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Editorial

The 300th anniversary of the execution of Charles I was the occasion of commemorative articles in almost all the journals and magazines. A few were balanced historical reviews of one of the salient events in English history. Many were romantic and sentimental, some deliberately polemical, others intentionally brilliant rather than illuminating. On an occasion like this, which inevitably stirs memories of "old unhappy far off things and battles long ago", a certain amount of latitude and exuberance in comment is to be expected. What has been surprising and disquieting has been the widely quoted remarks of supposedly responsible Anglican leaders, who have tried to revive and embroider the myth that Charles died as a martyr for the Church of England. It has even been suggested that renewed and formal efforts should be made to include him in the calendar of saints. Those who are still conscious of having Puritan and Free Church blood in their veins have shown considerable restraint of recent weeks. From many points of view this was commendable, but let it not be misunderstood nor carried too far.

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Not many Baptists are competent art critics or even serious students of painting. We pay all too little attention to the holiness of beauty. A special welcome is therefore due to the interesting, attractively printed booklet, *The Pre-Raphaelites and Oxford*, (Alden and Co., Ltd., Oxford, 2/6), by J. E. Alden. Mr. Alden bears a name greatly honoured in Free Church circles and is himself well known as a local preacher and younger leader in the Baptist churches in and around Oxford. His handbook outlines the story of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and tells of the many examples of its paintings, sculptures, glass work, tapestry and books which may be found in the city of dreaming spires and in neighbouring Kelmscott. Holman Hunt, Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Woolmer, William Morris and Burne-Jones are all represented.

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This spring the Rev. John Pearse returns from India to become one of the Associate Foreign Secretaries of the Baptist Missionary Society. After experience as an accountant, he received training at Manchester Baptist College and went to

India in 1934. Most of his service has been in Calcutta as Financial Secretary. For some months now Dr. Ellen M. Clow has been at London headquarters, also as Associate Foreign Secretary. She was appointed to the Shansi mission in 1928 and has rendered distinguished service at the Women's Hospital in Taiyuan under the disturbed and exacting conditions of the past two decades. The coming of Dr. Clow and Mr. Pearse to the Mission House should be a great strengthening to Dr. Williamson during the closing stages of his Foreign Secretaryship and a welcome reinforcement to the life of the Society as a whole. Changed conditions in India and China clearly make necessary many readjustments in administration and policy.

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This year marks the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Baptist missionaries at Serampore. The coming together there of Carey, Marshman and Ward was an event of historic significance for the whole Christian Church. The full story of what the Serampore Settlement meant to the making of modern India has yet to be told, though John Clark Marshman, George Smith and Pearce Carey have recorded the main features of it. Serampore has been and continues to be a creative centre of inspiration for the Indian Church. The Vice-Principal of Serampore College, Dr. C. E. Abraham, has recently reminded us that it was at Serampore that, in December, 1905, seventeen adventurous souls formed the National Missionary Society of India. The seventeen included the late K. T. Paul and the late Bishop Azariah, of Dornakal, then a young Y.M.C.A. secretary. There were also there two Burmese Baptists. The only Westerner was Dr. Sherwood Eddy. He, an Indian and a Singhalese are now the only survivors of the foundation members of the National Missionary Society which has done important work in India, Parkistan and Ceylon.

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In the account that was given in our last issue of the Mennonite historian, John Horsch, passing reference was made to Dr. C. Henry Smith, another of the group of scholarly contributors to the pages of the *Mennonite Quarterly*. News has now come of the death of C. Henry Smith last October at Bluffton, Ohio. Born in an Amish Mennonite community in Illinois, in 1875, a graduate of the University of Chicago, Dr. Smith spent the greater part of his life teaching history at Goshen College, Indiana, and at Bluffton College, Ohio, adding to his academic work considerable responsibilities in the field of banking. He was the author of several books and a large number of articles on Mennonite history, and was co-editor with Harold S. Bender

of a projected new Mennonite Encyclopedia. Of Dr. Smith's books the most important is *The Story of the Mennonites* (Berne, Indiana, 1941), which gives a comprehensive account of the communities both in Europe and America which bear the name of Menno Simons. It is of interest to note that it was the pacifist testimony of the Mennonites which he regarded as their most fundamental distinguishing principle, and that what first awakened his interest in historical studies was the discovery, while an undergraduate, that English-speaking Separatists, Congregationalists and Baptists were all indebted to the Mennonites and Anabaptists of the sixteenth century.

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It is satisfactory to learn that plans have been made to complete the publication of the *Mennonitisches Lexikon*. Volume I was completed in 1925, Volume II in 1937. The last part to be issued appeared in 1942; it was numbered thirty-six and contained entries as far as the letter O. The two original editors, Christian Neff and Christian Hege, are both dead. Their places have been taken by Dr. Ernst Crous, of Göttingen, and Dr. H. S. Bender, of Goshen College, Indiana. American support will, it is hoped, make it possible to complete the *Lexikon* from O to Z during the present year. A fourth, supplementary volume is also projected, since much new material is now available. American Mennonites have already in hand plans for a *Mennonite Encyclopedia* which will be basically an English translation and revision of the *Lexikon* with a great enlargement of the material relating to North American Mennonitism. It is to be hoped that efforts will be made to secure Baptist interest and support for this important enterprise, both in the United States and in England.

American collaboration has also made possible the resuscitation of plans for the publication in Germany of documents on the history of the Anabaptist movement from its beginnings in 1525 to the outbreak of the Thirty Years War. Between 1930 and 1938 three volumes appeared as part of a plan sponsored by the Verein für Reformationsgeschichte. A new *Täufer Akten-Kommission* has been set up jointly by the Verein and the Mennonitischer Geschichts-verein, the latter helped from the United States. It is hoped to issue ten or eleven volumes in the next decade, each dealing with a different geographical area. In addition, separate volumes covering Switzerland and Hesse are already in an advanced stage of preparation. These plans are of great importance for all interested in the history of the Reformation.