

EVANGEL

The Prospect of EVANGEL

'I am appalled that you are starting yet another magazine', scribbled one prospective subscriber across the front of an introductory brochure. 'Financial suicide' was the comment of another (a publisher!). As we commend this first issue to its readers, we must give an account of ourselves and our venture.

First, it must be said that this is not a commercial enterprise. We do not have overheads to meet, but neither is there the capital of a publishing house to support us over the crucial first year of our life. EVANGEL is launched upon the gifts of well-wishers, and it is being established as a charitable trust. We have in consequence been profoundly grateful to those who have seen fit to send us more than the simple subscription fee. Yet we intend that EVANGEL should stand upon its feet and pay its own way, and we look to those who are more enthusiastic than the clergyman we have quoted above to make it known and increase its circulation. We look to them also to encourage advertising, and are confident that these pages will prove a suitable vehicle for publishers and others who wish to communicate with thinking evangelicals.

Secondly, we must address the broader question: why EVANGEL? The Editorial Board, the names of whose members appear opposite, spans a very broad denominational spectrum — indeed, those groupings which are absent are so by accident rather than design. Our object has been to gather a body of Christian people who are prepared to join together in those great matters which unite them, setting their differences (which are in some cases not insignificant) to one side. EVANGEL does not have an editorial stance on baptism, or church government, or any of a dozen other contentious issues. We shall not ignore them, but intend that they should be discussed freely and intelligently in these pages. But our over-riding concerns are the elements of orthodox Christianity which unite conservative evangelical believers, and especially the paramountcy of the Holy Scriptures and their vital place in the life of the church. In particular, we have a concern for the preaching of the Scriptures,

which we see to be the logical outworking of their inspiration. Discussion and examples of Biblical exposition will be a major feature of EVANGEL.

Yet we have also a more general concern. We are confident in our evangelical faith, a faith encompassing and indeed derived from an inerrant Bible. In the light of that confidence we believe it to be crucial for evangelicals to be aware of the theological climate of the day, so that they may attain to a critical appreciation of what is good in modern theological thinking, and develop an apologetic which is both informed and convincing. So EVANGEL is not merely to be a journal for preachers and about preaching. It is a Review, and in book reviews and articles of a more general flavour (such as the series on Continental theology initiated in this issue) we shall seek to provide informed comment on the theological scene of today.

We trust we shall be something more than merely 'yet another magazine'. If we are not, we shall have failed. As editors, writers and readers we all have better things to do than to be drawn into so meagre a venture. Our hopes and our prayers have been for a *distinctive* journal, aiding and encouraging the preacher while stimulating the thinking Christian and surveying the contemporary theological scene on his behalf. Whether we attain so ambitious an objective is not for us to say.

Letters to EVANGEL

We welcome correspondence intended for publication, and hope to carry a regular page of readers' letters, either responding to material published in these pages or directed elsewhere. Letters for inclusion in the next (April) issue must be in the hands of the editor before the end of January. We reserve the right to shorten letters for reasons of space.