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CAN AN EFFICIENT THEOLOGY BE DEPENDENT UPON HISTORICAL FACTS?

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The biblical critics are responsible for a growing interest in this question. It is true that Lessing long ago formulated it in Germany and answered it in a tremendous and startling negative. He declared that eternal truths of reason could not be dependent upon accidental truths of history.¹ But the reaction from rationalism and the new understanding and valuation of history, which the doctrine of evolution necessitated, demonstrated that Lessing's "eternal truths of reason" were themselves in large part formulations of the historical experience of men. Perhaps never have men turned so eagerly to historical research for guidance in religion and theology as in the 135 years since those words were written. Not only Schleiermacher and Ritschl but the age in which they lived turned from the mists of philosophy and the strainings of Hegelianism to the facts of history with the relief which men experience who come on solid rock beneath the sand. It is no philosophical skepticism which in our time has led men to formulate once more the question of our paper and to incline them once more to take their stand with Lessing. But as the biblical critics have tested the rock of gospel history with their pickaxes and their modern

¹ *Beweis des Geistes und der Kraft*, 1777.

RECENT THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

A VOLUME IN HONOR OF PROFESSOR TOY¹

It is with great pleasure that I respond to the request of the editors of the *American Journal of Theology*, not so much to write a notice of this book, as to add my testimony to that of the authors of these papers to the worth of my lifelong friend and colleague in biblical scholarship. Dr. Toy and I were educated at the University of Virginia, which in the golden days before the Civil War represented the highest scholarship our country could produce. There we both laid the foundation in the study of the classics and modern languages for subsequent Semitic study. I have known many distinguished teachers, both in America and abroad; but I have found nowhere a higher average of pedagogic ability and scholarly enthusiasm for the highest and the best.

We were separated by the calamity of the Civil War, he being a southern man and I a northern man, when we were compelled by circumstances and training to take different sides. Those were times that tried men's souls, and though they inevitably were irksome to scholars, they yet gave an experience of the realities of life, which was invaluable to them.

I first came to really know Dr. Toy at the University of Berlin, where again we studied at the same time with the same teachers and under similar influences. Though we represented different churches, he a Baptist and I a Presbyterian, our differences in this respect did not keep us apart. We had learned at the University of Virginia, where religion was free, that Christians of various faiths could work together as brethren, with mutual respect and consideration, notwithstanding differences.

On our return to America we both undertook the same work for the greater part of our lives, the teaching of the Old Testament in theological seminaries: Dr. Toy immediately after his return in 1869, I after a brief service in the pastorate in 1874.

It was our fortune to engage in the same struggle on behalf of the scientific study of the Bible over against dogmatic traditionalism. Dr. Toy was the first to suffer from intolerance. He lost his position in the South in 1879; but after a brief interval of editorial service, he was

¹ *Studies in the History of Religions Presented to Crawford Howell Toy by Pupils, Colleagues, and Friends.* Macmillan, 1912.

welcomed to the chair of Hebrew and other oriental languages in Harvard in 1880, where he has spent a happy, independent, and useful life, and was saved from the storms and trials that I had subsequently to endure for the same cause.

Dr. Toy and I have also had another common experience. In later years he has given himself to the study of comparative religion, while I have been professor of comparative Christian theology, in the form of theological encyclopedia, and Christian symbolics and irenics. This parallelism in our lifework has, from the very nature of the case, kept me in touch with Dr. Toy, and given me a personal as well as a scholarly interest in all his work.

Dr. Toy is one of the most thoroughly trained scholars of our generation, and as such all his work has been able, thorough, of ripe scholarship, and of practical importance. He has done an immense amount of literary labor for learned societies and periodicals, as is evident from the list of his writings given in this volume; but he has not published as many books as his friends had a right to expect from him. Undoubtedly his standard of literary excellence has always been high; but he has the ability and the scholarship to do a great deal more for the world than he has done in this regard. I understand that he has another learned work almost ready; and it is to be hoped that he will give us several more, and so remove the only fault I can find in him. His most important works are his *Quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament* (1884) and his *Commentary on Proverbs* (1899). These are certainly the best works on the subjects that have yet appeared in any language.

The writers of the papers in this memorial volume are mostly scholars of reputation; and their work for the most part is worthy of them, and of our honored friend. Several of these papers are of unusual merit. It would require too much space to review them in detail, and under the circumstances I do not feel inclined to discriminate between them.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN THOUGHT¹

Even so recently as the appearance of the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, in the excellent article on Egyptian religion

¹ *The Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*. By James Henry Breasted. [Lectures Delivered on the Morse Foundation at Union Theological Seminary]. New York: Scribner, 1912. xiv+379 pages. \$1.50.