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BIBLIOTHECA SACRA

GEORGE FREDERICK WRIGHT

PROFESSOR G. FREDERICK WRIGHT, D.D., LL.D., F.G.S.A., who since 1884 has edited the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA*, died April 20, and funeral services in his honor were held on the 23d in the church where he had been for nearly forty years a constant attendant. As editor he succeeded Dr. Edwards A. Park of Andover, Massachusetts, who embodied in the *Quarterly* the highest scholarship of the times and made it the organ for a sane defense of the faith and a reasonable interpretation of the Bible. The reputation which was thus established Dr. Wright has maintained so that the *Quarterly* is indispensable in the leading libraries of America and Europe, and has attracted to it able scholars both at home and abroad. Dr. Wright, however, had interests that extended to other fields than that of theology—scientific and artistic interests—and these were touched upon in the three addresses at the funeral. Thinking that our readers would be interested in these we are publishing them in full, together with an outline of his theological position, written specially for this number, and with tributes from some of his intimate friends. Lack of space precludes the use of but a small number of the many which have been received.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

I. THE *external record of Professor Wright's life* may be briefly recounted.

He was born January 22, 1838, and hence died in his eighty-fourth year. His birthplace was the little village of Whitehall, New York, at the head of Lake Champlain. His early education was in country schools and a neighboring academy. He came to Oberlin in 1855, graduating

from the College in 1859, and from the Theological Seminary in 1862. Brown University later gave him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity, and Drury College that of Doctor of Laws.

At the outbreak of the Civil War he was one of the first to enlist in Company C, the first Oberlin Company to be formed, and entered the service of the army, but on account of severe illness due to long exposure, was given sick-leave furlough after five months.

His first pastorate, of ten years, was in a country parish at Bakersfield, Vermont, where he laid the foundations for his steady growth by sacredly devoting his mornings to study. His second pastorate, also of nearly ten years, was at the Free Church at Andover, Massachusetts, where he continued with great success his glacial studies.

He was assistant in the Pennsylvania Geological Survey of 1881-82, and in the United States Survey of 1884-92.

He was Corresponding Member from the Alumni on the Board of Trustees of the College for three years (1870, and 1876-78).

He began his *teaching* at Oberlin in 1881, holding the chair of New Testament Language and Literature until 1892, when a new professorship was created for him — that of the Harmony of Science and Revelation, which he held from 1892 to his retirement in 1907. He had been Emeritus Professor since 1907, continuing his scientific investigations and his editorship of the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA, which involved an enormous amount of writing, — as the bibliography of his writings shows. And he was elected President of the Ohio Archæological and Historical Society in 1907 and held that position for twelve years.

II. It is evident at once from this brief record *how large a factor Professor Wright was in the life both of Oberlin College and of the Oberlin community.*

In the College he was seven years a student, three years a Corresponding Member from the Alumni of the Board of Trustees, twenty-six years an active teacher, and fourteen

years an Emeritus Professor. His entire *direct connection* as student and officer with Oberlin therefore covered fifty years, and he had personally known sixty-six years of the history of the College. He proved himself one of the most distinguished Alumni of the College and one of its most widely known teachers and investigators. He had an exceedingly wide acquaintance.

As one of the first of Oberlin's young men to enlist for the Civil War, he has naturally had close connection with the local Post of the Grand Army of the Republic.

In church and community the earnestness of his Christian conviction, his wide interests and knowledge, his genuine friendliness, his hopeful faith, and the weight of his own character and attainments—have all combined to make him a man to rejoice in and to be proud of.

III. Back of all this pride in him on the part of his friends and colleagues lay the remarkable *breadth of his work*. His work included that of preacher and pastor, of teacher, of investigator, of author, and of editor. In almost any one of these fields he had done work sufficient to make a solid basis for an enduring reputation. His writing [as will be pointed out by Professor Root] was along correspondingly varied lines—apologetic, theological, critical, biographical, geological, archæological, and æsthetic. And he secured interested and notable attention in each of these fields, having real contributions to make at many points.

IV. His strong and fine *personal qualities* stand out also unmistakably in this record. The very amount of his work reveals indubitably his unusual capacity for turning off work, and his unquestionably great intellectual ability. He had a mind in rare degree persistently active, versatile, and productive. His retirement from teaching meant apparently no lessening of mental labor but only change of work.

Professor Wright had the power also to take comprehensive views and to use a wide range of data—to bring

many details together into one inquiry and so skillfully to handle broad masses of evidence. His achievements in glacial geology could hardly have been possible to him otherwise.

In his judgment of men, of means, and of the changing times he was not blind to the limitations of the past, but kept a good measure of confidence in the new times, in harmony with his deep faith in the overruling Providence of God.

None of us need to be told that he was a man of deep convictions in many realms and of profound religious faith, as the personal Creed, which forms the last chapter of the interesting and suggestive story of his life, abundantly reveals. As truly as Abraham, he believed that God was "his shield and his exceeding great reward"—in this life and in all lives.—HENRY CHURCHILL KING, D.D., LL.D., *President of Oberlin College.*

DR. WRIGHT'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCIENCE

In the few minutes allotted me I wish to say something of a side of Professor Wright's work which I think he would like emphasized; namely, his work in the field of science. It will be understood that I am not speaking as one who has wide knowledge in this field, endeavoring to evaluate the worth of Professor Wright's contribution to this field of knowledge, but rather as a loving friend, reviewing with admiration the accomplishment of an honored colleague.

That Professor Wright should have become prominent in the scientific world was certainly a great tribute to his individual initiative and capacity, for scientific training in the modern sense he had little. The College Catalogue for 1859 indicates that the following courses in science were offered to his class:—

9 weeks of Botany with no laboratory. Lectures.

24 weeks of Physics, no laboratory. Olmstead as a text with recitations.

- 24 weeks of lectures on Chemistry. No laboratory.
- 12 weeks of Astronomy. Olmstead as text, with recitations.
- 12 weeks of Geology. Hitchcock as text with occasional lectures.
- 12 weeks of Mineralogy.

The entire amount of science offered at that time was thus less than five semesters' work in six different fields of science, or less than a single semester in any one science.

His graduation from the College in 1859 was followed by his years of theological study, interrupted by service in the Civil War. He then took his place as a country minister in Vermont. Here the geological formation of the vicinity interested him. His intellectual curiosity would not be satisfied by a superficial explanation. He gained such information as he could from books and from correspondence with geologists in and out of the state, and supplemented this by a wide reading of scientific literature. In this way he was led to a study of the works of Charles Darwin, just then coming from the press. As a result of this study he became a believer in the general theory of evolution as taught by Darwin, and both spoke and wrote in its favor. As an advocate of evolution at a time when many leading scientists (as, for example, Agassiz) opposed it, and when nearly every clergyman viewed it with alarm, he was brought into acquaintance and established friendly relations with many of the leading scientific men of the East, particularly with Asa Gray of Harvard and Professor C. H. Hitchcock of Dartmouth.

Because of his advocacy of evolution, he was invited to write a series of articles on the subject for the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA*, the first article appearing in the number for December, 1875. This series of articles awakened wide interest and brought him a greatly increased reputation. Of his work at this period, Dr. Tucker, ex-President of Dartmouth College, in his recent book "My Generation," speaks as follows: "Especially noticeable was a series of

articles in the 'Bibliotheca Sacra,' the leading theological review of the time, by Professor George Frederick Wright of Oberlin, then the young pastor of the Free Church in Andover, Massachusetts. These papers were characterized by a breadth and candor, and above all by a thorough comprehension of the real questions at issue, which make them still an example of fair-minded and intelligent discussion in place of controversy."

When Professor Wright removed to Andover, he became interested in the "kettleholes" and other characteristics of the glacial formation of the region and this led to an increasing specialization in that particular field. As a result, he determined to trace the boundary of the glaciated region in North America. Because of articles published by him on this subject, he was selected by the Director of the Second Geological Survey of Pennsylvania to prepare a volume on the terminal moraine for that survey, and later was employed by the United States Geological Survey. On his removal to Oberlin he devoted many of his vacations to the following of this line through Ohio and the states west of Ohio. His work was so conscientiously done, his ability to assemble and relate the observations made in these trips was so unusual, that this work must rank among the most important of his contributions to Geology. After some years of such study he was honored by an invitation to give a course of lectures on the subject in the Lowell Lectures of Boston. As a consequence he prepared and published the most elaborate of his scientific contributions, "The Ice Age in North America." This work was widely reviewed and had a very large sale. During a trip through Europe, Dr. Wright had great satisfaction in finding his work in the libraries of the scientific men upon whom he called, and received many assurances of the value of its contribution to the subject. Only a few months ago he published the sixth edition of this work, with an additional chapter reviewing the literature of the subject that had appeared since the issue of the fifth edition.

This work in the field of glacial geology led almost inevitably into another field, namely, that of prehistoric archæology. At the fringe of the terminal moraine or within the territory covered once by glacial ice, there came to light, from time to time, evidences of the existence of preglacial man. Professor Wright's first contribution to *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA* (in April, 1873) was upon this topic. In this paper he reviews the recent books in the field, and after stating the conclusions to which they led, turns to what was then a much mooted question, the bearing of these conclusions upon the then generally accepted Biblical chronology of Archbishop Usher. "It is a principle," he says, "which we should keep more prominently in view than we do, that the integrity of the divine revelation should not be made to depend upon the interpretation of a few isolated and doubtful passages. . . . In such a brief and rapid epitome of long periods of early history as is given in Genesis, the words 'beget' and 'son of' cannot be so equivocal in their meaning and limitations, that the Bible must stand or fall with the strictest and most limited interpretation of them. . . . That feeling of uneasiness which many students of the Bible have, . . . resting on Archbishop Usher's interpretation of equivocal words occurring in a rapid historical epitome of little logical importance to the rest of the book, is not more unpleasant than it is unfortunate." In this spirit he followed Professor Abbott's discoveries in the Delaware Valley and every other such discovery that was reported, usually refraining from any expression of opinion until he had personally visited the spot, and studied all the obtainable evidence. He published many articles upon the antiquity of man and was presently asked to deliver a course of lectures on the subject in the Lowell Lectures at Boston. In 1892 these lectures appeared in print in Appleton's famous *International Scientific Series* under the title "Man and the Glacial Period." This subject never ceased to interest him and he followed it with keenest interest to the end of his life.

For many years any such discovery was at once communicated to him and as speedily as possible he was on the spot to investigate. The gradual accumulation of material presently led him to publish (in 1912) a second volume on the subject, entitled "The Origin and Antiquity of Man."

This interest in archæology led naturally to his election to the Presidency of the Ohio Archæological and Historical Society, a position which he held for many years. Two years ago, because of increasing deafness, he insisted upon declining further service, and the Society reluctantly released him. Almost his last public appearance was in presenting a paper in this general field before the Social Science Club. On that occasion he spoke with his wonted enthusiasm, and, as was his custom, without manuscript or memoranda. One of those present remarked to me as we were leaving, "How glad I would be to be able to believe that at Professor Wright's age I should speak with such fire, state my thought so logically, and be as clear-headed as he has been this afternoon."

I am well aware that I have only been able to touch upon a few of the scientific contributions of Professor Wright. In our card catalogue there are recorded ninety-eight books and pamphlets of which he was the author, and I suppose there are many which have not come to us. To these numerous publications should be added, as another phase of his widely extended influence, his work in the lecture field. As a popular lecturer upon scientific topics he was called for in all parts of the country. Thus he reached an unusually widely distributed audience.

But now he will speak no more, and we shall only recall in memory the kindly face, the straightforward presentation, the fine flavor of humor, the graciousness of personality, the beauty of spirit which made Professor Wright one of Oberlin's best known and most highly esteemed citizens.—AZABIAH S. ROOT, A.M., *Professor of Bibliography in Oberlin College.*

DR. WRIGHT AS A LOVER OF ART

UPON this sacred occasion it is natural to let our minds linger upon those achievements which have carried the name of our departed friend into learned circles in many lands. And yet, when we stand, as we do, at such a time, with our faces turned towards eternal things, scientific discoveries, even though carried to an eminent degree, do not seem of quite supreme importance. In the world of science one discovery succeeds another, one discovery supplants another and makes the deductions of one day obsolete the next. But they have a value beyond the slight relation they bear to the sum total of the unknown, when they testify to an activity which finds its highest satisfaction when it helps to keep the longing for truth alive and burning in the world. It was Thomas Huxley, standing in the front rank of scientists of his day, who declared that the scientific spirit is of more value than its products. It is because our friend had this spirit and at the same time made it tributary to moral ends that we praise him to-day. He toiled unremittingly to uncover new secrets of nature; he strove in his theological writings to maintain what he devoutly believed, and he defended his conclusions stoutly, not from any pride in them as his own, certainly not from any love of controversy, but because he could not do otherwise and be true to his conscience. They may be superseded or they may remain constant, but at any rate his example stands and will always stand as that of a man who devoted high intellectual powers to the attainment of knowledge, not for its own sake or for any economic profits, but for the sake of those spiritual values in which knowledge and mental achievement find their only real satisfaction and stability.

I have been asked to speak of Dr. Wright's love of art, and especially of music. I do this the more readily because of a claim upon my gratitude. From my first coming to Oberlin College to found a new department of instruction I had his sympathy and encouragement. We were drawn

together first by a common love of music, but our friendship soon found other bases on which to rest. Although I did not need any argument to prove the value of music as a factor in the intellectual life, it was the source of an added gratification to find a deep respect and love for music in so intellectual a man, and one whose professional pursuits were so different from those of one devoted to art. It was not that music and art were a recreation with him — a relief from arduous mental toil; they were a part of the deeper need of his nature; they were to him both a joy and a witness to a truth which he could not separate from beauty. Being an essential part of his nature they helped to give freshness and elasticity to his mind. I do not doubt that these æsthetic appreciations had a share in the preservation of that youthfulness of spirit which kept him ardently and joyfully at his task far beyond the usual span of working life. The love of beauty unquestionably has this rejuvenating power. The surest preservative of a youthful freshness of mind is a constant loving contact with that which is unchangeably young. And not least in nature and in art, for their beauty is the beauty of immortal youth.

• A recent poet sings:—

“Life well spent is ever new,
And years anointed younger grow.”

• Certainly the years of Dr. Wright were anointed years; his well-spent life was ever renewed, and part of the renewing power was his reverent love of all that is beautiful in sight and sound.

Although there was no restriction in his love of music it was primarily based upon religious music. No one realized more than he the importance of music as an aid to worship. He was not content with listening, he joined in it with his voice, and always lent it the help of his enthusiastic advocacy. As one of the founders of the Second Church Society he gave his interest hardly less to the church music than to the other activities. When the Mu-

sical Union was established as a combination of the choirs of the two Congregational Churches he was a leading spirit in its organization. Not only that, but he was from the first a member of the singing force, a faithful attendant in its rehearsals and public performances whenever he was in town. Even as late as two years ago one of the pleasant features of the concerts was the sight of his gray head among the tenors, the only survivor in the chorus from the original body, singing his part with no less zeal and enjoyment than the youngest member of the company.

In his travels in Russia and Siberia he was struck with the wealth and marvelous abundance of the Russian folk music, and his talk about it one day to my classes was one of the very pleasant episodes of my department work. His enlightened admiration for the music of the Russian Church was equally significant. He brought back from Russia a copy of the beautiful setting of the "Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom" by Tchaikovsky and made an English version which was published in Moscow, and became at once one of the most valued works in the repertory of the choir of the Second Church. This was one of the beginnings, if not actually the beginning, of the introduction of the music of the Russian Church to the attention of American musicians. It was a fortunate movement, for I think it is safe to say that no other nation in recent years has made so rich a contribution to the music of the Christian Church as Russia. In his perception of this and in his wise action Dr. Wright was a pioneer.

In working with him upon the revision of the Oberlin Hymnal I was surprised at the extent of his knowledge of hymnody and hymn music, and was also pleased to see that he was as appreciative of the value of the later tendencies in that field as he was of the established dignity of the old.

In his researches in archæology he was as ready to find æsthetic values there as he was to recognize its function as historic record. In his observation of Japanese art he

was quick to perceive its peculiar and unique beauty as well as its importance in the study of racial character.

Our sorrow in the loss of such a friend is blended with a kind of noble pleasure in the contemplation of a fruitful life that is at the same time rounded and complete. I used the word loss in order that I might contradict myself. There is no loss unless we make it so. The inspiration of it remains; the lesson is always ours by which to profit if we will hold it fast. I have spoken of Oberlin music, and I think of music as he thought of it — as a revelation of the soul, a bond between the life of action and the life of the spirit. He helped to establish the Oberlin music for the sake of its uplifting and steadying power, — as a social force, drawing all the elements of the community together by a common interest in a purifying and humanizing influence. This consciousness we must not lose. The foundation of Oberlin music was a religious foundation, and although it has greatly developed along technical and secular lines, it must never lose its early spirit of earnestness and reverence if it would be true to its high mission. Here lies the permanent value of a life like that of Dr. Wright — as an example and a reminder.

One of the magazines with which Dr. Wright was for a time connected was entitled "Records of the Past." Such a career as his is a precious record of the past — of a past in which much that is best in the present is planted. His qualities of sincerity, singleness, and resolute unflagging zeal in the affirmation of what he believed to be the permanent bases of truth are examples for us in our own pursuits, however widely they may diverge from his in their nature and their results. The tribute that we offer to such careers — the tribute like that we pay to-day — is an implicit pledge that we will strive to be true in our acts to the homage which we pay with our words.—EDWARD DICKINSON, Litt.D., *Professor of the History and Criticism of Music in Oberlin College.*

DR. WRIGHT AS A THEOLOGIAN

A truly great prince has fallen in Israel. The living voice of another champion of truth has been silenced. The Kingdom has lost one of its best and noblest characters.

Among the sons of men there are always a few in every calling who tower above their fellows. But it is only rarely that to one and the same individual there is given such a measure of a variety of qualities as to enable him to rise above his contemporaries in more than one department of thought and investigation. To this class of rarely gifted men Dr. Wright belonged. He was a many-talented, and therefore in actual service a many-sided, man.

It is true that the learned world knew Dr. Wright best, and will perhaps longest remember him, as one of the most eminent original investigators in geology and as undoubtedly the greatest authority on the glacial period, yet, as already intimated, his labors were by no means confined to one sphere of research. Educated before the days of reckless freedom as to electives and of abnormal specialization to the rather general neglect of at least a fundamental all-round development, he learned to love truth wherever he found it. Then with Providence as his Guide he cheerfully followed whithersoever it might lead him. And he found, as every ardent seeker always finds, that truth is stranger, more fascinating, than fiction. Moreover, as we review the history of his long career, in every step in his intellectual development and in his rise to fame, from his humble college days in Oberlin and his headship of country schools to his latest years of world-service in the interests of the truth he loved, he seemed to have been providentially guided with a view to the great end actually attained in his many years of usefulness. And throughout his life the consciousness of the constant presence of God's guiding hand to direct and shape his course, never left him, and to this may largely be traced his remarkable patience under trials and humility in times of prosperity and honor. In his splendid "Story of My Life and Work," this recog-

nition of the leadings of Providence is expressed on many a page.

Deeply religious by nature, the fundamental doctrines of Christianity became to him more and more also matters of conviction as well as of faith. He saw that there is a legitimate place for reason in religion as also for faith in science, and he understood, as few men understand, the true relation between faith and reason in both science and religion. He was therefore by nature and training fitted to be an apologist; and thus when the time came that needed just such a defender of the faith, he was ready for the task. He reverently said, "To the discussion of the intellectual problems which have special bearings on our religious life Providence has given me a call which I could not decline."

Fortunately for himself personally and for the cause of truth to which he had dedicated his life in his ordination, Dr. Wright was settled in a country parish for the first ten years of his professional career. This gave him much time for study and reflection. Being an enthusiastic student he devoted a good part of his time to a continuation of his studies, which he felt he had only begun at Oberlin. Among other tasks he read the Bible through in Hebrew and Greek, thus unconsciously beginning his preparation for the professorship of New Testament Language and Literature in Oberlin Theological Seminary, which he so acceptably filled from 1881 to 1892. He also carefully studied the great masters in philosophy, such as Plato, Kant, Hamilton, and Mill; and in exploring the surrounding country he laid the foundation for his great work in geology. And thus he gradually fitted himself for his second important Oberlin professorship, 1892 to 1907, of the Harmony of Science and Revelation. During the twenty-six years of his professorial work he helped to mold many hundreds of students, some of whom have risen to eminence in church and state. Theirs was indeed a rare privilege to sit at the feet of so great a master in his several departments.

Called to Andover in 1872, Dr. Wright soon found himself in the midst of theological and scientific discussions that largely gave direction to his future investigations. Andover Theological Seminary, with such eminent men in its faculty as Drs. Edwards A. Park, Austin Phelps, and Joseph Henry Thayer, had then attained a position in the theological world second to no other school in the country. His association with such an array of great men as he found at Andover, some of them recognized as without any superior in their special departments, had much to do with the shaping of his career as a theologian. The very liberalizing tendency in theology under the influence of the still somewhat new scientific doctrine of evolution, caused him to use his great resources in science and theology in defense of the established faith. It was at Andover also that he was first associated with the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA* as a conservative theological quarterly, whose policy he helped to shape and which he so ably edited for a generation. And it was during his last years at Andover that, upon the suggestion of such men as the eminent botanist Asa Gray, he wrote "The Logic of Christian Evidences," which has had such a wide influence in shaping the newer apologetic approach to the problems with which the newer science was confronting the Church. If Dr. Wright had written nothing else after the appearance of this important work, he would still be entitled to a permanent place among philosophic theologians and defenders of the faith. The time had come for a re-statement of the evidences of Christianity in the light of later scientific progress. And that this was most satisfactorily done by Dr. Wright in this volume, is evident from its enthusiastic reception by both scientists and theologians. Inasmuch as this work so well illustrates his position and method as a scientific Christian apologist, it is important for our purpose to give a brief outline of its outstanding points.

The book opens with a statement and illustration of some of the principles of induction, as well as of deduction, and of their application both to Christianity and to science.

He shows that logic is as valid in dealing with religion and its evidence as it is in dealing with the phenomena of the natural world, and that there are uncertainties and limitations to reasoning as to nature no less than there are as to revelation. And these facts he sustains in a lengthy chapter of illustrations from such inductive sciences as chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology, botany, as well as from the several historical sciences. The supposed objections to the validity of evidence in general in the sphere of religion having now been shown to be groundless, he proceeds in the second part of the book to set forth some of the more specific evidences for theism in general and for Christianity in particular. He somewhat elaborately develops the arguments for the personality and manifest wisdom of Deity, removing one by one the old stock objections, and shows that such wisdom and personality are necessarily implied in all the phenomena and facts of universal nature. And in considering the marvelous adaptations in nature he points out that these are not lessened or negatived even by the evolution hypothesis. Divine omnipotence and human freedom are ably treated and the alleged contradictions involved in each, as well as in the coexistence of the two, are shown to have no real existence. The reader is thus prepared for the elaborate defense of the miraculous element in Christianity that follows, and for an application of the pragmatic test to Christianity in a later chapter. Then in the third part of the book he makes quite an extended survey of the specific evidences of Christianity, in which its documentary facts in their historical setting, as well as its major doctrines, are set forth in a masterly manner. Speaking of the book as a whole, its method of approach and its defense of Christianity may be said to have marked a new departure in the science of apologetics. And although Dr. Wright's more definite evangelical theological position could not be determined from it alone, yet the elements of that position may be felt throughout, while they become quite evident in the light of his many later publications, especially his

numerous articles on theological subjects in various periodicals.

Not to speak of many articles, several other notable works on scientific apologetics came from Dr. Wright's prolific pen, in which some points only touched upon in his "Logic of Christian Evidences" were more fully developed in the light of further investigation and scientific progress. His "Scientific Aspects of Christian Evidences," which appeared in 1898, sets forth the results of many more years of earnest thought and study. In it we have his maturer convictions on such great subjects as God and Nature, Darwinism and Design, Mediate Miracles, together with an elaboration of some of his arguments from the documentary history of the New Testament in the light of newer discoveries. In this connection he shows that Christianity rests upon an unassailable scientific foundation, that its facts have stood the historic test, and that by its glorious fruits it has further proved its divine origin.

We can only mention, in passing, his somewhat unique work, entitled "Scientific Confirmations of Old Testament History," published in 1906, after a thorough fresh study of the Biblical records, especially their miraculous elements, in the light of archæology and contemporaneous history and in the light of an extended personal examination of their geographical and geological setting. In this work he shows by elaborate argument based upon a vast amount of evidence that the authenticity of the Old Testament miracles and historic facts can no longer even be seriously questioned in the light of the physical conditions involved. The book received a cordial reception by both American and European scholars. It was translated into Dutch, with an introduction by the well-known scholar Dr. A. Kuyper, while an edition of it was called for in England. And in his great work on "Genesis," recently published, the prince of European Old Testament scholars, Prof. Dr. Eduard König, of Bonn, in confirmation of his own position on certain points, approvingly cites this work of Dr. Wright.

Of his testimony for the facts and truths of the Christian Scriptures found in his many more purely scientific works and in his numerous contributions to the periodical literature of over a generation, space forbids us to speak. But enough has been said to serve at least as a basis for a general statement of his theological position.

Dr. Wright's theological training was along conservative evangelical lines, and from the theological position to which he was thus led his later studies and independent investigations furnished him no valid grounds to depart. Although thoroughly acquainted with the scientific and theological movements of the day and with the consequent tendency toward even reckless liberalism and latitudinarianism, the foundations upon which his convictions rested were so broad and deep that the destructive negative criticism, which swept so many scholars away from the long-established truths of historical Christianity, could never move him from his position. His wide range of scholarship and acquaintance with current religious thought, coupled with his keen logical acumen, enabled him to see, as few men saw, the weaknesses and subtle fallacies in the arguments of the negative critics and philosophic and scientific objectors. Indeed, his scientific investigations only confirmed him in his theological convictions. While many other scholars are during their earlier years swept from a conservative attitude toward the old tried truths of Scripture to a radical negative position, which maturer thought and investigation make them abandon for a consistent positive constructive position in later life, Dr. Wright never had that humiliating experience. His thorough understanding of the real status of the truth and of the history of Biblical criticism and scientific skepticism was such from his earlier years as to cause him to remain consistently conservative throughout his life, and yet not without the sane progressiveness characteristic of the true Christian scholar.

The God of whom nature affords unmistakable glimpses he found to be the same as the God whom the Christian

Scriptures so convincingly declare. He had no difficulty, therefore, in reconciling religion with the profoundest established science. God and nature, the Bible and true science, manifested for him no real contradiction. He saw that universal nature reveals God as a spiritual Personality, no less really so than do the Scriptures. He believed this personal God originally *created* the elements from which largely through secondary causes, which He Himself imposed upon nature, and undoubtedly in part directly, He fashioned the cosmos. He held that, however much man might learn of God from His handiwork, he nevertheless needed for clearer knowledge and spiritual guidance the supplementary revelation from God set forth in the Christian Scriptures, and that therefore, although from nature and reason man can clearly "find God," he can by no such means "find Him out." Moreover, in the Jesus Christ of the New Testament, whose books he was compelled by unanswerable evidence to accept as genuine and authoritative, he saw and worshiped his Saviour and Lord. The crucifixion and subsequent resurrection of Jesus he considered as so authenticated historically as not any longer to be open to question, and that in the light of the resurrection all other miracles become possible and intelligible. And in that death and resurrection he beheld the manifestation of God's transcendent love and of a plan of salvation for the human race which we have no reason to doubt and no right to oppose. He had no difficulty in accepting the great fundamental truths of Christianity as set forth in the great oecumenical creeds of the early Church, as containing the substance of the teachings of Christ and His Apostles with the least possible human additions and corruptions. And these he considered not only not in conflict with one another and with human reason, but he never found them contradicted by the highest real science. He devoutly believed that God is ever present in His Church and indeed in all human history, guiding, directing, and overruling the affairs of individuals and of nations toward some wonderful goal.

Dr. Wright's theological position was evangelical, and his life was attuned to his creed. He has gone from us, but his influence abides. And his faith has now been transfigured into sight and knowledge.—L. FRANKLIN GRUBER, D.D., *St. Paul, Minn.*

PERSONAL TRIBUTES

GEORGE FREDERICK WRIGHT, Professor Emeritus, who died April 20, was almost the last of that group of broadly trained, versatile teachers whose personalities were so conspicuous in the Oberlin Faculty when I came to the college in 1893. He is to be remembered by Oberlin alumni with Fairchild and with Ellis, with Monroe and with Churchill. But his work in science, theology, and literature has made for him a reputation extending far beyond the body of Oberlin students.

In an article which he wrote for the April number of the *Oberlin Alumni Magazine* Mr. Wright insisted on the value of a broad education as contrasted with excessive specialization. His own life might well testify to the belief he there expressed. Trained in the barest rudiments of the sciences, with no laboratory experience, educated for the ministry in the old rigid course, with physical handicaps that made success in his chosen profession seem impossible to his friends, he still drew from this inadequate preparation an interest in investigation and a passion for scientific research that made him one of the recognized authorities of his generation.

In his autobiography he tells how, after he had been invalided out of the army he took up his profession as a minister, making himself a part of the community in all its interests but reserving his mornings for scientific study. Here he began the study of glacial geology, which he eagerly pursued all his life. In this field he made himself an authority recognized throughout the world. His "Ice Age in North America" has passed through six editions and is still the most authoritative compend in this field.

His interest in science did not, however, keep him from active work in the Christian ministry, nor abate his devotion to the study of religion. His articles and books published during his active ministry and after his appointment to a chair in the Oberlin Theological Seminary have given him a leading place in one of the schools of Biblical interpretation.

Devoted to art in all its forms Dr. Wright was especially interested in music and literature. He was a successful choirmaster and one of the editors of the Oberlin "Manual of Praise." He translated the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom from the Russian and adjusted the English words to the music which Tchaikovsky had written for this work. This was published in Moscow and did much to introduce Russian church music to the American public. For many years he was the editor of the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA*, America's oldest quarterly. His two volumes on "Asiatic Russia," though now nearly twenty years old, are still the most readable account of that vast country.

Thus with what now seems very inadequate training Dr. Wright won recognition in three fields, science, theology, and literature. What he may have lacked in accuracy of minute observation was more than offset by an ability for wide generalization and a power to correlate and evaluate the meaning of phenomena in widely different fields.

Dr. Wright was a vigorous personality. The extent of his writing testifies to this fact. At the age of sixty-three he drove more than 1,000 miles over the Siberian Steppes in a tarantass — a journey that many young men would hesitate to undertake. And this energy of mind and body he retained to the end. His last published article displays the same incisiveness and vigor which characterized the work of his earlier years. His alert interest led him, when a young man, to accept and champion evolution, . . . and at the close of his long life Dr. Wright was still ready to entertain new ideas, still eager for new information. His

interest was never exhausted; he regretted the coming of the end, "There was still so much to do."

Though he always vigorously championed his opinions he practiced democracy. If outvoted he rendered loyal obedience to the will of the majority. Whether a private in Company C, a minister, a teacher, or an editor, no man could say that Mr. Wright had deserted his duty.

In any company George Frederick Wright would have been a distinguished figure. His handsome, clear-cut features, his silver hair, his gracious dignity and unfailing courtesy made him nobly conspicuous. His life, full of happiness and of achievement, ran strong to the end. He was a runner who finished his course. To him was granted the fulfillment of the Roman poet's prayer, "Grant me, O Son of Leto, I pray, in health to enjoy the fruit of my labors, and with mind unobscured, to pass my latter days not dishonored nor left of song."—LOUIS E. LORD, Ph.D., *Professor of the Latin Language and Literature in Oberlin College*. [From *The Oberlin Review* for April 26, 1921.]

My acquaintance with Professor Wright and lasting affection for him because of his human qualities began as a student of his in 1886. Since then I have been associated with him as colleague on the Theological Faculty of Oberlin Seminary, and have come to know him intimately. My admiration for him has increased with the passing years. A cultured Christian gentleman, of strong convictions yet tolerant and courteous to those differing from him, open and above board in all his dealings, nothing mean and sordid about him, good-natured and generous, and a man to be loved and liked,—that, in short, is my estimate of his character, a *sterling* character. His generosity was proverbial among his students. I recall a theological student's complaining of his straitened circumstances, and getting this advice from one of our fellow students: "You go to Professor Wright, he always gives a fellow a dollar when one asks him." A virtue rare as it is admirable, as I have found. He was a man of deeds, not

of words merely. May his memory long linger among us.
—LOUIS FRANCIS MISKOVSKY, D.B., *Professor of the Bohemian Language, Oberlin College.*

THE death of Professor G. Frederick Wright brings to me a keen sense of personal sorrow. He was my teacher and for many years has been one of my most cherished and highly honored friends. I have known him for nearly forty years. I first met him in the home of his brother, Prof. W. E. C. Wright, when I was a student in College. In 1887 I matriculated in Oberlin Theological Seminary, where he was Professor of Greek Language and Literature. I studied my Greek New Testament under him. For many years I have been associated with him in the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA, of which he was not simply editor-in-chief, but the heart and soul. In all these years I have known him as a man of rare generosity, broad sympathy, large ability, and a Christian character which won the admiration of all his students. I named one of my sons for him.

As I think of Professor Wright in the years I have known him, the thing which stands out in the forefront of my thought of him is not his fame as a scientist, though that is secure, nor the breadth of his scholarship, though that was wide and established beyond question, but the kindness of his heart. I think of his consideration for his pupils, his eagerness to discern in them some promise of usefulness, his generous gift of himself to them in their struggles and aspirations.

My last extended visit with him was in the early summer of 1917. He came to Chicago, accompanied by two friends, geologists, and was making studies of the prehistoric lake shores of preglacial Lake Chicago, and of the depressions through which, by successive stages of recession, that larger lake, of which Lake Michigan is the diminutive survival, emptied into what later became the Mississippi. I procured an automobile from a friend and accompanied him and his friends on a portion of this jour-

ney of exploration. He was alert, resourceful, companionable, and appreciative. If he discovered at any point that a former pupil of his had done anything worthy of commendation his joy was great and his expression as spontaneous as it was sincere.

Others will speak of his contributions to that branch of science which he always counted an avocation rather than a vocation, but in which he won illustrious fame. Others will speak of his contributions to Biblical knowledge. Let mine be the sincere word of appreciation of a pupil who remembers most of all the greatness of his heart, the warmth of his sympathy, and the inspiration of his companionship.—Rev. WILLIAM E. BARTON, D.D., *Oak Park, Ill.*

THE great procession moves relentlessly forward, and one by one we pass into eternity. The world does not miss the many because of the vast throng that ever presses upon the heels of the departing. It is the few, the seekers after truth, that the world misses; for they contribute to its knowledge and to its well-being. They also leave their imprint on the lives of others with whom they have come in contact. Necessarily, they have not been advocates of a theory. They are always too busy trying to formulate one that will be broad enough to cover all the facts, and they are never quite satisfied with their results.

Such a man was George Frederick Wright. Quiet, unobtrusive, genial, kindly, broad-minded, sympathetic, straightforward, and yet simple and direct as a little child, he, nevertheless, was a profound thinker and an enthusiastic seeker after truth, and he never grew weary in his quest. It is impossible to read a book like his "Ice Age in North America" without being deeply impressed with the extent of its author's erudition and the minute carefulness of his methods. The truth is what such a man is after, and he considers no pains too great to be employed for its acquisition. Dr. Wright spared none, and he has therefore left a monument for himself in his printed

pages. All of his books and articles are helpful, and all of them are instructive.

These, however, are the things which the world sees. It does not see the hidden springs of influence that silently flowed from his life. Take my own experience, for instance. Fresh from the university, I went to Oberlin full of a great enthusiasm for teaching. I had about as much idea of ever becoming a contributor to religious periodicals as I had of becoming the absolute ruler of Kamchatka. After a time Dr. Wright asked me to prepare some articles on the early religion of the Hindus for publication in the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA*. Being deeply interested in that subject, I gladly did so.

They were published, and I forgot the matter. Not long afterward, however, I met Professor Wright on the street, and we walked along together. As we were on the point of separating, he said, with that quiet smile of his which was one of his most charming characteristics: "You ought to spend all your time in writing and not waste it in a classroom." Too astonished to reply, I was also too much amused to know what to think. Writing had always been a bugbear to me, I had a firm conviction that I could not write acceptably, and Professor Wright thought I should give all my time to it!

The thing seemed almost preposterous. And yet I could not get rid of that quiet remark. Moreover, circumstances led more and more to a situation which compelled me to write. Writing ceased to be a bother. It actually began to be rather enjoyable. Then came the pressure to contribute, as he had so conspicuously done, to discussions along the lines of science and religion. I yielded, and he gave me his most gracious encouragement.

It was like a draft of spring water on a summer's day, and if I ever accomplish any good by my writings along such lines, the credit, in large measure, will belong to the man who first saw possibilities within me of which I had not myself even dreamed. How many others there are whose lives have been touched in some such way, the world

will never know. But the great Masterbuilder, who so plainly directed his life, knows all about it, and when the books are opened and the records are read, he, too, may know, and we can be perfectly certain that he will rejoice that he was counted worthy to render such signal service to his fellow men and to his contemporaries.

“Ἱερὸν ὕπνου

Κοιμᾶται· θνήσκειν μὴ λέγε τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς.”

—HERBERT W. MAGOUN, Ph.D., Cambridge, Mass.

FROM the lives of many Christian leaders we have to make selections, reminding ourselves *nil de mortuis nisi bonum*. The life of our beloved friend and teacher, recently departed, needs no editing. There were no lapses, nothing to regret, no failure at the last to hold firmly to the cross and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the fall of 1915 it was my happiness and profit to spend a few days at Oberlin under my beloved friend's roof. Never shall I forget our walks and talks about the one subject uppermost in his thoughts, which was, in the words of the great Puritan Milton:—

“To assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.”

He was troubled by the trend of the modern mind to materialism, and by its rejection of the miracles of the Gospel. He was distressed for the young men and women in American universities, who heard nothing but “the other side.” It was not so in the past. He recalled the faith in Christ of the missionaries he knew who had died in China and had “gone to glory.” Their memory was precious to him, and he believed he would meet them again.

He recalled the struggle in the early Andover days against the Unitarianism which denied the deity of Christ. Without the deity of Christ the Christian believer, he maintained, had no sure foundation.

“On Christ the sold rock I stand:
All other ground is sinking sand.”

He saw nothing in science to hinder belief in miracles: our life and death were miracles. The adaptation of the earth to the support of life implied a long series of miracles. The glaciers in the past Ice Age did not move fortuitously. He had a great dislike of the *methods* of the enemies of the Gospel. He spoke of the "muzzling" of all those who were not on the side of the higher criticism; and he added with a quiet determination, "They cannot muzzle me."

Another characteristic of our beloved friend and teacher was that he was a man of prayer. In his own home he used private prayers, and these were straight from his heart, or rather from his earnest spirit. He spoke to me of the pressing need of prayer to meet the materialism of the age. He lived intimately with God, and believed that our spirits came from God and returned to God. The thought of death caused him no misgiving. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

At the same time there was a happiness pervading his whole spirit which made him a delightful companion for a ramble through the woods or over the fields. He had a merry laugh on occasions, which I still recall. The gloom of Puritanism found no place in him.

Well, he is gone to the glory of God, and we have only his writings and our memories of him left. His "Story of My Life and Work" will now have a new value. Those who wish to know what manner of man he was will find him at home there; for in this book he speaks as one would to his home circle. He had no affectation — not the least trace of it. Sincere in his love for his friends, humble in his walk with God, valiant in his defense of the truth of God's revelation of Himself to mankind in His Son, he has left a splendid and unsullied memory to his friends.

The BIBLIOTHECA SACRA for January, 1920, has an article, called "Garnishing the Tombs of the Righteous," which is now a voice *d'outré tombe*. He speaks of "the material-

ism which has taken possession of our leading colleges and universities, and of their neglect adequately to teach the evidences of Christianity"—and he might have added their hostility towards all who believe in spirit and the Holy Spirit. He warns us that if we cease to believe and teach "that Christ rose from the dead and that God has at sundry times and in divers manners broken through the chain of natural causes to speak to the world . . . a pall worse than Egyptian darkness will settle over the world" (p. 110). Something more, he contended, is needed than dialectic skill in our teachers. Something more, he insisted, is required than millions of dollars. Unless convinced by the Holy Spirit of a risen Lord and a life hereafter with Him, the preacher is powerless in face of the forces arrayed against him. He is but doing what the Pharisees did. But all things are possible to one believing in the love of God for mankind.

Such a one was George Frederick Wright, and we thank God for the example and love he gave, and still gives, to his friends.—E. S. BUCHANAN, M.A., B.Sc., *Mount Kisco, N. Y.*

IN the death of G. Frederick Wright American Biblical scholarship loses its foremost leader. But for his loyalty and tenacity, his calm persistence in a cause that for long was thought by many to be irretrievably lost, his quiet courage, and his invincible faith, the outlook for Biblical truth and revealed religion would to-day be very different from what it actually is. He early marked out the course he intended to pursue, and thereafter nothing availed to induce him to deviate from it. In the last few months of his life, *Time*, that tests all things, proved the profound correctness of his judgment and insight, and, as the years roll by, the fruits of his labours will be gathered by ever-widening circles throughout the habitable world.

It was not merely in the Biblical field that his work was so important; but of his scientific attainments and contributions, of his wide intellectual interests, of his achieve-

ment as teacher and minister, investigator and organizer, I must leave it to others to speak. In our association of many years the qualities noticed occupied the leading place together with a keenness that was boyish in its intensity till the very last, a profound capacity for friendship, and a mellow piety that pervaded his whole life and conduct. He was one of those men who imperceptibly but unfailingly win the affection of their fellows and by their example make the struggle of life easier for all who come in contact with them. For those who had the privilege of knowing him intimately his disappearance leaves a void that no other will ever wholly fill.

“Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
Tam cari capitis?”

—HAROLD M. WIENER, M.A., LL.B., of *Lincoln's Inn*,
Barrister-at-Law.

No OTHER person has come into my life in the last five years who has so given me pleasure or so won my sincere affection. . . . He was a very rare man, not only in the variety of his gifts and in his mastery of many branches of learning, but far more than this: in the unusual qualities of his character,—his openness of mind and his catholicity of spirit. He and I were far apart in some of our theological views, and this fact in ordinary cases would have been a bar making intimate friendship impossible. Nevertheless, while never abating a particle of his loyalty to his convictions, he could easily, and he did constantly, treat me with all the gracious kindness of a father. In all this he was an inspiring example and a constant benediction. I have cherished him as one of the most precious influences that ever came into my life. His memory is very dear and sacred to me. And he had other qualities fully as unusual and equally noble. All these things made him a very remarkable personality. I always felt highly honored by his friendship and he won and held my ardent affection.—Rev. J. H. CROOKER, D.D., *Lexington, Mass.*

It is the end of a long and singularly useful life, along a path of continuous work and service, marked with important achievements, and strewn with rewards and honors. Mr. Wright's was an inquiring and open mind, of such remarkable breadth and comprehensiveness that he could hold firmly what was valuable in the old beliefs and at the same time receive and assimilate all well-attested and sound advances of science. His was a name that meant much to thousands of people who were struggling to maintain their hold on Christianity in the shifting currents of modern thought. He did not visualize the relations of religion and science as a warfare, but as different aspects of truth which needed only honest and intelligent consideration to be brought into harmony.—Prof. ALBERT H. LYBYER, Ph.D., *Urbana, Ill.*