

Christian religion below the level of the mystic may be used by the politician for his temporal gains and his material security. For the Christian religion throughout, from the Head down to the extreme and dullest member, is formed by obedience, i.e. obedience to lawfully constituted authority. An easy prey to the wolf politician. But this wolf is powerless before the utter poverty of spirit expressed in this abandonment to God's will. By this means captivity is led captive; the death of the Cross becomes the life of Resurrection; and Christ himself, not Caesar or the Jews, is Victor. The politician can and should use the papal social encyclicals; he can make little of S. John of the Cross and is overcome by S. Catherine of Siena. Blessed are the poor for they shall possess. The Christian leaven must work, but only through obedience, renunciation and detachment, until having nothing the Christ of here-and-now does possess all things.

CARDINAL HINSLEY.

THE death of Cardinal Hinsley brings a sense of grievous loss to innumerable men and women outside his own flock. His championship of right, his outspokenness, his love of England, his pity for the suffering, all inspired by a deep religious faith, combined to make a remarkable impression on the public mind. A story he told me of his first meeting with Mr. Churchill throws a flood of light on the bonds which bound him to his fellow countrymen. It was just after the fall of France, when there was a widespread belief that anything might happen. 'I am glad we're alone,' he said to the Prime Minister, 'and have not to rely on France.' 'Why?' asked Mr. Churchill, much surprised. He replied, 'Englishmen fight best when they have got their backs to the wall.' It was very fitting that when the Cardinal died, nearly three years later, Mr. Churchill should express his deep sympathy with English Roman Catholics 'in the loss of a leader of character and courage, a great patriot, and a true lover of justice and freedom.'

There is another campaign in the leadership of which the Cardinal's death will be most keenly felt. It is the campaign for a regeneration of Britain and Europe and a building up of a new social, economic and political system on just and moral foundations. Staunch Roman Catholic though he was, he saw that in a world so divided as our own the gathering of all forces looking in the same direction was indispensable for such a purpose. Accordingly, in August, 1940, profoundly stirred by the moral collapse which caused France's down-

fall, he inaugurated the movement of 'The Sword of the Spirit' to 'deal with the issues raised by the present war.' It was a Roman Catholic organisation, with an appeal directed to all men of good will.

Not long after the Sword had started, a move of another kind was being suggested in non-Roman Catholic circles. This was the project of a joint Declaration on the Foundations of Peace, to be signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Cardinal Hinsley, and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council. It was to include the Pope's Five Peace Points, and also (from non-Roman sources), the Five Social and Economic Points adopted by the Oxford Conference, 1937. For some twenty years there had been occasional co-operation for limited social purposes between the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian Communions. But the manifesto now proposed covered a much larger field. I knew something of the communications which passed between the Archbishops and the Cardinal, and of the care which the Cardinal took about the wording of the summary of the Five Peace Points. And I have no doubt that equal care was taken in his consultations with his own brethren. The Cardinal's decision to take part in the Declaration was of far-reaching import. When it appeared as a Letter to the *Times*, on December 21st, 1940, with all four signatures, it was greeted as an outstanding event in contemporary Christian history.

Having given his signature, the Cardinal never looked back. The famous Stoll meetings of May, 1941, organised by the Sword of the Spirit, over which he and the Archbishop of Canterbury presided on two consecutive afternoons, with speakers of different communions expounding the Ten Points, gave emphatic evidence that the campaign of Christian co-operation was safely launched. At the end of the first meeting the Cardinal appealed for a further step.

'Our unity must not be in sentiment and in word only; it must be carried into practical measures. Why should we not have a regular system of consultation and collaboration from now onwards . . . to agree on a plan of action which shall win the peace when the din of battle is ended.'

The appeal was received with a burst of applause. Then, turning from his chair and about to depart, the Cardinal, in response to an urgent whisper, 'Eminence, may we say the *Our Father*?' led the whole vast assembly in praying together of *Our Father which art in heaven*.

It could hardly be expected that no difficulties should arise. Anglicans and Free Churchmen had co-operated for some time, but

not Roman Catholics. The change was too great to escape criticism within the Roman Catholic Church, and suspicion outside it. It was then that I had the great privilege of coming into close personal touch with the Cardinal, following upon the welcome he gave me at the first Stoll meeting. Misunderstandings in particular had arisen in connection with the Constitution of the Sword of the Spirit, lately published. Plans were afoot for some sort of association of both Roman Catholics and non-Roman Catholics in a single movement. Amongst other plans was that of one Sword having two separate Wings, under two separate Presidents. The Cardinal invited me to spend a night in October, 1941, as his guest at Hare Street. It was a wonderful experience of charity, devotion and wisdom. My host was extraordinarily kind. He talked of many persons and things—the Pope, his own time at Rome, Cardinal Faulhaber, Bishop von Galen, the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Lang), 'a lovable man,' the R.A.F. pilots, 'boys in blue'; and of how men had become beasts, and how the murder and destruction of war horrified him.

But our principal subject was the Sword of the Spirit and Christian co-operation. The Pope had called for the collaboration of all men of good will. The Cardinal himself longed for the unity of the Church, but he knew that Christian co-operation was a very different thing from that. Co-operation must be based on the natural law, yet with the knowledge that our civilisation was founded on Christianity. And though Christian co-operation was a convenient short description, it would in his judgment be more accurate to speak of 'co-operation in applying traditions received from Christianity,'—Christian traditions which are the basis of our civilisation. He emphasised the immensity of the forces opposed to all that Christians stood for, and mentioned a recent 'dreadful' speech, utterly anti-religious, by one of the best known writers in England. Surely we must co-operate with a view to reconstruction and a just and proper order after the war!

He discussed the difficulties. He spoke of those felt by some in his own Church, especially with regard to the inclusion of religious activities as a part of co-operation. He listened to me describing difficulties felt by some on the other side. There was still the old fear of Rome in many quarters, and therefore a wonder whether there was not something which lay behind this new cordiality. And there was above all the special difficulty of religious freedom. The Cardinal went fully into this point, and wrote to me for my personal information afterwards, emphasising, among other things, the impossibility of applying coercion in belief consistently with Catholic

teaching; the part played in the whole matter by political factors and by governments; the stress laid by the present Pope on the rights of minorities in the Five Peace Points; and quoting Pius XI. *Mit Brennender Sorge*.

'The believer has an inalienable right to profess his faith and to put it into practice in the manner suited to him. Laws that suppress, or make this profession and practice difficult, contradict the natural law.'

These, and all other points, were discussed by the Cardinal with complete charity and candour. I could not help being struck at every moment of our long talks with the deep earnestness of his spirit and his heart-felt desire for the working together of Christians on a common basis, while at the same time clearly recognising that all such working together must be outside the dogmatic field. Nor could I help being struck by the desire he showed to work on lines which would endure, and so secure the firm and lasting support of English Roman Catholics.

The upshot of our conversations was a renewed conviction that there was a growing movement in the country in favour of united meetings, and therefore that the first step was to press for united action locally, and then for something more fully national. It was clear, too, that the Cardinal had a strong belief in personal relationships, and in the coming together, as friends, of like-minded men and women who, whatever their differences, were animated by the same Spirit.

When I left Hare Street the next morning I felt a richer man, richer spiritually as well as richer in wisdom. Since then more things have happened to extend co-operation, particularly the setting up of a Joint Standing Committee, including Roman Catholics, Free Churchmen, and Anglicans. These things are good; and the impetus of the movement depends very much on the enthusiasm with which members of the various bodies concerned play their part, without sacrifice of principle on either side. But what is needed above everything else in this crisis of civilisation is a release of spiritual power, in dependence on Divine Grace. For the increasing realisation both of the crisis and of the need, and for the lead he gave in the co-ordination and direction of Christian influences in national and international life, Christians of all communions owe Cardinal Hinsley a great and unforgettable debt.

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