The First Issue

Fergus Kerr OP

Revamped with effect from October 1964 as *New Blackfriars,* this journal first appeared in April 1920. We claimed then not to be 'new' but only *The Catholic Review*, 'revived and renamed': a quarterly that ran for several years but had to give up during the War. In 1919 Fr Bede Jarrett (1881-1934), then Prior Provincial, bought it for £40, on behalf of the English Dominican Province.

Bernard Delany (1890-1959) was appointed Editor of the projected journal. He had just come from two years as an army chaplain (1917-19). As he recalled, Fr Bede wanted a review which 'was not to be learned or theological, nor of a specifically ecclesiastical character' (see Bernard Delany, 'The Beginnings of "Blackfriars"', *Blackfriars* 34 (1953): 308-319).

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The first issues were planned over lunches at Jack Straw's Castle on Hampstead Heath. Besides Delany and Jarrett himself the editorial board consisted of Joseph Clayton and Stanley Morison, along with two other Dominicans, Fr Vincent McNabb and Fr Luke Walker.

Stanley Morison (1889–1967) was to become the most distinguished British scholar of typography. At this stage, barely thirty years of age, he was working for small presses in London. He became adviser to Cambridge University Press in 1925, designed Gollancz's famous 'yellow jackets', completely restyled *The Times*, and created the Times New Roman type-family which remains widely in use.

Joseph Clayton (1868-1943), a freelance journalist, with leftwing sympathies, had published short studies of Robert Owen, Wat Tyler, Jack Cade, Robert Kett and others, as well as *Votes for Women*, a pamphlet on behalf of the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society. His book *Economics for Christians* would be published by Basil Blackwell in 1923. His most substantial book was *The Protestant Reformation in Great Britain*, published by Burns, Oates and Co. in 1934. As we shall see, his contributions to the journal aroused some controversy.

Initially, the board considered the possibility of having the review printed on a hand press by two Dominican lay brothers. Alternatively, St Dominic's Press, Ditchling, was willing but, with hand-made paper as well as their hand press, there was no way they could print up to 2000

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copies every month — not to mention the expense. These 'idealistic dreams', as Bernard Delany calls them, were put aside and a local Hampstead printer was engaged — unnamed anywhere in the journal.

The cover was designed by Eric Gill (1882-1940), already a quite well known stone- and wood-carver. Between 1913 and 1918 he created the Stations of the Cross in Westminster Cathedral. Gill Sanserif would be commissioned by Morison for Monotype Corporation. He designed ten other typefaces, including Golden Cockerel and Perpetua. He was responsible for many church monuments and war memorials, as well as work for London Underground's St James's Park HQ (1929), Broadcasting House (1929-31) and much else. Greatly influenced by his study of Thomas Aquinas but also by Ananda Coomaraswamy (1877–1947), he published several books, beginning with *Money and Morals* (1934) and including *Work and Leisure* (1935) and his *Autobiography* (1940), acknowledged as a minor classic. He published many articles in *Blackfriars* , beginning with 'Dress', as we shall see.

As the Editor writes in the first editorial, the review 'will not seek to entertain or necessarily to edify its readers, but will take as its aim and endeavour to state and defend truth'.[1] 'It is an ambitious ideal', he goes on to say, prudently adding that it is 'one that we quite expect will not always be realized'. He then says that the primary concern of the journal would be 'the divine truths contained in the treasury of Christ's Church, and their bearing on men and things' — but if the first phrase suggests a journal devoted to expounding Catholic Christian doctrine the second is immediately spelled out as follows: 'We shall try to tell relevant truths and insist on those truths that are either unknown or neglected or in danger of being forgotten'.

In fact, looking over the eighty years and more of the journal's existence, it is plain from the outset that the contents, as Bede Jarrett wanted, have never been specifically ecclesiastical. As we shall see, the first issue set the tone.

Moreover, 'the Editor wishes to state that he accepts no responsibility for the views set forth in signed articles'. In other words, readers should not assume that the views of contributors were all endorsed by the Dominican Order, let alone that the articles all conformed to some Dominican 'line'. Again, as we shall see, there were some early problems on this score.

The yearly subscription was fourteen shillings — one subscriber had already asked for his money back — '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'. In 1920, obviously, fourteen shillings was a considerable sum.

The first issue ran to 62 pages, including the page of advertisements.

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Of these there were four: Hearne & Co. Ltd. of Waterford, offering the best value in the United Kingdom (*sic*) in serges, nuns veilings, sheetings, calicoes and linens; Louis Sandy, Gordon Mills, Stafford, offering habits, materials and veilings in a large variety of widths and qualities; Colwyn Bay Imperial Station Hotel, and 'Belmont', a Boarding Establishment in Brighton, guaranteed excellent cuisine, separate tables, electric light and two bathrooms, terms from 52/6 per week, week end 20/-.

Presumably these were establishments patronised by the friars, getting their black serge suits and woollen habits from the firms in Waterford and Stafford (a few miles from Hawkesyard, then the Dominican Order's study house in England), and vacationing in Colwyn Bay and Brighton.

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The first article is by Fr Vincent McNabb OP (1868-1943), explaining 'Our aim of truth' — the attitude towards truth that the journal would seek to maintain. By the time of his death Fr Vincent had spent over twenty years at St Dominic's Priory, Haverstock Hill, one of the most famous 'characters' in London. He studied with the Dominican friars in Louvain and taught their version of Thomism to younger friars of the English Province from 1894 until 1920, with a gap between 1906 and 1914 when he worked on the Dominican parishes in London and Leicester. In 1920, aged fifty-two, he was the leading Dominican theologian and one of the handful of competent Catholic theologians in England. He seems also to have been completely confident in his understanding of Thomism, not inclined to rigid scholasticism and not intimidated, either, by fears of betraying 'Modernist' tendencies.[2]

The article opens with two texts from the *Summa Theologiae*: truth is logically prior to good (*ST* 1.16. art.4); intellect is nobler than will (ibid.,1. 82. art.3).[3] Truth-seeking and truth-telling must be practised for their own sake. Many people write, not so much to tell the truth but to make a living — 'quite a noble' aim, Fr Vincent allows. Writers in *Blackfriars*, however, will tell the truth, 'not knowing or enquiring whether we shall or shall not make a living'. Indeed, 'we have been assured by one of our chief advisers that after a long experience of the world he never knew a man who made a living by telling the Truth; but he knew three men who met their death'. Somewhat melodramatically, 'it may be that *Blackfriars*, in its witness to the Truth, may have as short a career as the Holy Innocents' (Matthew 2: 16-18). (Is this a joke? I doubt it.)

There is a 'charity of the truth', a 'difficult task of economizing the truth', when the whole truth may or must be withheld, Fr Vincent

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concedes; but that is something different from adjusting the truth to circumstances — which he clearly regards as habitual in this 'era of compromise', which betrays 'the crown rights of God' and also, in failing to give others 'their due of truth' denies them 'their due of justice'.

While this still reads well, it is pretty abstract and highminded. The articles in this first issue, obviously, must all have been commissioned, no doubt over these pub lunches in Hampstead. It is interesting, then, that, after Vincent McNabb's exordium about 'Truth', we are treated to an article dealing with 'The Movies', by C.C. Martindale SJ (1879-1963), already known as a retreat-giver and writer, soon to be one of the most distinguished of a remarkable generation of English Jesuits. He has a wonderfully direct and informal approach. He opens by recalling, or embroidering, a conversation in the Paddington 'refreshment-room' with a half-tipsy soldier (it is 1919) who advises him to see 'Tarzan of the Apes', a then new film — which he does, as soon as it is shown in Oxford. Recounting the plot 'at tea' — in Campion Hall? — Martindale was 'rebuffed' by a colleague who regarded cinemas as 'vulgar' — 'Fancy *you* going to cinemas'.[4]

There follows a brilliant and highly entertaining refutation of all the arguments against 'going to the pictures' — as hundreds of thousands of people were then beginning to do.

It's bad for the eyes, they say: well, perhaps, so 'you shouldn't sit too close'. 'Well, then, they debauch the intellect, the emotions, the imagination, and the morals'. Sometimes, Fr Martindale concedes, he reaches the end of a film 'almost imbecile from its inconsequence' — yet he is 'ashamed to notice that very simple folk (like soldiers) were often quicker than I at seeing why this followed that, and even at foreseeing what would happen next'.

As for emotions — well, yes, people get carried away, he had once been hit — 'suddenly and very hard' — by an elderly lady sitting next to him, unintentionally, he is sure, in her excitement; on this score, however, his main concern is about the '*impermanence* of the emotions (rather than about the emotions themselves) evoked by cinemas' — no greater an occasion for concern, after all, than 'when a very sensuous Benediction-music has melted away the feelings — which might have crystallized into resolution — called forth by the Sermon'.

As for morals — 'I honestly believe that the average working man has a very sound code (he doesn't always live up to it, of course) and judges what he sees sanely, and is rather contemptuous of pictorial provocation'. He once sat among a crowd of Wigan miners and their comments on a film 'showing some rather undressed savages' — a film banned in Ireland, he tells us — were 'perfectly

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correct' (he says no more).

Fr Martindale regards 'our censorship' as 'psychologically crude'. Recalling the War-time 'instruction' films ('Bake bread', 'Save potato-peel', etc.), he reflects on how films can be and are used for 'indoctrination'. He is leading up to considering the possibility of 'Catholic films'.

Imagination *is* important: 'England really lost the faith when her imagination was corrupted, and not till then. As long as people felt friendly to the old religion, no "reformation" triumphed. When the Pope had got mythologized, when Spain had got on people's nerves and "Roman" ideas were associated with anti-patriot ideas, then Elizabeth and her ministers could do what they liked. Those who look forward to any massive conversion of our countrymen must look towards their imaginations. They won't *think* rightly of what they *see* wrongly'.

Controversial no doubt, now as then, that paragraph deserves discussion. It also introduces the hostility to Protestantism which runs through early issues of *Blackfriars* , as we shall see. The rest of the article, starting with *Fabiola,* the recently filmed novel by Robert Hugh Benson, offers a lengthy catalogue of films and suggestions of subjects for films which are, or would be, 'Catholic'.[5]

From 'Truth' to the new phenomenon of the cinema — and now to politics. The third article, by Joseph Clayton, is a fierce attack on Capitalism, ascribing it to the Reformation: 'This capitalism is but a thing of a few hundred years' growth; begotten in the break-up of European society at the Reformation; born in the pride that contemned as foolishness authority claiming inspired supremacy on earth; nourished on the ethics and philosophy of Protestant individualism; achieving its full stature in the hideous, heedless sacrifice of child-life in cotton factories at home, and the exploitation of countless aboriginal tribes in the dark corners of the earth'; and much in the same vein.

The alternative is 'co-operative labour for the satisfaction of human needs'.

The fourth article is by Shane[6] Leslie (1885-1971): at this time the author of only two or three volumes of verse but eventually to become a prolific writer. In 1944 he succeeded his father in the baronetcy of Glaslough, County Monaghan. His brief, as an Anglo-Irish gentleman, was plainly to argue that 'England' has to learn to make her 'final concession to Ireland' under 'the economic pressure she is beginning to feel from the United States'. Scornfully sweeping aside the 'gush' about Americans coming into the War to help their English kinsfolk (etc.), Leslie sees no 'special relationship'. On the contrary, such talk only 'riles the Irish-Americans'. Indeed, 'the Irish cause', and the

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urgent need to support Sinn Fein, is 'the one vital, virescent and violent cause which came out of the war in the American mind'. Moreover, the United States is determined to keep Britain financially dependent, and to dislodge the hegemony of the Royal Navy. In brief, it is 'very mighty economical influences' that will bring about the departure of Ireland from the British Empire.

Such vehemently anti-capitalist and anti-American articles as these by Clayton and Leslie would not appear in any Catholic journal nowadays.

We next have a nod towards literature. Osbert Burdett (1885–1936) was a man of letters, a now impossible way of life. Independent of academia, a true amateur, he published studies of Beardsley, the Brownings, Patmore, the Carlyles and others. He did William Blake for the English Men of Letters series (1926). *Memory and Imagination*, his reminiscences (1935), records the kind of life he was able to lead. His article, basically about the effect on handwriting of the newfangled typewriter, would be reprinted in his *Critical Essays* (1925).

Then there is a two page poem —'The Image of God' — by Theodore Maynard (1890-1956). Born into an Anglican clerical family in Madras he became a Catholic in 1913. A slim volume of his poems had just come out in 1919, with an introduction by G. K. Chesterton (an Anglican until 1922). Later in 1920 Maynard published *A Tankard of Ale: an anthology of drinking songs*. That same year he moved to the United States, where he taught in several Catholic colleges, raised a large family, brought out biographies of Henry VIII, Queen Elizabeth and many other books, the most successful of which, *The Story of American Catholicism* (1941, often reissued), largely dictated the self-image of US Catholics. His *Collected Poems* (1946) does not include 'The Image of God'.

The sixth article returns us to anti-Protestantism. Leslie Toke (born 1871, date of death as yet untraced), published an appendix on St Dunstan in the scholarly edition of the Bosworth Psalter edited by Edmund Bishop (1908), and also pamphlets on the housing problem and suchlike for the Catholic Social Guild. His article deals with 'The English medieval gilds (*sic*)'. He regrets that 'the modern English people' have 'lost all sense of historic time', as of 'most of its popular traditions' — 'ultimately as a result of that orgy of destructive licence which is called the Reformation, and immediately as a mental effect of the unstable and irrational social conditions which have grown out of that revolt'.

The seventh and last of the articles in the April 1920 issue is by Dorothea E. Brennell, M.A. — the only contributor to have these letters after her name, presumably because women were only then attending universities and that the male authors were all graduates could be taken for granted. She distinguishes 'patriotism' from 'jingoism' — but if this

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seems a fairly straightforward topic in the aftermath of the Great War she gives it an unexpected twist: the true patriots in the sixteenth century were the English martyrs (the Catholics, of course).

There follows a note explaining the name 'Blackfriars': Dominican friars wear black cloaks out of doors, hence Black Friars. They were first so called, apparently, in Aberdeen: the earliest use of the word, anyway, is in charters granted to the Dominicans in Aberdeen, 1342 and 1352; the first use in England being in 1466 in Lady Cicily Torboke's will.

There are two reviews, both by Luke Walker OP (1887–1936). He studied Thomism at Louvain 1909–1912 and then Scripture at the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem 1912-14. He taught at Hawkesyard and then Blackfriars, Oxford. Regarded by colleagues as a considerable theologian, and certainly well read if he read the books in the Oxford library which he borrowed, Walker published nothing but occasional articles and reviews in *Blackfriars*. The first of his reviews here deals with *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*, the Bampton Lectures at Oxford by Hastings Rashdall (1858-1924) then Dean of Carlisle and one of the most distinguished Anglican scholars of the day. Rashdall's 3-volume *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (1895) remains a fundamental study. *The Theory of Good and Evil* (two volumes, 1907), the product of many years of teaching philosophy at Oxford, expounds the theory of ethics which he called 'ideal utilitarianism'. He was a strong critic of Anglican forms of Modernism. In the Bampton Lectures he defends an 'exemplarist' or 'Abelardian' theory of the Atonement: the significance of Christ's death lies purely in the moral example which it sets us of self-surrender, moving us to repentance and holiness (etc.). Rashdall was well known as a vigorous polemicist. Anyway, the thirty-three year old Dominican, with next to nothing to attest his competence, weighs in against Rashdall: 'we may say at once that the teaching put forward by Dr Rashdall is, from the Catholic point of view, heretical', he 'grossly' misunderstands Thomas Aquinas on some important points , yet the book 'can be recommended to those whose business it is to know and combat it' — a pretty dismissive recommendation!

Having distanced himself from the eminent Anglican theologian, the young Dominican, in the other review, draws attention to a book (in French) by Marie-Joseph Lagrange OP (1855-1938), lectures delivered at Paris in 1917–18, refuting in advance the theories of Alfred Firmin Loisy (1857–1940) about New Testament Christianity as originating in Hellenistic Mystery religion.

Loisy, by any standards one of the great Modernist biblical scholars, left the Catholic Church finally in 1907. In 1890 Lagrange founded what became the Ecole Biblique, and soon afterwards its journal the *Revue*

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Biblique. His original interest was in Old Testament studies but in 1907 the Holy Office forbade him to continue working in that field and he turned his attention to the New Testament. His monumental commentary on Mark came out in 1911.

By 1920, the year that Père Lagrange brought out his commentary on Luke, he was well on the way to establishing his reputation as the greatest of that generation of Catholic biblical scholars — no longer suspected of Modernism. It may not have looked like that in 1920, to young Walker. Anyway, stirred by a critical review in *The Times Literary Supplement* of Loisy's book *The Pagan Mysteries and the Christian Religion* (an anonymous review, as they were then, no doubt by an Anglican scholar), Fr Luke obviously wanted to take the opportunity to record his beloved Père Lagrange's total rejection of Loisy's Modernism.

For the first issue of a review devoting itself to telling the truth this collection of essays makes a good start: capitalism is evil; Ireland will have to leave the British Empire, the United States is using economic leverage to ensure this; there is nothing to be feared in the new medium of the cinema; typing will ruin handwriting; Hastings Rashdall propounds heresy.

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In June 1920, according to the Editor, there is 'no dearth of writers' — unsolicited articles were now coming in.

In May 1920 Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953), the foremost Catholic apologist of the day, widely regarded (then at least) as a historian and political theorist, attacks nationalization, state capitalism, and the Servile State, a corollary of his espousal of Catholic economic liberalism and the traditional values of European civilization. In July 1920 Belloc dismisses as 'puerilities' *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* , the book that was just making the reputation of John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946): the claim that the defeated Germans could not afford to pay the French the required reparations. On the contrary, Belloc contends, the surplus wealth of Germany should be paid to those to whom it is morally due — not 'into the coffers of the international financiers to whom Germany before the war was mortgaged'.

In June 1920 Eric Gill reviews the two- volume study of the building of Westminster Cathedral by the architect's daughter — 'a great building' ... 'As a piece of brick and concrete it is magnificent'. Apart from the bad marbles and mosaics, 'the only serious fault in the inside is the mad terra-cotta traceried windows under the domes'. As for the exterior decoration, 'little less ridiculous than the Pavilion at Brighton or the Albert

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Memorial', Gill raves against the 'utterly dead carvings, capitals, mouldings, domes and finials in a more or less imitation Byzantine style'.

Ronald Knox (1888–1957), not yet Catholic chaplain to the University of Oxford, but well enough known as a wit, must have been asked for 'something'; he offers a paper on Sherlock Holmes, dating from 1910 when he was an undergraduate, a *jeu d'esprit* perhaps one might say, fabricated of mock learning — Holmes couldn't have gone to Cambridge; must have been at 'the House' (Christ Church, Oxford), though didn't read 'Greats' (Classics) etc., etc.

On the theological side — we have Vincent McNabb on Thomas Aquinas and biblical criticism (there were readers of Aquinas even in those days who had regard for his interest in Scripture); and, at much greater length, an interesting analysis of the Song of Deborah by Luke Walker.

The July 1920 issue has Vincent McNabb on the Lambeth Conference — important, historically, with its 'Appeal to All Christian People' for reunion, sent to the heads of Christian churches throughout the world. 'By reunion [Fr McNabb] means the only possible solution which would be at once a reunion and a healing of schism, namely reunion with Rome', so the Editor advises us before we reach the article. It is, however, pretty obvious that Vincent McNabb has Eastern Rite Catholics in mind as his model of reunion — what we used to call 'Uniat Churches'. That of course would mean reunion with Rome; but 'the Ecclesia Anglicana may well expect that its desires for reunion will be met by Rome's traditional breadth of toleration' (*sic*!). He expects 'the Churches ... in communion with Canterbury and York' to free themselves from 'secular and royal pressure' (disestablishment in other words). He notes 'the movement', in these churches, 'towards regaining, under a sense of continuity, all those truths, all that sacramental life, all that ecclesiastical communion and fellowship with Christian churches' which, as he says, were torn from the Church of England 'by an organized conspiracy of fraud and force' (the English Reformation, that is to say). Moreover, since these are the churches of 'the two most powerful nations left by the War', England and the United States of America, McNabb clearly thinks that now, in 1920, is the opportune time.

This article was delated to the Holy Office; it was referred to the Master of the Order; nothing came of this except that censors were always to be appointed for articles by Dominicans in *Blackfriars*.

In July, also, the Editor writes of having received a great deal of criticism — contradictory, as such criticism usually is: articles are 'too lofty' , 'too heavy', 'inclined to be dull', 'given to flippancy' , 'not definitive enough', 'too outspoken and overbold', and so on. One critic

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questioned the need for the journal — the Editor replies by citing a letter from Belloc, grateful that his essay had been published, saying that it could not have appeared 'in any of the Capitalist papers or reviews'.

Consistently with this anti-capitalist ethos the July 1920 issue carries another article by Joseph Clayton — 'The meaning of dividends'. The 'privilege of living on interest without working for a living' is as iniquitous as 'living by slave-holding in the West Indies' was eventually found to be. Protestantism is blamed again, as we now expect, especially from Clayton. We have to abandon living on dividends and work for 'a co- operative commonwealth where each shall readily aid his neighbour without thought of gain, and where reward shall be not in mastery but in service'.

In August 1920 Eric Gill explains what he was trying to do with his Stations of the Cross in Westminster Cathedral. Joseph Clayton follows up his earlier essays with a paper on 'medieval economics'.

In September 1920 another Dominican Norbert Wylie (1879–1928) returns to the Lambeth Conference: briefly deploring the Anglican communion as 'disorganized', 'scattered and therefore effete', etc., nearly half of his article is given over to quotations from Vladimir Solovyov (1853-1900), the Russian philosopher and theologian who strove for reunion between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches.[7]

In October 1920 Vincent McNabb returned to the Lambeth Conference, insisting that, in discussion of Christian Reunion, we 'will not allow our separated brethren to accept all the sin of disunion'. On the contrary, quoting the Catholic Encyclopedia, it is, or should be, agreed, by Catholics, that the fault was not on one side only. McNabb also refers to 'the distressing period before and after the *Apostolicae Curae*' — Pope Leo XIII's Bull, issued in 1896, condemning Anglican Orders as invalid. For many Catholics, in England especially, there was, of course, nothing 'distressing'; they were delighted. For Vincent McNabb, on the other hand, 'the kiss of peace between Rome and Canterbury, was much to be desired — 'between the Mother-Church and its beloved Daughter-Church'.

His article is followed by a lengthy review by none other than Marie-Joseph Lagrange OP of *The Doctrine of the Church and Christian Reunion* , the Bampton Lectures at Oxford composed in view precisely of the Lambeth Conference by A.C. Headlam (1862–1947). In the opening paragraph Lagrange regrets that Catholics 'do not feel the sorrow they ought', when they consider divided Christianity. In the end he concludes that Headlam's attempt to provide an ecclesiological basis for reunion between the Church of England and other churches does not work — it could not include the Churches in communion with Rome. Headlam

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cannot have been much surprised or disappointed if he ever read Lagrange's article. For 1920, however, sad as this may seem, it was a quite remarkable step for any English-speaking journal to commission as eminent a scholar as Lagrange to take an Anglican theologian's proposal so seriously.

In November 1920 we have Joseph Clayton again, this time on 'Christian socialism'. We also have 'What is happening in Ireland?', the first contribution by Denis Gwynn (1893–1971). At this time still a very young man, Gwynn would write a large number of books, lives of Wiseman and Challenor, Dominic Barberi, Roger Casement; *The Second Spring 1818-1852* (1942); *Lord Shrewsbury, Pugin and the Catholic Revival* (1946); and many others. He became research professor of modern Irish history at University College Cork.

Gwynn's position is absolutely clear: 'Give Ireland real self-government, with full power to manage her own affairs, and with guarantees that the present ghastly reign of violence and pillage will not be repeated. Give Ireland a firm offer, which will really be carried out, and a settlement could be had for the asking'.

In the December 1920 issue Bede Jarrett contributes 'The condition of Ireland' — as he says, self deprecatingly, on the strength of a fortnight's stay in Cork. 'At present', he fears, 'Ireland is in no condition to vote other than Sinn Fein' — so 'give her peace and settled government, and at least you are helping her to quiet her affairs, and perhaps helping her, more than you can guess, on to your side'.

In December 1920 we have another *jeu d'esprit* — except that it is probably not meant as a joke. This is Eric Gill on 'Dress': 'by design of divine providence vanity is the virtue of the male creature, pride in his physical condition and appearance, like the peacock ... in modern times this natural order has been reversed ... inverted ... modesty and self-effacement, the proper virtues of the female, have since the 1520s become the attributes of the male' (the Reformation again). The result, now, is that women have become the peacocks: 'The dress of modern women is the dress of the prostitute ... Nuns, nurses, and servant-maids are the only decently dressed women. Women should dress in uniforms and be thoroughly covered up ...'. Gill refers us to the Isles of Arran as the ideal: 'their women are entirely covered by their shawls, and they have crucifixes instead of mirrors in their bedrooms'.

In January 1921 the Editor notes that he has received 'lengthy letters' about the Gill piece, some 'merely contentious and sometimes abusive'; but he declines either to answer the critics or publish any of their letters. He must have known that he had made a mistake in ever publishing Gill's 'Dress'.

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In the December 1920 issue the seeds of another controversy were sown. Before the War, Robert Keable (1887–1927) had worked in Central Africa with the Universities' Mission 1912 and 1913. He would become a successful writer, with novels such as *The Mother of All Living* set in Africa; and religious novels, especially *Simon called Peter* (1921, reprinted again in 1939 with biographical note). Never a Catholic, he became very anti-Catholic: see the obituaries in the February 1928 issue; Bede Jarrett hopes the novels will not live — 'For all his vigour, they suffer from the trail of mire over them'.

Reviewing Chesterton's *A Short History of England* — which apparently claims that 'the Church did not agitate for abolition [of slavery] by legislation, but created an atmosphere in which slavery simply could not exist' — Keable mentions the case of East Africa: 'We have just emerged from a war for Freedom ... We have but just listened to the enunciation of principles of political self-determination and of mandatory rather than sovereign rights over the less advanced portions of the human race. And it is now that lord Milner, in the name of the Empire, allots to East Africans that very thing against which our invective was turned when the country was German ... Forced labour is riveted on their necks'. Backing Frank Weston, Anglican Bishop of Zanzibar, Keable denounces the British Imperial government, 'indifferent to the social and moral life of the natives'. Weston (1871–1924), credited with inspiring the appeal for Christian reunion put out by the Lambeth Conference, had that same year issued his protest against forced labour in Africa (*Serfs of Great Britain*).

This prompted a lengthy response, in the February 1921 issue, a seven page letter, by Aileen A. Millar, defending the British South Africa Company: it concludes with the typical put-down, that, far from being downtrodden the natives were flourishing, 'at the funeral of the late Sir Starr Jameson in the Matopos,a Matabele chieftain arrived in his own motor-car'. Another seven pages were devoted in the March 1921 issue, replying to Miss Millar.

The March 1921 issue opens with 'Ireland to-day under England', an article written anonymously 'by an English officer's son', living in Ireland. Truth telling indeed — it is a series of reports of the atrocities perpetrated by the Black and Tans — 'what shameless representatives of England'. In a letter to his friend Lady Margaret Domville (1840–1929), herself an Anglo-Irish aristocrat, dated 5 March 1921, Bede Jarrett refers to this as 'a hair-raising article', 'put in deliberately to make people realise how the name of England to us who love her is being dragged hatefully through mud' — telling the truth about the Royal Irish Constabulary was clearly an example of the truth telling which *Blackfriars* was founded to

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do. The letter, however, starts as a response to Lady Domville's anxieties about Clayton's article on the immorality of living on dividends. Fr Bede himself was due to lecture at Caxton Hall on "the morality of dividends' in a series 'Modern thought and ancient morals'. He had presumably been discussing the lecture with her. 'Really I had no intention of saying Dividends were necessarily wrong', he says. He endorses Clayton's main points: dividends are money lending; dividends come from other people's labour. 'But these 2 points don't make dividends wrong; they only make them dangerous and to be carefully examined in each case'. Clayton, in fact, seems to go a good deal further than this. Lady Domville was, of course, a generous benefactress of the Order.

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We are delighted to announce that, with effect from January 2004, *New Blackfriars* will be managed, printed and distributed by Blackwell Publishing, thus joining the large number of journals which they publish.

Basil Blackwell (1889–1984, knighted 1956) joined his father's bookshop in 1913. He founded his own publishing firm in 1921. Soon afterwards he offered to take over the publishing of *Blackfriars*: an offer accepted by the Order on 3 February 1922.

In October 1924 Bernard Delany completed his B.Litt. and left Oxford to teach at the Dominican school at Laxton, in Northamptonshire. The new Editor was Edwin Essex OP (1891–1966); he had had a few poems published in the journal but had hitherto worked in the parishes in Leicester, Woodchester and London. A year later, Bernard Delany was reappointed; Edwin Essex moved to Pendleton, then to Leicester, had a year as a chaplain in the Royal Navy, and really never settled long anywhere until 1945 when he spent five years at Woodchester and then the rest of his life in a congenially semi-eremitic fashion as chaplain to a convent in rural Gloucestershire.

The circulation had dropped to 950 copies a month (it had reached 1550). Bede Jarrett wrote to Bernard Delany on 23 July 1925 as follows: 'Blackwell has immense belief in your sense of editorship, your scent as to what will sell and what won't, above all in your discovery of controversy. When he took over the Review, he heard of it on all hands as fresh, daring, and sane. He thinks at the moment that it is little more than respectable. Will you please see that it is no longer respectable?'

Fr Bede went on to give advice: 'I think the thing to do is (a) to have people whom you can depend on and whose views you approve to be your spokesmen on the chief headings, (b) to build circulation not on "names" so much as on subjects, helped out when available by "names', (c) to

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foresee the coming points that will be locally discussed and to provide the Catholic dining population with arguments they can employ after the soup to worsen (*sic*) their adversaries, Protestants, Pagans and the Deadly Sins'.

Clearly it's a different world. Through all these early years there is a sense that the journal has 'adversaries' — like the Catholic community in the United Kingdom, permanently in conflict with the surrounding culture and society. Yet, on so many of the issues very little has changed: the Church of England and the Lambeth Conference; Ireland, even if now this is only 'the North'; Africa, still exploited though the Empire has gone; the hegemony of the United States of America ...

1 The publicity leaflet reads as follows:
BLACKFRIARS was inaugurated in April 1920 by the Dominican Friars of the English Province in response to the general demand for a Review representing their traditional teaching in Religion, Philosophy, Science and Art, and its application to the needs of today.
The aim of BLACKFRIARS is to state in a form intelligible to modern readers the primitive and traditional principles of the Catholic Church, and to apply those principles to the peculiar needs of the present day.
In *Religion* BLACKFRIARS stands for the continuity of God's intimate relations with mankind, as testified in the Old and New Testaments and in the history and authority of the Catholic Church.
In *Philosophy* and *Science* BLACKFRIARS stands for the validity of human thought in a priori and a posteriori processes of reasoning and for the necessity of experience and experiment as the groundwork of all syntheses and the test of all hypotheses,
In *Art* BLACKFRIARS upholds the relationship between the rules of human conduct and the rules of human production and the dependence of both on the End of human nature, whence all Goodness, Truth and Beauty are derived.

2 McNabb's near contemporary George Tyrrell SJ (1861-1908) found the rigidities of Scholasticism increasingly intolerable; many other capable scholars of that generation moved discreetly into uncontroversial erudition or out of theology altogether, such was the anti-Modernist witch hunting from 1907 until 1914.

3 With 'part' instead of 'art', the first typographical slip in the history of the journal.

4 The 'movies' were obviously like the 'telly', for educated people: when a television set was introduced into the Dominican study house in 1958 it was placed in the library and we only watched edifying programmes.

5 C.C. Martindale published a 2-volume biography of Benson in 1916, and also the entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography 1912-1921.*

6 Pronounced 'Shaun'.

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