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# Pulpit Criticism.

WITH

◀ ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE ▶

A WEEKLY SHEET.

**BY DAVID EDWARDS.**

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## "BELIEF & UNBELIEF."

A LECTURE BY COLONEL INGERSOLL.

Ribaldry is a powerful weapon, and especially in relation to the defectively educated — "the unthinking masses" as they are sometimes designated—and it is to these, we may presume, that Colonel Ingersoll addresses himself, and it is these he flatters; it is scarcely possible that he can make himself believe that the Israelitish-nation allowed themselves to be deceived with regard to the facts of their own history, or that the learning and piety of eighteen centuries can be set at nought by any human being, much less by such a person as Colonel Ingersoll. One consideration stares one in the face, in connexion with the Colonel's proceedings, which, we may presume, is obvious to all; that is, that the emolument derived from them far exceeds that of multitudes of simple-minded men, whom he denounces, men who, according to their measure, adopt precisely the opposite course. Unscrupulousness of statement is so nearly allied to ribaldry,

that we need not be surprised to find the two associated in the harangues of the Colonel. There is one particular, in which Colonel Ingersoll unwittingly confirms a prominent feature of the Biblical narrative, and that is the fact of the fall of man, for it would not be easy to find a more striking illustration of this, than is afforded by the spectacle of a man of ability denying the existence of a Creator. He has a most legitimate target in the corrupt Christianity which has blighted the world for some eighteen centuries, and he makes great capital of it, but the existence of counterfeit coins presents an irrefragable argument for the existence of the true. This lapsed condition of the professing Church, is itself distinctly predicted in scripture, and foreshadowed in Matt. xiii, and so far confirms the veracity of the sacred volume. It would not pay to adopt a line of rational argument, to assail the mass of evidence relating to Christ-

ianity, we do not therefore hear a word on the subject; appeals to popular sentiment, marshalling names of certain prominent unbelievers, and including among them writers such as he who indicated the following poem—are among his favorite modes of attack—

Blind Bartimeus at the gates  
Of Jericho in darkness waits ;  
He hears the crowd ;—he hears  
a breath  
Say, “ It is Christ of Nazareth !”  
And calls, in tones of agony,  
*Iesou, eleeson me !*  
(Jesus, pity me !)

The thronging multitudes in-  
crease ;  
Blind Bartimeus hold thy peace !  
But still, above the noisycrowd,  
The beggar’s cry is shrill and  
loud :  
Until they say, “ He calleth thee !”  
*Tharsei, egeirai, phonei se !*  
(Take courage, arise, he calleth  
thee !)

Then saith the Christ, as silent  
stands  
The crowd, “ What wilt thou at  
my hands ?”  
And he replies, “ O give me  
light !  
Rabbi, restore the blind man’s  
sight !”  
And Jesus answers, *Upage,*  
*E pistis sou sesoke se !*  
(Go, thy faith hath saved thee).

Ye that have eyes, yet cannot  
see,  
In darkness and in misery,  
Recall those mighty Voices  
Three,  
*Iesou, eleeson me !*  
*Tharsei, egeirai, Upage !*  
*E pistis sou sesoke se !*

LONGFELLOW.

Jesus, pity me !  
Take courage, arise, go !  
Thy faith hath saved thee !

Charles Dickens, one whom Colonel Ingersoll cites as being a rejector of Christianity, testified in his will, to his reliance on it. Unless the Colonel should adopt a mode of assailing the Scriptures less unbecoming than that which he has already adopted, there will be few who will deem it their duty to reply to him.

It is remarkable how few persons appear to have any idea of the nature and extent of the evidences of Christianity; the various sects among which the majority of Christians are divided, appear to be unaware that any necessity exists for grounding their disciples in matters of so fundamental a nature; we will therefore conclude these observations by quoting Leslie’s four points against the Deists:—1. The miracles of Moses and of Christ were of such a nature that the senses could take cognizance of them. 2. They were wrought before many witnesses. 3. Institutions and memorials were established in commemoration of them. 4. These institutions and memorials date from the time at which the alleged miracles are said to have taken place. These points can be sustained in reference to the miracles of Moses and of Christ, and they cannot be sustained in relation to any spurious miracle.

#### A SYLLOGISM.

The Author of Christianity says,  
“ Every scribe instructed to the kingdom of heaven is like to a man who is an householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.”—Matt. xiii, 52.

The scribes of the nineteenth century do not bring forth out of their treasure anything new.

Therefore the scribes of the nineteenth century are not instructed to the kingdom of heaven.

### NATURE'S CARE FOR SPIDERS.

It is not on the corded texture of the web, on its geometrical perfection, or on the sequestered nooks which its weavers select for it, that we are about to dilate, but rather on the unfailing supply of *flies* which kind nature supplies to these predatory insects ; no sooner do the spiders appear, than it becomes the business of the flies to provide them with nutrition and warmth ; take courage therefore,—increase your faith—my Reverend brethren, and ye of the medical profession ; the same unfailing provision which nature makes for the spider, she will surely make for you ; depend on it there will be a periodical supply of new-born babes, whose slumbers will be wholly undisturbed by dreams of sermons, of rheumatism, or of Boards of Health ; what if a wayward and somewhat experienced human blue-bottle occasionally burst through the meshes of your respective webs ? the synodical, parliamentary, and collegiate, raw-material is always at hand wherewith to repair the breaches made by the blue-bottle, and if the latest arrived batch of babies should happen to learn anything, before you take them home, an *evergreen* prospect still awaits you, in the generations yet unborn.

### ZION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,

YONGE STREET AVENUE.

(*Second notice.*)

The first portion of Scripture read by the Reverend Mr. Powis, in connection with the opening service of the above-named Church, was one of the "songs of degrees"—Psalm cxxxii. There is one remarkable circumstance connected with that psalm, to which we shall venture to invite attention, and that is the circumstance of the ark having been found "at Ephratah" *i.e.* at

Bethlehem, the spot to which the true Ark ultimately came ; we will connect this with Micah v. 2, which shall be presented in a slightly altered form—"But thou, Bethlehem—Ephratah, a little one to be amongst the thousands of Judah ; From thee shall one go forth to me, to be Ruler in Israel ; and his goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." The Targum reads—"From Thee the Messiah shall come forth before me, *to exercise dominion over Israel*, whose name was announced long ago, from the days of old." The comment of the Jerusalem Talmud on this, is too important to be omitted :—it states that the Messiah was born at Bethlehem, and tells the story of a Jew who went and saw him.

Mr. Powis is to be felicitated on having shown that it is possible for a minister, when reading the scriptures in public, to find something to say in relation to them ; Mr. P. read from Luke x, 38, to xi, 7 ; one of the inconveniences attending such expositions (and still more anything of the nature of catechizing, which, we learn, has been suggested by another pastor,) is that it is apt to set people thinking and that again, may possibly disturb a chronic condition of unanimity in certain spheres ; the statement for instance, that the Lord's prayer was intended for a model for all time, when contrasted with Col. ii, 13, 14, is one which will be found to lack corroboration from Scripture ; "lead us not into trial," would appear to possess the twofold recommendation of being more literal, and more intelligible ; the pastor was understood to describe believers as "forgiven and accepted," if so, an enquirer might naturally ask if the Lord's prayer could be intended for such persons ; in the course of his remarks, he also quoted Heb. iv. 1, as if it related—not to the personal Word, but to

the written. The sermon, on this occasion, was based on Psalm cxxii. 9, another of those portions used by the Jews, (as stated before) on their ascent from Babylon; Jerusalem was always to the Jew, the meeting-place between his covenant-keeping Jehovah, and himself—the chosen site, “whither the tribes go up, the tribes of Jehovah, to the testimony (ark) of Israel, to give thanks to the name of Jehovah”—*the Name*, as before explained, being, according to Jewish usage, a designation of the Messiah, who was probably represented by an ark, even after the return from Babylon; the temple was as it were the heart of the city, hence the sentiment of the concluding verse of this psalm—“Because of the house of Jehovah our God, I will seek thy good”—the welfare of the city which encompassed the temple; this was “spiritualized” on this occasion; a reference was made to that part of the dedicatory prayer of Solomon (1 Kings viii. 29) wherein the king supplicates that Jehovah’s “eyes may be open toward this house night and day, toward

the place of which thou hast said, *My Name shall be there &c.*,” but to persons who do not apprehend that the purpose of blessing the earth through the instrumentality of the Messiah, and from that selected sphere, remains unalterable, all the beauty of it is lost; we therefore must confess to being disinclined to comment on what was put forth, in relation to it, save that an argument in favor of “elegant structures” was sought to be based on the departed glory of Solomon’s temple, an argument utterly at variance, to our thinking, with the enjoined attitude of a believer of the present dispensation—that of “waiting for his Son from heaven.” 1 Thess. i, 10.

The lack of ventilation in the school-room, on which we commented last week, it appears was traceable to lack of apprehension of the principles of ventilation, on the part of the deacons, who, in their desire to have the room sufficiently heated, closed the registers. We should advise the architects, in future, to study deacons, as well as the science of ventilation.

✍ In the event of any irregularity occurring in the delivery of this publication, the Editor requests that he may be addressed respecting it.

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