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A BASIS FOR UNITY

ON Christmas Eve, in a comprehensive survey of the dangers and opportunities of the future, his Holiness Pius XII reiterated many of the teachings that have been characteristic of his Pontificate. We would point especially to his desire for collaboration among good-willed worshippers of Almighty God. 'These principles (for the solution of the social question) can be followed in their entirety, and bear their fullest fruits only when statesmen and people, employers and employees, are animated by faith in a personal God . . . Every man who believes in God is numbered among his partisans and paladins. Those who have faith in Christ, in his divinity, in his love, in his work of love and brotherhood amongst men will make a particularly valuable contribution to the reconstruction of the social order.' At the same time his Holiness reaffirms the spiritual centrality of Rome, concluding with this moving appeal: 'From this Rome, centre, rock, and teacher of Christianity, from this city called Eternal by reason of its relations with the living Christ rather than by reason of its association with the passing glory of the Caesars, from this Rome . . . We direct Our Appeal to all . . .' The present number of BLACKFRIARS offers some parallels to these words.

On the whole the contributors may appear unexpectedly to reveal sharp claws in the sleek and padded foot of the Church of Rome. If, however, Catholics were to conceal some of the basic truths of the Church in a desire to entice unwary people into St. Peter's net, they would effectively wreck any possibility of union. They would justify the accusation of the Northampton Baptist minister who recently declared that any overtures from Roman sources were to be regarded as Greek gifts. Co-operation must be based on a clear understanding of the different positions of Christians; and Catholics must clarify the *essential*, and therefore unchangeable, tenets of their faith, which includes the Primacy of St. Peter's*See, and all that submission to that authority implies. At the same time they should show their readiness to abandon at the urgent demand of charity any *non-essential* point, while humility before the wisdom

and charity of others should bring them to a fruitful *modus vivendi* with all believers in the goodness and providence of God. Catholics in this country too often develop an attitude to the certainty of their faith which can only be described as sectarian.

The desire to work together in the spirit of prayer and charity is the most powerful weapon against the evils of sectarianism. The Rev. G. W. O. Addleshaw has shown that action must be built on prayer and prayer on dogma. It is, in fact, of the nature of prayer to make for unity, unity between the individual and God and between individuals themselves. In order to pray in truth we have to know to whom it is we pray, so that worship develops the content of faith regarding the One worshipped. Perseverance in prayer and worship should, therefore, lead us eventually to see more clearly how God wishes us to serve him both in prayer and action. Thus a basic unity in worship and dogma should be the final outcome of the generous collaboration of truly praying Christians. Mdme. Gorodetzky, herself a member of the Russian Orthodox Church, thus contributes of her experience towards a common understanding between the churches in terms of prayer and the spiritual life.

Social action, as Mr. Addleshaw insists, must grow out of this spirit. At present there are so many divergent social theories among convinced Christians that the approach through dogma and prayer must be the first concern. The Church Union has in this respect produced an admirable statement on *A Christian Realm* (price 2d.) as a basis for future discussion. It continues the movement begun by the Pope's Peace Points, and carried forward by the Joint Letter to the *Times* and by the Malvern Conference. The statement after laying down the principles of social order springing from the Creator and the Natural Law, declares against the power of Money and for a return to a God-centred society which is 'functional' in character. One of the needs of such a society is that the responsibilities and opportunities given by personal ownership and control of property be shared by all instead of, as now, by a minority; another is that agriculture be recognised as basic to the community.

Many would wish to see co-operation on the lines of this *Christian Realm*. But not all Christians think in this wise, nor yet all the interpreters of Malvern. Mr. Sidney Dark, wishing to promote his view of the Christian Commonwealth, has undertaken the editorship of a monthly Bulletin, *The Malvern Torch*, with a view to carrying on the spirit of that Conference (The Industrial Christian Fellowship, price 4d.). He advises 'prayerful consideration' of the subjects raised, and yet some of his results are hardly reassuring. He wants the school-leaving age to be raised to 18; he attacks the idea

that true freedom demands the possession of property and claims that small possessions inevitably diminish 'spiritual freedom.' We do not forget that the same author earlier claimed that at the Malvern Conference Dr. Temple nailed the Red Flag to the ecclesiastical mast, a view which he appears to share with Mr. H. G. Wells.

The divergences among Christians regarding social matters are still wide, but the effect of prayer should be to bring them within one orbit of practical co-operation. And in this respect the Pope's Christmas blessing should be an inspiration to many: 'May Our benediction also descend on those who although not members of the visible body of the Catholic Church, are near to Us in their faith in God and in Jesus Christ, and share with Us Our views with regard to the conditions for a peace and its fundamental aims.'

THE EFFECTS OF SCHISM

[The following pages were written in response to a request from a group of Anglican Papalists for some account of the 'official Roman doctrine' regarding the practical consequences of separation from visible unity with the Catholic Church. They are here offered in the hope of providing a complement to the writer's article on 'Membership of the Church' (BLACKFRIARS, September, 1941).

As membership of the Church is an analogical concept which admits of many manners and degrees, so correspondingly is privation of that membership. In this essay we abstract altogether from such diversities and degrees of privation, and confine ourselves to the consideration of the results of factual loss of external communion with the *Catholica*. The question is not, therefore, 'Who is in schism?', but 'What is the practical outcome of being in schism?']

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JESUS CHRIST is Prophet, Priest and King. He teaches, he hal- lows, he governs. The Church, continuing in space and time what 'He began to do and to teach,' inherits that threefold power and authority, without some participation in which *nulla est salus*. It will be convenient to treat our subject under this threefold heading of (1) the Church's teaching authority (*potestas docendi* or *magisterium*), (2) her power and authority to impart the means of grace (*potestas sanctificandi*), and (3) her power and authority to order and govern herself, *i.e.* the faithful (*potestas regendi*). Each of these may be considered both (a) actively, and (b) passively.