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The Correspondence of Bishop Strachan and John Henry Newman

JOHN S. MOIR

ON Sunday, August 4, 1839, in the historic chapel of Lambeth Palace, the Reverend Doctor John Strachan was consecrated first Bishop of Toronto with the whole province of Upper Canada as his diocese.¹ Eleven days later, while still in London, Bishop Strachan opened a correspondence with the Reverend John Henry Newman, editor of the Tracts for the Times and one of the leaders of the Oxford Movement.

Strachan's relations with the Oxford Movement, and with its spirit, are not mentioned in his biography.² In fact, the impact of the Oxford Movement on the Canadian branch of the Church of England has as yet attracted very little attention among historians or theologians. Yet the ideals of the movement and its practices, especially ritualism, had a profound and disturbing effect in Upper Canada. Some parishes were divided internally by the activities of ardent ritualists and would-be tractarians. On the diocesan scene Low Church and High Church tended to separate along national lines—the Church of Ireland *versus* the Church of England. Although Strachan seldom allowed his feelings to interfere with his duties to the diocese, the fact that he was at heart a High Churchman led to serious conflict during the latter part of his episcopate. In Western Ontario, where the traditions of the Church of Ireland were cherished with almost fanatical fervour, Strachan's High Church sympathies were most strongly opposed, at the first episcopal election for the See of Huron, and afterwards by Benjamin Cronyn, first Bishop of Huron, who created Huron College in protest against the alleged Puseyism of Strachan's creature, Trinity College.

It is not the intention of this paper to trace the religious controversy between the two wings of the state church in Upper Canada, nor the political complications and results of that conflict, for that is too big a subject to be compassed within such physical limitations. The letters reproduced here, all drawn from the Strachan Papers in the Ontario Archives, are intended to show Strachan's attitude towards the Oxford Movement and his reaction to the defection of many of its leaders into the Church of Rome. Strachan was fated never to meet Newman personally, but Newman's influence in propagating the ideal of the *Via Media* is shown clearly in their correspondence. It is unnecessary to comment on the substance of the letters, and the editor has confined himself to placing the letters into the double context of

1. At the same ceremony Aubrey George Spencer, D.D., was consecrated first Bishop of Newfoundland.

2. A. N. Bethune, *Memoir of the Right Reverend John Strachan, D.D., LL.D.*, (Toronto, 1870).

the lives of the two authors and to elucidating some of the more obscure references and points of chronology by footnotes.

The amount of printed material on the Oxford Movement seems to be endless, and it is estimated that in 1933, the centenary of the Movement, some 10,000 books and articles were printed on the subject. Many of the books that have appeared are now unavailable—and a great many more are unknown to the average reader. Special mention should, however, be made here of Geoffrey Faber's *Oxford Apostles* which was republished as a Penguin Book in 1954, and of Chapter III of Harold Laski's *Studies in the Problem of Sovereignty* (New Haven, 1917) which is almost the only attempt to examine the political springs of the Movement. As this paper is concerned primarily with Strachan's ideas rather than the Oxford Movement, the numerous sources consulted in connection with the footnotes have not been cited individually.

John Strachan to J. H. Newman, 23 Sackville St., London, August 15, 1839, draft.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have found so much in accordance with my own heart and with my own principles in the Tracts of the Times that I shall be very reluctant to leave England for Upper Canada without becoming acquainted with the Authors and thanking them in person for their able defence of the true Church and their eloquent and profound elucidation of the foundation on which she ought to rest.

When I went to Canada about forty years ago my notions respecting the Church, her Government, the efficacy of the blessed Sacraments, the Succession etc., were crude & unsatisfactory. But it pleased God by reflexion rather than books of which I had few to improve my views on all these points so that when I visited this country after twenty four years absence³ I found them fearfully correct when compared to those generally prevalent at that time in England. As a transient visitor I was silent but not discouraged and in the *British Magazine* while under its both pious and accomplished Editor⁴ and yet more especially in the tracts of the times I was delighted to discover the results at which I had steadily and laboriously arrived carried still further and a flood of light let in upon them which I trust in God will never be extinguished. Having become better acquainted with you from your acknowledged works than with any other of the reputed writers of the tracts I request your assistance in making me personally known to yourself and your associates in your invaluable labours to protect the Church from Popery on the one hand and dissent on the other.⁵ I return to Canada early in Octr. and have many arrangements to make but I must find time to meet you at Oxford or any other place more convenient for you. It will be to me a source of permanent delight while travelling in the silent & primeval forests of my Diocese to have spent a single day nay even an

3. Strachan had returned to Britain for the first time in 1824, having arrived in Upper Canada in the last days of 1799.

4. *The British Magazine of Ecclesiastical Information*, edited by the Rev. Hugh James Rose, one of the first Tractarians, who had died in January, 1839.

5. This letter reached Newman at the very time that he felt his first pangs of doubt about the schismatic state of his own church. After lengthy study of the Eutychian and Monophysite heresies during the summer of 1839, Newman recorded, "I saw my face in that mirror [the controversies of the fifth century], and I was a Monophysite."

hour with men whom I already love and admire for the inestimable services they have done to our beloved Church.

I remain My Dear Sir
Yours Faithfully

JOHN TORONTO

J. H. Newman to John Strachan, Oriel College, Oxford, August 19, 1839.

MY DEAR LORD,

On my return to Oxford, which I had left for a few days, I found your Lordship's most kind and acceptable letter. It is a sufficient reward for any trouble or anxiety which the writers of the Tracts for the Times have experienced, if they approve themselves to the Rulers of the Church. Dr Pusey and Mr Keble to whom I will communicate your letter, will, I know, share in my feelings of gratification on reading it. They are neither of them in Oxford at this time. Mr Keble indeed lives in the country; & Dr Pusey is on the Devonshire coast. There are very few persons in Oxford at present, so that I can hardly recommend to your Lordship to come down; though, should you determine to do so I hope I need not say it will give me very great pleasure to do what I can to make up to your Lordship the absence of other people. I think it very probable that I shall be passing through London myself between this and the 4th of October in which case I will not fail to avail myself of your Lordship's permission to wait upon you, and I will inform you a day or two beforehand of my intention.

I am, My dear Lord,
Your Lordship's faithful Servant

JOHN H. NEWMAN

J. H. Newman to John Strachan, Oriel College, Oxford, September 22, 1839.⁶

MY DEAR LORD,

This is the first post by which I have been able to write word when I pass through London. I can hardly hope for the pleasure of seeing your Lordship—but I will take the chance early on Thursday morning next.

My movements have depended on a friend who was going out of England by a packet, the exact day uncertain. Hoping this will account for my seeming inattention.

I am, My dear Lord,
Your Lordship's faithful Servant

JOHN H. NEWMAN

J. H. Newman to John Strachan, Oriel College, Oxford, October 11, 1839.

MY DEAR LORD,

Things have happened very disappointingly as regards my seeing your Lordship. I have just returned to Oxford, & find your letter, too late to avail myself of its offer. I did not recollect I had mentioned the 4th of October in my letter to your Lordship. The truth was I had to take an invalid friend off who was going to Malta,⁷ & his vessel went off a week sooner than had been

6. On the same day that Newman penned this letter to Strachan he wrote Frederic Rogers (Lord Blatchford) that he had just had "the first real hit from Romanism." The "hit" was Wiseman's article in the *Dublin Review* which compared the Church of England to the schismatic Donatists.

7. This was probably John William Bowden, Newman's "dear, earliest friend," whose death in 1844 after years of ill-health Pusey hoped might stop Newman's drift into Romanism. Bowden died firmly in the Anglican faith. Newman had visited Malta in the winter of 1832-3 and may have recommended it to his ailing friend.

originally appointed. I am now returned to our yearly circuit [?]& find that Dr Pusey is still at Brighton.

I was much concerned to hear of your Lordship's affliction—with the kindest and most respectful wishes and best prayers for your Lordship's prosperity personally & in your momentous duties

I am, My dear Lord,
Your faithful Servant

JOHN H. NEWMAN

John Strachan to J. H. Newman, Toronto, May 23, 1840, draft, Strachan Letter Book, 1839-43.

This will be delivered to you by the Revd Henry Scadding⁸ of St John [College] Cambridge who goes to England to take his degree of MA. You will find him intelligent pious modest & unassuming. I have just appointed him one of my Chaplains. He is aware of the high opinion which I cherish for you & your Friends and of the Vast benefit which your labours are conferring upon the Church we love and requested a note of introduction.

The said principles which your writings & those of your Friends are disseminating in England are rapidly gaining ground in the United States & this Province. We have a weekly journal under the direction of a beneficed clergyman⁹ which during its continuance of three years has done much good in spreading the distinctive principles of the Church of England, & removing the prejudices & mistatements [*sic*] which the Dissenters publish & foster against her. We are gaining ground very rapidly¹⁰ & many of my Clergy who were rather low in their opinions on the Sacraments & sacred Character of the Church are very much changed for the better.

Soon after I arrived from England the Governor General C Poulett Thomson [*sic*] arrived to meet the Provincial Parliament in order to obtain their consent to a Union of the Province of Lower Canada.¹¹

As such a Union virtually places the two Canadas under a Papist Legislature I found myself under the necessity of opposing it & when the resolution in its favour passed the Legislative Council to enter my Protest.¹²

The moment that the Union question was disposed of the Governor General produced a bill by his Solicitor General disposing of the Clergy Reserves as

8. Henry Scadding, 1813-1901, after teaching several years at Upper Canada College, became rector of Holy Trinity Church, Toronto. He retired in 1875 and devoted himself to scholarly research and published several works on the history of Toronto.

9. *The Church*, "official organ of the Church of England in Upper and Lower Canada" (according to its masthead,) was established at Cobourg in 1837 under the editorship of A. N. Bethune, Rector of Cobourg and in 1867 Strachan's successor in the see of Toronto.

10. The sociological processes of urbanization were bringing many Wesleyan Methodists, both lay and clerical, into the Anglican fold. In addition the Church of England was the biggest gainer numerically from the renewed immigration to the Canadas.

11. Charles Poulett Thomson, 1799-1841, first Baron Sydenham, had arrived in Canada to take up his duties as Governor General about three weeks before Strachan's return, and opened the last session of the last Parliament of Upper Canada at Toronto in December, 1839. His task was to carry out as far as practicable the recommendations of Lord Durham's Report, the main recommendation being a legislative union for the Canadas with equal representation for both parts despite the fact that Lower Canada had the larger population. The intention of this measure was to reduce French Canadian Roman Catholic influence, not augment it as Strachan believed. The Irish immigration following the tragic potato famine of 1845-6, however, tipped the electoral scales in favour of Roman Catholic representation and led directly to the establishment of the Ontario Separate School system and to more than a decade of Protestant agitation against "papal domination." The solution of both religious and political difficulties was sought in a confederation in 1867.

12. Strachan had been a member of the Upper Canadian Legislative Council since 1820 but he was omitted from the new Council of the United Canadas in 1841.

Church property. It robs her of $\frac{3}{4}$ —it degrades her (as far as human enactment can degrade) to an equality with all Sects & gives the Presbyterians whose numbers it purposely swells by adding to the Members of the Church of Scotland & another division of the Presbyterians an equal portion with the Church of England.¹³ The remaining half of the property is given to all the Sectaries within the Province in proportion to their respective Numbers. There are seventeen or eighteen of such Divisions—some deny the Sacraments—some the Trinity. Others seem to have no religious principles—but merely call themselves Christians. You may readily suppose that I gave every opposition in my power to this iniquitous measure & when it passed I warned our Friends in England of its turpitude & corrupt influence by which it was carried that it might be stopped in the House of Lords & it requires the tacit consent of both Houses of the Imperial Parliament before it can become law.¹⁴ Having done all I can in this matter I leave it in confidence in the hands of God.

I trust that while prepared to defend the exterior walls of the Church I am not inattentive to her Spiritual objects which are infinitely more important, and I am happy to say that my Clergy in general are pious diligent & active. Our people are rapidly increasing. From every quarter of the Colony are applications sent me for Clergymen & the strongest desire expressed for the Ministrations of our beloved Church.

My last tract of the time is the 80th but I daily expect all that may have been published up to April.¹⁵ I believe I have all your publications that were out before I left England. I am delighted with Palmer[']s Treatise on the Church¹⁶ & have read with benefit Gladstone[']s book.¹⁷ Nor do I feel inclined to quarrel with the remains of the Revd R. H. Froude.¹⁸ He was a noble Soul and his death a great loss to the Church. A few years would have removed any little excrescences and perhaps his spirit wishes that his Editor had softened those which appear.

13. Another recommendation of the Durham Report was a local settlement of the Clergy Reserves, hitherto monopolized by the Church of England and blamed by many as the main cause of the Upper Canadian Rebellion of 1837. This plan to divide the proceeds of the Reserves among the denominations met opposition from many sides in Upper Canada for many reasons. The Act was passed thanks to Thomson's managerial ability but was disallowed in Britain on a technicality. The members of the United Synod of Upper Canada had been united with the Church of Scotland with the aid of covert pressure from Thomson—hence the objections of Strachan to what seemed an unduly large plum for the Kirk. In fact the religious census of 1839, the basis for the denominational division of the Reserves funds, was acknowledged by all parties to be statistically erroneous.

14. The Act was disallowed before it reached the House of Lords and a new bill framed and passed by the Imperial Parliament was more generous to the Church of England. When a residue finally became available to other denominations in 1848 the violent political and religious strife engendered over its disposal led to the nationalization of the bulk of the troublesome Reserves in 1854.

15. Tract 80 appeared in 1837.

16. William Palmer, authority on Anglican liturgy, was an admirer of Newman but one who urged the suspension of the Tracts when they came under attack for their supposed Romish tendencies. His *Treatise on the Church of Christ* (1838) was one of the most important theological works of the period.

17. William Ewart Gladstone's book, *The State in its Relations with the Church* appeared in December, 1838, and went into a second edition in 1839. The theme of the work was the impossibility of the state having more than one religion.

18. *Remains of the late Reverend Richard Hurrell Froude*, edited anonymously by Newman, the first two volumes published in 1838 and two more volumes later. Froude had been Newman's *alter ego* who provided the stabilizing influence which Newman needed so badly. His premature death has been blamed by some for Newman's seeking his "authority" in Rome. In any case it is interesting to speculate on Froude's own course and influence had he lived through the whole period of the Oxford Movement. As one who "loved" Froude above all others and as the anonymous editor, Newman may have been hurt by Strachan's frank remarks.

I venture to remind you of a small work which I suggested in my last letter¹⁹ & believe me

Yours Faithfully
J[OHN] T[ORONTO]

John Strachan to J. H. Newman, Toronto, May 21, 1842, draft, Strachan Letter Book, 1839-43.

REVD & DEAR SIR

This will be delivered to you by my Secretary and examining Chaplain the Revd Henry J Grasset²⁰ who goes to Cambridge to take his degree of AM. & proposes to visit Oxford. You will find him intelligent and well informed & what is better pious and devoted to the duties of his profession. Any attention you may find it convenient to show him I shall willingly repay to any Friend of Yours coming to this Country. I gladly avail myself of this opportunity of renewing our acquaintance in writing as it has not been permitted us to meet in person.

Tho far distant I have not been altogether inattentive to the controversy occasioned by the Tracts for the Times and while I exercise my own judgment in approving or disapproving those I have seen (down to Number 82 inclusive)²¹ I am unable to account for its bitterness. I certainly am one of those who believe that the earlier Numbers wrought wonders for our Church and revived with a force never I trust to be diminished that Spirit of reverence for primitive truth & order which in many places seemed to be entirely forgotten. This alone is a benefit of the greatest importance and those who by their writings conferred it deserve our grateful thanks. Moreover it is generally conceded that the Writers so far as they are known are men of greatest ability & learning—earnest & disinterested in their views & conclusions meek & amiable in their deportment & pure & holy in their lives. All this which ought to have removed wrath and acrimony appears rather to have increased them perhaps from the fear that men in every way so good and praiseworthy would by their example & writings acquire the greater influence. Be this as it may I feel persuaded that the Spirit of inquiry you have revived will be ever ruled for infinite good tho' for a time it may be attended with some commotion.

I do not consider myself qualified to decide upon the points at issue and even if I were the requisite information is not within my reach. There are however some few matters which jar our favourite feelings. I regretted Dr Pusey[']s proceedings in Ireland tho perhaps more than redeemed by his beautiful & affectionate apology.²² I do not & cannot accord with severe strictures on our

19. It is apparent from two references in these letters that all the correspondence with Newman has not survived. Some of the most important incidents in Strachan's life are now forever blanks thanks to the destructive efforts of an officious and self-appointed literary executor (not Bethune,) who undertook to protect Strachan's memory by burning letters and pages from his letterbooks.

20. Henry James Grasset, 1808-1882, chaplain to the Bishop of Quebec, succeeded Strachan as rector of Toronto in 1839. He was created dean in 1867. He was active in educational activities. In 1854 and 1856 he successfully defended his rectory patent in a test case and appeal.

21. It is surprising that Strachan had not seen the later Tracts, particularly Number 90, *Remarks on Certain Passages in the Thirty-nine Articles*, which showed undeniably the Romanizing trend of Newman's thought. Since Tract 90 was published on February 27, 1841, (six days after Newman's fortieth birthday,) Strachan must have been aware of its contents through British magazine and newspaper comments. It is therefore strange that he is so mild in his criticism of those who seemed about to turn off the *Via Media* into the *Via Appia*. It is possible that the 80 here is a slip of the pen for 90.

22. As a result of his visit to Roman Catholic nunneries in Ireland during July and August of 1841, so soon after the appearance of Tract 90, Pusey was severely censured in some quarters. The visit, however, convinced Pusey that reunion with an unreformed

early reformers—or with the tone not always dutiful to my Mother the Church of England—or with some palliations as they seem to me of the Church of Rome. My union with that Church must remain hopeless while she adheres to the Canons of the Council of Trent and the creed of Pius the 4th.²³

You will be happy to learn that blessed be God we are doing much here and I trust in the right way. The true principles of the Church are daily gaining ground. We desire to be called after no man but to continue to nestle in the bosom of our Mother Scriptural & primitive.

I have derived much benefit from your parochial Sermons of which I have procured the first three volumes.²⁴ If convenient gratify me with a few lines by Mr Grasset or at your future leisure for I regard not postage.²⁵

I remain Revd & Dear Sir

Yours Faithfully

JOHN TORONTO

The following extract is from a letter which, though not addressed to Newman, seems to contain Strachan's last word on the Oxford Movement and on those Tractarians who had joined the Roman Catholic Church. Newman, one of the last to make the break with his "Mother Church," was accepted into the Roman faith only one month before this letter was penned.

John Strachan to Henry Patton, Rector of Kemptville, Toronto, November 10, 1845, draft, Strachan Letter Book, 1844-9. (Patton, scion of an old Scottish family, had just returned from Britain where he had met many notable divines. After welcoming him home, Strachan proceeds to comment on Patton's impressions of the personages and events of the day.)

Your remarks on the religious movement in the Church are judicious but altho it has done & will do much good by bringing back her true principles this does not excuse the insidious proceedings of Mr Newman & his Party, whose conduct appears to me a sort of insanity. We are well rid of such men. They have proved themselves totally unequal to the crisis & unworthy of confidence. I can easily conceive it possible for a learned & good man to continue a Roman Catholic who has been born & educated in that Church from strong ties & associations but I cannot conceive it possible for a man of sense to become a Roman Catholic.

Rome was impossible, and in answer to his critics he published a pamphlet *Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury* in February, 1842, in which he attempted to explain the views and principles of the Oxford Movement and to allay the growing irritation and fear within the Anglican hierarchy. In fact the Archbishop had interviewed Pusey on these matters in September, 1841, and requested a cessation of publications and the gagging of Newman. Pusey admitted the Romish tendencies of the Oxford Movement, but after accusing the Roman Church of mariolatry and denouncing the Evangelicals for their nonconformist connections, he ends with strong praise for the blessings of his own Church.

23. Froude had strongly opposed tridentine doctrine as emanating from a false Council. But Froude was dead and Newman had shown in Tract 90, to his own satisfaction at least, that the tridentine doctrines could be accepted as true since they postdated the Thirty Nine Articles by two years. The Articles, however, were not ratified until 1571, seven years after the ratification of the decisions of the Council of Trent.

24. Newman published eight volumes of *Parochial and Plain Sermons* between 1834 and 1843.

25. It was still possible to send letters with the postage payable by the receiver.

Theology and Apologetics

J. V. LANGMEAD CASSERLEY

TO SAY that a great deal of what has passed for and been accepted as theological writing since the eighteenth century has in fact been apologetics rather than theology is, of course, to utter a very broad generalisation to which there are many significant exceptions. Nevertheless such a verdict is one which conveys a great deal of truth, particularly if we have chiefly in mind the theological writings which have emerged during that period out of the English speaking world. This development, of course, has been an understandable one. Since the eighteenth century the theologian has become more and more conscious of the Christian frontier, the line which divides the Christian from an increasingly post-Christian world, and of his strong desire if possible to cross it and to blaze out a beaten track leading from one to the other. On the other hand the vogue of apologetics disguised as theology has done a great harm to the cause of systematic theology itself.

I use the word theology here in the strict sense. It is the *fides quaerens intellectum* of St. Anselm—Christian reason endeavouring to provide a coherent and systematic account of the whole content of Christian faith and of the character and bias of Christian existence. Theology in this strict sense must be distinguished not only from apologetics, but also from what are more properly described as theological studies. By theological studies I have in mind the biblical and historical disciplines which investigate the character and content of the basic data of theological thought—the scriptures, liturgies and the vast and varied literature which has arisen out of Christian history and existence. Theological studies are primarily works of scholarship; theology itself is primarily a work of thought. Clearly theology is profoundly dependent upon and indebted to a vast range of theological studies, but theological studies are not theology, and theology itself in using them transcends and passes beyond them.

Apologetics is also a work of thought, but it differs from theology in its essential nature. Theology is addressed primarily to the Church; apologetics primarily to the world. The aim of theology is that the man of faith should achieve a systematic understanding of the content of his own Christian affirmations, so as to be able to give a coherent account of the nature and purpose of his own existence, and of that reality in and for which he exists. Apologetics, on the other hand, is concerned with the Church's relationship to the world, particularly the intellectual and cultural world, outside the circle of faith and is conscious of the philosophical perplexities which occur to the minds of those outside the circle of faith who contemplate and consider Christianity from what may be called the external point of view. It is important to notice that both theology and apologetics have their proper place

in Christian intellectualism, but the spirit and the prospects of theology are gravely undermined when its aims are confused with those of apologetics, or the apologist is mistakenly permitted to call the theological tune. Such a state of affairs has certainly been tolerated during the last two centuries, and the extent to which it still obtains even now seriously embarrasses and threatens the cause of pure theological thought.

The two chief ways in which the domination of theology by apologetic motives diverts theology from its proper systematic aim, and embarrasses it in its pursuit of its proper task, may be described as follows:

(a) First of all, the preoccupation of apologetics with peripheral questions. The questions which are pressed upon the attention of the apologist are usually quite different from those which arise within the very heart of the faith itself. A question which may have very little, or at best a comparatively superficial, interest for theology may nevertheless be a major question for apologetics, simply because large numbers of people who stand altogether outside theology and Christianity regard it as vitally relevant and persistently press it upon the attention of the Church. Conversely many questions of the greatest moment to the theologian are neglected by the apologist, again because non-Christian thought, which is the apologist's primary concern and starting point, does not attach any particular importance to them.

The purpose of apologetics is not and cannot be purely intellectual or theoretic. Apologetics is essentially an activity in the Church—indeed of the Church—closely related in spirit to preaching and evangelism. For this very reason tactical considerations enter into apologetics quite foreign to the nature of pure theology. The apologist's natural and proper desire is to meet the intellectualism which lies outside the Church on its own grounds, to engage its sympathies, to make every possible concession to its characteristic prejudices and preconceptions, while yet succeeding in making a case for some genuine measure of Christian belief and commitment. The theologian, on the other hand, is concerned to present Christian truth in its integrity, in so far as he is able to grasp its integrity, and not, *qua* theologian, to take into very serious account the way in which the contemporary mind is likely to respond to the spectacle of Christian doctrine presented systematically and in its integrity. In short the apologist is essentially an honest and convinced advocate while the theologian is more like a pure scientist, seeking insight into truth for its own sake. Inevitably the apologist will be more concerned with the questions which arise in the mind when Christianity is contemplated from the outside while the theologian will be almost wholly taken up with the very different questions which arise when Christianity is contemplated from the inside. It is hardly likely that the questions with which the apologist deals will be entirely irrelevant for the theological task, but it frequently happens that the apologist will magnify their importance, and it is almost inevitable that many of the deepest theological questions will elude his attention altogether.

For example, we may consider the way in which, in the kind of theology which is dominated by apologetic motives, the problem of miracle has assumed an importance which it does not intrinsically possess. For genuine theology the problem of what we may call the nature of nature, of how there can be, and whether there is, by Divine creation and permission, an order of secondary causality, is a much bigger and far tougher problem than the alleged problem of miracle, which always seems to be raised from a point of view which assumes that there can be no possible doubt whatever about the existence of an integral order of nature. Some theologians at all events have tended to argue that what we entitle and interpret as "the order of nature" is really one prolonged stream of supernatural or miraculous events. Personally I do not believe this to be true, but the question which such a thesis raises is a far more profound one than the problem of miracle as discussed by the average Christian apologist. Again, apologetics has devoted a great deal of attention to the problem of free will considered in relation to some system of naturalistic determinism. Nobody can say that this question is entirely irrelevant, but in pure theology the real problem is the nature of freedom considered in its relation to the Grace of God. Does the Grace of God limit or frustrate man's freedom, or does it negative only the apparent and perhaps pseudo-freedom of choice, while functioning as the ground of man's real freedom to be what God means him to be and to become what God means him to become? We may say that the question as raised by apologetics tends to be the comparatively superficial one of the reality of our apparent freedom of choice, whereas the question as raised in theology is the profounder question of how fallen man can rediscover his true freedom, his *freedom to be*. In apologetics, to sum up, relatively unimportant questions tend to be treated as though they were questions of first-rate importance, and the profound issues of Christian theology tend to be ignored or neglected, precisely because most of the people to whom essays in apologetics are addressed are not in a position, and do not enjoy a point of view, which enables them to see why, or even that, these questions genuinely arise.

(b) But perhaps the most embarrassing thing about apologetics from the point of view of theology is not so much the extent of its failures as the burden of its successes. The trouble about really great and successful essays in apologetics is that they tend towards such a fusion of Christianity and passing intellectual fashions that once the intellectual fashion has passed away there is imposed upon the Christian intellect a tremendous and yet superfluous task of disentanglement.

We may select two examples of the way in which the theological mind can be gravely embarrassed by past apologetic successes. Nobody can doubt, for example, that Aquinas dealt brilliantly with the Aristotelian crisis in the thirteenth century. With consummate mastery he showed that there was indeed a way in which he and his contemporaries could consistently be both Christians and Aristotelians at the same time. Unlike some later apologists he contrived this without any modifications of his integral Christianity,

through a superb rethinking of the Aristotelian inheritance, and this because he was a truly great philosopher as well as a brilliantly successful apologist. The time was to come, however, when the intellectual mood of Western civilisation would revolt against Aristotle, but by this time most of the acknowledged Christian thinkers and teachers were convinced Aristotelians. It is arguable, for example, that the conflict with the new sciences of the seventeenth century was a conflict not so much between Christianity and physics as between physics and Aristotelianism in its Christian dress. This was probably the basic issue in the dispute over the teachings of Galileo. Aristotelianism and Christianity had by that time been so skilfully fused that an attack on Aristotle's physics could easily be mistaken for an attack on Christianity itself.

At the end of the nineteenth century, and with diminished power through the first quarter of the twentieth, the chief tendency of apologetics was to present Christianity in terms of some brand of ethical idealism, decked out with an ethical or progressivist account or interpretation of evolution which gave it a kind of pseudo-scientific flavour. Even now, when the mood of the time has turned decisively against what we may call ethical idealism, it is still not always easy to divorce the Christian faith from this fatal marriage in which the apologists involved it. In the long run a too successful apologetics can be even more dangerous to the integrity of theological thought than a relatively unsuccessful one. It has been well said that he who marries today will be a widower tomorrow. Indeed the tempo of cultural change has been so accelerated in the contemporary world that the wheel may well come full circle within a single lifetime, and a Christian apologist who was abreast of his time in his early thirties may sound, if he fails to grow intellectually, like a voice from the dead by the time he reaches his early fifties.

But perhaps the gravest danger in modern apologetics is that of reductionism. The apologist is constantly tempted to commend the faith to the world by reducing it to those proportions or aspects which he finds it relatively easy to commend. Thus the apologist may end by producing his own theology, a theology which is not the historic theology of the Church but a specially reduced and simplified theology for the world. Worse still, he may even be tempted so to twist his account of the historical development of the Church's theology as to suggest that his reduced theology is in fact the true theology of the Church. By such means the integrity of theology is altogether overthrown and the discipline is reduced to a series of *ad hoc* efforts to commend the faith, or those aspects of it which are deemed commendable, to a series of passing intellectual moods and climates of opinion.

We may say that whereas it is for theology to decide what shall be communicated, a theology intellectually free from any domination by apologetic motives, the function of a genuinely Christian apologetic, an apologetic dominated by profoundly theological motives, is to examine how in any reigning climate of opinion the verdicts of theology are to be communicated

to those outside the Church. Thus works of apologetics rather resemble those little books, often very good ones, which attempt to interpret and elucidate the findings of contemporary science, and the state of opinion in the contemporary scientific world, for the benefit of reasonably intelligent people who lack any scientific training but are anxious to know as much as possible about the specialised natural sciences which have so tremendously influenced the shape of the world in which they live.

This of course raises the question how far we can communicate the depths of Christian faith to people outside the Christian Church—or even to many of those who are just inside the Christian Church but whose understanding of the Christian faith is still limited and frustrated by the outlooks and mental habits which they brought with them when they came in. We are of course familiar with the demand for ways of teaching the faith without technical language and in terms of “modern thought.” We must probably accept the fact that what can successfully be done along these lines is drastically limited. Thus the little books which explain modern physics without using mathematical or technical terminology, and without presuming any kind of acquaintance with the disciplines of laboratory research, do not really succeed in taking the readers very far. Every special discipline of the human intellect, as it progresses and develops, evolves and perfects its own characteristic language and then uses that language as a medium for saying many important things which cannot be said in any other way. Thus the fulness of Christian communication is only possible within the Church, and only possible within the Church in so far as the Church insists on initiating the faithful into the mysteries of its own characteristic language. There is, of course, a real problem of communication in the modern world, but we are perhaps wrong to suppose that it is the kind of problem which must somehow and at some time be capable of any solution except that of widespread and serious theological education. The trouble about theological education is that it has become too much a series of specialised vocational studies undertaken only by those who are preparing for the Christian ministry. The question of the serious theological education of the laity must be taken in hand far more boldly and pursued far more profoundly in the contemporary world than perhaps ever before in the history of Christendom. Theology for the laity does not mean a special kind of theology of an artificially simplified character, nor does it require the abolition of theological language. Theology for the laity really means *teaching the laity theology*. For at least the laity of the Church is in touch with those realities of Christian existence which theology interprets. Much more difficult is the task of communicating theological truth to those outside the Church, who are not in touch with those realities of Christian existence which theology interprets. This is rather like explaining modern empirical science to people who lack any laboratory experience whatever. They find it so difficult to see what the facts are which are being interpreted, and they understand science as a web of abstruse theory without ever comprehending how it is that these hypotheses get themselves verified, and to what specific range of realities they refer.

In so many of the small books professing to diagnose, explain, expound and defend the faith in modern speech, or "in terms of modern thought," the basic fallacy is perhaps the notion that Christianity is metaphysically neutral, that is, that it can be expressed equally well in almost any metaphysical terminology that happens to be fashionable. It may reasonably be doubted, however, whether this is really the case. Obviously the Christian faith as such is not a metaphysical system, but clearly there are some metaphysical systems which enable us to utter the assertions about destiny and reality which the Christian must utter with force and intelligibility, whereas other metaphysical systems either restrain and restrict the freedom of the Christian mind or perhaps even inhibit it altogether. Christianity is not a metaphysic, but it nevertheless has metaphysical implications and it certainly exerts steady pressure on our metaphysical beliefs. For the committed Christian philosopher, Christianity itself is one of the primary factors which he must take into account in making his metaphysical decisions. A metaphysical philosophy which prevents him from fully and clearly stating his Christian convictions is clearly an unsound philosophy. As a philosopher of course he will not condemn it merely on those grounds; rather with heightened awareness and aroused suspicion he will search for those purely metaphysical weaknesses and inadequacies in the particular philosophy under discussion which render it useless for the purposes of Christian expression. Even the most adequate metaphysic does not amount to and cannot supply a revelation from God, but once we are convinced that the revelation has been given, and has opened up to men a new area of experience, then the philosophy which cannot handle the truths and realities which are borne in upon our minds from every side when we live in that area of experience is clearly one that must be rejected.

All this is part of the case for what some Christian thinkers call the *philosophia perennis*. The *philosophia perennis* is more than Thomism; it includes a wider range of philosophical positions and opens up the possibility of genuine differences of philosophical opinion among equally convinced Christians. We may say that the *philosophia perennis* includes both the Thomistic neo-Aristotelians and the Augustinian neo-Platonists, and of course the modern developments and offshoots of both. The tensions between them are stimulating and fruitful, but we ought not to minimise the depth and extent of their underlying unity. To deny the validity of any conception of the *philosophia perennis*, conceived in this broad and inclusive way, is by implication to deny the providential character of the preparation of the Hellenistic world for the publication and proclamation of the gospel by the discipline of Greek thought and philosophy. It also denies by implication the weight and authority in Christendom of those classical forms and phases of Christian thought which we describe as Patristic, Byzantine and Scholastic.

Thus to defend Christianity is in part to defend the great metaphysical tradition in terms of which classical Christian theology contrived to do justice to the central Christian realities. I do not mean that to the Christian mind the classical metaphysical position is beyond criticism on innumerable points

of detail, but I would suggest that the Christian must regard it as in general running along the right lines, so that the defence of this great metaphysical tradition—obviously a discerning and critical defence—is an essential part of Christian apologetics. At least these considerations suggest that it is very dubious indeed to proceed on the assumption that any contemporary philosophical fashion whatsoever will serve the purposes of Christian expression with equal facility.

Christianity is not metaphysics but it does issue a series of metaphysical demands. We cannot attempt here to provide an exhaustive list of these demands, but perhaps we might mention one or two of the most important of them in order to illustrate precisely the kind of thing we are discussing.

(a) Christianity demands a metaphysic which treats material and spiritual reality with equal seriousness, yet resolutely avoids any ultimate dualism.

(b) Christianity demands a metaphysic which is naturalistic in the sense of believing in the reality of a true order of nature, but not naturalistic in the sense of believing that that order of nature is or can conceivably be a closed and self-sufficient order. Any metaphysic which can conceive of the being of God is a metaphysic which thinks in terms of supernatural being. Any metaphysic which thinks in terms of the Divine action is a metaphysic which thinks in terms of supernatural action. The purposes of Christian expression cannot conceivably be served by any possible system of metaphysics or metaphysical language which denies the reality of the supernatural. Nor at the same time must we deny the reality of nature. On the contrary the creation of nature is the supreme instance of the supernatural. The existence of an order of nature is a miracle.

(c) Christianity demands a metaphysic in which existence is supreme in the order of value and at the same time essence is of primary importance to the order of intelligibility. Neither can be wholly analysed away into the other, with the one exception of the Divine existence itself. Similarly substance cannot be analysed into function nor function into substance. Christianity can tolerate neither Spinoza on the one hand nor John Dewey on the other. The categories of any sound metaphysics remain a plurality and cannot be reduced to a seeming unity by explaining all the other categories in terms of some one central category. In Christianity the sole ground of the unity of the universe is the reality of God. If we ignore the reality of God, we are committed to the problem of an ultimate and irreducible plurality.

Any kind of philosophical thinking which neglects or ignores these basic requirements is useless for purposes of Christian expression, and must be rejected, however fashionable and modern it may be. On the other hand it must always be remembered that the defence of a system of philosophy which satisfies these basic Christian requirements involves more than merely remarking that it satisfies these basic Christian requirements. For Christianity also demands of any philosophy which satisfies its basic requirements that it must have a philosophical integrity of its own and be able to make a rational case for itself without any reference to Christianity at all. Otherwise

the danger is that Christian theology will become metaphysics, and metaphysics will be identical with Christian theology. But this is to confuse things which are basically distinct. Theology must use metaphysics but cannot become metaphysics. Metaphysics on the other hand, while claiming to provide a language which permits the interpretation and expression of all the realities of life and experience, does not necessarily dictate what those realities are to be, and is never identical with the empirical description and testimony which declares what in fact they are.

We may then come to the following conclusions: The first function of apologetics is the critique of contemporary culture and in particular of contemporary intellectual fashions. The *Zeitgeist* is the perennial enemy of the intellect. The truly awakened mind will never consent to be locked up in the fashions and perspectives of a passing age. From this point of view the intellectual movement out of the contemporary world into Christianity can be experienced as something which confers an enormous access of intellectual freedom. Christianity is emphatically not for an age but for all time. It can never be fitted too easily into the framework of passing intellectual fashions. Rather it is a great instrument of criticism which clearly reveals how transitory and ephemeral most of them are. The second function of apologetics is the removal of intellectual obstacles which seem to stand in the way of the intelligent man as he approaches the Christian faith. Apologetics can never argue any man into becoming a Christian; the most it can do is to remove from his pathway a great deal of the intellectual rubbish that impedes his course.

Although in this paper I have distinguished rather sharply between theology and apologetics I do not wish to deny that theology may have an indirect apologetic effect which is a kind of by-product of its success in conceiving and expounding a coherent theological system. The demonstration that Christianity can be systematically and cogently thought out, that the theological system may succeed in enabling us to interpret not only the Christian experience and the Christian facts but also all the other facts and experiences which enter into the texture of human life, bears witness to the power of Christian thought, of theologically inspired Christian intellectualism, in a way and to an extent far beyond the capacity of the more direct attempts of apologetics to wrestle with particular doubts and difficulties. A science may be apologized for, and often it must be apologized for, but the supreme justification of any science is the science itself, its coherence and cogency as an intellectual structure, its successful functioning as the rational interpreter of its chosen subject matter. Perhaps what the somewhat sceptical modern man needs above all as he contemplates and approaches Christianity is not so much the resolution of each of his particular doubts one by one, as the demonstration that Christianity can indeed be received, lived with, and thought through by rational man, in the proper rational mood of unsparing criticism and with an intellectual integrity as absolute as fallen man can make it. So long as such a man merely feels that his particular formu-

lated doubts have been dealt with and resolved, the real heart of his rational doubt is left untouched. He will feel that there may be other possible doubts and difficulties which have not occurred to him which, if they were to be formulated, could not be resolved so easily. What will finally reassure him is not particular apologetic essays but the consciousness that a systematic theology is possible, and compatible with an intellectual scrutiny as searching as that to which other areas of human experience and other systems of human ideas have been submitted in other sciences.