

Editorial Notes.

THE news of exciting discoveries of Old Testament manuscripts in a cave south of Jericho was but a nine days' wonder so far as the popular press was concerned. It will, however, provide Biblical scholars with many new tasks. Those at work on the text of the Old Testament itself now have Hebrew manuscripts of Isaiah, and fragments of other books, which are at least a thousand years older than any known before. The textual study of the Hebrew Bible and of the Septuagint will receive a new impetus. Further, the formerly unknown work, provisionally entitled "The War of the Children of Light and Darkness," the collection of thanksgiving hymns, the secretarian book of initiation and ritual, and the copy of Enoch in Aramaic should help historians to fill in a number of the many gaps in our knowledge of "the period between the Testaments." It appears that there may still be other scrolls from the cave, besides those now in the United States and at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and in addition to the fragments which are being examined at the British Museum. It is to be hoped that they will speedily pass into the hands of those competent to make use of them. The contents of the cave as a whole must be examined that the possibility may be considered of their being related to the discoveries which Origen says were made in the neighbourhood of Jericho about 217 A.D. The new find will raise hopes of further archaeological and literary discoveries in the Near East.

* * * *

On June 28th and 29th, 1949 the Council of Serampore College met again at Serampore after an interval of ninety-four years. Since 1855 the governing body of the College has had its headquarters and secretariat in London, in close liaison with the Baptist Missionary Society from which has come the main continuing support of the institution in personnel and money. It has long been evident, however, that a new administrative pattern must be devised and the recent political changes in India gave the matter a new urgency. With the cordially expressed goodwill of the Baptist Missionary Society, the Council of the College has been transferred back to India and will in future function there. All the English members have resigned, with the exception of Dr. H. R. Williamson. They will be replaced

by persons resident in India. It is intended that the close links between the College and the B.M.S. shall be maintained, and the B.M.S. has already expressed the hope and intention of continuing its present contribution of four members of staff and £1000 per annum for the next five years at least.

This is a very significant development in the long and notable history of the College founded by Carey, Marshman and Ward. It has coincided with personal changes. Mr. C. T. LeQuesne, K.C., for many years Master of College, has retired in favour of Dr. Christopher Angus. The latter succeeded Dr. George Howells as Principal in 1930, and to his wise and patient leadership is largely due the successful issue of the delicate negotiations involved in the administrative changes. To the vacant Principalship of the College Dr. C. E. Abraham has been appointed. This also is an historic step, for Dr. Abraham is the first Indian to become Principal of Serampore. He is a member of the Syrian Church and has already given many years of devoted service to the College.

We cannot but feel that the present changes would have been approved and welcomed by Carey. Baptists in this country will extend warm good wishes to the re-constituted Council and to the new Master and Principal, in the heavy responsibilities they have undertaken. We are glad to know that Dr. Williamson hopes to maintain and develop personal links between Serampore and this country by enrolling many individuals as "Friends of Serampore."

* * * *

At the end of July, Professor Morris B. Owen, M.A., B.D., of the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen, passed away. He had been the Baptist member of the staff for no less than forty-two years. A native of North Wales, trained at Bangor College, his life was spent in the south of the Principality. He won the respect and regard of successive generations of students, and not only the College but also the Baptist denomination in Wales has suffered a great loss by his death. Professor Owen shunned the limelight, but he was ever ready to serve. His special interest was in the field of Church History. For many years he edited *Seren Gomer*, the Welsh Baptist quarterly, and a few months ago translated for it into Welsh Mr. Payne's Dr. Williams's Lecture on the Anabaptists. In addition to his College duties he was for twenty-five years the devoted pastor of the two little chapels of Sitim, Felingwyn, and Salem, Felinwen. It was fitting that his body should be laid to rest on the side of the hill near Sitim, amid beautiful surroundings, in brilliant sunshine, and in the presence of a great company of friends, colleagues, and former students.