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THE LATE PRINCIPAL DYKES

By W. G. Jordan.

Dr. Oswald Dykes was not merely a leading minister in the Presbyterian Church of England, he belonged to the church at large; he was a worthy representative of the best traditions of the Scottish church, in regard to his scholarship, style of preaching and general ministerial character. Though it was only on rare occasions that I had the privilege of meeting Dr. Dykes, he was a man for whom I cherished an intense reverence. I owe him thanks for personal help given to me at the time I determined to come to Canada. In his treatment of the case he showed that he could cut the knots of "red tape" if that operation was desirable. But the reverence I speak of was kindled before there was any cause for personal gratitude. It was stirred by the strong, noble way in which the man presented the essential elements of Christianity and by the combination of courage and caution in his handling of important affairs. I am not prepared to give even a brief biography, but in such a journal as the Westminster Hall Magazine a few reminiscences on such a theme may not be out of place. That must be my excuse for the personal tone of this short article.

There will always be discussion as to the best method of delivering the sermon. The chief thing, of course, is to have something to say—a living message with the truth of God in it that men need and will welcome. Personally, I think that our young men should be able, after

careful preparation, to SPEAK in the pulpit. But in this connection I want simply to record the fact that Dr. Dykes was one of the few men whom I have heard READ who made me wish that I could use that method of pulpit discourse. There was evidence of the greatest care in preparation. To use Dr. Milligan's phrase, the preacher was really ready for "the event of the week." The message was significant, and it was presented in language that was at the same time noble and dignified. One could never imagine Dr. Dykes using "slang" in the pulpit, and one would have no desire for any such spice, as for such a man the English language in its simplicity and beauty was a noble organ of expression.

Some conception of this may be gained from the books which came from his pen, but in reading the last one especially—a work on Pastoral Theology—we feel that even a good book does not do full justice to its author. More than a quarter of a century ago I heard him speak on "Minor Ministerial Etiquette." That was the subject if not the exact title. A small subject one would say, and yet it gained a largeness and dignity from the method of treatment and the strength of the speaker.

For seventeen years he filled the historic pulpit in Regent Square, the church built for Edward Irving, and made it a centre of noble spiritual influence. In those days he saw the signs of the times and worked for the