

# THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI BULLETIN

VOLUME 37, NUMBER 3

LIBRARY SERIES 17

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WILLIAM BENJAMIN SMITH, Ph. D., LL. D.

A Friend of the University of Missouri Library

By

HENRY ORMAL SEVERANCE

Librarian



Columbia, Missouri

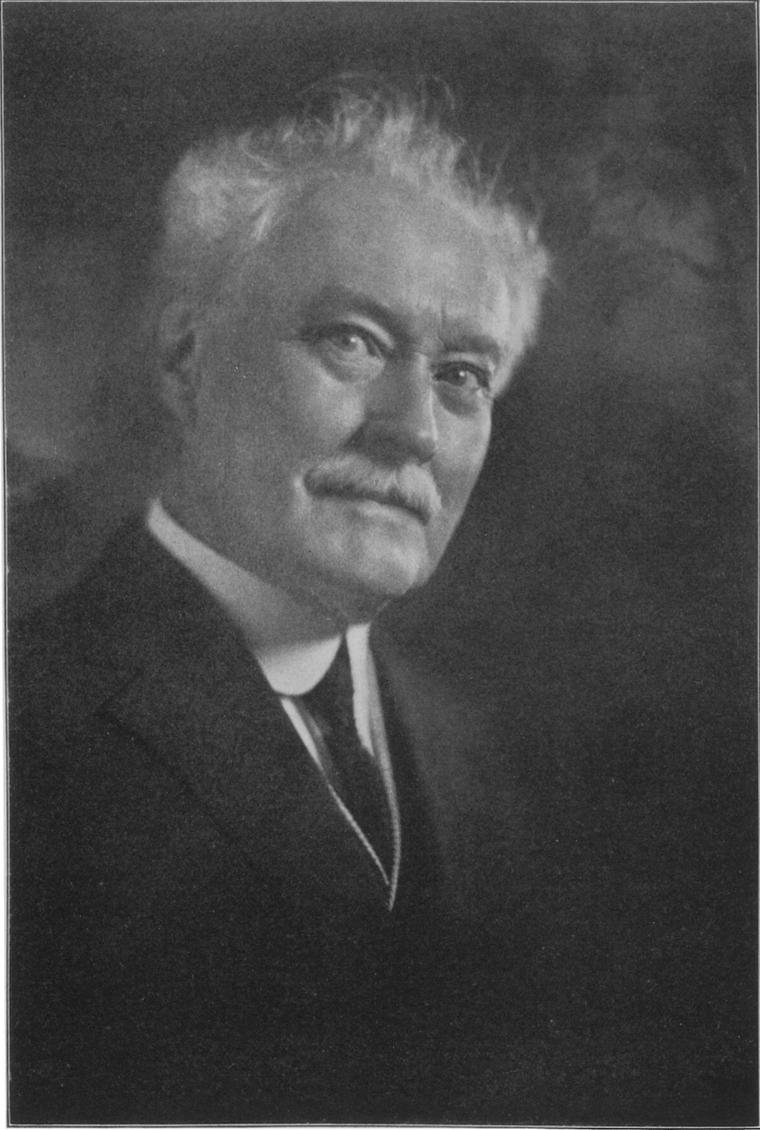
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ISSUED THREE TIMES MONTHLY; ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER AT THE  
POSTOFFICE AT COLUMBIA, MISSOURI—1,000

JANUARY 20, 1936







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## Preface

The work and influence of Doctor William Benjamin Smith touched the history of Missouri at many points, since fully one-half of his life span of eighty-four years was spent in this State. He grew to young manhood near St. Joseph. His University training and his early experiences as a teacher were gained at the University of Kentucky, but he returned to Missouri in 1881 as a professor of physics in Central College, Fayette, where he continued four years. From 1885 until 1893 he was a teacher in the University of Missouri, first as professor of physics and later of mathematics. In 1893 he was called to Tulane University, New Orleans, where he served fourteen years as professor of mathematics and eight years as professor of philosophy. After his retirement from Tulane, Dr. Smith returned to Missouri in 1923, making his home in Columbia, and continuing his independent research and literary work until his death in 1934.

During his long career, Dr. Smith accumulated a library of more than 2000 volumes, and these he presented to the University of Missouri Library. This unusual collection contains 325 volumes in the field of mathematics and physics, 300 volumes in philosophy, 900 in religion and theology, and 500 in the fields of history and literature. The religious class includes several translations of the Bible and reproductions of several celebrated codices of the *Old* and of the *New Testaments*, such as the *Sinaitic Codex*, *Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus*, the *Bezae Codex Cantabrigiensis*, *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, *The Sons of Jacob*, *Works of Philo Judaeus* 1691, and the very rare work *Novum Testamentum Graecum* in two volumes, 1751, edited by J. J. Wetstenius.

On June 3, 1931, the University of Missouri conferred upon Dr. Smith the honorary degree of LL.D. It seems fitting, therefore, that the University should present this sketch of Dr. Smith, a Missourian, and one of the most learned men of our time. The sketch is based on the incomplete manuscript of Dr. Smith's autobiography, supplemented by personal conversations with him and with his friends. The list of his writings was compiled largely by the writer's secretary, Frances McKee (Mrs. Fred S.) Hanna, assisted by the writer and Dr. Smith himself.

HENRY ORMAL SEVERANCE.

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# William Benjamin Smith

1850-1934

## EARLY LIFE

Dr. William Benjamin Smith was one of the greatest scholars of modern times. It has been said that he had the greatest mind since Immanuel Kant and that he was the "coequal of the omniscient Goethe". Another writer has compared Dr. Smith to Leibnitz and wrote that his mind was truly Leibnitzian in scope and versatility, in the exactness, the depth, and the immensity of his scholarship.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Smith won distinction in mathematics and physics, in philosophy, in classical literature, and in his Biblical researches and constructive criticisms.

In order to understand his achievements, it is necessary to inquire into his early life. He was endowed with a good physique and a good mind. He came from Virginian ancestry. He was born in Stanford, Kentucky, the son of Jeremiah and Angelina (Kenley) Smith. His grandfather was a pioneer from Virginia who amassed a fortune in lands in Kentucky. William Benjamin's father, Jeremiah, might have inherited the manor and might have settled down to a life of a gentleman of affluence and comparative ease, but he decided to forego such a life and devote himself to the profession of law and to the cultivation of literature and things spiritual.

Jeremiah Smith was engrossed in the reading of the great English literary masters and in the classical writers in translation. Upon graduation from Transylvania University (which later became the University of Kentucky), he practiced law for several years. He won the epithet in his village of "a walking encyclopaedia" because of his wide knowledge and the depth of his learning. For some reason unknown to William, his father sold his practice and moved to a rented farm about ten miles south of St. Joseph, Missouri, but later he purchased a farm nearer the city. His reputation for learning and for a successful practice of law followed him. Consequently, he was invited to join a prominent law firm in St. Joseph, but he declined the honor. He was known to be in sympathy with the southern cause in the Civil War. He was assassinated one day in 1864, while enroute to his farm from the city, by a reckless Federal soldier who with others was stationed in barracks in St. Joseph. Thereupon the direction of the farm fell upon William Benjamin, who was only fourteen years of age, and upon his mother.

This young industrious lad worked hard from early morning until late at night. His patience must have been sorely tried by the slowness of the ox team. He learned to allow for this handicap by starting operations early in the morning. At three o'clock in the morning he would start with his ox team

1. Keyser, Cassius J.: *Scripta Mathematica* 2, no. 4, pp. 305-311.

for St. Joseph, during marketing time, so that his produce might be placed on the early morning market. After the war came the inflation of the dollar; prices were high and crops were abundant. By practicing strict economy, the family became prosperous. The mother and sisters decided to carry on the farm operations and allow William Benjamin to go to college, which at this time was his greatest ambition.

William Benjamin early developed a love for the classics and acquired the mental habits of independent study which may in part explain his method of acquiring knowledge. At the age of eight, his mother found him under the four-poster bedstead, lying face down, reading Homer's *Iliad* in Pope's translation with an Anthon's *Classical Dictionary* by his side. Another favorite was Vergil's *Aeneid* translated by Dryden. At the age of ten, when most American children are just beginning to read English, William Benjamin was studying Latin literature and Latin grammar, and at the age of eleven he was enrolled in the Sleepy Hollow Classical Academy near St. Joseph. His courses included the reading of Vergil, Nepos, and Ovid in the original, and the study of mathematics, physics, and geography. The principal was so busy that he seldom found time to hear William Benjamin recite or read his translations. The student simply stated that he had read so many lines of Vergil and that he had learned the assignments in other subjects. In this way William Benjamin developed the ability to do independent study. He progressed so rapidly that the principal, after four years with William Benjamin, advised Jeremiah Smith, that it was a waste of time and money to keep his son in the Academy. At this juncture his father was killed, so that William Benjamin's academy days were over, but not his studies; they were only temporarily interrupted. He worked the farm in the summer and studied in the office of Colonel J. W. Strong in St. Joseph during three winters.

At the age of seventeen, in 1867, William Benjamin Smith entered the University of Kentucky, having met all the entrance requirements. He wanted to enter Harvard or Yale but could not as he lacked a knowledge of Greek. He made a record for scholarship unparalled in the history of the University of Kentucky. He completed the four-year curriculum in two years. His first year's course included the study of Greek, in which he was extremely interested. During the following summer vacation, he read and wrote all the Greek required in the second year and passed it on examination whereupon he entered the third year and was soon advanced to the fourth year for the study of Thucydides and Isocrates. He also applied himself to the study of Hebrew, Italian, French, and German without a teacher. Because of his proficiency in these subjects a Master of Arts degree was conferred upon him by the University of Kentucky in 1871.

In 1877, he entered the University of Goettingen and amazed the German scholars by winning two prizes for scholarship in the mathematical-physical seminar of the University. These were the first prizes ever won from this

University by an American. Upon the completion of his course, in 1879, the University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Philosophy *summa cum laude*.

His training in the exact sciences—mathematics and physics—developed in him a habit of careful investigation of any subject. When he reached a conclusion, he was very positive of its correctness, and when the results were at variance with his preconceived ideas, he would discard the old ideas for the new. He was willing to stand by his convictions let come what would. This is well illustrated in his loss of faith in the creed of the churches of his time. He joined the Methodist Church in his youth but transferred his membership to the Christian Church in Lexington when he entered the University of Kentucky. After graduating from this University, which was controlled by the Disciples of Christ, William Benjamin was retained first as a tutor and then as an assistant in English and Sacred History, teaching the history of Israel from Samuel to the downfall of the Hebrew state. His study of Jewish history brought him into contact with German Biblical criticism as found in the works of Keil, Delitzsch and other critics and philosophers, such as David Hume, Edward Gibbon, Victor Cousin, and Charles Darwin. These studies caused him to consider carefully the creeds and tenets of the Protestant churches. The result was that the pillars of his faith gave way and the creeds lay in ruin about him. He was so honest and so true to his convictions that he thereupon notified the official board of the Christian Church that he had changed his ideas about the church and asked the local Church to release him from its membership. Then, unwilling to compromise the Administration of the University of Kentucky, which was dominated by the Christian Church, he resigned his position on the faculty. Partly to justify his action and partly to clarify his own thinking on this subject he wrote an article on "Who are Christians? We?" published in the *Apostolic Times* in which he set forth the utter collapse of modern faith. This article was followed by another in the *Chicago Times* exposing the general dogmas of the church.

It is not known whether he considered the price he would have to pay for this action in alienating practically all his friends and making it practically impossible for him to secure another teaching position, but knowing Dr. Smith the writer doubts whether a foreknowledge of the results of his decision would have made any difference. He was an independent thinker and nothing but the truth would satisfy him. "Absolutely candid and outspoken, he revealed a spirit quite unrestrained by worldly consideration of safety or prudence." His colleagues were indignant with him. He was branded as an infidel, and no college wanted a professor of this type on its faculty. James Lane Allen, the novelist, a friend of Dr. Smith, knew the story of his friend's apostasy and his attempt to find himself, so in his book *The Reign of Law* he made Dr. Smith the prototype of David the hero. The story of David is said to have been the story in its important outline of Dr. Smith in search of a new basis of faith and belief after he had discarded his early faith.

## THE PROFESSOR

After his resignation from the University of Kentucky following his denouncement of the creeds and dogmas of the church William Benjamin Smith was like a derelict upon the ocean. No ports were open to him. Due to a shortage of available men to teach mathematics and due also to Dr. Smith's extraordinary ability, St. John's College, a Catholic institution at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, secured his services. After two years' service he resigned and entered the University of Goettingen, hoping to overcome the handicap of heresy by unusual accomplishments in scholarship. After he earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree from this University, he returned to Lexington and entered upon a campaign to secure a professorship in a college. His credentials were superior, but they were counter-balanced by the spectre of heresy which still, after four years, dogged his steps. At last in desperation he accepted an insignificant position in a woman's private college in Georgetown, Kentucky. The school collapsed in a few months and the principal—the owner—paid him with her note, of which never a cent was collected. This left him without a job in the spring of 1880. A friend of his, who had recently lost a daughter, invited him to spend the summer with him on the farm. Dr. Smith was again a farmer.

In the spring and summer he pushed a second campaign for a position in a college or in a university. Again he was sorely disappointed, and late in the season he accepted a position to teach Latin and Greek in the Bethel Military School, a private school in Virginia. He started his third campaign in 1881, which ended with success. President Hendrix (later Bishop Hendrix) of Central College suggested only one objection to Dr. Smith—that he was too young to occupy the chair of physics, to which Dr. Smith replied that he admitted the offense of being a young man but that he was correcting the habit rapidly and permanently. President Hendrix's rejoinder was to tender the position to Dr. Smith. Religious beliefs were not discussed. When Dr. Smith felt impelled to express his beliefs, he wrote under an assumed name, "Conrad Mascol", and sent his contributions to the *Unitarian Review*.

Central College was the stepping stone for William Benjamin Smith to a successful teaching career of thirty-four years—Central College 1881-1885, University of Missouri 1885-1893, and Tulane University 1893-1915.

Dr. Smith's four years in Central College were probably the happiest four years of his academic teaching career. The atmosphere of culture, the cooperative spirit, the push and energy, the attitude of college men toward learning were all agreeable to him. An added attraction which made his life and work worth while and gave him a new motive, was the influence in his life of Kathleen Merrill, who later became his wife. She was a young woman of great personal charm and beauty, of high artistic nature, of extraordinary gifts in singing. She was teaching vocal music in Howard Payne College, at Fayette.

When Dr. Smith became professor of physics in the University of Missouri in 1885, the President of the University was Dr. Samuel S. Laws, a man of extensive learning, a doctor of medicine, theologian, philosopher, inventor, a man of affairs, an autocrat in the administration of the University. Dr. Smith was young and inexperienced in the ways of men and the world, completely devoted to the things of the mind, absolutely candid. "It is then not strange," to quote Dr. Keyser again, "that, being in no way awed by the President's self-estimate and power, the youthful professor in his contacts with the official head of the institution not infrequently suffered himself to use words which though always spoken in the manner of a gentleman revealed a spirit quite unrestrained by any worldly consideration of safety and prudence." The clashing of intellects, however, was not the immediate cause of the rift between them. When the University was established and for forty years thereafter it maintained a preparatory department for the training of pupils in high school subjects so that they might be prepared for entrance to the University. A large number of high schools had established a sufficiently high standard in 1889 to enable their graduates to enter the University without examination. The preparatory department of the University then became a rival of the high schools. The Missouri State Teachers Association petitioned the Board of Curators to discontinue the preparatory department. Dr. Smith gave an able and forceful address before the Association advocating the discontinuance of the department. President Laws commended him for his able address, but later the President, after due consideration, decided to retain the preparatory department, as it had more students than the University proper, so he ignored the petition of the Missouri State Teachers Association, called his faculty in conference, and declared that the whole movement to abolish the department was an attack upon his administration and that the loyalty of the faculty demanded its support of the President's position. His chief and practically only opponent on the faculty was William Benjamin Smith. The President's contention in this matter was one of the causes which led to legislative investigation of the University. The resignation of the President followed.

Upon the death of Joseph Ficklin, Professor of Mathematics, in 1888, Dr. Smith upon his own request and in response to a petition of advanced students was transferred to the professorship of mathematics, which he held until 1893, when he was called to the chair of mathematics in Tulane University of New Orleans. After fourteen years' service in this chair he became professor of philosophy in Tulane. This was the goal of his childhood ambition. To him philosophy was not circumscribed by the limitations usually placed upon it by university professors. Philosophy embraced all knowledge, conforming to Francis Bacon's comprehensive classification of human knowledge into history, philosophy, and poetry. In 1915 he retired from active teaching, although in the full flush of his powers, and accepted the title of Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, with a retiring allowance of \$2,400 a year. This relief from teaching gave him opportunity to push forward literary undertakings.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

*Natural Science*

Dr. Smith was a versatile scholar with wide and varied interests. The whole circle of human knowledge came within his purview. He was an acknowledged master in at least four distinct fields of learning: natural sciences, philosophy, classical literature, and Biblical research and constructive criticism.

His early field of activity was mathematics and physics. He pursued these subjects in the academy while he was a mere boy. He taught natural science in the University of Kentucky and his major study in the University of Goettingen was in this field. His doctor's thesis was entitled *Zur Molecular-kine-matek*. His teaching in Central College, in the University of Missouri, and in Tulane was in this field. His investigations and teaching of mathematics and physics resulted in several books and magazine articles, of which the most important were: *Elementary Co-ordinate Geometry*, 1886; *Co-ordinate Geometry*, 1888, listed in Sonnenschein's *Best Books*, which with one exception was considered the finest handling of the subject in the English language; *A Clew to Trigonometry* 1891; *An Introductory Modern Geometry of Point, Line and Circle*, 1892; and *Infinitesimal Calculus* volume I, 1898. The editors of Webster's *International Dictionary* secured Dr. Smith to write the definitions of mathematical terms for their book.

The fourteenth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* contains Dr. Smith's definitions of such mathematical terms as "Complex numbers," "Cone," "Conic Sections," "Coordinates," "Cylinder," "Ellipse," "Hyperbola," and "Parabola". The *Encyclopaedia Americana* contains an article of 100,000 words on the "Calculus" contributed by Dr. Smith. Dr. Smith's other recorded contributions in this field numbered 22; some in manuscript. He considered the article "Method and Aim in Mathematical Physics" published in the *Methodist Quarterly* of great importance because he forecast in it a portion of the doctrine so brilliantly expanded by Hans Vaihinger in his *Die Philosophie des Als Ob*.

*New Testament History and Criticism*

The second field in which Dr. Smith was master was the field of New Testament history and textual criticism. At the age of fifteen he gave a lecture in the Methodist Church of St. Joseph, of which he was a member, on "The True Sense in which is to be Understood the Necessity of Creation." For twenty years after his break with the church and his resignation from the Faculty of the University of Kentucky, he wrote very little on the controversial subjects in religion. He contributed in 1887-1888 a few articles on the resurrection of Jesus and on the Pauline Doctrine for the *Unitarian Review* under the pen name of "Conrad Mascol," but he continued an intensive study of the Epistles of St. Paul.

The conclusion of his study on "Curves of Pauline and Pseudo-Pauline Style" was that the Epistles to the Philippians, the Ephesians, and the Colossians could not have been written by the author of the Epistles to the Galatians to the Corinthians, and to the Romans. From his exhaustive study of the "Pauline Manuscript F and G of the Epistle to the Romans" he concluded that F cannot be a copy of G and that both were copied from an older manuscript. These findings in New Testament criticism were confirmed by Dr. Caspar René Gregory in his gigantic work on the New Testament. His conclusions on the study of the Epistle to the Romans were expressed in his article "Origin and Destination of the Epistle to the Romans", published in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*. His findings were accepted by Adolf Harnack, the distinguished German biblical scholar and writer, and they elicited the favorable criticism of T. K. Cheyne, the eminent English Bible critic; of Van Mannen, editor of the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*; and of L. P. Jacks, editor of the *Hibbert Journal*. These men urged Dr. Smith to elaborate his ideas, which he did in several magazine articles.

In 1903, Dr. Smith purchased a copy of *Lyon's Assyrian Manual* which he found in a second hand book store in Chicago. He studied this carefully while acting as nurse to his son Kenley. In reading the long chrestomathy at the end of the book he repeatedly met with the stem n-ç-r always in the sense of 'keep, protect, guard and defend.' It was extremely like na-z-ar-eth. After comparing the Hebrew cognates, he was convinced that *nazaraios* was derived from n-ç-r and was the name of a deity, and that *Jesus Nazaraios* was parallel with Zeus Soter, Yahveh Sabaoth and a host of other deities. This to his mind gave a solution of the problem of primitive Christianity. In Hippolytus he found an older form of the "Parable of the Sower" which "called imperiously for interpretation as a parable of creation." Then he wrote an essay on "Pre-Christian Christianity" and sent it to Dr. Otto Pfeiderer of Berlin for examination. Dr. Pfeiderer insisted that the work be published in book form. It was published in 1906, by A. Topelman, as *Der Vorchristliche Jesus*; a second edition appeared in English in the United States in 1911. The book caused much criticism among German critics. Dr. Arthur Drews popularized the work about four years later when he published his *Der Christus mythe*, which contained numerous quotations from Dr. Smith's work. Several articles and books appeared for and against Dr. Smith's thesis. Finally, Dr. Eugen Diederich asked Dr. Smith to write another book to clarify and amplify his thesis in *Der Vorchristliche Jesus*. His answer was *Ecce Deus: Die Urchristliche Lehre des Reingottlichen Jesu*, 1911, translated and published in English in London in 1912. "The essence of *Ecce Deus*", wrote Dr. Smith, "is symbolic interpretation of the Gospel . . . which carries with it as an inevitable consequence, the unhistorical character of the whole Gospel story as a biography . . . and is the interpretation of the whole proto-Christian movement as a crusade for monotheism, a protest against idolatry." In an article, "The Everlasting

Gospel," the author tried to show the "indisputable and unequivocally essential character of the great missionary movement in the diaspora." He wrote more than 80 articles and books on theology, New Testament criticism, the origin of Christianity, and other religious subjects, many of which were never offered for publication. There were four elaborate memoirs; "The Witness of Hermes," "The Witness of the Teaching," "The Interpolated Proof-Texts," and "The Original Meaning and Reference to the Crucifixion." These contributions were to form chapters in his great work *Transfigured—Crucified—Enthroned: A study of the Folk Mind of Israel as a Matrix of Christianity*, but the work was never finished.

Many years later (1932) in an article: "Milk or Meat?" (*Hibbert Journal* v. 31, p. 372) Dr. Smith expressed the results of his research in this field. Briefly they were: The Christ of the New Testament is the righteous servant of Jehovah, the Hebrew race, the people of Israel; the son of Man was the people of Israel, generally impersonated, also the chosen people; again, the hero of this old old story usually the people of Israel, was idealized, spiritualized and personalized.

In an article in the *Monist* in 1923 on "Christmas? or Epiphany?" he wrote: "In the feast of Epiphany he beheld the earlier and quasignostic view of the spiritual Jesus, the Savior-God who had appeared on earth to redeem man from the sin of idolatry, a conception that gradually retired before the later conception of a divine man, physically born, physically living, physically suffering and physically dying for the sins of the world."

#### *Classical Literature*

Dr. Smith was nurtured on the Classics. He read them as a boy. His love for them never ceased and in later years he became a distinguished classical scholar. After his retirement from Tulane University he began a very ambitious project: A Homometrical translation of the *Iliad* of Homer, line by line, in rhythm, measure and cadence, as faithful to the original as the genius of the English language would permit. After several years of constant strenuous labor, he completed the work. It was accepted by the Macmillan Company for publication, but he withdrew it so that he might make the translation more nearly perfect. Life was too short for the completion of this great work. It was left for his friend and noted classical scholar, Dr. Walter Miller of the University of Missouri, for completion and publication.

William Benjamin Smith possessed a lively imagination, tender emotion, love and appreciation of the beautiful everywhere. He often expressed himself in rhyme. He wrote the "Merman and the Seraph," which received the *Poet-Lore* prize, and "Love and Lore," a poem which received a prize among more than two hundred competitors. His translation into English verse of "Dies Irae," "Stabat Mater," and the "Drunken Song" in Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra* were widely published and received very favorable approval from Catholics and Protestants.

### *Philosophy*

During several years Dr. Smith had been developing certain philosophical views which he hoped to bring together and coordinate in a work to be entitled *Mind the Maker*. He addressed the Phi Beta Kappa of the University of Virginia, in 1913, on "Push or Pull," in which he contrasted the two views of the nature process: the one regarding it as a thrust of a transcendent power from without; the other as the urge of an immanent power from within. In 1918 he addressed the Phi Beta Kappa of Tulane University on "Mors Mortis" in which he emphasized the evolution of the "Communal consciousness divine as the goal of the universal nature-process as slowly revealing itself in history." The next year he wrote "Relativity and its philosophical implication." A result of this study was his "Metastereoscopy-Mass as Measure of space-curvature." There were many other contributions to be made a part of this master work of which the latest manuscript was an essay entitled "Recent Physics and World Theory." The major part of this essay containing his theory of *Reality and the World* was published in a booklet *Mind, the Maker*, edited by Dr. C. J. Keyser and published by *Scripta Mathematica*. This brochure must not be confused with his great work *Mind, the Maker* on which he concentrated in his later years but which he never completed.

### *Other Fields of Learning*

His major work was in the fields of classics, philosophy, New Testament research and criticism, and origin of Christianity, but he won distinction in other fields. In the social sciences he wrote not less than forty articles and books, including several biographical sketches, such as the ones on "James S. Rollins, the Father of the University of Missouri", "James K. Patterson, President of the University of Kentucky." He wrote on old age pensions, the race question, government ownership of public utilities, the gold standard, and the tariff. His work on the World War covered 400 pages. *An Inquiry into the Origin and Some Probable Issues of the European War*, 1914 was accepted for publication by Putnam and Sons, and was according to their judgment the best that had been written up to that time on the World War. However, Dr. Smith withdrew the manuscript as new revelations of facts were constantly antiquating earlier statements. It was never published.

His sketch of "James K. Patterson, President of the University of Kentucky" was unusually brilliant. It was an appreciation of his intimate friend, a teacher, an administrator, a man of learning, of poise and dignity; one of the two men on the Faculty of the University of Kentucky who remained loyal to Dr. Smith after his great apostacy. Dr. Patterson devoted his great talents for forty years to the building of the University of Kentucky. The author's splendid diction, the rhythm of his sentences, the sweep of his paragraphs would indicate that he might have been associated with the famous Homer on the windy plains of Troy. The sketch is a literary classic conceived and modeled in the Grecian spirit of beauty.

## LATER LIFE

Dr. Smith was honored with the Doctor of Laws degree by the University of Missouri. President Theodore Roosevelt selected him as one of the American representatives to the Pan-American Scientific Congress, Santiago, Chile, in 1906. He enjoyed the distinction of having his biographical sketch in *Who's Who* as well as in *Who's Who in America* and in the *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*. Dr. Smith was a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the first president of the New Orleans Academy of Science. He was a member of the American Mathematical Society, the Circolo Matematico di Palermo, and the Kantgesellschaft of Berlin.

William Benjamin Smith was a man of great personal charm; gentlemanly, courteous, unselfish; a man who could discourse on abstract science with a college professor or carry on an interesting conversation with the lowliest citizen. He inherited a strong vigorous physique and during his long life was seldom ill. In 1882, he married Miss Kathleen Merrill of Fayette, Missouri. She was an unusually talented woman, a teacher of vocal music in Howard Payne College. Later she sang in grand opera in St. Louis, Missouri. After seventeen years of married life she died of pulmonary tuberculosis in 1899. His eldest son, Neville Merrill Smith, a prominent physician of Fayette, Missouri, did not survive an appendectomy in the Jewish Hospital in St. Louis. Three children survived their father; Kenley, Katharyn, (Mrs. John Dos Passos), and William Benjamin Smith, Jr.

In his later years, William Benjamin Smith enjoyed a home life such as he had not known since his family scattered after the death of his wife. He had been very fortunate in selecting a room at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Curtis R. Everman, Columbia, Missouri. This family loved Dr. Smith not because he was a lonely man, but because of his gentleness, his courtesy, his generosity and his scholarship. Their hearts and their home were open to him. In return he loved and respected them and made many contributions to the congeniality and happiness of their home. This incipient friendship grew richer and deeper in sympathy and understanding during the eleven years which he lived in the Everman home. After the death of Mr. Everman in 1932, Dr. Smith was very solicitous for his future as he had hoped that the Evermans would care for him as long as he lived. He was very happy when he learned that he could keep his room, as Mrs. Everman would continue to keep some of the rooms in her home rented. Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Bryan, cousins of Mrs. Everman, came to live in the home. A deep love and understanding developed between Dr. Smith and the Bryans. When he was transferred to the Boone County Hospital he begged these three friends not to leave him, so he enjoyed their faithful ministrations to the last as had been his request.

The pleasant home relations had left Dr. Smith free to study and to write. Certain hours of the day were regularly devoted to writing and research; other

hours to recreation and sleep. His ambition had been to bring the three major projects—the translation of the *Iliad*, *Mind the Maker*, and *Transfigured, Crucified, Enthroned*—to completion, but an infected tooth and the extremely dry hot weather in the summer of 1934 over-taxed his well-worn physical body.

Dr. Smith had always grieved over the death of those dear to him, and while he appeared to take death as a matter of fact that comes to everyone he did not discuss his own approach to death and his future life. He was so engrossed in his work and so intent upon the completion of his projects that he seemed to dislike to think of the time for his own passing and he hoped that death would be delayed in summoning him.

After a brief illness in the Everman home Dr. Smith was taken to the Boone County Hospital. His children, Katharyn and Kenley, soon arrived. This great scholar's eyes soon grew very weary and stared upon the upper corner of the room, then came his last words in a very low murmur "Rappings—Rappings—the angels." The portals of the other world slowly unfolded and Dr. William Benjamin Smith entered in, on August 6, 1934. The mortal remains of this great man were laid to rest beside his devoted wife in the cemetery in Louisiana, Missouri.

Dr. Cassius J. Keyser in his sketch of William Benjamin Smith concluded with this estimate: "Of William Benjamin Smith it may, I think, be said without extravagance, that our country has had no greater scholar, no profounder or more productive investigator, no more versatile genius, and none more completely devoted to the higher interests of the human spirit."



## Bibliography of William Benjamin Smith

Compiled By

Henry O. Severance, Librarian, University of Missouri

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- "Cases of Construction", 24 pp.; "Epilog to Mind Makes Matter", 4 pp.; "Metastereoscropy", 18 pp.; "Mind is Maker; Matter is Made", 6 pp., 1930; "Nature and Necessity of Philosophy"; "New Realism", 122 pp., 1924; "The Realism of B. Russell", 31 pp.; "Seen, Occasional—Unseen, Eternal", 12 pp., 1927; "Space is Everything—Except Reality", 9 pp., 1930; "The World is My Idea"; "World-making", 34 pp., 1927.

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## LIBRARY SERIES

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(Numbers 1-7, 9-12, 14 are out of print)

1. Annual report of the librarian, 1907.
2. List of periodicals currently received by the libraries, 1910.
3. Handbook of the libraries. 1910.
4. Books for farmers and farmers' wives, April, 1912.
5. Partial bibliography and index of the publications of the College of Agriculture and the Agricultural Experiment Station, July, 1912.
6. Check list of the official serial publications of the University, 1913.
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11. List of periodicals currently received by the University library. 1921 35 p.
12. Check list of the official serial publications of the University. Edition 3. 1926. 63 p.
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Capture information

Date captured

Scanner manufacturer	Zeutschel
Scanner model	OS 15000
Scanning system software	Omniscan v.12.4 SR4 (1947) 64-bit
Optical resolution	600 dpi
Color settings	24 bit color
File types	tiff

Source information

Format	Book
Content type	text
Source ID	
Notes	

Derivatives - Access copy

Compression	Tiff: LZW
Editing software	Adobe Photoshop CS5
Editing characteristics	
Resolution	600 dpi
Color	grayscale
File types	tiff
Notes	Pages cropped and brightened