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The BAPTIST QUARTERLY

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The large attendance at the Annual General Meeting of the Society on 29th April was but one aspect of its success. We were fortunate in our speaker, Dr. R. T. Handy, Professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary, New York, whose paper on Walter Rauschenbusch not only made that great Baptist live for us but also indicated the place of growing significance which he is being accorded by present-day Church historians in the U.S.A. The honorary treasurer, Mr. A. Calder, whose services we so much appreciate, was able to give a more encouraging account of our finances than has been the case for some time. If we can continue in this direction by extending our membership it should become possible to undertake certain tasks which await our attention. We would reiterate the plea made at the A.G.M. concerning this and a spare application form is enclosed with this issue in the hope that each of our present members will make a personal effort to enlist another. If further reinforcement of this plea were needed the present issue also offers a sad reminder of the losses which befall us as veterans are called from our midst. Though he put all too little into writing few men were so well versed in the history of our churches as the Rev. B. Grey Griffith, and few men were so beloved among us as the Rev. S. G. Morris whose review of our President's memoir of B.G.G. is published posthumously on page 143. Each of these in his own way made a notable contribution to the life of the denomination and we salute their memory with gratitude.

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With regard to the A.G.M. it is evident that our present custom of meeting at the end of the afternoon on the Monday of the B.U. Assembly suits many people well and it is doubtful if we could improve upon it. It must be conceded, however, that it does not leave us with any great margin of time; we have to watch the clock fairly closely. While this is not a reason for change it prompts one to ask if some members would like additional opportunities for meeting at other times of the year. One Baptist research student recently described himself as "starved of fellowship" and he was referring to the lack of opportunity for conversation and discussion with others actively pursuing Baptist studies. It would be helpful to know what others think. Even if only a few were keen to do something in this direction it would be worth investigating.

* * *

ON June 26th celebrations in Switzerland marked the centenary of the first conducted tour of British holidaymakers to that country. Its organizer was Thomas Cook of Leicester, founder of the well-known firm of travel agents, and the commemorative tour this year is being led by a great-grandson of the same name. Underwood in his *History of the English Baptists* has a paragraph on Cook's links with the New Connexion of General Baptists, his visits to stations of both the Baptist missionary societies in India, and his life-long advocacy of total abstinence. It was as secretary of a Temperance Association that in 1841 he organized the first publicly-advertised excursion by train in England. He obtained half-price fares for his party and thus unwittingly laid the foundation for modern tourism. Extending his activities he conducted his first trip to Scotland in 1846, a more difficult undertaking since there was then no complete railway link to cover the journey. He overcame this problem by taking his party to Fleetwood and then by steamer to Ardrossan where they boarded a train to Glasgow and Edinburgh. The tour was a success and for the next fifteen years he was busy running similar ones which took thousands of people north of the border and made the Trossachs and Loch Lomond household names. It was when the Scottish Railways withdrew the concession allowing him to issue his own circular tickets that he looked to the Continent and conceived the idea of the Swiss tour.