

Pulpit Criticism.

A WEEKLY SHEET.

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THE KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The pulpit of this church was occupied by Prof. McLaren on the 19th inst. On entering the building, anyone who had been accustomed to reflect on the simple, and doubtless essentially philosophical mode of worship adopted in the "upper room," would be struck with the evidence of what had come of the development-theory in matters ecclesiastical; instead of any trace of "eating together" (see margin Acts i. 4), one is confronted with a canopied pulpit, supported and surrounded by richly dignified organ pipes, which the "godly Gilfillans" of oven the recent past, would have denounced as "a bag o' whistles." Leaving that, however, without further comment, we will direct attention to the officiating minister; when defects happen to be prominent, it becomes necessary to comment on them, and the writer has to confess that he was reminded on this occasion of a practice which is far from uncommon, not in churches only, but wherever the Bible is read; persons are wont to treat the sacred volume as if the mere perusal of it, regardless of any meaning it may happen to convey, possessed some talismanic charm; they therefore assume a

demure aspect, befitting the occasion, and it is probably well for them that they are not required to pass an examination on the subject-matter with which their minds are supposed to have been occupied. The paraphrases of the Psalms appear to have been compiled on this principle. The professor, on the present occasion, appeared to be actuated by the same, as he read both from the book of Isaiah, and from the Gospel of John without a word of comment on either portion. Inasmuch as He who caused the respective portions to be written, has also thought fit to characterise the former of them by some peculiarities of structure, it may be well to indicate them, so far as the writer is acquainted with them. The exhortation "fear not" in connection with "for I have redeemed thee," occurring in the first verse of chapter xliii, may be regarded as an echo of a similar exhortation at chapter xli. 14. There are seven of these exhortations, extending from chapter xli. 10, to xliv. 8, inclusively; the intervening occurrences of the passage may be seen at chapters xli. 13, 14, xliii. 1, 5, xliv. 2. There are sixteen occurrences of the word, "re-