The Study of Hebrew

BY W. A. S. WRIGHT

HEBREW is the original language of the Old Testament, with the exception of certain portions of the books of Ezra and Daniel, and a single verse in Jeremiah, which were written in the cognate Chaldee language, because during the Babylonian captivity, the mass of the Jewish people who were born and educated in Babylon and the regions adjacent adopted of necessity the language of the country, the Aramean or Chaldee, which he longs to the same great family of languages as the Hebrew (the Semitic)

Hebrew, therefore, being the vehicle of the revelations of God to man during the Old Testament dispensation—yea, the fountain-head of Scriptural information—a knowledge of it is highly necessary for a thorough and correct interpretation of the truths of the Old Testament, for translations are in themselves imperfect. "No translation can ever render the original exactly, and no commentary will ever give you those things that you must dig out for yourself," says a great divine. "The most useful commentaries on the Bible are the concordances and lexicons on the original languages," Hebrew of the Old Testament, and Greek of the New Testament.

The study of Hebrew in the theological seminaries of the country has been a subject of much discussion recently by professors of some of the leading seminaries. The growing tendency is towards the elimination of this venerable and revered language from the curricula of the various schools. This is evidenced by the records of one of the most conservative of our theological seminaries, the General Theological Seminary of New York.

The advocates of this elimination justify themselves on the ground that they do not advocate a less scholarly ministry, but rather because they believe that a change of emphasis is needed in the preparation required for ministerial work—that a primary requisite for men who are to be leaders in the work of the church and spiritual guides of their people is a knowledge of life; they must know men as individuals and must understand them in their social relations, or they cannot do wise and fruitful service for humanity.

If this growing tendency reaches the point of entire elimination of Hebrew it will be a condition greatly to be deplored. Yet after counterbalancing the pro and con arguments, one cannot but concede that these advocates are right to a certain extent—for example, in cases of a mere smattering of Hebrew at the expense of studies which would be more essential to such students; as it is well known that there are students who are "crazy" over Hebrew yet woefully lacking in some of the elementary branches. Students who have not the necessary prerequisites in their mother tongue should be deterred. It is absolutely indispensable that aspirants for that venerable language ought to have a good English foundation. It further presupposes a knowledge of Latin and Greek, the two great sources of the English language. Tho it may be said that this is not absolutely indispensable, yet it is certainly highly desirable. It cannot be gainsaid that a student who has

not a good foundation in English and an average knowledge of Latin and Greek ceteris paribus cannot grapple or cope with Hebrew as one who is well equipt in these.

Students of Hebrew who lack the minimum prerequisites—yea, who are subject to some of the most glaring errors, the most unpardonable violations of syntax—cast a very serious reproach on this scholarly language, which was a subject of learned study by the Rabbis of old.

I would that Hebrew be not entirely eliminated from the curricula of the seminaries, but that it be offered with much reserve and discretion.

"Vive l'Hebrew!"

Rev. Huckle's Illustrated Lecture

On Monday evening in Andrew Rankin Chapel, Rev. Oliver Huckle, pastor of the Associate Congregational Church, Baltimore, lectured on "Student Life at Oxford." Mr. Huckle, in company with President Thirkield, spent a year at Oxford. He spoke from his own personal experience of the scenes and life of that ancient and renowned university. The lecture was illustrated by very good stereopticon views. The manners and customs of the institution were vividly presented by the lecturer, and the affair was voted an entire success by the appreciative audience present.

A New Piano

The growth of classes in music has necessitated the purchase of a new piano—the Ebersole, which the President has tested in a number of schools and found very satisfactory.
The Divorce Evil

The question of divorce is at present a very live one, occupying the serious thought and earnest attention of every right-minded American citizen. It is distasteful to the pulpit and press; its various phases have due consideration. It has even ceased to be a mere academic question; it is considered by 'the man on the street' as of great practical interest. In fact, it is no longer a question; it is deemed an evil. Thru the lax laws in many states, on the slightest pretext a divorce can be obtained, and the parties set free to marry at will. Although some states have stricter laws, so general is the evil in this country, that Europe, with a much larger population, grants fewer divorces.

The cause of this is not far to seek. Europe with her large Roman Catholic population largely regards marriage as more than a civil contract. The Catholics themselves regard it as a sacrament; and the Reformed Churches, although not willing to go so far, readily admit the sanctity of the marital bond.

Now it will hardly be disputed that in our efforts to solve the problems of divorce as they obtain in this country very much depends upon the view we take of marriage. If marriage is merely a civil contract in which two parties of different sexes agree to live together in a certain state, either express or implied, for an indefinite period, each being under certain legal obligations to the other, then, we take it, when one fails to live up to the letter of the contract, a legal separation is in order. And when, in popular opinion, such separations become too many, it might be well to seek such a remedy as would in a great measure lighten the work of the courts.

With this view of marriage, the remedy for divorce as suggested by Mrs. Parsons, wife of a congressman, in a recent work, seems admirable. This suggestion in substance is that husbands and wives should be taken on trial. In other words, there should be a probationary period during which they try each other, and if found to be suited, then a marriage could be consummated. This is a happy solution to a very vexed question.

But what is very unfortunate for Mrs. Parsons and her theory is that the legal side of the question is not the only one. There are great physical and moral aspects which change a plausible theory into a mighty evil. Would not the union inevitably resulting from such probationary association be indeed and in fact a natural marriage, and not the same evils result if the trial proved to be a failure, as are now seen in the case of legal divorce? We see in this suggestion only an ostrich-like attempt to dodge the issue.

It seems to us that divorces should be given by the courts as long as this social order of things exists; but only on the ground of infidelity. Even the Roman church which formally declares that marriage is indissoluble, reserves to its head a dispensatory power, and popes have been known to grant divorces. In the case of infidelity formal declaration is made of a then existing state; for nature has already effected a divorce. What then is needed is such an awakening of the individual conscience as would make cases of marital infidelity rare if not impossible, and such a quickening of the national consciousness as would discover and regard the sanctity and permanence of the-marriage relation.

Dr. Herbert Johnson

Dr. Herbert Johnson, who is traveling under the auspices of the Congo Reform Society of Boston, gave a very impressive lecture in the Chapel last Sunday evening, in which he clearly exposed the atrocities heaped upon the inhabitants and missionaries of the Congo Free State by the officers and ministers of the Belgian king Leopold. He appealed to all Christian people and particularly to those of the United States to exert their utmost influence to relieve the present situation. He warned us that we should not only do this for the sake of humanity, but in order that we make sure our own salvation. It is almost incredible to believe that crimes could be committed in such an enlightened age and by people of a so-called civilized country. And for what motive? The greed of gold! And yet the evidence that these crimes have been and are being committed is quite conclusive. Will not the American people unite with Great Britain in demanding Leopold to halt? How can we refuse and still be called a Christian people? May God save us from such hypocrisy!
The Track Team

BY GEORGE A. KYLE, CAPT. '05

If a stranger could have been on the campus one spring morning about two years ago, he would have seen a crowd of very lively young men, who were laughing and talking to one another. He would have seen some putting on light shoes, indeed he would have seen everyone preparing for something of seemingly great interest to them all.

On closer inspection he would have seen two gentlemen comparing time by their watches. To one side of this motley crowd stood a package. This package contained a jar of strawberry preserves. Not this jar of preserves was the sole cause of the then prevailing excitement. Of course any jar of any kind of preserves would cause no little excitement on the campus, provided a few young men knew that a jar of such was seeking an owner or claimant. But this particular jar had its history.

This jar of sweets was to be awarded to the first man to cover the ellipse in front of the Main Building, in the shortest time. The trials came off rather spiritedly, students from all departments of University taking part. At last the final heat was run, but in some mysterious way or other my poor memory fails to furnish me the name of the winner. But I DO remember that when the successful contestant went to receive his prize, the "Judges of the finish," had fulfilled their office—"they had FINISHED" the jar of the luscious fruit.

This humorous incident marked the beginning of the Howard University Track Team.

Strange it may seem, but within one year after this episode a gigantic track meet was held on Howard campus by the I. S. A. A. It turned out to be the greatest and most successful athletic event that has ever occurred in the annals of this school.

The campus was literally packed with throngs of spectators, bearing a multitude of glistening colors, which represented their respective schools and clubs. Above these the dark blue and white predominated. This alone signified that Howard University at last had a track team.

I will not go into details concerning the formation and the minor troubles of establishing such a team nor will I state the hard struggles to make and maintain a track suitable for the training of such a team. But I will say that after all the trials and tribulations of training only sixteen men were eligible to enter the meet. Just think! only sixteen men out of a school containing perhaps upward of five hundred athletes. Strange to say this small retinue captured the honors of the day. Having been taxed hard they deserve their success. To their efforts Howard University owes a cinder track, a handsome silver trophy in the form of a huge loving cup, and above all a glorious reputation.

Now the question arises, Will we have a greater track team this year than we did last year? The student may surmise the answer. If he agrees to become a candidate and train faithfully, if he will co-operate with others who do not possess the ability to become a track athlete and help in the best way he possibly can to make the team a success then we can look forward to a successful season.

Next in importance to the team is Next in importance to the team is the call and help make the reputation of the Howard University Track Team a stronger and firmer one.

Prof. Miller to Lecture

Tonight in the Andrew Rankin Chapel, Prof. Kelly Miller, scholar, author and lecturer, will deliver his popular lecture "Some Phases of the Race Problem". Prof. Miller has delivered this lecture with great success in many parts of the United States. The proceeds are for the benefit of the Athletic Association. Admission 10 cents.

Vespers

We are glad to note the increasing attendance of students from the Medical and Law Schools at Vespers. It is helpful to the spirit of unity in the University to have members from all departments meet together in the Chapel at least once a week.

President Thirkield will deliver the address at Vespers on Sunday at 4:30 o'clock.
PHOTOGRAPHS

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is wanted for the Library. Any copies
sent will be gratefully acknowledged.

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Librarian.
Mr. W. A. Hunton, one of the International Secretaries, spent several days with the Y. M. C. A. He met the young men in conference on Saturday, Monday and Tuesday. On Monday he discussed plans for the proposed building and on Tuesday he organized a Personal Workers' Club for concerted religious work in a quiet way. Mr. Hunton's visits are always productive of much good. Hewas present at last Sunday's meeting. After preliminaries R. S. Gamble, recent delegate to the Asheville conference made a brief report. On Tuesday evening Mr. Gamble reported in full before the faculty and students. He presented an interesting account of the conference.

Y. M. C. A. will be addressed Sunday, 15th, by Mr. Summers, of the theological Department. Let all young men come out. There will be some important announcements.

The Eureka held its regular meeting on Friday, Dec. 7. The meeting was called to order by H. L. Scott, acting chairman. The following program was rendered:

- Paper . . . Mr. T. J. Brown
- Recitation . . . Mr. Benj. Locke
- Quarrel between Brutus & Cassius, Messrs. Neely and Hypshier
- Anon's Oration Mr. P. B. Hewett
- Selection from Othello, Mr. Samuel Height, a noted dramaticist.
- Piano Duet, Miss Bessie McKinney
- Vocal Solo, Miss Gertude Perry & Miss Beatrice Lewis
- Recitation, Miss L. A. Landers
- Vocal Solo, Miss Pearl Barnes
- Recitation, Miss Gertrude Stewart
- Cornet Solo, Mr. G. W. Hines
- Recitation, Miss Bertha Monrady
- Vocal Solo, Miss V. L. Williams
- Recitation, Miss Faunie Brooks
- Vocal Solo, Miss Mamie Chase
- Recitation, Miss Blanche Thomas
- Vocal Solo, Miss L. V. Childers

Closing Remarks . Dean Moore

The President announces he has made a report ready concerning final plans.

PESTALOZZI-FROEBEL

The Pestalozzi-Froebel Literary Society rendered a very excellent program at Peoples' Congregational Church last Friday evening (Dec. 7), before an appreciative audience. After the program all adjourned to the basement of the church where refreshments were served by the Rosebud Circle, under whose auspices the program was rendered. The following was the program:

- Vocal solo, Mr. W. J. Jones
- Recitation, Miss Bessie McKinney
- Piano Duet, Miss Gertrude Perry & Miss Beatrice Lewis
- Recitation, Miss L. A. Landers
- Vocal Solo, Miss Pearl Barnes
- Recitation, Miss Gertrude Stewart
- Cornet Solo, Mr. G. W. Hines
- Recitation, Miss Bertha Monrady
- Vocal Solo, Miss V. L. Williams
- Recitation, Miss Faunie Brooks
- Vocal Solo, Miss Mamie Chase
- Recitation, Miss Blanche Thomas
- Vocal Solo, Miss L. V. Childers

Closing Remarks . Dean Moore

THEOLOGICAL LITERTARY

At the meeting last Wednesday the officers elected at the previous meeting were installed. The President, Mr. E. T. Newman, delivered his inaugural address. Subject: "Leadership." It was decided that the disputants for the Maynard Prize Debate will be elected next week.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

Very pleasant entertainments are being planned for Christmas week, so that the holidays will be made as agreeable and pleasant as possible to the students remaining on the Hill.

President Thirkield gave an address before the United Ministers' meeting of the city, at Asbury Church last Monday morning, on "The Personality and Message of the Preacher." Bishops Clinton and Smith, of the A. M. E. Zion Church, were present and spoke at the close.

Law School Notes

Midwintert examinations have been announced, and embryonic lawyers are "hunting old trails" in dusty law books.

The Friday evening sessions of the moot court are very interesting. Students in other departments and friends are invited to attend.

The law firm of Browne and Taylor, composed of Howard Browne of Kansas and Ocea Taylor of Alabama, won an important case recently.

Seniors are on the "qui vive" concerning the proposed quo warranto proceedings.

A Senior Yell—

"Action! Action!
Detinue! Replevin!
Howard! Law School!
Nineteen-Seventy!"

Miss Lowell, the lone representative of the fair sex, figured in the court proceedings Friday evening, as a witness. We look forward with greater anxiety to her appearance as an advocate.

Oh! to hear these lawyers! Whether there is certainty to a common intent, or certainty to a certain intent in general, or certainty to a certain intent in particular, and such hairsplitting questions are frequently discuss.

Richard M. Duke '07 is slowly recovering from a recent illness.

Have you promised to deliver to a certain fair damsel some article of personal property on or about the 25th day of December, 1906? Doubtless you have. But if you haven't it's all the same, an action will lie against you on an implied promise.

Another Treat in Store

The President announces he has arranged for Judge Wendell Phillips Stafford, of the Supreme Court, District of Columbia, to give his lecture on Whittier soon.

Truth will out even in misprint:
"The motor has come to slay."
—London Punch.
HOWARD UNIVERSITY

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President.

MR. GEO. H. SAFFORD,
Secretary and Treasurer.

REV. ISAAC CLARK, D. D.,
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ROBERT REYBURN, A. M., M. D.,
Dean of Medical Department, including Medical, Dental, and
Pharmaceutical Colleges.

B. F. LEIGHTON, LL. D.
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REV. F. W. FAIRFIELD, D. D.
Dean of College of Arts and Sciences.

REV. LEWIS B. MOORE, A. M., Ph. D.,
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Dean of Preparatory Department.

GEORGE WILLIAM COOK, A. M.,
Dean of Commercial Department.

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