

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

With this number *Dionysius* completes its first quinquennium of existence. In the last five years it has established itself as a learned journal of considerable respectability. We have published a number of notable articles on various aspects of ancient philosophy and its later influence, especially in the area which is of particular interest and concern to us, that of the study of later Greek philosophy and its interaction with and continuing influence on Christian thought.

We have also published a couple of articles on literature, and made an occasional gesture, of one sort or another, towards the concerns of our contemporaries. The present number continues the so far established pattern very well, and we are glad that so much good work of this kind is being submitted to us for publication. But we are deeply interested in everything which shows the living power of ancient thought in all generations, down to and including our own. We should welcome articles on a greater variety of subjects, for instance on the continuance and transformation of ancient ways of thinking in Byzantium and the world of Islam, in European Renaissance thought or the later English Platonist tradition. And we should like more articles which fall within our general terms of reference on imaginative literature and the other arts.

One article in this number, that by Dr. Patricia Cox, does break new ground for *Dionysius* in that it sets out to relate a genuinely contemporary kind of imagination and sensibility to some of the wilder and stranger regions of ancient thought which in our wild strange world we should not neglect or despise. An article which begins with a quotation from Wallace Stevens has at least caught up with the creative imagination of the present editor's young manhood, half a century or so ago: the products of which are, of course, still too "modern" for many of his younger colleagues. He finds this encouraging for reasons connected with a recent re-reading of Hesse's *Glasperlenspiel*. A periodical which approached no nearer to modern literature than Kleist would be likely to find approving readers in Castalia, that remarkable province of the mind in which all thought and all art, except that of the despised and deplorable present and recent past, are consummately studied and elegantly woven into its great Game, that apotheosis of system in which everything (of a suitable age) can be understood (in a way) and related (if its conventions are accepted) to everything else, in a symbolic language of superb

precision (comprehensible only to the initiated). There are, of course, worse places than Castalia to be read in with approval. The Germany of the conservative mind has more sinister provinces than the Pedagogic Province. And Hesse's great parable for professors is written with love and longing for the beauty of that exquisite and nearly universal culture of which with deep and delicate irony he displays the consummate arrogance and utter sterility. Nothing is created in that beautiful little province, and no living creation from its contemporary world can enter it. But it is beautiful. The present writer might enjoy Castalia as a retirement home. But he would not like to devote his last intellectual energies to the playing of a Glass Bead Game, and therefore would not wish *Dionysius* to become altogether a Castalian periodical.

*Hilary Armstrong*