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Dr. Dakin

DR. ARTHUR DAKIN, Principal Emeritus of Bristol College, who died on 18th September, 1969, at the age of 84, had been a Vice-President of the Baptist Historical Society since 1945. By his character and service he made a notable contribution to the honesty and sanity of the denomination.

Leicestershire born, with not a few of the radical qualities of that part of England, it was while he was co-pastor with Dr. Charles Brown at Ferme Park immediately after World War I that he was drawn by Dr. Wheeler Robinson and Dr. Whitley into the service of the re-organised Society and made a member of the committee. His first contribution to the *Baptist Quarterly* was an interview with the aged Dr. Clifford. To Dr. Dakin was entrusted the reviewing—or better said, notice—of Dr. Whitley's *History of British Baptists* when it first appeared in 1923. Even at the time not all agreed with him that Baptist needs had been “met in a way which will give universal satisfaction”; but it has to be remembered that Dr. Whitley's work broke new ground and has not yet been replaced. Dr. Dakin had a strong historical sense, already shown in the work he had done on Wyclif while one of the early Baptist students on the Continent.

How one envies a candidate for the ministry sent on to a German University after tuition at Rawdon College by a staff consisting of W. E. Blomfield, William Medley, David Glass, H. C. Rowse and Wheeler Robinson!

Characteristic of the man and the teacher was Dr. Dakin's first article in the *Quarterly* after his—at that time—unexpected translation to Bristol College. It was entitled "The Place of English in the Theological Curriculum." He had little place for those who could not or would not express themselves clearly. Thereafter his work did not often appear in these pages. It was never easy to persuade him to put his pen to paper; that was not his most natural medium of expression. But the curious will find value as well as interest in the address on "Ideals of Freedom," which he gave to the Dissenting Deputies in October, 1938.

Walter Bottoms was no doubt right when, in his brief personal appreciation in the volume presented to Dr. Dakin on his 80th birthday, he described the latter's essay on "Evangelical Ethics" in the Wheeler Robinson *Festschrift* as "his most stimulating contribution" in print. But many will continue to find his summary of Calvin's *Institutes* useful; his brief sketch of Carey was living and penetrating (what wonderful value we once got for sixpence!); and he used generously to say that his controversial *Baptist View of the Church and Ministry* was at any rate justified by the replies it had produced.

Dr. Dakin will live in the memory of all who knew him and benefited from his forthright and refreshing personality, and through his students his influence is felt—and will long be—by many others in this and other lands.

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