

## OUR AIM OF TRUTH

THE EDITOR

IN the first issue of BLACKFRIARS, which appeared in April 1920, Fr Vincent McNabb introduced the review with an article whose title we use again. 'In our aim of finding and telling the truth we will not primarily concern ourselves with what is good; or only with that highest good, the Truth. This is but to realise that transcendentals, such as truth, must be sought for their own sake or they will not be found in their fulness. Truth-seeking and truth-telling must not be blended and weakened with enquiries into the economic, political, ethical or theological value of the truth. Men should not accept the findings of science because they are useful; nor the axioms of mathematics because of their economic value. So too it is a kind of unconscious treason to believe in God (if that were possible) because it profits us in this world or in the next. To serve the truth otherwise than because it is true is to withhold from the altar some of the sacrifice.'

So absolute a definition of the aim of this journal, appearing as it did and does under the auspices of an Order whose simple device is *Veritas*, was indeed imperative. It seemed at the time an aim so little likely to attract that Fr Vincent could go on to express the fear that 'BLACKFRIARS, in its witness to the truth, may have as short a career as the Holy Innocents'. In this he was wrong. For more than thirty years BLACKFRIARS has continued to appear, and—we may hope—has continued to be faithful to the purpose of its foundation. It has lived through a period that has seen grave inroads into the primacy of truth. War and economic disaster have made even the gloomy prospects of 1920 seem light in retrospect. And the territory which it should be its business to explore and to interpret has grown vaster and infinitely more complex.

The survival of BLACKFRIARS is due primarily to the consistent support of its readers. In 1920 the Editor began with a warning that 'in these days of inflated prices, when in matters relating to printing a shilling barely represents a pre-war fourpence, our most pressing peril is the financial one'. It needs no developed argument to explain how much more pressing is that peril in 1951. With this double number, BLACKFRIARS for the first time in

thirty years is obliged to ask its subscribers to meet costs which are now at least five times what they were in 1920. Even at two shillings a copy, with an annual subscription rate of one guinea, a monthly review can scarcely hope to avoid financial loss. But we remain confident that our readers will continue their support and will indeed do their best to extend it, for it is certainly true that the need for a critical review, committed to the truth and its application in the world of today, was never so urgent.

The work of publishing a review such as this should be a co-operative one, in which editor, contributors and readers have all an essential function. It is hoped to arrange in the autumn meetings in London and other centres where those interested in BLACKFRIARS and in the extension of its work may come together, so that the association of the review may be strengthened by personal contact and discussion. It would be useful if interested readers would write to the Editor at Blackfriars, Oxford, with suggestions for such meetings.

In the meantime, the present number may be a reminder of the continuing need of a Christian and a critical judgment, inspired as it must be by the single service of truth. In an imperfect world this can be but imperfectly accomplished, but we may be permitted to end, as we began, with Fr Vincent McNabb: 'Little things are little things, but little beginnings may be great things. Little groups, who have the words of Christ and who have the words of St Thomas Aquinas, will have their effect. This effect will not be seen before I am only a memory. It will be seen.'

**Beginning with this issue, the subscription rate for BLACKFRIARS will be One Guinea (U.S.A., 3 Dollars), single copies 2s. Orders should be sent to Blackfriars Publications, 34 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.**