

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

"BLASTING AT THE ROCK OF AGES"

FOR the past twenty years we have been sounding the Alarm against the infidel tendencies of the colleges and seminaries of Christendom. We have pointed out that Higher Criticism of the Bible and the Evolution Theory are taught in practically every institution of learning of higher grade than a Grammar School and that even in these the seeds of infidelity are being sown in the class books and studies, though not openly lectured upon.

In these twenty years we have counselled parents that it is better to give their children less education than to risk the complete wreck of their religious instincts and faith in God and the Bible. Our views were thought to be extreme and rarely heeded. Now parents are writing us of their sad mistake – that the faith of their children is irreparably lost, because they refuse to read the only thing which would enable them to regain the ground of faith lost, namely *The Divine Plan of the Ages*.

Finally, when the new manhood and womanhood have been thoroughly inoculated with the poison of infidelity others are awakening to the situation; as, for instance, Mr. Harold Bolce, who writes in the "Cosmopolitan," and Hon. S. H. Blake, who has started a good warfare in Canada.

We give below John Temple Graves' note of alarm. He says:

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Out of the curricula of American colleges a dynamic movement is upheaving ancient foundations and making an open way for a revolution in the thought and life of this people. Those

who are not in close touch with the great colleges of the country will be astonished, in most cases indignant, to learn the creeds that are being fostered by the strong men in the professors' chairs.

In hundreds of classrooms there is a scholarly repudiation of all solemn authority, and it is being taught daily that "the Decalogue is no more sacred than a syllabus"; that "the home as an institution is doomed"; that "there are no absolute evils"; that "immorality is simply an act in contravention of society's accepted standards"; that "democracy is a failure and the Declaration of Independence only spectacular rhetoric"; that "the change from one religion to another is like getting a new hat"; that "moral precepts are passing shibboleths"; that "conceptions of right and wrong are as unstable as styles of dress"; that "wide stairways are open between social levels, but that to the climber children are encumbrances"; that "the sole effect of prolificacy is to fill tiny graves," and that "*there can be and are holier alliances outside the marriage bond than within it!*"

Every quoted sentiment is from the spoken or written word of some one of the leading and famous professors of the great colleges.

And the colleges carrying such new and revolutionary creeds are not the minor schools, but those vaster seminaries such as Harvard, Yale, Princeton (shade of Jonathan Edwards behold it!), University of Pennsylvania, University of Chicago, Columbia, Syracuse, California, George Washington, William and Mary, Northwestern, the universities of New York, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Wisconsin, Cornell, Brown, Leland Stanford, Union, Nebraska and others.

In each of these great institutions some professor, neither infallible nor inspired, but a free thinker rioting in the mere license of opinion, and some, alas, hungering for the notoriety of the utterance, are flinging down daily doctrines like these, not to

strong and mature men capable of discrimination and accustomed to disputation, but speaking from responsible stations to youthful and undeveloped minds which are accustomed to receive what comes from the scholar in the chair of authority as the unchallenged gospel of the time.

"Meat for strong men and milk for babes," has no restraining influence upon the riot of opinion among these so-called professors of to-day. If these men really believe the monstrous conceptions which are stirring the age to unwholesome revolution against the doctrines of the ages, they should at least voice them first in serious councils of their peers, and submit them solemnly and primarily to an arena in which orthodoxy can fairly defend **[R4394 : page 147]** its Gibraltars and stand by its own.

But to strip every shred of reverence from the foot of thought – to march out before unfledged youth of either sex – to dissect God, and Religion and Home and Government as if they were mere fossils, or vertebrates or equations – to leave morals afloat upon inclination, and so unsettle standards of virtue that every youth might swing unsmitten of conscience from the classroom to the scarlet woman in the street – this is carrying liberty of thought to the rank license which makes the intellectual commune and presages the revolution which is the beginning of chaos.

The presidents of these great institutions, held in check by boards and councils, are not usually the voices of this amazing propaganda. But college professors, in the enjoyment of apparently too much liberty, and of rarely questioned responsibility, are sowing the seeds of these dangerous doctrines day by day in the minds of a quarter of a million of American young men and women who are going out to make the morals, the manners and the civilization of our country.

I protest the initial exploitation of these "doubtful disputations" upon the great body in whom all of us have such vital concern. I deny the right of teacher or professor [R4394 : page 148] to take such advantage of youth sent by orthodox parents to university halls.

I am neither preacher nor Puritan. I neither cavil nor cant. I am an ordinary man of the world, who, as unworthy as he is, keeps yet in reverence the old orthodox faith of his fathers, and I do not hesitate to say that if I had a son in one of these colleges, and I heard that such doctrines were being fed to him out of the irreverent lips of uninspired thinkers, I would put my hat on my head and walk up to the chancellor's office of that university and demand on behalf of my son, and of other sons of American citizens, that these intellectual banditti of the classroom should practise their license of opinion upon the sunrise clubs or the free thought societies to which they belong, or ought to belong, and to leave unstained to these tender minds those old honored and orthodox creeds by which American fathers and mothers for over a hundred years have led their children up to the honor of the American home and to the responsibility of the American citizen.

THE ORTHODOX STUDENT VS. THE ORTHODOX TEACHER

Under date of Toronto, March 29th, 1909, the Hon. H. S. Blake of Canada replies to a college student respecting the responsibility of college teachers for the spread of Infidelity amongst the people, under the specious name of "Higher Criticism," thus: –

My Dear Brother: – I have received and thought a great deal over your letter of the 19th inst....

I have not time to reply to all the letters that I have received containing complaints of the teaching given by those who "sit in Moses' seat," but have made the Word of God of none effect."

You will, therefore, excuse me if, while I deal with your difficulty, I also take up some other points that have been presented.

You ask my attention to one of the text-books which is prescribed for you in your course of study for the ministry, namely, "The Life of Christ," by Burton & Matthews (Constructive Studies); and you say as to this, "I have been impressed by the amount of what I consider 'Higher Criticism' that I find there." But this should not surprise you, for this book has the endorsement of "The University of Chicago," which University gives its imprimatur to a work of Professor G. B. Foster on "The Finality of the Christian Religion," in which it is declared at page 130 that to the scientific understanding of the world, and to the intellectual attitude super-induced by science, a miracle cannot be admitted; and again, at page 132, where the anti-supernaturalistic principle is not only admitted, but is paraded, and a man is said not to be a "modern" who does not admit it, Prof. Foster affirms, "An intelligent man who now affirms faith in such stories (miraculous narratives like the Bible) as actual facts can hardly know what intellectual honesty means."

So that you perceive from other books which have the authority of this University that the miracle of the resurrection of Jesus is not to be accepted. You may possibly in due course be led to this book, but in the meantime you refer to page 269 of the text-book, which you are obliged to study, where this comment on verse 33, of chapter XV. of the Gospel of St. Mark, is found: –

"And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour." On which the comment is: "Darkness; if taken literally, it was probably due to a storm of

sand...But probably the phrase in its origin is metaphorical." There is no more reason to think that this is metaphorical than that the fact of the crucifixion itself was a mere metaphor. Even as children, we learned that God hung the world in mourning when the creature crucified the Creator. It was fitting and proper that this should be done. Continue to believe it as God's miracle to call the attention of the world, at that time assembled in Jerusalem, to the depth of the crime committed. Second, you call attention to the belittling of the mode in which God called the attention of all to the fact that Jesus Christ was the new and living way into the Holy of Holies. It was intended to strike home to the mind of a Jew the great truth beyond any other means that could be presented. The Jew might well stand awe-struck at the rending of the heavy veil and the throwing open to the gaze of all that which for centuries was regarded as too sacred a place to be entered but once in the year, and that by the High Priest alone, and then not without blood.

To say that, "This rather than a physical fact is perhaps all that the words should be taken to mean," is without any warrant whatever. These two instances to which you refer are simply illustrations of the determination of those who are introducing the new Bible to drive away everything that savors of the miraculous.

Pay no attention to the statements of the Higher Critics "that certain words are *apparently* an addition to the original narrative, etc." He says it is "apparently" so to him. But in all such cases take my advice and thankfully accept the text that has stood for all these centuries rather than the suggestions of some new light....

It may be helpful to you to read this quotation from Wesley's preface to his explanatory notes of the Bible printed for the "Wesleyan Methodist Bookroom":

"Concerning the Scriptures in general, it may be observed, the word of the living God, which directed the first patriarchs also,

was, in the time of Moses, committed to writing. To this were added, in several succeeding generations, the inspired writings of the other prophets. Afterwards, what the Son of God preached, and the Holy Ghost spake by the apostles, the apostles and evangelists wrote. This is what we now style the Holy Scripture. This is that 'Word of God which remaineth forever,' of which, though 'heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle shall not pass away.' The Scripture, therefore, of the Old and New Testaments is a most solid and precious system of divine truth. Every part thereof is worthy of God; and all together are one entire body, wherein is no defect, no excess. It is the fountain of heavenly wisdom, which they who are able to taste, prefer to all writings of men, however wise, or learned, or holy."...

But, you will say, Did John Wesley know of the wonderful teachings of "new light," "modern thought," "common sense," "rational views"? Did he know of the infirmities of Genesis, the mistakes of Moses, the childishness of the story of Jonah? And had he recognized that a belief in miracles was a sure mark of superstition to be at once rejected by anyone that pretended to intellectual power?

Why, John Wesley lived in the very centre of this atmosphere when, as one of the "Bible moths" in his Oxford days, he was the perpetual object of attack, ridicule and obloquy by the smart, clever infidel set of the 18th century. He was a contemporary of Thomas Paine, with his "Age of Reason" and "Common Sense," and of Voltaire and Volney.

After quoting Dr. Eakin's words in defense – "It is a significant fact that neither Charles Bradlaugh, in England, nor Colonel Ingersoll, in America, has had any successor" – *Mr. Blake concludes*: –

How amused these two gentlemen would be if they, revisiting the scenes of their labors, attended some of the lectures of the

higher critics in the Toronto Y.M. C.A. and elsewhere, and perused their many volumes! How "significant" to them would be the fact that their labors were not thrown away, and that so-called ministers of God were playing him false, and that schools and colleges rendered their presence unnecessary, as the work commenced by them was being so constantly, efficiently and thoroughly carried on by their ecclesiastical successors!

It is a still more "significant fact" what a wonderful **[R4394 : page 149]** resemblance the above teaching, sanctioned by Dr. Eakin, bears to the results that we find amongst our students and graduates who have had the disadvantage of his teaching!

One reason urged for preserving such teaching which should trouble every lover of our country is, that the students thus instructed are to be throughout the length and breadth of our land the teachers in our public schools, and are to receive diplomas enabling them to continue to spread abroad the infidelity of this destructive criticism.

Truly, "the plague is begun." How is this plague to be "stayed?" There is no more live question in our **[R4395 : page 149]** Dominion to-day than is this.

It is not denied that this is the teaching we have in some of our colleges, and that the determination is to proceed with such instruction in order to educate those that are to be the teachers in our land to believe in and to present a mangled edition of the Bible. Remember, my dear friend, that these men do not seek to strengthen faith in the Bible, to build up their pupils in a reverence and love for it and an acceptance of it as God's Word. All the doubts, difficulties, uncertainties, objections, contradictions, imperfections, mistakes, that can be conjured up from minds that have been devoted to this one-sided study are presented. The views of people that do not know how to weigh evidence are given as conclusive.

If a man has his doubts as to the authenticity of the Bible as God's Word, he is to be deeply pitied, and is worthy of great sympathy. If with such doubts he spreads them abroad, pity should end in reproof; but if with such doubts he accepts the position of instructor of youth and spreads abroad the poison with which he is afflicted, he should be found guilty of treason against the State, which he is wounding in its most vital part.

H. S. BLAKE.

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