

BLACKFRIARS

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CATHOLICISM IN SCOTLAND

IN the modern age recognition of a distinctive minority leads almost always to separation and conflict. It might seem that to dedicate a special number of this review to Scotland would insist once again on the recognition of the Scottish section of the British Isles and foment, however slightly, the spirit of separation and division just at a time when the crying need is for solidarity. But solidarity does not arise out of a mist of distinction. It requires the acknowledgement of individualities and their rights, and, built up on that acknowledgement, an understanding co-operation towards the common good. That is needed now among nations, classes and families, or the increasing disintegration will continue to atomize society. Scotland, and particularly Catholic Scotland, has much to offer to such a solidarity of people, not from a romantic view of her bonnie isles and lassies—Ian Finlay has called the romantic view of Scotland 'The Great Illusion'—but from a measured judgment of her past history, her present industrial importance, her unique peasantry of crofters, as well as her well known propensity for hard-headed philosophy and business. Here, in *BLACKFRIARS*, we present a few aspects of such valuable contributions to co-operation and solidarity. They are limited in scope and with a Dominican bias in the historical articles, but they are offered as an approach to a reasoned and unromantic understanding of the great potentiality of Catholicism in Scotland.