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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REFORMED THEOLOGY TODAY*

MR. PRESIDENT, GENTLEMEN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, FATHERS AND BRETHERN :

I have a very profound sense of unworthiness in taking up the duties of the Chair to which you have called me—a Chair made famous by the illustrious men who have preceded me, and whose labours have helped to give Princeton Seminary a fame throughout the world for sound learning and true piety. We think today of Archibald Alexander, that man of God, the first Professor in this Seminary; of Charles Hodge, whose Systematic Theology today remains as probably the greatest exposition of the Reformed Theology in the English language; of Archibald Alexander Hodge, a man of rare popular gifts and of unusual metaphysical ability; and last, but not least, excelling them all in erudition, of Dr. Warfield, whose recent death has left us bereft of our leader and of one of the greatest men who have ever taught in this Institution.

I would pause a moment to pay a tribute to his memory. He was my honoured teacher and friend. For twenty years I had the privilege of helping him in this department, and drew inspiration from his broad minded scholarship. At the time of his death he was, I think, without an equal as a theologian in the English speaking world. With Doctors Kuyper and Bavinck of Holland, he made up a great trio of outstanding exponents of the Reformed Faith. His loss is simply irreparable. But he has gone to his reward, to

* An Inaugural Address delivered by Caspar Wistar Hodge on the occasion of his induction into the Charles Hodge Chair of Didactic and Polemic Theology, Miller Chapel, October 11th, 1921.

"evangelical" conception supposedly more in accord with Christian experience and life.

This whole method, however, is a fallacious one. We can distinguish between doctrine and life, theology and religion, but not between the form and essence of doctrine, as Schulze does. The form and essence of doctrine are inseparable, and Schulze's doctrinal statements come from the nineteenth century, not from the Apostolic age. Christian experience is neither a source nor a norm of Christian truth, but is determined by a doctrine derived from the Christian revelation. Just at this point is found the fundamental fault in this modern theology which Schulze represents, *viz.*, its subjective conception of revelation, and its denial that the idea of revelation involves that of the communication of truth to man by God.

Princeton.

C. W. HODGE.

Studies in Recent Adventism. By HENRY C. SHELDON, Professor in Boston University. New York; Cincinnati: The Abingdon Press. 1918. Pp. 195.

This is a reprint of Professor Sheldon's book of the above title, which was published in 1915, and reviewed in THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW in 1916, Vol. XIV, p. 146.

In this reprint an Appendix of thirty-five pages is added to reinforce, as the author says, four points of his criticism of Adventism. These points, which had previously received some attention are: 1. The forcing of the Old Testament Prophecy; 2. an arbitrary intrusion into the New Testament of a sense favorable to the pre-millennial thesis; 3. a drastic disparagement of the vocation of Christianity over against the interest and office of Jewish nationality; 4. a combination of intemperate pessimism with a most extravagant optimism.

Princeton.

C. W. HODGE.

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

From Authority to Freedom. The Spiritual Pilgrimage of Charles Hargrove. By L. P. JACKS, M.A., D.D., LL.D., Principal of Manchester College, Oxford; and Editor of *The Hibbert Journal*. London: Williams & Norgate. 1920. Pp. 384.

The brilliant editor of *The Hibbert Journal* rarely touches any subject which he does not adorn. *From Authority to Freedom* is the gripping story of the spiritual pilgrimage of Charles Hargrove, for many years minister of the Mills Hill Unitarian Church at Leeds, England. On this side Hargrove is not even a name; in England he seems to have been in Unitarian circles. The book is composed for the greater part of excerpts from the diary of Hargrove. His father was a minister of the Church of England, but resigned his living to become a preacher in the Plymouth Brethren. This straitest of non-conformist sects was

the first spiritual home of Hargrove. There the tremendous question of the salvation of his immortal soul was early thrust upon him and the way of eternal life became the grand interest of the lad's thought. In his days of "Freedom" Hargrove described this Plymouth Brethren religion as Bibliolatry. He recalled the feeling of having done something wicked because one day he went somewhere without his Bible. He gives an account of what he was taught by his father and in the church of the Brethren. The editorial selections and grouping of this material would indicate that Professor Jacks shares Hargrove's contempt for such beliefs. But in the summary he gives there is nothing that is not Scriptural and evangelical. The Plymouth Brethren believed in sin, hell, conversion and atonement through the death of Christ. This creed he pillories by saying, "The good God be thanked for it that few are wholly true to their creeds. They believe with their minds what their souls disallow." But what is there in this series of beliefs held by the Plymouth Brethren which differs in any important item from that of Catholic Christianity? Or is it that the Plymouth Brethren, like some of the other smaller and poorer communions boldly preached and declared what was and is in the creeds of all other churches?

When a young man of twenty at Cambridge, Hargrove, through influences which he himself does not seem to be able to define, became a convert to the Roman Catholic Church and entered the London Oratory. Now ensues the grand contest between the young convert and his pious and Rome abominating father and mother. On his side the son, like most converts to Rome, outdoes the ordinary Catholic in his references to the Blood and the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Blessed Mother, etc. The logic of his Romanism he thus defines: 1. There must needs be some religion revealed of God. 2. Such a religion requires a living infallible teacher. 3. The Church of Rome is the only body which can make a reasonable pretension to be this teacher. Therefore the Church of Rome is to be obeyed.

The letters which his father addressed to him in the convent of Santa Sabina near Rome are magnificent. In them a burning love for the wayward son mingles with a fierce hatred of the abominations of Rome. From the first letter which he wrote him when he heard of his conversion to Rome to the last one which he dictated when he lay dying upon his bed, this stern father pleads with his son to come out of the lap of the Roman harlot. There is no doubt about his concern for the salvation of the soul of his son: "O, stir yourself from this deadly slough into which you are fallen, use the powers which God has given you and don't suffer yourself to be enslaved by man." The son tells his father that it was from him he learned the vast importance of saving his soul. Can the father now blame him, if he puts the salvation of his soul above the love of father and mother and brother and sister?

When he had become a full-fledged Dominican, Hargrove, now Brother Jerome, went out to Trinidad. In that detestable country amid a sunken and degraded population, he began his priestly labours. His

letters and his entries in the diary betray a certain weariness of spirit, and at length doubt as to Catholic truth, whereby, in an instant, he incurs major excommunication. The rock on which his monkish fancy was wrecked was the underlying doctrine of all Roman theology, eternal damnation. He found himself saying, "I do not believe it!" Here again he fell back upon the logical method which he had learned in the Convent: 1. "A religion which teaches everlasting punishment is not of God. 2. But the only religion which has any claim upon a reasonable man teaches this. 3. Therefore there is no religion 'of God'—i.e., supernaturally revealed. 4. I ceased to be a Roman Catholic, and—in your sense of the word—a Christian. I landed in England as what you would call an infidel."

Fulfilling a prophecy of his father that he would come out of Rome as quickly as he had gone into it, Hargrove sailed for England and withdrew from the priesthood. It is noteworthy that he had nothing to say in after years about the cruelty or alleged licentiousness of the monks and the clergy. Nothing in Catholic practise or polity, but only doubt as to dogma had caused his withdrawal. The years he was a priest he afterwards referred to as a "beautiful vision." "Verily it was a god-like life, splendours of the Eternal seemed to flow forth upon me from the great mystery of the God I worshipped. Light from afar as from a vision of brightness inconceivable filled me with longings and delight beyond what I could support."

He now returned to Oxford as an undergraduate, at thirty-four years of age, and made a feeble effort at preparing for medicine. But this uncongenial task was soon abandoned for lecturing in the University Extension course, and from this he drifted into the Unitarian ministry, much to the horror of his brother, a clergyman in the Established Church, for if their father had taught them that Roman Catholicism was an "odious Christ dishonoring apostacy," his detestation for Unitarianism was even greater; he could not suffer it to be mentioned as a form of Christian faith. Previous to his settlement at Leeds, Hargrove married a girl of seventeen, in this respect following the footsteps of famous rebels against Rome, and recalling the jest of Erasmus about the Reformation being a comedy which always ended in marriage.

For five and thirty years Hargrove ministered faithfully at Leeds. But his somewhat vague discussions about God and the soul and his attendance upon this and that welfare committee do not give the impression that he had found that "freedom" which Professor Jacks names as the end of the pilgrimage. George Muller of Bristol who had joined with many others in prayers for the return of Hargrove to the evangelical faith made a prediction to Hargrove's brother that God would yet bring him out to be a great witness for His truth, using his experience of Romanism and Unitarianism to testify for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This prediction was not fulfilled. Hargrove died a Unitarian.

He is a singular example of the man of deep interest in the things of God and the spiritual world, yet who chose error, either the errors of a

Christ dishonoring system like that of Rome or the far worse infidelity of Unitarianism. The title "From Authority to Freedom" is misleading. It might better have been called "From Authority to Agnosticism."

So far as Professor Jacks appears in the pages of this book his speech, when not in the nature of a eulogy upon the morality and sincerity of Roman Catholics as against Protestants—Unitarians excepted—is to the disparagement of the grand and simple doctrines of the Christian religion. Sin, eternal retribution, conversion, atonement, these doctrines which Hargrove damns as the beliefs of the Plymouth Brethren, apparently mean little to Professor Jacks. He names them as preposterous and outworn articles of a dead church. The book is a sad one. The struggles of doubt are always sad, especially when they lead first to refuge of lies and superstitions, and then to infidelity tinged with morality and ethics.

Philadelphia, Pa.

CLARENCE EDWARD MACARTNEY.

A New Mind for the New Age. By HENRY CHURCHILL KING, D.D., LL.D., President of Oberlin College. Fleming H. Revell Co. 1920.

This book contains the six lectures delivered by Dr. King on the Cole Foundation at Vanderbilt University. Much of the material in the book is a reprint from a book by Dr. King which was distributed among the soldiers during the war. This accounts for much that sounds stale and platitudinous. Although the addenda to the book after the War speaks much of disillusionment and relaxation one cannot avoid the conviction that he is listening to a man who still holds the belief that was shared by so many as the war drew to its close, viz., that the old world order was giving way to a new and better order. Hardly any one feels that way now. For this reason Dr. King's book sounds more like a pamphlet for the existing days of the war than a sober judgment after the war.

The title, *A New Mind for the New Age*, will raise a question in many minds: Save in a sense of time, is there any such thing as a New Age? What is new about it? What new hopes are there? what new fears? what new graces? and what new vices and sins and perils? The book ought to demonstrate this, if it is to justify its title. We do not feel that it does. There are many helpful and suggestive sayings about an active and positive Christian civilization which does not wait for calamities to happen, and then apply its healing philosophy, but takes steps to so order human affairs that such offenses shall not come.

The book has an unfortunate and offensive reference to what is called the Old Testament idea of religion as one of those things the falseness of which had been taught us by the war. Nothing could be further from the truth. If any book came out of the fiery furnace of the great conflict with unreduced authority, and with a new majesty and awe about it, that book was the Old Testament, the book which tells us that God is the moral governor of nations and societies as well as of individuals; the book that tells us righteousness and judgment are the habitation of