

# Prayer and Righteous Action : exploring Bonhoeffer's suggestion\*

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Today you will be baptized a Christian. All those great ancient words of the Christian proclamation will be spoken over you, and the command of Jesus to baptize will be carried out on you, without your knowing anything about it. But we are once again being driven right back to the beginnings of our understanding. Reconciliation and redemption, regeneration and the Holy Spirit, love of our enemies, cross and resurrection, life in Christ and Christian discipleship—all these things are so difficult and so remote that we hardly venture any more to speak of them. In the traditional words and acts we suspect that there may be something quite new and revolutionary, though we cannot as yet grasp or express it. That is our own fault. Our Church, which has been fighting in these years only for self-preservation, as though that were an end in itself, is incapable of taking the word of reconciliation and redemption to man and the world. Our earlier words are therefore bound to lose their force and sense, and our being Christians today will be limited to two things: prayer and righteous action among men. All Christian thinking, speaking, and organising, must be born anew out of this prayer and action.<sup>1</sup>

That was written by Bonhoeffer during that period of his imprisonment in Tegel between April and August 1944 when, having faced up to the prospect of a long time in prison due to the delay of his trial, he settled down to critical and creative theological work. The first letter to Bethge of this period raises the theme of God's providence:

I'm firmly convinced—however strange it may seem—that my life has followed a straight and unbroken course, at any rate in its outward conduct. It has been an uninterrupted enrichment of experience, for which I can only be thankful. If I were to end my life here in these conditions that would have a meaning that I think I could understand; on the other hand, everything might be a thorough preparation for a new start and a new task when

peace comes.<sup>2</sup>

The theme becomes more explicit when he returns to the subject of the continuity of his life two weeks later, and concludes:

Everything seems to me to have taken its natural course, and to be determined necessarily and straightforwardly of a higher providence.<sup>3</sup>

In the event, he both ended his life in prison and, through those letters to Bethge, contributed to a new start after the war. *The Letters and Papers from Prison* are now something of a classic in modern theology, and there are fierce disputes over their interpretation. I will not do an exegesis of them but will use them to place in context the title of this essay and will draw on them at several points as a source of key questions and suggestions.

## I

Christian prayer is a fundamental form of engagement in life with God. It is a way of being knitted into relationship with God at the 'cutting edge' of history and actively recognizing the priority of God. The same could be said of prayer in Judaism, Islam and several other traditions. The particularity of Christian prayer is bound up with its being 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', symbolizing a definite way of identifying God and of recognising what sort of priority God has.

That short paragraph could lead into most of the main issues of theology and philosophy of religion. They range from the problems of the existence and nature of God through the interaction of divine and human freedom to the meaning of creation and history, including the various religions and world-views. I want to take a particular angle, one similar in a general way to that of Bonhoeffer in his *Letters and Papers*. It is the perspective of a theologian who has tried to work out positions on such issues over the years, and who is also engaged in prayer and action. My main concern here is to explore some urgent questions that arise within this involvement.

The first is: Who are you, God? Bonhoeffer, in his lectures on Christology over ten years previously had argued for the priority of the question 'Who are you?' in relation to Jesus Christ, and that was for him the way to the question of God, inseparable from prayer. It does not rule out doing justice to a wide range of other questions, theological, historical, philosophical, etc., but it does underline the fact that, if God is the sort of God affirmed by the tradition, he is already in relationship with us, and rational recognition of this through direct address is desirable. Prayer that does not keep this question alive and central misses the endlessly rich living God, and is in danger of turning God into an axiom, a function, an unquestioned projection, a doctrine or even a problem-solver with no being of his

own. Persisting in this question with the available resources is essential to the iconoclasm of prayer. 'The corruption of the best is the worst', and prayer has long been understood as a place of ultimate reality and also maximum illusion and delusion. In our culture's 'masters of suspicion', such as Marx, Nietzsche and Freud, the cure for such delusion has often been worse than the disease, but all prayer needs this and other iconoclastic therapy, and its lifeline is that leading question to God, putting the questioner in the vulnerable position of openness to an answer. Bonhoeffer's *Christology* sees the answer coming first as a counter-question: Who are you? Our autonomy over against God and other people is challenged, and the therapy is inextricable from acknowledging a self and engaging in an action that conform to the structure of reality in Christ: being for others and for God in the world.

Bonhoeffer followed this theme in various ways through *The Cost of Discipleship*, *Ethics* and other writings, and in *Letters and Papers* he returns with new urgency to the 'Who?' question: 'What is bothering me incessantly is the question what Christianity really is, or indeed who Christ really is, for us today'<sup>4</sup>. Trying to answer that leads him to a reconception of God through the crucified Christ, whose implications for prayer and providence are what I want to explore:

Here is the decisive difference between Christianity and all religions. Man's religiosity makes him look in his distress to the power of God in the world: God is the *deus ex machina*. The Bible directs man to God's powerlessness and suffering; only the suffering God can help. To that extent we may say that the development towards the world's coming of age outlined above, which has done away with a false conception of God, opens up a way of seeing the God of the Bible, who wins power and space in the world by his weakness. This will probably be the starting point for our 'secular interpretation'.<sup>5</sup>

This is a drastic iconoclasm, using the force of modern secularization and atheism in alliance with the Gospel of Christ crucified in order to smash the images of God that are projections of our religious desires and needs. It is in the area of providence, as we try to imagine God's future, that we are most vulnerable to the seduction of a comfortable God with a power which serves our ends, and prayer becomes a function of our fixation on this idol. If, however, the answer to the question: 'Who are you, God?' is: 'I am the one who suffers for the world in Jesus Christ, and I call you to join me in this', then providence is in that answer and call: this is what is being provided by God, this is the way into the future.

If the cross is the eye of the needle through which all the images and attributes of God have to pass and be transformed, what about

transformed omnipotence in relation to providence? Can we not give some indication of how the cross changes our understanding of the power of God? The force of Bonhoeffer's prescription of 'prayer and righteous action' before speech about such things points to an answer: 'Not directly'. This cuts two ways. Firstly, it of course destroys idolatry which extrapolates its picture of divine power, causality and success from human ideas and practice. But, secondly, it also undermines any pat reversals of our common notions. There is here no easily understood powerlessness either. It is still a God 'who wins power and space in the world by his weakness'. What sort of power? It is one that has been through the crucifixion and never leaves that behind, that is identified by that suffering and death, but yet still is power, beyond our categories and possibilities. This is only entered through that eye of the needle, and participated in through prayer and righteous action, from which there is the possibility of fresh speech and concepts. Without the cross, the prayer and the action, the right language is unimaginable, and to take short cuts gives a dangerous illusion of knowledge. Hence Bonhoeffer's much-debated 'discipline of the secret' in line with the early Christian limitation of the Eucharist to those who had been through catechesis and baptism.

The obvious place to look for this different sort of power in Christian terms is to the resurrection of the crucified Jesus. On 27th March 1944 Bonhoeffer had written:

Easter? We're paying more attention to dying than to death. We're more concerned to get over the act of dying than to overcome death. Socrates mastered the art of dying; Christ overcame death as 'the last enemy' (1 Cor. 15.26). There is a real difference between the two; the one is within the scope of human possibilities, the other means resurrection. It's not from *ars moriendi*, the art of dying, but from the resurrection of Christ, that a new and purifying wind can blow through our present world. Here is the answer to *dos moi pou stō kai kinēsō iēn gēn*. If a few people really believed and acted on that in their daily lives, a great deal would be changed. To live in the light of the resurrection—that is what Easter means.<sup>6</sup>

In his reflections during the following months there is no sign at all of going back on this, and he himself was clearly living confident of his own participation in the resurrection. He saw his 'religionless Christianity' involving a 'profound this-worldliness, characterized by discipline and the constant knowledge of death and resurrection'.<sup>7</sup> But the letters break off with little more on the way in which 'the suffering God' who 'lets himself be pushed out of the world on to the cross'<sup>8</sup> is also identifiable as the one who raises Jesus from death. That surely is at the heart of the specifically Christian way of posing the question of prayer and providence. If God's identity and action in the world are to

be understood decisively through Jesus and the climactic events of his life then the relationship between crucifixion and resurrection is pivotal. What are the implications of the answer to that key question, 'Who are you, God?' being 'I am the one who raises Jesus Christ from death'?

It has often been easier for twentieth century theologians to conceive of a suffering God than of a God who raises the dead. The iconoclasm that a suffering God demands is of idols whose destruction brings considerable relief to many post-Enlightenment minds: the omnipotent, interfering, dominating God has been a principal target for atheisms and humanisms which aim to liberate humanity from this apparent heteronomy. But the God of resurrection seems to bring back all the old problems again. Is this not a *deus ex machina* dealing with death, a reversal of the weakness of the cross by a 'God of the gaps', and a clear opening for affirming God's triumphant power in the world?

The answer depends partly on how far the crucified Jesus is intrinsic to the reality of both the resurrection and God. The resurrection may be used to reaffirm an unreconstructed God, but it also may invite the sort of reconception of God that the doctrine of the Trinity may represent and that in this century has been attempted in various ways. Key considerations are those of creation, cosmology and causality, of time and the openness of the future, of the possibility of a non-competitive notion of the relationship of divine and human freedom and action, and of the historical status of Christian faith. The scope of the issue of the resurrection is the scope of God in relation to the world and the whole of its history and therefore inevitably raises all the major systematic and historical questions. But my title suggests another complementary way into it: in what sort of prayer and righteous action might the truth of the resurrection of Jesus be learnt, discerned and embodied?

## II

The prayer might centre on asking who Jesus Christ is for us today, purifying our acknowledgement of him, internalizing and becoming fluent in the vocabulary and grammar of the language and behaviour through which the testimony to Jesus has been conveyed, and participating in the expansive recognition and response that sprang from the first testimony. This prayer is most adequately characterized through the activity of praise. If it is praise of God through Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, it is part of a dynamic relationship in which there is not only a new knowledge and affirmation of God but also a new sort of responsibility and action. If God takes responsibility for the world in this way, then it is a complete taking, including death itself, but is also a complete renewal of responsibility.<sup>9</sup>

The recognition of this person, risen from death, is inseparable from a new vocation in the world. Union with Christ in faith means union with his being for God and for others in history. In prayer, praise and thanks for this informs everything else, and, because of the content which is being affirmed, prayer is the place where the most radical responsibility is taken. The responsibility includes decision and the risk of action, and it is in this free participation in the risks that God's purpose is enacted. A great deal in prayer, theology, the church and ourselves conspires to break the intrinsic link between Christian prayer and such risky, responsible action. As Bonhoeffer, in the baptism address from which my title is taken, says: 'We have learnt, rather too late, that action comes, not from thought, but from a readiness for responsibility.'<sup>10</sup>

What about righteous action in relation to the resurrection? For Bonhoeffer, the resonances of justification would have been implied by the term 'righteous' and his *Ethics* give an account of what such action in the reality of justification might be like. That is one worthwhile approach to the subject, but I want to take another more roundabout route of beginning with the question: What is action? Running through a great deal of modern theology and philosophy is a concern to conceive reality more adequately in terms of action. One classic discussion is by Hannah Arendt in *The Human Condition*<sup>11</sup>, in which she makes an illuminating distinction between labour, work and action.

Labour is activity concerned with the maintenance of life, the necessities which repeatedly need to be provided in order to be consumed in living. Its product is the continuity of life, and it aims at abundance of goods. In the process of production 'division of labour' signifies the qualitative equivalence of all special activities:

Division of labour is based on the fact that two men can put their labour power together and 'behave toward each other as though they were one'. This oneness is the exact opposite of cooperation, it indicates the unity of the species with regard to which every single member is the same and unexchangeable.<sup>12</sup>

The *animal laborans* is distinguished from *homo faber*, the labour of the body from the work of the hands. Work, in this sense, produces the 'artificial' human world, aims at permanence, stability and durability in use-objects. A world is fabricated, the worker has a means-end mentality geared to producing things (whereas in labour things are all subservient to the process of production and consumption), and sees human beings as users and instrumentalizers. The limit case of work is the work of art, representing by its capacity for permanence the stability of the fabricated world, but also showing that world as the stage for an 'action' which is useless for the

necessities of life or the production of useful objects.

Action itself is closely bound up with speech:

Action and speech are so closely related because the primordial and specifically human act must at the same time contain the answer to the question asked of every newcomer: 'Who are you?'<sup>13</sup>

Action and speech constitute the web of human relationships and their outcome cannot be calculated beforehand. This unpredictability and risk goes with a boundless potential for establishing new relationships, and even the agent cannot know in advance what the self is which his or her action and speech will reveal. Arendt sees the unpredictability met in a truly human way by the faculty of making promises, and the irreversibility of action met by the capacity for forgiveness enabling fresh beginnings in relationships.

As Arendt looks at our civilization she sees a takeover by the *animal laborans*. In Marxism this is explicitly the ideology. In the consumer society all activities tend to be assimilated to labour—job-holding in order to earn a living, earning and spending power as the central concerns in line with the *animal laborans*' goals of abundance, comfort and happiness—and society itself is seen as a large economic unit. Our culture of suspicion throws doubt on the importance of all action and speech not reducible to the values of labour or at best work. The contrasts with labour and work are found in leisure and play, not in action that performs 'great words and deeds'. Action loses significance in human sciences which study 'behaviour':

The justification of statistics is that deeds and events are rare occurrences in everyday life and in history. Yet the meaningfulness of everyday relationships is disclosed not in everyday life but in rare deeds, just as the significance of a historical period shows itself only in the few events which illuminate it.<sup>14</sup>

Arendt's account could be seen as an identification of specifically human transcendent endeavour. It is a humanist position which starts with the Greek *polis* and the action of its public life and moves to seeing Jesus as a teacher and practitioner of action in the fullest sense. There is no mention of prayer as part of Jesus' action (though it would probably be included in her concept of 'thought') and no place for the resurrection—it is replaced by hope in the capacity of human action for new beginnings, and by the immortality conferred by their memory and their consequences on great words and deeds. Can it be said that human action *needs* prayer? I think not! 'Needs' implies something more at the level of labour. Prayer can hardly be said to be necessary for action. But the character of action will be profoundly affected by the way in which its hopes, freedom and responsibility arise. By what are we enabled to be free and responsible? What is the

power and content of hope and responsibility? The greatest contemporary battles rage around these questions, and any answer involves a whole ecology of presuppositions, arguments and conclusions. One defensible answer is that, beyond the necessary God and God the maker, is the God of action. This is the God of all that Arendt sees in action—freedom, hope, promise, self-manifestation and expansive relationships—whose being is an invitation to full action and is intrinsic to its fulfilment. In his relationship with this God Jesus' prayer can be seen as integral to his action. His calling on God as Abba and his Gethsemane prayer are not just his 'thinking' but the union of his active recognition of God with his complete readiness for responsibility. The conditional petition of Gethsemane involves the decision, risk and responsibility of going to his death. The resurrection does not reverse any of this. Rather it answers the Gethsemane prayer in the following form: God acts, Jesus appears.<sup>15</sup> It is an action which can be understood through concepts of freedom, hope, promise and self-manifestation and which invites their spread and overflow in expansive relationships of communication, knowledge and love. Prayer therefore is participation in this God's active presence in which he is praised above all for his self-manifestation in a form which gives the possibility of our own reconstitution in his image: free to manifest ourselves in active responsibility. The expanding economy of this praise is enacted in lives whose action communicates its content in new ways and enables others to join its dynamic of 'life in the Spirit'.<sup>16</sup>

### III

This discussion of prayer and action has so far lacked one vital dimension, which is more than just an element. Consider the passage at the opening of 2 Corinthians (1: 3—12), in which Paul writes about the 'God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God ...'. That passage has prayer and righteous action, and embodies the logic of crucifixion and resurrection, but all of this is inextricable from the reality of the community. It is utterly shared action and prayer. This was vital for Bonhoeffer too. In his final period he did not shift from church to world, but carried further a concern for community that ran through all his theology from his doctorate *Sanctorum Communio*. His major project in prison was a book looking forward to the post-war church (sketched in "Outline for a Book" of July-August 1944)<sup>17</sup>, and the thrust of our opening quotation is toward a new sort of church, with "prayer and righteous action" as the form of life together that is needed to realize that vision.

Applying to that passage mentioned, from 2 Cor. 1, the remark



of Bonhoeffer that 'in the traditional words and acts we suspect that there may be something quite new and revolutionary', I see this partly in the jointness and mutuality that it shows. There is here a demonstration of partnership of a fundamental and all-embracing kind, informed by the news of the crucifixion and resurrection. Arendt too sees clearly how her concept of action involves a sort of power which is only possible through the free partnership of those who speak and act (in her full sense) together. This 'power is to an astonishing degree independent of material factors, either of numbers or means', it cannot be stored up and kept in reserve, but exists only in its actualization, and

Power is actualized only where word and deed have not parted company, where words are not empty and deeds not brutal, where words are not used to veil intentions but to disclose realities, and deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities.<sup>18</sup>

I recently looked back over my life, asking the question: Where has there been this sort of partnership in action, according to the criteria of shared decision, risk and responsibility? It was striking how very rare it had been in all areas of life. Yet the qualitative difference in the action where it had happened, and the astonishingly fruitful power of this, enabled many of the traditional words and acts to reveal their revolutionary potential. There is truth that simply cannot be appreciated, appropriated or communicated unless it is received together with others and allowed to inform a life of joint action. New speech, understanding and activity are generated through previous and current shared life, and there is no short cut that bypasses the 'death to self' that the sharing requires. The prayer and action that go on within this sharing are a way of appropriating the tradition as the New Testament appropriated the Old Testament: carrying it forward in new ways which maintain its grammar and syntax but embody them in a new common story.

The clearest contemporary threat to such sharing is our almost normative individualism, pervading the church, society and theology. It is even possible to suspect Bonhoeffer and Arendt of a type of individualism. They may both localize community in shared action in a way which misses or at least does not make sufficiently explicit the relationship of 'being held', of 'being welcomed by the other'.<sup>19</sup> Both are in danger of encouraging a high-quality individual action with others and for others which maximizes responsibility but does not make clear enough the preconditions in terms of presence and being held together. When good relationships go sour, the most vulnerable element, and usually the first to go, is not shared action but the constant holding of the other in love and respect. The problem with focussing on action, and on prayer as an act, is that justice is not done

to the context of constancy in which these come right.

Prayer is first of all a recognition that we are all together being held in a fundamental relationship of faithfulness by God, and to discern the nature and quality of that faithfulness is to see how intrinsic to it is our being in community. Ephesians ch. 1, if freed from predestinarian misunderstanding, is a good example of the interweaving of the initiative and faithfulness of God, the death of Christ, and the prayer, praise and love of the community, all in the context of a universal *shalom*, “the fulness of time, uniting all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth” (Eph. 1.10). Being part of all that gives the individual an identity which cannot be individualist or even centred on one group of people: ‘For he is our peace, who has made us both one ... that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body, through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end’ (Eph. 2. 14—16). Prayer asks above all for the constant, expansive realization of this,

that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be fulfilled with all the fulness of God.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus, to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen. (Eph. 3.17—21)

Such prayer shows, as do the rest of Ephesians and the Corinthian correspondence, an identity that is essentially corporate, sustained in dynamic relationships of mutuality and coinherence. The horizon is the whole of reality, and righteousness is revealed in the welcome of a face:

For it is the God who said, ‘Let light shine in the darkness’, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. (2. Cor. 4.6)

Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. (Rom. 15.7)

In such a context the life of prayer and action is woven into the home life of a community that tries to learn and grow together in the basic character traits that Bonhoeffer lists in his vision of the church:

Moderation, purity, trust, loyalty, constancy, patience, discipline, humility, contentment, and modesty.<sup>20</sup>

#### IV

I will try to summarize where this essay has reached. In the present, at the cutting edge of our common history, there are three key Christian

dynamics of life in the Spirit: prayer, community and righteous action (including prophetic speech). The three are coinherent, in constant *perichoresis*, and if one goes wrong the others suffer. Their form and content are intrinsically related to the identity of God, and I have tried, mainly through exploring the meaning of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, to conceive them appropriately. The result has been a concept of prayer that centres on praise and thanks, within which readiness for new action arises; a concept of action that centres on decision, risk and responsibility, seen as in non-competitive relationship with the God who is recognized in prayer; and both are inherently corporate—learnt, developed and practised in community and generating new community.

This essay has been what David Tracy describes as a ‘journey of intensification’ into two vital activities. Theology has seen a great many such journeys in recent years, especially in relation to action. It seems to me that such ‘hot’ theologies are best when they are complemented by, or at least contain implicitly, the types of theology that are more historical and hermeneutical, on the one hand, and systematic, on the other. As regards the topic of this essay, the area of both historical and systematic theology that seems most to require development if prayer and action are to have adequate treatment is that of ecclesiology. In English academic theology there have been many pressures against paying adequate attention to the doctrine of the church (not least the desire to stay clear of an area of very messy conflict), and this neglect raises serious questions about whether it is possible to pay the right sort of attention to it in a discipline generally carried on in such an individualist way. If there is anything in the challenge of the opening quotation from Bonhoeffer, then the indirectness of the way to renewal of Christian thinking needs reckoning with: it involves prayer and righteous action in community.

\* First given as a paper at the Annual Conference of the Society for the Study of Theology, Exeter 1985, which had for its theme ‘God’s providence’.

1 “Thoughts on the Day of the Baptism of Dietrich Wilhelm Rudiger Bethge, May 1944” by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, Enlarged Edition, ed. by Eberhard Bethge, S.C.M. London 1971, pp. 299f.

2 Ibid. 11th April 1944, p. 272.

3 Ibid. 22nd April 1944, p. 276.

4 Ibid. 30th April 1944, p. 279.

5 Ibid. 16th July 1944, p. 361.

6 Ibid. p. 240. Bonhoeffer’s quotation of Archimedes (‘Give me somewhere to stand and I will move the earth’) comes from Pappus, *Synagoge*.

7 Ibid. 21st July 1944, p. 369.

8 Ibid. 16th July 1944, p. 360.

9 The sense of completeness here is not of a static perfection but of an overflowing, expanding completeness and perfection of the sort that is involved

- in 'the glory of God'. Cf. Daniel W. Hardy and David F. Ford, *Jubilate: Theology in Praise* D.L.T. London 1984, Chs. 2, 7; Appendix A.
- 10 Ibid. p. 298.
- 11 Doubleday, New York, 1958.
- 12 Op. cit. p. 107.
- 13 Ibid. p. 158. Cf. Bonhoeffer: 'Every real action is of such a kind that no one other than oneself can do it'. (*Letters and Papers*, op. cit., 8th June 1944, p. 325).
- 14 Ibid. p. 39.
- 15 Hans Frei, in *The Identity of Jesus Christ*, Fortress, Philadelphia 1975, gives an account of the resurrection in these terms, the best that I have found.
- 16 Cf. Hardy and Ford, op. cit., Chs. 7, 9, Appendix A.
- 17 These pointers to an ecclesiology Thomas Day, in a perspective essay, calls 'Bonhoeffer's main point—and the purpose of his writings'. ('Conviviality and Common Sense: The Meaning of Christian Community for Dietrich Bonhoeffer' in *A Bonhoeffer Legacy. Essays in Understanding* Ed. A.J. Klassen, Erdmans, Grand Rapids 1981, p. 225).
- 18 *The Human Condition*, op. cit., pp. 178—9.
- 19 Emmanuel Levinas in *Totality and Infinity. An Essay on Exteriority*, Duquesne, Pittsburgh 1969, offers a philosophical account of ethics that embraces this aspect together with action and theory, 'the welcoming of the face and the work of justice—which condition the birth of truth itself' (p. 28).
- 20 *Letters and Papers*, op. cit. p. 383.

## Dear, Dear Maude

### Peter Hebblethwaite

Baron Friedrich von Huegel wrote to Maude Domenica Petre in February 1910:

My dear, dear Maude,

You, now that Fr. T. is gone, are about the only English Catholic, with whom I have felt, with whom I feel, profoundly at one in these most complex and straining transition-problems (Michael de la Bedoyère, *The Life of Baron von Huegel*, p. 240).

Fr. T. was of course George Tyrrell, who had died, excommunicated in 1909. Maude, born in 1863, belonged to an old Catholic family which had combined dying for the Pope with a tradition of Cisalpine resistance to intolerable papal decrees. In childhood she resolved to become, when she grew up, a saint, a philosopher and a martyr (p. 6). When doubts assailed her, a learned Jesuit recommended that she should go to Rome to study the philosophy of St Thomas Aquinas.