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Contributors and Correspondents

THE LATE REV. ARCHIBALD HENDERSON, M.A.

BY REV. D. PATTERSON, M.A.

No. II

Mr. Henderson lived on terms of intimacy with some of the clergy of the established Church, of whose character and evangelical sentiments he had a high opinion, and was invited repeatedly to the annual dinner of the Dean and Chapter; courtesy which we do not suppose would find its parallel in many cathedral cities in the present day. The Dean who was so kindly was the excellent Dr. Isaac Milner, a continuator of his brother Joseph's story of the Church. He was also Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, where seated in the chair which had been occupied by two famous namesakes, Isaac Barrow and Isaac Newton; whence the Cantabrigians dignified him with the title of Isaac III. It was in connection with him, I think, that we have heard our venerable and relate one of the finest rebukes ever addressed to proud ignorance. Dr. Milner preached often on regeneration, a doctrine very unfashionable at that time, and of which he shared in the ridicule which was liberally cast on the evangelists. On one occasion a clergyman of the opposite school was walking along the street with a friend, when, seeing Dr. Milner passing on the other side, he exclaimed, "there is old Born-again!" An aged hucksterman, to whom things hidden from the wise and prudent had been revealed, hearing the words, turned towards him and asked, "Art thou a master of Israel and knowest not these things?"

While in this city, Mr. H. received a visit from Dr. Chalmers, whom he had known at St. Andrews, and who was passing through Carlisle on his way to London. He was struck with the manner and conversation of Chalmers, in which there was seriousness which surprised him, but which he understood soon after, when he heard of the great change which had taken place in the spiritual life of that illustrious man. He had some correspondence with him after coming to this country, and received from him a copy of some of his works. He continued in Carlisle for nearly eight years, faithfully and laboriously doing the work of the ministry, and gaining the attachment of the people, with some of whom and their descendants he continued to correspond till the close of his life. Indeed strength of affection and sincerity of friendship were among his leading characteristics.

In the year 1817 application for ministers was made to the Associate, or Burgher, Presbytery of Edinburgh, from two places in Canada, Perth in Upper, and Argenteuil in Lower Canada. Mr. William Bell, a probationer, was appointed to the former, and the Rev. William Taylor of Falkirk, to the latter. Each of them received the promise of £100 a year—"in addition to what the settlers might give them"—from the British government, which was desirous of inducing people to settle in this country. Mr. Taylor did not come to Argenteuil, but turned aside to Osnaburgh. Accordingly a second petition was sent to the same Presbytery, the result of which was that Mr. Henderson was persuaded by Dr. Hall of Edinburgh, a leading member of that Presbytery, to accept the invitation of the people of Argenteuil and resign his charge at Carlisle. The Presbytery then applied to the government, through the Lord advocate, to have the salary that had been promised to Mr. Taylor transferred to Mr. Henderson, and their request was granted. The voluntary controversy had not then been raised in Scotland. The lion was slumbering as yet, or only uttering occasionally a low growl. Dr. Marshall's Glasgow sermon had not been preached, nor had even Vinet written his essay on Liberty of Worship, which some (erroneously) represent as the seed from which voluntarism sprang. And so far were the brethren of the Edinburgh Presbytery from doing anything considered out of the way that the Synod itself sanctioned Mr. H.'s mission, and gave him a grant of £20 to assist in defraying his expenses to Canada, besides lending him £30, which he duly repaid. This is important in view of subsequent events.

Mr. Henderson sailed from Greenock, the port of departure also to many of his St. Andrew's congregation. This town was interested with a peculiar interest in the eyes of the emigrants of those days, not only from the beauty of its situation, nestling as it does in the bosom of an amphitheatre of heathery hills, with the Frith of Clyde spread out before it, in what seems a landlocked basin (resembling, it is said the Sea

of Galilee in size and outline); while right opposite, rise the mountains of Dunbartonshire, with the "lofty Benlomond" towering over all. It lies just above the point where the estuary suddenly turns at a right angle towards the south, ("Greenock, where Clyde to the ocean is sweeping."—Scott), and widens rapidly onwards, past Bute and Arran, and Ailsa Craig, till it loses itself in the North Channel. Altogether it is, even to strangers, one of the most beautiful parts of that romantic land. Not only then on this account, but chiefly as being the last spot of Scottish soil on which their feet were privileged to tread, ere embarking on a long and often dangerous voyage, sometimes of three and four months' duration, so many Canadian colonials look back to that town with a fond remembrance. It was so with Mr. Henderson, who enjoyed there, for a few days, the hospitality of the Rev. Wm. Wilson, (of musical fame in anecdotal literature) and often spoke of him, and of the Shearer family.

He sailed about the end of May, with his family, consisting of his wife, a daughter of the Rev. Mr. Morton, of Leslie, and three young children; and landed at Quebec after a voyage of about two months. He carried with him a letter of introduction from Lord Bathurst the Colonial secretary, to the Governor-General, Sir J. C. Sherbrooke, by whom he was kindly received. On reaching Montreal, by steamer, he left his family there till he should go to Argenteuil and make arrangements for settlement. During his absence one of his children sickened and died, the forerunner of sad bereavements yet to come, which were to leave him desolate in the country of his sojourning, where his first possession, like that of Abraham, was a possession of a burying place.

He fixed his residence in the village of St. Andrew's, then consisting of a few houses only, but expecting to become a place of importance, both from the amenity of its situation, and the excellence of the water privilege furnished by the North River, which flows through it. The latter advantage, at least the greater part of it, from various causes, awaits the use of some wise and fortunate man.

The district was in much need of Gospel ordinances, no minister having ever been settled in it. An Episcopal minister used to come from some distance and preach once a fortnight, while the lack of Presbyterian worship was attempted to be supplied by a worthy man, of the name of Cameron, who was wont to exhort the people, and whose doctrines, are still distinguished by the cognomen of "the minister." There was now, however, an abundance of clerical provision, for on the same day with Mr. H. and in the same place—a school-house—a minister of the Church of England began his labors. This gentleman afterwards published an account of his work in Canada under the pseudonym of "Philip Musgrave," in a book written in a graphic style, as entertaining as a novel, and partaking largely of that character. It still circulates in Murray's Home and Colonial Library, and is doubtless enjoyed by its readers as an authentic narrative of missionary labors.

Our missionary had a large field before him. He was the only minister of the Presbyterian Church on the North side of the Ottawa; but he confined himself, according to the terms of his appointment, to the Seigneurie, now the County—of Argenteuil, and laboured diligently in his work. Besides St. Andrews he preached regularly at Lachute, where he established a temperance society, and at Chatham, places six or seven miles distant, and in other parts of the surrounding region, where a few farmers, chiefly Scotch Highlanders, had settled down. The country was covered with forest, and the roads were mere bridle paths through the bush, sometimes beset with wolves and bears. A stone church, solid but very plain, was erected at St. Andrews in 1821, which still stands strong. After some years a church was built at Lachute, and a minister, the late Mr. Bunton, obtained, and in 1844 a second, the congregation having divided, and the separating branch joining the Free Church. At Chatham also a church was put up, in connection with the Church of Scotland. The two unions have at length brought them

* Greenock, we may take the opportunity of recording, is noted not only for its ships and its sugar, but for learning also. No fewer than three of its sons lately occupied at the same time professorial chairs in the University of Glasgow, to wit the two Cairns and the late Duncan Blair, the Hebrewist; while a fourth has now been called by the United Presbyterian Church to fill the chair of Church History, in the person of Dr. Duff, our old friend, whose due scholarship and wit, and even his very appearance and gait, somewhat active, used to remind us irresistibly of Erasmus.

† It is at present being enlarged and beautified, and the venerable pastor, for whom it was first built, was spared to see the improvement commenced.

all into one Presbytery again, and the branches are healed.

Mr. Henderson's labors were henceforth devoted to St. Andrews and the immediate neighborhood. He preached occasionally also in Montreal, and was highly esteemed among the religious public of that city. He was particularly on intimate terms with the successive ministers of the American Presbyterian Church, the members of which cherished a strong sympathy with the Secession Church, to which they originally belonged. Especially did he enjoy the brief neighborhood of Mr. Christmas, that McCheyne-like man, whom he never ceased to remember with the most tender affection, and whose early death he mourned as "great loss to the Church of Christ."

(To be continued.)

[Of several misprints in the former article, will the reader kindly correct the following, viz: Column 1, line 6, for "Johnston" read Johnson; Column 2, line 35, for "Elen" read Glen; Column 2, line 67, for "Rudarnie" read Radarnie; Column 2, line 72-3, for "following" read follow; Column 3, line 7, for "but" read had; Passim for "seceders" read Seceders.]

PROFESSOR SMITH OF ABERDEEN.

MR. EDITOR.—I have not the least doubt that the respected contributor of the recent series of articles on Professor Smith's article in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," was actuated, as he says, by a genuine zeal for truth, which is the more to be approved because the author of the article he criticises belongs to that portion of the Presbyterian Church with which he may be supposed to have a more special sympathy. Yet while respecting his impartial zeal for truth, I must say I have observed with no little surprise the course he has pursued in bringing before the readers of your journal the contents of an article which very few of them were ever likely to have met with in the ordinary course of things, as he himself admitted, and in perplexing simple-minded readers of the Bible with complicated and difficult questions of Biblical criticism, which it requires a special education and training even to comprehend. Even if your contributor himself fully understood Prof. Smith's position in that article, which I venture to think he does not, few will read his strictures with sufficient patience and care to have anything more than a confused impression that "doctors differ" in regard to the truth and inspiration of the Bible; whereas it is not that question at all which is involved, but simply questions as to the individual authorship and literary history of the various books. Papers on such questions dealing with critical difficulties with which the great mass of readers need never be troubled, and on which they are not competent to decide, would surely have been more in place in the pages of a theological review; and the learned gentlemen whose attention your contributor wished to draw towards the article in question, would hardly require, one would think, to have so notable an article commended to their notice.

Moreover, I humbly submit that the free use of harsh, exaggerated, or sarcastic expressions is not calculated to advance or commend the truth, especially as it is apt to suggest—justly or not—deficiency of more legitimate weapons. And I am certainly at a loss to reconcile your contributor's references to Prof. Smith in his last paper, with the terms of reproach which abound in his other articles.

Even the adjective "youthful" is brought in with such unnecessary frequency as to seem another count against him in his critic's mind, though I suppose that Professor Smith must be at least some years older than was Calvin when he wrote his "Institutes." I do not suppose that your worthy contributor was aware of the seeming asperity of tone that characterized his articles, and feel sure that it is more seeming than real. But would it not be in every way better that questions on which good men differ should be calmly discussed without personal references at all, and that even error when it has to be exposed should be met simply by sound argument without recurring to unedifying "personalities."

However, I did not write so much with the intention of criticising a criticism, though this is fair enough; as in order to submit to your readers the following statement regarding Prof. Smith's article, prepared and signed by fifty-nine ministers, forty-nine elders, twenty-six deacons and four lay members of the Free Church of Scotland. The date, Jan. 5th, 1877, is previous to the publication of the Report of the College Committee. And I may here notice that that report, instead of containing any of the "Presbyterian"

thunder which we have had invoked on the head of the "youthful professor," is exceedingly mild and cautious in its tone, and distinctly asserts that the article in question contains no ground "sufficient to support a process of heresy," and also that "the Committee are not prepared to say that Professor Smith's views infer a denial on his part, either directly or constructively, of the doctrine, that in the books of the Old and New Testaments the revelation of God and the declaration of His will are committed wholly unto writing; and that they are all given by inspiration of God to be the only rule of life."

The "statement" which follows is signed, among others, by the R. v. Hugh MacMillan, LL.D., Glasgow; Rev. W. C. Smith, D.D., LL.D., Edinburgh; Rev. A. B. Bruce, D.D., Glasgow; Rev. Dr. Lindsay, Glasgow; Rev. David Somerville, Dundee, etc., etc. As will be observed, its aim is to deprecate all hasty and premature condemnation.

The undersigned office-bearers of the Free Church, being deeply interested in the questions raised in connection with Professor Smith's article on the Bible in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," recently published, concerned as to the issue of ecclesiastical proceedings in reference thereto, and animated by a sense of respect for Professor Smith's personal character and scholarly attainments, feel constrained to make public the following statement, setting forth the view which they take of an important business which for some time past has been occupying the attention of the Church.

In taking this step they have no desire to interfere with or unduly influence those whose duty it is to deal authoritatively with the matter. Their sole wish is to prevent the raising in the Church of a panic which, in their judgment, would be prejudicial, not only to Professor Smith personally, but to the still more important interests of the Church and of the truth. Any legitimate line of action having this object in view will not be deemed superfluous when it is recollected that several pamphlets have appeared, written by ministers of the Free Church, fitted to produce alarm in reference to the character and tendency of Professor Smith's views, and that an effort was made at the meeting of Commission in November last to induce the reverend Court to appoint a special meeting for the consideration of Professor Smith's opinions—a proposal which could not fail to produce the impression that a great and serious emergency had arisen. The subscribers are not to be understood as holding Professor Smith's opinion regarding the literary history of the Old Testament books, nor as indiscriminate partisans who have no other object in view than to screen him from Church censures. Many of them have hitherto been content to entertain the views generally received in this country on such topics, though few of them can pretend to have made the special studies necessary to entitle any one to speak with much confidence on the special points in dispute. On the only point dealt with by Professor Smith which appears to them of serious moment—the age and authority of the Pentateuch or portions thereof—many of them are in favor of the Mosaic authorship, and are somewhat doubtful as to the bearings of Professor Smith's views on some important questions—e.g., the value of portions of the Pentateuch as a source of historical information—and greatly desiderate fuller discussion of the subject in these latter respects. But while this is the position of many of the subscribers, so far as personal opinion is concerned they are unanimous in the conviction that the Church—not merely the Free Church, but the Christian Church generally—should proceed with great caution in dealing with this class of questions, and should carefully abstain, as the Westminster Confession markedly does, from any unnecessary dogmatism in reference to the literary history of the Scriptures, and from hastily inferring as to the bearing of such views as these advocated by Professor Smith on the historical worth, authority, and inspiration of the sacred Scriptures. In their judgment the safe and truly conservative line of procedure is not to pronounce too confidently and hastily that such views are false and dangerous, but to endeavour to show how the great doctrines concerning Holy Scripture which the Church is concerned to defend can be maintained independently thereof, and meanwhile to suspend judgment on questions relating to the literary history of the Bible, and leave them to the ordinary course of discussion. They believe that such a suspension of judgment would be more dignified than premature dogmatism, would not compromise the position of the Church as believing in a Divine revelation and in the authority of Scripture, and would be more in accordance with the actual state of information; and they feel that what is most needed at present is not judicial decisions, but further free discussion, tending to bring out the doctrinal bearings of the questions involved, and make these better understood than they are now. The subscribers desire, further, to say that they should greatly deprecate anything being done or said by any parties or in any quarrel fitted to damage the reputation and usefulness of Professor Smith. A mode of dealing with the case which would make him an object of suspicion as a man holding unsound views on the authority and inspiration of the Holy Scripture, or weaken his influence as a teacher, appears to them so undesirable that they would greatly prefer that those who feel inclined to pursue such a course would frame a libel against him, whereby the accused would have reserved his full rights, and the duty would be imposed upon his accusers of speaking

and writing with judicial calmness, candour, and care.

Jan. 8, 1877.

As another rather striking instance of difference of opinion between leading ministers of the Free Church of Scotland and representatives of the former C. P. Church here, permit me also to append the following printed extract of a letter which appeared some time ago in a widely circulated Canadian journal, but has never, I think, appeared in your columns. It was written some time last spring, and bears upon a case which at that time excited much interest in Britain as well as in Canada. The writer is the Rev. Donald Fraser, D.D., of London, England, formerly well-known as a Canadian Free Church minister, and son of another minister, well-known, also, in Canada. He is now, as almost every one knows, one of the most distinguished ministers of the English Presbyterian Church, after having been long a successful minister of the Scottish Free Church at Inverness. It is hardly necessary to add that his opinion is entitled to all esteem, and that his "orthodoxy" has never been questioned. The following are his own words:

"The pertinacity exhibited by the Presbytery of Toronto in the Macdonnell case seems to me very injudicious. He has gone a long way to meet the brethren and should not be pressed further. It is plain to me that the eschatological portion of the Confession of Faith is nothing to boast of, and all our best divines now are expressing themselves in much more guarded terms. I do not wish to meddle with what is not exactly my business, but I have as good means as most men of knowing what the leading Presbyterian ministers of Scotland and England think, and I am sure that it would meet with universal approval here if the Church Courts in Canada were to let this case drop, all that is essential to the vindication of truth and discipline having been gained. To drive Mr. Macdonnell out of the church on such small grounds as now appear would be an almost irreparable blunder. You may state my opinion to any one at your own discretion. It is all right to guard sound doctrine, but there seems to me to be a tendency to what a Frenchman would call doctrinarism which will give a hard aspect to the Presbyterian Church, and alienate a class of minds we can ill afford to lose."

I think it is as well that your readers should occasionally have the benefit of a British point of view, as well as a Canadian one, which is my apology for troubling you on the present occasion.

OBSERVER.

"Presbyterian Record" and "Sabbath School Lessons."

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—I am sorry to see in your paper a letter signed "Ignorance" under the above heading.

Ignorance takes exception (1) to the use of the idea conveyed by "the disobedience of love" as characteristic of the feeling which moved Elisha when he insisted on accompanying his Master.

(2) He takes exception to calling the destruction of the children a miracle of Elisha's. Is not this the veriest quibbling? Everybody knows that the miracle is God's, but, instrumentally, does not Elisha's curse stand to it as cause and effect.

(3) In connecting the fate of the children with the sins of the parents, Mr. Grant has but followed many able divines. It is worthy of notice that the Hebrew word while certainly used of lads or youths, is also used of little children. On the supposition that the "little children" were but reflecting the cruel lesson and example of their elders, the "Record's" exposition is not so far astray.

But, sir, Mr. Grant needs no defence from me. So long as the cardinal doctrines of our holy religion are not assailed, freedom and variety of interpretation are to be encouraged. The "Record's Commentaries" would be of poor service if they were simply copies of your excellent notes on the lessons. I find pleasure and profit in using both.

The spirit of the communication from "Ignorance" is to be regretted. The expression "by one Rev. Geo. M. Grant, M.A. (the italics are mine), and the general and evident effort to be sarcastic are painfully apparent.

While admitting the liberality which opens the columns of your excellent paper to all comers, and while not presuming to dictate to you as to the conduct of the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, I cannot help expressing my opinion that you would have exercised a sound discretion in refusing to insert such a causeless critique on the General Assembly, the "Record," and Mr. Grant. Yours, D.G.D.V.

WISHING will not make a prayer-meeting either interesting or instructive. Thought first and then action are needful. There must be planning, and the carrying out of the plan. Very little that is worth having comes to us unless some one has given it both thought and labor. Go at the problem yourself. Think first; then act.