

OVER 1,500 SPEECHES

May Possibly Be Delivered in the Briggs Trial Before the

VERDICT IS FINALLY RECORDED.

A Decision in the Smith Case is Likely to Be Reached To-Day.

THE TABLES TURNED ON THE DOCTOR

New York, Dec. 7.—Dr. George E. Birch resumed the reading of his argument to-day to prove the heresy of Dr. George A. Briggs. The speech was in support of Charge 3. This charge, unlike its predecessors, is specific. Dr. Briggs is accused of teaching that "Moses is not the author of the Pentateuch, which teaching is contrary to the direct statements of Holy Scripture and to the essential doctrines of the Standards of the Church."

"Dr. Briggs' biblical study," said Dr. Birch, "had not a ghost of an excuse for publication. He maintains that one must study the Bible in the original, but if the authorized version is insufficient, what are unlearned people to believe? The theory of inspiration as taught by the defendant, is a denial of inspiration. It took a perfect man to exhibit a perfect God, and it takes a perfect Bible to reveal a perfect Christ."

The Authorship of the Pentateuch Vital. "The only authority on the authorship of the Pentateuch," said Dr. Birch, directing his attention to the specific charge, "is the Bible itself. If Moses did not write the Pentateuch, no Hebrew can be blamed for rejecting Christ. If Moses did not write the Pentateuch, Christ himself is dishonored."

Dr. Birch then took up the charges that Dr. Briggs has taught that Isaiah is not the author of one-half the book that bears his name. Much greater variety exists in the writing of Hawthorne, Walter Scott and Dr. Briggs himself. "The Presbytery Committee do not oppose conscientious criticism of the Bible, for that book itself says, 'Search the Scriptures,' but the criticism of Dr. Briggs suggests universalism. The committee of the court, as anxious that Dr. Briggs should be acquitted if his teachings are orthodox, as they are that he should be convicted if his doctrines are contrary to Scripture."

Dr. McCook Begins His Speech.

When Dr. Birch had concluded his long argument, Colonel McCook took up the ecclesiastical cudgel. The speaker announced his intention to prove the heresy of the theories of Dr. Briggs as expounded in the inaugural address, by showing their effect upon practical Christianity. The approach of the closing hour interrupted the Colonel's argument, and he will continue it at to-morrow's session.

When the case goes to the jury the Presbytery will sit with closed doors. Each member as he votes on the charges, may give reasons for his vote. All of these reasons are stenographically reported and go to make up the record of the case. There are ever 120 members of the court, and each has the right to explain his vote on each charge. As there are 12 divisions of the charges upon which separate votes must be taken, it follows that there are over 1,500 possible speeches to be delivered before a verdict can be reached. It does not seem possible, considering that there are but four sessions open each week, with three hours to each session, that the result of the Briggs trial will be known before the middle of January.

A Vote in the Smith Case To-Day.

A dispatch from Cincinnati says: The Smith heresy trial is nearing the end of the portion which will be open to the public. Prof. Smith closed his argument to-day, presenting in strictly logical form his view of the case and summing up with the claim that the committee had failed to show anything in his writing or teaching to justify a verdict of guilty. Rev. Dr. McKibben, for the Presbytery Committee, began his final argument. The Presbytery, believing in the firmness of the foundation of its faith in the Scriptures, should not hesitate for the good of the church to eject any modern builder who would destroy it.

Dr. McKibben, at the close of to-day's session, said he hoped to close his argument in an hour to-morrow. Prof. Smith then has the right to make a reply, and the prosecution to finally close the argument. The parties then retire, and the court, in executive session, takes the case for judgment. Members may or may not speak before voting, as may be ordered, but, owing to the vast amount of talk already heard and the desire to close the matter, it is possible a vote may be reached to-morrow.

A Foregone Conclusion Against Him.

What the outcome will be is hardly questionable. The Presbytery was divided before the trial began, the lines were quite closely drawn and the changes made by the progress of argument, while apparently in Prof. Smith's favor, are not sufficient to carry a verdict in his behalf.

What Prof. Smith himself expects, may be inferred from an illustration used in his argument. It was this: A boy living in a very old house had his attention called by some neighbors to some architectural discrepancies in the building, which, while not affecting its stability, were susceptible to changes and would add to its beauty. Upon suggesting these changes to his father, the latter, in anger at the boy's presumption in proposing changes in the ancestral pile, drove him from his home.

Dr. McKibben intimated what the committee proposes shall be the judgment of the court, when he cited the case of a son who wanted to take out the old foundation from his father's house and replace it with a theoretical foundation which had never been tested, and when he could not convince his father that the plan was right, insisted upon putting in the new foundation anyway. Then the father, mindful of the safety of the family, drove the foolish son from under his roof to save a wreck.

Dr. McKibben said he is willing to die, if need be, to save the foundation of the church from being snatched by the modern lies of higher criticism.

WHEN PEOPLE DESIRE A good room they invariably read the To Let Room Columns of THE DISPATCH.

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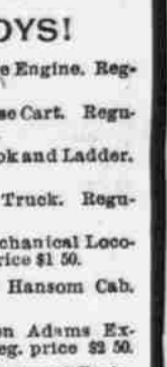
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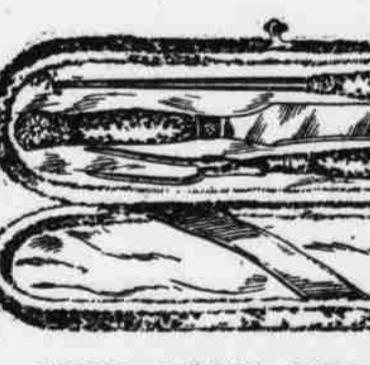


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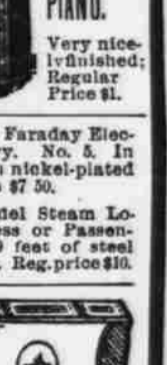


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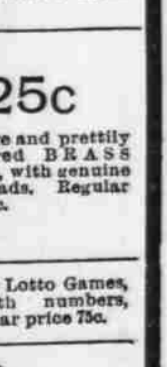


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