

Editorial

This number of *LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* is the last to appear in separate form. This doesn't mean it is to die. It is to be merged once again with our other Dominican review, *Blackfriars*, from which it originally grew some twenty years ago.

The merger is simply a logical consequence of present editorial policy. We have always identified 'spiritual life' with Christian life as every man can live it. It isn't mystical and apart, the life of nuns and hermits, to be discussed in special technical terms. Rather it is ordinary; it is into our midst that Christ sends the Spirit, into a culture which the Spirit finds as well as forms. And it is in terms of this culture that, in each age, the truth of the Spirit must be re-expressed, just as that truth was once and for all expressed through the everyday terms of Israel's life in history. In his last epistles, St Paul came to see how unity in Christ spreads far beyond the apparent limits of the Church; all creation is open to the saving power of the one God who made it. Christ is called the first-born of *all creation* (Col. 1.15), before he is called head of the Church. So in our turn we have to try not to separate sacred and secular, lay and clerical, the mystic and the ordinary, moral principles and the social-political decisions they demand, liturgy and parish life; or for that matter the ways in which we talk about these things, which if isolated produce the text-book with its many divisions of theology but no room for poem or novel as also expressing the Spirit's life. There is only one world, and the Church is up to her eyes in it. Things fall apart, they are bound to, but we must struggle to build them up again, in Christ.

So a single Dominican review, *NEW BLACKFRIARS*, will continue two traditions that had rightly grown too close to be kept apart. Readers will, we hope, find the best in each improved and developed by having been brought together in this way.

In taking leave of his readers, the present editor would like to thank them for the support they have always given, and to thank on their behalf—and on his own—that group of contributors, men and women, lay and clerical, who have, it seems to him, come near to thinking with one heart and one mind.

L.B.