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A table of contents for *The Evangelical Quarterly* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_evangelical\\_quarterly.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_evangelical_quarterly.php)

# The Evangelical Quarterly

APRIL 15th, 1943

## FOREWORD

BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE *Evangelical Quarterly* COMMITTEE

BARELY a year ago, Professor Maclean entrusted the management of the business affairs of the *Evangelical Quarterly* to a Committee, drawn from both England and Scotland, representative of those actively concerned in the propagation of the Reformed Faith. No one then thought that so soon the Editorial board would require reconstitution owing to the lamented death of the Editor and Founder himself. On 30th January, Professor Maclean was called to his reward. An appreciation of the man and his work appears elsewhere in these pages, and the Committee wish to place on record the following resolution:

“The members of the Committee desire to express their profound sense of loss in the passing of Principal Donald Maclean, who founded and for fifteen years played the chief part in maintaining the *Evangelical Quarterly*. They recall with gratitude his informed and fearless witness for the Faith to which both heart and head contributed in irresistible partnership. His championship of Reformed Doctrine was strengthened by his personal friendship with Reformed Leaders in Europe, Africa, the United States and Australasia, who held him in esteem and affection. Not less do the members wish to express their grief in losing one whose unflinchingly upright character and warm-hearted friendship will be a cherished memory. They pray that they may be enabled by the grace of God to maintain the *Quarterly* as a worthy memorial of its Founder and towards the fulfilment of his heart's desire for the strengthening and consolidating of Reformed Theology to the glory of his Redeemer.”

Professor J. H. S. Burleigh, B.Litt., D.D., of the Regius Chair of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Edinburgh, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the Committee to become the new Editor. By training, experience and personal ideals, he is well fitted to maintain the high traditions of the *Quarterly*; five years ago, he was chosen by Professor Maclean himself as Assistant Editor. He studied in Paris, Strasbourg, and Prague, and has acted as Presbyterian delegate in North America and several European countries, so that it is confidently hoped that under his guidance the international connection of the *Quarterly* will be further extended when peace returns. Professor Daniel Lamont, D.D., of the Chair of Christian Ethics, and Professor G. T. Thomson, D.D., of the Chair of Christian Dogmatics, in the University of Edinburgh, have honoured the *Quarterly* by agreeing to join Principal John Macleod, D.D., Principal Emeritus of the Free Church College, Edinburgh, as Consulting Editors. To be Assistant Editors the Committee have appointed Mr. F. F. Bruce, M.A., Lecturer in Greek in the University of Leeds, whose worth is already known in these pages, and Rev. David Read, B.D., C.F., at present a Prisoner of War in Germany, who we hope will accept office and ere long be able to resume at home his promising career.

We feel sure that the new Editor and his associates will receive the continued trust and support of all interested in the *Quarterly* and the Faith for which it stands.

D. M. BLAIR.

Glasgow.

## EDITORIAL

FOR fifteen years, since its inception, Dr. Maclean edited and conducted the *Evangelical Quarterly*, and in the process gathered round him a faithful company of contributors, subscribers and well-wishers in many lands. Many of these were attached to him by personal ties of friendship. All were equally bound by loyalty to the Faith which he so valiantly maintained. A new Editor cannot at once count upon the former tie, though he may look for the sympathetic consideration of his predecessor's friends. He must rely all the more on the strength of the latter bond. He appeals, therefore, for the continued support of those who have at heart the purpose which the *Quarterly* was designed to serve.

From the beginning it has described itself as "A Theological Review, International in scope and outlook, in Defence of the Historic Christian Faith". To this character it will remain true. The International aspect is at present, alas, obscured. From our many friends and contributors in Europe we are quite cut off, and communication with the United States and the Nations of the British Commonwealth is inevitably restricted—to our impoverishment in every sense. But we look forward to a renewal of the old relations, confident that the fiery trial through which all are passing will only have proved the strength of the link forged by a common Evangelical Faith. We pray that by God's blessing that link may be a means of international healing and reconciliation.

Meantime it is our part to see to our end of it, that is the Defence of the Historic Christian Faith. In fifteen years this task has become *both* harder *and* easier—in any case different. Anti-Christian philosophies have taken on the character of fanatical religions attacking the Christian Faith at its centre. But on the other hand in face of the conflicting aspirations of men with their threat to civilisation, Christians are no longer under the temptation of reducing Christianity to a form of moral and social idealism hardly distinguishable from secular culture. It is now recognised not only by Christian theologians, but by other thinkers also, that the Church must have something distinctive to say to man in his so obvious "estate of

sin and misery". And this it can only have in so far as it is humbly submissive to the Word of God. The initiative has passed into the hands of those who know that God has spoken.

The Defence of the Christian Faith, suited to our time, is therefore its positive and unfaltering assertion in word and action. The clamant need of the hour is Theology in the properly Christian sense of the word; that is a doctrine of God and Man based upon the diligent and reverent study of the Scriptures, but aware also of the problems and trends of modern thought. To supply this need the various Churches and schools of Christian thought are devoting their best energies, and notable work is being done. The Oecumenical Movement through its important Conferences has provided a stimulus, offering a respectful hearing to the testimony of genuine conviction. Confronted with other traditions tenaciously held, Reformed Churches, which had been half ashamed of their own, realising their weakness, have been led to rediscover the fundamental principles by which they exist. This revival of Evangelical and Reformation Theology, in no narrow partisan, sectarian or obscurantist spirit, is to be welcomed in the interests both of Oecumenism and of Christian truth.

To this revival the *Evangelical Quarterly* may claim to have pointed the way in Scotland at least, and it may justifiably hope to become the organ of the growing number of those who are eager to advance it by scholarly work in all the fields of present Christian interest. It is true that there is among them a certain difference of emphasis. But that should not surprise and ought not to irritate. A school of thought is strengthened by full and frank discussion, provided the truth is reverently sought and mere eristic is avoided. The editor undertakes to see that every article published conforms to the well-understood aim of the *Quarterly*, but he cannot be held to agree with every view that may be expressed. Contributors must be allowed all reasonable liberty in the treatment of their themes. Only so can conscientious and fruitful work be done.