

Editorial Notes.

THE eighth Baptist World Congress was held at Cleveland, Ohio, from July 22nd to 27th, with more than 20,000 registered delegates. The situation behind the "iron" and "bamboo" curtains, the seriously unsettled condition of the world, the high cost of travel and other restrictions made it difficult for many to attend from outside the North American Continent. But the Administrative Committee, with the aid of American generosity, secured as representative a gathering as possible, and though the outbreak of hostilities cast a deep shadow of uncertainty over the proceedings there was a general feeling of gratitude that it had been decided to hold another Congress at this particular time.

Only three years have elapsed since the seventh Congress met in Copenhagen. There Baptist fellowship had to be renewed after the dislocation and tension caused by the second World War, but the Alliance was obviously suffering grievously from the loss of Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke. New leaders had to be found and new and greater financial resources secured. Much has been achieved since 1947. Dr. A. T. Ohrn has become the General Secretary and fine headquarters have been purchased in Washington. A truly remarkable relief programme has been carried through. It is estimated that more than \$9,000,000 worth of food, clothing, medicine, building grants and aid of one kind and another has been distributed in Europe, and that at least 3,000 Baptist displaced persons have been helped to find new homes outside Europe. Further, there has been the quickening of the united evangelistic purpose of Baptists in more than one continent.

The central figure at the Cleveland Congress—and rightly—was the President, Dr. C. Oscar Johnson, a master of assemblies, great in stature and in heart, to whose leadership during these past three years Baptists all over the world owe a deep debt. Dr. Johnson and Dr. Ohrn may well feel satisfaction at what has been achieved and may be assured that the Cleveland Congress will be recognized as an important milestone in the development of the Alliance. Perhaps not many of the addresses delivered at the Congress will be remembered—though the level of speaking was high. There were few resolutions or pronouncements. On matters like the World Council of Churches there was agreement

to differ. Through the work of the six pre-Congress Commissions, however, and the subsequent week-end of fellowship at the Northern Baptist Assembly at Green Lake, Wisconsin, close ties of understanding, friendship and intellectual, practical and spiritual co-operation were formed. Never before have so many Baptist leaders from so many lands spent longer in one another's company. There is a clearer realization of both the variety and the unity of Baptists than ever before, and a clearer recognition of the tasks and responsibilities they must undertake together. That there can at present be no direct contact with Baptists behind the "curtains" is deeply regretted, and it was perhaps unfortunate that occasion was not taken to declare this more explicitly.

The British Baptist delegation was inevitably a small one, but from its ranks there came the new President of the Alliance, Dr. F. Townley Lord, who among his many other interests is a member of the committee of the Baptist Historical Society. He stands in a notable succession and will have the good wishes and prayerful support of all British Baptists as he faces the heavy responsibilities which his new office entails. Dr. Aubrey preached the Congress Sermon. Two of the pre-Congress Commissions had British chairmen. And it was agreed that, all being well, the next Congress be held in London in 1955. It was in London in 1905 that the Alliance was formed. The decision to meet again in Britain should come as a challenge as well as a gratification to British Baptists.

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The appearance of a new edition of *Chambers' Encyclopaedia* is a notable event. It is very many years—indeed, several decades—since so substantial an editorial and publishing enterprise has been carried out, and the attempt made to gather up the results of modern discovery and knowledge. The chief editor—a woman—and the publishers are to be warmly congratulated and thanked. The true value of an encyclopaedia can be judged only by constant use over a period of years, but first impressions suggest that the new *Chambers* will prove indispensable to all libraries and that it can be warmly commended to those private individuals fortunate enough to have sufficient space to house the fifteen volumes and a large enough bank account to purchase them. The general supervision of the articles on religion was in the competent hands of Dr. F. L. Cross, of Oxford. Advice on Nonconformist material was given by the late Dr. Albert Peel. The latter's untimely death was perhaps responsible for one or two anomalies which appear from a glance at the index. At first sight it seems that only eight Baptist worthies achieve the honour of a biographical article, whereas forty-eight Congregationalists

are noticed. Carey, Timothy Richard, William Knibb and Adoniram Judson, however, are in the list of missionaries. Even so, and though we may particularly welcome the inclusion of an entry on Wheeler Robinson, we take leave to doubt whether there should be four times as many Congregationalists as there are Baptists. Nor can we regard the brief article on "Baptism" as at all satisfactory. It contains the extraordinary statement that "the minister of baptism was originally the bishop."

There are at least eight Baptist names in the list of contributors. Dr. H. H. Rowley prepared a number of the more important articles on Biblical subjects. The initials of the Rev. J. N. Schofield appear in no less than eight of the volumes. The Rev. L. H. Brockington is responsible for the articles on "Balaam" and "Saul." The Rev. E. A. Payne contributes those on "Anabaptists," "Baptists," "Pietism" and a number of other subjects connected with the Reformation. Dr. Marjorie Reeves writes on Joachim of Flore, Dr. Percy Stocks on Cancer, and Professors R. I. Aaron and David Williams, of Aberystwyth, share responsibility for the article on "Wales."

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Professor David Williams is also the author of the recently published *History of Modern Wales* (John Murray, 12s. 6d.), a book which will be of value far beyond the borders of the Principality. Of interest throughout, this history is to be particularly welcomed for its careful and sympathetic treatment of Welsh Puritanism and Nonconformity, and because it makes available in a more popular form much material that has up to now been hidden from those who are ignorant of the Welsh language. The work of men like John Miles, Vavasour Powell and Morgan John Rhys is set in its proper historical perspective. Professor Williams has drawn extensively on the writings of another distinguished Baptist scholar, Dr. Thomas Richards, of Bangor.

Mention of Vavasour Powell reminds us that the great apostle of seventeenth century Wales was buried in Bunhill Fields and that his grave might surely claim special treatment in the scheme for the improvement of Bunhill Fields to which reference was made in our last issue.

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The retirement of Dr. P. W. Evans from the Principalship of Spurgeon's College provides an opportunity of expressing to one of the Vice-Presidents of the Baptist Historical Society our warm regards and good wishes, and of noting for the benefit of our readers, present and future, that few men have made a more

notable and welcome contribution to the life of the denomination than this son of Wales, who is as modest as he is staunch in the faith, and as shrewd, far-seeing and courageous as he is witty. It is difficult to realise that it is a quarter of a century since he succeeded Dr. Archibald McCaig at Spurgeon's College. Under Dr. Evans's leadership, the College has gone from strength to strength, the last wounds left by the Down Grade Controversy have been healed, and the name of Spurgeon is more widely and wisely honoured than ever before. Not the least among Dr. Evans's denominational services has been the part he has played in bringing our Baptist Colleges more closely together.

Our last issue contained the statement (cover p.ii) that "During 1948-49 the Baptist Historical Society's expenditure totalled £424." This may have unintentionally misled our members for, of course, £424 was the total expenditure during 1948 and 1949 (two years).

In the 1950 issue of *Trafodion Cymdeithas Hanes Bedyddwyr Cymru* (Transactions of the Welsh Baptist Historical Society) the editor, Dr. Thomas Richards, shows what useful information may sometimes be brought to light by examining the wills of Baptists of former days. He also gives an account of William Rider, who was sent by the Glazier's Hall church to enlighten the church at Llanwenarth, Mon., on the subject of the laying-on of hands at baptism, and also shows how some historians, like Ivimey, wrongly confused the Glazier's Hall and Glass House churches. There are also articles from other pens on Denbighshire Baptists, the hymns of Nathaniel Williams, Penuel Chapel, Bangor, Bethel Chapel, Mynachlog-ddu (Pembs.) while Prof. David Williams writes in English upon Micah Thomas (once Principal of Pontypool Baptist Academy) and the Chartists.