

# BLACKFRIARS

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## EDITORIAL

‘THE British Empire now stands virtually alone as the champion of freedom, of civilization, and of the rights of man. Every citizen has a vital part to play in this titanic struggle, more especially every individual in this beleaguered fortress of England. We need more tanks, more planes, more guns, more ships, more men, and we need a confident and steadfast will to victory. Given the material and a good morale, we *must* win.’

This is the burden of the message now repeatedly addressed to the nation, and it does indeed represent an urgent and immediate need. Yet it by no means covers the whole of England’s present need, nor even includes the most urgent need of all. She also needs more supernatural faith, more confidence in and appeal to God and the things of God, more prayer, more understanding of the value of suffering borne for the sake of Him Who suffered even the Cross to overthrow the kingdom of Satan. We are beset not merely by a ruthless human foe, but by the spirit of evil who now seeks through human agencies to dominate the world and souls of men. Material might alone will not win this war. Satan and his kingdom are to be overcome not with material weapons alone, but with spiritual ones; and if this war is to be fought to a successful issue, if real freedom is to be won, the output of spiritual munitions must equal and surpass that of their material counterparts.

Herein it may not be doubted that the Catholic Church must stand in the forefront of the battle. England was once a Catholic country, Mary's dowry and an island of saints. Like so much of the rest of the world it has largely been lost to God. Fundamentally it is that loss which has robbed England, as it has robbed almost the whole world, of peace; and it is that loss which has given Satan his opportunity. There can be but one remedy for this fundamental loss, and without that remedy no other means can ultimately prevail. It is the Cross, the standard of Christ the King, which must be carried before any army preparing to do battle with Satan and his instruments. We Catholics, at least, should know that there is no way to a victory that is real and lasting except the kingly road to Calvary. They should know that they must be one with Christ in this as in all else, that in their following of Him they must carry the Cross at all times, but especially in these days of strife with evil. Their mission in England to-day is of paramount importance, and it will not be achieved without superlative effort. Even the time for passive acceptance of the Cross is past; patient stoicism in the face of suffering is not enough. The Cross must be eagerly sought and resolutely shouldered. The hardships of long hours of work, of self-imposed privations, of alarms and attacks, of worse perhaps to come, these are undoubtedly material for the Christian effort. But they alone will not win the war against Satan. It has been truly said that the final victory in any campaign cannot be won by an army which is merely on the defensive; it must itself take the offensive and press home its attacks.

Most people will remember those dramatic and tragic words: 'If it is true that only a miracle can save France, then I believe in that miracle because I believe in France.' The miracle was not vouchsafed,

perhaps because the grounds of belief in it were unsound. It might be said that only a miracle can save England. That miracle will be vouchsafed if we believe first in God and then in an England once more turned to God. Indeed, perhaps the first and greatest miracle we must seek is the one that will justify the second part of this act of faith. But it is a miracle that we may confidently expect if we who believe in God and in the essential England will unite in a campaign of prayer and self-sacrifice worthy of the great cause at stake. Whether there is likely to be much fifth column activity in this England of ours, as there has been in all the other countries which have been attacked, it is impossible to forecast. But this much we must recognise—there is a spiritual fifth column at work which must be ruthlessly stamped out. Just as this treachery works foully and insidiously in the material sphere, so does it work in the spiritual sphere. This evil spirit must be exorcised, and this sort is cast out only by fasting and prayer.

We cherish the freedom that is associated with the name of England, but more and more are beginning to realise now that there can be no freedom while the spirit of evil, be it the noonday devil of direct attack or the creeping devil of dark treachery, is loose and abroad. Where Satan holds sway there can be no freedom, for the only true freedom is that wherewith Christ has made us free. It is of this freedom that the devil seeks always to rob mankind; therefore, he binds men where he can with the bonds of things earthy, where he can he blinds them with pride and lust of power, chains them to machines dealing death and destruction in an attempt to incarcerate others in the same diabolical concentration camp. But England has drawn the sword in freedom's name and, unwitting where many of her sons are concerned, is fighting for the prerogatives of God. But only His

faithful ones know what she is really fighting for, and upon them falls the duty of ensuring that the most important means of all are not disregarded but are used to the full.

In this present issue of BLACKFRIARS, sadly shrunk in size for reasons over which we have no control, we print two important articles which elaborate the vitally important truth set forth so briefly in this Editorial. It is possible, even probable, that some practical campaign of spiritual effort may follow hard upon them. We venture to urge our readers to a whole-hearted co-operation in any such campaign, which may well be the decisive factor in securing the victory for which we strive.