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Pulpit Criticism:

WITH

ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE.

A WEEKLY SHEET.

BY DAVID EDWARDS.

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THE BAPTIST CHURCH.

COLLEGE ST.

The oft-troubled breast of Archbishop Lynch will not be without its consolations when, on the return of His Grace from his pilgrimage, he beholds the hopeful indications of Protestantism; when for instance he may visit the fane of *St. Andrew*, and find the officiating minister using "sanctified water" for the babies, he will sagely conclude that that liquid is of equal value with the "holy water" used at *St. Michael's*; when His Grace finds his erring Presbyterian friend treating "infant baptism" as "a sign of remission," and as "a channel of spiritual blessing" to the unconscious babes, he will probably apply his archiepiscopal crook to this disciple of Knox, and bid him approximate more closely to "the true Church;" when His Grace extends his visitation to College Street and has the satisfaction to hear minister and people singing "Angels, help us to adore him" (hymn 784), he will probably telegraph "all serene" to the Vatican; and yet it is to be feared that the lot of the Archbishop will so far re-

semble that of ordinary mortals, that he will find his "pleasure mixed with pain," if he should linger long within the precincts of College Street; for although he would not be likely to protest against singing hymns to the Holy Spirit (No. 666) and would not, any more than his Baptist friend, be aware that the sins of believers *are forgiven* ("having forgiven you all trespasses, Col. ii. 13,) yet he would listen to much that accords with the Douay or any other version of the Scriptures. The service on the 16th inst., was conducted by the Rev. S. A. Dyke, a gentleman who is generally regarded as the "commercial pastor;" he will therefore, it is to be hoped not object to *an account being opened with him* by the editor of "Pulpit Criticism," to his credit (for it is well to begin with the credit side *when one can*) we will place the fact that he relinquished a lucrative business, when he received what he possibly mistook for *a call to the ministry*; after the lapse of some ten years, he believes himself to have received a decided

call from the ministry, accompanied by the terrestrial consideration of some \$2,000 per annum. It is to be feared that deaf ears would be turned to many a call, but for such sublunary considerations. Howbeit in the discharge of the duties connected with the former of the two calls, the reverend gentleman found himself connected with the management of the Endowment Fund of the community which he represents; this circumstance would naturally endue him with a prescience of probable building sites for Baptist churches, and no one can say that he would have merited his fame as a *financial minister*, if an eligible site had not been found, under such circumstances, in the "casual" possession of the Rev. S. A. D.; *s-a-d* as it may be, or otherwise, casual commissions on church furniture and the like, would necessary flow into the same channel, and these, with the reverend gentleman's permission, we will place to his debit; it may now be said of him, as it was authoritatively said of religious teachers with whom we would not compare him "verily he has his reward." If health be accorded him, it is safe to predict for him a career of success in his new and more congenial sphere as editor of his sectional journal, and manager of the Book-room; as he has for some time past accustomed himself to sing of "Steps up to heaven," it is not improbable that his future theme may be "steps to the managership of the Bank of Commerce;" under any circumstances, it is to be hoped that he will so husband his hardly-earned resources, as not to incur the rebuke of his predecessor in the ministry, "Thy money perish with thee." The reverend gentleman preached from 2. Cor. iv, 17, 18; a passage which would have been improved had he rendered it as follows: "For our *transient* affliction, which is *but transient*, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, &c.;" the apostle's "far more exceeding" is evidently intended to enhance the force of "eternal" in this case. As the ark of Noah long survived its special purpose of bearing the patriarch over the billows of the deluge, so the *shell*

of various forms of religion is apt to survive the kernel; we have for instance water conveyed in silver bason that the previously cleansed feet of a selected dozen may be washed by "the sovereign Pontiff," and similarly we have the talk about "Christians suffering affliction" frequently dream't of by the sleep-wakers of our pulpits, the only effect of which one may suppose to be that preacher and hearers may each say to the other—"Do you ever suffer the bitter consequences of your antagonism to the ways of the world?" and the preacher may be supposed faintly to reply—"I suffer the cruel persecution of "Pulpit Criticism;" one thing at least is clear, these good people, "of whom (possibly) the world is not worthy," no longer "wander about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented," but as is but natural to frail humanity, Christian or no Christian, they accept \$2,000 a year when it comes in their way, but continue to whine in the minor key of "afflictions" which are either "transitory" or visionary; the solution of the mystery, we take to be, that without pretending to fasten the remark on any particular church, the body as a whole has sold itself to the world; the "tares" (darnel) are so mingled with the wheat, that to talk of "affliction" as characteristic of such a *crop*, forces one to enquire, "where are the victims?" and echo, one may suspect, will continue to answer, "where?" There is one particular aspect of this chronic pulpit-malady—the wail about "affliction"—which it is impossible to pass without censure, so pernicious is it in its tendency; it manifested itself in College Street, in the assertions that Christianity "doesn't save from physical suffering,"—that "God often sends sickness that we may serve in the ministry of suffering"—"lays us on our backs that we may look up, &c.;" and then we are told that "although the night (of affliction) comes, the stars shine throughout it;" these tinsel sentiments presumably serve as gilt to the gingerbread, but they veil a calumnious misrepresentation of the Al-

mighty's mind and ways ; as we have been obliged to observe repeatedly before, if Christianity "doesn't save from physical suffering," it ought (at least to a great extent) to do so, for obedience to the laws of God, whether natural or revealed, *ought* to be an essential characteristic of a Christian, but in all probability there is no subject of which average Christians are more absolutely ignorant, than that of the requirements of "the house they live in;" the consequences of which to themselves are the loss of the personal enjoyments of life, premature death, and bitter bereavements by the way ; they prefer to believe in such teaching as that to which we are adverting, (and of course in the doctors) to "acquainting themselves with God;" they therefore realize the consequences in relation to *His* *penal* providence. Our friend Mr. Dyke relieved himself of a certain number of pretty sentiments, in harmony with his present branch of business, but when, in his editorial capacity, he may ventilate similar sentiments, and "run" the book-store, he will occupy a position for which he is better qualified, and one which will doubtless be more congenial to himself, and more beneficial to the community with which he is connected.

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN MEETING.

ALBERT STREET.

A mechanic or a tradesman, of whatsoever kind he may be, has so accustomed himself to the idea of *apprenticeship*, in connection with his vocation, that he unconsciously leaps to the conclusion that wherever anyone occupies a certain position he is necessarily qualified for it ; no amount of personal suffering will shake his faith in his doctor, for he has always had "the best advice," *with the usual result* ; and as little will he doubt the infallibility of his particular minister, for *he* has been to College ; what these gentlemen may respectively have been taught at their several Colleges is not dream't of in his philosophy. The bricklayer knows it will not do for himself to "daub with untem-

pered mortar," and he concludes that the same consideration will apply to his minister ; but while the builder and the architect are at hand to keep an eye on the bricklayer, the minister operates in the presence of an all-confiding, and for the most part gullible flock ; hence we have some scores of conflicting sects in this city, each of them agreed in "one faith" — *that they "are the people,"*—ignorance and self-will being omitted from the account. The community, which is the subject of the present notice, is an offshoot from that which assembles in the Temperance Hall, Alice Street ; it is one of eleven in this city and its environs, whose confidence in the teaching of ordinary ministers has vanished ; one consequence of this is that there is much greater simplicity in the worship of these assemblies than is to be found in those wherein the ministry devolves exclusively on one man ; a medical man of the name of Thomas, himself an apostate from "the Disciples," was the founder of this sect, which assumed its present name during the late civil war in the United States. The Christadelphians have published confessions of faith, which though not faultless, are considerably in advance of what may be termed Puritanical churches, and their worship consists in "breaking bread," reading scripture, praise and prayer ; the measure of intelligence which characterizes them is easy to discern, as it is disclosed in the hymns, and indeed in most parts of their worship, including such attempts as are made at exposition. To quote from an authoritative document which purports to answer the enquiry, "Who are the Christadelphians?" we learn that they "claim to be the sect everywhere spoken against in the first century, newly revived;" unfortunately they do not content themselves with presenting such a claim, but on the assumption that the late Dr. Thomas discovered and bequeathed to them the philosopher's stone, "they repudiate the popular churches and all their adjuncts, as no part of the body of Christ, and affirm that there is no salvation within

the pale of any of them." It is saddening and humiliating to find any persons, in the name of Christianity, promulgating such sentiments as the foregoing, and it cannot but be prejudicial to the cause of Christ, even although we should demur to the statement that "this ancient sect is now forcing itself into the forefront of society;" any community which has the temerity to publish its views, when those views happen to be demonstrably crude, may secure a limited following, but although these people have possessed themselves of one (to them) all-engrossing truth, the literality of the Lord's return, they have doctrinal truth to learn from Christians they affect to despise, and they have also to lay to heart the teaching of the Apostle Paul with regard to the trinity of graces—that "the greatest of these is (the unpopular grace of) love."

Albeit a subject of color-blindness would be as competent to descant on the charms of crimson and green respectively, as a person unacquainted with the language in which the Bible is written, is qualified to understand large portions of the sacred volume, yet "the secret of lawlessness" (translated "the mystery of iniquity" 2. Thess. ii. 7.) has been working so effectually of late that we find the following illustration of it in a manifesto of the fraternity above-named—That which was above designated "the philosopher's stone" is by themselves described as "the pearl of great price," a form of expression applied by them to the teaching of the late Dr. Thomas; this teaching is said to be (as is every variety of teaching) apostolic, and we are informed on the one hand, that "the sacrifice which its acceptance involves is too great to entice the learned and the in-

fluent members of society, and consequently they who have been bold enough to take this stand comprise those who can only speak their mother tongue." "Nevertheless (they tell us) they find they can understand the Bible, and profit by its study, and are prepared to contend earnestly for *the original faith* against any upholder of orthodox religion, however learned in all these things." The writer regards the foregoing sentiments as illustrative of the spirit of the age we live in—"one man's opinion's as good as another's"—whether he happens to know anything or not; if it be necessary to account for such a condition of things, it may probably be traceable largely to the proof we have on all hands of the lack of that uncommon gift, styled common sense, on the part of "the learned;" the conclusions and the tenets of not a few who are so regarded, are of a nature to lead men to repudiate the value of learning altogether; erudition, so far as one can judge, does little enough for the reasoning faculties, and of this perhaps one of the most tangible illustrations is afforded by the recent revision of the New Testament. But whether men be learned or unlearned in each other's estimation, they are found capable, as in the case of the community in question, of holding that "baptism is essential to salvation;" such men therefore, although they may lay the flattering unction to their souls that they are despised on the same grounds that the founders of Christianity were, will find the case to be far otherwise.

Something will be added in the ensuing number, with regard to the scriptures read at this meeting on the 23rd inst.