

Editorial Notes.

IN July 1920 there took place in London, under the auspices of the Baptist World Alliance, a conference which has come to be looked back upon as a turning-point in modern Baptist history. Under the chairmanship of Dr. Clifford, representatives from seventeen continental lands conferred with representatives of Britain, the United States and Canada. The plans then made for relief and aid inaugurated a new era of Baptist co-operation and determined the main lines of policy for the subsequent quarter of a century. The appointment of Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke as European Commissioner came out of the 1920 deliberations. At the Baptist World Congress in Copenhagen in 1947, it was clearly seen that the time was ripe for another conference of a similar kind. The European situation has radically changed. Baptist relationships and strategy cannot satisfactorily remain within the framework of the 1920 agreements.

A two-day Conference was, therefore, held at the Baptist Church House, London, on August 13th and 14th, immediately before meetings of the Executive of the Baptist World Alliance. Dr. C. Oscar Johnson, the B.W.A. President, was in the chair. Representatives of twelve European lands, and of Britain, the United States and Canada, responded to the roll call. There were four present who had been at the 1920 meetings, but only four: the Rev. M. E. Aubrey, Dr. J. W. Ewing, Dr. P. Stiansen (then of Norway, now of Chicago) and the Rev. J. W. Weenink (of Holland). The subjects discussed included Relief Work, which has already been notable in its volume and range, Religious Liberty, Evangelism, Theological Education and the general theme of Baptist Co-operation in Europe. Important proposals on all these matters were made to the B.W.A. Executive. The sense of fellowship was strong. The prayer of all is that the recent meetings may prove as productive of good as were those of 1920.

It was Dr. A. T. Ohrn's first appearance as Secretary of the B.W.A. He was warmly welcomed. The Alliance has secured a headquarters of its own at 1628, 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., and there Dr. Ohrn will have his office. Until 1950, when it is hoped to hold another World Congress, the London office of the Alliance will be cared for by the Associate Secretary, Dr. W. O. Lewis, who will be giving special attention to relief work in

Europe. The 1950 Congress will probably take place in Cleveland, Ohio. An invitation to hold a Jubilee Congress in London in 1955 has been provisionally accepted by the Alliance.

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Within a few days of these B.W.A. meetings, the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches began its sessions in Amsterdam. When the Assembly met nine Baptist Unions or Conventions were in the list of "member Churches": the China Baptist Council (Shanghai), the Baptist Unions of Holland, New Zealand, Great Britain, Scotland, and Wales and Monmouthshire, the National Convention and the Northern Convention, U.S.A., and the Baptist Church of Burma. An application for membership had already been lodged by the Baptist Union of Denmark and this has now been accepted. There were in Amsterdam, in one capacity or another, between fifty and sixty Baptists. This was a larger number than some had expected, but it bears, of course, little relationship to the total strength of Baptists throughout the world. The Southern Convention of the United States and some of the largest European groups are at present outside the World Council.

There will be five Baptists on the Central Committee of ninety, which will direct the work of the World Council until the next Assembly meets. They are the Rev. M. E. Aubrey (Great Britain), Dr. E. T. Dahlberg and Mrs. Leslie Swain (Northern Convention, U.S.A.), Dr. Benjamin Mays (National Convention) and the Rt. Hon. Ernest Brown (New Zealand).

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It is clear that World Confessional Associations and Alliances are destined to play an increasingly important part in ecumenical affairs. Changes made at Amsterdam in the draft constitution of the World Council give them greater recognition and authority. They are to be invited to send representatives to the sessions of the Assembly and of the Central Committee in a consultative capacity. Lutherans as well as Baptists held world gatherings in 1947. Shortly before the Amsterdam Assembly, the Presbyterian Alliance was reconstituted by the Reformed Churches. As already noted in these pages, it is hoped next year to enlarge the International Congregational Council on a wider basis. Methodists are planning for an Ecumenical Conference in Oxford in 1951. The Lambeth Conference endorsed a scheme for an Anglican World Congress in America in 1953. That should also be the year in which the next Assembly of the World Council of Churches meets. These developments give our own Baptist World Alliance added significance.

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During the Amsterdam gatherings a meeting was held in the Mennonite Church on the Singel to commemorate the life and witness of John Smyth, the leader of the first English-speaking Baptist Church. Elsewhere in this issue we print the address given on this occasion by Dr. de Bussey, city archivist. In the early decades of the seventeenth century Dutch Mennonites and English General Baptists maintained fitful contact with one another. At the close of the eighteenth century Ryland, Rippon and others had correspondence with Mennonite leaders (see the *Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. XI pp. 33f.). In the nineteenth century both E. B. Underhill and Benjamin Evans drew on the Mennonite archives in their historical researches. For the last two or three generations, however, there has been little or no contact, The German Mennonite Church and the General Mennonite Society of Holland are both members of the World Council of Churches. There is much to be said for again seeking closer acquaintance with our Mennonite kinsmen.

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John Smyth was buried on September 1st, 1612, in the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam, the scene of some of the most notable services held in connection with the World Council. Ought not the Baptists of the world to ask if they may erect there some memorial to him?

We have been strangely remiss in these matters. A correspondent draws our attention to the fact that there is nothing in the Baptist chapel in Soham to mark Andrew Fuller's ministry there from 1774 to 1782 and his far longer connection with the church. We are within six years of the 200th anniversary of Fuller's birth. Baptists must surely see that well before 1954 there is a proper memorial in Soham to one of our greatest figures.

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Dr. Zieglschmid, of North Western University, Illinois, has followed up his important edition of *Die älteste Chronik der Hutterischen Brüder* (to which allusion was made in Vol. XII, No. 9, January, 1948) by publishing in similar form what is known as *Das Klein-Geschichtsbuch der Hutterischen Brüder* (Philadelphia, 1947). The latter is based upon the former and was largely the work of Johannes Waldner, a Hutterite preacher from 1782, and elder and leader from 1794 to 1824. The book is in the nature of a pioneer attempt at the writing of a history as distinct from the compiling of a chronicle. For the period after 1665, when the *Chronik* ceased, Waldner drew upon important first-hand material in the form of letters, etc. He also diligently collected information from his older contemporaries. In 1767, as a youth of eighteen, he had shared in the migration of the

little persecuted community over the Transylvanian mountains into modern Rumania. From 1770 to 1802, when Waldner's own writing ceases, the Hutterites were in Russia. The period from 1802-77 occupies only four pages in the *Geschichtsbuch*. But in 1874 the Hutterites emigrated to the United States, bearing with them this and other priceless literary treasures. Leaders in America carried the story on from 1874 to 1897. Dr. Ziegleschmid has expanded their account for this last quarter of the nineteenth century and has continued the record down to the present time, bringing together in his substantial volume facts and documents covering the modern Brüderhof movement and including details of not only the Wheathill community in England, but of the more recent settlements in Paraguay. Introduction, notes glossaries, indices and bibliography are all on an elaborate and comprehensive scale. The result is another volume of first-class importance for the scholar, and of a general interest even wider than Dr. Ziegleschmid's previous publication. It is good to know that he already has in hand a new edition of *Die Lieder der hutterischen Brüder*, the impressive collection of old hymns and poems last published by the American Mennonites in 1914. There are now more than fifty Hutterite Communities in Canada and America, forming three main groups. They comprise nearly 7,000 individuals. The two communities in Paraguay have in them some 450 persons and there are a further 120 in the Wheat-hill Brüderhof, now located near Bridgnorth in Shropshire.