

still the contract is dissolved. How the change of conviction is to be declared, may be a matter of judgment, the orderly method would be to approach the brethren in the Church courts; but should a man deem the public press or platform the proper medium, we will not demur, only here we do protest against the cry of intolerance being raised when the utterance is noticed, and the brother asked to explain before the brethren to whom in his ordination covenant he promised subjection in the Lord. We disavow even in the remotest sense sympathy with a heresy hunt. We believe that a broad Christian sympathy pervades our working Canadian Church, we do not fear even in the near or distant future serious divergence in our own ranks; but our continued peace, in view of the distracted state of our brethren across the line, depends upon the recognition, both by those who avow a desire for a broader liberty, and by those who would jealously conserve our inherited faith and traditions, of mutual obligations and mutual regard, and in following after things that make for peace and things whereby we may edify one another. A proper respect for honest convictions will forbid all imputation of unworthy motives and all pugnacity in meeting the many questions of the day about which, just now great diversity of opinion exists. Above all standards is our Christ, and a readiness to learn at his feet will keep all in a right mind and in the right way.

CODEX BEZAE.

Of the ancient manuscripts depended on by critics for determining the text of the New Testament, five stand forth as principals. The Sinaitic discovered by Tischendorf in the St. Catherine Convent at Sinai in 1844, and now in the Royal library at St. Petersburg; the Alexandrine, sent by the Patriarch of Constantinople as a gift to Charles I., and now in the British Museum; the Vatican Codex, the glory of the Papal library, and sharing, perhaps, with the Sinaitic, the honour of being the oldest vellum manuscript known; the Codex Ephraemi, a valuable palimpsest in the Royal Library of Paris; and the Beza manuscript, so-called from having been in the possession of that celebrated reformer, and by him presented to the Cambridge University, in whose library it now remains. Of this last, designated by the letter D, a critic has said that "its singularly corrupt text, in connection with its great antiquity, is a curious problem which cannot be easily solved." Of this perplexing witness to an early text of our Gospel and of the Acts, we purpose to treat in simple language for the benefit of thoughtful but busy readers.

The time in which these manuscripts were written may be stated thus: The Vatican and Sinaitic about the middle of the fourth century A. D., the Alexandrine somewhere during the fifth, the Ephraem palimpsest a little later than the Alexandrine, and the Beza about the early part of the sixth century. There is, however, great reason to believe that our Codex D. represents a very old text which may be traced in versions such as the old Latin and Syriac back to the middle of the second century, and it is this fact, together with its bold and frequent departures from the text as presented by the other manuscripts, that gives surpassing importance to its testimony. This codex is bilingual, having a Greek text and a Latin version on opposite pages, and it is still a moot case whether the Greek text has been made to conform to the Latin version, or vice versa. We shall notice first some suggestive additions made to the generally received text; the one first given, wholly unsupported by any other authority, and yet, as Alford held, representing in all probability a current tradition. After Luke vi. 4 is added:—"The same day he beheld a man working on the Sabbath, and said to him: 'Man, if thou knowest what thou art doing, blessed art thou; but if thou knowest not thou art cursed and a transgressor of the law.'" The Philoxenian version,

the most slavishly literal of all the old Syriac versions supports D in a reading we could wish genuine, it adds to Acts viii. 24, "who weeping bitterly did not leave." We shall have occasion to notice others ere we close. These may suffice as examples of the boldness with which D asserts its independence of our other known texts.

The Cambridge University press is issuing a series of studies bearing critically upon Biblical and Patristic literature, and Prof. J. Rendell Harris, M. A., contributes one on this Codex Bezae. The study is far too technical and minute for general reading, as one must at once realize, but some of its indications are of such interest that a general statement of some conclusions tentatively put forth can but be acceptable. Mr. Harris characterizes the text as "showing in some passages an accuracy of transcription which is quite exceptional; in others, a laxity of reading which is simply appalling," a statement in which all critics have substantially concurred, and should any true explanation be found for these very ancient vagaries of text, much further strength will be given to reverent Biblical research.

With the manuscript is a statement in Baza's own handwriting to the effect that he obtained the volume from the monastery of St. Irenaeus at Lyons where civil war had arisen. It may be presumed that it formed part of the plunder when the abbey was sacked, many linguistic peculiarities detailed by Mr. Harris point to the conclusion that its origin was near to, if not in the city from whence it had been obtained; there are "words in the Latin text which belong not merely to the Vulgar Latin as distinguished from the classical speech, but to those forms supposed to be characteristic of southern Gaul." This fact has been in some measure used to fix the date of the writing, not later certainly than the sixth century.

Instances are also given, too many to admit the supposition of accident, in which the Greek and Latin corresponding lines have been so arranged as to show a numerical verbal equality, e. g. in Luke xv. 28 the Greek word (parakalein) "to entreat" following the verb "began" has been dropped from the line, though the corresponding verb, rogabat, in the Latin presupposes it in the copy; thus the two lines are made of equal length. In other instances the Latin text has been plainly shortened to suit the Greek lines; here texts are altered to suit the eye and ear.

But the most striking theory regarding some of the singular readings of this bilingual manuscript is the statement that at a very early period the leading facts of the Gospel were put into verse "by using the language of Homer and translating into this speech the records of the miracles and passion of our Lord. These curious patchworks of verses and half verses of Homer were known by the name of Homerokentrones." These centrones were known in Greek literature, and appear to have been constructed in early Christian days for instruction in the Gospel. Mr. Harris traces an example of the influence of this custom upon the text of the Beza Codex in a singular addition found in Luke xxiii. 53, "and placed over it a stone which scarcely twenty men could move." The Latin text forms an hexameter verse, and the Greek text suggests even to so conservative and candid a critic as Scrivener a borrowing from the Odyssey, where the stone which Polyphemus rolled to the mouth of the cave in which Ulysses and his companions were imprisoned as so great, that two and twenty waggons would not be able to stir it. Mr. Harris thinks that other instances of Homerocentrones may be traced. These peculiarities may suggest great untrustworthiness in this witness to the early text, but more thorough consideration forbids its dismissal. Not only are many of its peculiarities supported by the older Syriac and Latin versions, but it would appear to represent the text used by Irenaeus, and therefore not to be lightly esteemed. D cannot be left out of the question, or even deposed from its position among the five most important codices the critic has at command, and we

with interest look for further researches in this field with their fuller light. Meantime, ere we close, a few considerations may be suggested.

It is growingly manifest that even in the time of Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp, who had conversed with John and others who had seen Jesus, there were variations in the text as perplexing then as now. This is evident from an enquiry of Irenaeus as to the correct reading of Rev. xiii. 18. Was the number 666 or 616; and his only method of determining was by comparing copies. Indeed it may be affirmed, that with the means at our command to-day, we have equal if not superior material for which to determine the text of the N.T. than even the Bishop of Lyons. There is no cause for anxiety here, only care and candour. But these variations press reflections which have practical value. The gospel was preached before it assumed a written form—Luke's preface to his gospel implies that obvious fact—Even as to-day in heathendom, before the translation of Scripture into the native tongue, the message is given, and its spirit not its letter is and was the great care. It has been again and again asserted, not more often than truly, that in no case do variations in the text affect the substance of evangelical truth, they do press the truth, however, which the Master uttered "the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life" and which Paul declared that "the latter killeth but the spirit giveth life." In the growing appreciation of this truth we shall step out into a broader liberty and sympathy than our exclusive denominational traditions or philosophical theologies allow, and enter into the realization of that greater fellowship which is found in Him who is "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."

REV. DR. LANGTRY ON PRESBYTERIANISM.

This reverend gentleman has been informing the good people of Canada as to the invalidity of Presbyterian ordination, and the priceless value of apostolic-episcopal succession. Ancient and modern history has been ransacked to prove that the Presbyterian Church is a self-made body, and that many of its founders were wicked and cruel men; whereas the Episcopal Church is of divine appointment, and its bishops and priests have been free from any of the wickedness and cruelty which have characterized other denominations.

As one who cares little or nothing about the historical or polemic view of the subject, but has been taught to believe that the evidence of a divine calling to or fitness for the sacred office of a clergyman, is to be looked for in the character and life of the minister himself, and upon his influence for good in the society around him, I found a refreshing antidote to the reverend doctor's fulminations, in Scribner's Magazine for April. Among the unpublished letters of Dr. Carlyle, found in that number, is one, dated London, 19th Dec., 1834, addressed to D. Hope, Esq. In writing about Adam Hope, Rector of Annan Academy, and also of old Mr. Johnstone, Dr. Carlyle says:—"I often speak of both these men; declare again and again that Adam's history is legible to this day in the population of Annan; the venerable John Johnstone, is my model of an apostolic priest; more priestlike in his humble simplicity than archbishops to me; and more honored, too, for I have seen the Cuddy lane population (most brutal of the creatures of God) suspend their quarrelling and cursing till he had passed through them, and potent is goodness; the idea even in coarsest souls, that here is a good man. Had it been the Archbishop of Canterbury with all his gilt coach-panels, they would have thrown dead cats at him. I have often told this to the amazement of the shovel-hatted."

A footnote says:—Rev. John Johnstone, minister at Ecclefechan, Annandale, and father of Rev. J. Johnstone, for many years minister of a Presbyterian church, Jersey City.

I think that most people will attach more weight to Dr. Carlyle's idea of the evidence of ministerial usefulness, than to Dr. Langtry's. R. H. L.

Books and Magazines

The Presbyterian and Reformed Review for April is on our desk, freighted as usual with weighty and conservative teachings. Two articles on Inspiration show the prevailing interest in that vital subject, and a suggestive review of some prevalent defects in preaching the gospel to-day is worthy of close attention.

The Canadian Magazine for May contains several papers of considerable merit. Among the contributors may be found Mr. W. Hamilton Merritt, who writes instructively on "Let us Smelt our own Steel;" Dr. P. H. Bryce, who furnishes a readable paper on "Is Cholera Coming?" and Mr. A. H. F. Lefroy who tells us of "British Hopes and Dangers." Of lighter topics there are several. Fanny Harwood gives the reader many pleasant "Glimpses of Bermuda;" Mr. Henry Lyles tells entertainingly another of the series of "Tales of Wayside Inns;" and there are three poems—the best being The Song of the Toiler, by our old contributor, Mr. W. T. Tassie. The illustrations are not of a very high order. Altogether the Canadian gives promise of a vigorous future.

Harper's Monthly for May opens with a descriptive paper on "The Evolution of New York" by Thomas A. Janyler which is quaintly and beautifully illustrated by Howard Pyle, whose frontispiece "Along the Canal in old Manhattan," is simply delightful. Then Harper's pays tribute to Chicago in "A Dream City," from the pen of Candace Wheeler. Professor Norton has an appreciation of Lowell; Brander Matthews a clever, short story entitled "Etelka Talmeyr: A tale of three Cities;" H. L. Nelson, a pessimistic paper on Quebec Province; "Love's Labour Lost" is well illustrated by Abbey and commented on by Lang, and Colorado is described by Julian Ralph; M. De Blowitz writes on "The French Scare of '75, and Rev. Arthur Brooks on Phillips' Brooks. The serials are well sustained, and of poems there is one and that an old one, far afield, though of course good, by T. B. Aldrich.

The May number of the Methodist Magazine opens with a most interesting contribution entitled "Tent Life in Palestine" from the pen of the editor, Mrs. L. A. Des Brisay is the author of a sonnet which shows real beauty of expression and emotional force. "The Conflict for a Continent" is the title of a very able paper by Dr. Withrow which no reader of this number should pass by. Speaking of the struggle between the French and English-speaking races, the writer observes: "This was a conflict, not merely between hostile people, but between Democracy and Feudalism, between Catholic superstition and Protestant liberty. The issue at stake was whether mediaeval institutions, the principles of military absolutism, and the teachings of Gallican clericalism should dominate, or whether the evolution of civil and religious liberty of free thought, free speech, a free press, and the universal genius of free institutions, should find a field for their development, as wide as the continent." Julia MacNair Wright continues "The Life Cruise of Captain Bess Adams" which loses none of its interest in this number.

Sunday Afternoon Addresses, Published by the Students, Queen's University, Kingston. This series of ten addresses has more than passing interest. The addresses of Professors Campbell and Watson, show Canadian scholarship in Theological studies fully abreast to these stirring times. We have commented elsewhere on the former, Dr. Watson on Ecclesiastes is equally suggestive. The composition of the book is placed towards the end of the Persian domination, say B. C. 350. It is characterized as the saddest book in the Bible, though its conception of life, sad as it is, is an advance upon superficial optimism, and its study in the light of Christianity ought to teach us amid all difficulties. "God is in His heaven, all's right with the world."

The fine spiritual vein in Principal Caven's opening address is well complimented by the closing one on considering the spirit in which the outgoing students should enquire "what thou wilt do?" the venerable Dr. Williamson has ever the student's ear and heart; the earnest appeal for union of the Church of Christ by the Principal ought not to be unheeded in the wider sphere to which these published addresses minister, and Mr. Gandler's "Motives to Missionary work" is worth more than a mere reading; but we cannot further particularize, the collection is as suggestive as it is varied. Queen's is to be congratulated.