

## COMMENTARY

THE DEATH OF A REVIEW. The news that *La Vie Intellectuelle* has stopped circulation in its present form is sad and significant. Founded in 1928, the review in less than thirty years of existence had a profound influence on French intellectual life, reaching far beyond the customary public of Catholic journals and in that respect reflecting the wide sympathies of a succession of remarkable editors. One of the last issues of *La Vie Intellectuelle* was devoted to the greatest of them all, Père Maydiou, and it brings together tributes from every land and party, from his family and his friends, from his religious brethren and from his colleagues in the French Resistance. The variety of his interests and the seemingly infinite number of his friends were the mark of a man who was none the less simple and single in his allegiance to the truth. If Père Maydiou sometimes seemed to stretch his desire to understand beyond the limits of usual prudence, he was motivated only by a generosity which longed to unite and not to divide, to establish Christ's kingdom and never to weaken its universal character.

Perhaps the most notable achievement of *La Vie Intellectuelle* was the close collaboration it fostered between theologians and the lay contributors it regularly used. No one who was ever present at an editorial meeting of the review could fail to be struck by this sense of undertaking a common task. The only vested interest was that of the truth. In this way the penetrating examination month by month of the whole political and cultural scene was at once authoritative and courageous. And a list of the contributors over the years is an accurate reflection of the cultural renaissance of the Church in France, in which the Dominicans of the Province of France and *La Vie Intellectuelle* have played so essential a part.

It is independent reviews of opinion, which can claim no support from the commercial interests which increasingly determine our cultural destinies, that are the first casualties in the economic difficulties of our times. Their loss is a calamity that affects far more people than their readers, for their influence is never to be assessed merely in terms of circulation—which is all that commercial publishing can understand or respect. It is hard to imagine what the remedy can be, and official help is scarcely to be looked

for. But the fate of *La Vie Intellectuelle* is much more than a local affair, and our gratitude for what it has achieved must be allied to a sincere regret for the cause of its ending.

We are glad nevertheless to know that its work is in a measure to continue through the publishing of a series of *Rencontres*, which in an extended form will present detailed studies of the huge problems that now confront the Christian conscience. We are particularly glad that a volume is to be devoted to Catholicism in England and Wales, and we are sure our readers will await its appearance with interest.

WALES. The month of March begins with St David's Day and a passing acknowledgment of the existence of Wales. For governmental purposes Welsh affairs have now become the responsibility of the Minister for Housing and Local Government, which must be regarded as a remarkable example of parity of esteem. We publish in this issue two articles which deal with the religious background of Wales, a subject usually less familiar to English readers than African anthropology. The difficulties of the Welsh present are, as always, only intelligible in terms of the past, and the past of Wales has been peculiarly misunderstood—not least by Catholic historians. The realities of Welsh life have a deeper meaning than the cheerful generalizations of St David's Day speeches might suggest, and for Catholics in particular the tragic separation of a people from the source of unity which alone gave them any significance as a nation is a matter not merely for sadness but for intelligent understanding. In any case, St David's reputed dying words are true for everyone: 'Keep the faith and fulfil the little things that lead you to God'.

---