

# THE PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

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## I.

### THE REVISED CONFESSION.

THE Northern Presbyterians have published their Revised Confession of Faith, and it is proper for other Presbyterians, not of that communion, to review the changes which have been made, with a view to ascertaining whether they are alterations in the mere superficialities or in the substantive body of the Calvinistic system. The hilarity with which the revision has been received by such diluted Calvinists as the Cumberland Presbyterians, together with the promptness and enthusiasm with which they offered organic union on the basis of these changes, awakens apprehension, and calls for cautious examination.

An inventory of the changes which have been made will show that the Northern Presbyterians have, (1) explained their former doctrine of Predestination, (2) interpreted their doctrine of the salvation of Dead Infants, (3) restated their doctrine of works done by unregenerate persons, (4) amended their doctrine of Oaths, (5) withdrawn their charge that the Pope of Rome was Antichrist, (6) added a new chapter on the Holy Spirit, (7) and added a new chapter on the Love of God, and Missions.

We are not going to take up these points in detail, but elect, for animadversion, the changes which seem to affect the integrity of the Calvinistic system.

We quote now the new language which is the basis of our fault-finding:

we cannot but feel that our author is scarcely careful in his statement. He should certainly have taken into account the work of the Spirit in giving the dispositions to be thus affected by the vision of the death of Christ. Those who were eye witnesses of it did not show that they were in many cases affected in this saving way by it.

In this chapter he repudiates the idea of imputation entirely. He will not deny that Christ died as our substitute, and that his death was sacrificial, but he denies all transfer of merit when he says that "merit and demerit cannot be mechanically transferred like sums in an account." He adds that the substitutionary view of Christ's atonement must not be taken "to suggest the idea of a transference of merit, the sin of the world being carried over to Christ's account, and the merit of Christ to the world's account." Here we are inclined to think our author has capitulated, in part at least, to the modern mind. He tries to save himself by drawing the contrast between "a representative" and "a substitute." He says that Christ was "our substitute, but not our representative."

Here we are prompted to make two remarks. First, in denying imputation, or "transference of merit," as he calls it, our author fails to distinguish between guilt and demerit. Guilt as liability to penalty is imputable, even though personal merit or demerit is not. Those who teach the doctrine of imputation do not teach the transference of merit as our author seems to think. The other remark is that if our author had placed the covenant principle under his feet, he would have had no such difficulty as he seems to feel with the word representative. Indeed, we felt this to be a weakness in his book on the death of Christ, and it is now more evident. Then, with the covenant under our feet, we have no difficulty in giving proper scriptural meaning to both imputation and representation.

But we must conclude. We are sorry to have to say that we find here some toning down of the exegetical results which our author brought out so finely in his former book. This book, therefore, may be a little more agreeable to the modern liberal mind, but it is just that much the less satisfactory to the modern evangelical mind, which believes not only that Jesus Christ died for our sins, but that he died for us.

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ORR'S "DAVID HUME AND HIS INFLUENCE ON PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY."

DAVID HUME AND HIS INFLUENCE ON PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY. *By James Orr, D. D., Professor of Apologetics and Systematic Theology, United Free Church College, Glasgow, Scotland.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1903. Pp. ix.-241.

This is one of an interesting series of books known as "The World's Epoch Makers." About a dozen have been already published, and this is one of the very best. Those who know Dr. Orr's ability and fitness for the task assigned him are prepared to find this a good treatment of a difficult subject, and we are sure they will not be disappointed when they read the book now before us.

Hume's philosophy has had a peculiar history. In his own day it had little influence, and his books nearly all "fell flat" when first issued. Then later on it revived for a time when empiricism became influential. Again,

this was followed by a period of decline, due in part to the Kantian criticism. But in our own generation, since modern agnosticism lifted up its voice, Hume's skepticism has been brought forth as from the dead and rehabilitated. Hence the remarkable revival of interest in Hume's philosophy in our own time.

Dr. Orr was limited in his treatment of the subject, yet he has put a great deal into very little space.

There are eleven chapters. The first is introductory, then follow three chapters telling of Hume's life and literary labors. We scarcely know where to get in so brief a space such a good account of the man, with his good nature and self-conceit, as in these three chapters.

This is followed by four chapters which give some account of Hume's philosophy. First, his relation to previous philosophy, with the skeptical result, is sketched. Then his destructive doctrine of the first principles of knowledge is a valuable chapter. The problems of cause and effect and of free will are also carefully expounded. Here, in a sense, is really the point of departure for Hume's system. Hume's denial of the reality of substance, both material and spiritual, is also made the subject of close investigation.

The discussion concludes with a presentation of his extreme utilitarianism in morals, with his critique on miracles in the sphere of theology, and with his miscellaneous writings in history and in political economy. In an appendix there is some account given of Hume's various writings and their chief editions.

We content ourselves with saying that this is a capital little book from a most competent hand, and its perusal will give any careful reader a good idea of Hume and his philosophy.

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#### VERNER'S "PIONEERING IN CENTRAL AFRICA."

PIONEERING IN CENTRAL AFRICA. *By Samuel P. Verner.* Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication. 1903. Svo. Cloth. Pp. vi.-500. Price, \$2.00.

In furnishing a critique of this book, the writer labors somewhat under the embarrassment of what is popularly known as "the personal equation," due to a long and close acquaintance and intimacy with its author and his family, and a practical and personal relation to the enterprise of which it is at once the fruit and the explanation.

The author, the Rev. Samuel Phillips Verner, is a son of the Hon. J. S. Verner, of Columbia, S. C., and grandson of the late lamented and distinguished Dr. Charles Phillips, for years eminent as a professor in the University of North Carolina, and one of the leading preachers of that Synod. The grandson inherits something of his grandfather's physique, mental gifts, and constitutional characteristics. His youth was spent in the city of Columbia, S. C., where he studied in the State University, from which he graduated with distinction, but at the expense of his health. Immediately upon graduation, largely for purposes of physical recuperation, his father secured for him a situation as mechanic in the railroad shops of Columbia.

It was while working in these shops that the idea of going to Africa took