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Hear Baith Sides.

We're s'noo at judgin' ither fouk,
An' sooin' nei'bours' illa,
We mak' gigantic mountains
Oot o' microscopic hills;
We lend a willin' ear to tales
The tattlin' tongue confides,
An' digna wait, ere we condemn,
To hear baith sides.

There's mony a man wha's sair misjudged,
His freen's frae him hae turned,
They look on him wi' scornfu' oen,
An' frae their door he's spurned,
Because they've listened to some foe
Whase he'rt dark hatred hides;
And yet they wad hao' lo'ed him,
Had they heard baith sides.

Sae let us aye wi' care tak' tent
To deem nae man a knave,
Tho' roond about us mony a tongue
About his faults may rave;
In ae side o' a tale aff times
There's mony a mystery bides,
We canna justly judge until
We hear baith sides.

Brechin.

D. B. MACKIE.

NOTES ON BIBLE STUDY.

For the Review.

1 IN the study of Scripture two facts are to be freely recognized. One is that in some respects the Bible resembles other books. The other is that in some respects it differs from all other books. From the first fact it follows that in the study of Scripture principles are to be adapted similar to those adopted in the study of other books. From the second fact it follows that principles must be acknowledged which may be safely ignored in the study of other books.

2. There are those who are not prepared to accept the latter of these statements. They affirm that in the study of Scripture it is necessary to relieve oneself of all preconceptions and thus be able to approach the study of the book with the untrammelled spirit that alone is crowned with success in the study of secular literature. That is to say the same principles and only the same principles are to be recognized in the pursuit of Scripture knowledge which are recognized in the efforts put forth to master the thoughts and sentiments met in other books. The Bible is to be treated just as if it were an ordinary book.

This claim no Bible student can afford to allow. He can do so only with results fatal to his study. It may be that for purposes of criticism the Bible may be treated like any other book, and even criticism must suffer from such a method. But study having in view a knowledge of the subject matter of the Scripture, its thoughts and sentiments, its laws and doctrines, it is absolutely necessary, if the effort is to be at all successful, to acknowledge that the Bible has distinctive fea-

tures and that its study must be pursued under the guidance of principles safely ignored in the study of other books.

(a) One distinctive feature of the Bible is that it is the Word of God. It was written under the inspiration of His Spirit. The thoughts and sentiments which it contains originated with Him and not in the minds and heart of the sacred writers. From this it follows that the Spirit of God is the only infallible interpreter of Scripture, and that among men they only are its true interpreters who are under the influence of the Spirit. Our blessed Lord taught this in His farewell address to His disciples when He assured them that the Spirit of Truth would come and guide them into all truth. Every student of Scripture is to act upon this instruction and is to proceed in his study of Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise his efforts will be sadly disappointing.

(b) Another distinctive feature of Scripture is that it is a spiritual book. Its theme is the spiritual. It contains much of history. It abounds in references to the material universe. Everything, however, is subordinated to spiritual purposes. From this it follows that in order to understand Scripture it is necessary to have spiritual discernment. One can study with success any department of human knowledge if he has the intellectual qualifications necessary. For these are confined to the sphere of the intellectual. To study Scripture with anything like success one must have, in addition to the intellectual qualifications, spiritual qualifications, for its sphere is the spiritual "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God neither can he know them." No one can understand what the Bible means by "contrition of heart" "conviction of sin" "poverty of spirit" who has not been led through these experiences by the Spirit. As well expect an intelligent judgment in regard to a work of art from a man color-blind as to expect an intelligent estimate of these and other Scripture facts from one who has not spiritual discernment. This every intelligent Bible student must acknowledge and his prayer will be "open thou mine eyes that I may behold wonderful things out of Thy law." These two principles, perhaps at bottom are, which may be ignored in the pursuit of secular knowledge must be acknowledged in every effort put forth to gain a knowledge of Scripture truth. Those who ignore them have met, will and must meet with failure as students of God's Word whose letter killeth and whose Spirit giveth life.

3. Since the Bible resembles in some respects other books it will be helpful, as has been said, to adopt in its study the principles adopted in the study of other books. Among these principles we may mention the following:

(Concluded next week.)