

SOME QUESTIONS AS TO INTERDENOMINATIONAL COOPERATION

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AMONG the many ethical and pastoral problems that the present crisis emphasizes as one of the most important, as well as one of the most perplexing, is that of so-called "inter-faith" meetings, or discussions on ethical and religious topics jointly with non-Catholics. Particular prominence has been given to this topic in this country by the nation-wide activities of the National Conference of Christians and Jews and the criticisms that have been directed against this organization. In Great Britain the "Sword of the Spirit" movement, under the leadership of His Eminence Arthur Cardinal Hinsley, has been obliged to consider norms for co-operation with non-Catholics in the spiritual sphere. The subject of interconfessional approach to urgent social and ethical questions was earnestly mooted in Germany before the present war; and the attacks made upon the Church by the Nazis have caused both Catholics and Protestants in that country to re-examine their respective positions with regard to the possibility of working together.

The Editor of *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES*, in a conversation early in this year with the writer, expressed the view that a somewhat more detailed inquiry into the rights and wrongs of such co-operation would be timely and appropriate for this Review. It was agreed that such an inquiry might well be prefaced by a preliminary article which would merely propound the question at issue. Without venturing upon a solution, this preface would recall some of the events that make such a question appropriate, and would attempt to indicate where some of the most controversial points appear to lie. This is the scope, therefore, of the following lines. They are intended merely as a curtain-raiser, in the hope that they may lead to a discussion that will not be merely theoretically interesting, but

which will offer some aid to the Catholic clergy and laity when they are confronted with requests for participation in such events.

When such invitations are offered, as they usually are, in the best of faith, it is certainly most desirable that the answer we give to our non-Catholic friends, whether it be yea or nay, should be founded upon a definite and universally accepted principle. If we accept, let us be sure of our ground. If we refuse, let it be for reasons that are genuinely authoritative, and are not inconsistent with the sum total of our Catholic professions of justice and charity. Even if our reply at times may produce disappointment or pain, let it be seen that its motives are wholly objective, and not conditioned by merely temperamental traits of character.

Obviously, the actual decision as to the lawfulness of such participation in any individual instance rests with the authorities of the Church. Nevertheless, in this as in all similar instances, the exercise of the Church's authority presupposes, for its normal functioning, a religious care on the part of the Church's members to form their own consciences.

I

Approach to the questions at issue will be facilitated by first eliminating the type of interdenominational co-operation or discussion with which we are not here so immediately concerned. Such an approach has already been indicated by the Rev. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., S.T.D., in a scholarly article, entitled "Catholics and 'Interfaith' Groups," in the *Ecclesiastical Review* for November, 1941.

The Code of Canon Law (Canon 1325, §3), as Father Connell points out, "explicitly provides for public meetings held for the *specific purpose* of discussing or debating religious questions. In treating of matters pertaining to Divine Faith, the law prescribes: 'Let Catholics beware of conducting debates

(*disputationes*) or conferences, (*collationes*), particularly those that are public, with non-Catholics, without the permission of the Holy See, or, in an urgent case, of the local Ordinary.”

Quite the opposite type of interdenominational meeting is that, notes Father Connell, “in which the participants are present merely as fellow-citizens, and matters of a religious nature are not discussed.” These may be generally summed up as civic tasks. The priest, the minister, the rabbi take part in them “not precisely as religious functionaries but rather as prominent citizens, like the mayor and the local congressman.” Even a prayer by a non-Catholic clergyman is tolerated on such an occasion *civilis officii vel honoris causa* (Canon 1258, §2.).

The main problem, therefore, as stated by Father Connell: “centers about meetings and associations of an intermediate character—those which are not professedly and primarily devoted to the discussion of religious topics, but which are concerned with matters that naturally invite the expression of religious ideas. Such are, in general, assemblies and organizations that occupy themselves with moral and social questions.”

These elementary distinctions, simple and clear as they appear, are useful as a general guide through the maze. But they are not without difficulty when applied to the circumstances in which the relations between Catholics and non-Catholics now find themselves. Chief among these circumstances is the challenge to the Christian synthesis which is placed by the totalitarian ideologies. With wilful vehemence, these ideologies use purely civic and temporal issues as a weapon against religion and the spiritual concept of man. The Christian reaction to such confusion is naturally to assert the primacy of the religious element and the spiritual element in man on every occasion, even those which are from their nature purely civic in character, and anxiously to seek the means for perfecting and consolidating such an assertion. Such a reaction,

however, on the part of religiously minded persons, Catholic or non-Catholic, tends to break down conveniently established divisions. While it opens new and unexpected opportunities for the force and cogency of the Catholic message, it creates new dangers; makes it all the more imperative that the Catholic position in these contacts be clearly defined.

II

With the foregoing as a preliminary, a glance over some of the more noteworthy recent interdenominational activities at home and abroad may illustrate some of the difficulties that are to be met.

1. In the field of what might be called civic tasks, where Catholics and non-Catholics co-operate in the furthering of some worthy patriotic or social cause or undertaking, we have such matters as the support given by the various leaders, Catholic and non-Catholic, to the very effective and timely Catholic campaign for decent literature, initiated by the Most Rev. John F. Noll, Bishop of Fort Wayne.

The Interfaith Conference on Unemployment, at Washington, D.C., held in June, 1940, and several subsequent joint meetings and joint utterances on such matters as unemployment, race discrimination, etc., are of similar category.

The needs of the men in the armed services have called forth a host of interdenominational activities under the aegis of the United Services Organizations (USO). So, too, has the civilian defense program. One of the most notable instances in this line was the interfaith committee appointed on December 20, 1941, by Governor Hurley of Connecticut, in order to enlist the aid of churches and synagogues within that State. A five-point program for civic unity and amity was drawn up at a meeting in Hartford by Catholic, Protestant and Jewish clergymen. The five points enumerated brought the religious and spiritual issue squarely into the civic field. They emphasized

the need of a spiritual interpretation of the present crisis—loyalty to the Government—the importance of fostering unity among citizens—preparation for a just and durable peace—the spiritual and religious foundation for the rights of man.

The USO program against intolerance led to important “trio” meetings in the South, e.g., in the Richmond Diocese.

2. Express action for the promotion of civic amity, as such, or “solidarity” is the characteristic of a wide circle of interdenominational activities. In its leaflet entitled “Trends, 1940,” the National Conference of Christians and Jews stated that such solidarity is needed because of (1) the civic danger of various hate-inspiring activities; and (2) the need of supplying spiritual power and vision to our civic life, in order to resist the totalitarian tide. The leaflet gave various examples of co-operation, but insisted that unity, not “uniformity,” was sought.

From time to time, the same organization discussed the possibility of definitely creating common tasks for the sake of promoting civic amity.

In Detroit, the Civic Amity Dinner takes place annually, under the auspices of the N.C.C.J. As many as a thousand have attended this affair, representative of all religious bodies, racial and national groups.

3. In the interests of civic amity interdenominational meetings and conferences against intolerance were held in various parts of the country. Particularly prominent in this connection have been the “trios,” discussed by Father Connell in his article, where a team of three clergymen, a priest, a minister and a rabbi travel through the country and present the case for tolerance to the public, each through the medium of his respective beliefs. Their talks are usually followed by a question period from the floor.

Closely allied to the campaign against intolerance is the effort to build up a *specifically religious amity*: not merely to create friendship between the members of various religious

denominations, but to create a favorable or sympathetic attitude toward other religious beliefs.

It is evident that "tolerance" can be understood as meaning two very widely divergent things: tolerance for or sense of fellowship with *persons* of other religious beliefs, in spite of religious differences; which tolerance is based upon the esteem and love which we, as Christians, owe to all men; or it can be understood as tolerance of, or even esteem for, *other religious beliefs* than our own.

Certain categories of activities may be listed under this latter heading, but they are chiefly among non-Catholics themselves such as the Springfield, Mass., "experiment" among children in trying to understand "the other fellow's religion." They come into such obvious conflict with Catholic teaching and practice that they are not subjects of our immediate consideration.

A curious adventure in the line of tolerance for "the other man's religion" was the project entitled "Religious Tourists," or "Tourists for a Day," whereby members of each of the three major religious groups, Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, such as university students, were taken around to a Catholic church, a Protestant church, a synagog, where the respective beliefs and religious practices were explained to them by the clergyman in charge. This device enabled Jews and Protestants to inform themselves about the Catholic church; it enabled Catholics to obtain some interesting historical and liturgical information about the Jews and their rites, but obviously it exposed Catholics to the preaching of heresy; and objections based thereon brought about the discontinuance of the practice, as far as Catholics were concerned.

4. Still another category of interdenominational activities may be included in various enterprises on behalf of religious practice, in general: such as the campaign for church-going inaugurated in Washington, D.C., for the benefit of Government employes, by the Canon Anson Phelps Stokes, of the

Episcopal Washington Cathedral. Catholic participation in this campaign, which was kept free from indifferentist implications, was endorsed by the Most Rev. Michael J. Curley, D.D., Archbishop of Baltimore.

An investigation of religion in education was undertaken by the executive committee of the N.C.C.J. A pamphlet was issued on the status of women in the three major religious bodies. The capable and accurate Religious News Service, conducted by the same organization, both supposes and stimulates a growing interest in religious events and personalities.

At Dundee Presbyterian Church in Omaha, Neb., an educational exposition was held in the cause of religion. One of the features was a "Catholic Room," furnished with Catholic liturgical and devotional articles, explanations of the same, literature, etc. Other religious bodies were similarly provided.

5. Finally, and most critical of all, come the large series of meetings and joint activities on behalf of a spiritualized or religion-motivated *social or political order*.

Such, for instance, are the discussions held in various centers of the United States concerning the co-operative movement. One distinguished Catholic promoter of that movement complained to the writer that he could obtain a hearing thereon more readily in a non-Catholic or interdenominational group than among Catholics—a possible argument for a distinctively Catholic Co-operative League.

Observance of Brotherhood Week, around Washington's Birthday, is directed toward this end. The Brotherhood Week, 1941, message of President Roosevelt may be recalled:

"With reverent dependence upon God and faith in our destiny as a people let us meet in church and school, in cathedral and synagog, in public hall and home, during the week of Washington's Birthday, to purge our hearts of all intolerance and to bind all our citizens in a common loyalty. The defense of America begins in the hearts of our countrymen. In this

hour of emergency, let us set aside time to build our unity from within, to renew our faith in brotherhood, to quicken our national life, and to reinvigorate our patriotism with a renewal of that vision of democracy without which we perish as a people."

On the same occasion, in 1941, a testimonial was presented by the N.C.C.J. to Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes, as one who "is eminent among those whose influence has encouraged Americans of all religious faiths not to hold aloof from one another but, through conference and co-operation to sustain the spiritual and ethical standards of the nation. . . ."

Rabbi Heller, of Cincinnati, urged in a statement made on February 28, 1942, the assembling of a "great convocation" of various faiths, in the interests of an affirmation of beliefs that we hold in common.

The annual Institute of Public Relations discussion-forum held at Charlottesville under the auspices of the University of Virginia, opened on July 7, 1942, with a Vesper Service in which a Catholic priest (the Rev. Dr. Cronin of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore), a minister, and a rabbi took part. Said Rabbi Shusterman: "We have a Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish work to do. But also a common work of transcendent importance."

Announcement was made on February 3, 1942, of the so-called Cape Cod Movement, with the avowed purpose of achieving the "spiritual awakening of the nation through co-operation of Protestants, Catholics, and Jews as a civilian offensive" in time of war. Seven "key words" were selected, which men of all faiths could recite in common: "Father, Thy will be done through me." Again, a Protestant, a Catholic (the Rev. J. W. Waldron), and a Jewish clergyman took part. The promoters of the Cape Cod movement noted that "three faiths were united for the first time in history, in a specific public action, identical on the part of each."

Under the chairmanship of the Right Rev. Msgr. William M. Hart, an Interfaith Good Will committee met in Rochester, N. Y., on December 16, 1941.

The movement for interdenominational co-operation in England is thus summed up by the Rev. John Murray, S.J., Editor of the British Catholic magazine of opinion, *The Month*, writing in *America* for June 22, 1942:

"One of the most striking developments in war-time Britain has been that of cooperation between Catholics and non-Catholics. In August, 1941, Cardinal Hinsley appealed to all British Catholics to realize and confront the spiritual issues at stake in the war: he extended this appeal to all men of good will who could share something of the Catholic outlook in this time of crisis. The Catholic movement of the 'Sword of the Spirit' was founded: it was met with interest and enthusiasm.

"Cooperation between Catholics and non-Catholics. How? and on what basis? There could be no question of joining in common worship. It could not mean the whittling down the Catholic position or looking for some lowest common denominator of Christian belief which all Christian bodies might be supposed to share. Cooperation could only be *parallel* in religious matters; it could not be *joint* or *common* when it was a question of applying broadly Christian principles and standards to public and social problems, to the national and international spheres.

"A great impetus was given to this movement by the famous letter to the London *Times* (December 21, 1940) signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Cardinal Hinsley and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council. The letter accepted the five Peace Points of Pius XII's 1939 Christmas Allocution as providing an essential basis for a just and lasting peace settlement. It accepted five other standards by which existing social and economic institutions and all post-war schemes of reconstruction might be adjudged.

"Large public meetings were held all over the country, at which Catholic, Anglican and Free Church speakers occupied a common platform and together insisted upon the vital need of re-Christianizing public life and international relations. At two momentous London meetings in May, 1941, the chair was taken, first by Cardinal Hinsley and, on the second day, by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield, Birmingham, Preston—these are a few of the important centres where such meetings have been held. Activity has often been local and spontaneous, and the result has been the inauguration of Joint Christian Councils for the locality. Catholics are now cooperating by holding *parallel* weeks of Missions or special services when non-Catholics have their 'Religion and Life Weeks'; the opportunity is taken of holding, during the week, one or two joint public meetings upon the application of the principles of the Natural Law and of broadly Christian standards to social and national problems.

"On May 28, 1942, a joint statement was issued to the press concerning this question of cooperation. It consisted of five paragraphs that had been drawn up by representatives of the non-Catholic 'Commission of the Churches' and the Catholic 'Sword of the Spirit.' The document was not an official agreement between the Church of England, Free Churches, and the Catholic Church in England; it was an agreed statement between a Catholic and non-Catholic society; but it enjoyed full official approbation. The gathering at which it was first communicated to the press had, as its guests of honor, Cardinal Hinsley and the Archbishop of Canterbury. Both spoke in warm commendation of the document and discussed the spirit of charity and the urgency of the times which had inspired it. It marked a further advance in the campaign for sincere cooperation on a platform, where Catholics and non-Catholics can honestly unite, namely, that of applying standards of justice, reasonableness and charity to the grave problems of today and the immediately post-war years."

III

The following principles were laid down, as a guide in the matter of co-operation, by Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes, United States Ambassador to Spain, former co-chairman of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, at an interfaith seminar held at Columbia University in 1940. Professor Hayes declared:

"We should not try to belittle religion or to seek a lowest common denominator for our various interpretations of it. That would only pave the way for a new uniformity and thence for a totalitarian state tyranny. On the contrary, we should be alert to maintain a cultural and religious pluralism. Catholics should be better Catholics; Protestants should be better Protestants; Jews should be better Jews. Each man should know and practise his religion.

"This will not lead to anarchy or to any weakening of the American state and nation, if two complementary principles are kept constantly in mind and acted upon: (1) members of each of our religious groups must have an informed respect for the convictions and behavior of members of the others; and (2) members of all our groups can and must collaborate, as American citizens, in common secular tasks and responsibilities. More and not less devotion to one's particular religion, more and not less mutual understanding among us all—such, in sum, are the crying needs for American defense against the latest and direct threat of intolerance—that of totalitarian intolerance."

On the eve of his departure for Spain, on April 23, 1942, Professor Hayes observed:

"Indeed, if we are to make a better world issue from the present awful conflict, we must have more, not fewer, good Jews and good Christians. Debasement of the spiritual values of our Judaeo-Christian heritage has been a central source of Hitlerism and all the evils it is inflicting upon the world. Ex-

altation of those same spiritual values must be the accompaniment of our national struggle against Hitlerism and the inspiration for the post-war renaissance of freedom and justice.

"Here in the United States we differ about religion. I thank God we do, and I pray that we may continue to respect differences. I mean, however, *Differences*—and not *Indifference*. Indifference is quite as dangerous and subversive to the American way of life as intolerance. The task is not to water down Judaism or Protestantism or Catholicism, but to make Jews better Jews, Protestants better Protestants, and Catholics better Catholics. And by 'better' I mean more informed and more practising. For right information about each of the three great faiths and faithful practice of them will make for sincere and genuine and beneficial cooperation in all our public affairs—civic, national, and international."

V

An approach to the problem from the point of view of political philosophy, in the light of Christian ethics and the teachings of Saint Thomas Aquinas, is afforded in an address delivered on April 15, 1940, at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City, by Dr. Jacques Maritain, Professor of Philosophy at the *Institut Catholique* of Paris. The address was entitled *Human Cooperation and the Diversity of Creeds*, and covered a scope wider than the subject of this article. It touched upon the entire question of how persons of different beliefs are to live together in civic peace, their relation to the state, and the principles underlying the constitution of the state itself in a religiously divided world.

Maritain prefers the term fellowship to that of tolerance. Even in a common temporal task, such as is called for by the exigencies of the present war, ethical values are involved. The believer must profess his God in temporal life. Maritain pointedly asks whether religious believers, Christian or non-Chris-

tian, should rightly have needed to await the present dire crisis before effecting a rapprochement. He rules out any fundamentalism, or least common multiple of ideas, at the start. Our outlooks, he explains, are essentially heterogeneous, and never fully meet. We may take as examples the ideas of personality, the spiritual destiny of man, of charity and justice, etc.

To the objection that such divergences would, therefore, preclude any real meeting of minds and make merely for a certain formal courtesy, Maritain replies by proposing his theory of the "analogical" likeness of ideas and principles held by Catholics in common with those of other beliefs. For joint action, in the present crisis, indeed for any sort of social unity, there must be a certain community of ideas and principles, but it suffices for urgent practical purposes that they share but an imperfect unity and community. If they do share this imperfect community, they can co-operate for constructive action for the right life of temporal society. We do not say to the non-believer: we can do *nothing* together with you for the good of society or the state until you have completely accepted the teachings of the Church, or our Savior.

The primary likeness between those of differing beliefs Maritain finds in the fundamental ethical value of the law of love. He sees a natural friendship existing not of beliefs but of men who believe.

VI

After this cursory survey, the following are some questions that occur to me as needing careful consideration with a view to a practical solution.

1. What is our attitude towards the cultivation of civic amity? With all due precautions and reservations, do we or do we not favor some kind of organized movement or enterprise toward the cultivation of amity between citizens regardless of their religious affiliations (as may cultivate amity be-

tween citizens regardless of their racial affiliations)? To what degree and according to what ethical and religious principles should that amity be cultivated?

2. Should the amity that we, as Catholics, cultivate toward the citizens who do not share our faith be motivated solely by a prudent expediency (word not used in a derogative sense), by the question of preserving our ecclesiastical liberties, or—while giving due weight to the considerations of prudence—should it be primarily motivated by respect for the neighbor's person as a human being, a respect derived from the principles of Christian ethics? Should, in other words, the non-Catholic be encouraged to believe that we shall retain this respect for his personal freedom and integrity, even though his influence were politically or socially no longer a serious consideration in the community?

3. How far, and with what qualifications, shall we go in attributing good faith to the non-Catholic and the non-believer? The "shall" concerns both principle and prudence in the case. Can we profess any respect for "the good elements" that his belief may comprise—again principle and prudence?

4. How far shall the standard of "convert-making" be applied to public contacts with non-Catholics and unbelievers? Granting the validity of the facts as alleged by Father Leslie Rumble, (*America*, January 26, 1941), and others, that inter-denominational meetings or discussion on behalf of civic amity do not further or may even impede conversions, that they compare unfavorably in this respect with the direct presentation of Catholic doctrine on the platform or over the radio, is that quite the question in this instance? Even judged by the pure standard of conversions, are not certain misapprehensions to be removed, before this work can progress?

Will not the practical norm to be applied in this matter vary greatly with local circumstances: as between, for instance, a Northern urban community where Catholics are

relatively numerous merged among a large unbelieving or quasi-pagan population, and a Southern countryside where the people are largely non-Catholic, yet largely devout, believing Christians? Hence the obvious need of the judgment in all these cases of the local Ordinary, who knows the circumstances and the effect they have on the public mind.

5. Is it a matter of vital import—whether or not from the standpoint of immediate or ultimate conversions—that the non-Catholic clearly understand that our professed aim for him is not based solely upon the hope of his conversion, although this hope is an essential part of that amity? If such an idea is made known, will it necessarily emasculate the drive for conversions, imperil the faith of Catholics, or create the danger of indifferentism, mixed marriages, and other compromises?

6. May not a too explicit and organized quest for civic amity, as such, defeat its own end, which will be better achieved by an implicitly amicable fellowship in common civic tasks?

7. Consideration of the “trio” system, mentioned above, comes under this heading.

In lieu of a question, I may here express my own personal impression, which is that any judgment upon these trios will be conditioned by a large number of highly variable factors. Father Wilfrid Parsons, S.J., Professor of Sociology and Politics at the Catholic University of America, notes, concerning these meetings, in *America* for March 1, 1941, their strict devotion to civic, not dogmatic questions. The debatable issue, as he sees it, is the prudence of such meetings, a matter which facts alone would settle.

a) There are the regional differences, the totally different impression that such a meeting will make in various parts of the country, with different types of audiences, etc.

b) There is the great variety in the views and attitudes

among the non-Catholic speakers. Some may grasp with remarkable clarity the Catholic attitude toward doctrinal differences and the matter of co-operation; others are completely blind to the same, and in all good faith and good will propound complete indifferentism. The National Conference of Christians and Jews, to my knowledge, extremely deprecates such aberrations, but in practice it is not always easy to prevent them; we speak in different languages.

c) A Catholic priest, taking part in such meetings, who speaks bluntly and frankly the full Catholic doctrine, "pulls no punches" from a doctrinal point of view, will not only be tolerated, he will be welcome, as long as his personality is one of friendliness and honest good will.

d) A most variable element is the motivation and the occasion of the meeting. It takes on a very different character when assembled for some serious purpose, and when arranged as mere species of intellectual or cultural entertainment. There are certain non-Catholic groups that have gone to excess in this latter respect.

The problem in the case is whether any series of restrictions and safeguards can be devised, from the Catholic point of view, that will ensure the safety and legitimacy of such meetings, without, on the other hand, alienating the non-Catholic completely.

8. Is there (or is there not) a certain element of confusion brought into the matter by the well-meaning attempts of some of the organized enterprises on behalf of civic amity to go *beyond the simple quest* and strive for amity between the various religions themselves—a striving most natural between the divided Protestant religious bodies but fraught with problems when sought between Catholicism and other beliefs.

9. While granting that the quest of such inter-religious amity should be ruled out of the sphere of the civic-amity movements—as creating confusion, scandal, etc.—(a) is the

quest intrinsically harmful? (b) Even if not intrinsically harmful, is it imprudent under present circumstances? And (c) if not intrinsically harmful, is there any way that could be ecclesiastically authorized for its pursuit, e.g., by a supervised group of trained theologians?

10. Even if all the preceding points are clarified, there still remains the most urgent question of all, under our present circumstances. How is it possible, today, to devote ourselves effectively to common civic tasks (cf. No. 6), and not to inquire jointly into the moral and religious causes of our present disorders in the social and political field? A certain amount of joint inquiry seems inevitable. Can, for instance, the propaganda for birth-control under the guise of planned parenthood be adequately counteracted unless the ethical principles underlying a sound population philosophy be investigated, which brings us at once into the ethical and religious implications of the family?

It would be easy to amplify this point. By what norms, therefore, are such joint inquiries to be conducted; by what persons, under what safeguards or principles? Obviously the leadership, from the Catholic point of view, will be provided by our Catholic universities and colleges. This question, therefore, is naturally bound up with our Catholic educational policy in the United States.

It is likewise intimately connected with our Catholic concept of the social and political order, with our idea, ultimately, of the state, with such matters as the foundations and nature of human rights, of the relations of social groups and religious as well as cultural or racial minorities, of democracy, of a pluralist society.

11. One final question, in conclusion. Might not this question, particularly as enunciated under the preceding heading, be brought into a more healthy atmosphere, if there were much greater impetus given to the multiplication of forums and

study groups under Catholic auspices? This, in the field of *social and ethical discussion*, would be in accordance with the recommendation by Pope Leo XIII, with regard to the *religious and dogmatic matters*, that Catholics should run their own discussions, but have them open to non-Catholics. (Letter to Cardinal Satolli, September 18, 1905). To the extent that Catholics advance in the frequency and thoroughness with which they moot these matters among themselves, will be their competence and assurance in discussing them with persons of other beliefs.

After all these considerations, the plain fact remains that there can be no adequate defense of our civilization and of Christian institutions without a much greater degree of social unity than we now possess; that this unity cannot be achieved without a long and careful and co-operative probing into the principles—ethical and religious—which we hold in some fashion in common with those not of our faith; and that this investigation necessarily entails a risk of misunderstanding, possible scandal and detriment to the Faith on the part of Catholics. What is the path out of this dilemma that takes all factors into account? Does not the solution involve our religio-social concept of civil and political society? Here, it seems to me, is a matter our moral theologians may well ponder.

Editor's Note.—In the December issue Father T. Lincoln Bouscaren, S.J. will write on the canonical aspects of the problem of co-operation, from an historical standpoint. Correspondence on the subject will be welcomed, to be published if suitable.