

Notes and News

We congratulate Harry Foreman, Tutor in charge of the Oaken-gates Outpost of the Wolverhampton Teachers' College, who has been awarded the Ph.D. degree of the University of Leeds for his thesis "The Early Separatists, the Baptists and Education, 1580-1780, with special reference to the Education of the Clergy".

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Dr. E. A. Payne writes:

The smooth-running of our institutions and organizations, as well as the preservation of their records, owe much to a group of persons, whose services are seldom adequately recognized. Now that there must be no sex discrimination and women may have the leading public role, the "back-room girls" may be better treated, or perhaps, if the latter are replaced by men, the treatment will be much the same in reverse.

These reflections are the result of examining *The Baptist Story in Western Canada*, by Margaret E. Thompson (Baptist Union of Western Canada, 1974), an impressive compilation of more than 500 pages. Miss Thompson was born in Hailsham, Sussex, but was taken to Canada in 1912 at the age of seven. For thirty-eight years, from 1929 to 1967, she worked in the office of the Baptist Union, serving under W. C. Smalley, W. J. MacDonald, J. Frank Patch and finally Theo. T. Gibson. Dr. T. B. McDormand, of the Canadian Baptist Federation, describes her as "office manager, banker, the de facto editor of *The Western Baptist*, compiler of the *Year Book*, receptionist . . . with whom overtime was standard procedure."

But this was not all. As a member of the First Baptist Church, Edmonton, Alberta, Miss Thompson was deeply committed to the cause. Since her retirement, she has put together information about the churches of Western Canada. It is an area of great distances with many immigrants from overseas, particularly Swedes and Germans and more recently people from Eastern Europe. There has been steady growth, but isolated communities, as are many of these, are subject to controversies of various kinds. There have been "modernist" scares. There was a serious disruption in British Columbia in 1927. The advent of Southern Baptists in the 1950s has not made things easier. Proposals to join the World Council of Churches have been debated more than once, put on one side, but never defeated. Missionary work among Indians and overseas, educational and social enterprises—all have had a place. Through times good and bad Miss Thompson has noted the important events and the personalities.

There are a few mistakes connected with Britain and Europe, but they are minor ones. There ought to be a copy of this work for reference in all our main Baptist libraries.