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THE "CRITICAL STUDY OF THE BIBLE."

LECTURE BY PROFESSOR BENSLEY.

A lecture on the "Critical study of the Bible" was delivered by Professor Bensley at the University on Friday, July 15, before the members of University Christian Union and several others interested in the latter movement. The Professor explained at the outset that "critical study" conveyed no notion of hostility to received doctrines; it rather meant a study of the original texts and translations, upon which the Bible rests. He dwelt upon the unanimity of the MSS. in all important points, but affirmed that even in minor issues, accuracy and certainty were to be desired, and a search after them was not fruitless. The various translations into English of the Bible were mentioned, and in showing their importance one to another Professor Bensley quoted Dr. Moulton's remark that at least 80 per cent. or 90 per cent. of our present version was borrowed or adopted from Tyndall's version in 1526. Why then had revision been necessary? Just because the earlier translators had not access to the original Greek manuscripts. The discovery of these in later years had enabled students to considerably rectify the "textus acceptus." The corruptions in the MSS. had arisen, as in the classical texts, from the frequency of transcription, and the earliest errors had in many cases been handed down without correction. Erasmus in 1516 A.D. first consulted the Greek MSS.; St. Jerome's Latin version had previously been received as the standard edition of the Bible. The lecturer referred to the fact that in the early days of the Christian Church the New Testament was not placed in the same category as the Old, and illustrated his statement with the story of how in the 6th century, A.D., the New Testament writings were obliterated in one edition of the Bible, and the vellum transcribed with the work of a Christian writer of the time. In dealing more particularly with the authority of the text the professor stated there were far fewer MSS. of the classics, and this often through a comparative want of discrepancies seemed to establish that their authority was sounder and more certain than that on which the Bible rested. In reality, however, the Scriptures had in the most cases the best authority. Aids to textual criticism of the Biblical text, apart from the MSS., were citations of passages selected from the works of the Christian fathers, and secondly the translations made in the Latin, Syriac, and Coptic languages. The MSS., however, themselves provided a text that was to some extent unanimous, and the variations found, as mentioned before, did not generally involve doctrinal points. The lecture was illustrated by fac-similes of several of the different MSS., and these added to the interest of Professor Bensley's most instructive lecture.

ORCHESTRAL CONCERT.

To-night the Conservatorium Grand Orchestra will give their fourth popular concert in the Town Hall. The programme, which may be seen in our advertising columns, includes Liszt's great composition, "Hungarian Rhapsodie," Mozart's celebrated overture "Zauberflöte," Suppe's overture "Poet and peasant," a paraphrase on "Walther's Preislied" (Wagner), four charming compositions for strings only, and the well-known march "True to the flag" (Blon). Miss E. Meyrick Hack will sing "Evening Hymn" ("Eli"), and "When the tide comes in" (Barnby). Mr. J. Opie will make his second appearance and sing "Thou art my life" (Mascheroni) and "The gallant salamander" (Barnard). Sets of five tickets are on sale at reduced rates at the music-sellers' during the day.

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SECONDARY EDUCATION.

"Bring the brains to the front, and your battles are half won." This was the maxim inculcated by a celebrated military leader, and its application to other affairs besides those of warfare is practically universal. No matter in what station of life they may chance to be found, the powerful mind and the sympathetic spirit should be cherished and exalted; because not only the possessor of rare gifts, but also society as a whole, is the gainer by the exercise of his talents. "From the highest to the lowest, the richest to the poorest," says *De Mille*, "to no rank or condition in life has Nature denied her highest boon—the great heart." The difficulty, however, is how to find the great heart which, combined with the great intellect, may render the man—whether born in a mansion or in a hovel—fitted to lead and to instruct his fellow-men. Mr. Batchelor had no need to apologize for occupying the time of the Assembly in introducing the subject of secondary education on Wednesday after having explained his views last session. To this topic legislators and others might well devote far more attention than they have given to it. If there be one thing more than another upon which the prosperity of a country like South Australia depends it is the selection of those who are best suited to be leaders in industry, in science, in art, and in religion. In the possession of brains there is no such thing as caste, and certainly nobody needs to live long in Australia—or, for that matter, in any other country—before understanding that many of the children of the well-to-do exhibit not only mental incapacity, but even a lack of inclination to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered to them. The desirableness of bringing out clever poor scholars and enabling them to use their talents to the fullest extent possible is practically admitted by all. The only difference of opinion concerns the best and most practical means of accomplishing the desired result.

Two principal lines of policy are open to the Legislature in this matter. The

one which Mr. Batchelor supports is the establishment of a State-supported Boys' High School similar to the existing institution for girls. The other is the extension of the system of granting bursaries to clever State School pupils in order to enable them to proceed to secondary schools and finally to the University. Nearly connected with the latter method would be the plan proposed by the University Council—to utilize a portion of the munificent Elder Bequest for promoting the education of teachers, and thus the highest scholastic institution would be brought into closer touch with the primary schools. Bursaries at the University are usually won by teachers, but the prizes are not sufficiently large to provide for the maintenance of the holders while attending lectures; and accordingly some of them have been dropped before the completion of the intended course. With the new funds in hand it will be possible to greatly strengthen this system, and to enable quite a large proportion of the teachers to become educated men and women in the fullest and largest sense. After the recent Cambridge Tripos Examinations surprise was caused by the large percentage of successes obtained by the holders of the Teachers' Bursaries provided by the British Government. These are worth only £25 per annum each, and the Principal of King's College, Cambridge, has recently published an appeal for an increase of the amount. He contends—and any one who understands the subject will heartily agree with him—that the value of a teacher, even for his work in an elemen-

tary school, is largely enhanced by his passing through a course of higher studies.

As a means of bridging over the gap between the State School and the University the establishment of a High School for boys would not be adequate or economical, and it would involve a needless duplication of institutions. If the school were to be self-supporting fairly high fees would have to be charged in order to maintain the special staff of teachers who would be required. Practically no advantage, so far as the poor boy is concerned, would be gained which cannot be secured under the system now in force. Mr. Batchelor's idea, however, is to make the fees low, and to throw upon the State the burden of any loss. Towards this loss parents who reside in the country would be compelled to contribute, and yet their children would have no chance of benefiting by the outlay. A similar objection may be urged against more than one of the existing city institutions; and it is by no means desirable that the grounds of objection should be enlarged by the starting of another school to give city boys a better opportunity in life than can be enjoyed by those living in the rural districts. The State provides elementary education in even the remotest localities, and it is bound to do so because it makes instruction in "the three R's" compulsory. Regarding secondary education, however, the same argument will not apply; and the children of the comparatively rich would derive more benefit from the proposed school than those of the really poor. The chief outlay which a poor man has to face in placing his son at a secondary school until the age of eighteen or nineteen, and in giving him a chance to go to the University, consists in his maintenance and the loss of his earnings for several years after he has already attained to a wage-earning age. Most boys coming from very poor families would require a living allowance as well as free secondary education. To provide this would be costly, and it would augment the inequality of which the country residents already have reason to complain. On the other hand, the idea of establishing secondary schools all over the country is obviously quite out of the question. In Queensland a very partial attempt has been made to give effect to such a plan; and the natural result has been that in trying to please everybody the Legislature has pleased nobody. The State-supported high schools have provided a secondary education in a few favoured towns for the sons and daughters of the well-to-do residents, most of whom could well afford the fees now payable in South Australia. The poor have received very little advantage indeed.

The twelve bursaries of which Mr. Batchelor speaks rather slightly are the nucleus of a system which, if wisely developed, may do far more good than the establishment of a new Government institution with salaried officials. We should be glad to see three or four times the number of bursaries. In bringing out by such means the special talent and energy of highly gifted children born in humble circumstances the community as a whole receives back in the end more than the full value of the assistance which it renders. Instead of being a menace to the established schools and colleges, as a new institution would be, bursaries might also stimulate private enterprise to provide more and more for the higher education of the people. This, indeed, is the only true direction in which an effort can be made to bridge over the educational gulf whose existence Mr. Batchelor so deplors. Too many critics forget that the University is not a State institution. Like some of the secondary schools, it is mainly maintained by the income from private endowments. The State grant is only a moderate acknowledgment of the direct and indirect benefits which the institution confers upon the country as a whole; and the offer of more numerous bursaries to scholars, tenable at existing secondary schools, might be looked upon in very much the same light. There is practical commonsense in a well-conducted bursary system, but the idea of establishing State secondary schools is founded on a false analogy, and presents another example of the fallacious notion that the only way to meet a public want of any kind is to create a new State institu-

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TOWN HALL CONCERT.

A popular concert was given in the Town Hall on Saturday evening by the Conservatorium Orchestra under the leadership of Herr Heinicke. Lady Victoria Buxton, Miss Buxton, and Captain Guise were among those present, but the audience was not so large as the admirable nature of the entertainment warranted. The programme opened with the very difficult overture to Mozart's "Zauberflöte," which was finely executed. Weiss's favorite quintet "Prayer," for strings only, followed, and as usual met with an imperative demand for a repetition. Without Wagner an orchestral concert would scarcely be complete, and "Walther's Preislied" from the "Meistersinger von Nürnberg," was rendered in a manner which enabled those present to thoroughly appreciate the grandeur of the music. The gem of the evening was probably the brilliant Hungarian Rhapsody of Liszt (No. 2), where the great composer seems to have embodied the very spirit of his fiery voice in a wealth of splendid sounds. It is music that thrills the

nerve of the listener, who is in soul carried through the most varied scenes—the march of a Hunnish army with its barbaric strains and wild war songs, the "rapture of the strife," the gipsies' dance upon the heath, or the gleaming of moonlight on the waves. Herr Heinicke must certainly repeat the Rhapsody No. 2 on some very near occasion. The Vorspiel to "King Manfred" (Heinicke) was also much enjoyed; it opens with weird chords for the wood-wind instruments, the strings having their own way for the most part later on. A pizzicato by Cuth Clark, for strings and bassoons, was very lively, and a descriptive intermezzo by Eilenberg. "The march of the mountain Gnomes," with effects after the style of the "Turkish patrol," was much enjoyed. The final item was the stirring piece of martial music, Blon's "True to the flag." The vocal portion of the concert was ably contributed by Miss E. Meyrick Hack and Mr. J. Opie. Miss Hack's fine contralto was heard to good effect in the "Evening hymn," from Sir Michael Coster's "Eli," and the young singer was loudly applauded for her sympathetic rendering of Barnby's song "When the tide comes in," giving as an encore a pretty lullaby. Mr. Opie made his second appearance on the concert platform, and is evidently becoming already a favorite. He possesses a well trained baritone of great range, and rendered with good expression Mascheroni's "Thou art my life." In reply to an imperative recall he sang "Vanity" in a way that evidently pleased the audience. In the second part of the entertainment he gave the fighting ballad of "The gallant salamander," and repeated the last verse again as an encore. Mr. A. H. Otto acted as accompanist to the vocalists.