

These, which from their nature are alien and hostile to each other, the Word constrains and brings together into concord, communion, and into the *kiss of love* (φιλημα ἀγάπης).

The use of such a metaphor points, I think, to such a formal and ceremonial use of the kiss as we have recorded in St. Paul's Epistles, and such as there was in the early ritual of the Christian Church.

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DR. ROBERTSON SMITH AT CAMBRIDGE.

It is difficult perhaps for any except a few of his most intimate friends to measure the full extent of the loss which all who knew him have suffered by the death of Professor Robertson Smith. It resulted from that extraordinary versatility of powers and variety of interests which distinguished him, perhaps more even than the vast range of his knowledge, that he showed himself in different lights to different men. And so it may be hard for some of his older friends in Scotland to appreciate the ties by which he became bound to his new home in the south. But I think that every one who saw him amid the Cambridge surroundings of his later years must have felt how congenial those surroundings were, and how thoroughly happy was his Cambridge life.

Professor Smith's settlement in Cambridge was largely due to his association with leading Cambridge scholars on the O. T. Revision Committee. From this association resulted that close friendship with Professors Wright and Bensly, and Mr. Aldis Wright, which had the singularly happy effect of making him their colleague in the oriental school at Cambridge. In 1882 the Lord Almoner's Professorship of Arabic became vacant through the death of Professor Palmer, who had held it since 1871. The loss of that great and original scholar must have produced a feeling

that a strong man was required to supply his place. Eighteen months had by this time elapsed since the decision of the Free Church Assembly, by which Robertson Smith ceased to be Professor at Aberdeen; and so, I believe on the suggestion of Professor Wright, he was invited to become a candidate for the vacant chair. He was appointed in February, 1883, by the Lord Almoner (Lord Alwyne Compton, now Bishop of Ely), with whom the patronage rests. Trinity College soon afterwards received him as a resident member of their body, and from the spring of 1883 and onwards his home was at Cambridge. It was a high compliment that one who was a total stranger should be called to this high office within the University; it must have been specially grateful to him after the weariness of the long conflict through which he had passed; and the next ten years abundantly showed how wise had been the choice, and what a loyal son the University had gained.

In the Easter term of 1883 the new Professor inaugurated his tenure of the chair by a course of three lectures on "The Early Relations of Arabia with Syria, and particularly with Palestine," and each Easter term till 1886 he delivered a similar historical course. In 1884 he lectured on the "History of Palmyra," following up the lectures with an exposition of the Palmyrene dialect and inscriptions; in 1885 his subject was "Marriage and Kinship in Ancient Arabia," and in 1886 "The Theory of Sacrifice illustrated by a Comparison of Semitic and Greek Ritual." During the intervening Michaelmas and Lent terms he read Arabic authors with his pupils. This work was largely in excess of that required by the conditions of his chair, which provided merely for the delivery of "at least one public lecture yearly within the University on a subject connected with Arabic or Arabic history or literature." The stipend was small, but the post was honorific.

In 1883, as I have mentioned, he was received as a

member of Trinity, and he spent there eighteen months, during which he made many friends. In the beginning of 1885 he was called to yet closer relations with another College. Christ's—the College of Milton, Cudworth, Henry More, Paley, and Darwin—elected him to a Fellowship on January 17th, 1885. In this act, most honourable to themselves and to him, the Master and Fellows were maintaining a certain tradition of liberality in advancing studies other than mathematical and classical, which has long flourished in this College. Smith at once moved into rooms at Christ's—the same, it is said, which had once been the home of Henry More. It is with those spacious rooms, overlooking the College garden, which he occupied for the last nine years of his life, that many of his friends will most like to associate his memory. It was no ordinary gain that the College made in securing him as a Fellow. One of his most marked characteristics was a splendid loyalty to his friends; and he looked upon his election in the light of an act of friendship on the part of the whole society. Entering the College in [this spirit, he may be said to have identified himself with every interest that any member of it represented. He was a never-failing source of advice, help, and encouragement to any one who sought it. At College meetings, and in ordinary conversation, he was always eager to give an opinion on any point under discussion: in his rapid manner he would at once express sharp dissent from any view that seemed to him wrong; but however he might differ in opinion, he was the same loyal, sympathetic friend to each. And one of the things that will most linger in the memories of those who saw him in his last illness is the thought of how, even though he might be suffering great pain, he seemed quite to forget himself and his suffering in his eagerness to hear about the concerns of his visitor, still ready as of old to help him with advice or suggestion.

Among the friends he had gained at Cambridge was Henry Bradshaw, who held the post of University Librarian from 1867 to his death in 1886, and who won abiding fame by his vast knowledge of historical documents and books. United by common tastes, he and Smith spent more than one vacation together in foreign travel. The Librarianship at Cambridge is justly regarded as one of the most important University offices, and as demanding the services of an accomplished scholar; and when Bradshaw died, in February, 1886, the eyes of many were soon turned to Robertson Smith, and it was felt that he, who was almost without equal among living men for the range of his knowledge, had the best possible qualifications for the post. His own College and his friends throughout the University eagerly supported him, and he was elected librarian on February 24th, 1886, by a very large majority of the Senate, 424 members voting. This election by the whole graduate body, but three years after he came as a stranger to Cambridge, was new evidence of the extraordinary impression he had made on all in the University with whom he came into contact. His successor in the Lord Almoner's Professorship was Ion Keith-Falconer.

For three years and a half he continued librarian, and employed to the best advantage his amazing knowledge of books. On the library syndicate his business talents, and his faculty of bringing questions to a rapid decision, proved of the greatest service. Within the library, while he occasionally showed impatience of its use for any purpose but that of real study, there are many who can tell of his ungrudging help in finding the materials which they wished, and that at no small sacrifice of the librarian's time. One thing is much to be regretted—the effect upon his health of confinement within the close atmosphere of the library. It seemed to him, no doubt, that as he was constantly walking about inside, he thus secured a large amount of physical

exercise which absolved him from the need of further walking outside ; but it is to be feared that the want of fresh air and sunlight through the greater part of the day may have fostered the growth of the disease by which he was ere long prostrated.

During these years his most intimate friend in Cambridge was William Wright, the Adams Professor of Arabic, who had long enjoyed European reputation as among the very first of Semitic scholars. As colleagues in the Arabic Professorships, and serving together on the board of oriental studies, they had many opportunities of co-operating in the work they both had at heart—the promotion of sound Semitic learning at Cambridge and in England. In 1887 Wright finished his monumental article on “ Syriac Literature ” for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*—an exhaustive account of all known Syriac literature, published and unpublished. By the end of the next year his health had entirely broken down, and in May, 1889, Cambridge lost by his death one of the most finished scholars, most successful teachers, and most attractive men she has ever possessed. Two men likeminded with him were left behind to carry on the work of the Semitic school—Bensly and Robertson Smith ; and already we have lost them both.

It was Smith's first thought and wish that Bensly should succeed to the vacant chair ; but the latter, with characteristic humility, declined to stand ; and the electors at their meeting on June 24, 1889, appointed Smith. All who knew his skill in teaching were glad to see him once more a Professor. Unhappily he was even then in weakened health ; he never recovered full vigour after the long strain of the librarianship. One winter, 1891-2, he was compelled to spend in Egypt seeking health ; with that exception he lectured every term from October, 1889, till the close of 1893, though for the last four terms he had to lecture from his couch, and there were occasional days

when pain and weakness made the effort impossible. The reading included such works as the *Travels of Ibn Jubair*, Ibn Hishâm's Life of Mohammed, the *Mo'allakas* of 'Amr and Al-Hârith, selections from the *Aghânî*, and the poems included in Nöldeke's *Delectus Carminum Arabicorum*. In the last term of 1893 he entered with much zest on Baidâwî's *Commentary on the Koran*, a work whose difficulty gave full play to his skill as an exponent. He looked forward eagerly to continuing this reading in the Lent and Easter terms of the present year; but alas! it was not to be.

Of the last sad weeks there is no need to speak, except to record that his mental activity was kept up almost to the end. On days when he had scarcely strength to speak, he would show from time to time that he had been following out some important train of thought. It seemed as if the bodily weakness had hardly impaired the mental power. Of his brave endurance, of the gentle thoughtfulness for others, which seemed even to increase as he grew weaker, of his gratefulness for any little service, many of his friends could speak. He died as the sun rose on the last day of March.

Of Robertson Smith's work as a Semitic scholar during the eleven years at Cambridge no detailed account can here be given; as readers of his *Kinship* and his *Burnett Lectures* know, it was in the main highly specialised work along scientific lines. When he came to Cambridge he had been for some considerable time sole editor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and had written the articles by which he is perhaps best known to the public, such as "Bible" and "Hebrew Literature"; but some of his most valuable contributions appeared after his removal to the South, in such articles as "Prophet," "Psalms," "Sacrifice," etc. The first of these might be singled out as a masterpiece of insight into the historical development of Old Testament religion.

It combines, as did all his work from first to last, a careful appreciation of all the elements of religion common to the different Semitic peoples with a view of the history of Israel which does full justice to the distinctive features, moral and intellectual, that belonged to the religion of Jehovah. Another characteristic of the article is its masterly working out of the idea of a progressive revelation, in which the way was gradually prepared for the entering of the fuller light of Christianity.

It was however his study of religious *usages* among the ancient Semitic peoples that constituted his main achievement at Cambridge. It is easy to see how he was led to this, in pursuance of the great aim of his life—to restore the Old Testament to its proper historic setting, and interpret the Hebrew writings in their original sense, according to the intentions of the ancient authors. He wrote in the preface to his *Burnett Lectures* (1889):—"In Scotland, at least, no words need be wasted to prove that a right understanding of the religion of the Old Testament is the only way to a right understanding of the Christian faith; but it is not so fully recognised, except in the circle of professed scholars, that the doctrines and ordinances of the Old Testament cannot be thoroughly comprehended until they are put into comparison with the religions of the nations akin to the Israelites."

The first fruit of these investigations was his book on *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia* (Cambridge, 1885), in which he maintained, and enforced by much evidence from the Semitic field, the view of his friend J. F. McLennan, that female kinship extensively prevailed in early times, and preceded the patriarchal system. This was a subject on which Smith had been at work for many years; and the conclusions at which he arrived, as regards the history of kinship, have received the general assent of Semitic scholars throughout Europe. His method was to

start with the *tribal* groups of historical times, and by a careful examination of tradition to work back to the more primitive *kindred* groups, in which actual blood-relationship constituted the bond. He found that the old traditions, while they largely recognised the patriarchal system with kinship through the father as the normal state of society, yet pointed back by many indications to a time in which polyandry prevailed, and kinship was reckoned through the mother. The last step, by which he arrived at the theory of belief in kinship with an animal totem as underlying the notion of blood-kinship, has not commanded so general assent. There is abundant evidence of the prevalence of totemism in different parts of the world (collected, for instance, by J. G. Frazer in his little book on *Totemism*, and in his longer work *The Golden Bough*); but there is still much doubt as to how far this principle is to be applied within the history of the Semitic races.

In June, 1886, he had lectured at Cambridge on "The Theory of Sacrifice, illustrated by a Comparison of Semitic and Greek Ritual"; and the result of the studies on which these lectures were based is seen in the most important of all his published works—the first course of Burnett Lectures, or the *Fundamental Institutions of Semitic Religion*. He had been invited in April, 1887, to deliver three courses of lectures in Aberdeen, on "The Primitive Religions of the Semitic Peoples viewed in relation to other Ancient Religions and to the Spiritual Religion of the Old Testament and of Christianity." The first course, on *Fundamental Institutions*, was delivered in 1888, and published in 1889. The state of his health prevented his giving more than three lectures in the second course, and these he was unable to work out for publication. The third course was never delivered; but the published work is an enduring monument of learning and research on a subject to which he was almost the first to devote scientific treatment. The titles of the lectures show the

range of the work ; the main themes are " the nature of the religious community and the relation of the gods to their worshippers,"—"holy places,"—"first-fruits, tithes and sacrificial meals,"—"animal sacrifice, its original significance and its sacramental efficacy." The discussion and its results are of the greatest importance in their bearing on Biblical study. The evidence is mainly drawn from the literature of the Semitic races ; but analogies are quoted from Greek and Roman usage, with appeals to ancient writers as to whom even the most learned reader may be excused if he confesses ignorance. In fact, one does not know whether to admire the author more for his enormous learning, or for his power of marshalling and expounding. The work is characterised in places by a boldness of inference which some may think undue ; but, in considering the general results, it must always be remembered that the book is but *part* of a larger plan, and the part which deals with the beginnings of Semitic religions and with their common elements ; the more distinctive and developed features of the religion of Israel were to be treated in the later courses.

In 1892 he published a second and enlarged edition of those lectures on the *Old Testament in the Jewish Church* which had drawn and fascinated great audiences in Edinburgh and Glasgow in the winter of 1880. The most important additions consisted of some farther applications of the critical method to the text of the historical books, and the incorporation of some fresh points in his treatment of the Psalter which had appeared in his *Encyclopædia* article. It was his intention also to bring out a new and larger edition of the *Prophets of Israel*, which had long been out of print. He was anxious to complete the work by including in it chapters on Jeremiah and some of the later prophets who did not find a place in the original lectures. But this purpose was frustrated by his illness.

Mention should also be made of the fact that he con-

tributed some interesting papers to the *Journal of Philology*: especially worthy of notice are two "On the Forms of Divination and Magic enumerated in Deut. xviii. 10, 11" (vol. xiii., pp. 273-287; and vol. xiv., pp. 113-128).

But important as are his published works, there was never a scholar of whom it was more true that he himself was greater than the works he gave to the world. I think it was perhaps in attending his lectures that one best learned to appreciate his mental powers. He possessed a familiarity with the details of Arab history and literature,—with the topography of Mecca and the other important centres,—with the names and relations of the very numerous Arab tribes,—and with the usages of Arab life in ancient and modern times, which enabled him to render luminous all the Arabic works he read. Here, as in the case of Hebrew literature, he showed always that "grasp of the concrete realities of ancient history" which Professor Bevan has justly noted as pre-eminently distinguishing him. A favourite subject was the history of the Arabs before Islam: like all recent investigators, he distrusted the later traditions which had passed through the distorting medium of Mohammedan prejudice. The exactness of his scholarship, shown especially in skilful analysis of the most difficult details of Arabic syntax, taught a lesson that no pupil of his could ever forget. His reading of the poets was rendered delightful by his keen literary sense, and by a peculiar appreciation of the moods and humours of the Semitic mind. However small the number of his students—and Arabic has not many votaries in this or any other University—he gave them of his best. It was one of the lessons he taught by example as by precept that every lecture ought to be thoroughly prepared, its material arranged and digested beforehand.

Much might be written about his marvellous conversation—about the floods of information he would pour forth

on almost any subject, to the delight and interest of his listeners. But it is time to draw this imperfect sketch to a close. And in doing so, I would just remark that in Robertson Smith the passion for exact science, which is characteristic of our day, was united with a deep regard for the higher aspects of truth, and reverence for all that was great and worthy in the past. Owing to the almost unexampled range of his studies, he seemed to bring out any subject that he dealt with into a clearer light than is given to most men. The greatness of his knowledge affected all the parts, and his logical faculty never failed to answer to any demand upon it, so that his mind was fully master of all the materials it had stored. On the other hand, not less striking was his insight into the spiritual side of life. No one can read his works without being struck by his reverence for sacred things—a reverence which, being mingled with confidence that all discovery of truth is in the end a good, never interfered to bias his judgment or check the progress of investigation. In his eyes all history was the expression of a living Will; it was the student's business to go fearlessly ahead in honest enquiry, because every addition to our knowledge of human history is a farther step towards understanding the purpose of God.

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