

June 10th, 1882.

No. 22.

# Pulpit Criticism:

WITH

ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE.

A WEEKLY SHEET.

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Published on Saturday, and sold at 20 Queen Street East, Toronto.

PRICE \$1.00 PER ANNUM.

Copies of any single number can be had, in quantities, at 15 cents per dozen.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH.

YORKVILLE.

The service at this Church was conducted by the Rev. Elmore Harris on the morning of the 4th instant. Our attention was soon directed to that unique and comprehensive portion of Scripture, the 8th Psalm, and to the second chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, in connection with it. For convenience sake, and not with a view to find fault, it may be well to indicate at the outset, a point or two which the preacher did not dilate on; such are—(1.) The fact of the psalm being looped up, so to speak, at either end with the same sentiment. (2.) The consideration that *the Jehovah* who is the subject of the psalm is in an especial sense '*Our Lord*' as celebrated by an Israelite; the second occurrence of the name 'Lord' being marked in the Hebrew by a title which always applies to Christ, and which is indicated in English by the comparatively small type in which the title appears. (3.) The singularly gracious manner in which the Lord silenced his

enemies by quoting the second verse of the psalm, and stopping short of that portion of the verse which expressly mentions 'adversaries.' Matt. xxi, 16. (4.) The reference of the Apostle Paul to the sixth verse when in 1. Cor. xv. 27, he says 'He hath put all things under his feet.' (5) It is perhaps worth while to note also the fourfold division of the animated world, as occurring in the 7th and 8th verses, inasmuch as the number four is in so many ways characteristic of the world.\* Mr. Harris observed that this eighth psalm was used at the time of gathering in the vintage; as such, it is of the more interest to

\*"The elements of the universe (according to the opinion of the ancients) consist of four, viz. fire, air, earth, and water. There are four quarters of the globe; the extension of all bodies is estimated according to length, breadth, depth and height; time is divided into Morning, Noon, Evening and Midnight; the year is divided into Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter; four are the phases of the moon, and four are the ages of man, Infancy, Youth, Manhood, and Old Age."

those who, like himself, have learned to connect it with those future festivals of the seventh thousand years, which are foreshadowed in the feasts of *the seventh month*, as commanded in Lev. xxiii. ; see ver. 39. It was refreshing, so rare is it to meet with any approach to an intelligent apprehension of these verities in a pulpit, to hear the reverend gentleman cite the sixty-third of Isaiah in this connexion ; and invite his hearers to refer to the passage ; they might there perceive what *he*, no doubt, has done, that "deliverance will not come to Zion," (ch. lxii. 11,) and the Messiah will not receive his "recompense" (marg.) until judgment has been executed, as it was "in the days of Noah" prior to the blessing being bestowed ; hence he did not quote the following words as a piece of unmeaning rhetoric, but as predictions of judgment the most terrific the world has ever realized—"Who is this that cometh from Edom ("red,") with dyed garments from Bozrah ? ("distress,") this who is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?—I, who speak in righteousness, mighty to deliver—Wherefore art thou *red* in thine apparel, and thy garments like him who treadeth in the wine-fat ? I have trodden the winepress alone," &c. The sermon was based on Heb. ii. 10, and as the leading thought of it was "Jesus for a little while inferior to the angels"; both the preacher and his hearers will probably be interested to read the Syriac version of the ninth verse, as translated by Murdock : "But we see Him who was depressed somewhat lower than the angels, to be this Jesus, because of the passion of his death ; and glory and honor are placed on his head ; for God himself, in his grace, tasted death for all men." The preacher reminded us that as the tendency of the converted Jews would be to cling to the pristine and visible glories of their temple, to the "ceremonies of divine service," "the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold," &c., the apostle was the more precise in indicating that these things were "the patterns of

those in the heavens," "the figures of the true," that the Messiah is not entered into the holiest made with hands," "but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." He also called attention to the characteristic fact that in the epistle to the Hebrews, the writer, in the consciousness that he was addressing those who knew that the oracles of which, for so many ages, they had been the keepers, were inspired, contented himself when quoting, with expressing himself thus :—"The Holy Ghost signifying." "One in a certain place testified," &c. The verse which was the especial subject of the sermon was divided into three heads, viz. (1) the design of redemption ; (2) the method ; and (3) the testimony thereof ; these were subdivided to an extent which it is not practicable to repeat ; it must suffice to observe (1.) That the obscurity of the rendering of the fifth verse in relation to "the world to come," was removed by an explanation in the sense of the following translation : "For not to angels put he in subjection the future habitable earth, of which we are speaking," (2) That Mr. H. repudiated the idea of the Almighty's judicial anger requiring to be appeased by the death of Christ ; he would nevertheless doubtless admit that such an "accomplished decease" was the result of a governmental necessity. (3) In touching on Heb. ch. i. 3, he omitted on *this occasion*, to give us the highly important rendering "who being the *offshining* of his glory," a passage which brings out the eternal and intimate relation of the Son to the Father, in a mode which no other portion of Scripture does, and which has been overlooked both by the translators of the authorized version, and by the revisers ; (4) One of the faults of this gentleman, which happily admits of easy correction, is that he evinced a disposition to draw on his imagination more than once, as when he gave Archbishop Lynch some hope of him, by suggesting, in connection with a reference to Jacob's ladder, that we *might send up our petitions by angels* ; again, when

dilating on the subject of the death of Christ, he stated it to be his conviction that the Lord, as sinless man, would not have died, except on man's account; he endeavored also to make a point of the *tasting of death*, on the part of Christ, as involving a more thorough realization of it, than has been the experience of sin-stricken man; (5.) Confession of sin, if consciously needed, should *commence* an act of worship, as we gather from the practice of the Israelites, and as the service of the Episcopal church correctly presents it; our friend, the Baptist, on the contrary, introduced it at the close. In spite of the foregoing abatements however, it has afforded the writer great satisfaction to listen to a minister who realizes the unique advantage of having studied the Scriptures, untrammelled by sectarian traditions; this gentleman judiciously availed himself of a three years' course at University College for the purpose of increasing his knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, and as he has availed himself of the inspired commentators of the New Testament, in order to understand the Old, the robust quartos of the last century or so are unlikely to be much consulted by him; with such guides as he has already trusted, and with the habitual study of the languages in which the Scriptures were communicated to us, he will realize the aspiration of the Apostle Peter, and find that "grace and peace will be multiplied to him in the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord;" his flock will also realize, as they doubtless have done already, that a "Scribe instructed to the kingdom of heaven, brings forth out of his treasure things new (as well as) old."

#### THE UNITARIAN CHURCH.

The services at this church were conducted on the 4th inst. by the Rev. W. Brookman. The number of persons who kindly undertake to correct our errors in the present day is apt to be bewildering; possibly it may result in the establishment of an *error exchange*, in which case one may safely predict that the amount of business tran-

sacted thereat will far exceed the negotiations of the stock or corn exchange; whether any such arrangement had been effected between the Unitarians and Mr. Brookman, one cannot determine, albeit it is easy to decide that such a presentation of Mr. B.'s views as that to which the writer listened in the evening, would be as obnoxious to his hearers as it would have been had it been delivered in the synagogue. "Levelling up" is one of the characteristics of our age, hence on the other side of the ocean, Jew, Mahomedan, Christian and Pagan, are learning to live in happy accord; persecution and patronage have been successively tried; the prevailing idea at the present time is, that all are equally *worthy* of respect, the next stage will be that all are equally *unworthy*; towards this climax we are rapidly advancing, and the professing church is keeping pace with "the powers that be" as well as it knows how. "Adversity makes strange bedfellows," and perhaps this abstract of popular experience may account for an Episcopal and Baptist minister figuring in the pulpit of a Unitarian Church; from the martyrdom-tone adopted by the preacher, it appeared so to do. The reverend gentleman selected the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah as the portion of scripture on which to dilate during the former part of the service, and rightly commenced the reading of the prophecy with the 13th verse of the previous chapter; the lofty utterance, "Behold my servant shall prosper, he shall be exalted and extolled and be very high," is that of him who saw the end from the beginning, with whom a thousand years is as a day; hence at the conclusion of the marvellous story of the humiliation, we have the outburst of triumphant joy likewise anticipated—"Sing, O barren, thou who didst not bear, break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou who didst not travail with child, for more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife saith Jehovah." Mr. B., as if *authoritatively*, descended on questions of translation, and this, *under the circum-*

stances, would have been better omitted he was manifestly ill at ease, as indeed he might be expected to be, when addressing Unitarians as "brethren," and expressing his confidence in their reliance on "the cross," and this, as he observed, "on Trinity Sunday." As the reverend gentleman cherishes a batch of pet crochets, which he has been in the habit of ventilating, either at Bible readings, or in successive pulpits, as he has had opportunity, it was to be expected that one of them at least would find expression on this occasion; we accordingly had to listen to a rambling dissertation on "the resurrection of the body," the bearing of which was that when the Apostle Paul was "absent from the body, he was (*not*) present with the Lord;" it does not appear to have occurred to the reverend gentleman that when Christians are described in Scripture as "sleeping," it is the body which is said "to sleep" till the morning of reunion with that part of the man which is "present with the Lord." Preachers would do well to remember what was said of the late Dr. Chalmers, when, on one occasion, a lady who had listened to one of his sermons, was asked what she thought of him; she replied, he made me think so much about Christ, that I didn't think of him at all. The Unitarians, probably with a view to counteract "the errors" of the gentleman who occupied their pulpit, kindly distributed at the door of the church, a discourse by Dr. Channing; all this confusion, lamentable as it is from one point of view, is ludicrous from another, and suggests the position of that luckless swain, who when distracted by rival claimants to his affections, sorrowfully exclaimed, "how happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away."

"EARNESTLY CONTENTEND FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS."—*Jude* 3.

One of the objections of the former Baptist deacon (referred to in No. 21,) related to Deut. xxiii. 6, the prohibition to the Israelites to seek the 'peace or the prosperity of the children of Ammon for ever.' As we know but in part, we may admit that such a command may appear strange, but we can also perceive that it was calculated to teach gentile nations the jealousy with which the Almighty watched over Israel, that 'he who toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye;' we can further recognize that it involves a principle on which the Allwise has acted from the first, the representative principle, which, as we read in 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, has operated in our favor illimitably, while it wrought against us for a limited period only, 'for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' That the 'for ever' of the passage in question is limited in its duration, is probable, by reference to Jer. xlix. 6, where we read 'afterward' I will bring again the prosperity of the children of Ammon, saith Jehovah. It will not be out of place to observe that in this book of Deuteronomy which it is the fashion, in the present day, to disparage, occur two safeguards which have precluded the possibility of the Israelites' being deceived by the person, or the writings of a false prophet; these occur in chapters xiii. 1,—3, and xviii. 22: these safeguards account for the Jews requiring a sign from the Lord. It is remarkable that the Lord should in each instance have quoted from this book, when answering Satan, during the temptation, Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10.