

REPRINT.

Pulpit Criticism:

A WEEKLY SHEET.

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ST. JAMES' CATHEDRAL.

The pulpit of *St. James' Cathedral* was occupied by the Rev. W. S. Rainsford, on the 1st of January.

The antediluvian practice of preaching, as conducted in churches, is so hedged around by traditional reticence, that nothing is more remote from the mind of an average hearer than to interrogate the minister as to the subject matter of his discourse; it can scarcely be said to be a subject on which the mind of either preacher or hearer has been greatly exercised. Indifference on the part of the hearer would appear to be a natural consequence of such a condition of things. If they who "formerly were disobedient, in the days of Noah," could step into a church of the present era, it is to be feared they would be apt to exclaim, on listening to the disquisition from the pulpit, "How are the mighty fallen!" The entire lack of opportunity on the part of those who are supposed to listen to sermons, to make enquiry or comment on the subject of them has led the writer to conclude that what is denied to hearers *in vivo*, may be supplied in some measure through the press, hence his promised round of visits to the churches. One would wish to deal tenderly with a man whose testimony, there

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is reason to believe, the Almighty has deigned to honour, but no sooner had the preacher on the present occasion delivered his text (Prov. xx. 27) than one was struck with the illustration it afforded of the lack of "comprehensive study," on which the *Globe* commented a short time ago. Instead of the passage being rendered as it is, the correct rendering of the verse is the following—"A lamp of Jehovah (a title largely applied to Christ in Scripture) is the spirit of man, searching all the secret chambers of the inner man." Although the preacher referred to the Hebrew in connection with the word "lamp," if he be acquainted with it, otherwise than through the medium of another, his knowledge of the language must be an acquisition of the last few months, as prior to that time he "could not find time" to study it. He was understood to refer to the Shechinah, (the visible presence of the Messiah in the Temple), as having, up to the time of his withdrawal, acted as a manifested lamp of the Lord; and he worked out the thought of believers reflecting the light of the Sun of Righteousness, in a manner which might be styled eloquent, but it did not occur to him that Solomon was not acquainted with wax candles. He reminded