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THE REVISED TESTAMENT.

We cannot by any means bring ourselves to agree with Mr. Smith, who so ably defends the New Revision of the New Testament against all comers. It is a question, we think, above every other question upon which the clergy, individually and collectively, are well competent to pass an opinion. The work has now been before the public for nearly a year; everywhere criticisms, more or less learned, have been made public, and every weak and strong argument advanced for and against many of the numerous changes made; it cannot, therefore, be considered presumption on the part of any clergyman who may please to express an opinion upon it. As far as a majority of the learned critics can decide the question, it may be summed up in the language of the Archbishop of York: "What we wanted for the Church was not the *maximum* of alteration, but the *minimum* of alteration"; and the instructions to this effect set before the revisers they neglected to observe.

In the Northern Convocation recently, the Archbishop of York in the chair, the Rev. E. Harman (Carlisle) moved, "That the thanks of this Convocation be presented to the Revisers of the New Testament for their sustained efforts in the work intrusted to them, and that this Convocation unites in the prayer that under the blessing of Almighty God the Revised Translation may materially advance the knowledge and understanding of the Holy Scriptures." Canon Trevor, in opposing the motion, said that "this revised thing" had led to discussion and disaster to the English Bible, and so far from helping to promote the study of the Word of God, he took it to be a distinct step in the race of that criticism which had led to the most disastrous results in the country in which it originated.

"The President asked whether it would not be better to wait until the next session of Convocation, and have the whole matter discussed, because it was a great and grave question, and would require considerable discussion. If the vote of thanks could have been passed without raising discussion on the whole subject of revision it might have been passed to-day. It must be distinctly understood that the vote of thanks was not refused. What would probably be the course of things would be this—that the Revised Version, with other helps that had come and would come, would be the subject of a new inquiry. What we wanted for the Church was not the *maximum* of alteration, but the *minimum* of alteration. (Cheers.) The English Bible, with its merits and its faults, was uncommonly good English, and was very dear to the people of England, and he had no doubt that the mass of the people of this country were not in favor of abandoning the one and taking up the other. (Cheers.)

The Rev. E. Harman then withdrew the resolution.

And very recently the *English Churchman* had the following:—

"The clear-sighted Archbishop of Dublin foresaw, years ago, the danger of laying unhallowed hands on the Authorized Version of the good old English Bible. He prescribed the minimum of change as the only desideratum, and never dreamed of the infinitesimal and infinite mutations and com-

binations which the Revision of 1881 would see introduced into the most sacred and solemn book in the English tongue. Liberal-minded, too, as Dr. Trench always was, he nevertheless resisted for a time the plan of leaguings, for the purposes of revision, with all those not embraced in the organization of his own Church, although he admitted that with the exception of the "so-called Baptists," they might advantageously be invited to offer suggestions, to be decided upon for the acceptance or non-acceptance by a body of which they were not to be members. It is an open secret that Archbishop Trench was won over to the view of sectarian comprehensiveness which ultimately prevailed, to the inclusion of Socinians as well as so-called Baptists, by the irresistible appeals of the late Bishop of Winchester, Bishop Wilberforce, who never perpetrated a more mischievous blunder than when he threw the whole weight of his influence and his energy into the Revision scheme, as finally arranged and carried out. As a member, and a most illustrious member of the Revision Company, for Archbishop Trench is unquestionably one of the most gifted linguists and divines in Christendom, it would be uncourteous of him to denounce the result of the Revision as a failure, reflecting as it would be upon his fellow-labourers, and all the more so as the Archbishop took the least part in the work, prevented, as he was, because of a protracted illness and a multiplicity of business, from attending the sittings at the Revision meetings at the Jerusalem Chamber. All that the Archbishop of Dublin can say honestly in favour of the Revised New Testament he does. He predicts for it a very useful future, no doubt in the way of a comment on the Authorized Version; but he is very careful to point out that it has no chance of ever superseding the Authorized Version as that superseded all its predecessors in the past and its rivals in the present. He points out, too, its shortcomings, and inferiority in point of style and diction. And here we cannot but express our firm conviction that if the literary skill and the familiarity of Archbishop Trench with the manifold resources and niceties of our English language could have been utilised by the revisers, neither Dean Burgon nor Sir Edmund Becket nor Mr. Washington Moon would have been so successful in their unmeasured and merciless exposure of the un-English style, idiom, and grammar of the Revisers' English. Although the Archbishop of Dublin generously gives his colleagues all credit for honesty and courage, it is beyond question that he regards the work, as a whole, a failure; and this is a hard blow, coming, as it does, not only from a member of the Revision Company, but from one who has proved himself superior to all his colleagues in his vast and varied attainments as a scholar."

It is at least wise, while placing these extracts before our readers, to repeat Mr. Smith's concluding words, by way of a caution to those who might misunderstand the point of the discussion, viz., "That no fact or doctrine of the Gospel is in any way, (that is, was not intended to be) weakened or impaired by the changes which have been made. No revision, with whatever freedom it be carried out, can exclude or obscure any of the great truths and facts which we have been taught.

The great truths and doctrines of our Holy Faith are most certain and unalterable, and their proof is not dependent upon one text of Scripture, but is drawn from the whole teaching of God's Word.

"BIGOTRY" AND "PRUDENCE."

From time to time a great outcry is raised against the bigotry of our clergy in not permitting "ministers of any denomination" to conduct services in our burying grounds. We have just been reading "An Act to Amend and Consolidate the Laws relating to the Methodist Church of Canada." This act is a very full one. It has, we believe, been enacted by all the Provincial Legislatures, and so may be found in the Statute Book of any Province.

Now, we wish particularly to direct attention to Section 9, Sub-sections 1, 2, and 3, of this act. The whole section declares the various trusts for which the property is to be held. Sub-section 1 requires Trustees to build and repair churches and appurtenances; Sub-section 2 requires them to permit such churches, etc., to be used for religious worship, etc., and that they "do and shall, from time to time, and at all times hereafter, permit and suffer such person as is hereafter mentioned or designated, and such person only, to preach and expound God's Holy Word, and to perform the usual acts of reli-

gious worship therein, and burial services in the burial ground thereto belonging," etc. The section then goes on to "designate" the person to perform these acts; he is to be approved and appointed by the Annual Conference or by the Superintendent of the Circuit or a temporary appointment by the Conference, "and in no case any other person or persons whomsoever." The next Sub-section (3) very strictly limits the power of appointment, as it provides "that no person whomsoever shall at any time hereafter be permitted to preach or expound God's Holy Word, or to perform any of the usual acts of religious worship upon the said parcel or tract of land and hereditaments, nor in the said Church, nor in or upon the appurtenances thereto belonging, or any of them, or any part or parts thereof, who shall maintain, promulgate or teach any doctrine or practice contrary to those held and practiced by the said Methodist Church of Canada."

This is no relic of bye-gone exclusiveness; it is a law asked for since Confederation by the "Methodist Church in Canada." The law is, we think (in this respect), a reasonable and prudent one; but why should that in us be bigotry which in them is prudence?

DR. JENKINS' note in another column leads us again to ask the Clergy and Churchwardens throughout the Dominion to send us items of local news from their respective Parishes and Missions. We have a circulation of over fifteen hundred in Quebec and Montreal Dioceses alone, (which number is being rapidly increased,) and over four thousand in the other Dioceses; and we are most anxious to publish full and accurate accounts of the work and progress of the several Parishes, and in this way make our paper interesting and useful.

We begin in this number a series of interesting papers from the pen of the Rev. G. O. Troop, late of St. Paul's, Halifax, and now of Hellmuth College, London, Ontario. We are glad to welcome Mr. Troop as a contributor to our columns, and hope to hear from him very frequently.

MISCELLANEA.

It is curious that *Gnosticism* should have been the great trouble of the Church in earlier times—*Agnosticism* its difficulty to-day. These men prided themselves because they knew so much; to-day it is, of some the boast, of some the lament, that they can know nothing. Yet it may be that the state of mind producing two such dissimilar results is alike, or nearly so, in both cases. Is it not the deciding, determining, measuring all things referring to faith or religion by just the same methods, limits, standards, as questions of natural things are judged by? In the earlier days, men's reasoning, or rather their conjectures about all natural phenomena were a *præri*; they set to work to think how things ought to be, or in their opinion must be, and decided accordingly how they were. The same process carried on in theology gave the "æons," "emanations" and other fancies of the thinkers' brain. To-day men have learnt to follow patiently the rigidly inductive method, starting from observed facts as first principles. But when they attempt the same method in matters of the faith, they find no observed facts from which to start, or they are wholly dissatisfied with the evidence of asserted facts; they have nothing from which to begin to reason, so they can know nothing.

There is, however, one vast difference between the methods of the two periods; a difference which greatly increases to-day the difficulty of the Christian apologist. The old method was certainly wrong and misleading in natural things, when its operations in that direction became discredited, men soon discontinued its application to things supernatural. But the new method is demonstrably the true one within one range of subjects; its successes there have been triumphant, it has been the means by which have been won all the noble victories which the annals of science record. The very same reasoning which led men to reject the old method in supernatural things, viz., its proved falsity in natural things, leads them to apply the new method to supernaturals, for it is certainly true in naturals.

Certainly patient, faithful, inductive reasoning, logically carried out, cannot mislead in any class of subjects, natural or supernatural. It is not here that we differ from the Agnostic. We had better grant them that, or rather tell him that his method is as valuable to us as it is to him. The difference lies somewhat further back. Our reasoning about

natural subjects starts from observed facts that come within the range of human experience. But he refuses to start with us in our processes of reasoning in supernatural matters, because we take as premises, facts or truths wholly outside of human experience, claiming that they have been given to us on sufficient evidence by an intelligence higher than our own. And when there is a difficulty or inability about receiving such evidence, the case is a hard one.

If any one flatters himself that we are so far away from the rapid currents of modern thought, as to be unaffected by these views and themes, he greatly misunderstands what is going on around him. Nor is it in our large towns only that these questions are agitated; in many, I had almost written in every village congregation among our own people, as well as among those of other denominations, there are men and women, some in distress, struggling to conquer, if they may, doubts which are robbing them of hopes they once held dear, others shallow and flippant, perking and priding themselves on their clever and startling unbeliefs. But of one class and the other, there are not a few, many too in places that seem unlikely ones.

Whether there is a Christ or a God at all, whether man has a soul and may look to a future life, when these questions are asked, it is surely time to put aside all lesser controversies and address ourselves to the solution of these. In the year 1850, when the Baptismal Regeneration controversy (now an almost forgotten one) was raging, F. W. Robertson speaking in the Town Hall of Brighton, used these words. "It is a fact worthy of deep pondering, to me a singularly startling one, that at the moment when we the priests of England were debating as a matter of life and death, the precise amount of miracle said to be performed in a Christian Sacrament, and excommunicating one another with reciprocated charges of heresy, the workingmen of this country who are not to be put off with transcendental hypotheses and mysterious phraseology, on whom the burdens of this existence press as fearful realities, were actually debating in their societies, here beneath this very roof, a far more awful question, whether there be indeed a God or not. It might suggest to one who thinks, a question not altogether calming in these days, what connection there is between these two things." With a few changes these words might be made applicable to 1882. OUTIS.

NOTES ON THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

By REV. G. OSBORNE TROOP.

No. I.

It is not always remembered by those who are accustomed to participate in the festivities peculiar to the observance of New Year's Day, that until about one hundred and thirty years ago the beginning of the civil year was dated not from January 1st—but from March 25th. Before the year 1752, in which the change of style was effected, our Prayer Book contained the following direction:—"Note, that the supputation of the year of our Lord in the Church of England beginneth the five-and-twentieth day of March." Thus the civil and Christian years coincided at least nominally, in their beginning until this date. Since that time, however, the dates have been quite distinct. The Church in no way recognizes the first of January as New Year's Day; but, rather urges upon all her loyal sons and daughters the prayerful observance of the 1st Sunday in Advent as the beginning of what is called 'The Christian Year.' In fact, if we may judge from the arrangement (which for centuries has never varied) of the Collects, Epistles and Gospels, it has ever been the mind of the Church, that her children should begin the year with the reverent contemplation of the mystery of the Holy Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. To say, moreover, that the 25th of March is the date appointed for the Commemoration of the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin Mary, is to remind all theologians that the Incarnation was still the starting-point, even with those Christians who began the year on that day.

Thus much for history. As to the practical benefits to be derived from the careful observance of the solemn round of Festivals and Fasts embraced within the Church's year, they are obvious to all thinking men and women. First, look at the preacher. If he be a royal student of his Prayer Book, he will escape the snare in which the more earnest man is, the more liable he is to be taken, of bringing only his own favorite points of doctrine before his people. The Church chooses his subjects for him, and chooses always in a wise and comprehensive order. Or, if we look at the people, they will find the Prayer Book a protection from any man who wears them with his hobbies. Let their clergyman preach