

THE PURPOSE OF THE JOURNAL: AN EDITORIAL

WE anticipate two reactions upon the appearance of the first number of THE CANADIAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY. One will be, "Not another theological Journal!" The other will be, "Ah, at last a *Canadian Journal of theology!*"

We have much sympathy with the former point of view. We know only too well how impossible it is to keep abreast of contemporary theological production in books and periodicals, quite apart from the need to master the riches of the past. A moment's reflection, however, reminds us that the very volume of theological production makes journals of this sort necessary, so that by means of essays and reviews the cream of contemporary thinking may be made available to those who do not have time for highly specialized studies, and so that those interested in a particular topic may receive direction how to pursue it. To fulfil our purposes to begin with, each number will generally contain an article of each of the following types: theological or theological-philosophical, Biblical (in the Old and New Testament fields alternately), historical (relating to Canadian Church history particularly), political and social, pastoral and psychological, editorials and book-reviews.

But someone may say that there are already a number of periodicals doing just this kind of thing. Why start one in Canada? There are several very strong reasons.

In the first place, we are not so much starting a new periodical as seeking to recover and further the achievements of a predecessor. *The Canadian Journal of Religious Thought* had a successful career for a number of years. It was only the abnormal conditions of the great depression that brought it to an end. Since that day, the population of the country has increased, her material wealth has vastly expanded, and theology has had a new birth. If the former journal could thrive so well under less favourable conditions, we must not for very shame neglect the task of producing one today.

In the second place, we belong to a nation that is rapidly achieving a splendid nationhood, progressive within and respected without. But we cannot grow wholesomely, deeply, and in a balanced way unless we develop among us all the organs of life and expression. Reflective journals are a prime necessity for intellectual and spiritual health. For this reason alone, there *must* be a Canadian Journal of theology. We are confident that every patriotic Canadian who has a sense of spiritual values will want to see our venture succeed.

In the third place, although Christianity is not Canadian but universal, and although there cannot be a Canadian theology in the sense of a Canadian system of doctrine, the eternal quality of truth is to be reached, not by seeking to abstract ourselves from our existence, but by relating ourselves to it. We are now in a period of theological quickening because the whole life of the Church has been quickened. The "eternal quality of truth" is inseparable from its here-and-now quality. Word and action condition one another. The Churches in Canada cannot take their place in the Church Catholic by being pallid reflections of the life and theology of denominations elsewhere. We shall hear the Word of God only as we obey it in the Canadian milieu in which he has put us to serve him. Let no man be affronted by the word *Theology* in our name, as if it stood for dry, abstract, unpractical discourse. To us it means the Word or Truth of God yielded as we shape our decisions in live human issues in the light of Christ. We believe that the task of clarifying that Word and those issues in the service of the Church of Christ calls for a theological journal. To that service we dedicate ourselves. Supporting groups have been formed and are being multiplied in all the Provinces to make the word *Canadian* in our title a genuine description. We desire assistance in the way of articles, suggestions, and financial donations from every quarter, and confidently appeal for a warm welcome and a large list of subscribers.