

OBSERVATIONS

FAMILY HOUSING. In a recent *Times* correspondence, it was suggested that future building schemes should concentrate on two or three-roomed dwellings. The average size of the unit of family accommodation has remained constant, though the average size of the family has shrunk. Thus in the Manchester district, the average house has 4.7 rooms, as in 1921, probably as in 1911 and even earlier. But the average size of a family has diminished sixteen per cent. in the last twenty years. In theory it is the sensible thing to fit the house to the family, in practice it would help to perpetuate the present preposterous situation, by which families are limited to artificial and reformable restrictions.

THE CRISIS OF MARRIAGE. It is not the number of marriages that causes concern for the future of the institution, but the changing conception of it. Distinctions must not be made into oppositions. Still, it does appear that the main purpose of marriage is now taken to mean, not the establishment of a home, a centre and a source of life, but the satisfaction of a community of taste and interest. A psychological rather than a sociological emphasis, which retains the traditional institution in many cases, but, over-emphasised, is tending to new forms, such as companionate and trial marriage.

MODERN TECHNIQUE AND THE CHURCH. A curious commentary on the Spanish situation is furnished by some 1931 statistics. It appears that for one hundred young people receiving primary education from the State, only fifty receive it from the religious congregations. But as regards secondary education, the latter have one hundred and eight to the State's hundred, and the proportion is even higher for technical education. Yet it is commonly assumed that it was the policy of the Church in Spain to keep the people in ignorance. This is not true even by the Whitehall test of education.

BLACKFRIARS

UNITY OR HOMOGENEITY. Simplicity at its best does not demand poverty or fewness of components. The richer the variety, the nobler the simplicity which orders it. Simplicity, unity, order—the Church is committed to these. But it does not require the rejection of integral parts of a complicated civilization, but their co-ordination and subordination. *Quadragesimo Anno*, for instance, does not preach 'back to the land' as a principal solution of the present problem. It is directed to the complicated twentieth century; it does not urge simplification by sweeping reduction to primitive conditions, but by re-ordering within the existing framework. Some of us have a tendency to reduce human activity to agriculture, human society to the family. But domestic economy is only the first and indispensable stage of society. Things have not yet come to such a pass that it can only be saved by destroying city, national and international economy.

THE NEW PAGANI. The Church is not only an institution of the countryside. Actually its centre is the City; historically the early Christians were townsmen and the countrymen were pagans. To attach deeper spiritual significance to driving a plough than to driving a locomotive is a likeable enough expression of temperament, and perhaps a sound piece of patriotism at the present time, but it is not a matter of Catholic doctrine. People with simple rural tastes have their place, so have the people who are happy with modern apparatus. Some really prefer tinned salmon; and tinned fruit certainly has its dietetic advantages. To leave the town for the country is only to exchange one set of sensations for another, and it depends on the individual which are most calculated to bring him to God. After all, the Vatican City is not exactly a simple-life community, and the Pope has not hesitated to bless the latest triumphs of machinery. All this is not to question the urgent need of Land Movements, but merely the exaggeration in some of the journalism accompanying them, the manicheism on the subject of machinery, the antithesis between Galilee and Rome.

RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM. The efforts of the Editor of the *Cité Chrétienne* in the cause of international understand-

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ing have led to his being attacked by some fellow-Catholics as a 'mauvais Belge, pacifiste illuminé et germanophile.' His apologia is complete; quoting the approval of the *Osservatore Romano*, he concludes: 'on comprendra que j'attache plus d'importance à cette approbation de l'organe officieux du Saint-Siège qu'aux critiques de quelques publicistes sans mandat.' The incident may be given a wider reference to those not infrequent occasions where sub-catholicism is made the test of Catholicism.

AND INTERNATIONALISM. Recent celebrations in Paris in honour of St. Albert the Great were another pointer to the fact that the Church offers the best hope for the peace of Europe. Communism may level, or Finance interlock, but a deeper, freer unity will still be wanting. After ecclesiastical functions, the great amphitheatre of the Sorbonne was packed by a meeting at which were present the Rector of the University, the Master-General of the Dominicans, the Ambassadors of Germany and Italy, and many other distinguished figures. After M. Gilson and Prof. von Hildebrand had united to praise the memory of the great European figure of the Scientist-Saint, M. de Monzie, the Minister of Education, gave an address on him, 'the first of the Encyclopaedists.' Turning to the German Ambassador, he ended by associating the French Government with the homage offered to the great German Saint. The mingling of the nations at Rome for the Holy Year is another help to European understanding; and the various International congresses of Catholic Societies, among which attention particularly is to be drawn to the meeting this summer at Luxemburg of *Pax Romana*.

JACOBIN.