

a hint of its purpose. Fifty years of purposeless progress in the diffusion of the printed word is indeed an extraordinary achievement. Robertson Scott, whose book records twenty-four years of exceptionally successful editing of *The Countryman*, as well as of other years with his *The New East*, does seek further into the meaning of things, particularly in the first article 'The Papers We Get'. The author was 81 years old when he retired from *The Countryman* which he had founded, and the galaxy of talent and blood here represented in the letters and telegrams of congratulations on the coming of age of that quarterly shows that he was in touch with the Press at every point. His long and varied experience reveals the primary evil of commercialism which has corrupted the printed word; when writers began to make 'stories' their business instead of truth their vocation; and this has happened more particularly in the last half-century. But he concludes also that the Press in consequence has less influence on the people, which is one of the few hopeful signs in the morass of the modern printed word. Robertson Scott himself shows that non-commercial and vocational journalism can in fact become as great, if not greater, financial success than if the printed word be treated as a commodity. Even so he reveals no true purpose for the universal diffusion of news. That everyone has a right to know everything and ought to want to know everything is the principle upon which it all seems to be based. That is why the now famous conversion of the news editor of the British *Daily Worker* is so refreshing. Douglas Hyde in this pamphlet shows how for some years he could immerse himself in the editing of news for Communists while in the process of discovering a line which was drawing him out of Communism altogether. It was *The Weekly Review* which first set him on the track in 1943. At that time he accepted the philosophy of purposeless, inevitable, material progress which provided him and so many other generous men and women with a way of life which led nowhere. But after the leaven had worked for four years and more the news editor found that the way of Catholicism led out of his newspaper office, and with heroism he departed. What his story shows particularly is that the intense progress in technique in all sections of industrialist society but particularly in the Press will be regulated sooner or later by the complete materialism of Communism which smothered its freedom and therefore its humanity entirely, or the Church which will regulate it by giving it an ultimate purpose and consequent responsibility.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY: An Inaugural Lecture. By E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Professor of Social Anthropology. (Oxford University Press; n.p.)

In this short but very suggestive inaugural lecture Professor Evans-Pritchard sets out what he understands by social anthropology. He states with admirable lucidity that for him it is the study of societies,

undertaken in order to make possible the formulation of sociological laws of a general kind. He shows the difference between his approach and that of the older school of anthropologists whose work, however, laid the foundations on which modern workers have built.

Today the field-worker needs to be a well-equipped person, competent in the realm of political science, comparative religions, economics, jurisprudence, linguistics, problems of kinship and marriage and psychology.

Professor Evans-Pritchard anticipates and answers the question: 'If the object of social anthropology is to formulate general sociological laws, why in fact does it confine its detailed inquiries to primitive societies?' He says there are three reasons for this, the first being that it is easier to make objective observations among a people of unfamiliar culture. The second is that a primitive society is usually smaller and more uniform than a more advanced group. The third and last and most pressing reason is that primitive societies are fast disappearing. Then bringing all these reasons together, he makes the important statement that 'in order to understand the nature of human society, it is essential to make comparative studies of institutions with a wide range of variation'. This is undeniably true since the object of all anthropological inquiry is the discovery of the basic structure on which all society rests.

Again he says: 'A theory of the fundamental nature of law must clearly cover the laws of both civilised and savage peoples'. And when speaking of primitive religion he says: 'It would be pointless to try to interpret the religious cults of primitive peoples except in terms of a general theory of religion'.

The importance to Catholics, as indeed to all people, of such an attitude cannot be over-emphasised. In fact the whole lecture is a challenge to Catholics to look to their claim to catholicity, and to be sure that they know at least something of their own foundations in the history of human effort, in which the transcendental pattern is embodied.

DORIS LAYARD

RENCONTRES SCIENTIFIQUES. By D. Dubarle, G. Bouligand, O. Costa de Beauregard, H. Alimen, R. Collin, R. Lavocat, A.-M. Dubarle. (Les Editions du Cerf, Paris; 1948).

D. Dubarle explains the purpose of these essays in his introduction. He remarks on the progressive separation between secular and religious thought that has gone on since the seventeenth century. The propriety of this total divorce has often been affirmed on both sides, to the detriment of each. It is certainly of the first importance to delimit the fields of the various sciences, but the psychological and moral unity of the human being who is a scientist must not be broken. It is therefore intended that these surveys of contemporary thought in logic, mathematics, physics, paleontology and biology