

Editorial Notes.

WE much regret the late appearance of this issue, particularly as we had hoped that we could now become again in fact, as well as name, a quarterly. The fuel crisis and the difficulties of the last few months have, however, caused unavoidable delays. We offer our sympathies to our printers, Messrs. Rush and Warwick, of Bedford, and take this opportunity of thanking them for their faithful and efficient service throughout the war years and the present austere aftermath.

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The death on February 1st, in his seventy-seventh year, of Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke removes one of the best known Baptists of his generation and one who by his practical achievements engraved his name deeply and ineradicably into our modern history. When the Baptist World Alliance was founded, Newton Marshall and Rushbrooke were J. H. Shakespeare's invaluable lieutenants. They were then young men who had both studied in Germany, and who were full of enthusiasm for the cause of international peace and Christian fellowship. Newton Marshall's lamented death—a very severe blow to the denomination in more directions than one—and the breakdown in health of the gallant C. T. Byford left Rushbrooke almost alone in our ranks so far as intimate knowledge of the Continent was concerned. But when he was appointed Baptist Commissioner for Europe in 1920, few can have foreseen the place he would occupy a quarter of a century later in the regard of his fellow Baptists, of Christians of other communions, and of officials in chancelleries and foreign offices in many different lands. His standing was the result of unremitting, self-sacrificing labour and of courage, wisdom and simple friendliness. He believed in our Baptist witness, he loved his fellowmen and he was prepared for hard work. We shall hope in a future issue to publish an account of his life. We also hope that the preparation of an adequate biography will at once be put in hand. Dr. Rushbrooke was a frequent contributor to the *Quarterly*, and was also the ever ready friend and helper of those who have been its editors.

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During the Congress at Copenhagen there is to be a meeting of those interested in Baptist history. It is high time that closer links were forged between those studying our witness and tradition

in different parts of the world. A great deal of important work has been done recently in the United States, first, by those studying Puritan and Separatist origins (among whom Professors Perry Miller, William Haller and M. M. Knappen stand supreme) secondly by Mennonite historians, and thirdly by those like Professor Stiansen, of Chicago, who belong to groups of Baptists in America who come of Continental stock. Their books are all too little known on this side of the Atlantic. But, in addition, there are now valuable contributions to Baptist history coming from Germany and the Scandinavian lands. Dr. Luckey's scholarly book on Julius Köbner was on sale at the World Congress in Atlanta. There is now available another valuable study of Köbner, this time in Swedish and by Dr. K. A. Modén (*En Baptismens Banbrytare*, Stockholm, 1946). Mention of Swedish recalls the fact that Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* has recently been translated into that language by Eric Wärenstam, a Baptist journalist with a number of useful books to his credit. It is to be hoped that the World Alliance will be able to work out adequate channels for publicity and co-operation in this field. There are a number of English books with ought to be circulated in other lands. We should not leave it to the Roman Catholics to use what they do not hesitate to call "the apostolate of the Press."

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There have recently been a number of changes in the officers of the Baptist Historical Society. They were duly recorded on the cover of our last issue, but occurred too late for comment. Dr. W. T. Whitley becomes president. He is now the honoured *doyen* of Baptist scholars, known and honoured throughout the world. Also, he was the founder of the Society. We rejoice that after his long stay in hospital he is now at home again and still able to take a deep interest in our work. To the vice-presidency three College Principals have been appointed, Dr. Dakin, Dr. Evans and Dr. Underwood, all of whom have rendered important services to the Society and the cause for which it stands. Mr. Seymour J. Price has also been appointed a vice-president. His services during many years as secretary of the Baptist Historical Society and editor of the *Quarterly* are well known to our readers, and are among the most important of the many tasks he has undertaken for the denomination. It is good to know that he hopes to be able to give more time to work on Baptist history and kindred topics than has been possible during recent busy years. Dr. E. J. Tongue succeeds the Rev. F. E. Robinson as librarian. We are deeply grateful to the latter for taking responsibility during many years for the care of the Society's books housed in Bristol College. As secretary, the Rev. Graham W. Hughes has been appointed,

and we look forward with confidence to what his youth, knowledge and enthusiasm will be able to accomplish. It is now nearly forty years since the Society was formed. It has not often secured great publicity, but the discerning will be under no doubt how much is owed to the publications which it has sponsored, the research it has encouraged and the help it has been able to render to students of history in all parts of the world. We look forward in the years to come to considerable extension of its activities.

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In the *Baptist Quarterly*, Volume xi, pp. 337f., we printed an important article by the late Dr. Mott Harrison on *The Portraiture of John Bunyan*. In the course of the article, Dr. Harrison referred to the oil painting of Bunyan which is in the possession of Regent's Park College, Oxford. It was presented to the College in 1863 by John Fenwick, Esq., a Newcastle solicitor. There has recently come to light a note by Dr. Angus giving the history of the picture as told to him by Mr. Fenwick. It is as follows:—

“This picture was purchased by Mr. Gee Phillips of a descendant of Bunyan. From Mr. Phillips it came into the possession of Mr. William Sharp, the celebrated engraver, who engraved it. From him it came into the possession of Messrs. Hurst, Robinson and Co., Booksellers in Cheapside, from whom it came into the possession of the late James Richardson, Esq., the Clerk of the Peace for Leeds, from whom I obtained it. Only the head of the portrait seems to be finished, and the painting is supposed to be the work of Mr. Walker, the celebrated portrait painter of the time of the Commonwealth.”

This provides further important evidence in authentication of the portrait.

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In a recent letter to the editor the Rev. C. B. Whyatt emphasizes again the importance of the proper preservation of Baptist records, and in particular, church minute books. We would again urge upon individuals who may possess old Baptist documents and books that they should get in touch either with the Baptist Historical Society or with the nearest Baptist College before either disposing of or destroying such material. We would also suggest to church officers the desirability of their depositing church books which date from the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries with Baptist College libraries. This should be done by resolution of the church, and a proper note should be made in the current church books of where the minute books are now to be

found. It is to be feared that a good deal of important historical material has been lost of recent years for want of due care.

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What has been here said about Church records applies also to those of Associations. Dr. Thomas Richards, M.A., of University College of North Wales, Bangor, one of the outstanding Free Church historians of his generation, has recently published a very valuable and attractive booklet for the Monmouthshire Baptist Association, based upon the Circular Letters, 1832-1945. The Monmouthshire Association is not one of the oldest, but it has proved by no means easy to get together a complete set of the Letters, and we gather that even now no copy of that for 1843 has been discovered. The commissioning of Dr. Richards' brochure and its publication with portraits of eight Welsh preachers (among which there stands out the truly noble head of Robert Ellis, Cynddelw) are due to the characteristic generosity of Mr. W. Nefydd Lewis, of Aberclydach, Gilwern. Copies may be had from him for one shilling, post free, and any profits will be devoted to the Reconstruction Fund of the Baptist Union of Wales, and the New Home Work Fund of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

Stars in Still Waters, by S. P. Goodge. (Kingsgate Press, 5s.)

A lot of people in our churches, who would like to read profitably on Christian themes, find themselves without time or energy for either solid or sustained reading. This book is one such people would greatly appreciate. Ministers will find in it many suggestions for short talks of a homely nature. In his forty "Random Reflections on Things Visible and Invisible" (the subtitle) the author has brought together a good deal of sound, practical Christianity in genial and interesting fashion. His book will do a lot of good of a kind I think he would like it to do.

G. W. RUSLING.