

Editorial

There is no shallow end in philosophy. To study or teach the subject is to be plunged into depths where there is no distinction between the elementary and the fundamental. Some of the greatest philosophical classics are rightly used as introductory texts. For the same reason there is no conflict, as there would be in many a field, between the scholarly purposes of a learned journal of philosophy and the special aims that *Philosophy* pursues as an organ of the Royal Institute of Philosophy. The first Editor, Dr S. E. Hooper, in his valedictory editorial in the issue of July 1956, reminded his readers of the objects of the Institute, and of their necessary influence on the policy of the journal. The Editor had done his best 'to provide certain articles in every issue capable of being understood and appreciated by every educated person'. His successor has pursued and achieved the same objective.

Professor Acton has given distinguished service to *Philosophy* and to philosophy. He has brought to his editorial task the varied gifts and interests that are shown in his writings: wide philosophical sympathies; a scholarly concern with the history of philosophy, informed by the recognition that no philosophical work of any value can be merely historical; and a willingness to attend to authors, texts and questions of importance to the world at large as well as to those that have preoccupied the academic philosophers of his generation. He has known and shown that morals impinge on markets, and that it would be a fortunate epoch whose only illusions were about matters of pure epistemology. In his books and articles, as well as by his editorial choices, he has demonstrated that the highest professional standards of philosophy and scholarship can be harnessed to the pursuit of the wider objects of the Institute. It is an honour to succeed him.

The same objects will continue to be pursued. Professor Acton has proved that it is possible to achieve them while at the same time securing and retaining a place among the leading professional journals in the field, able to attract articles and reviews from distinguished philosophers in all the English-speaking countries. In these respects there will be a complete continuity of policy and practice. But a new editor naturally makes changes of emphasis, and there will be some innovations which are designed to reinforce the appeal of the journal to the general educated reader without compromising the high professional standard on which *Philosophy* has been able to insist.

There will in future be more soliciting and commissioning of articles than has been customary. The marrying of the right author to the right subject sometimes calls for editorial match-making. This applies even to the most basic and traditional types of philosophical articles, but it applies more strongly to some themes to which it is fitting that *Philosophy* should give particular attention: the relations between philosophy and other academic subjects (history, literature, law, theology, the natural and social

Editorial

sciences); branches of philosophy where clear non-technical presentation, combined with rigorous professional standards of argument, is particularly difficult to achieve (philosophy of science and philosophical logic); and the application of philosophy to problems, including practical problems, which lie outside the range of academic philosophy.

In the field of practical policy and social enquiry many questions of tangled complexity arise on or outside the boundaries of recognized academic disciplines and techniques. Some of them are practical and ethical (abortion, organ transplantation, euthanasia). Others have an ethical component but involve a wide range of other types of question (ecology and the environment; the ethics of social research and 'social engineering'). These issues arouse powerful emotions at just the points where the clearest heads and the most detached investigations are called for. Controversies about the relations between race, class and intelligence, as conducted by some of the supporters and critics of Arthur Jensen and H. J. Eysenck, provide the most dramatic current examples, but new instances constantly come into view. All or most of them relate in one way or another to the role of experts and authorities in dealing with questions that call in the end for individual moral and political judgment, and hence they raise philosophical problems which are as old as Plato and yet fresh in every new conflict between the pundit and the public.

Some professional philosophers are already actively interested in these themes and problems. Some others who are actively concerned with them have a well-developed even if non-professional interest in philosophy. It will therefore be possible to attract writings on these themes without relaxing the standard of professional expertise which a learned journal can and must exact.

Reviews and review-articles will make their contribution to the discussion of these topics, and there will sometimes be reviews of non-philosophical books that call for philosophical comment. Other changes in the book pages will be designed to increase the coverage of new titles. In recent years *Philosophy* has been reviewing little more than ten per cent of the books submitted by publishers. Most of these have been dealt with in individual reviews of up to a thousand words, though there have been occasional review-articles. In future it is hoped to include a review-article in every issue. Some of the articles will cover groups of related books, and in suitable cases they will amount to survey articles, for example on recent philosophy of science, or French philosophy, or aesthetics. There will also be more composite reviews of two or three books on related themes.

The Booknotes column that appears for the first time in this issue will be a regular feature. Some anthologies, second editions and reprints, and volumes of collected papers by individual philosophers, which do not need full reviews, call for more attention than a mere listing without comment.

Some future issues may also contain news and editorial comment on matters of current philosophical interest, ranging from a Papal Encyclical or Report of a Royal Commission to Radical Philosophy, or Tom Stoppard's play *Jumpers*, or the recent proposal by the Secretary-General of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies for the holding of a 'World Philosophy Year'—an idea to which the reactions of a group of British philosophers were a mixture of scepticism, cynicism, amusement and amazement.

This issue, besides appearing in a new shape and size and with a new cover and new design, also contains sixteen additional pages. The number of pages will if at all possible be maintained or further increased, so that the introduction of some new features need involve no reduction in the amount of space devoted to the journal's customary and primary role as a medium for the discussion of the central problems of philosophy.