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I. LITERARY.

BENJAMIN MOSBY SMITH.

The Rev. Benjamin Mosby Smith, D. D., LL. D., Professor *Emeritus* of Oriental Literature in Union Theological Seminary, died at the home of his son-in-law, Rev. John W. Rosebro, D. D., Petersburg, Va., on Tuesday, 14th March, 1893. He had attained the ripe age of eighty-one years and six and a half months. He was venerable for his years, abilities, attainments and great usefulness, and his death removes a familiar and conspicuous figure from the history of our church.

Dr. Smith was born the 30th of June, 1811, at Montrose, Powhatan County, Virginia, the family seat of his father, of an ancestry honorable and useful. Bereaved of his father at a tender age, he found in his mother a wise and helpful friend and counsellor as well as a loving pious parent. The struggles of the lad for an education, the self denials of those early years, form an interesting preface to the story of a laborious and efficient life, and give promise of the successful career with which the church is familiar. His early instruction was secured at home at the hand of various tutors. His diligence attracted the attention of Rev. Dr. John Holt Rice, who afterwards took the profoundest interest in the young student, a near relative by marriage. He graduated at Hampden-Sidney College with the first honors, and at the age of eighteen took charge of an academy at Milton, N. C., where he taught successfully for two years. Then entering Union Seminary, before completing its course he was chosen Assistant Instructor, serving from April, 1834 to April, 1836. Licensed in April, 1834, and ordained in October, he supplied during this term

LIBERALISM, TRUE AND FALSE.

Accepting the Bible as the standard of truth, there is a true liberalism. It enjoins the broadest liberalism in the matter of *sympathy*. The sympathy of Christ was immeasurable. It embraced all classes and all races. Nothing could check its outflow. The tears He shed over Jerusalem, when the thunder cloud of its wrath was just ready to burst over His devoted head welled from a heart whose sympathies were as broad as the sorrows of a sinning and suffering world. What He was, that the Bible would have every man to be, and "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, He is none of His."

The Bible enjoins the broadest liberalism in the matter of practical benevolence. He in whom the teachings of the Bible were incarnated "tasted death for every man." He directed that the inestimable benefits purchased by His sufferings and death should be distributed "far as the curse is found." The broadest man on the face of the earth to-day is the man who is living most nearly up to the example set by Christ. He looks to the frozen region of the North and there he sees a brother to whom he owes a debt of love. He looks to the torrid regions of the South and there he sees a brother to whom in like manner he owes a debt of love. He looks to the East and the West till his eye completes the circuit of the globe, and wherever he sees a man he sees a brother to whom he owes a debt of love; for the love that redeemed him covers all, and the blood that bought him was paid for all, and the Master who owns him has given him to be the servant of all.

The Christian, if true to his profession, if loyal to his Master is a broad and liberal man, His sympathies are unrestrained by sectional lines, unimpeded by national boundaries, and unhampered by race distinctions. They sweep round the world and gather the whole race into one brotherhood. Then upon this brotherhood the beneficent activity evoked by these sympathies confers blessings measured only by ability and opportunity. The Christian who adorns the doctrines of the gospel is a big hearted man. He may be narrow in certain directions, but his heart is as broad as the race. He has room in it for Jew and Greek, Scythian, Barbarian, bond and free. This

heart liberalism, this breadth of affection is not only enjoined by the Bible, but it is an actual product of the gospel, as is manifest in the great missionary work of the church. The ubiquitous traveler of these modern times has never found a tribe of cannibals whose lives were so degraded and whose savagery was so fierce as to shut them out of the hearts of gospel-taught men. We claim then for Christians a certain breadth and liberality, and the more Christian, the greater the breadth and liberality. The new man in Christ Jesus is a broader man than the old. He has been lifted out of the narrow circle of selfish interests and set in relations of brotherhood with the whole family of Adam. But there is another liberalism altogether different from this which is enjoined and produced by the Bible. It has its seat not in the heart, but in the intellect, and its achievements lie not in the field of practical benevolence but of speculative thought. It is synonymous with the phrase "advanced thought," and it extends its energies in advanced thinking. It is not noticeably liberal in its active sympathy for the suffering, neither is it conspicuously broad in its plans and efforts for the uplifting of the degraded. Its breadth is confined for the most part to its views. It is very broad in its views. There are no barriers circumscribing its vision, no horizons obstructing its opinions.

The most eminent exponents of this liberalism are the most uncompromising infidels, free-thinkers *par excellence*. Who so broad and liberal in his views as Mr. Ingersoll? His views are confined by no restrictions whatever. The Bible puts no restraint on them; God puts no restraint on them; the devil puts no restraint on them; and so they have an infinite vacuum in which to disport themselves. His views have in them a chemical property by which they can dissolve facts and from the solution precipitate myths and legends, and so free history from all traces of the supernatural. A mind released from the fetters of history and the dogmas of religion, unawed by the possibilities of the future and unrebuked by the protests of conscience is in a position to entertain broad and liberal views. It can advance in thought without let or hindrance.

This intellectual liberalism is found within the pale of the church. It has a great attraction for a certain class of minds, minds that are ambitious of leadership and who can only hope to get in the lead by leaving the old paths. They are progressive, in touch with the spirit of the age and keeping step with

the grand march of modern ideas. They have cast off the shackles of traditionalism, renounced their allegiance to dogma and stand upon that broad platform which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things," but insisteth on nothing." Now the question arises, to what extent can a Christian man, a member of Christ's church, and thereby proclaiming Christ as his master, be broad and liberal in his views? This question must be answered by another, does Christ propose to define and control the views of His disciples? If so, then the Christian man can be broad and liberal only within the limits prescribed by Christ, and it is folly and rebellion in him to claim a breadth and liberalism beyond that. As a matter of fact, almost the only thing that Christ does propose is to define and control the views of His disciples touching all matters of faith and practice, of doctrine and duty. "Except ye be converted and become as little children ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." He demands that we shall prostrate our intellects as well as our hearts before Him, and that we shall learn from Him what to think and believe as well as what to do. Was He dogmatic in His teaching? Never was man more so. This was the quality of His teaching that amazed the people. He taught them with *authority*, and not as the Scribes and Pharisees. The Christian then must be bound by dogma. To scout dogma, is to renounce Christ. Was Christ narrow in any directions? Never was teacher more so. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able; for strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it." He limits the pilgrim to heaven to *one* way, and that a narrow way. "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." There is no liberalism at this point. He who "openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth," has set the door ajar just so far and no power on earth or hell can widen the entrance. The Christian then must be narrow in certain directions. To preach broadness where the gate is strait and the way narrow, is to betray souls. Was Christ intolerant in any particular? Never was a tyrant more so. 'Whoso shall cause one of these little ones who believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great mill-stone should be hanged about his neck and that he should be sunk in the depths of the sea. Woe unto the world

because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that occasions come, but woe to that man, through whom they come. And if thy hand, or thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire." He set before every wicked man one alternative, "*Turn or burn.*" The Christian then must be intolerant in certain particulars. Not in the way of persecution, but in the way of faithful warning. The man who is loyal to Christ cannot believe just anything touching what has been, and is to be. His views have been sharply defined for him and the obligation to hold and to teach them has been solemnly bound upon his conscience. He cannot do just anything and everything. For him the path of duty has been clearly mapped out, and danger signals placed on either side warning him of hell. There is dogmatism, and there is narrowness, and there is intolerance—all these hateful and much anathematized things—adhering to Christianity. They made it offensive to the Romans who were so broad and liberal as to allow freedom of worship to nearly all other forms of religion, but who put Christianity under the ban of law. They have made it offensive to the world from that age to this, and hence the motive for liberalism in the church. It is an effort to conform the demands of the gospel to the taste of the world. But let it be distinctly understood that the dogmatism, narrowness and intolerance of Christ are the fruit of the same infinite love that brought Him to earth as man's Redeemer. They go hand in hand with that sympathy which wept where it could not bless, and with that active benevolence which provided the bread of life for a famishing world. He was dogmatic, narrow and intolerant because there is an open hell with a broad road leading to it densely crowded by perverse sinners who can only be rescued by such methods.

Of course, we recognize the fact that there is a field of non-essential truth where divergent views are allowable. Otherwise orthodoxy could embrace only one man's views and the witty definition would be the true one, "*orthodoxy is mydoxy.*" Furthermore, it may be admitted that it is impossible to define the exact limit within which divergent views may be allowed. Undoubtedly this limit is broader now than it once was. Calvinist and Arminian, Baptist and Pedobaptist can now dwell together in peace. It is a comfort to believe that the day of

warring sects is pretty well over. But while the limit of allowable differences is broader than formerly, a limit is still to be recognized, while we cannot tell just where it is we know that it is. We cannot tell where day ends and night begins, but we know that day ends and night begins. The liberalism against which we protest would blot out all limit, and extend the hand of fellowship to errorists of all classes. An exhibition of its spirit is seen in the Parliament of Religions recently held in Chicago. There this liberalism in the name of Christianity played the *role* of courteous host to all the isms that the carnal heart of man has devised. It put Christ on exhibition in the Pantheon along with all false gods and made Him share His honors with them. Such liberalism is not zeal for the truth but a plea for error. Its tendency is not to glorify God, but to gild humanity. It is lenient in its judgment of everything except dogmatism, and patient with everybody but him who would condition Divine mercy. It knows no sin so great as tenderness of conscience, and no weakness so contemptible as loyalty to convictions. There is one church pre-eminent for its liberalism, making this its boast, and offering an asylum for the persecuted liberals of all other folds. This is the one church that excludes all dissenters, however devout and Christ-like from the pale of God's "covenanted mercies." It is liberal towards everybody but Christians. We can earnestly adopt the words of its favorite prayer, from such liberalism, "may the good Lord deliver us."

Nashville, Tenn.

CLARK.

