

“The Collected Essays of Bertrand Russell”

This edition will entail almost a generation of scholarship, and the preliminary planning will be revealed in the succeeding pages of this issue of *Russell*. The *Essays*, the first phase of a cooperative endeavour between McMaster and the Bertrand Russell Estate, will be but the foothills of the monumental *Complete Works*. We forbear to contemplate, let alone schedule, the steep climb to the summit of Russell's mountain, which will be undertaken as time goes by and new generations of editors rise to face this challenge. But there must be a beginning, and nowhere else could this undertaking be begun but at McMaster. We have collected, since our acquisition of the Russell Archives I and II, in photoform or original, from both the well-known and the ephemeral of the world of periodicals, all the essays, newspaper and journal articles, prefaces, pamphlets, speeches, debates, letters to editors and messages and even blurbs that are known to Russell's bibliographers. Also, we have added from various private and public sources to the unpublished manuscripts that came with Archives I and II.

The constantly growing interest in Russell has led to a proliferation of different editions of his works that further points up the need for a standard and scholarly edition. There shall be a day when a shorthand citation like "McMaster 8: 279" will be sufficient affidavit for the scholar of the authenticity and location of any quotation of Russell's written word.

It is not pedantic to give chapter and verse thus; it is essential for exact scholarship. With an author so controversial and prolific as Russell, it becomes all the more imperative. The McMaster Russell citation will take a place alongside the great Stephanus edition of Plato (of which this library is happy to own the first edition of 1578), the University of Toronto's splendid edition of the Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, and other cherished editions of Collected Works that through the centuries transcend reprints and new settings of type.

We aspire to a limited collectors' edition bound in morocco, blue and gold, and printed on fine laid paper, a library subscription edition sturdily bound on longlife archival paper, and perhaps most important - and this would please Russell - a popular paperback edition that would be within the resources of readers everywhere.

The time has come for all the writings of Russell to be brought out of the Archives and made more available, leaving the original manuscripts to be the Court of final authority for the reliability of the Collected Works and the indispensable source of how Russell's composition actually proceeded.

William Ready