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Editorial

DIAMOND Jubilee is a very special occasion and certainly this year's Annual Meeting, marking sixty years of witness by the Society was a memorable one. It was fitting that the speaker should be its own President, Dr. Ernest Payne. "History—too much or too little" was the intriguing title of his lecture—the second Henton Lecture. In his characteristically thoughtful and stimulating way, he showed the importance not only of the study of Baptist history, but of the need to get our history in perspective, seeing it in the wider context of the history of the whole Church. The lecture (which is to be printed in the *Quarterly* later this year) was well described by the Secretary as a "prophetic utterance".

The Officers and Committee were re-elected, and encouraging reports from the Treasurer, Secretary and Editor, were received. These showed that, sixty years after its formation, the Society is healthy and vigorous, with a membership of 467. It was announced that only a few places remained for the Baptist History Summer School in June, planned as one of the celebrations to mark the Society's Diamond Jubilee.

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In the course of the Annual Meeting tribute was paid to the memory of Mr. A. de M. Chesterman whose tragic death a few weeks earlier had robbed the Society of a devoted and valued Committee member. In a tribute to his brother in the *Baptist Times* Dr. Clement Chesterman told how they had gone together to the Congo in 1923

to build the Yakusu hospital. Mr. Chesterman returned to this country in 1926 but he retained a deep and lifelong interest in the B.M.S. After retirement, when he and his wife lived at Ealing, they undertook voluntarily a task of great importance for Baptist history. They founded at the Mission House a muniment room and there, for several years, gave themselves to the task of sorting, repairing, indexing and storing a mass of archives which, as a result of their work, are now properly housed and available for *bona fide* research. When such a task awaits attention it calls for someone with a great deal of devotion, skill and understanding, and also the willingness to give much time. These things Mr. and Mrs. Chesterman had and gave gladly. It was Mr. Chesterman's intention to organize a display of early B.M.S. materials at our Diamond Jubilee Summer School. He would have brought knowledge and enthusiasm in making that contribution as he did to various aspects of our work. As a society we are the poorer for his passing. His middle name, de Merveilleux, came from his maternal grandmother through a long line of Swiss Protestants dating back, says Dr. Chesterman, to the 16th century when John de Merveilleux, from his Chateau Peseux in Neuchatel, was protector of Farel the Swiss reformer.

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Dr. Gordon Rupp, Principal of Wesley House, Cambridge, and President of the Methodist Conference, has been elected as Dixie Professor of Ecclesiastical History of Cambridge University. This is the first time a Free Churchman has been appointed to the professorship and it could have no better occupant. We congratulate Dr Rupp and also the university on an excellent appointment.

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The Cumulative Index to, and the microfilm edition of, the *Transactions* of our Society, continue their sales both in this country and overseas, and their worth is amply proved. We are happy to report that preparation of a Cumulative Index for volumes I-X of the *Baptist Quarterly* is well advanced. Negotiations with the publishers of the earlier index, University Microfilms Ltd., are well in hand, and we hope that this Index, together with a microfilm edition of the first ten volumes of the *Quarterly*, will be available late in 1969.

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