis of the divine light reaching us through revelation and of the notions (*données*) of human reason. But, if the divine light is by nature immutable, the notions of reason, as we discover each day a bit more, change with time. The synthesis itself, therefore, must also be modified. Many, even those who understand this, dream of possessing in some way these two elements separated from each other. They do not stop to reflect that, from the very instant divine truth is expressed, there is introduced in this very expression an human element. We can scarcely separate the notions which

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 5 f.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 7 f.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8: "Croyez-vous vraiment, mon Père, que ce soit là la pensée du P. de Lubac? J'ai, quant à moi, la certitude du contraire et si vraiment le P. Labourdette est d'un autre avis, qu'il cite donc des textes sur lesquels on puisse discuter. Or il n'en cite aucun ni du P. de Lubac, ni des autres auteurs des deux collections mises en cause, si ce n'est du seul P. Bouillard."

⁷ Cf. THEOLOGICAL STUDIES, VIII (1947), 478.

divine truth illuminates, without substituting for these human notions other notions equally human.⁸

To illustrate these abstract principles, Mgr. de Solages states that even Christ Himself had to submit to these laws. For example, in defining the justice which He demands from His followers, He opposes it to the justice of the Pharisees. To the modern shepherd of souls, who desires to present this notion in a popular sermon, only two alternatives are open: either to reconstruct the historical milieu of the Gospel, or to transpose the lesson into modern circumstances. Moreover, if the lesson is to be made fully operative, even an historical reconstruction of the scene is not enough without a modern application.⁹

Mgr. de Solages then goes on to give the fundamental technical reason for this situation of human thought:

There is no ground for astonishment at this perpetual presence of analogy in the varying mechanisms of knowledge. The reason for it is simple. Our human knowledge is imperfect. Everyone admits this, because knowledge does not exhaust the real, whose mystery it strives to penetrate. There is then always an element of difference between being and its representation. However, under penalty of denying absolutely the validity of human knowledge, it must indeed be admitted that there is some similarity between what we know and the knowledge we have of it.

Similarity and difference—we discover these two aspects at the very heart of knowledge; this is the very essence of analogy. We discover likewise, at least in every primitive idea of knowledge, the same impossibility of dissociating clearly these two elements, of pointing out precisely wherein our representation is identical with its object and wherein it is different. For, if we could isolate entirely the aspect of resemblance, by that very fact our knowledge would become rigorously adequate—an ideal towards which it tends without ever arriving. Knowledge is an analogy.¹⁰

With this background, Mgr. de Solages is in a position to expose his interpretation of P. Bouillard's exact meaning as follows:

Every theological notion (in fact, every theological system) is analogous to the reality which it strives to express. If another notion is substituted, it too will be analogous, and, what is more, it will be analogous to the first notion. If now one wishes to express the absolute truth which both notions express in a different manner, this can be effected only by the introduction of a third notion, which also will inevitably be analogous, since in theology one cannot depart from analogical knowledge. The pretention of departing from it and of arriving at an adequate

⁸ De Solages, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

⁹ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

expression of God would mean the elimination of all mystery—a blasphemous pretention. Does P. Labourdette believe himself capable of finding a formula, in any human language whatsoever, which expresses in an adequate manner (even identically) the absolute and transcendent truth which theologians strive to translate into human notions and systematizations? There will always be in the formula something relative to a vocabulary, a grammar, a philosophy, a culture, etc. And this, simply because of the laws of human knowledge, and, in particular, because our knowledge of supernatural realities can only be analogical. Otherwise we deviate entirely from Thomism; on this point, then, there seems no possibility of disagreement.¹¹

Yet there may remain some disagreement, Mgr. de Solages feels, on the exact position of Thomism in relation to other theological systems. Since, historically, there have been and still exist several theological systems expressing in an orthodox way the same revealed truths, does it follow that their analogical approximations to the absolute truth are perfectly equal and that no single one is preferable to any other? Mgr. de Solages does not think so, and for the last twenty years has repeatedly asserted his reasons for believing in the superiority of Thomistic metaphysics. However, he maintains, this general superiority does not necessarily mean that the Thomistic system expresses by itself alone all the aspects of divine revelation, as well as, or even better than, the entirety of other systems. He does not mind a Thomist believing otherwise, but thinks one can be a Thomist and still maintain the opposite; furthermore, he is inclined to think that St. Thomas would agree with his opinion.¹²

In concluding his letter, Mgr. de Solages expresses the five following desires: (1) that theologians should renounce making general and vague accusations, and that they should rather restrict themselves to precise discussions of precise texts; (2) that in their controversies they should not so frequently permit a suspicion of heterodoxy to hover above their Catholic adversaries; (3) that they should not allow these domestic controversies to take precedence over the good fight for the defense of their common faith against modern infidelity; (4) that, in accord with its frequent statement that the doctrine of St. Thomas should not be simply parroted in its literal meaning, the *Revue Thomiste* should accept the work of theological renewal which the times demand; (5) that, furthermore, the *Revue Thomiste* itself should show the way by its example; this is the true means of remaining faithful to the historical example of St. Thomas.¹³

¹¹ *Loc. cit.*

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹³ *Loc. cit.*

II

In his urbane answer to Mgr. de Solages, P. Nicolas first expresses his complete accord with the former's views on the imperfection of all human knowledge, the unavoidable place of analogy in all theological development, and the relative inadequacy of any systematization.¹⁴ He then poses, respectfully but forcefully, the following objections:

1) Is it true that philosophies, which differ among themselves, are nevertheless inevitably analogous? Frequently philosophical concepts differ by *sic et non*, and hence can have no point of analogy; for example, the concept of substance cannot be simultaneously affirmed and denied, and yet remain an analogous concept in both affirmation and denial. In any case, not all philosophies are capable of being utilized by the theologian. Nor does the inadequacy of every philosophical concept in comparison with divine truth imply the possibility of a plurality of different, though analogous, philosophical systems. For according to Mgr. de Solages, the only legitimate theological systems are those which are mutually analogous; but what analogy, asks P. Nicolas, exists between the theories of Scotists and of Cajetan on the hypostatic union? One is false and the other is true; and everything, which in either system derives directly from this theory, is inevitably either false or true. In this example, "the unchangeable element of the dogma," to employ the language of P. Bouillard, is formulated in two different human conceptions which cannot both be true. These two theological systems have, it is true, the same confused notions of nature and person, and this suffices for the integrity of faith, but they do not possess in common the same clear and developed notions of these two concepts; rather there exist two distinct theologies, of which only one is true. In addition, P. Nicolas would like some examples of P. Bouillard's assertion that, when contingent representations of immutable truth change, the new contingent representations contain the same absolute relations to transcendent truth. To use the same example again, if the concepts of nature and person change to the point that they no longer contain anything of what the Church conceived in placing these terms in her professions of faith, P. Nicolas cannot see how the continuity of relationship between the two concepts thus changed would maintain the invariability of the dogma.¹⁵

2) In his second objection, P. Nicolas denies flatly Mgr. de Solages' supposition that the notions (*données*) of human reason are inevitably fluctuating and constantly changing because of the evolution of the mind. Among the invariables of human reason must be ranked the fundamental metaphysi-

¹⁴ Nicolas, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

cal notions of St. Thomas. It is quite one thing to say that formulas change with changes in language and culture; quite another to maintain the same of philosophy, whose fundamental concepts express eternal and necessary truths. The variables of philosophy are completely accidental with relation to its fundamental concepts; hence it is useless to attempt to explain the permanence of truth by an identity of relationship between different contingent representations. According to P. Nicolas, only an accidental variation would be needed to adapt Thomism to evolutionistic concepts, if the theory of evolution were proven to be true in biology; on the other hand, an essential change would be necessary to conform Thomism to a philosophy of "becoming." Obviously, therefore, there is no analogy between Thomism and the philosophy of Hegel, and one must yield to the other. To P. Nicolas, the disturbing feature of P. Bouillard's exposition is his use of "contingent" to describe all human thought; all human thought simply is not contingent.¹⁶

In his concluding paragraphs, P. Nicolas repudiates the notion that Thomism is the only possible theological system. However, he believes it to be not only the truest system yet evolved, but also the only true one, in the sense of a complete system. This implies, of course, that Thomism is vital and dynamic, that it is capable of assimilating the truth of other systems, of adapting itself to various points of view, and of integrating all new discoveries of truth. St. Thomas himself, with the help of countless predecessors, succeeded in establishing the metaphysical bases of a truly scientific theology, for which Christian faith had been searching. But more than metaphysics is required for an integral theology; there is need of history, science, and the Holy Spirit. This is why the scientific theology of St. Thomas is incomplete and will never be complete in any single mind. Ultimately, Thomism is not completely true unless, without losing its essential principles, it arrives at universality.¹⁷

III

Invaluable for an estimate of this controversy is a book written by PP. Nicolas and Labourdette, with an introduction by P. Bruckberger, O. P., in refutation of the editorial "Réponse" to P. Labourdette, published last year in the *Recherches de science religieuse*.¹⁸

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁸ M. Labourdette, M.-J. Nicolas, R.-L. Bruckberger, Dominicains, *Dialogue théologique: Pièces du débat entre "La Revue Thomiste" d'une part et les R.R. P.P. de Lubac, Daniélou, Bouillard, Fessard, von Balthasar, S.J., d'autre part* (Les Arcades, Saint-Maximin, Var, 1947).

In order to permit an impartial judgment of P. Labourdette's original article and of the "Réponse" which it provoked, both are printed again in full. Throughout P. Labourdette's reprint, which comes first, references are made to seven pages of notes immediately following, which answer briefly the accusations of the "Réponse" directly drawn from his text. These notes are followed by the "Réponse" itself. Then follows a detailed answer written by P. Labourdette, a brief postscript by P. Nicolas, and a conclusion written by P. Nicolas.¹⁹

In his detailed reply, P. Labourdette deplores that his opponents have brought so much of the personal element into this controversy. He disclaims vigorously, and with justice, any ulterior purpose, any alliance with others or any entrusted mission; his only motive in writing his original critique was an honest disagreement in the realm of ideas. He rejects even more forcefully any intention of reducing this controversy to a banal rivalry between religious orders; he repels the insinuation that his article was an attack on Jesuit theologians and, by implication, on the whole Order; furthermore, he proposed only his own personal views and, thereby, in no way engaged the views of Dominicans, any more than his opponents' views should be considered those of Jesuits in general. To the accusation of the "Réponse" that his critique involves a renewal of *intégrisme*, he replies that such name-calling belongs to the same order as the loose and emotional modern usage of branding one's opponents as communists or fascists. He similarly resents the irony whereby the "Réponse" dramatizes the whole issue and represents P. Labourdette as a judge summoning cowering prisoners before the bar of justice, or as a rigid examiner quizzing trembling candidates; since the candidates in question are theologians of international renown and authors of important works received with great praise, the unreality of such a dramatization is obvious. As to vague and unsubstantiated insinuations concerning P. Labourdette's part in secret conversations and private correspondence, he registers a flat denial and a dignified protest against the injustice of airing publicly such unfounded suspicions.²⁰

In the second part of his reply, P. Labourdette deals with the charge of the "Réponse" that he had unfairly accused his opponents of being unortho-

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5: "Sommaire. I. Dialogue théologique (P. Bruckberger), pp. 9-19, II. La théologie et ses sources, par M. Labourdette, pp. 21-64; Notes (P. Labourdette), pp. 65-71; III. La théologie et ses sources: Réponse parue dans les 'Recherches de science religieuse' (1946, IV, 385-401) pp. 73-101; IV. De la critique en théologie, par M. Labourdette, pp. 101-141; V. Le progrès de la théologie et la fidélité à saint Thomas, par M.-J. Nicolas, pp. 141-151."

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-7.

dox. If these charges are derived by his opponents from the tone of his critique and from their unwarranted assumption that he wished to impose his views on them, P. Labourdette professes astonishment at such susceptibility; he never imagined that authors, so highly and justly esteemed for their many contributions to the Church and to theology, would attribute to him any authority beyond the objective weight of his arguments. The supposed accusations of unorthodoxy, then, should only be derived from his arguments; in this case the complaint is based on a complete misunderstanding of the function of objective and impersonal criticism in theological discussions.²¹

P. Labourdette admits freely that in his original article he did assert that certain statements, if pushed to their logical conclusions, appeared to him incompatible with the teaching of the Church. But the teaching of the Church (i.e. objective revelation and truths closely connected) constitutes the very principles of theology. What would become of free theological discussion and progress, if no one had the right to compare conclusions with their principles, or to point out the inconsistency of a theological chain of reasoning? Does the critic thereby unfairly cast doubt upon the faith of the theologian criticized or upon his intention of remaining orthodox? Concretely, P. Labourdette admits having said, and until proved wrong, persists in believing that P. Bouillard's method of explaining the progress of theology and the permanence of dogmatic formulas is not compatible with the teaching of the Church on the immutability of dogma; but he also said, and is now equally convinced, that P. Bouillard sees no such incompatibility and that his precise aim was to avoid that very relativism of truth which his formulas imply to P. Labourdette. There was, then, no question of his thinking or insinuating that any of his opponents wished to reject the Catholic faith; rather, he admires in their writings a Christian spirit and apostolic zeal whose source could only be a living supernatural faith. Nevertheless, he asks, cannot a critic reject an opinion without thereby considering its author blind or stupid? To deny such a possibility, would certainly betray a singular view of intellectual life, its complexity, its manifold difficulties and countless occasions of error.²²

Perhaps the most interesting section of P. Labourdette's rejoinder is his answer to the criticism of his method of presenting globally so many volumes and authors without a detailed consideration of each. In utilizing this method, he is accused of first having conjured up in his own mind a monster of heresy, and then, of seeking to detect traces of this heresy in diverse

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 114 f.

authors, without taking the trouble to analyze them (or perhaps even to read them). If it were not for such fantastic charges, which if true would so discredit his sincerity as to render any further discussion futile, P. Labourdette would be quite willing to admit defects in his chosen method; for any method selected would have had some imperfections. In the face of such serious charges, however, some explanation of the choice of a global presentation becomes necessary.²³

After the almost complete famine of intellectual stimulus due to the war, P. Labourdette greeted with absolute approval the announcement of the two collections, *Sources chrétiennes* and *Théologie*. The appearance of the first volume of *Sources chrétiennes* (*Saint Grégoire de Nysse: Vie de Moïse*, trad. et notes de J. Daniélou, S. J.), gave rise to some minor reserves. The Introduction to this volume manifested such an evident desire to ingratiate, to orientate the reader toward something more than a simple vital contact with an admirable text, that P. Labourdette regretted its excessively apologetic tone, which appeared to him a danger for the whole collection; for accommodations of this sort to the modern spirit entail the difficulty that their very solicitude for excessive up-to-dateness tends to make them out of date too soon.²⁴

This attitude of reserve, at first somewhat hesitant, was increased by the Introduction to the homilies of Origen written by P. de Lubac (Vol. VII of *Sources chrétiennes*). There are many treasures of thought contained in these homilies; but P. de Lubac's plea for the legitimacy and vitality of Origen's figurative exegesis of Scripture seemed injudicious to P. Labourdette. Obviously, here was a matter of opinion open to free discussion. But why should the public expression of P. Labourdette's opinion cause hands to be raised indignantly as if confronting an attack? Thus, little by little, the actual current of theological writing seemed to be focusing on a problem of serious import, namely, the precise nature of the relation of our developed theology to its sources. To P. Labourdette, the universal aspects of this problem appeared more interesting than the multiple scattered details which were bringing it into prominence.²⁵

In 1941, the new collection, *Théologie*, was introduced with its now famous first volume, *Conversion et grâce* by P. Bouillard. This book devoted its entire conclusion to the general problem of the essential permanence of Christian thought in the course of its historical evolution. P. Bouillard's solution appeared to P. Labourdette to be at least obscure and confused, although clear on this point, that the historic position of St. Thomas, since it differed radically from that of modern theology, was false.²⁶

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

²⁶ *Loc. cit.*

The next factor to influence P. Labourdette's growing reserves was the second volume of the same series, *Platonisme et théologie mystique*, by J. Daniélou. In opposition to previous studies of PP. Arnou, S. J. and Festugière, O. P., Daniélou concluded frankly that the literally Platonic formulas of St. Gregory of Nyssa were so thoroughly reconstructed and so profoundly thought-out on a new plane, that they were purely and simply Christian; far from being a drag on his thought or remaining a blemish, they expressed an essentially Christian experience. P. Labourdette, at the time, saw no reason for entering upon a controversy, but merely noted to himself that P. Daniélou in his reasoning diminished greatly the importance of conceptual content and preferred to measure the true value of symbolistic formulas by the authenticity of a spiritual experience. One of the major accusations of the "Réponse" stressed the illegitimacy of uniting for purposes of criticism the two series, *Sources chrétiennes* and *Théologie*. But, asks P. Labourdette, how avoid uniting the general trend of P. Daniélou's work on Gregory of Nyssa with the two volumes of *Sources chrétiennes* for which he wrote the introduction or notes? Does the fact of belonging to different collections deny the right of a critic to consider them together? Yet, P. Labourdette is chided in the "Réponse" for seeking to detect a hidden meaning in innocent translations of the Fathers by interpreting these according to a collection of theological studies.²⁷

Soon after, *Corpus Mysticum* (*Théologie*, Vol. III), by P. de Lubac was published—a book, according to P. Labourdette, so vitalized by the supple genius of its author that it carries lightly an astounding weight of austere erudition. However, despite its many excellent qualities, the historico-theological view presented in this book is that Scholasticism, notwithstanding its many contributions, brought a great detriment to theology through its new methods of dialectic rationalism. P. de Lubac is by no means hostile to St. Thomas, but his sincere admiration is accompanied by very great regrets. He cherishes a dynamic nostalgia for the patristic age and method—a nostalgia which he excels in imparting to others; this is his absolute right. But, P. Labourdette queries, has not he himself an equal right to view the matter otherwise? May he not state his opinion that P. de Lubac's historic graph of the evolution of Christian thought seems in part to be false, because it shuts off the profound significance of the evolution of theology into a strict science? Is it not P. Labourdette's right to see, in this book, *Corpus Mysticum*, and the same author's plea for the figurative exegesis of Origen, a continuation of the same general effort and tendency? P. Labourdette, then, denies simply, as completely false, the accusation of the "Réponse"

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

that in linking these two collections he was moved by a desire to verify some resemblance to a scare-crow of preconceived heresy. Moreover, his intention was not to review these two collections; rather, his intention was to write a chronicle on the problems of the relation of theology to its sources, which involve necessarily the question of the progress of theology and the permanence of its acquisitions.²⁸

P. Labourdette already was sincerely convinced of an objective convergence toward these problems in the writings of PP. de Lubac, Daniélou, and Bouillard. Precisely because of this conviction he chose the method of global presentation. However, the content and tone of his critique, which was almost completely written, would have been quite different, had it not been for the provocative article of P. Daniélou in *Études* of April, 1946, with its scornful depreciation of Scholasticism, its total preoccupation with adaptations to modern tastes, its scarcely veiled assumption that Thomism is incapable of coming to grips with modern problems. Moreover, since in his article P. Daniélou explicitly linked the collection *Théologie*, of which he is one of the foremost contributors, with the collection *Sources chrétiennes*, of which he is co-editor, and stated the aim of the latter collection to be the presentation of certain categories which are foreign to Thomism, but found in the Fathers and needed in modern times, P. Labourdette felt completely justified in utilizing this article as an outstanding confirmation of the objective convergence of ideas, with which he honestly disagreed.²⁹

As a conclusion to his rejoinder, P. Labourdette sets down the following unmistakably clear summary of his position.

1) The two collections, *Sources chrétiennes* and *Théologie* are complementary in a common effort, whose substantial aim is excellent. The complementary character of the two series was stated by P. Daniélou himself in *Études*, April, 1946, p. 10. An extrinsic confirmation may be found in the fact that the two directors of the first series, PP. de Lubac and Daniélou, are the authors of the most significant works of the second series, *Théologie*.³⁰

2) The aim of *Sources chrétiennes*, according to the explicit definition of its co-director, P. Daniélou, is bent toward an orientation which P. Labourdette criticizes. This orientation consists in the desire to publicize precisely those categories of patristic thought which fit in with modern ideas and which Scholasticism has lost. This desire is tantamount to asserting the modern insufficiency of Scholastic theology. P. Labourdette has the right to prefer a revitalization of the Fathers without a concomitant depreciation of Scholasticism. Moreover, he is justified in thinking that the goal set down by

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 123-25.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-28.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

P. Daniélou is characteristic of a spirit and mentality shared by PP. de Lubac, Bouillard, and others.³¹

3) The manner in which P. Daniélou speaks of Thomism, and of Scholasticism in general, classes both as an outmoded period of Christian thought, which explains their incapacity to assimilate new categories, in particular, those of history and subjective experience, as expressed by existentialism.³²

4) P. Daniélou's treatment of the relation between systems of theology and of spirituality tends toward seeking the criterion of theological expression, not in the object proposed, but in the vitality of a religious experience, and thereby bends the classical definition of truth as conformity of mind with object toward another definition, namely, conformity with subjective life. P. Labourdette is glad to know from private correspondence that such are not P. Daniélou's views, but maintains that the formulation of his ideas does not admit of any other objective interpretation.³³

5) P. de Lubac's two books manifest the same generic trend—the first, *Corpus Mysticum*, by representing the introduction of dialectics which gave rise to Scholasticism as an impoverishment of thought; the second (*Introduction aux homélies d'Origène*), by its plea for a return to symbolism. P. Labourdette sees in these two opinions of P. de Lubac not the slightest deviation from orthodoxy, but only ideas open to discussion. However, these two views are identical with those expressed by P. Daniélou with such complacency. P. Labourdette did not intend to attribute to P. de Lubac anything beyond these two contestable opinions; if any reader derived more from his critique, he now wishes to clarify his intention, and even to retract publicly any statement which objectively may have exceeded his intentions.³⁴

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 135; cf. the high eulogies of *Sources chrétiennes* by the noted scholar J. d^e Ghellinck, S. J., *Nouvelle revue théologique*, LXXVIII (1946), 244–46, LXXIX (1947), 767 f.; and in his book *Patristique et moyen âge*, II (Bruxelles: Édition universelle, 1947), pp. 42 f.: “Celle-ci, intitulée *Sources chrétiennes*, a l'avantage d'éditer avec la traduction le texte original et fait une large place aux auteurs spirituels, comme le dit son sous-titre. . . . L'accueil fait aux premiers volumes parus a engagé les directeurs de la collection à ajouter une série latine et une série non-chrétienne, qui comprend des textes religieux non-chrétiens importants pour l'histoire des origines chrétiennes. . . . Les introductions, assez développées, qui réunissent tous les éléments utiles pour une meilleure intelligence de l'oeuvre sont l'objet d'un soin spécial et dépassent les meilleures de la *Bibliothek der Kirchenväter*. Celles sur Origène, par le P. de Lubac, et sur Grégoire de Nysse, par Daniélou et J. Laplace, devront être lues par quiconque veut pénétrer dans la pensée de ces auteurs. L'on ne peut qu'applaudir à l'idée de faire mieux connaître les abondants trésors de vie chrétienne et les richesses culturelles fournies par les écrivains de l'antiquité patristique. Le choix des oeuvres déjà en cours d'impression ou de préparation fait bien augurer de la publication qui, espérons-le, aura à coeur de rester fidèle à ses normes de saine rigueur scientifique.”

³² *Loc. cit.*

³³ *Loc. cit.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

6) P. Bouillard's *Conversion et grâce* presents in its concluding chapter a general theory of the evolution of theology which, despite the author's explicit intentions to the contrary, ends with a denial of the permanent value of theological science and even of dogmatic formulas.³⁵

7) The preface of P. Fessard's book (*Autorité et bien commun*, Vol. V of *Théologie*), wherein he desires to validate an essential theological notion entirely by means of Hegelian dialectic in a manner adapted to moderns, eases St. Thomas out of the picture gracefully. The significance of the book manifestly is that the Christian doctrine on the *bonum commune* will today find no instrument of interpretation except in some other metaphysics than that of St. Thomas. Here again there is no question of heresy; nevertheless, one is quite justified in defending the position of St. Thomas, as M. Jacques Maritain did so admirably in the same issue of the *Revue Thomiste* which contained P. Labourdette's original critique.³⁶

8) P. Daniélou's article in *Études* increased considerably the previous evidence of an objective convergence of these diverse writings toward a new concept of Scholastic theology.³⁷

In the final essay of this same book, P. Nicolas, in a desire to secure clarity and precision, poses the following two questions to his opponents: (1) do you believe that the metaphysics of St. Thomas is true, not merely as an hypothesis or the authentic expression of a mentality, but objectively and in the very nature of things? (2) Do you at least believe that every effort of Christian thinkers should be bent toward comprehending the metaphysics of St. Thomas, in order that the faith may be explained in the most complete and most universal theology?³⁸

P. Nicolas then explains his positive stand in the whole controversy, in a manner at once so obviously sincere and reasonable, that his (and P. Labourdette's) position deserve and should command complete respect, however much his opponents may still disagree. He believes that no single truth, however transcendently superior to our concepts it may be, can be truly expressed by means of fundamentally differing systems of metaphysics. It is perfectly true that in all philosophies utilized by Christian thought there are certain minimal truths held in common. It is perhaps too optimistic to attribute this fact to the perceptions of common sense; the explanation, it seems, should rather be placed in the exigencies of faith itself, which seeks an intellectual world in which it can breathe. But, in any case, this

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

³⁶ *Loc. cit.*; cf. J. Maritain, "La personne et le bien commun," *Revue Thomiste*, XLVI (1946), 237-79.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 146 f.

philosophia perennis, this common minimum of all Christian philosophies does not suffice for a perfect theology. Does not the glory and historical significance of St. Thomas lie in the fact that he marked out the essential lines of Christian metaphysics?³⁹

Frank discussion on this point is necessary. What would be extremely disquieting to P. Nicolas would be an attitude of casting doubts upon even the possibility of Christian metaphysics, and, in consequence, upon the possibility of a scientifically elaborated theology, capable of integrating new knowledge and new points of view. P. Nicolas and his colleagues are convinced that the desertion of the fundamental positions of St. Thomas' metaphysics would lead to the ruin of the faith. Perhaps he may be deceived in imagining that St. Thomas is so absent from the so-called "new theology." Perhaps the attitude of reserve which he senses with regard to St. Thomas derives from a justified persuasion that the modern mind is too impregnated with idealism, existentialism, and evolutionism to be able to understand the language of St. Thomas, even though brought up to date. Perhaps it is thought that, actually, Thomism is too indicative of a mentality closed to science and modern views, to be able to utilize these latter freely. Perhaps it is felt that the imperative need of Christianizing certain currents of thought, all-powerful in their influence on modern men, is too urgent to wait for Thomism to integrate them into its system.⁴⁰

All these are possible, but P. Nicolas personally believes that Thomistic metaphysics could not be true, unless it were convinced of a radical defect in modern thought, which is fundamentally opposed to Thomism. It is painful for men who are profoundly involved in their own age, who are by no means "émigrés," but rather, desirous of an active engagement in their times, to be forced into opposition with modern thought. Perhaps the forcefulness of criticism coming from such men is accentuated by the bitterness of feeling themselves so completely alone in a mental attitude, which they cannot surrender at the price of intellectual and moral integrity, and which alone promises any success in the face of swiftly mounting evidence of the profound evils which are corrupting modern thought.⁴¹

P. Nicolas feels sure that in the future his domestic opponents will not be less liberal to him and his colleagues than they show themselves to the proponents of modern thought. It is much more difficult for him and his colleagues to accept mental attitudes differing from their own, than it is for his Catholic opponents, although these latter are just as uncompromisingly intransigent where the faith is concerned. Nevertheless, P. Nicolas promises

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

⁴⁰ *Loc. cit.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

that he will never confound Thomistic metaphysics with the defined dogmas of the Church or with her ordinary teaching. However, he and his colleagues think that there are other certitudes than those of faith, and that not every position which cannot be condemned is thereby placed above all criticism. The type of intellectualism which, without confusing its system with dogma, knows how to speak out with assurance, to affirm and deny, can be somewhat annoying. P. Nicolas sincerely regrets any hard feelings or irritation which he and his colleagues have caused; they have, however, no unconscionable confidence in themselves; they know how to, and will recognize, mistakes. Strong belief in the truth can communicate excessive assurance in words. Striving, therefore, never to confuse the general aptitude of the mind for truth with personal judgments, he and his colleagues will, nevertheless, never allow themselves to become over-scrupulous in saying what they honestly think. But they beg their readers in the future not to see in their criticisms judicial condemnations or appeals to sacred tribunals, but simply the free and frank expression of personal convictions.⁴²

IV

Père J.-M. Le Blond, S. J., formerly professor at the Gregorian University and at present Rector of the House of Philosophy at Mongré in France, presents valuable ideas for the solution of this controversy.⁴³ The first part of his article insists upon the trite, but too often neglected doctrine, that not only the concept of being, but also the concept of truth is analogous. Absolute, comprehensive, exhaustive, and perfect truth is found in the intellect of God alone. Truth as found in the created intellects of men is by comparison participated, inadequate, partial, and imperfect. The irreformability of human knowledge is, then, only an analogous one, whose validity depends entirely on its ontological participation in the absolute truth of the divine intellect.⁴⁴

The recognition of these fundamental principles obliges us to hold the absolute aspect of true human affirmations. The same principles, however,

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁴³ Le Blond, "L'analogie de la vérité," *Recherches de science religieuse*, XXXIV (1947), 129-41.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-31. To the present writer it seems evident that Le Blond's ultimate explanation of the absolute quality of truth in human knowledge would stem from the theories of Blondel, Rousselot, and Maréchal on the natural dynamism of created intellect, concerning which there can be honest disagreement. The pertinence of this article to the present controversy remains, nevertheless, because it stresses, not the ultimate explanation, but the accepted fact that all human knowledge, despite the absolute quality of its true affirmations, contains truth only analogously and imperfectly.

oblige us equally to maintain the insurmountable chasm between our true judgments, our clearest and most perfectly constructed systems, and the subsistent truth of God. The best human system can never be the best possible, *quo verius cogitari nequit*; it will simply be the best *de facto*, separated always by an abyss from the simple intuition which is the possession of God.⁴⁶

So, in the concrete order, the Thomistic synthesis, firm and solid though it be, consecrated by the usage of the Church, prescribed by her for the formation of her clerics, and singularly open to new perspectives, cannot be compared for an instant with divine truth. Besides Thomism, there are the syntheses of St. Bonaventure, Scotus, Suarez, and others, perhaps less firm and not so well constructed, but nevertheless complementary, rather than opposed, to Thomism.⁴⁶

Here P. Le Blond makes and develops briefly an important point on the necessity of not confusing systematic contradictions with contradictions concerning a fact, e.g., "Caesar was murdered" or "Caesar was not murdered." One of these factual propositions is absolutely true, the other absolutely false. Not so necessarily in philosophical contradictions, which are often more or less reducible to different points of view, even as we observe in ordinary discussions, where one person contradicts another without having made the effort to understand him. For example, Scotus' doctrine on the univocal nature of being is not entirely the doctrine which St. Thomas denies, as M. Gilson has pointed out in his brilliant studies on the point of departure of Scotus' metaphysics, thereby guarding against too facile condemnations based on systematic over-simplification.⁴⁷

Human truth is, on one hand, related to the absolute, and consequently dependent on it; and on the other hand, human truth is related to multiple and changing finite being. The truth of which alone we are capable during this life is, then, a composite truth, resulting from two elements. The first is the orientation of the human intellect toward the absolute, the supposition, more or less implicit, of the existence of this absolute; in other words, the positive element, which gives to truth its proper character and imprints on it the image of subsistent truth. The second element is the concrete situation in space and time, the negative and restricting element.⁴⁸

Because of this second element, the study of human truths is evidently linked to the knowledge of history. There is no repugnance in speaking of the various aspects of truth developed in time. To situate an author in his spatial and temporal environment, to resurrect the precise manner in which

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁴⁷ *Loc. cit.* (note 1).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 134 f.

problems arose concretely, to attempt to penetrate an author's individual and dated psychology—all this is not the phantasy of a mind more inquisitive about human reactions than about objective truth. In other words, an integral philosophical or theological study cannot be reduced to pure logic or be situated outside temporal limits. If theology is to be real and concrete, if it is to avoid dangerous over-simplification, if it is to grasp its own antecedent development in all its complex determining factors, psychology and history must have their place. The distinction between logical and psychological or historical truth must not be pushed to the point of complete divorce. Rather, an adequate and conscientious method ought to unite the *de facto* values of historical truth to the *de jure* values of logical truth.⁴⁹

Undoubtedly referring to the accusations of relativism lodged against P. Bouillard and focused on his statement: "Une théologie qui ne serait pas actuelle serait une théologie fausse" (p. 219), P. Le Blond goes on to say unequivocally that actuality (*l'actualité*) is a contributing element in the definition of truth. This, obviously, must not be understood in the existentialist sense, that it is the unique or decisive element, or that, on the one hand it is enough to condemn a system to call it "dépassé," and on the other hand, to approve a system it is enough to call it "actuel." On the contrary, actuality is only the restrictive and negative condition in all human truths. But, entirely negative and limiting though it be, it is the real conditioning factor of these truths, and unless one takes it into account, an integral knowledge of these truths is impossible.⁵⁰

P. Le Blond now concretizes his views on the function of actuality. Each age, each school of thought, each individual has a singular and original way of tending toward the absolute and of constructing its image—tendencies and images which are convergent and analogous, but differentiated by their point of departure. This is true of St. Thomas and his system. He existed in an "actuality," which must be reconstructed, if one wishes to grasp his thought fully. The relatively retarded state of our knowledge of St. Thomas is perhaps best explained by that clumsy, although not excessive veneration, whereby attempts have been made to set him above all time.⁵¹

During the past twenty years, great progress has been made in the exact and objective knowledge of the Thomism of St. Thomas himself, as opposed to Thomism *ad mentem Sancti Thomae*. These studies, carried out by such eminent scholars as Gilson, Théry, Mandonnet, Van Steenberghe, Grabmann and Cardinal Ehrle, show how much St. Thomas, urged on by his preoccupation for the welfare of souls and his solicitude for truth, was possessed

⁴⁹ *Loc. cit.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁵¹ Cf. J. de Guibert, *Les doublets de saint Thomas d'Aquin*, 1926, p. 10.

with a sound taste for modern methods and ideas. Faced with the excessively defiant conservatism of thirteenth-century Augustinianism, he did not hesitate to utilize a philosophy as compromised and compromising as Aristotelianism. He kept himself *au courant* with regard to all the trends of his time. The *Summa contra Gentiles* alone shows with what care and sympathy he studied even the Arabian philosophers. On the basis of this innovating attitude of St. Thomas, it would obviously be rash to renew every ten or fifteen years an effort of modernization in theology. On the other hand, it would be equally rash and erroneous to condemn this spirit of St. Thomas, in order to cling only to the letter of his system. The latter course would be simultaneously an error concerning the nature of human truth and a substantial infidelity to Thomism itself.⁵²

Faced with the inevitable analogy of human truths, the human mind will perhaps always be tempted to separate the invariable element which these truths contain, and thereby pretend to constitute a complete system of truth. But this would be to forget the concrete condition of human nature and to misunderstand radically the elementary law of analogy. Our human knowledge can aptly be called a bronze coin of real but inferior value. During this life, it would be chimerical to attempt to exchange it for the gold piece of divine subsistent truth. In the pretention of establishing an objective *corpus* of doctrine which would reunite in itself the eternal acquisitions of all philosophies, one can, indeed, detect a trace of the lofty vocation of human mind to knowledge without shadow. But it can also be questioned whether this pretention, manifesting as it does a lack of patience and submission to our human condition, does not disclose, even among many excellent Christians, an unconscious presumption and the hidden influence of modern rationalism. It was this same rationalism which was the source of Descartes' mathematical reveries and of the pantheism of Spinoza. Against such dangers, good-will and a narrowly literal fidelity to certain texts of St. Thomas are not enough, if his spirit is neglected.⁵³

These elementary, but necessary reflections are now utilized by P. Le Blond to show the true meaning of the classic definition of truth as a conformity between mind and object. There can be no question of a total adequation, but only of a certain assimilation which always leaves a residue of ignorance. One may object that undoubtedly the Thomistic theory of a concept seems to imply, in the doctrine of abstraction, a true intuition of essence, disengaged from the material conditions which limit the intelligibility of the object. But with regard to his theory of abstraction, we must keep in mind St. Thomas' manifest modesty concerning the *de facto* exercise of

⁵² Le Blond, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

human knowledge. Against Augustinianism, he insisted on the imperfection and analogous nature of our knowledge of God, the powerlessness of human knowledge to grasp the spiritual order except under heterogeneous sensible symbols; against Cartesian "angelism," St. Thomas does not hesitate to say that, if *de jure* our mind through abstraction attains essences and enjoys a sort of intuition of them, nevertheless, *de facto*, the substantial specific differences of beings remain unknown to us.⁵⁴ From this actual and natural defect in our knowledge of substantial specific differences is derived the precarious and reformable character of many of our definitions and also their link, which is almost never broken, with metaphors or with extrinsic procedures of classification. In this loyal submission to the concrete condition of our human nature, St. Thomas proved himself a philosopher, both profound and endowed with common sense.⁵⁴

The practical neglect of the analogical nature of human knowledge would produce, P. Le Blond is certain, a definitive rupture with modern thought and, thereby the opposition between the thought of theological seminaries and the rest of men would become encrusted, to the detriment of an effective apostolate. This neglect, therefore, would be opposed to the deepest aspirations of the Church, which seeks in her world-wide mission to adapt herself not only to the language, but also to the mentality of widely divergent peoples. The Church does not fear seeing her theology translated, not only into foreign idioms, but also into foreign concepts. She would be prepared to receive our separated brethren of the eastern Church, of England and America, without wishing to impose on them a terminology and system of thought which would be repulsive. She is not less eager to adapt herself to changes in time than to distances in space.⁵⁵

In philosophy, the narrowness involved in the practical neglect of analogy would disclose a fatal error. It would denote an unmindfulness of the transcendence of divine truth and of the real nature of human knowledge; it would be a sign of a concealed, but very real victory of Cartesian rationalism and of Spinoza's doctrine of being as univocal. That this narrowness is an actual influence in our day is evidenced by the confusion which certain writers would like to establish between the absolute and univocal, and between the relative and analogous. Herein lies a formidable danger for Christian philosophy—a danger completely opposed to the spirit of St. Thomas. Truth has an absolute character, but it is not univocal. Our human truths are not purely relative, but they are only analogous to divine truth.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 139 f.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 140 f.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

V

Mgr. Bruno de Solages enters this controversy again with an article against P. Garrigou-Lagrange's bold charges of unorthodox tendencies in the writings of P. de Lubac, Teilhard de Chardin, Daniélou, Bouillard, Fessard, and M. Blondel.⁵⁷

The introductory part of this article calls attention to elementary laws of literary and historical criticism, which every critic is obliged to observe in citing a text and interpreting the thought of an author, precisely because these laws are nothing more than the simple rules of honesty. According to Mgr. de Solages, P. Garrigou-Lagrange, who continually uses Thomism as a club to crush his opponents, has violated outrageously the elementary code of honesty. However much he regrets the necessity of undertaking a public demonstration of this accusation, Mgr. de Solages feels a strict obligation to do so, rather than to permit some of the foremost leaders of Catholic thought in France to be vilified by P. Garrigou-Lagrange.⁵⁸

As the first proof of his serious charge, Mgr. de Solages puts down the utilization of anonymous manuscripts containing false doctrine on the real presence, and a scarcely veiled insinuation, entirely false, that P. Teilhard de Chardin was the author. Even more unconventional, to say the least, is P. Garrigou-Lagrange's use of unpublished manuscripts, actually written by P. Teilhard de Chardin, but disseminated imprudently without his consent. Of this procedure, Mgr. de Solages judges: "In a public controversy, honest people do not make use of texts not meant for publication, nor, *a fortiori*, of texts not known to be authentic."⁵⁹

Next, Mgr. de Solages accuses P. Garrigou-Lagrange of having arbitrarily built up an artificial group of representatives of the so-called "new theology."

⁵⁷ De Solages, "Pour l'honneur de théologie," *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique*, XLVIII (1947), 65-84; cf. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, "La nouvelle théologie, où va-t-elle?", *Angelicum*, XXIII (1946), 126-45, and the comments of the present writer in *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES*, VIII (1947), 477-79.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 66: "Or l'article dont je parle viole outrageusement ces règles élémentaires. . . Il parle (p. 135) d'une stricte obligation de conscience pour les théologiens traditionnels de répondre 'aux erreurs qui circulent,' autrement—écrit-il—ils manquent gravement à leur devoir, et ils devront en rendre compte devant Dieu. Le P. Garrigou-Lagrange croit-il qu'un théologien qui accuse ses collègues d'hérésie, sans preuves suffisantes, ne manque pas gravement à son devoir et n'aura pas aussi à en rendre compte devant Dieu? . . . je ne puis laisser vilipender ainsi à la face du monde quelques-uns des représentants les plus éminents de la pensée catholique française."

⁵⁹ *Loc. cit.* ". . . on n'utilise pas—entre honnêtes gens—dans une controverse publique, des textes qui ne sont pas du domaine public, à plus forte raison des textes dont on ne sait pas s'ils sont authentiques."

Pope Pius XII, it is true, did warn against the dangers of a "new theology," but did not name its representatives. P. Garrigou-Lagrange, however, feels himself authorized to name as adherents of a "new theology," which tends directly to heresy, the following: PP. Bouillard, de Lubac, Fessard, Teilhard de Chardin, and M. Maurice Blondel. But of these, only the first two are theologians; the third is a philosopher and specialist on the thought of Hegel; the fourth is a palaeontologist and scientist of world renown; the fifth is essentially a metaphysician. It is this strange assemblage, which according to P. Garrigou-Lagrange is responsible for the "new theology," whose fundamental concept is the Blondelian notion of truth. Only a total failure to grasp the deepest inspiration of their thought could account for the attempt to link together viewpoints so radically different as, for example, those of M. Blondel and P. Teilhard. There is no less distance between "Teilhardism" and "Blondelism" than there was between the Aristotelianism and Platonism which St. Thomas so sedulously distinguished. Does P. Garrigou-Lagrange in this matter show himself a follower of St. Thomas?⁶⁰

When it comes to a question of proving his accusations by precise texts, the defective method of P. Garrigou-Lagrange becomes serious. He is satisfied to cite a few sentences, often only half a sentence, from the authors whom he attacks; not only this, but his citations are inexact, detached from their context, and interpreted absurdly. Here again, he is shown to be a poor pupil of St. Thomas, whose scrupulosity in exact citation is proverbial.⁶¹

P. Garrigou-Lagrange accused P. de Lubac, in his book *Surnaturel* of showing a complete disinterest in the major pronouncements of St. Thomas, i.e., in the twenty-four theses approved by the Sacred Congregation of Studies in 1916.⁶² This charge is absurdly based on P. de Lubac's conclusion, arrived at only after thirty pages of detailed and exhaustive exegesis, that St. Thomas did not distinguish, as later Thomists did and do, between God the author of the natural and God the author of the supernatural. There is no effort made by P. Garrigou-Lagrange to discuss P. de Lubac's

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 68 f.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 69: "Il se contente de citer quelques phrases, un morceau de phrase souvent, de chacun des auteurs qu'il attaque. Ceci est déjà de mauvaise méthode quand on veut juger de la pensée d'un auteur. Mais ce n'est rien encore. Ses citations sont inexactes, détachées de tout contexte et interprétées à contre-sens."

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 70 f.: "Ces 24 thèses n'ont d'ailleurs pas été publiées en 1916, comme le dit le P. Garrigou-Lagrange, mais le 27 juillet 1914 (A. A. S., 1914, pp. 383-386); et ce qui a paru en 1916 (A. A. S., 1916, pp. 156-7), le 7 mars, c'est le texte de *dubia* soumis à la S. Congrégation des Études, dont le deuxième, '*utrum imponi debeant scholis catholicis tenendae?*' amène une réponse: '*proponantur veluti tutae normae directivae*', dont le P. Garrigou-Lagrange oublie un peu trop l'exacte portée."

interpretation of many texts; no attempt even to understand the precise problem which P. de Lubac was considering. The latter's laboriously worked-out interpretation is simply confronted with the citation of four texts of St. Thomas, without any comment. The charge, therefore, that P. de Lubac shows a total disinterest in the twenty-four theses is totally without proof or foundation, since it is based on a matter which has nothing whatsoever to do with the twenty-four theses.⁶³

In the next section of his article, Mgr. de Solages shows even more forcefully the defectiveness of the method which he is attacking. In an italicized quotation from an unnamed author, P. Garrigou-Lagrange purports to give the definition of the so-called "new theology" as follows: "La théologie n'est autre qu'une spiritualité ou expérience religieuse qui a trouvé son expression intellectuelle." This citation is followed by a second quotation, whose author is not named, but whose significance is linked by P. Garrigou-Lagrange to the first, in the following way:

Et alors que penser d'assertions comme celle-ci: 'Si la théologie nous peut aider à comprendre la spiritualité, la spiritualité à son tour fera, dans bien des cas, éclater nos cadres théologiques et nous obligera à concevoir divers types de théologie. . . . A chaque grande spiritualité a correspondu une grande théologie.' Cela veut-il dire que deux théologies peuvent être vraies, même si elles s'opposent *contradictoirement* sur leur thèses capitales? On répondra non, si l'on maintient la définition traditionnelle de la vérité. On dira oui, si l'on adopte la nouvelle définition du vrai conçu non pas par rapport à l'être et à ses lois immuables, mais par rapport à différentes expériences religieuses. Cela nous rapproche singulièrement du modernisme.⁶⁴

Mgr. de Solages proves that this second citation, quite innocent and above reproach in its context, is taken from a book-review written by P. Daniélou—a fact which needs no proof to any one who has had the chance to follow this controversy closely.⁶⁵ But who is the author of the first citation, italicized by P. Garrigou-Lagrange, because he thinks it contains the definition and essential error of the so-called "new theology"? Merely because of its collocation, the reader would very likely be tempted to attribute it to the author of the second citation. But Mgr. de Solages is able to state with certainty that this definition is not to be found in the writings of P. Daniélou or of any of the other authors whom P. Garrigou-Lagrange has named as the representatives of the so-called "new theology." Rather, it bears a curious resemblance to a definition almost identical, although expressed in

⁶³ *Loc. cit.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 71 f.

⁶⁵ For P. Daniélou's review of M. Gilson, *Théologie et histoire de la spiritualité*, see *Revue du moyen-âge latin*, I (1945), 65.

slightly different words, in a book of Père M.-D. Chenu, O. P., as follows: "Une théologie digne de ce nom, c'est une spiritualité qui a trouvé des instruments rationnels adéquates à son expérience religieuse."⁶⁶

It would have been much more chivalrous of P. Garrigou-Lagrange, Mgr. de Solages feels, not to have involved P. Chenu in this controversy, because the book, from which the citation above was taken, has been put on the Index of forbidden books—a fact, however, which by no means implies that every statement in it merits a suspicion of modernism. Mgr. de Solages, although defending a group of Jesuits from an unjustified attack, is in no way attacking the Dominican order, as he now sets out to prove, by showing that the suspicions tacitly cast upon P. Chenu by his confrère, P. Garrigou-Lagrange, are equally unjustified. If the citation from P. Chenu is replaced in its context, it will readily be seen that he is not speaking of theological science, but rather of different theological systems. P. Garrigou-Lagrange's free quotation of P. Chenu begins: "*La théologie . . .*"; P. Chenu's own statement reads: "*Une théologie . . .*", thereby emphasizing that there are several theological systems, with which the immediate context of this statement deals, namely the Augustinianism of St. Bonaventure, Scotism, Molinism, and Thomism. The precise point of P. Chenu's thought in this passage is to offer an explanation of variations in theological systems by appealing to different concepts of spirituality. But, as the context makes strikingly clear, he is considering only Christian forms of spirituality and orthodox systems of theology. These systems are different, it is true, but not in contradiction with each other, at least with regard to their principal theses; between the systems of St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas there are many differences, such as, for example, their proofs of the existence of God. Such differences by no means constitute a contradiction in principal theses; for in this matter the principal thesis of each is that God exists and that His existence can be proved. What justice then is there in P. Garrigou-Lagrange's conclusion: "All this is singularly in harmony with modernism"? Mgr. de Solages answers this question by once again reminding P. Garrigou-Lagrange of the honesty of St. Thomas.⁶⁷

Mgr. de Solages now comes to the defense of P. Bouillard. On the basis

⁶⁶ De Solages, *loc. cit.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 71-74: "Il eût sans doute été plus chevaleresque de la part du P. Garrigou-Lagrange de ne pas mêler le Père Chenu à cette affaire. Le livre a été mis à l'Index; mais cela n'implique pas que toutes ses affirmations méritent d'être suspectées de modernisme, ni donne le droit de calomnier son auteur en lui faisant dire ce qu'il ne dit pas . . . de quel droit alors conclure comme le fait le P. Garrigou-Lagrange: 'Cela nous rapproche singulièrement du modernisme?'; j'en appelle, mon Révérend Père, à l'honnêteté de saint Thomas d'Aquin!" (pp. 73 f.).

of the latter's now famous sentence: "Une théologie qui ne serait pas actuelle, serait une théologie fausse," P. Garrigou-Lagrange declared that any reader, having learned in the pages of P. Bouillard preceding and following the above citation that the theology of St. Thomas in several important parts is no longer "actuelle," cannot escape concluding: "therefore, the theology of St. Thomas, since it is no longer 'actuelle,' is a false theology." No, replies Mgr. de Solage; P. Garrigou-Lagrange would force the reader to sin against the laws of dialectics; in strict formal logic, the reader could only conclude that the theology of St. Thomas is false *in several important parts*. But even this conclusion would show a complete misapprehension of P. Bouillard's meaning. He by no means asserts the monstrosity that a theology, which ever was true, could become a false theology. Rather, as the context shows, P. Bouillard is stating that a theology would become false subjectively, that is to say, it would be interpreted falsely by a mind which no longer assigns the originally intended meaning to terms. Hence the conclusion that the theology of St. Thomas, even in parts no longer up-to-date, is actually a false theology, is unjustified. The only legitimate conclusion is that the theology of St. Thomas will be false for modern minds which no longer grasp the meaning of certain Aristotelian formulas and make no effort in the historical exegesis necessary to replace these formulas in their proper perspective.⁶⁸

Finally, Mgr. de Solages defends vigorously M. Blondel, whose philosophy of action and concept of truth P. Garrigou-Lagrange finds at the root of P. Bouillard's views and of the so-called "new theology." The basic charge against M. Blondel is that he substitutes the philosophy of action for the philosophy of being, that he turns up his nose (*fait fi*) at all metaphysics and all ontology. Mgr. de Solages answers this wholesale condemnation with the following quotation from M. Blondel: "L'être est . . . le principe,

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-77: "Je sais bien que le P. Garrigou-Lagrange proteste et prétend qu'ici 'on se paie de mots (en insistant d'abord sur *une autre* et ensuite sur *équivalente*)' (p. 129), d'autant, ajoute-t-il, 'qu'il ne s'agit pas seulement d'équivalence verbale, puisque c'est une *autre notion*.' Mais n'est-ce justement le propre de la notion analogique (car il s'agit bien d'équivalences verbales) d'avoir comme une double face: l'une par où elle ressemble à la réalité dont elle permet la connaissance (sans quoi elle serait équivoque), et l'autre par laquelle elle en diffère (sans quoi elle serait univoque). Je ne prétends pas d'ailleurs que toutes les notions évoluent ainsi de fait, ni que toutes les philosophies soient analogues, l'une à l'autre, mais qu'il est parfaitement admissible—grâce à la conception thomiste de l'analogie—de concevoir que, dans des cas donnés d'évolution des notions et des conceptions philosophiques, l'on puisse trouver des notions analogues pour exprimer les mêmes réalités surnaturelles, vu que la connaissance que nous en avons est essentiellement analogique."

le centre, le but de toute pensée et de tout agir."⁶⁹ He concludes the defense of M. Blondel by noting the significant praise addressed by Pius XII to the latter on the occasion of his latest book,⁷⁰ despite the fact that, at least to P. Garrigou-Lagrange, M. Blondel remains a dangerous modernist.⁷¹

In a caustic summary of his defense of the several authors mentioned, Mgr. de Solages writes:

Are texts an exception to P. Garrigou-Lagrange's definition of truth: 'the conformity of judgment to the extra-mental real and to its immutable laws'? In the case of one who recalls incessantly to others, and indeed on almost every page of his article, the prerogatives of objective truth, what irony to see this perpetual subjectivism in the interpretation of texts. Nevertheless, texts have their extra-mental reality and their own immutable laws of interpretation, of which the fundamental one is that the meaning of a text is not independent of its context. My professor, the late R. P. Lagrange, O. P., loved to repeat that one should read a text seven times before criticising it. A theologian who is proved to be incapable of reading texts correctly loses all right to pass judgment on them; by the same token, he is utterly disqualified as a judge of their orthodoxy.⁷²

Then, in three incisive pages, Mgr. de Solages offers his own constructive program. Christian theology, in the face of generalized evolution which is at the center of modern thought, is confronted with the problem of how to maintain transcendent values and immutable truths. It is true that we have no St. Thomas to solve this immense problem, which is, however, too complex for one man to handle. But we have a team of learned scientists, philosophers, and theologians, who are striving to save transcendence in the very midst of evolution, and, even better, to demonstrate that evolution postulates transcendent values. Of P. Teilhard de Chardin, whom he describes as "that great scientist of world repute, that great thinker, and I add—since he is one who would never utilize private papers in a public controversy—that fine gentleman . . .," Mgr. de Solages states that the profound Christian significance of his works lies in this that, more than any other, he has succeeded in showing that evolution must be theological, that it could only be explained by a spiritual order, that it demands at its origin, because it demands for its goal, a transcendent God.⁷³

⁶⁹ M. Blondel, *Pensée*, II, p. 131.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Documentation catholique*, July 8, 1945, col. 498 f.

⁷¹ De Solages, *op. cit.*, p. 79: "Le Pape Pie XII a beau lui avoir fait écrire par S. Exc. Mgr. Montini, à l'occasion de son dernier ouvrage, une lettre qui contient des éloges significatifs; il n'en reste pas moins un dangereux moderniste."

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 80: "Un théologien qui s'avère incapable d'interpréter correctement les textes perd tout droit à porter un jugement sur eux. Par la même, comme juge de leur orthodoxie, il se disqualifie."

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-83.

Evolution has been brought into prominence, not only by palaeontology, but also by the philosophy of history. Ever more profound historical research is continually setting forth problems of Christian thought, of dogma and, especially of theology. There is a method of presenting the results of these studies which tends to reveal only radical contradictions between theological and even dogmatic positions in various eras of Christianity. To show, on the contrary, how the same faith perdures throughout history, it is not sufficient to know St. Thomas and to shut oneself off from any other knowledge—a method, moreover, which can only produce a warped comprehension of St. Thomas, who was not born in some absolute beginning; rather, it is necessary to have a profound knowledge also of Holy Scripture, of the mediaeval theologians, and of modern thought. When there is a theologian of such endowments as P. de Lubac, capable of moving with mastery through so many complex fields of knowledge, he will not be deflected from his fertile labors by inconsiderate attacks. Because studies like his take into account the obvious partial relativisms of Christian thought whose expression is always dependent on a language, a culture, and on different stages in the development of philosophy, these precise studies are more capable than any others of saving, in an environment of historical evolution, the transcendence of Christian revelation. But, Mgr. de Solages asks, what role is P. Garrigou-Lagrange assuming in this complex undertaking, which, in accord with the historic example of St. Thomas facing courageously the vital problems of the thirteenth century, has for its goal the saving of transcendence in evolution? As the final blow in perhaps the most severe criticism of an internationally known theologian during our era, Mgr. de Solages answers: "Le P. Garrigou-Lagrange, il est—et je le regrette—dans le camp de ceux qui firent condamner saint Thomas."⁷⁴

VI

As one could easily predict, P. Garrigou-Lagrange was by no means rendered speechless by the caustic comments of Mgr. de Solages.⁷⁵ However, the tone of this article is quite different from the previous one. It is far more restrained, much more carefully documented, and much more indicative of the ability of one who has spent, without sparing himself, his life and his talents in scholarship and has contributed distinguished services to theology.

In a very few pages of dense, but clear exposition, P. Garrigou-Lagrange shows why he disagrees with the fundamental notions of M. Blondel's phi-

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁷⁵ R. Garrigou-Lagrange, "Vérité et immutabilité du dogme," *Angelicum*, XXIV (1947), 124-39.

losophy, although he recognizes the fact that the latter's personal faith is beyond reproach, that his more recent writings reveal a manifest intention of readjustment, and that all of his works contain a lofty elevation of thought, which has accomplished a great deal of good.⁷⁶ This fundamental disagreement is centered in M. Blondel's definition of truth: "A l'abstraite et chimérique *adaequatio speculativa rei et intellectus*, se substitue la recherche méthodique de droit, l'*adaequatio realis mentis et vitae*."⁷⁷

Whether or not one agrees with the full extent of P. Garrigou-Lagrange's reserves, it is the opinion of the present writer that the profound and extremely personal philosophy of M. Blondel, precisely because of its widespread influence on modern theological thought, requires a great deal more scientific testing and impartial criticism, before a truly definitive estimate of its permanent value can be made. Except for his exaggerated apologists who will brook no opposition, and thereby, it would seem, manifest a trace of that partiality which they deplore so much in narrow followers of "systems," most impartial students of M. Blondel express some reserves. For example, Père A.-D. Sertillanges, whose broadness of view and genuine sympathy for M. Blondel's life-long efforts are so well known, offers some criticisms resembling those of P. Garrigou-Lagrange.⁷⁸ Similarly, Aubert has recently pointed out certain dangers in the adaptation of M. Blondel's philosophy to the theology of the act of faith.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-31.

⁷⁷ M. Blondel, *Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, 15 juin, 1906, p. 255.

⁷⁸ A.-D. Sertillanges, *Le Christianisme et les philosophes* (Paris: Aubier, 1941), p. 373: "M. Blondel s'étonne de ce qu'on dise à la fois que les natures intelligibles sont dans l'esprit et dans la chose une même réalité, et que cependant la connaissance métaphysique soit reconnue incurablement indigente. Il n'y aurait là contradiction que si les natures intelligibles dont on parle, pour autant qu'elles sont dans l'esprit, étaient censées s'égaliser à l'être même. Certains critiques, comme le P. Rousselot, ont interprété ainsi le thomisme. Mais c'est une méprise presque enfantine, du fait qu'elle prête un enfantillage à des penseurs qui n'étaient pas des enfants. La nature intelligible en question est un abstrait, et elle n'en représente pas moins fidèlement, du concret, *ce qui en est connu* par cette voie, se confondant avec lui *sous ce rapport*, qui laisse place à la recherche d'autres rapports, dans cette *venatio* du *quod quid est* dont parle fréquemment l'auteur de la Somme. Nous maintenons qu'il n'y a de science que du général, et le terme de la connaissance n'en est moins le concret. C'est pourquoi s. Thomas veut qu'on spéculé au contact du concret, avec tous les moyens du concret, mais sans que jamais on arrive à un autre résultat que de dire: cet être est ceci, et cela, et autre chose encore, notations toujours abstractives, toujours 'notionelles,' qu'un *sentiment* pourra synthétiser à sa manière, qu'une *contemplation unitive* pourra s'approprier sans *discours*, mais d'une façon originale et intransmissible autrement que par suggestions, et ce n'est pas là proprement de la science."

⁷⁹ R. Aubert, *Le problème de l'acte de foi* (Louvain: E. Warny, 1945), pp. 293 f: "Il est indispensable pourtant de terminer par une critique. En considérant la foi comme une

In answering Mgr. de Solages' interpretation of P. Bouillard's statement: "Une théologie qui ne serait pas actuelle, serait une théologie fausse," P. Garrigou-Lagrange replies that, if P. Bouillard intended only to say that a theology, whose terms are no longer understood in their original meaning by moderns would be falsely interpreted by them, he has expressed himself very poorly. P. Garrigou-Lagrange then persists in urging his original charges that P. Bouillard holds truth to be essentially relative, that the theology of St. Thomas is now false, that the conciliar definition of Trent concerning the formal cause of justification is no longer true.⁸⁰ The sincere inability of such a solid theologian as P. Charles Boyer to see valid grounds for such an interpretation and the disavowals of any such intention by P. Bouillard himself evidently impress P. Garrigou-Lagrange not at all.

To the present writer it seems that an impartial reading of the entire context of the disputed passages shows that P. Garrigou-Lagrange's interpretation is incorrect. P. Bouillard by no means holds that all human notions are subject to change; in the context of the historical problems with which his book deals, he is speaking only of technical theological terms, which historically have either undergone a change in meaning, or have been changed by theologians in different ages to express and interpret more completely divine truth. With regard to conciliar definitions, no one can deny that the full truth of the essential nature of Christian justification is expressed in Scripture in terms other than that of "formal cause"; it does not then seem unreasonable to affirm that, for modern minds untrained in Scholasticism, the term "form," which in common usage implies shape or figure, does not convey the precise notions either of St. Thomas or of the Tridentine

vie dont on doit expérimenter la vérité en la vivant, M. Blondel est amené à laisser dans l'ombre un élément que les théologiens considèrent à juste titre comme essentiel; la foi est une connaissance par témoignage *propter auctoritatem Dei revelantis*. . . Sans doute aussi, M. Blondel n'avait pas à donner un traité de la foi en forme et il pouvait donc n'insister que sur ce qui importait au dessein qu'il s'était tracé. Il n'en était pas moins dangereux de critiquer comme il le fait la démonstration historique de la révélation (comment alors distinguer la vraie foi parmi les diverses religions positives?); d'insister sur la nécessité d'une expérimentation, sans en préciser exactement l'objet; de faire usage de certaines expressions qui semblent indiquer que les besoins constatés en nous portent, non seulement sur l'idée d'une révélation surnaturelle en général, mais sur le contenu des différents dogmes, et nous orienter vers une découverte subjective de ceux-ci indépendamment de la révélation extérieure. Le développement ultérieur de la doctrine blondélienne chez des disciples imprudents allait révéler les déviations auxquelles pouvait donner lieu l'orientation nouvelle, si justifiée qu'elle soit en son principe." These strictures of Aubert are accompanied with careful and scholarly documentation from the works of Blondel.

⁸⁰ Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-33.

definition concerning the formal cause of justification. It is quite obvious P. Bouillard never held and never intended to express the ideas imputed to him. To continue the debate over the objective meaning of his expressions would be a waste of time.

P. Garrigou-Lagrange does not even attempt to answer adequately the charge of having unjustifiably accused P. de Lubac of a total disinterest in the twenty-four theses in a matter totally unconnected with them. He does answer the questioning of his honesty in utilizing anonymous and private manuscripts as follows: "S'il y a manque de probité, est-il le fait de celui qui dénonce un scandale, ou le fait de celui qui provoque?"⁸¹ With regard to Mgr. de Solages' views on evolution and transcendence, P. Garrigou-Lagrange is more assured; it is of importance, he says, to distinguish the domain of scientific hypotheses, i.e., of sensible appearances, from the domain of being and metaphysics, which demand a special intervention of God for the production of the various grades of life and *a fortiori* for the production of the life of grace; it is impossible to admit that the Incarnation and redemption are mere phases of general evolution; moreover, if evolution were to be explained in the sense of Hegelian metaphysics, condemned by the Vatican Council (*DB* 1804), this would be a strict heresy, even more, a complete apostasy, since the absolute and pantheistic evolution of Hegel would ruin every dogma.⁸²

P. Garrigou-Lagrange concludes this article with a plea for the classic definition of truth rather than the definition of M. Blondel. The latter is pragmatic, would deal a mortal blow to intelligence, would have us forget that the traditional definition is supposed by all the Councils and is required for the immutability of dogma. One cannot be too mindful of His Holiness' warning about the "new theology"; our faith would cease to be vital and strong, if it were to lose its firm and unyielding adherence to "the words that will never pass away" and that are expressed in human notions sufficiently stable to remain unchangeably true forever.⁸³

In a final footnote, citing a passage written by M. Blondel in 1946, P. Garrigou-Lagrange finds the ideas expressed therein at variance with the doctrine of the Church, especially as contained in the Vatican Council and in the condemnations of Frohschammer.⁸⁴

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

⁸⁴ *Loc. cit.* "Même dans *La Philosophie et l'esprit chrétien*, publié par M. Blondel en 1946, on trouve encore à côté de belles pages, des assertions comme celles-ci (t. II, p. 261): 'On s'aperçoit davantage que l'idée d'étayer *l'obsequium rationabile fidei* sur des arguments abstraits, sur une *fixité de notions*, sans relations plastiques avec l'évolution normale des méthodes de pensée et des mentalités toujours en mouvement, risque de conduire à une

VII

Since this entire controversy has tended to focus itself on the problem of the exact position which Scholasticism in general, and Thomism in particular, should occupy in a perfectly integrated and living theology, the following views of P. Yves M.-J. Congar, O. P., despite a few remarks which may seem unwarranted or excessive, form a fine summary of the causes and main issues of this controversy, and open up wide perspectives for the future of theology:

Since criticism of Scholasticism, to the profit of a symbolistic theology based on the Fathers, has appeared to many to be contained in a certain number of recent publications, and even to constitute the formal aim of these publications, I would like to express briefly my opinion. I feel sure that I shall not run counter to the real opinion of P. de Lubac. Incontestably, this criticism of Scholasticism is registered in the movement of a return to the sources of faith—one of the most vital theological efforts of our age. It was normal that one of the first values to be recovered, after the theology of the Counter-Reformation, would be the importance of symbol, whose loss is so perceptible in what has been called 'baroque' theology and culture. In this return beyond 'baroque' theology, some would willingly call a halt at Scholasticism, at least the Scholasticism of Saint Thomas and Saint Bonaventure. Others wish to go beyond Saint Thomas, even to the non-dialectical, but contemplative and sacramental system of the undivided Church—a Church in which oriental ferments and points of view were still active. I feel myself in profound and active sympathy with this movement, for its positive, but not for its negative, tendency. At the beginning of his essay on 'The Mission of

conception statique et close d'une formalisme qui a pu être adapté à un moment de l'histoire ou à une *idée toute extrinséciste d'une religion imposée une fois pour toutes*, par des témoignages marqués de la date et des habitudes d'esprit de leur temps, abstraction faite des problèmes à la fois permanents et mouvants et de l'enracinement vital des vérités à croire et des obligations à observer dans les profondeurs des âmes humaines et des éléments constructifs de la conscience morale et métaphysique . . . [Here P. Garrigou-Lagrange breaks in, to ask: "Mais qui donc, dirons-nous, a fait une *telle abstraction*? Ce ne sont pas les théologiens traditionnels." He then continues with the text of M. Blondel.] Rien n'est donc plus contraire à la vivante idée du christianisme que cette double thèse dont certains avaient voulu faire une condition *sine qua non* d'une orthodoxie intégriste: un sommaire *littéralement fixé* en fonction d'une terminologie et d'une *doctrine construite avec des notions* comme matériaux, et *une superposition* pure et simple de l'ordre surnaturel à une philosophie se suffisante, fermée sur elle-même sans soupirail, même obscur, vers une clarté plus haute et une vie plus abondante." P. Garrigou-Lagrange then contrasts the phrases italicized by himself with the doctrine of the Church as contained in *DB* in the following numbers, 1637, 1787, 2020 ff., 1786, 1808, 1622 ff., 1627, 1638 f., 1651, 1790, 1793, 1812, 1637, 1656, 1705, 1800, 1785, 1616 f., 1642 ff., 1796, 1671, 1673, 1795, 2106; he then concludes: "Toutes ces propositions sont immuablement vraies et ne peuvent l'être que si les notions qu'elles unissent par le verbe 'être' sont parfaitement stables, elles aussi."

Saint Benedict,' Newman shows that Christian doctrine has passed through three periods: antiquity, the middle ages and modern times. To each, he says, belongs a great religious order and the remarkable personality of its founder; Saint Benedict with his poetic character, Saint Dominic with his scientific bent, and Saint Ignatius with his practical gifts of organization. These three orders reproduce the successive stages which man traverses in his development; as a child he lives especially by his imagination, the faculty of poetry; as an adult, he develops logic and reasoning power; in full manhood, these are crowned by experience. There is without doubt in this view of Newman the intuition of a great truth, which can spontaneously be transferred to the well known historical successions of a contemplative and symbolic theology, a scientific and Scholastic theology, and finally, a positive and spiritual theology. But we must never forget what Newman adds: 'The Catholic Church never loses what she has once possessed. . . . Instead of passing completely from one stage of life to another, she bears her youth and maturity into her old age. She has not exchanged her possessions, but rather has them all accumulated, and thus is able always to draw forth from her treasure-store *nova et vetera*. The birth of Dominic did not mean for her the passing of Benedict, and she possesses them both completely in becoming the mother of Ignatius.' Our theological effort, then, ought to tend incessantly toward realizing an integration. We must lose nothing of the vigor, the great and simple depth of contemplation of the Fathers and ancient writers; but on the other hand, no more should we lose the rigorous methods of analysis, exposition, and synthesis which the use of more rational instruments permitted Scholasticism to attain; and finally, we should lose nothing of the magnificent possibilities, still poorly exploited, which the historical method opens up. That Scholasticism presents dangers, I have said before;⁸⁸ that its rationalistic, scientific and dialectical regulations, which are its fundamental laws, are not without their perils, I admit; that it has definite limitations, that it ought to be kept in its proper function and not be allowed to trespass in foreign domains, I discover more and more each year. . . . In the measure that, on the one hand, one has more knowledge of the primary sources of Christian doctrine, especially of Scripture, and, on the other hand, in the measure that one takes a bit broader view of the historic movement of Christian thought, one perceives that there is truly a problem with regard to Scholasticism, and particularly with regard to the almost exclusive part which it has assumed, not only in scientific thought, but also in the concrete life, the preaching and even in the administration of the Catholic Church. But this problem of Scholasticism must be approached with a great deal of respect, with patience, and with that lack of precipitousness which in the Church every development, every adaptation demands. We must not seek to by-pass Scholasticism (and this is not the aim of P. de Lubac) by attaching, with the aid of historical criticism, a diminished value

⁸⁸ Cf. Congar, *DTC*, art. "Théologie," col. 407 f.

to a work so sound, so humble, so exact, so religious when it is thoroughly grasped, as that of a Saint Thomas Aquinas or of the other great Scholastics.⁸⁶

Conclusion

Because of the extensive literature which had to be covered fairly completely in order to give an equitable summary, this article, of necessity, is much more a mere report than a critical commentary. Reasons of space likewise precluded a further discussion of P. de Lubac's *Surnaturel*; as a matter of fact, however, the only new material available to the writer is a remarkable article, entirely favorable to P. de Lubac's theory, by Dom Sebastian Moore.⁸⁷ In the controversy which these pages have tried to cover, the open and frank clash of ideas seems to have produced a much greater harmony and objective similarity of viewpoint than seemed possible. The problems raised have not received a definitive solution, but the issues involved and their bearing on Christian life have been brought into sharper focus, and, it is hoped, may in the future be discussed with more serenity and less personal animus.

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⁸⁶ Yves M.-J. Congar, "Bulletin d'ecclésiologie," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, XXXI (1947), 86-88: "Mais ce problème demande à être abordé avec beaucoup de respect, de patience, de sens de délais que demandent, dans l'Église, tout développement et toute adaptation. Il ne faut pas chercher un dépassement de la scolastique (et ce n'est pas ce que cherche le P. de Lubac) par une relativisation, grâce à la critique historique, de l'oeuvre si probe, si humble, si rigoureuse, si religieuse quand on la connaît bien, d'un S. Thomas d'Aquin ou des autres grands docteurs scolastiques" (p. 88). P. Congar mentions P. de Lubac, since the latter's book *Corpus Mysticum*, and particularly the chapter, "Du symbolisme au dialectique," are the occasion of treating briefly the entire problem of the development of dogma. Of P. de Lubac's conclusions in the chapter just named, P. Congar judges: "Je crois que le P. de L. force ici les choses, et qu'il ne rend pas pleinement justice aux ressources considérables de cette analyse, dont S. Thomas a fait si largement usage, du sacrement en *sacramentum tantum, res et sacramentum, res tantum*" (*ibid.*, p. 85).

⁸⁷ Dom Sebastian Moore, O. S. B., "The Desire of God," *Downside Review*, LXV (1947), 246-59.