

Friendly Endeavor

Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends Church  
(Quakers)

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## Friendly Endeavor, March 1920

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# A FRIENDLY ENDEAVOR

VOLUME II.

MARCH, 1920

NUMBER 9

## THE CRITIC'S METHOD.

Wm. M. Smith.

### Classes of Critics.

Bible critics are of two classes: textual critics and higher critics.

Textual critics are those who study and compare the different manuscripts and versions of the Bible with a view to arriving at the correct wording of the Scriptures. Their work is invaluable in Bible translation and revision. Textual critics are sometimes called "lower critics."

Higher critics are those who study the Bible in its historical setting, endeavoring to find an explanation of vague statements and hidden passages by studying the various books of the Bible in the light of the social, political, educational, religious and other customs and conditions of the times when the books were written. There is a large and legitimate field for higher criticism thus understood, when used by devout students.

### Kinds of Higher Critics.

Higher critics are of two kinds: devout higher critics, and destructive higher critics. Devout higher critics seek always to increase the value of the Bible to the reader, and the devotion of the reader to the Book; throwing light on obscure passages and bringing new phases of truth out of familiar texts. On account of the stigma attached to the term "higher critic," these devout scholars may more properly be termed devout Biblical critics.

Destructive higher critics, seek to find and magnify difficult passages of the Scriptures, explaining away their generally accepted meaning and substituting some rationalistic interpretation in its place, using apparently the methods of legitimate higher criticism and covertly adapting them to their ends.

In case all Bible critics could definitely be classified as above, and would keep their places within these clear lines of demarcation, each appearing to be just what he is, Bible criticism in general would not be attended with the dangers now surrounding it. The textual critic would hold his legitimate place, keeping the text pure; the devout Biblical critic, bringing his historical study to bear in interpreting the rich treasures of the Book; while the destructive critic, working to destroy the evangelical faith, could easily be detected and avoided. But this is not the case, and therein lies the danger we desire to warn against.

### The Dangerous Critic.

Swinging between the devout Biblical critic and the destructive higher critic, partaking of the characteristics of both, with possibly some features of textual criticism added, is another critic we will take the liberty of designating the dangerous critic. He passes as a devout higher critic and would like to be known as a "constructive critic." He uses the devout method to secure the attention of the novice and disarm him of his prejudice against higher criticism. Then, his confidence gained, he turns gradually to the destructive methods undetected by his hearers or readers. He brings out wonderful hidden beauties that would do credit to the most devout Bible teacher and really opens deep truth to the children of God, then, while the mind is favorably impressed and made to believe that such deep things would not be revealed to a man who was wrong, the poison is insiduously injected, and the damage is incalculable.

### Deceiving the Audience.

I have in mind a man whom I heard address an assembly of pastors and Christian workers. He had been invited from a distance and given the Bible hour, besides other prominent places on the program. It is reasonable to suppose the presence of his name on the program constituted a high recommendation from safe authorities, and that he began his work with his hearers prejudiced in his favor.

Early in the assembly he preached a sermon. It was highly pleasing and contained teaching calculated to be helpful to the devout, earnest Christian worker. There was a little—just a little—sense of something indescribable about the sermon in its entirety—more of some lack than of something wrong expressed. It may have been unintentional, and of itself entirely harmless; and, as one kindly explained, "it is not expected that a man will tell all he believes in one address."

His first address, in a series of three on the Bible, was on how our Bible came to us. He traced the Sacred Work back through the various English versions to the more ancient ones, and thence to the manuscripts, embellishing his points with accounts of how some of the old manuscripts were discovered. It was a line all too little studied by the average pastor and Christian worker, and was greatly enjoyed, as it opened what was to many a new field of thought and study. It seemed a masterly address in a devout spirit. An occasional statement, especi-

ally toward the last, was hard to grasp—suggesting the same indescribable something before mentioned—like a new, queer taste in one's food, or like the salt left out. But so much of it was unquestionably good, that there seemed no reason why this should not be received as good also.

The speaker began his second address in the series on the Bible under especially favorable circumstances. He had added to the reputation with which he came the confidence inspired by his previous address and a sermon. After a review of the excellent points of the address of the day before, he introduced the subject of the higher criticism, apologizing for the "unfortunate term." To allay possible prejudice against the subject, he explained the various classes of Bible critics very similarly to what has been done above. The audience seemed readily to grasp the plain distinction between the devout and destructive critic, and see a legitimate field for the former, and of course understood him to be pleading for the recognition of that kind only.

In order to illustrate the field of legitimate criticism, he asked the question, "Who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews?" "That," said he, "is a question in higher criticism." He turned to Heb. 13:23, "Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty," and explained that as Paul and Timothy were so closely associated, this mention pointed to Paul as the probable author. He then called attention to the style of the writing as not like that of the epistles known to have been written by Paul and offered this as possible evidence of other authorship. The question was then left open, and harmlessly so, for no utterance of the Scriptures was set at naught.

Next he asked, "Who wrote the Acts of the Apostles?" Another question in higher criticism," he explained. He called attention to the "we" sections and other evidence that pointed to Luke's authorship, and showed how such a study enhanced the value of the book to the reader. Still no harm done, for no statement of Scripture doubted, and the accepted belief of the church undisturbed.

Then he turned to the Old Testament, ostensibly to pursue the same helpful method. He began on the Pentateuch. Some passages, "selected at random," he assured the audience, were produced as "evidence" that Moses did not write the five books credited to him.

One of these passages was Gen. 13:7, "The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled

then in the land." He read it with emphasis on then. This he declared must have been written after the Canaanite and Perizzite were exterminated from the land. As this was not done until long after Moses' day, he could not have written it.

Another passage was Gen. 14:14, relating Abraham's pursuit of the kings who captured Sodom and took Lot captive, stating he "pursued them unto Dan." The speaker said the name Dan was not applied to that region until after the Danites took the country as related in the latter part of Judges. Hence Moses could never have written this, but it was written after the days of the Judges.

Again Gen. 36:31, "These are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel." This, the speaker affirmed, could not have been written until after Israel had kings, hence Moses did not write this.

Another passage that the speaker affirmed showed an authorship different from Moses, if not later, was Num. 12:3, "Now the man Moses was very meek." The assumption was that if Moses was truly meek he would never have written this about himself. It must therefore be by the hand of some other writer.

Again, the last chapter of Deuteronomy was referred to as proving another and later hand than Moses, because it referred to his death and even mentions events still later.

#### The Process Analyzed.

Let us consider wherein this speaker's process of applying the rules of higher criticism to the Old Testament differ from his method with the New Testament, referred to above.

It will be observed that in the case of the New Testament, while he was initiating a new audience into the workings of the system, he proceeded from the premise held by all devout Bible readers and students that what the church has believed for centuries about the authorship of Hebrews and Acts was true. He made no attempt to disturb this belief regarding Luke's authorship of Acts; and, while admitting a possible argument against Paul's authorship of Hebrews, he left his audience in a safe position.

But, be it carefully observed, on turning to consider the authorship of the first five books of the Bible, he left the premise, so carefully proceeded from in his former considerations, that the general evangelical belief is true, and shifted his base of procedure to the premise, held by destructive critics, and infidels as well, that the generally accepted belief of the church in this matter is wrong. Instead of assembling the arguments, of which there are many, that Moses wrote this portion of the Bible, he took the destructive stand, and assembled arguments calculated to shake this belief.

We hold that, while a devout critic may consider arguments against the general belief, he will admit only such as are worthy his attention. Further, we hold that even a neutral critic, would admit argument on both sides of the question. But notice that this speaker, having obtained the confidence of his audience, who believed him to be giving them the results of devout higher criticism, left the premises held by devout Bible critics, and not even stopping at the neutral point, swung clear over to the destructive critic's premises. It was done so artfully, that one is made to wonder if it was really intentional and deliberate on his part. Be it remembered, we are not forging a brief of condemnation upon any person's character, but uncovering a system of deception that we fear had its origin deeper than the brains of man.

#### The Passages Studied.

A study of the Scripture passages on which the argument against Moses' authorship of the Pentateuch was based will reveal a weakness of reasoning that ought to doom the system.

It will be remembered that these passages were said to have been selected at "random." The speaker afterwards said there were hundreds of others. It is a little surprising to note these texts have served as guideposts on a road long traveled by destructive higher critics, and infidels also. One may conclude, from the use made of these texts, that, if there really are hundreds of other passages which might be used to the same end, these are considered the very best, hence most generally used, and they never refer to the other hundreds by chapter and verse.

Gen. 13:7, "The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land." The speaker said Moses could not have written this because the inference is that these peoples no longer dwelled there when this was written, and they were there until some time after Moses' death.

Is this assumption right? A different, stronger emphasis upon "then" will show a meaning of the passage different from that assumed by the speaker. Suppose Moses did write it, even though these people were still there, and wanted to inform his readers that they were dwelling in the land even as long ago as "then," when Abraham and Lot were there. No explanation is made of who these nations are, which would indicate that the Israelites, for whom Moses originally wrote, knew who they were without any explanation. This passage can be used with equal force on either side of the argument, according to the premise from which one proceeds. We hold a devout Bible critic would not attempt to use such a text as an argument against the accepted belief of the church, that Moses wrote the Pentateuch.

Gen. 14:14, "pursued them unto Dan." This is part of the account of Abram's pursuit of the kings who captured Sodom and carried away Lot with the captives. This account, the speaker assumed, was surely written by a later author than Moses, for the region was never known as Dan until a delegation of the tribe of Dan migrated northward as recorded in Judges 18. This appears very reasonable, but does not bear evidence of the research appropriate to the work of a devout critic, who, we believe, never unnecessarily disturbs the historical faith of those who listen to him.

In more than one case in Bible geography the same name applies to more than one place. There are two Carmels, widely separated, but both in Palestine; three places named Kedesh; two Bethlehems, various Apheks, and other duplicates. There is room, therefore, for before the two which were named after the tribe of Dan. A study of the map will show that in pursuing these kings to near Damascus, Abram would never have passed through Dan in western Palestine, and hardly through the northern Dan, as the general route of travel from points east of Jordan, from whence these kings began their retreat, near the head of the present Dead sea, would pass further east. A similar passage is Deut. 34:1, in which it is stated that the Lord showed Moses, among other places, "the land of Gilead unto Dan." Now all agree that Gilead lies east of Jordan and Galilee. This would indicate that the Dan here mentioned as bordering Gilead on the north. With the plain possibility, therefore, of there being another place called Dan, beside the two so named later, a devout Bible critic will hardly disturb a belief likely to be founded upon better evidence than he possesses.

Gen. 36:31, "These are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel." The speaker affirmed this must have been written after Israel had kings, for otherwise how could the writer make such a comparison, or know Israel ever would have a king? As there was no king over Israel for hundreds of years after Moses' death, Moses could not have written it.

In Deut. 18:14-20, directions are given to Israel regarding the duties of their king when they should have one. What is there inconsistent about Moses making the statement of Gen. 36:31, when it was revealed to him Israel would some day have kings reigning over them? Again, we contend no devout Bible critic would base an argument for the overthrow of the accepted faith of his hearers on such weak evidence.

Num. 12:3, "Now the man Moses was very meek." The speaker assumed a meek man would not say such a thing of himself, leaving the audience to choose

between believing some one else wrote the book of Numbers, or that Moses was mistaken about himself. Working from the assumption that a truly meek person cannot say of himself, even under inspiration, that he is meek, where will we locate Jesus after reading Matt. 11:29, "I am meek and lowly in heart?" The weakness of using this passage as part of an argument must be apparent to all at a glance.

And how about the evidence of a later hand writing all these five books because there seems some ground for believing a later hand wrote the last chapter of Deuteronomy? There may appear no great difficulty in admitting that some later hand added this as a kind of appendix to the book, and did it under inspiration. But do we need to go to this trouble? Moses died alone, so if he did not write the account of what happened on that mount, who did? It must have been an inspired hand at any rate. It appears no more difficult to believe that Moses wrote it by inspiration before he died, than to believe that some one else wrote it by inspiration after Moses' death. But the former would not conform to a rule this speaker gave forth on this occasion, that no book could have been written earlier than the latest historical event mentioned in it, by which process he was obliged to divide the authorship of the book of Isaiah between Isaiah himself and a wonderful "unknown prophet."

(Since writing this my attention has been called to a reply to Thomas Paine, written many years ago, from which it is clear he used these identical texts. Did he select them "at random?")

If it were in the province of this booklet we would advance some evidence in favor of Moses writing the Pentateuch, but we cannot take the space here. Suffice it to say, that, if the above chain of evidence against the authorship of Moses is the best that can be produced, we need not abandon the belief in which we were reared, that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. That any scholar should advocate, or even soberly consider, what, to the simple believer, is such a fabric of cob-webs, is an example of the wisdom of this world coming to naught.

(To be continued.)

Our reporter from Greenleaf, A. Clark Smith, makes the following timely suggestion: "Let us use the "Friendly Endeavor" as a medium through which we can discuss our Endeavor problems. Each society has problems of its own, and a good discussion might help toward solutions."

"I have lived on crackers and water for the sake of preaching holiness, but the crackers were fresh and the water was wet, and I had the glory in my soul."  
—C. W. Ruth.

## SOCIETY NEWS

### SPRINGBROOK.

We are praising God for the success of our revival meetings which began Feb. 8th, and closed Feb. 22nd. The meetings were conducted by Rev. Fred Carter, of Newberg. About thirty-four persons received special blessing at the altar. The church as a whole has gone deeper in the Kingdom of God.

A great work has been done among the Junior and Intermediate departments of our society. We praise the Lord for the children. Nearly all of the Juniors and Intermediates were converted, and several of them came back to the altar, and received the Holy Ghost. Also several of the fathers and mothers were blessed. We are praying that the revival spirit may continue in our church.

Paul Lewis was a visitor during the meetings and preached, one evening.

### BOISE.

Our business meeting and social were held this month at the home of Mrs. Nellie Osborn. The attendance was not as large as usual on account of the sickness among us, but we had a very pleasant and profitable evening.

William Murphy, one of our young men, preaches regularly every Sunday morning at a schoolhouse. He is gladly obeying the command, "Go ye, and preach." He is a real inspiration in our service.

Rosa and Mamie Allen were at home a week on account of the school being closed at Greenleaf, while so many were sick with the "flu."

Most of our people are out again after having the smallpox and "flu."

Some of our young people went to the Soldiers' Home and sang for them one Sunday afternoon.

Our people are attending the revival meeting being held in the Nazarene church by Dr. Whitcom.

### FIRST CHURCH, PORTLAND.

The team representing the "Forward Movement" of the church, composed of Levi T. Pennington, Arthur Woolam, was with us for two evening meetings and one day. Splendid messages were given by each of them, telling what the movement was and what its aims were.

A great deal of interest is being shown in basketball. Under the leadership of

Ernest Wright, a hall has been procured for one night a week, when all the young people gather for a good time. Several exciting games have been played with outside teams. Come and play us a game.

We have just closed a ten-days' meeting under the teaching of Joseph Smith. God gave us wonderful blessings and souls were brought into His kingdom. Two meetings were held especially for the young people. We feel that the work is still going on and many who did not yield at the time are under conviction for His Saving and Sanctifying power. Pray for us.

The "flu" has struck us again, though not as hard as last year. Lesta Cook is out again after a siege. On the sick list are Russell Morman and Eva Saint. Both are improving.

Our pastor and wife have both had the influenza. Though they are still under quarantine both are on the road to recovery. We hope to see them back in our midst soon.

Three young peoples' classes of the S. S. held a contest for new members, the losing side to entertain the others. As a result a banquet was given in the basement of the church to about 30, the girls furnishing the eats. All enjoyed the evening very much, especially the eating part.

### STAR.

Thursday, February 19, was chosen by our people as a day of prayer for Home and Foreign Missions. On account of local conditions it was held the 19th instead of the 20th. Although not a very large number were present it proved a very helpful meeting.

Our church has accepted an invitation to join with the Methodist people in the dedication services for their church.

We are very glad that Linda Townsend is again able to attend the services.

Raymond Haworth has bought a ranch at Greenleaf. We miss him at our Endeavor meetings.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen Dunbar are visiting at the Sylvanus Haworth home.

The McCown family have been quarantined for several weeks with scarlet fever.

Edna Elmore has given up her work in the telephone office until school is out, it being hard for her to keep up both

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# A Friendly Endeavor

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The article which we present this month by William M. Smith may seem in some respects to be a repetition of that written by E. H. Parish in December. But since repetition lends emphasis, we feel that we need both of these valuable articles. "Why," some may ask, "do we need a second sermon on 'criticism'?"

Did you ever hear an Oregon mother start her child off to school with the following warning: "Be careful, son, as you pass the swamp, don't go near the crocodiles, and climb a tree if you see a rhinoceros. That boa-constrictor was out again yesterday over by the orchard, better go around the other way, and when you take the camels down to water, watch that they don't step on you."

But how many times have you heard this? "Be careful when you cross the road, watch for automobiles, and look both ways before you cross the car-track." Why have we heard the latter and not the former? Because an Oregon mother is wise and warns her child of Oregon dangers.

Why do we wish to warn our present day young people of destructive criticism? Because we love them, and feel that destructive criticism is the present day peril. There is no enemy more subtle in its action, more cunning in its deception, more designing in concealing its motive, more treacherous to belief, more deadly to faith. So artfully is the leaven mixed with the meal, and such exquisite tact is employed in manipulation of truth, that many people do not detect it. They fail to hear the false note, the broken harmony.

Say, you get into Canaan, and live on milk and honey and grapes and corn awhile, and when a higher critic talks, you can smell his onion breath, (the real Egyptian brand), clear across the Jordan river!

"Grace in time will be glory in eternity."

"Nothing but love to God can conquer the love of the world."

"The path of disobedience is the path of suffering."

(Continued from Page 3)

her school and office work. We are glad to have her help in the C. E.

Wm. McKibbin is visiting relatives and friends in Wisconsin. He and his family have just recently moved into their nice new house. Already their doors are open in a hospitable way to the Endeavorers.

Lindley Wells and Eli Perisho attended our services Sunday morning, February 15, in the interest of the Endowment fund for the Greenleaf Seminary.

## REX.

Feb. 8, Paul Elliott from Newberg, gave a very interesting report of our C. E. meeting of the Des Moines convention. A missionary offering was taken at the close of the meeting.

A C. E. social was held at the Wiley home the evening of Feb. 10. About 25 were present. All had a very enjoyable evening, as the social committee had things well planned. The house was decorated in greens, valentines and state convention posters. During the evening the state convention yell was given several times. After refreshments of sandwiches, chocolate and cake, the boys washed the dishes.

Florence I. Eves attended the state convention at Albany.

There has been quite a bit of sickness the past few weeks. Maude H. Butler has been unable to preach for us a part of the time on account of ill health.

Pres. Mills of Pacific College preached here February 22.

Sunday evening, February 15, Endeavor was held early, then all went to Sherwood for church.

Our new song books, "Songs of Hope," have arrived. We like them very much.

## SOUTH SALEM.

Our society has been busy with many interests the past month.

We have endeavored to cheer the lives of our shut-in friends by going to sing for them Sunday evenings before C. E.

Few of our families have escaped having a little "flu" in them. A serious case of illness has been that of Adra Harmon. Her recovery is yet doubtful.

Mrs. Ethel Miller, Catherine Pemberton and William Wright attended the State C. E. Convention at Albany. We know they had a fine time, but we will hear about it later.

Mrs. Bowman, a missionary from China, gave us a most interesting view into the working of the gospel in China, a few weeks ago. Though she came from China in 1901, her vision has not lessened and her zeal for the work has not abated.

We are praying for a revival in our church. Would you like a share in the "proceeds?" Or do you take any "stock" in such things. We guarantee greater results than were ever realized by any gold mine "stock-holders."

## ROSEDALE.

So many of our people have been sick with "flu" that our entire time has been taken up in caring for each other. The pastor's wife, Mrs. Hadley, has been very sick, but is improving slowly.

Lowell Gardner is at home from Pacific, on account of his own health and sickness in the family.

It is with regret that we see the progress of the new church stopped at this time. But we hope to resume our work soon.

"Nothing is beyond the reach of prayer but that which lies outside the will of God."

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