

## Editorial Notes.

SHORTLY after the writing of the last set of notes the Churches of this country—and indeed of the world—suffered a totally unexpected and grievous blow in the death of Dr. William Temple, the Archbishop of Canterbury. It is not too much to say that the whole ecclesiastical situation has been changed by his untimely passing. Dr. Temple had made for himself a unique position in our midst, and under his leadership the Christian forces might have recovered a position of moral authority in the nation, and among themselves might have achieved a closer unity than has been known since the Reformation. In countless Free Church manses, and among the rank and file of the churches, his death was felt as a personal bereavement. Dr. Temple had come to exercise a greater measure of authority in the Free Churches than any single leader of our own order. He has left us no successor in this regard, though by his personal qualities of courage, friendliness and spiritual discernment he has ensured that we shall regard all future Archbishops with greater respect and sympathy. Coming so soon after the lamented death of Dr. William Paton, that of Dr. Temple further seriously impoverishes the leadership of the Ecumenical Movement in all its phases, and would seem to make much harder the task of Christian reconstruction and international reconciliation. Yet another blow has come through a disastrous rocket incident due to enemy action. The Presbyterian Church of England, as well as suffering other serious losses, has been deprived of two of its outstanding leaders, the Revs. W. T. Elmslie and T. W. Douglas James, both of them able and experienced men at the height of their powers, and the Rev. Reginald Tribe, a High Anglican leader of the Faith and Order Commission of the British Council of Churches, has also been killed. Other well-known ecclesiastics were injured, including Canon Leonard Hodgson, Regius Professor of Divinity in Oxford and the Secretary of the Faith and Order Continuation Committee. Yet others had very narrow escapes. These tragic happenings are a further grim reminder of the realities of modern war, and emphasise the need for all the Churches to be constantly preparing younger men as under-studies in the responsibilities of leadership.

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A melancholy interest is added to the very important article from the pen of Dr. Mott Harrison which we are glad to be

able to publish in this number. On January 25th last, only a short time after completing the article, and while still engaged in correspondence about the illustrations, Dr. Harrison passed away at his home in Hove. He had made himself the outstanding modern authority on the life and work of Bunyan. His revised and enlarged 1928 edition of Dr. John Brown's standard biography of Bunyan, and the choice Bedford edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which appeared in 1938 (first from the Sidney Press and then from Heffer's of Cambridge) were the fruit of much careful research. Other valuable contributions to Bunyan study were made through the pages of the *Library* and the *Baptist Quarterly*. To the Bedford Public Library Dr. Harrison presented more than one thousand books and prints relating to his hero, and the Frank Mott Harrison Collection, as it is called, will grow in importance and value as the years pass. Dr. Harrison had many other interests. His doctorate was in music. In Hove he played a notable part in public affairs, having been a member of the Town Council for more than a quarter of a century, and taking a particular interest in educational matters. He was a member of the Holland Road Baptist Church, Hove. All those who were brought into contact with him, even casually, came to regard him with the greatest esteem. Deep sympathy will be felt with Mrs. Harrison, his partner and the sharer in all his enterprises during more than forty-six years.

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The Rev. D. T. Jenkins is the contributor of one of the latest additions to the stimulating series of Congregational "Forward Books," which is being published by the Independent Press. By earlier writings, and notably by *The Nature of Catholicity*, Mr. Jenkins has shown himself a very fresh and provocative thinker, whose work repays careful study even by those who disagree with many of his views. The same qualities are shown by his new book, *The Church Meeting and Democracy*, which should have a wide circulation. It deals with a subject as vital to Baptists as to Congregationalists, and penetrates a good deal deeper than most contemporary discussions of the matter. It is somewhat surprising to find Mr. Jenkins so anxious to minimise the connection between the seventeenth-century Independents and the more radical sects of the period, and equally unsatisfactory to find him trying to claim for the Congregationalists in the matter of English and American democracy what certainly belonged to Separatists generally and in particular to the more revolutionary of them. The great interpreters of the Congregationalist tradition—Bogue and Bennet, Dale, Selbie, H. W. Clark and the rest—would certainly be surprised to read that "the only justification for our continued existence as Congregational churches in separa-

tion from other churches is that we regard it as a solemn trust from God to the re-united church which is to come to show to other churches the Church Meeting in action." *Only* justification? Then how few of our churches have any justification for their continued existence! Mr. Jenkins admits that the Church Meeting has sadly decayed in modern Congregationalism. Most of his book is taken up with an examination of the theological principles underlying the Church Meeting and with practical suggestions for its renewal. Many of his points will awaken vigorous controversy. We commend them to the consideration of Ministers' Fraternal and churches, not because we think they will all be acceptable, but because they raise issues which it is most important should be faced by those of our tradition. "The Church Meeting," he says, "is part of the fulness of Church Order and . . . without it a church lacks one of the essential ordinances which God has provided for His people as they live the Christian life together." Mr. Jenkins thinks that Church Meetings are ideally held weekly on a Sunday, following the preaching of the Word and the observance of the Lord's Supper. The deliberate attempt to obtain the practical guidance of the Holy Spirit requires that the meeting have "competent theological guidance," and Mr. Jenkins believes that "no Church Meeting should be held except under conditions of emergency, unless an ordained minister presides." He would even have the minister wear robes of office, and the meeting take place either in a special hall or in the body of the church itself. "It is intolerable," he goes on, "that persons who do not attend regularly upon the preaching of the Word and join in the fellowship of the Communion, should enjoy the full privileges of membership of the Church Meeting." He frankly admits that his conception of its function and working involves "the re-establishment of Church discipline." "If," he says, "the ministry is the public conscience, the Church Meeting is the public listening to the voice of conscience." Christians have to set an example to the State in the matter and mode of their self-criticism, and the whole range of community and individual life must come under review. We hope that Mr. Jenkins may find a Congregational church or churches willing to try out his ideas, and that as Baptists we may share with him in the renewal of this vital part of our church order, even though it be not exactly along the lines he suggests.

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Early in 1745, two hundred years ago, Philip Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul* first appeared. For nearly a century it was one of the most widely circulated and read of religious books, and had a remarkable influence on men as varied as James Herve, William Wilberforce, Samuel Pearce,

John Foster and Alexander McLaren. It was translated into many different languages. Its eighteenth-century style and its theological framework make it somewhat difficult reading to-day. Nevertheless, it deserves to be taken down, dusted, opened and perused in this bicentenary year, if only that its earnestness and comprehensiveness may be noted, and as a reminder, first, of the tradition of personal religion in which Free Churchmen stand, and, secondly, of the need for a twentieth-century Doddridge.

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Baptist history was made in the early days of January by a gathering at Regent's Park College, Oxford, to which were invited not only the Principals of the Baptist Theological Colleges of Great Britain, but also all their tutors, together with the Secretary of the Baptist Union. Strange as it may seem, it was the first time such a meeting had been held. The illness of Principal J. Williams Hughes deprived Bangor of representation, but all the other seven Colleges were represented, in four cases all the members of the staff being present. The conference was most valuable for the forging of personal links, and clearly demonstrated how important for the whole life and work of the denomination consultation and co-operation of this kind may be. The day of isolation, rivalry, and mutual suspicion is over so far as the Colleges are concerned. We have now to prepare for the day of common planning and the pooling of the rich resources we possess. The many men in the services who have been thinking of the ministry as their post-war vocation and the lengthy list of names sent to the Baptist Union by the chaplains will expedite this. It is good to know that a similar gathering is projected for next year.

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The next issue of the *Quarterly* will appear, according to present plans, early in the autumn. It will bring to an end Vol. XI., and will include the usual indices. Among the articles we hope to print are "Shakespeare's Religion," by the Rev. B. G. Collins, "A Baptist Oxford Movement," by Dr. T. G. Dunning, and "Aristotelian Terms in the New Testament," by Professor R. A. Ward, of Spurgeon's College, and also an account by the Rev. Percy Austin of the historic church at Barton-in-the-Beans, which this year celebrates its bicentenary.