

EDITORIAL

“ANOTHER new Review!” This exclamation, whether it be meant to express surprise merely, or whether it be tinged with irritation and reproach, cannot with justice be applied to BLACKFRIARS. Strictly and literally speaking, it is not a new Review at all. It is *The Catholic Review*, revived and renamed. This Review, under the able editorship of Father Benedict Williamson, ran as a quarterly for several years, struggled valiantly against the abnormal conditions produced by the war, and finally had to be added, with many other noble names, to the list of “missing, believed dead.”

Because they are confident that *The Catholic Review* enshrined ideas and ideals that should not be allowed to die, the editors of BLACKFRIARS are heartened to make the attempt to resuscitate the Review and give it a new spell of life.

So many excellent publications already exist that a fresh arrival in the field might well be regarded as an unjustifiable intrusion. BLACKFRIARS is no newcomer and should not be looked on as an intruder. Besides, one does not intrude into a battlefield.

Compulsory education has made us a race of readers. Whether this is for the good of real thought may well be doubted, since most people seem to read too much and think too little. Intensive industrialism has reduced the vast mass of our people to a state of exaggerated unreality. Their lives are so uninspiring that they must seek to live in the dream-world they find within the covers of a book. Thus the magazine and the sensational novel become the toilers' means

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of escape from themselves and their dull surroundings. The written word ceases to be a medium of thought. It is sought after either for its own sake or for mere diversion, as a means of getting away from their own thoughts. Not infrequently it becomes an obsession as injurious to mind and body as the drug habit. The prevalence of this quest for mere amusement accounts for the popularity of the picture-palace, where a romance can be enacted in the minimum of time and enjoyed with the minimum of human effort. This thirst for sensation and excitement—whether it be good or bad we do not discuss—has had a bad effect on literature. It has created the shallow, modern journals.

The modern printing press amazes us with the prodigious variety of its output. Every possible human interest is provided for, from boxing to the latest fad religion. Whether it be to give the news, to amuse or edify, every journal professes to exist for some definite purpose. BLACKFRIARS will not seek to entertain or necessarily to edify its readers, but will take as its aim and endeavour to state and defend truth. It is an ambitious ideal, and one that we quite expect will not always be realized. In this human world, where man's one consistent quality is to err, aspiration unhappily does not always tally with achievement. Still the effort to attain will bring the ideal nearer, and will help to stimulate thought.

The divine truths contained in the treasury of Christ's Church, and their bearing on men and things will be our primary concern.

We shall try to remember that there is a form of truth known as calumny : that truth rooted in hate is

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more odious than the worst of lies : that in Blake's words :

The truth that's told with bad intent
Beats all the lies you could invent.

In short, we shall bear in mind that if we have not charity our truth will avail nothing.

We shall try to tell relevant truths and insist on those truths that are either unknown or neglected or in danger of being forgotten. Tilting at windmills is the unprofitable occupation of the foolish ; nor have we any desire to waste energy slaying imaginary dragons or spend ourselves reaping the stubble fields.

We are not unmindful of the perilous nature of our enterprise—but even danger can be made the driving force of effort.

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. We would take this opportunity of thanking all those who have placed sufficient trust in the venture to subscribe for a year in advance. So far only one subscriber has asked for the return of his money, and he admits that he was obliged to do this because we did not agree to publish an article of his before we had seen it.

The Editor wishes to state that he accepts no responsibility for the views set forth in signed articles. In unsigned articles he must be taken to agree with the conclusions and general drift, though not necessarily with the arguments used to prove the thesis.

THE EDITOR.