

Editorial

THE phrase 'the day of opportunity' has been so often heard, year by year, that the thought it expresses may seem trite. Yet the Church of England, and evangelicalism in particular, has an opportunity to-day which is to be envied. There is little doubt in the minds of thoughtful men that the Christianity which once seemed out-dated, except to its initiates, now holds the key to the future. The problem, however, is that the majority of our countrymen are vague as to the meaning of the Faith, puzzled as to its exact relevance to their lives, and still confused by the backwash of controversies now dead.

The Church must therefore put forth a message which is clearcut and unmistakable. The trumpet must not give an uncertain sound. Teaching and preaching must be plain and precise, yet not shallow. The aim of witness and evangelism must be certain, yet not limited. And the lives of the exponents of the gospel must be as positive as the truth they profess.

For this, hard theological thinking is needed. This journal will seek to play its part in guiding that thought. **THE CHURCHMAN**'s terms of reference are wide. 'Theology' will be taken in its largest sense, covering not only the study of doctrine, ethics and liturgy but their relation to the practical problems of the day. For if **THE CHURCHMAN** is to continue its usefulness and, in the late editor's words, 'to make a yet more effective contribution to the theological thought of the Church of England', it is essential that it should be related firmly both to the eternal gospel and to the contemporary scene.

It is natural that the bulk of the journal's matter should be theological in the stricter sense of the term. One article in each issue, however, will be topical, and another will deal with some practical aspect of the Christian ministry. There will also be articles on matters of general and historical interest. It will be noticed also that one of the contributors in this issue writes anonymously. Not many years back almost all the articles in quarterlies were anonymous, in order that the reader should not be deflected in his study by prejudices regarding their authors. Such practice may not be fully advisable to-day, but anonymous articles will, as deliberate policy, appear from time to time.

A new editor must always be conscious of his inadequacy. But he can take encouragement from the fact that a Christian journal must be a partnership, between editor, writers and readers. It is important that readers should be ready to submit their findings on the subjects which interest them and to allow others to share their thinking. In this way **THE CHURCHMAN** will never lack worthwhile material. But more necessary than that is the partnership of prayer. Without prayer, as is obvious, these pages will be barren. The Editor asks therefore that every reader will endeavour to join him in regular prayer for God's continued blessing on **THE CHURCHMAN**, that, in the words of the Ordinal, 'Thy holy Name may be for ever glorified, and Thy blessed kingdom enlarged'.