

FOREWORD

SINCE I read the proofs of this second collection of articles by Mr. Frank Duff I have been searching for adjectives adequate to describe the volume they form. Dynamic is one; the book is certainly that; it is live, forceful, intense, and even vehement in places. It is a rousing, rallying, stirring cry from a deeply spiritual man whose vision extends far beyond the horizons of most of us. Readers who penetrate its depths will find it startling, even frightening and upsetting. They will sense the author's concern that so many who apparently love God are not moved to action to make others love Him; they will share his anxiety lest Catholic apathy betoken refusal of apostolic grace; they will sympathise with his distress that so little effort is made to mobilise the Catholic multitudes, to fire the fervent, stimulate the self-satisfied, reclaim the lapsed and convert the straying.

Mr. Duff is generally regarded as the founder of the Legion of Mary. He maintains—rightly, I think—that he did not found it, but that it was implanted in the Church under God's Providence by His blessed Mother. Certainly Frank Duff has been the principal guiding spirit of the Legion during these last forty years. He has seen it become one of the most arresting phenomena in the Church's history. It would be hard to name any apostolic movement of the laity which has been so universal, effective, comprehensive, productive and numerous as the Legion with its multitudes of both active and auxiliary members. The spirit which has enthused the Legion is in every chapter that follows. The reader will understand that many of them were originally the material of talks at Legion functions; some were articles in *Maria Legionis*, the Legion's quarterly journal, or printed elsewhere; one was the preface of a book. In this context the allusions to the Handbook of the Legion, the Standing Instruction or various Legion works will be understood.

The chapters cover a lot of ground. Some are doctrinal, for example, those on the Mystical Body, the New Eve, the Mother of God, Heaven; some are simple meditations on Scripture, like *The New Testament*, *Christmas* and *The Magi*; some are apologetic either wholly or in part, such as that on *Capharnaum*; some are primarily practical and pastoral, namely, *The Priest Must Have Members* (one of the finest essays on the lay apostolate ever to be published), *The Legion of Mary for Men*, "Everyone Must Pour Himself Into Another Soul," "Waste Not—Want Not!" and *The Spirit of Home Visitation*. Through them all runs the theme epitomised in the title chosen for the book, "Mary Shall Reign." Few, if any, present-day writers have succeeded in communicating their devotion to the Mother of God as Frank Duff has done. It is himself, his life, his very being. It

MARY SHALL REIGN

is firmly doctrinal, impressively informed, perfectly comprehensive and tenderly human.

The message his book proclaims is essential if the Church is to discharge her divine commission of preaching the Gospel to every creature. Mr. Duff's principles are more than worthy of notice; they are cardinal, fundamental, indispensable. They apply not only to the Legion of Mary but to any form of apostolic endeavour. It is because they are neglected that much activity has meagre results. All who love the Church and yearn for its growth and extension will be grateful for these thrilling pages. They will not only read the book over and over again; they will never cease to recommend it.

FRANCIS J. RIPLEY.

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