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ART. I.—*The Natural History of Man; Comprising Inquiries into the modifying influence of Physical and Moral Agencies on the different tribes of the Human Family.* By J. C. Prichard, M. D. London: Baillere, 1843.

THE late decease of Dr. Prichard has given a death blow to the high hopes of farther contributions to the science of man, from his learned pen. If he had put forth no other work than this, it alone would have sufficed to give him an imperishable renown. The learning displayed in his work is not more remarkable, than the ability with which it is all brought to bear upon the particular subject before him, and the cool, quiet, and dispassionate manner, in which he conducts his inquiries, and grapples with the difficulties in his way. He has no preconceived, or pre-adopted theory to support. He takes mankind as they are, presenting certain phenomena. He seeks an explanation of these phenomena, which shall accord with philosophy, and pursuing a process of the most rigid induction, disdains to receive as conclusive aught that is not most thoroughly demonstrated; or as evidence, what a sound philosophy would reject

in this, as Dr. Milnor was not only one of the founders of the society, but for years its wise counsellor and steadfast friend. The volume is beautifully got up, and is a handsome tribute to the memory of a great and good man, who, though gifted by nature with neither brilliancy nor genius, yet, by his clearness of intellect, good sense, indefatigable industry, and devoted piety, was made the honoured instrument, under God, of accomplishing an unspeakable amount of good.

Art. V.—*Robert Burns; as a Poet, and as a Man.* By Samuel Tyler, of the Maryland Bar. New York: Baker & Scribner. 1848. pp. 209. 12mo.

We and our readers have long been familiar with Mr. Tyler's labours as an admiring student, and able expounder of the Baconian Philosophy, with its kindred doctrines in Logic and Metaphysics, and its applications to the argument of Natural Theology. We were taken somewhat by surprise by the publication of the little volume before us, as indicating that, amidst these severer studies, Mr. T. has found time for the culture of lighter literature, and even for paying his court to the Muses. It is very seldom that the same individual attains equal distinction in lines of research and of labour, so different from each other; and we think Mr. T. has not made good an exception to this general remark. The work before is by far the least satisfactory of any thing we have yet seen, from his lucid and generally able pen. It is divided into two parts: the one proposing a new theory of beauty as applied to the art of poetry, and especially as illustrated by the works of Burns; and the other constituting an almost unconditional defence of the Poet in his various relations to society as a man. In both cases, the author fails to carry our convictions by his ingenious reasonings or pleadings, as the case may be; and in both we are so far dissatisfied with his conclusions, as to feel a strong prompting to enter our dissent, not only as a matter of literary judgment, but with something approaching to moral disapprobation.

The hypothesis advocated in this work, as announced with the author's characteristic clearness, is that "the *sublimity* of the material world, is derived from associations with man and his spiritual characteristics; and that the *beauty* of the material world, is derived from associations with woman and her spiritual characteristics." After stating and excepting to the definition which makes "the beautiful to consist in whatever of external nature produces an agreeable impression within us," he adds: "What I mean by the beautiful, is whatever, in the material world, produces impressions within us analogous to those awakened by our intercourse with woman." "In fact, I make woman the spiritual dispenser of beauty to the world." This is sufficiently explicit; and we need hardly say we regard it, not merely like many other hypotheses on this recondite subject, as false philosophy, but as false philosophy sensualized.

The truth, we suppose, is simply this: the healthy exercise of all the faculties of man is attended by a sense of pleasure. This is an ultimate law of our nature, resulting from the beneficence of the Creator. The law of human life includes in it the law of happiness. Now the application of this simple principle to objects of sight, gives rise to the sense of beauty. It includes not only, or even principally, the agreeable sensation attending the mere act of vision as an organic function, but an act of discrimination between the objects or qualities that are adapted to its exercise in the original plan of its formation, and those that are not. It implies, therefore, a preference of one thing over another, grounded originally on the mere fact that it is more agreeable. We are constrained, therefore, to regard the taste, in its last analysis, as an original and ultimate law of our nature, admitting of no explanation except that we were so made; and beauty, pure, material or objective beauty, as a quality which we can only define, by saying that it awakens the pleasures of taste. This is a simple, ultimate fact, for which we can give no reason, any more than why we like the smell of a rose, and dislike that of assafœtida, or why we like the taste of a peach, and dislike that of garlic.

While this is, in our judgment, the true original germ of the faculty of taste as applied to beauty; and the true original foundation of beauty as an objective quality in nature, we are also to remember that the exercise of the taste in man, at least

in all its higher applications, is complex, and includes other elements besides the original and fundamental one just described. All our mental functions are those of intelligent and moral beings. Our intelligence and moral character are implicated in, and modify, all our mental acts. We apprehend truth, not as beings of pure, cold intellect, but as endowed with moral sensibilities: and so the exercise of the taste involves both the intellectual and moral faculties of our nature, because these all inhere, not as distinct ingredients, but as one compound or joint function of the same substantive mind. The human mind is not like a building made up of separate and independent apartments, each of which is appropriated to a separate mental faculty, but like a single chamber, into which light streams through various windows of differently coloured glass. There are not so many distinct images formed by each faculty, but one single image, formed by the blending of the several beams admitted through each aperture. In other words, beauty is never seen through a pure esthetic medium, but a medium that is tinged with the varied hues of human thought and feeling, which emanate from the intellectual and moral nature of the beholder himself. The sense of beauty, as the term is commonly taken, is therefore a highly complex thing. The question, what is beauty, and still more, the question as to the comparative degrees of beauty, depend upon the delicacy, purity, and elevation of thought and feeling in the soul, as well as the intrinsic quality of the object. To one it appears in the neutral tint of unemotional, unimpassioned, and almost unthinking mind. To another it is radiant with ideas of the spiritual and the divine, or coloured with the hues of human sympathy and feeling, flowing from a soul bathed in the knowledge and love of God and of humanity; and to a third it glares before the mental vision in the lurid fires shot from the sensual and earthly passions of a degraded heart. Hence arise, in part, the vast subjective differences of taste among men. In the first case, we have the lowest degree of unperverted taste, or, as near as human nature will admit of such a thing, what should, in strictness of language, be denominated a mere esthetic feeling. In the second, a taste exquisite at once for purity, delicacy, and elevation. And in the last, a taste that is not only low, but erro-

neous and vulgar, capable of appreciating only the most sensual class of beauties.

The strong tendency of the human mind to simplify and generalize, has constantly prompted philosophers to seek for some single element, to the constant presence of which, the manifold beauty of nature may be referred; or failing in this, to reduce the number of its ultimate elements to as few as possible. The attempt to do this has given us the well known analysis of Hogarth, and the familiar hypotheses of Alison, Diderot, Burke, Hume, and Kant. All these hypotheses appear to us to be at fault; first, because they are too restricted and artificial, to satisfy our experience, in contemplating the varied and countless diversities of beauty in the works of nature; and secondly, because they make too little of the ultimate and fundamental fact, that beauty exists, as a quality in natural objects, prior to all association, and independently of the exercise of the intellect on the qualities of proportion, fitness, utility, or multiplicity in unity, or indeed any of those abstract principles of the reason, in which metaphysicians have sought for the foundation of our sense of beauty.

To resolve the beauty of objects in nature into their utility, or the proportion and symmetry of their parts, is to confound things which are entirely distinct, though both productive of a certain sort of pleasure. It is not only to obliterate the taste, as a separate faculty or law of mental action from that by which we perceive the truth and the relations of things, but to obliterate entirely what we mean by beauty, from the works of nature. For it is to us a matter of simple consciousness, that there exists, and that we are capable of appreciating, a certain quality in objects, distinct from their utility or proportion, or any thing else that is the subject of an intellectual judgment.

If any thing be needed to establish this conclusion, beyond a simple appeal to experience, it may easily be found in the fact, that while the relations to which beauty has been referred are a source of agreeable emotion, yet our sense of beauty is by no means in proportion to the degree in which those relations appear; as it should be, if the two things are identical. Hume, with the philosophical acumen which characterises all his works, has shown that all those properties in which the sense of beauty has been sought, may be resolved into a perception

of their utility. But notwithstanding the ingenuity of his analysis, and the plausibility of his reasoning, we apprehend the taste of mankind will persist in discerning more beauty in the tail of a peacock or the plumage of a bird of paradise, than in the pouch of a pelican or the proboseis of an elephant, though the utility of the things are in the inverse ratio to their beauty. And even where the sense of beauty and the sense of utility are both present, and in equal proportions, the two things are clearly distinguished both in their origin and their pereeption. The taste of Michael Angelo guided by an original intuitive law of its own, projected the arch of the dome of St. Peter's. It was reserved for a mathematician only a few years ago, who was struck by its adaptation to support the immense weight of the dome, by applying the calculus to its measurements, to demonstrate its utility, by showing that it was precisely the arch of greatest strength. The legitimate inference from this coincidence is not that beauty and utility are the same thing, but that the laws of matter, on which its strength depends, were constituted by the same mind which ordained the taste of man, and hence the two are found to be in perfect harmony, though as distinguishable as the fragrance and the flavour of a strawberry or a peach.

The hypotheses of Alison, Burke, and that now propounded by Mr. Tyler, though differing in the most essential respects, agree in this: that they refer the sense of beauty in the objects of nature to the principle of association or suggestion, and not to a law of our being, terminating upon the qualities of the objects themselves. To this assumption our consciousness refuses to answer: and we are persuaded that it is the result of a theory, and not a simple interrogation of experience. To us it seems perfectly clear that the agreeable association of intellectual or moral expression with the forms of beautiful objects in nature, is founded upon a prior and instantaneous apprehension of their intrinsic beauty, instead of the sense of beauty springing out of the association; although, when the association is once established, it becomes, for reasons which we have already explained, a rich and constant source of emotion, tending to enhance the complex sense of what we term beauty. It is the inherent power of the violet, e. g. to awaken an agreeable emotion of a certain kind, as an ultimate fact, that makes it the

emblem of modesty, and not the association with that moral expression, which first awakens our sense of its beauty. All that it is possible for association to do, is to add fresh tints of feeling, or pour more brilliant hues of thought, over the forms of beauty before embodied in the works of nature.

We object, therefore, to the hypothesis of Alison only in part, and that purely on philosophical grounds; but the principle as applied by Mr. Tyler, awakens, as we have said before, a certain feeling bordering on moral disapprobation. It degrades the taste from the rank to which it belongs, if not among the strictly moral faculties of our nature, at least among the refining and elevating ones; and sinks the sense of beauty into the servant of lust. We do not mean to say that, in the conceptions of Mr. T. himself, it has run to that excess; but that such seems to be its tendency and its inevitable result. And we cannot help thinking that even to the feelings of Mr. T. there must be something startling, if not repugnant, in the supposition that there is no beauty in the works of God, but what comes from association with woman. Is there no feeling in the human soul, except the admiration for woman, capable of waking a response from all the vast range of being? Is there no other conception, whether intellectual or moral, capable of projecting an image of beauty in the great mirror of nature? What is it that constitutes woman the sole spiritual dispenser of beauty to the world? If we were disposed to indulge our comic fancy, it would be easy to draw some strange corollaries from this hypothesis, the legitimacy of which it might trouble the author to disprove. If he should attempt to escape what seems to us to be the inevitable tendency of his principles, by assuming that the admiration for woman is due to the extraordinary assemblage of beauties, both physical and moral, which it has pleased the Creator to embody in her constitution, we answer, this is a concession that these elements of female loveliness are beautiful, independently of their embodiment in woman. And if so why may not the same elements of beauty exist in other works of nature? and why may they not be appreciable by the taste, independently of their association with her?

The truth is, Mr. T. has made a false induction, perhaps from too confined a contemplation of the more sensuous beauties of his favourite author. There are two questions which his

intelligent devotion to the Baconian method should have led him to weigh more fully, before proceeding to generalize his law of beauty, viz: 1. Are there not beauties in nature which cannot be brought under this category at all, that cannot be referred to association with the characteristics of woman? 2. Even if it be possible to trace some remote association of the kind, in all the cases of beauty which he is able to find, both in poetry and nature, is it certain that this association is the true source of their power over the taste? Is it not, to say the least, quite as possible that woman owes her power to excite our true and pure admiration, to the possession of such a combination of beauties, physical, intellectual and moral, as that these qualities of person, mind and heart, owe their power over us, and still more their power to irradiate with their beauty the works of nature, including even our conceptions of the higher orders of being, to an instinctive passion for woman, merely as woman.

We have already stated how the apprehension of the objective beauty of nature is modified, when it comes to be blended with the thoughts and feelings of the mind itself. Now it is obvious that this subjective element must be more predominant in that class of beauties which it is the object of poetry, and of art generally, to reproduce. The poet aims not merely to paint the scenes of nature, but to invest them with the thoughts and feelings which they excite in his own mind; and to clothe them with the power of awakening sympathetic emotions in the bosom of others. This is the true aim, and the highest expression, of poetic genius. It is this which lends its fascinations to much of the poetry of Burns. It is not the simple copy of nature, in the Cotter's Saturday Night, or in the still simpler picture of the Mouse's Nest torn up by his plough-share; but the human sensibility, and the human sentiment, which the poet's genius has breathed into those exquisite poems. It follows, therefore, that the highest poetry is not that which most closely imitates nature in its descriptions; but that which suggests the highest thoughts and purest emotions by its pictures of nature. Now if this view be correct, as we are sure it is, and if it be applied as a test of truth to the theory before us, it will show it to be as defective and erroneous in its application to the philosophy of poetry, as we have found it to be, when applied to the original beauty of nature. We most cheerfully

concede to Mr. T. that mere sympathy with humanity in its higher forms, is sufficient to impart high charms to poetry. This is abundantly proved by the literature and art of Pagan Greece and Rome. We also admit, most freely, that these charms are presented in immeasurably greater loveliness, in our purest conceptions of the characteristics of woman, under the refining and elevating influence of Christianity. The poetry of Burns is full of exemplifications of this truth. But surely every one must admit that no one has ever felt the highest power of beauty, who does not see it illumined by a purer light than the spirit of humanity, in its gentlest and loveliest forms can impart;—who does not behold it all radiant with the ineffable glory of God. It is the utterance of the divine, which gives its eloquence to the voice of nature. It is the expression of the divine, which lends its highest effulgence to the beautiful in poetry and art.

If any one should object that the highest sensibility and the purest taste are sometimes found in the case of those who are morally estranged from the knowledge and sympathy of God, we reply that it is not necessary that this principle should be distinctly understood, and still less acknowledged, in order to make its power felt. God has endowed the workmanship of his hands with the power of impressing us with the sense of his presence, even though we may not know that it is his presence which we feel; just as we walk and see at night by the light of the sun diffused by reflection throughout our system even when the sun itself is not visible. Or we may be awed by the knowledge that the sounds of nature are the voice of God, and the works of nature instinct with the thoughts of God, even though we may not understand their precise import. Like inscriptions found upon rocks in some unknown character, we may feel that they utter some burden of human thought and feeling, though we may not be able to decypher their mysterious meanings. But after all, it is our firm belief that there is no degree of sensibility to beauty, and no power of imagination to penetrate and reveal the secrets of nature, which the illumination of true piety would not exalt and strengthen. Great as human taste and human genius often are, because they retain the blind, instinctive sympathies with which they are endowed by the very act of creation, they would be rendered greater still,

by intelligent and intimate communion with the great source of all true light and beauty.

In regard to the second part of the task which Mr. Tyler proposes, viz: to vindicate the moral and social character of Burns, we have only to say, that we fear his just admiration of the poet, has seduced him into an undue approbation of the man; or rather, perhaps, into excessive lenity in handling the notorious vices of his private life. This, however, is a topic for the discussion of which we have neither the time nor the taste.

ART. VI—*God in Christ; Three Discourses delivered at New Haven, Cambridge, and Andover; with a Preliminary Dissertation on Language.* By Horace Bushnell. Hartford: Brown & Parsons. 1849. pp. 356.

THE doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement, are the common property of Christians. They belong to no sect and to no country. Any assault upon them, any explanation or defence of them, is matter of general interest. These doctrines are discussed in the volume now before us. It is addressed, therefore, to the whole Christian public, and not exclusively to New England. On this account we are disposed to call the attention of our readers to its contents. We are the more inclined to take this course, because the character of the work, and the peculiar circumstances of its origin, are likely to secure for it an extensive circulation. We hardly think, indeed, that it will produce the sensation which many seem to expect. Dr. Bushnell says: "Some persons anticipate, in the publication of these 'Discourses,' the opening of another great religious controversy." This expectation he does not himself entertain, because he says, "I am quite resolved that I will be drawn into no reply, unless there is produced against me some argument of so great force, that I feel myself required, out of simple duty to the truth, either to surrender or to make important modifications in the views I have advanced. I anticipate, of course, no such necessity, though I do anticipate that arguments,