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Rev. H. B. ...
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Pulpit Criticism.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

ST. JAMES' SQUARE.

The service at this Church was conducted by the Rev. Dr. King on the morning of the 12th inst. If one were asked what was its chief characteristic, the unhesitating reply would be—devout reverence throughout, and this so marked, as to have reminded one that all churches are supposed to exist, for the promotion of godliness, in cases where it already exists, and for extending it, where it does not. The beneficial influence which cannot fail to be exercised in cases where the ministry is of the character above-intimated, has impressed the writer afresh with the desirability of the churches taking the initiative in selecting candidates for the Ministry, instead of allowing any unsuccessful “dry-goods” man, or indolent young farmer, who may have concluded that “the work of the ministry” is both genteel and profitable, to strike in that direction; piety in combination with at least average ability, cannot be so rare but that men might be found who have given evidence of qualification for such labor, and who consequently would give better promise of future usefulness than would he of the “dry-goods,” or of the unsped plough. To return to the consideration of the service in question, it had hardly been commenced before we were confronted with one of those chronic characteristics of the ecclesiastical systems of the day—“our iniquities prevail against us;” this was followed by a petition that the sins of the past week might be obliterated.

Whether the good people had any idea of spending the remainder of their days in their beautiful Church, as they sung the subjoined lines from one of their quaint and cumbrous old paraphrases, must remain with themselves to say—“That all days of my life I may within God’s house remain;” they might also possibly enlighten us, by telling us the meaning of these other words from another paraphrase—“From death to free their soul, in dearth life unto them to yield.” In direct contradiction to petitions of such a character as those presented is the lucid and definite portion of the epistle to the Colossians (Ch. iii, 1-17) which was read during the service; a portion which would become more intelligible, if the third verse were read thus—“For ye died,” etc., *i. e.*, when Christ died (as regarded from above), hence the force of the first verse—“If ye then be risen with Christ,” etc.; it will be well also to substitute “calumny” for “blasphemy” in the eighth verse, and “thanksgiving” for “grace,” in the sixteenth. The third chapter of Malachi was one of the portions of Scripture which was read during the service, and in *this case*, anyone who might happen to be conversant with the bearing of the chapter, would be unlikely to be content that it should be merely read; such a malcontent would know that the “sudden coming of the Lord to his temple,” does not relate to Christ’s first coming, but to that period of which it is written “But who may abide the day