

Pulpit Criticism.

It can hardly be a breach of promise for one to give something better than one undertook to give. In relation to the foregoing remark, the Editor begs to intimate that, in view of the fact of our having amongst us, a gentleman possessed of knowledge invaluable of its kind, in relation to that portion of the Bible styled the Old Testament, it cannot be desirable that he should himself be subjected to the irksome task of listening to sermons, or that his readers' time should be occupied in the perusal of his comments thereon. It has always been a prominent object with the Editor, to expound to the best of his knowledge, such portions of Scripture as might be dilated on, in public worship; and now that Professor Hirschfelder (the gentleman referred to above) has begun the publication of his commentary, the Editor believes he will best employ his own time, and that of his readers, by following the track of the Professor (so to speak), and drawing attention to whatever he may consider most valuable in his teaching. The Editor is necessarily conscious that a limited number of his readers take the Commentary, but he trusts that, in view of the extension of its teachings to a much greater number, they who now take it will not complain of the reiteration of its instruction. As the professor has thought fit to preface his work with a lengthy introduction, we shall adopt the plan of eliminating therefrom that which we take to be valuable, and shall leave the casket without further notice. The first passage of the authorized version on which Professor Hirschfelder throws light is that of Psalm cxxvii, 5, which the Professor reads as follows—"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, Let thy right hand forget me." The last word of the passage is supplied to fill up an idiomatic vacancy; the meaning of the latter passage is—"Let my right hand no longer render me its accustomed service." One of the most interesting facts to which Pro. H. calls attention is, that the Israelites have never counted time when their nation has been in captivity; this is illustrated by the discrepancy which is involved by the conflicting statements of 1 Kings vi. 1, and those of Josephus and Demetrius respectively. According to the Biblical narrative, it was "in the four hundred and eighteenth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Lîf, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of Jehovah." Josephus, on the other hand, connects this event with the five hundred and ninety second year after the Exodus, and Demetrius, who wrote the history of the Jewish kings, during the reign of Ptolomy Philopater, gives the same date; this discrepancy of 112 years is therefore accounted for, by the sacred writer reckoning time according to Israel's moral relation to the Almighty, (the several captivities being uniformly the consequence of transgression on their part), whereas the secular historian naturally gives the actual lapse of years; in reference to the period of 112 years of captivity, the Professor refers to the subjoined passages of Scripture—

Judges iii. 8. To the king of Mesopotamia 8 years.
" iii. 14. To the Moabites 18 "

Judges iv. 3. To Jabin, king of Canaan ... 20 years.
" vi. 1. To the Midianites 7 "
" x. 8. To the Philistines & Amorites 18 "
" xiii. 1. To the Philistines 40 "
111 "

Odd month is always counted with the preceding year 1 "

112 "

The same principle of reckoning time, in relation to the Israelites, is demonstrated by Sir Edward Denny, to be applicable, when indicating its division into seven successive thousands of years.

THE SMUTTY PULPIT.

It is not to be supposed that the statements of an Apostle will count for anything with the devotees of the idol of the smutty pulpit, but so long as those statements abide with us, they will be wont to be accepted by such as are not worshippers of idols; the oracular idol, we perceive, delivered himself of the following utterance, in the early part of a recent disquisition—"Disciples tried to put a human limitation on the gospel (will anyone inquire what the incident in question had to do with "the gospel?") when they once tried to make human devices receive divine sanction, and so to fill the bishopric or office of Judas, the traitor, they nominated two themselves, and submitted the same to ballot, Joseph, called Barsabas, and Matthias, and one was chosen, but nowhere in the scripture is he recognized. You cannot choose by ballot an Apostle, you cannot make a successor of an Apostle by any earthly authority. God alone claims that privilege. Hence He never accepted the choice that was by ballot, but called one in his own due time, a man of zeal and intelligence, and adapted to the work, viz., the Apostle Paul." In view of this authoritative deliverance, it is perhaps somewhat unfortunate that this "man of zeal and intelligence" should (in 1 Cor. xv, 5,) have expressly recognized the existence of *twelve* apostles; when referring to the resurrection of the Lord, the Apostle Paul observes "that he was seen of Cephas, *then of the twelve*"; Peter also, "in those days, (when) they all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication," must have, greatly erred when he "stood up in the midst of the brethren and said . . . Of these men who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us . . . must one become witness with us of his resurrection . . . and they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all, show whether of these two thou has chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship . . . and they gave forth their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was numbered *with the eleven* apostles." So that the testimony of two apostles and of Luke the evangelist is set aside by a gentleman who prefers the vocation of pulpit mountebank to that of an iron-moulder! Practical philosophy characterizes the various moves of this manœuverer, and of this, we have an illustration, (in connection with the pulpit performance) recorded in the Yorkville News—"The first two rows of pews in the centre of the church" (we are told) "were reserved for the children of the Protestant Orphans' Home, in aid of which charity the collection was to go." We are left therefore to determine whether the object of submitting the children to such an ordeal as would be involved by their sitting for an hour and a half in front of Dr. Wild, were for their spiritual behoof or if it were with a view to their presence telling on the hearts, and consequently on the purses of all beholders. If the children of this world be wiser in