

## The Presbyterian Review.

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Toronto, September 21, 1893.

### Professor Campbell's Case.

THE appeal of Professor Campbell to the Synod of Montreal and Ottawa leaves his case *sub judice* and, therefore, practically outside the pale of public discussion. Not that the necessity for continued discussion seems apparent. The less said of the case the better for the Church and for the Professor. There are conceivable circumstances when it might be our duty to come to close quarters on the merits of the case, but, at present, these circumstances are happily absent: the address of Professor Campbell before the Presbytery raising no new issues, and the finding having been generally accepted by the Church.

The Church is to be congratulated on the quiet, expeditious and unmistakable manner in which this serious case has been dealt with so far. Professor Campbell's lecture was delivered at the close of February last; it was taken up by the local Presbytery, touched upon by the General Assembly, and, since then, has been three times before the Montreal Presbytery, and disposed of by it in a remarkably short time. Yet it cannot be said that there has been undue haste. All the parties concerned have had ample time to think out the questions involved in the lecture and the conclusions come to by the Presbytery were the result of careful deliberation protected by the safeguards of constitutional procedure.

Two points on which some newspapers are not clear may be referred to. First, as to the position taken by Professor Campbell in his lecture. Viewing the question in an indefinite, indiscriminating way, they make the Professor a martyr to the Higher Criticism. This, of course, is an error. Professor Campbell discusses the ethics of the Bible, not questions of dates, authorship, literary composition, etc., with which the higher critics, as known to students of the Bible, deal. The Professor deals especially with the conception of God given in the Old and New Testament. The character of God is his study, and it is from that starting-point he arrives at the conclusion that the Book is imperfect; or, in the terms of the first count in the libel:—"A view of the Holy Scriptures which impugns and discredits them as the supreme and infallible source of religious truth." What the Professor accepts is "a view of God which sets Him forth as one who does not smite either in the way of punishment or discipline, and who has nothing to do with the judging or

punishing of the wicked." These are the views which the Presbytery found are held by Professor Campbell, and on which he has been found guilty of heresy; views not recognized as pertaining to the Higher Criticism. The second point on which a misconception has been placed is that the thirteen members of Presbytery who voted against the first count hold the same views as the Professor and ought, therefore, to be proceeded against. There is no ground for this assumption. It does not appear that any one of them identified himself with Professor Campbell's views. They attacked the libel for various reasons, but none of these reasons was that the views held by the Professor are correct and are held by them. It is one thing to object to a certain form of libel, quite another thing to believe that no libel at all should be sustained. Whatever views may be held on the subject, by the minority, neither the debate nor the vote would fasten those of Professor Campbell on them.

### American Seminaries.

IT cannot be said that the theological seminaries in connection with the Presbyterian Church in the United States have profited greatly by the advanced views taught in some of them. Only a short time ago it was announced that there was a remarkable desertion from Union Seminary, where Dr. Briggs was supposed to be entrenched in the esteem and confidence of the eastern section of the Church, and now the cry of distress comes from Lane in the west, a Seminary which, according to Prof. E. D. Morris, who is in charge of it, will be closed for lack of students unless friends come to its aid. It will be remembered that it was of this seminary Rev. H. Preserved Smith was a professor. The authorities of these two institutions hesitated to bow to the authority of the Church in the matter of retaining the discredited professors and the consequence is as above stated. Indeed the case of Lane is so very serious that Professor Morris has issued the following circular which discloses the state of affairs:—"Since the adjournment of the last Assembly, the Board of Education has sent out a private circular to the students under its care in this institution, and also to all Seniors under its care in colleges, and to the chairmen of the Committees on Education in the Presbyteries, informing them that no one studying in Lane will be granted any financial aid from the Board. Whatever may be the design of this action (of which I have learned but very recently), its practical effect must be the enforced closing of this seminary for lack of students, inasmuch as a very large proportion of the students here are persons aided through this Board. I do not propose to discuss this extraordinary action at present, though I have very strong convictions respecting it. I desire now simply to say publicly what I would have preferred to say privately, especially to the Seniors in colleges to whom this warning has come (whose names I have not been allowed to know), that they need not be deterred by this warning from coming to Lane Seminary, if such is their personal desire. I can assure them of a cordial Christian welcome, and of as much financial assistance as they would be entitled to receive in any other seminary of our Church. I desire also to say to the generous friends of Lane, near and far, that considerable help will be needed during the coming year in carrying out the pledge here given. Some of these friends have already assured me that, seeing that the Board of Education has relieved itself by this action from all responsibility for students here, and is therefore to this extent in less need of funds, they will send their contribu-