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I. BURNEY'S SOTERIOLOGY AND THE CUMBERLAND THEOLOGY.[1]

Dr. Burney's book is, on several accounts, worthy of the attention of the Christian public:

1. Along with a world of sophistries it occasionally exhibits a real truth in a vivid light.

2. It is a most virulent attack on the penal and substitutionary theory of the atonement, and presents a "new theory" of the atonement, which would suit, with only a slight modification, a Unitarian.

3. Its author's position makes the book worthy of consideration; for he is, perhaps, the most distinguished and honored teacher in a great church; and the doctrines of that church can, because of its numbers and aggressiveness, no longer be looked upon with indifference.

4. The production of such a book in such a quarter presents an excellent example of "the logic of events." Our Cumberland brethren set out, in 1810, with the rejection of the doctrine of predestination, professing to receive remaining Calvinism in its integrity. The reader of this volume will see evidence only too good that the Cumberland Church has already moved far out of Calvinism and into Pelagian Unitarianism, or, if not into it, hard by it, and only kept out by gross and ridiculous inconsistencies.

[1] *Atonement.—Soteriology.* The sacrificial, in contrast with the penal, substitutionary, and merely moral or exemplary theories of propitiation. By *S. G. Burney, D. D., LL. D., Professor of Systematic Theology in Cumberland University.* Nashville, Tenn.: Cumberland Presbyterian Publishing House. 1888.

vantage, in this case especially, if the author had "boiled down" the two volumes into one. He has introduced much extraneous matter. His style is often diffuse and sometimes involved. It lacks the crispness and directness of such a commentator as Canon Cook, for instance. He should have remembered too that Latin phrases freely quoted do not compensate for the lack of real learning. And yet he is often sprightly, and at times humorous, as where he says of the "borrowing" (Ex. iii. 22) that "our authorized version gave occasion to gainsayers, because they erred, not knowing the dictionary"; or where he rejects Brugsch's theory that "the Israelites did not pass through the Red Sea, but waddled through entanglements of marshes, lagoons, salt-water lakes—*as if Israel had been a runaway hippopotamus.*" We say nothing of the dignity or reverence of such remarks. Is "this here rod" good English? In writing a "hand-book for Bible classes," has a man the right to call anything "the *trikumia* of climax?" The author is not always consistent. He first denies Hengstenberg's theory concerning the natural basis of the ten plagues in general, and then admits it in detail. But it is gratifying to have him reiterate as he does his assurance that they were all wrought by supernatural power, and were all unquestionably miraculous.

There are of course many good points about this book, but it has not sufficient merit to supersede in popular use certain other brief commentaries. The work by Canon Cook in the Bible Commentary still holds its place as the best of its class, remaining preëminent among the shorter commentaries on this portion of Scripture.

Hampden-Sidney, Va. W. W. Moore.

Schurman's Belief in God.

Belief in God: Its Origin, Nature, and Basis. *By Jacob Gould Schurman, Professor of Philosophy in Cornell University.* Pp. 266. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1890.

This neat little treatise consists of six lectures given last year at Andover Theological Seminary on the Winkley foundation. The book itself is all that we would expect from the firm of Scribner's Sons. The author is a Canadian by birth; and though but a young man, he has had a brilliant career. He was educated in Canada, Britain and Germany. He was professor first in Acadia College, Nova Scotia, and afterwards in Dalhousie University, Halifax, N. S. A few years ago he was called to the Chair of Philosophy in Cornell, and has filled that position with distinction ever since.

The treatise before us deals with a question of perennial interest, and is written in a remarkably lucid and expressive style. Even when dealing with abstruse themes there is no obscurity, so that the reader has little difficulty in finding the author's meaning.

In the preface the author tells us that the Winkley lectureship is "hampered by no conditions whatever," and he counts this "a rare and surely a fortunate circumstance for any theological school." He does not inform us whether this is intended to be a sort of apology for some of the views which he unfolds in his lectures, or whether he means to hint that in the pursuit of religious inquiry revelation must abdicate in favor of reason. In any case, there is the commendation of a principle which is utterly destructive of sound views alike in philosophy and

religion, for all true and sound thinking must conform itself to the standard of revelation, otherwise we shall be at the mercy of every man's erratic speculations. This laudation of supposed religious freedom is too often the glorifying of a spurious liberty, which soon runs into wild license and produces what may be termed mob rule in religious thought.

But we must inspect without further delay the contents of these six lectures. The theme discussed is "*Belief in God*"; and the titles of the several lectures are as follows: "Agnosticism"; "The logical character of belief in God"; "Origin and development of the belief"; "Belief in God as cause or ground of the world"; "Belief in God as a realizing purpose in the world"; and "Belief in God as Father of spirits."

In the first lecture, agnosticism as a barrier to the possibility of a knowledge of God, is discussed in a brief but acute manner. Its three modern phases, as a *method* of knowledge, as related to the *object* of knowledge, and as connected with the *subject* in knowledge, are in turn canvassed. The first, much as it is exalted by Huxley, is shown to be only a method of knowledge, which no one cares to deny, wherein evidence is made the measure of mental assent. The second, which H. Spencer represents, leads, as our author makes plain, to most absurd results, both in regard to science and philosophy. The third, which dates back to Hume and Kant, is the most subtle of all; and the way in which Prof. Schurman proceeds to show that a sound psychology is the refutation of that phase of agnosticism, which is nothing else than philosophical skepticism, deserves highest praise.

The second lecture deals with the logical character of belief in God, and, on the whole, this lecture also has much which is to our liking, though some things are not. The question as to whether the existence of God can be *proved* is not formally discussed; still the way in which the question is stated is effective, as against those who deny that our belief in God is a rational, well-grounded belief, for which good reasons can be given. The position of our author seems to be this: Our belief in God is not of the nature of "demonstrative knowledge," nor is it really "inductive knowledge," but it is merely "an hypothesis to explain certain facts." As these facts are found in nature, they provide the *cosmic* basis of theistic belief; and as they are found in man, they provide its *anthropic* basis. The two taken together constitute *anthropo-cosmic* theism, and this new term denotes our author's view.

At this point there seems to be some confusion of thought in the discussion on the part of our author. The difference between belief and knowledge is not explained, nor is it announced that they are identical. On such an important point as this the reader should hardly be left to his own inferences as to the author's meaning. Then, too, the real nature of the logical process seems to be overlooked when it is said that it is not "inductive knowledge" but "an hypothesis to explain facts." Professor Schurman no doubt knows enough about logic to be familiar with the radical difference between induction from the recital of particulars (*inductio per enumerationem simplicem*), and the strict inductive method based upon the great principle of the general uniformity of nature, which involves a true doctrine of causation lying behind it. Failure to keep these two phases of the inductive method clearly in view introduces confusion into what would otherwise be a good discussion. Making an hypothesis to explain certain facts, and then verify-

ing the hypothesis by the facts is surely the true Baconian inductive method; so when our author speaks of belief in God not being inductive knowledge, but an hypothesis to explain certain facts, there is an evident confusion of thought of which no experienced logician should have been guilty.

And further, while we admit that the postulate of the divine existence as the explanation of certain facts in the universe affords *one* important mode by which belief in God may be vindicated, yet we cannot assent to the view that this is anything like a complete analysis of the logical nature of that belief. In many other ways can it also be shown that theistic belief is a well founded logical belief. The *a priori* proofs have their force and use, and the moral argument is of great value, yet both of these are but lightly regarded by our author. That this view of our author's doctrine is correct seems to be confirmed by the rather timid, uncertain way in which the proofs are exhibited in some of the later lectures of the course.

But we hasten to the next lecture, where what we regard as radical error is boldly expounded. The subject under discussion is "The origin and development of belief in God." This is a subject which at the present time is much debated, and in some respects it is more important than the question of the proofs for the divine existence, since the conclusions reached in regard to the origin of theistic belief will shape our views touching the grounds of it, and greatly modify our ideas as to the professedly divine revelation contained in the Scriptures. It is with regret that our dissent is entered against nearly everything contained in this lecture, for the discussion evinces much learning and ability. It is here that we first distinctly note the more than doubtful philosophical standpoint of our author, for we now discover that subtle idealistic pantheism of neo-Hegelian type which, with its grain of truth and mountain of error, evidently underlies such statements as these: "All objects of thought are in a state of becoming," "Identity in difference is the character both of being and of thought." Are there then, no permanent abiding objects of thought? Are thought and being identical?

When our author turns to discuss the question of the origin of belief in God, the bias of this philosophy, which identifies thought and being in absolute unconscious reason, and finds the universe of nature and spirit to be the necessary unfolding of the absolute idea, and then in the religious consciousness of man discovers in man's knowledge of God God's knowledge of himself, comes boldly into view.

Accepting this philosophy of idealistic evolutionary pantheism, we are not surprised to find the evolutionary, or, as he prefers to say, the historical method adopted by our author in accounting for the origin of the belief in God. In a general way he thinks that neither *animism* nor *fetichism*, strictly speaking, marks the beginning of the consciousness of God in the mind of primitive man, although at times he seems to admit that there is much truth in the explanations given along these lines by Positivists, H. Spencer and others. He ventures to give preference to the opinion that the origin of the belief in question is to be found in "polydæmonistic beliefs of savages." Having thus secured a starting point, the usual historical evidence is adduced to show how, through later prehistoric and early historic ages, the belief in God, or consciousness of God, became more and more distinct. Fetichism, pagan mythologies, and comparative religion, by a strange perversion of the facts in our author's hands, mark various stages of natural

growth in theistic belief, until we find Christianity described as "the noblest fruitage of the Semitic religion." That primitive divine objective revelation had any place in shaping the growth of the belief in God is denied, for on psychological grounds Professor Schurman is sure that primitive man could not receive such a revelation. The only revelation possible is that made in the religious consciousness of men, as they are gradually rising to clearer theistic belief; and the Scriptures, or any other sacred literature, simply register the religious ideas of any given age. Jehovah is the diety of Israel, just as Baal was of the Canaanites, Bel of the Babylonians, Chemosh of the Moabites, and Dagon of the Philistines. Such are some of the radical conclusions from which we enter emphatic dissent.

But further, in order to make sure that there will be time enough for all this to take place, a great antiquity for man is quietly assumed by Professor Schurman as if it were fixed fact, for no attempt at proof is made. The beginning of theistic belief, he says, dates away back "to that long period when a thousand years were but as a day," and during "an incalculable aeon of savagery and barbarism, of which every trace has perished," for we are further informed that "rude tools and weapons are memorials of later prehistoric ages." This assuredly is a cavalier mode of dealing with the question of man's antiquity. No proof is given, and no regard is paid to the Biblical data on this question, though in the latter part of this lecture and the opening of the next the mythical nature of the record in Genesis seems to be assumed, and the most radical results of the negative or destructive biblical critics appear to be admitted. This shows to what straits our author is driven by his philosophical bias. And to crown all, did Professor Schurman really expect his cultured Andover auditors to accept his authoritative statement as to what took place during that "*incalculable* aeon of savagery and barbarism *of which every trace has perished?*" We can understand the propriety of reasoning about man's antiquity from prehistoric ages, of which in stone and other relics we have some traces; but to speak of prehistoric periods "of which all traces have perished" is simply to make common sense laugh at the philosopher.

There are other points in this lecture which deserve attention, but enough has been said to indicate the line of exposition taken in it, and to show how fundamentally erroneous and untenable it is. All the facts which are adduced can be explained in accordance with a doctrine which does ample justice to them, and which gives the true philosophy of man, and which treats with reverence the record of the Scriptures.

Of the other three lectures little can now be said. One sets forth the substance of the *causal*, a second the gist of the *design*, and a third the dim outlines of what seems to be intended for the *moral* argument; but the influence of the philosophical theory which dominates our author has so transformed these proofs that it is not easy to see that even their logical form has been preserved. Instead of a first cause, who is not only Creator but also constant preserver of the universe, we find a doctrine proclaimed which regards God as merely the "immanent ground of the universe," with no real numerical distinction between the universe and its ground, and which announces creation to be nothing more than "the eternal self-revelation of God," who as infinite Spirit is the immanent ground of the universe. Instead of a directing intelligence, in vital relation with the universe, adapting means to ends, we have an "immanent teleology," where all finality or design is lost in the restless sea of the unconscious movement of nature as it

"seeks to realize the ideas" of the infinite Spirit, which is the immanent ground of the universe.

Finally, instead of the moral proof, which finds the nature of God the basis of immutable moral distinctions, and the will of God the ground of moral obligation, we have a vague and somewhat sentimental theodicy, which neither conceives the problem of evil correctly, nor affords any reasons whatever for believing that the "immanent ground of the universe," regarded as "the Father of Spirits," has any moral attributes at all. Our author makes far too much of the immanency of God in the universe, for in his doctrine the relation of God to the universe is expressed in terms of pantheism, and this must result in the logical destruction of the transcendency of God, for thereby the numerical distinction between God and the universe is reduced to zero on the side of immanency. A true theistic theory, which shall at once be a rational theology and a theistic cosmology, must hold, in well-balanced relation, both the immanency and transcendency of God in relation to the universe, and also refuse to allow them to be reduced to unity in terms of either the one or the other.

But we gladly lay aside the pen, for criticism is at best but ungracious work. Yet in order to make book reviews of any value, fair and candid scrutiny of an author's opinions must be made. We have perused this able treatise with feelings of interest and pain. The ability and freshness of the thought, and the clearness of the expression sustained interest on to the very last page. But at the same time, it was a source of real pain to find, in connection with a Christian institution, views advocated which can never provide a basis of Christian theism, but rather with a friendly kiss betray it to an old foe. And to hear in the same connection and in the name of the religion of Christ those Scriptures which we hold to be that Word of God which cannot be broken, spoken of as not essentially different from the Vedas or the Zend-a-Vesta, filled us with sadness. These lectures we greatly fear will not add to the reputation of the author, save in the opinion of those who do not wish the prosperity of Christianity as a distinctly supernatural religion.

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BURNEY'S "PSYCHOLOGY."

STUDIES IN PSYCHOLOGY. *"Γνῶθι σεαυτόν."* *By S. G. Burney, D. D., LL. D., Professor of Systematic Theology in Cumberland University, author of Studies in Moral Science, Soteriology, Atonement and Law Reviewed, etc.* Published for the author. Cumberland Presbyterian Publishing-House, Nashville, Tenn. 1890.

This work by the venerable Dr. Burney is a publication of his lectures to his classes, at their request, and is designed to be a college text-book. It is comprehensive; its five hundred pages discuss the intellect, the sensibility and the will in regular order, with an appendix devoted to the last of the three great powers. The views of English, Scotch, and American psychologists are given, usually in extracts from their own writings. The treatment is largely polemic and critical; the Doctor regarding all views but his own as "absurd." It is quite original and interesting. The proof-reading was not well done, as frequent inaccuracies show.

Let us turn the pages and notice some of the more striking views and passages.