

EDITORIAL

EVERY Catholic journal during this year of 1954 has had its Marian number to underline various aspects of the doctrine of, or devotion to, our Blessed Lady. *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* too has already, last May, devoted the greater part of one number to the same great topic. It would therefore be impossible to do justice to the centenary of the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception which falls this month without considerable repetition of what has been written elsewhere over the past twelve months. Yet we cannot let the centenary pass in silence, so that we have presumed to publish these few papers on our Lady without attempting to plan a special contribution to the dogma of the type that was produced by this journal in honour of the definition of the Assumption. We make no apology for this, since readers will be pleased to be reminded of our Lady's place in the Gospels as well as in the piety of England at the time of Chaucer, while they will find plenty of opportunity for deeper study elsewhere.

This century might almost be called the Marian Century, for not only did it open and close with two definitions which embrace the whole cycle of our Lady's life and work, but also there can scarcely be another hundred years out of the twenty of our era in which she has appeared so frequently in miraculous ways and with such a world-wide effect. She has entered in the life of Christians in a more conscious manner than ever before, so that as the Life of the Spirit flows from her maternal womb as our Lord's own life did and does, the children of God have become wonderfully aware of the meaning for them of the Motherhood of God.