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Contributors and Correspondents

For the Presbyterian.]

AN HONOURABLE WOMAN.

BY REV. DAVID MITCHELL, TORONTO.

In last week's issue of this journal, we read an interesting contribution upon the character and works of the late Mrs. Doremus of New York. Having frequently met this esteemed lady, and being well acquainted with her untiring labors, it was with the pleasure of thorough appreciation that we perused the article in question. Mrs. Doremus was in every respect a remarkable woman. No matter what meeting one might attend, whether in the Bowers, the Five Points, or Association Hall, there we were sure to catch a glimpse of the venerable form. It was the privilege of the writer to commence his ministerial work in New York as assistant to her pastor, the Rev. Dr. Rogers, of Fifth Avenue Reformed Church. The first person to attract attention on entering the pulpit was Mrs. Doremus. She was all aglow with interest from the first moment to the last of the service. Her piercing eye, and sharp business-like manner, betokened a woman who was not only benevolent, but practical and common-sense in her benevolence. We never met her, on the street, in the Church, or at any meeting, without being encouraged by a kindly smile, or a warm pressure of the hand. The excellent contributor of the article referred to, presents Mrs. Doremus as the philanthropist on a large scale, the soul of Foreign Missions, the active minister of every benevolent scheme, the industrious manager of a large and hospitable household. It was our privilege to know her in her humbler spheres of usefulness, in the influence she exerted in the Church, in the interest she took in the missionary work which was specially under our charge, in her kindly visits to the poor and sick and dying. The wonder is expressed that Mrs. Doremus could do so much work for foreign missions and benevolence, requiring the highest statesman-like ability. But surely we may be still more astonished at a woman, at the best of feeble strength, and regarded for many years past as one in the sore and yellow leaf, filling up what she called her leisure moments with work concerning which she acted upon the principle of "not letting the left hand know what the right hand doeth." When she slept, or rested, is a mystery of her life. She seemed to be ubiquitous. And yet we know she gave ample time to reading, meditation, and prayer; while all who knew her can testify that she was a model mother and housekeeper. We know not any one who united in her person with such beautiful blending of colours the flourishing of the almond tree with the fire of youth. To the last her spirit was indomitable. Like Moses, when she died it may be said of her, that "her eye was not dim, nor her natural force abated."

The life of Mrs. Doremus was a consecrated one. Its whole secret was told by her in one word, when some one said to her as he saw her amongst the crushing throng that was struggling to gain entrance to one of the meetings at the Hippodrome, "What, Mrs. Doremus, you alone here." Her reply was, "I am never alone." Like the Master she loved, she was "alone and yet not alone, for the Father was with her." This was the mystery of her crowded life. The one question was, "What can I do for Jesus?" It was her glorying in the cross that made her heart yearn for the conversion of the heathen, and sent her out to the streets and lanes on errands of mercy. Because she loved Jesus, she willingly bore the burden of all manner of missions, but because of this also, she was ever ready to listen to the cry for help, whether coming from a fallen sister, the homeless orphan, or from the sick-chamber of the poor. What a testimony to her worth, a physician gives, who says that on one occasion he stepped into a street car at two o'clock in the morning, and there was Mrs. Doremus returning from one of her many midnight errands to the poor and suffering.

What an example! In presence of it, we look with a feeling of shame upon our own life-work. But here is a lesson specially addressed to ladies, rich, educated, influential; not to waste their lives in pleasure and gaiety, but to devote themselves heart and soul to the work of the Master. We know there are many ladies like the subject of this sketch in Toronto, who are doing their best in the interests of the poor and fallen. But oh! if all were actuated by the same spirit, vice and intemperance would soon hide their heads, their sons and daughters would be given to Christ, and their noblest efforts would be turned to the advancement of the Christian cause.

For the Presbyterian.]

MODERN BIBLICAL HYPERCRITICISM.

BY REV. JOHN GRAY, M.A., ORILLIA.

No. III.

The two previous articles were written after a careful perusal and examination of the production of Prof. Smith, and are simply the independent judgment of a plain country minister on the views of the author.

We make no parade of, or pretensions to any extraordinary knowledge of the subject, but we do claim some little acquaintance with Exegetical Theology. And the subject of Biblical Criticism has ever had peculiar fascinations for us, and has been studied from absolute necessity, because the attacks which scepticism has made on the foundations of our personal faith have had origin in the denial of the purity of the sacred text of Scripture. It is in these insidious assaults of Professor Smith on the correctness of the text itself, that the chief danger of his views consists. For he thus undermines the very foundations of the faith itself.

4. We therefore, feel constrained to utter a warning against his fourth error, by which he impugns the very foundations on which the sacred text is based.

As one who has come through the fire, and who has had to face the question as a matter of life or death to his soul, we believe that there are two principles on which the integrity of the original text of Scripture rests. One of these is the general correctness and purity of the *Massoretic* text of the Old Testament, and the other is the apostolic origin of the New Testament Scriptures. Or the question may be stated thus: Neither the Jews, to whom the Old Testament oracles were entrusted by God, nor the Christians to whom the New Testament writings were committed, have proved faithless to their charge.

The learned Aberdeen theologian assails and seeks to subvert both these principles by the following statements.

"For a long time, the written text of the Bible was *consonantal only*." "But even the consonantal text was not absolutely fixed. The loose state of the laws of spelling, and the great similarity of several letters made errors of copying frequent."

"The Greek text of Jeremiah is vastly different from that of the Hebrew Bible, and it is not certain that the latter is always best."

"In the Books of Samuel, the Greek enables us to correct many blunders of the Hebrew text."

"Up to this time," (the Christian era) there was no absolutely received text.

"But soon after," "a single recension became supreme. The change was, no doubt, connected with the rise of an overdrawn and fantastic system of interpretation, which found lessons in the smallest peculiarity of the text; but Lagarde has made it probable that no critical process was used to fix the standard recension."

"It is from the *Massoretic* text, with *Massoretic* punctuation, that the English version, and most Protestant translations are derived."

Another reason for the unreliability of the Hebrew text, he deduces from the variations in chronology, between the Samaritan, Greek, and Hebrew Pentateuch.

But no mention is made of the collation of hundreds of old MSS., the comparison of versions, the several pathways of proof which instinctively converge towards the integrity of the Hebrew text, or the confirmatory testimonies to its truthful character, which modern discoveries have made known.

By his one-sided and destructive mode of reasoning, the youthful professor labors hard to convey the impression to his readers, that our venerable Hebrew text is in a very uncertain and dilapidated state, and that its purity and integrity are very problematical, from "all existing MSS. being derived from a single archetype, which was followed even in its marks of deletion and other accidental peculiarities."

The New Testament does not afford the learned theologian the same facilities for impugning the sacred text, as the labors of a Tischendorf, Tregelles and Westcott have vindicated, and born ample testimony to its comparative purity.

Alongside of a correct Greek text has always been placed as essential to its divine authority, its apostolic origin.

It has been held by the church in all ages as a necessary conjoint principle to inspiration, that the New Testament was written either by apostolic men, or under their direct or indirect superintendence. By doing away with this principle, the divine authority of the New Testament is seriously impugned. It is in this direction that his statement and reasoning tend,

and his arguments, and the general drift of his conclusions are fitted to unsettle the mind in regard to the apostolic origin of the Greek Scriptures.

"All the earliest external evidence points to the conclusion that the synoptical gospels are *non-apostolic digests* of spoken and written apostolic tradition, and that the arrangement of the earlier material in orderly form took place only gradually and by many essays. With this the internal evidence agrees."

"It appears from what we have already seen that a considerable portion of the New Testament is made up of writings not directly apostolic, and a main problem of criticism is to determine the relation of these writings, especially of the Gospels, to apostolic teaching and tradition."

This non-apostolic theory is applied to several of the New Testament books.

"In the epistle to the Hebrews, whose author, a man closely akin to Paul, is not a direct disciple of Jesus (Heb. xiii.) the theological reflection natural to the second generation, which no longer stood so immediately under the overpowering influence of the manifestation of Christ, is plainly affected in some points by Alexandrian views."

And this undermining process is in a cursory manner applied to the New Testament canon, in the brief reference made to it. What a rich pasture field for doubters there is in the following passage: "The apostolic writings continued to be very partially diffused, and readers used such books as they had access to, often failing to distinguish between books of genuine value and worthless forgeries. For most readers were very uncritical, and there was an enormous floating mass of spurious and apocryphic literature, including recensions of the Gospel, altered by heretical parties to suit their own views."

The opinions of the able Professor are neither novel nor original, and can be readily traced to German sources, or rather to one German author. Promulgated by the German writer, they excite no surprise, from their being the natural product of the irreverent and semi-infidel, semi-Christian criticism of the theological schools, of that land. But they do startle the Christian student, when they are promulgated by the pen of one who occupies a chair of theology, in a city ever remarkable for its strict and conservative theological spirit, and in connection with a church, noted since its existence in 1848, for its soundness and orthodoxy, in contending "for the faith once delivered to the saints."

"What shall I do in order to become famous?" said an ambitious youth to an ancient sophist. "Kill a man who is famous already, and then your name will be always mentioned along with his," was the sophist's reply.

And it cannot but be manifest, that the youthful Free Church Professor, in his unhappy article on the Bible, has, it may be unintentionally, suggested views and doubts, that tend to destroy the sacred volume as the pure and perfect revelation of Christian faith and hope, and has thus been suddenly raised to a high pinnacle of fame and notoriety. There is danger, however, of its being the sudden shooting up of the eccentric rocket, and of his becoming a pregnant example of a man, "hoist by his own petard." To any who may give way to doubts and even unbelief, under the unwise and ill-considered opinions and unfounded statements of Professor Smith, would we say, "Hold fast to the two foundation principles that underlie the sacred Scriptures, viz., the *substantial correctness and purity of the Massoretic text*, and the *apostolic origin* of the New Testament, and in this connection, it will be profitable to ponder the paradox of Bengel, the illustrious commentator, that "conversion easily leads to heterodoxy." That eminent man, having been himself under such deep trouble for years, from doubts regarding the text of the New Testament, that he carefully prepared a text for his own use, his words, as bearing on the present controversy, are worthy of careful consideration. "If the sacred volume, considering the fallibility of its many transcribers, had been preserved from every seeming defect, this preservation would have been so great a miracle, that faith in the written word could be no longer faith, I only wonder that there are not more of these readings than there are, and that none in the least affect the foundation of our faith."

An examination of Prof. Smith's article on Canticles in the fifth volume of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and the bearing of his views on the confession, on the canon and kindred topics, will form the next and closing series of these papers.

For the Presbyterian.]

THE OLD FASHIONED MINISTER.

The "old-fashioned minister" was, in the great majority of cases at least, a Christian gentleman and scholar. He had chosen the office of the ministry with a deep sense of the sacredness of the work, the dignity of the position and the high qualifications it required, and he spared no labor, in his preparatory studies, to equip himself with these qualifications. Although he often had to maintain himself at the University, to provide himself with books, clothes, etc., during a course of eight years, he hardly ever thought of shortening it, but considered the time all too short for the important studies that were to fit him for the ministerial office. By patient and persevering toil he laid the foundations of an accurate scholarship, which in after years, gave solidity and substance to his pulpit teaching, and impressed those with whom he came in contact, with a salutary respect for his knowledge and his judgment. He could read his Bible freely in both the original languages, and in consequence, it need hardly be said, he never gave wrong quantities to Scripture names, and though he sometimes spoke English words with a Scottish accent, he never indulged in slipshod grammar. He had a strong relish for classical and other literature, though he counted them but loss in comparison with the "riches of the gospel of Christ." Even when not brought up a gentleman, from his childhood, he had carefully cultivated gentlemanly habits and manners, believing them included in the "whatsoever things are pure and lovely and of good report." Consequently, it need scarcely be said that the "free and easy style" was not congenial to him, either in dress or manners; that his clerical costume was always irreproachable; while his people respected him all the more because he "knew his place" and did not "make himself cheap." No one was afraid to come to him in a trouble, but no one would have ventured on an impertinence or a familiarity.

After being licensed, he usually had to act for a year or two and even longer, as a preaching "probationer" or as regular assistant to an older minister, and thus gained a stock of sermons and experience before he entered upon a settled charge. And when he did this, it was with a deep sense of responsibility, and the feeling that his charge was a sacred trust. This being so, it was rarely, and only in response to a clear call of duty, that he would leave one charge for another. In the great majority of cases, the tie between minister and people was like the tie between him and his wife, for life. And the reverential affection with which they learned to regard him was indeed a crown for old age. In all congregational matters, he was an absolute, though a constitutional monarch. He was never dictatorial, because his opinion was always desired, and his judgment so respected that it was almost invariably followed. Congregational divisions and contentions were unknown under his unobtrusive guidance, against which no one thought of rebelling. His dignity and simplicity of character made themselves felt both in the pulpit and out of it. He had a clear and comprehensive grasp of gospel truth, and trusted more to the influence of steady and faithful teaching than to occasional seasons of excitement and sensational appeals. And he taught both publicly and privately. He was his own Sabbath-school superintendent, and cared to employ none but *Christian* teachers, who would teach, quietly steadily and faithfully. He did not encourage "socials" or "tea-meetings" as they were called in his day; nor "entertainments," believing that they cultivated a love of excitement which did more harm than good. Yet his Sabbath-school was at least as well attended and his congregation as truly interested in each other as those of the present day which have both. He was, usually, very conservative, and held steadily on the even tenor of his way, fearing no man's frown, pandering to no man's weakness, and, notwithstanding, winning an amount of influence and respect, seldom if ever accorded to the man who lays himself out to be "popular." In Church-courts his opinion always carried weight partly because it was never hastily given, partly because it was given in few words. In debate, when he did not take part in it, he was always courteous, brotherly and kind, tolerant of the different opinions of others, while, in general, adhering firmly to his own.

At home the "old-fashioned minister" was mindful of the apostolic injunction to "rule well his own house;" and in this, as in his parish labors, he was ably assisted by his wife, who was often the daughter—as he was often the son—of a Scottish manse, and carried to her own home, whether in

Scotland or Canada, the elevation of mind and character, the cultivation and refinement, in which Scottish manses were fruitful. Without the slightest pretension—which indeed she would never have thought of assuming—her simple dignity of character and manner gave her at once the "position" about which she did not trouble herself, and she "ruled well her household" after the good old Scottish pattern, in which a careful economy blended with the truest refinement. The minister's table and furniture, indeed, might have been considered intolerably "plain" by many of our luxurious farmers and tradesmen, but he and his wife had been brought up to a little less dainty fare or luxurious upholstery, or rich dress, and if there was "plain living" there was "high thinking," and refined taste, and "the minister's" children were creatures of health such as are not so likely to be found where hot cakes and pies, rich pastry and confectionary do most abound. Self-denial without asceticism, and a noble independence of mere sensual gratifications were among the good lessons early learned at "the manse." Pity that they were not more generally taught in our Canadian homes now! It would save some sad shipwrecks in after life! But the "old-fashioned minister" was "given to hospitality" also; not to the costly and ostentatious "entertaining" which so often passes for it, but to the true kindly hospitality which meets the stranger with the welcome he needs, and receives him cordially into the family life. It was truly wonderful indeed, how much the "manse" could do in this way, when occasion required, and more especially, when it was a brother minister, or several brother ministers who needed to be entertained. And few companies could be more full of innocent and joyous geniality than surrounded the manse table on such occasions.

After all that has been said, it is hardly necessary to say that the "old-fashioned minister's" piety was deep and true, though perhaps more quiet and less demonstrative than that of the present day. His earnest and solemn pulpit exhortations came from a heart full of a sense of the evil of sin and of grateful love to the Saviour from sin. Faithful in all duty, just and true and kind in all his relations, "an Israelite indeed in whom was no guile," in life and in death, the life which he lived in the flesh he lived, as he would have freely confessed, "by the grace of the Son of God who loved him and gave Himself for him."

The "old-fashioned minister" is fast passing away. It would be well that his portrait should be painted before he is forgotten.

"The old order falleth; giving place to new, And God fulfils Himself in many ways." But it will be well if the ministry of the future do not, in the more important traits that have been enumerated, fall below the standard of the "old-fashioned" ministry.

Religious Awakening.

MACINTOSH CONGREGATION.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

A great work of grace in this congregation broke out under the missionary services of Mr. Robert McIntyre, employed for mission work by the "Presbytery of Sauguenay." The Rev. J. M. McIntyre of Harriston, on invitation co-operated in the work, and on the evening of 6th February, twenty-five stood up in a crowded house signifying by this, their deep anxiety about their souls' salvation. Now between 200 and 300 remain to the enquiry meeting. The want of sufficient workers to direct the anxious and troubled to Christ, is very much felt. But the number of such is on the increase.

Many of God's people are themselves revived, and others who were only Christians in name, are so now in power. The most delightful work is that of winning souls to Christ. Dear people of God, pray for the laborers in this work! pray that Christ may be lifted up so that many many more may be born again!

To encourage those who work for Christ in His vineyard, it may be added that this work of grace is traced very largely to the labour of a few who wrought and pleaded, and waited for the blessing, and now the pleasure of the Lord is prospering in their midst. J. M. I.

RUDOLF MEYER, editor of a socialist newspaper, has been sentenced to nine months' imprisonment for publishing a libel on Prince Bismarck, charging him with stock-jobbing.

THE Berlin *Reichsanzeiger* states that Germany's determination not to participate in the Paris Exhibition is irrevocable. The state of affairs which had led the government to decline to take part therein is such as to preclude all possibility of reconsideration.

A DISPATCH from Calcutta reports that a gunpowder explosion has occurred at Ad-hemabad, by which fifty persons were killed and 1,000 wounded. A terrible explosion has taken place in one of the coal mines at Grasseuse, in the department of Herault, France. Fifty-five miners are known to have perished.