

Pulpit Criticism:

WITH

ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE. ▷

A WEEKLY SHEET.

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THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

TRINITY SQUARE.

They who are sufficiently conversant with ecclesiastical history will be aware that in the days of Queen Elizabeth, the qualification for "holy orders" consisted in the candidates being able to repeat the Apostles' creed and the Lord's prayer, and although the gentlemen who officiate in the above named church are doubtless somewhat in advance of their predecessors in that prosperous reign, yet "the reign of Elizabeth" stamps the whole institution from the style of architecture of the building, to the performance which it encrusts; the church was erected at the cost of two elderly English ladies; and the spirit of these venerable spinners would appear to hover over it to the present day, two considerations only redeem the service from expressed contempt—the sincerity of the ministers, and the kind of reverence they pay to the holy scripture; but inasmuch as the leading consideration with the writer is to *what extent do these churches represent, or misrepresent the teachings of the Bible*, he has no hesitation in declaring that if the object of those who minister therein were to obscure it as much as possible, they could not well be more successful within the pale of the Episcopal Church; this is a necessary consequence of their supposed *exaltation*, and their proximity to a church which asserts its own authority to be above that of the Bible; this again, be it observed, is precisely what was done by the Jews in the time of the Lord. As might be expected, women ("silly" or otherwise) constituted a large majority of the congregation, but the influence exercised over them would appear to be inconsiderable, if measured by the number who, for reasons best known to themselves, stayed to partake of the Lord's Supper; this number was limited to eight. In illustration of the tendency of this service to obscure the Bible (which indeed is characteristic of most services, *the profession notwithstanding*) we will glance at the first of the psalms appointed for the day, Ps. cxliv, and consider what came of that as sung by the choir. We learn from certain copies of the Septuagint,

that this psalm was said to have been composed by David after the victory over Goliath, and the suitability of it to such a circumstance, or to the position of David's greater son, who, "by the breath of his mouth will destroy the lawless one" (2 Thess. ii. 8; Is. xi. 4; Rev. xix. 20), the suitability of the psalm to such circumstances is intelligible, but when one finds the surpliced fraternity, and the fashionable ladies of "Holy Trinity," singing, "Blessed be Jehovah, my rock, who traineth my hands for war, my fingers to fight," one is apt to enquire who they contemplate pummelling. Availing one's self of the authorized version, and looking around one in such an assembly, one need be at no loss to find an application for the fourth verse, "Man is like to vanity"; very like, one says to one's self, but if one happen to know better than the crowd of mummers assembled there, one is aware that the passage should be read, "man is like to vapour, his days are as a shadow passing by." It is easy to perceive with what eagerness they who rely on the assurance that "His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives," Zech. xiv. 4; it is easy to apprehend with what eagerness they, *on the spot*, and in the midst of the final "travail" of Jehovah will exclaim, "Bow thy heavens, O Jehovah, and come down; touch (on) the mountains and they will smoke. Send forth lightning and scatter them; shoot out thine arrows, and discomfit them;" but how much have the congregation of "Holy Trinity" to do with all this? They will do well to enquire into the meaning of their utterances. The "new song" of the 9th verse, in common with all the other "new songs," will obviously derive its vocal inspira-

tion from the circumstance of the Almighty, 'giving victory to kings,' &c. If the congregation of "Holy Trinity," after praying that Canadian sheep "may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in their streets," should, on emerging into Yonge St., happen to find ten thousandewes in the act of lambing, they might possibly regard the circumstance as an answer to their supplications (see ver. 13), and as the sheep would doubtless occupy the side-walk, somewhat inconvenient to boot. It so happens that "pastures," should be substituted for "streets," but the consummate ignorance of the whole system is further illustrated by the subjoined verses, which should be read as follows:—"That our captains may be strong, that there be no breaking in (of the enemy), and no going out (of the people) into captivity. Happy is the nation which is in such a case; Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah." It is needless to say more of the sermon, which was delivered by the Rev. Wm. Farncome, than that in attempting to explain the meaning of "repentance," he omitted to state that *a change of mind* is the essential meaning of the word, and he *did* state that *the Lord Jesus repented of sin*. The reverend gentleman probably was dreaming of such a possibility in connection with the Lord's baptism, which ordinance he graciously submitted to, in the character of representative head of the nation, and in order "to fulfil all righteousness." Matt. iii. 15.

THE SCRIPTURES AND CHRISTADELPHIANISM.

The Christadelphians develop the malady which extends to us from the third century, and finds its manifestation in the following formula:—"Baptism is essential to salvation," and as every delusion is in-

tuitively made to depend from some peg of Scripture, they seek to hang this on Peter's words, as recorded in Acts ii. 38, "Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Before, however, they can fasten such teaching on these words, it behoves them to look at the 30th verse, where they should read "Let all the house of Israel *know assuredly*, that God hath manifested that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah." The result of this exhortation was that "pricking in their hearts" which led them to exclaim "Men, brethren, what shall we do?" They were then exhorted to *change their minds*, (to repent &c.); and which are the prominent thoughts in this address? the knowing assuredly that Jesus was the Messiah, and changing their minds accordingly, or being buried in baptism, in order to illustrate their belief in the burial and resurrection of the Redeemer? This was the "baptism which John *preached*," that they should *believe* on one who was to come after him—he laid the stress on the *faith*, not on the immersion. If instead of garbling the teaching of Gal. iii. 27-29, the Christadelphians will refer to the preceding verses, 24-26, they may perceive a line of teaching in strict harmony with that of Peter and John the Baptist.

Isaiah xxv. was the former of two portions read in the writer's presence. By connecting it with the previous chapter, where the word "earth" should be "land," one may perceive that it relates probably to that "beginning of sorrows" predicted in Matt. xxiv. 7. and Rev. vi. 12. The most prominent feature of the chapter is the verse which is still repeated by the Jews at their funerals, and is quoted by the Apostle Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 54. "He will swallow up death for ever, and the Lord God (the Messiah, as the Hebrew indicates, and the small type of the word "Lord") will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people will he remove from off all the earth: for *Jehovah* (the eternally covenanted

one) *ha'h spoken*," ver. 8. "Enemies should be substituted for "strangers," at vers. 2 and 5. "A dry place,"—a sandy desert. The Scotch expedition experienced this "bringing down of the heat," by a small and almost imperceptible cloud passing over the sun. "The branch"—the palm-branch waved in triumph. The "feast of fat things, full of marrow, of wines on the less well refined" was foreshadowed by Samson's feast in which he put forth the great enigma of revelation (Judges xiv. 14). "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness"—although the Philistines "could not in three days expound the enigma," the lion of the tribe of Judah, from the body of whose prototype the bees of resurrection had swarmed, *he*, the Samson who bore away the gates of death, displayed that *out of death*, the universal consumer, came forth meat (my flesh is meat indeed") and out of the strong came forth the sweet story of grace. The concluding part of the 11th verse should be read thus "He will humble his pride with the plots of his hands" (plots which his own hands have woven). This chapter is replete with instances of enumeration of sentences; *eight* flow from the opening declaration; *seven* constitute the third and fourth verses; *three* the fifth; *ten* vs. six to eight inclusive, and twice *eight* sentences conclude the chapter. The second portion of Scripture read on this occasion, was 1 Cor. ix. The remarkable circumstance of the Apostle Paul adducing a principle in relation to his own "power to forbear working," from Deut. xxv. 4,— "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out the corn,"—was passed without notice; the apostle's comment on the subject "Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? for our sakes no doubt this is written," this, together with his own gracious forbearing to exercise the power, and his "suffering all things lest he should hinder the gospel of Christ," some of us would suppose to constitute a more eloquent appeal to the heart, than the huge catalogue of purchas-

ed harangues which, as comparative counterfeits have been delivered subsequently. The substitution of "abstinent," or "self-controlled" would have been an improvement on being "temperate in all things," ver, 25, and that the apostle should entertain the possibility of being "disapproved," instead of being a "cast way," will be known to all who do not regard the language selected by the Almighty as the vehicle through which to convey his will and counsels to *His Church*, as a study of a supererogatory nature. When the Christadelphians have advanced a step or two beyond the threshold of knowledge, they may possibly discover that some further qualification is needed in order to "understand the Bible," and "to contend with others however learned in all these things."

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

One of the vexations inseparable from the position of an editor, consists in his liability to receive statements from immensely respectable sources, which, in spite of their respectability, are apt to be erroneous; the Editor of "PULPIT CRITICISM," although too often obliged to be severe, would be exceedingly sorry to be *unfair* in his comments on the occupants of pulpits; he therefore considers it due to his friend Mr. Dyke, to state that he finds, to his regret, that he had been misinformed on the subject of the supposed purchase and sale of a site for a Baptist Church, on the part of Mr. D.; the facts of the case, as they appeared in "*The Canadian Baptist*," on the 19th of May, 1881, are subjoined, and it gives the Editor sincere satisfaction to place them on the *credit side of the account* he has opened with the Reverend Mr. Dyke. Mr. Thomas Lailley states that "the friends" living in the vicinity of Dovern Court Road, and himself, delegated to the Rev. S. A. Dyke, the duty of selecting a lot on which to erect a church. In the same article occurs the following passage which is also traceable to Mr. L. The site previously purchased for the church, which was in every way inferior to the site now occupied, was kindly assumed by Brother Dyke on the expressed unwillingness of the vendor

to cancel the agreement (to purchase it). It would appear from the foregoing, that the inveterate money-grubbing malady which pervades this continent, has led certain persons to assume that when a man has had an opportunity for plunder, he has necessarily availed himself of it; but as Mr. Dyke repudiates the accusation, and challenges proof thereof, he is entitled to the withdrawal of *the debit*, until the "immensely respectable" voucher of proof produces it. Mr. D. is also entitled to vast additions to *the credit side of his account*, one item of which consists of upwards of \$80,000 secured by him as an endowment fund for the Baptist College. During a period of eleven years, some six hundred persons have been received into fellowship with the churches over which he has presided, three hundred and twenty of whom were baptized by himself; while ministering in Parliament Street, Mr. D. founded the Lewis Street Mission, became in part responsible for the rent of the little church, and throughout the whole period of his ministry has received little more than that kind of "reward" which *virtue* is acknowledged to concede; the few who are privileged to be acquainted with the lady, will be aware that her terrestrial favors are wont to be extended in somewhat scant measure; it is but rarely we should say, that she allows butter on the bread, possibly with a view to the complexion of her favorites. "Finally," "lastly," and "in conclusion," it is but fair to add that when on the day of publication of the stricture on Mr. Dyke, that gentleman placed himself by the Editor's side, in a boat, and knowing that the article relating to himself would be likely to be severe, he *insisted* on having it (to which as a subscriber he was entitled), he displayed an amount of self-control and tact, which caused him to rise about 200 per cent. in the estimation of the Editor; one consequence of which, as regards the latter individual is, that he will not in future be content with assurances of *capability* of proof of detrimental assertions from any individual, however immensely respectable the informant may happen to be.