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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.

VII. NOTES.

THE EVANGELISTIC REVIVAL IN THE SYNODS.

Not quite a decade has passed since the inauguration in Kentucky of a systematic movement to carry the gospel to the outlying masses by means of a body of men chosen by the Synod and set apart to strictly evangelistic work. The immediate aim of this movement was to enter the much-neglected but rapidly developing mountainous sections of Eastern Kentucky, and push forward the standards of Presbyterianism in strictly aggressive work. It was freely predicted at the time that the movement would be short-lived, that the ardor of its originators would soon cool, and the enthusiasm of its supporters become chilled, and the endeavor fail for want of pecuniary support. On the contrary, every year has but added to the interest manifested and the confidence felt in the work. During the last year more money was contributed, more laborers were employed, more communities were reached, and more visible results secured than in any previous year, whilst the current year promises to be the most prolific and fruitful of all. Meanwhile Synod after Synod has awakened to the importance of a similar work within its own bounds. It is wonderful to see the enkindling within a few months past of the evangelistic zeal in nearly every Synod of our Southern church. Virginia, with her great resources in men and means, seems likely to equal or even outstrip Kentucky. North Carolina is thoroughly aroused and grandly at work. Georgia, Nashville, Memphis, Mississippi, Missouri, are either organizing or pressing the work through organizations similar to that in Kentucky. In other Synods, as for instance South Carolina, the evangelistic work is being pressed with redoubled zeal and energy along strictly presbyterial lines. Everywhere unparalleled amounts of money are being contributed or pledged for evangelistic work. Our best and most successful pastors are being taken from devoted flocks and comfortable homes to carry evangelistic standards into the "regions beyond." A few years ago there was but "an handful of corn upon the top of the mountains," and to-day "the fruit thereof shakes like Lebanon."

We believe that this movement is, in the highest sense, a revival. In other words, we believe it to be the result of a special gracious operation upon the minds and hearts of our people, inspiring us with profounder interest in the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom amongst us, and guiding us into the use of those primitive and apostolic methods which, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, we may expect to issue in rich spiritual results. Amongst the beneficial results that are already apparent, may be mentioned the following: First, The attention of the church has been prayerfully drawn to the scriptural office of the evangelist, as a most potent factor not only in carrying the gospel to the heathen on foreign shores, but to the heathen at our own doors. Second, The name of evangelist has been lifted up to something of its proper dignity and respect. That a man is announced as an evangelist is no longer regarded as *prima facie* evidence that he is, if nothing worse, some brother of restless spirit, who has tired of the monotony and of the patient methods of pastoral work, or who has been unsuccessful in a settled charge, and has felt called upon without any higher sanction than that of his own private conscience to give himself to some species of rambling and desultory work. The word evangelist, for our Presbyterian people at least, carries with it an authority and awakens a reverence that it did not ten years ago. There were at that time a number of beloved and honored brethren of our church laboring as evangelists. They were highly esteemed in love for their personal qualities and for their work's sake, but the office itself, from the large number of irresponsible men in the land bearing the name of evangelist, was without the honor that properly belongs to it. A third of these already visible results is, that to which we have already alluded, in the greatly stimulated liberality of our Christian people. It will doubtless be found in all the Synods, as it has proven in Kentucky, that, instead of diminishing the amount of contribution to other schemes of church beneficence, the work of Synodical evangelization has stimulated to greater interest in them and to increased contributions for their support. The happy influence of this scheme upon all the others has been one of the best evidences that it is of the Holy Spirit. As to the results that are to accrue in the future, we may hope for, first, a great enlargement of Presbyterianism. These evangelists will carry it into many communities where it is now known, if known at all, only through the caricatures of those who delight in setting forth the virtues of their "free salvation" by painting it upon the dark background of the fatalism which they label

Presbyterianism. Second, We may hope for great ingatherings of souls into the kingdom of Christ, such ingatherings as shall make "the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose." In the third place, may we not hope that this thoroughly organized and efficient work throughout our whole Southern territory will take away the last semblance of excuse for the policy of our Northern brethren, as outlined by Dr. E. D. Morris in a recent number of *The Church at Home and Abroad*? With their Home Mission treasury depleted, and the vast number of calls from the great and growing Northwest, which they say they are not able to meet, surely they may now spare the tears they are weeping over the "destitutions in the older Synods of the South," and save themselves the increase of their Home Mission debt, that would be incurred in costly efforts to plant Northern churches and Presbyteries in the heart of our Southern Synods. The veil that covers such a zeal is too thin to conceal its real nature. Whatever plausibility it may have had in years gone by, in the face of the present systematic and determined effort to carry our standards wherever there is room, every dictate of Christian charity and every principle of Christian economics demand that the covenant of coöperation, so recently entered into between the two Assemblies, shall be strictly regarded, and no such wholesale organization of Northern churches on Southern soil indulged in as Dr. Morris' article manifestly contemplates.

Like every other genuine revival, this evangelistic revival has perils against which it is very important to guard. First, there is the danger of the evangelist being drawn off into the work of what is now known as the revivalist. That is, he is in danger of trying to reap where other men have patiently sown, instead of doing his own appropriate work in new and uncultivated fields. It is very delightful to go into a field where some consecrated pastor has been quietly and patiently toiling for years, where everything is ripe for a harvest of souls, and be the instrument of gathering great numbers into the church. It is delightful, but it is not "doing the work of an evangelist." A second danger is that of the glorification of numbers. A man who estimates his success by the number of churches he organizes, or the number of church members he enrolls, or the number of confessions he receives, must be more than human if he does not sometimes "daub with untempered mortar." He is in danger of receiving members without due examination, and of organizing churches that have no reasonable prospect of survival after he is gone.

These "notes" would be extended beyond all reasonable space if we should do more than merely to touch upon these points without enlarging. Let us consider in conclusion some suggestions that those engaged in evangelistic work may find of more or less practical value. First, care in the organization of churches. It does not follow because an evangelist has gone into a community where there is no Presbyterian church, and has had a good meeting, and has found a number of people who would like to be organized into a Presbyterian church, that he ought to go on and make the organization, or recommend Presbytery to do so. Many questions are to be considered, as to the extent to which other denominations are meeting the spiritual wants of the community; whether there is need for a Presbyterian church; whether there is room for it; whether it can be expected to become self-sustaining, or can be conveniently grouped with other churches, etc. You have no right to bring a church into existence that has no means of support, visible either to reason or to enlightened faith. Second, economy in the grouping of churches. The Presbyteries should see that, as soon as a church is organized, it is so grouped with other churches that it can have the stated ministry of the word and pastoral oversight and care. Third, judicious pecuniary aid. It is one of the most difficult problems that the church has to encounter, how to administer pecuniary aid to weak churches, and at the same time cultivate in them that proper spirit of Christian manhood which makes them strain every nerve towards self-support. The old five-year rule was too inflexible to adjust itself to all cases, and the admission of any cases as extraordinary, opened the way for the claimance of each particular case to be extraordinary, so that the rule was very difficult of administration. In the fourth and last place, we would suggest that the most serious of all problems is to find ministers for the new and interesting fields that our evangelists are opening up. For many years we have been pursuing the course to a very large extent of "robbing Peter to pay Paul." If all our vacant churches were properly grouped into pastorates we should find the supply of ministers sadly inadequate to our present wants. If our evangelistic movements shall result, as we trust they will, in the organization of many additional churches, whither shall we look for the men to supply them? Surely the church has need to look well to her education interests, and also to pray earnestly that the Lord of the harvest will "send forth laborers into the harvest."

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