

Editorial Notes.

ON October 11th, 1949, immediately after evensong, a service was held in Westminster Abbey at which Dr. S. Pearce Carey on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society handed over to the Dean and Chapter a finely carved lectern in memory of his great-grandfather, William Carey. The lectern was accepted and dedicated by Dr. A. C. Don and, after lessons had been read from it by Mr. H. C. Janes, this year's Chairman of the B.M.S., and Canon Marriott, an address was delivered by the Rev. J. B. Middlebrook, M.A. It was an historic occasion, attended by many hundreds of Baptists from all parts of the country. Thus, at long last, Carey's name is commemorated in the great shrine of English Christianity and the English national tradition, and commemorated in a specially fitting way. The lectern is a fine piece of craftsmanship,, reflecting great credit on its designer, Professor Richardson, and those who have carried out the work. The appeal by the B.M.S. for the necessary funds for this gift, which was first suggested at the time of the Society's Ter-jubilee celebrations in 1942, has been swiftly and widely responded to. Many individuals came forward eagerly to make their contribution, and we hear of churches where each member gave a penny or a threepenny bit that all might have a share. How deeply Baptists were stirred was shown also by the way in which they sang the hymns at the Abbey service. It was a special source of satisfaction to all that our beloved and still vigorous Dr. Pearce Carey was able, in spite of his years, to be the Baptist spokesman in the handing over of the lectern. The presence of Dr. George Howells, the Rev. Herbert Anderson, Dr. C. E. Wilson and other B.M.S. veterans was also a notable and welcome feature of the occasion. Across from where they sat, in the seats reserved for members of the Carey family, were several small children who must be seven or eight generations removed from the one who was being specially remembered that afternoon. It was thus a service at which past, present and future were strangely and fittingly mingled. As the procession moved down the aisle after the service, the organist, by a happy inspiration, played *Monks Gate*, the traditional English melody now usually sung to verses by another famous Baptist, John Bunyan.

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A new volume of the great *Dictionary of National Biography* has appeared. It contains notices of outstanding men and women

who died between 1931 and 1940. Every phase of national life is represented, and the volume well maintains the very high standard set by previous issues. The articles on King George V, and on statesmen such as Austen and Neville Chamberlain, are of enduring historical importance. Many notable theologians and ecclesiastics have articles assigned to them. R. F. Horton, H. R. Mackintosh, J. W. Oman, W. P. Paterson and Sir William Ramsay are all noticed, and their work and personalities described. We are glad also to find J. Vernon Bartlet included. The missionary work of the church is well represented by entries on Donald Fraser, Sir Wilfred Grenfell and Robert Laws. It cannot be said, however, that the English Free Churches figure very prominently. Is this just the inevitable consequence of the fact that few of their leaders died in the thirties? Or is it a sign that they count for less in the national life, or are producing fewer outstanding figures? There was no article on J. H. Shakespeare in the preceding volume which covered the years 1921 to 1930. This lack should certainly be made good in any supplement that is issued, for no one can understand the Free Church history of the first two decades of this century who does not know something of the part which Dr. Shakespeare played in it. In our opinion W. Y. Fullerton, who died in 1933, had quite as much claim on an entry as many of those who appear in the pages of the new volume. Perhaps Baptists have only themselves to blame that Shakespeare and Fullerton have not secured the attention of the editor, for no biography of either has appeared.

Baptists, indeed, find singularly little mention in this new volume. There is a valuable article on Augustine Birrell, in which his Nonconformist origin and associations are properly noted. The entry on Sir Frank Dyson, the astronomer, records the fact that he was the son of a Baptist minister. The Baptist forebears of A. C. Haddon, the anthropologist, are mentioned. Many will learn for the first time of the Baptist connections of "Frank" Harris. These scattered references are all that are revealed by a cursory turning of the pages. The next volume of the *Dictionary of National Biography* will—fortunately, or unfortunately—be richer in Baptist material, for we may presume it will at least include notices of Dr. Wheeler Robinson, Dr. T. R. Glover and Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke.

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The sudden and unexpected death of Dr. Albert Peel on November 4th at the early age of sixty-two is a serious loss to Congregationalism and to the Free Churches generally. His work on the early history of Separatism, his contributions to the

Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society and his notable editorship of the *Congregational Quarterly* give him a special claim to notice in these pages, though they were only part of his many-sided and energetic service to the life of his time. His patience and skill as an editor were strikingly shown in his transcript of the notebook of John Penry which is preserved in the Huntington Library, California. Among Dr. Peel's other finds there were some manuscript sermons which he thought may be those of John Smyth, preached in Lincoln before he had moved from Anglican Puritanism to Separatism. It is much to be hoped that some of the important literary projects which Dr. Peel had in hand will be carried to completion.

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An American scholar, Mr. Nathaniel H. Henry, recently suggested in the columns of the *Times Literary Supplement* that *Man's Mortalitie*, a pamphlet published by a certain R.O. in 1644 was the work not of Richard Overton, as has generally been assumed, but of Robert Overton, later the friend of John Milton. Both the Overtons had Baptist connections. Richard became a leading figure among the Levellers; Robert had a distinguished career in the Commonwealth army, but was afterwards imprisoned for his Fifth Monarchist activities. Some of the reasons for hesitating to accept Mr. Henry's suggestion were set out by Mr. Payne in a letter which appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement* on October 28th, 1949. To them may be added the following. In 1645 there appeared *The Arraignment of Mr. Persecution*, a vigorous allegory in favour of liberty of conscience. There seems little doubt that this was the work of Richard Overton. Inserted in the text on page twenty there occurs this note:—

"Here the Authour of that Booke, intituled *Man's Mortality*, desires Mr. Edwards with those that are so invective against it in their Pulpits that they would cease their railing at it there, and come forth in Print against it; for the thing being so rare, so little questioned, and the contrary so generally concluded as a principle of faith, any *bumbast stuffe* will passe there for authentike with the people without tryall, but if it be put forth to publike vew, it must expect an encounter by one or other, and therein the Authour of that Booke observeth the policie of his Presbyterian Adversaries to maintaine their repute with the people, in being so hasty in the Pulpit and so slow to the Presse."

This is surely further very strong evidence for assigning *Man's Mortalitie* to Richard Overton.