

## Editorial Notes.

The University Presses of Oxford and Cambridge have agreed to bear all the expenses of preparing and publishing a new translation of the Bible and this has now been undertaken by a Joint Committee of the Churches. What is in view is not a revision of the Authorised Version or the Revised Version, but a completely new translation from the original languages; and not the translation of one man, such as that prepared some years ago by the late Dr. James Moffatt, but a version representing an authoritative consensus of opinion, submitted not only to groups of scholars but also to a panel of literary men.

This is a substantial and notable enterprise, which will be followed with sympathetic interest by all who hear of it. The English Bible has been a decisive influence on our English heritage by reason of its language as well as its content, but neither of the standard versions is adequate to modern needs. Whether scholarship is sufficiently of one mind at the present time to be able to produce agreement on the most difficult texts and passages, and whether our language is just now a sufficiently living and creative medium remain to be seen. The example of the Revised Version is a warning against undue optimism.

We are glad, however, to see that Baptists are playing no small part in the preparation of the new version. Dr. Joseph Angus and Dr. Benjamin Davies were among the Revisers of seventy years ago, and both acquitted themselves with distinction. This time the Baptist Union is officially represented on the Joint Committee by Dr. P. W. Evans and Dr. Theodore Robinson, with Dr. M. E. Aubrey as an alternate. The Committee is working through three panels, one of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, one for the New Testament and one of men of letters. Of the first of these Dr. Theodore Robinson is the convener. We are not surprised to learn that at his invitation a number of our younger Baptist Old Testament scholars are likely to have a share in the work.

The Joint Committee issues a warning that its task will take many years and that no public developments can be expected for a considerable time. It is not proposed to publish anything until the whole Bible, or at least the New Testament, is complete.

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In the *Christian World* of March 10th, 1949, Dr. Albert Peel refers to a recent editorial note in these pages on the

statement on Congregationalism issued by the International Congregational Council (see *Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. XII, pp. 353-5). The main point at issue is whether it is satisfactory to say that "the instrument whereby Christ rules in the local Church is the Church Meeting." Dr. Peel admits that in many modern Baptist and Congregational Churches it is an instrument all too little used. He still, however, desires to describe it as *the* instrument of Christ's rule in the *local* Church. The admission Dr. Peel has to make is so serious a one, and the limitations that have had to be placed on the doctrine and practice of complete "independency"—through fuller appreciation of truths and responsibilities clearly witnessed to in other ecclesiastical traditions, which have inadequately stressed individual responsibility—make us feel that it would be better to say "*an* instrument by which the local Church seeks to discover the mind of Christ and to be obedient thereto is the Church Meeting." The dilemma is this: are we to say that Christ does not rule in the local fellowships of other Christian bodies, or are we to deny them the title of churches?

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In November, 1945, the Archbishop of Canterbury invited a group of Anglicans of the "Catholic" school of thought to examine the causes of the deadlock which occurs in discussions between Catholics and Protestants and to consider whether any synthesis between Catholicism and Protestantism is possible. Their report appeared two years later under the title *Catholicity: A Study in the Conflict of Christian Traditions in the West* (Dacre Press, 2s. 6d.). Among the signatories were Dom Gregory Dix, Father Hebert, Father Leslie Thornton, the Warden of Keble College and Mr. T. S. Eliot. The report has, therefore, naturally and rightly attracted considerable attention. It exercised a considerable influence on discussions at Amsterdam on the nature of the Church. Its setting forth of the reason for and nature of the tensions in Christendom has not gone unchallenged, however. In the pages of the *Scottish Journal of Theology* (Vol. II, No. 1, March, 1949), Dr. Torrance has submitted the report to searching scrutiny, concentrating particularly on what is said about an alleged primitive "wholeness" of tradition—an idea expounded elsewhere by Dom Gregory Dix and underlying a number of the contributions to *The Apostolic Ministry*. In the pages of *Theology* (Vol. LII, No. 345, March, 1949) Bishop Aulén of Strangnäs, Sweden, asserts vigorously that he does not recognise Lutheranism in the account of it given by the authors of the report. We understand that further contributions to this most important theological discussion may shortly be expected, one

from a group of Free Churchmen of whom Dr. Newton Flew has been convener, and one from a group of evangelical Anglicans. Frank, scholarly and constructive theological argument of this kind is warmly to be welcomed and will in the long run advance the cause of Christian understanding better than any compromising schemes and formulae.

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A few years ago a Roman Catholic, Father Maximin Piette, Professor of History at Brussels, produced a most stimulating book entitled, *John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism*. The veteran Methodist historian, Dr. Workman, gave it high praise when it appeared in an English translation in 1938. Recently a Swedish scholar, Dr. Harald Lindström has published in English *Wesley and Sanctification* (Stockholm, 1946) the most comprehensive and systematic study of Wesley's theology that has yet appeared. In these pages attention has already been called to the important book on William Carey by Dr. Oussoren, of the Dutch Reformed Church. There has now appeared a study of Bunyan by a French scholar, Henri A. Talon. All these books are welcome evidence of the increasing attention which is being given to the English Free Church tradition by continental scholars of other communions. They should be a challenge to the younger generation of Free Church scholars in this country.

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#### KIERKEGAARD FELLOWSHIP.

The privately-endowed David F. Swenson-Kierkegaard Memorial Fund is making available for 1949-50 and every year thereafter a fellowship of at least \$500 to be used for the study of Soren A. Kierkegaard, 1813-1855. Persons of any creed, nationality or colour are eligible. Each recipient is free to choose his own place of study. In view of the character of the subject matter, a religious interest and a reading knowledge of Danish are required. Information or application forms may be obtained from the Secretary of the Swenson-Kierkegaard Memorial Committee, Dr. Paul L. Holmer, Department of Philosophy, 300 Folwell Hall, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 14, Minn., U.S.A.