

simply through being himself he conveyed an uplifting sense of the goodness and nobility of human nature.

چونک قصهٔ حالِ پیر اینجا رسید
 پیر و حالش روی در پرده کشید
 پیر دامن را زگفت و گو فشاند
 نیم گفته در دهان ما بماند

R. A. N.

Agnes Smith Lewis

On Friday, 26th March, of this year Mrs. A. S. Lewis passed away after many years' illness, which had commenced before, but was rendered more acute by the death of her twin sister, Mrs. M. D. Gibson, who had been associated with her in most of her enterprises. Born in 1843, the daughter of Mr. John Smith, of Irvine, Ayrshire, she travelled in Egypt, the Holy Land, Greece, and Cyprus before her marriage, and took advantages of the opportunities which these journeys afforded to acquire Arabic and Modern Greek. In 1887 she married S. S. Lewis, Fellow of Corpus Christi, Cambridge, a distinguished archæologist; after his death in 1891 she planned a journey to Mount Sinai, where she made in the Convent her most important discovery. This was the palimpsest MS. of the Old Syriac text of the Gospels, of which she entrusted the editing to three eminent Syriac scholars, Messrs. Bensly, Burkitt, and Rendel Harris; a second edition with improved readings and supplements based on further study of the palimpsest was published by her in 1910. Considerable fragments of a Syriac recension of the Gospels which was clearly earlier than the Peshitta had been discovered by W. Cureton and published by him in 1858; from the careful examination of the Lewisian MS. made by A. Merx in

his unfinished Commentary (1902–1905) it became clear that the Curetonian recension was a revision based on a text closely resembling the Lewisian, wherein the Syriac was accommodated to a Greek MS., the corrections from the Greek being frequently added to the older text without displacing it. In the present writer's opinion the Syriac text of Matthew in this palimpsest is the original work of which the Greek is a translation; but even those who would reject that theory and the momentous consequences which follow, would admit that this palimpsest represents the earliest text of the Gospels which has come down to us. The discovery was therefore one of the most valuable ever made in the field of Biblical archæology.

Mrs. Lewis had also the good fortune to discover two MSS. of the Palestinian Lectionary, of which one MS. had previously been brought to Europe and edited by Minnescalchi and Lagarde. The readings of these new MSS. were published by her aided by her sister in a fine volume bearing date 1899. Scholars are indebted to Professor Burkitt for the enucleation of the history of this Lectionary. The curious dialect wherein it is composed, a mixture of Jewish Aramaic with Hebrew and other elements, receives not a little light from the new readings.

Besides these works Mrs. Lewis and her sister published two lengthy series of volumes, called respectively *Studia Sinaitica* and *Horæ Semiticae*, containing Catalogues of the Syriac and Arabic MSS. in the Sinaitic convent, numerous Christian texts in both languages, and (with the co-operation of Rendel Harris) text and translation of the Commentary of Ishu'dad on the New Testament. She also compiled an interesting collection of plates illustrating the palæography of Christian Arabic MSS. In addition she found time to compose some popular books of travel, including one called *A Lady's Impressions of Cyprus in 1893*, and *How the Codex was found*, consisting of her journals edited by her sister.

With her profound learning and indefatigable industry she

combined a character of singular amiability and sweetness, encouraged theological and Oriental students in a variety of ways, and was a munificent benefactress of Presbyterian institutions (especially Westminster College, Cambridge), the religious community to which she belonged. It is a pleasure to record that her services to learning were recognized by numerous Universities, both British and Continental. In 1915 the Gold Medal of this Society was awarded to her with her sister, and presented by Sir Austen Chamberlain, at that time Secretary of State for India.

D. S. M.