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Manager and Editor.

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, SEPT., 23, 1908

A couple of weeks ago we received from the author, Rev. Allen Leslie Howard, Kemptville, a neatly printed booklet of 130 pages, containing "Seven Thousand Facts About Temperance." The varied information contained in this little volume has evidently been carefully compiled, and will prove of inestimable value to the speaker and writer on temperance topics, as well as containing for the ordinary reader, a treasury of information on the Temperance question not obtainable in any other quarter. The price is only 25 cents.

There is a class of persons who constantly boast, as if it were a virtue, "I always speak my mind." Some one, denying the advisability of so much unnecessary frankness, says the person who would really speak out everything in his mind would be apt to be knocked down half-a-dozen times before he reached his down town office. There is such a thing as speaking the truth in love, as fitting opportunity offers, but brutality of utterance never helped the heart of any one. Akin to those who "always speak their minds" are those who flatter themselves that friendship authorizes them to say disagreeable things to their intimates.

The careful householder, as well as the prudent church manager and school trustee, will thank us for directing their attention to the Kelsey Air System, for the economical and efficient heating of homes, schools and churches. The Kelsey heater is not on trial. It has been in successful operation for several years, and has proved itself first-class in every particular. Enquiries should be addressed to the James Smart Manufacturing Company, Brockville, which has already turned out some 30,000 of these unrivalled furnaces. Confidence in the "Kelsey" will not be lessened when we tell readers of the Dominion Presbyterian that the president of the company is Mr. J. M. Gill, the well-known elder of the First Presbyterian Church, Brockville.

CRITICISM AND FAITH.*

These two volumes show the efforts that are now made to bring before the rank and file of the members of the Church the results of the scholarly investigation to which the Scriptures have been subjected during the past century. Dr. Monro Gibson is a preacher and pastor who has always valued high class expository work in the pulpit; Dr. A. Duff is a professor, a specialist in old Testament criticism who has kept himself in sympathy with the pulpit and in close touch with the people; hence the two volumes, while quite different in their handling of the common theme have one purpose and are moved by a similar spirit. The professor belongs to the "advanced" wing and he candidly tells us that we must always be advancing; the preacher, on the other hand, feels that we must not go too fast and that care must be taken to prove to the people that the result of reverent criticism is such that those who love the Bible do not suffer loss, but rather make real gains for head and heart. Dr. Gibson's book is published under the auspices of the Free Church Council, and is apologetic in the best sense of the word, as it comes from a man who has a faith that is strong enough to look facts in the face. This is well expressed in the closing words, "And when I hear of these old difficulties marshalled for the thousandth time, with the expectation of destroying our faith in Christ, I think of my little grandchild of eighteen months, who, having been taught by her father to blow out first a match and then a candle, made her next attempt on the orb of day, on an afternoon with just enough fog to make it possible for her to look straight at its great red ball. The dear child tried it again and again and again, and the sun is shining yet."

Very good! but we have also to admit, as the author does elsewhere, that the people who would put their little match in the place of the sun are just as foolish in their conduct and sometimes do as much harm as those who try in vain to blow out the sun. Dr. Gibson's style is always clear and strong; it is that of a man who appreciates literary form, but who is thinking of the real substance and spirit of his message. We are sorry that we cannot say the same for Principal Forsyth, who contributes an Introduction; he is so much of a mere stylist that his style may sometimes, without injustice, be called "decadent." For example, what can the average man make of this statement? "The mere hierophants only gather groups, and strike flashes; they vary between pathos and bathos; they are not equal to the needs of a great Church and the public it faces." Writing of that kind makes one think that there is a tremendous attempt at cleverness with most disastrous results. In the body of the book, as we have said, it is different. Dr. Gibson is content to put great ques-

tions plainly without straining after effect. Most interesting, especially to young preachers, is the place (page 7) where the author tells how he was driven or rather led into a larger view of inspiration, and the influence of Browning, Bruce and others that favored the movement in that direction is mentioned. Speaking of "Saul" he says: "For me, the reading of that poem put an end to the old mechanical, unnatural view of inspiration which reduces the sacred writers to mere amanuenses." A very good example of the power of poetry to soften dogma and bring back the Bible to its real position as living literature. It is not Dr. Gibson's purpose to enter into details of criticism, but he makes it quite clear that he accepts without reservation the principle of development or the progressiveness of revelation which is so abundantly illustrated by all careful criticism; or in his own words, the Old Testament contains the story of Divine discipline through a long history (p. 68). It would be well if the great body of the people would take a deeper interest in such questions, and turn away from the extreme orthodoxy of the letter to a position that is both more reverent and more intelligent, the position represented here that faith in revelation is richer when freed from the old slavish literalism.

When we turn to Dr. Duff's book, under the modest title of "Hints," we have information, suggestions and conjectures that will be startling to many readers; it will shake them up and will make them think, but it will, we hope, make them feel that there is no need to be alarmed. Dr. Duff has been working long in the region of Old Testament criticism, but he is by no means of the dry as dust kind; he keeps his youthful enthusiasm and is a man of fine spiritual feeling. This book consists of articles that appeared in the Christian Commonwealth and on the whole the sympathy of the author is with the New Theology, but he feels that we still have much to learn from the theology of the oldest times. He rejoices in the fact that in the distant days before Israel came into existence God was speaking to reverent souls in Babylonia. If we had space for such criticism we might point out several statements that demand pretty full discussion; we need then to remember that in a small volume of "Hints" many things are presented as the author's opinion, which can by no means be regarded as settled. But we must say that the spirit of this book is living and healthful, and that one of its chief recommendations is that it will provide thought and quicken in the reader the desire to examine more fully some of these important matters. From these two volumes any thoughtful reader will receive real help and will learn that the Bible is a book of ever increasing interest and power. Dr. Duff's small volume is provokingly suggestive; it raises a great variety of important questions and must lead those who read it to look more fully into the interesting question of Israel's origin and history, and the way in which his prophets and wise men prepared for Christianity and left us such a noble heritage of truth.

*The Inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture, by J. Monro Gibson, M.A., LL.D. (London: National Council of Evangelical Free Churches) Hints on Old Testament Theology, by Archibald Duff, M.A., LL.D. (London: A. and C. Black).