

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

This autumn the editorship of the *Baptist Quarterly* passes from the hands of the Rev. G. W. Rusling, M.A., B.D., to those of Miss Rosemary Taylor, M.A., M.Phil.

Since the Baptist Historical Society was formed, its journal has had six editors. From 1908 to 1921 the *Transactions* and from 1922 to 1935 the *Quarterly* were produced by Dr. W. T. Whitley and contained a great deal of material based on his own research. In the last forty years the late Mr. Seymour J. Price, Dr. E. A. Payne, the Rev. Graham W. Hughes, Dr. W. Morris S. West, and since 1963 the Rev. G. W. Rusling have served as editors.

To have maintained publication through two world wars and now two periods of acute economic difficulty has not been easy. The quarterly journals of a number of other denominations have not fared as well. We have reason for great gratitude to the editors and the contributors (who receive no remuneration), to the printers, the subscribers and those responsible for the distribution of the *Quarterly*. When Mr. Rusling undertook the editorship he was Vice-Principal of Spurgeon's College and to the authorities there, as to those of Regent's Park College earlier, the Society owes a debt. Since 1971 Mr. Rusling has been at the Baptist Church House and among his responsibilities has been the care of the library, which now comprises the books owned by the Baptist Union and those collected by Dr. Whitley for the Society and at one time housed in Bristol Baptist College under the care of the late Dr. E. J. Tongue.

We shall continue to look to Mr. Rusling for supervision of the library. Miss Taylor works at the Institute of Historical Research and has for some years given valuable service to the Society's committee as Minute Secretary. She will bring to her task as editor specialised gifts and experience and has been assured of the cooperation of the Rev. Basil Amey, the B.M.S. Editor, and the Society's Officers. We welcome Mrs. Faith Bowers, B.A., as the new Minute Secretary.

The steady increase in the membership of the Society is a tribute to the value of the *Quarterly* as well as an indication of an increasing understanding of the importance of preserving the history of the denomination. There is much important material from the past that should be made available in print or it will be irretrievably lost. There are many current matters of importance that should be immediately recorded and discussed. Even in days of stringency and in a denomination, whose size is as limited as ours, it should be possible to double the present membership of the Society.

With gratitude for the past and high hopes for the future we salute the editors, old and new, and appeal to our readers for continued support, asking them to introduce the *Quarterly* to their friends.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.
President.