

doing a most valuable work in presenting the Catholic faith to Wales in the language of Wales. It is to be hoped that the new venture will be well supported, and even English Catholics can help by giving copies to their Welsh friends who, it will usually be found, will welcome a bit of theology. ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

A FRENCH EXPERIMENT — II.
"ECONOMIE ET HUMANISME"

A Doctrine: The general lines taken at the first meeting have directed subsequent researches; and the results of these are to be found in the twenty-three numbers of the review which have already appeared. Annual sessions of intensive study have been organized for the investigation of particular problems:—

A Session at Sainte Baume, September 1942, on Property and Community.⁽¹⁾

At Grand-Bornand, September 1943, on Principles of Co-ordinated Economy.⁽²⁾

At Ecully, May 1944, The Basis of Humanism.⁽³⁾

Groups of specialists at these sessions gather to discuss their own subjects with special committees on patristics, sociology, etc. And finally the central council harmonizes, co-ordinates and stimulates these enquiries. Some key ideas are now beginning to emerge and are becoming the common property of all those who, rejecting the anarchy of liberalism and the oppression of state control, seek for a world-order in harmony with the principles of a human economy, such as the critical vindication of the community ideal⁽⁴⁾, the movement towards a 'community' formula in business⁽⁵⁾, a revolution in agriculture⁽⁶⁾, the discovery of the scientific basis of regional economy (see note 2), a new approach to town and country planning, the elaboration of a new method for the investigation of sociological

(1) The main findings of this meeting are published in *Propriété et Communauté*, Ed. Economie et Humanisme.

(2) This session used as a basis for its discussions a manifesto which was published in the sixth issue of the review: *L'Ordre communautaire, principes d'une économie humaine*. Ed. Economie et Humanisme.

(3) The results of this session are to appear in two volumes: *Essor de l'humanisme occidental*, and *Confiance dans l'homme*. Ed. Economie et Humanisme.

(4) *Caractères de la communauté*. Ed. Economie et Humanisme.

(5) *Une étape vers la suppression de la condition prolétarienne—La communauté*. Ed. Economie et Humanisme.

(6) *Metier d'agriculture*, by M. Artaud. Ed. Economie et Humanisme.

data⁽⁷⁾, the regrouping of political allegiances⁽⁸⁾, a new pedagogy arising from the reconciliation of theory and practice, culture and the people⁽⁹⁾. All these key notions, which are the fruit of prolonged study and have been put to the test in practice, have all a common inspiration: that man is not made to live in isolation. He is not made for a mechanical order, but to live in an organic whole in which vital ties link him to other men and to the rest of creation.

The manifold links which bind a man to other men, to nature, to work, to his family, to his country, were fostered in former times by the whole tempo and framework of social life—a life limited in many ways but nevertheless healthy. Mechanical progress has changed all this. Man has been spiritually and physically uprooted, with the result that a world proletariat has come into being.

We must seek to regain the balance which a civilisation built upon money has lost. But the way to achieve this is not to run away from progress, but to snatch from progress itself what is useful to the whole man and integrate it into an harmonious way of life. To bring about this well-ordered world there is required an improvement in the techniques of production, distribution, administration, representation and education. In this way the old antagonisms which have vitiated human relationships, may be gradually overcome. *Economie et Humanisme* does not look for a heaven on earth. Man has to be taken as he is. But it does seek to establish a *human* society.

Man is to be taken as a whole—body and soul. With his body he shares life with others in the world of matter and sense, so that he is subject to physical and, more proximately, to biological laws. But on the other hand he shares in the things of the soul in the world of the spirit of God. To know man therefore involves philosophy and theology.

Man must be taken as a whole—nature and behaviour. The nature of man only exists in history. It is impossible to have a complete knowledge of man merely by deduction from abstract principles. Man is a concrete being caught in the movement of history, the history of a free being which can only be grasped by a patient, efficient and meticulous observation of all the elements involved. The knowledge of man belongs to the philosophy of history.

Man must be taken as a whole—a personal and a social being. He belongs to the communities of family, work and country, and it is

(7) *La Methode d'Economie et Humanisme: Introduction et généralités, et Le Personne et le Foyer*. Ed. *Economie et Humanisme*.

(8) *Problemes-cles, Positions-cles: La Cité que nous voulons*. *Revue Economie et Humanisme*, no. 23. To be published later in book form.

(9) *Guide du Militant*, by L. J. Lebreton; in two volumes. Ed. *Economie et Humanisme*.

through these that he is differentiated. What he borrows from them in making his individual and peculiar place in the history of mankind, he gives back to them in the shape of a gift of himself to others in order to form with them an increasingly human society. His humanity can only be fully achieved with the help of all men. And all men are only truly human by being themselves. The knowledge of man also belongs to a history and doctrine of social realities (*réalités communautaires*).

Man must be taken as a whole—an eternal and a temporal being. His destiny unfolds on two levels—in time and in eternity. Some maintain that time is without importance and that only eternity has any meaning. For others eternity is a product of the imagination and only time is real. Both are incomplete. The truth is that it is in time that eternity is gained or lost. Man's temporal and eternal destiny must be seen as a whole.

A Technique of Action: These inquiries are not conducted simply out of intellectual or scientific curiosity. They come to grips with the deep causes of social evils, local and regional alike. Their whole aim is to find a solution to the evils that afflict human society. The inquiry only ends when the execution finds a successful issue in the alteration to or creation of a more healthy social structure.

This action consists first of all in the propaganda of the doctrine. A review, appearing every month, keeps the various groups in touch with one another and enables them to pool all their discoveries. There is also a publication centre the output of which increases daily, and which provides its French and foreign readers with special series of works:—the doctrinal series *L'Economie Humaine*; a series of documentation, *Documents d'économie et humanisme*; a humanist series, *Bases de l'humanisme*; a technical series, *Analyses et conjoncture*; a spiritual series, *Spiritualité*; and an historical series, *La Bataille de Dieu*.

This activity depends on the establishment of new teams. A team is a cell composed of those who have taken charge of a special district, made it their own and entered into its life and outlook. It has therefore to evolve a technique adapted to the task of analysis and co-operation as well as to be prepared to undertake social services and educational work. The moral obligations of a member may be summarized under four heads:—to respect personality, to serve the community, to make constant efforts to improve on his previous achievement and to give himself unreservedly to the cause. The group should aim at a more perfect community life among its members. And its whole inspiration is Christian and Catholic. As such it must nourish its spirituality on the teaching of Christ and of the Church.

But in the field of practical action it will gladly co-operate with all other groups with morally worthy aims, provided that they agree on the 'community hypothesis' on the one hand, and certain concrete social conditions to be achieved in the given district on the other.

What is envisaged is a revolutionary activity of a continuous and all-pervasive kind. Starting in the mind and heart of the group-members, this activity must radiate throughout the whole *milieu* in which he exists.

Experience shows that groups vary greatly according to circumstances. Some make it their chief concern to co-operate with other workers in a given region or a particular sphere of human action. Some are frankly committed to proselytizing; some to teaching; some to social work in great cities; some in particular to training people in citizenship. All groups and members must find out for themselves the tasks best suited to their particular circumstances. They cannot be tied down by *a priori* planning. *A priori* one may say that any initiative they may feel called to will be in keeping with their job provided only that it tends to serve the properly human interests of man.

Of these groups the French are obviously the most numerous. But already the movement is under way in Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, North Africa. A start has been made in Canada, South America, and the Middle East. The vitality of the movement is only just beginning to show itself.

"Respect human nature! If a respect for human nature is rooted in human hearts, men will sooner or later build a social, political and economic system worthy of man." These words of a great French thinker, killed in the last years of the war, bring to life the inner logic of the whole movement of *Economie et Humanisme*.

For the past hundred years many minds have been at work, moved by a common devotion to Christ, patiently striving to build up these social conditions without which neither justice nor freedom can be realised effectively for man in his wholeness and for all mankind. *Economie et Humanisme* takes its place in this great movement of minds inspired by the same ideal of reverence for man; and in its turn it dedicates itself wholeheartedly to the building up of a social, political and economic system which will fulfil all that this ideal demands.

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NOTE.—For further information, etc., please write to *Economie et Humanisme*, Direction Equipe Centrale, La Tourette, L'Arbresle, Rhône (Tel. 43), or to *Economie et Humanisme*, Editions et Librairie, 262 rue Saint-Honoré, Paris (Opera 69-30).