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Pulpit Criticism:

WITH

ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE.

A WEEKLY SHEET.

BY DAVID EDWARDS.

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EMMANUEL CHURCH.

(Reformed Episcopal.)

DOVERCOURT ROAD.

The links of affinity between the builders of churches and those who erect taverns may be presumed to be few, but in one particular, at least, they are agreed; in their respective aim at "cornering" the people, they each possess themselves of corner lots to a remarkable extent; in this respect the representative of reformed episcopacy who officiates in Emmanuel Church, and the Baptists whose site is at cross corners from him are agreed; Popery and Protestantism each manifest the wisdom of the serpent, if not the harmlessness of the dove, in a similar appropriation of corners; the particular corner which is dedicated to the worship of "Emmanuel," derives an exceptional interest from the fact of it having been erected at the cost of the gentleman who officiates there; this gentleman's name figures on the church board as Rev. J. W. Treen, and he is not the less to be revered because his name appears on another board, in connection with broadcloth, in another part of the city; his connection with broadcloth (which, in his hands, will probably never assume the form of an altar-cloth,) enables him so far to claim *apostolic succession* as not only to minister "without charge," but to do so, at least in some measure, *at his own charge*: Mr. T. also contrives to support a large young family. The Church of Emmanuel is constructed and furnished in the simplest possible style, and the worshippers consist mainly, if not entirely, of the wage-earning classes; they are consequently the persons most likely to appreciate that kind of labour which possesses the unique recommendation of not being that of an hireling. Mr. Treen conducted the service in this church on the 2nd inst., and selected as the text for his sermon, the latter part of 1 Kings xix. 9.—"What doest thou here, Elijah?" He descanted on the exhibition of human infirmity presented by Elijah, in this instance: the more remarkable in view of the prophet's

past achievements when relying on the living God; he indicated that Elijah's way was not the Almighty's, by pointing out what great things were yet intended to be wrought by him, and what vast consequences to mankind depended thereon; he then sought to apply these considerations to ourselves—What were we doing? what *might* we be doing, by the exercise of self-denial? what excuses did we present for not rendering our life a perpetual sermon? etc. Possibly it may not be amiss to supplement such enquiries by indicating what has been accomplished by a true-hearted lady whose invalided condition would have induced many in such circumstances to regard themselves as the exclusive object of others' solicitude. Mrs. Spurgeon—the lady referred to—tells her own story in the following words: "It was in the summer of the year 1875 that my dear husband completed and published the first volume of his 'Lectures to Students.' Reading one of the 'proof' copies, I became so enamoured of the book, that when the dear author asked, 'Well, how do you like it?' I answered with a full heart, 'I wish I could place it in the hands of every minister in England.' 'Then why not do so: *how much will you give?*' said my very practical spouse. I must confess I was unprepared for such a challenge. I was ready enough to *desire* the distribution of the precious book, but to *assist* in it, or help to pay for it, had not occurred to me. But 'John Ploughman' 'drives a straight furrow' to one's heart, and knows how to turn over the thick clods of selfishness which lie there choking up the useful growths, and very soon his words set me thinking how much I could spare from housekeeping or personal matters to start this new scheme. I knew it would necessitate a pressure somewhere, for money was not plentiful just then; but to see dear John's face beam so radiantly, at the idea of my scattering his books far and wide, was worth any effort; and love, even more than obedience, constrained me to carry

out the suddenly formed plan. Then comes the wonderful part: I found the money ready and waiting! Upstairs in a little drawer were some carefully hoarded crown-pieces, which owing to some-foolish fancy I had been gathering for years, whenever chance threw one in my way; these I now counted out, and found they made a sum *exactly* sufficient to pay for one hundred copies of the work! If a twinge of regret at parting from my cherished but unwieldy favorites passed over me, it was gone in an instant, and then they were given freely and thankfully to the Lord, and in that moment, though I knew it not,

THE BOOK FUND WAS INAUGURATED!

"It took but a very short time to distribute the copies so purchased, and then the publishers kindly gave me another hundred. By the time these were disposed of, friends began to take an interest in the little work, and as the exceeding value of the book became better known, the desire to circulate it increased, and funds flowed in plentifully, enabling me to continue and enlarge the scheme. Gradually, by God's gracious help, 'the little one became a thousand,' and now, instead of sending out books singly, and by post, my grants consist of a large parcel of eight or nine good sized volumes, enough to gladden any poor minister's heart, and make him sing for joy. During the five years of the Book Fund's existence, forty-one thousand, six hundred and thirty volumes have been distributed, and these mainly, so far as fallible human judgment can declare, to ministers who could not afford to purchase for themselves; poor pastors whose total income has not exceeded £150 per annum. The amount of good done by this provision of mental food for preachers can scarcely be over-estimated, and it is pleasant to think the benefit is not a fleeting or evanescent one, for God's blessing on the books will secure an inexhaustible treasure of truth and grace to the possessors. That much of the work has been accomplished in

spite of suffering and weakness, is a precious evidence of God's grace and power, and brightly sets forth the lustre of His goodness to one so unworthy, and I would that every word in this book should be to the praise of Him whose love first gave me the charge, and whose power has ever since sustained me in fulfilling it.

"SUSIE SPURGEON."

Books distributed during the year 1881.

Treasury of David.....	2,508	vols.
Volumes of Sermons.....	1,280	"
Lectures to Students.....	1,280	"
Watson's Body of Divinity....	71	"
Dr. Fish's Handbook of Re-		
vivals.....	108	"
"In prospect of Sunday"....	300	"
Ford's Commentary on the		
Gospels.....	82	"
Matthew Henry (6 sets).....	30	"
"Bengel's Gnomon".....	10	"
Dr. Hamilton's Works.....	70	"
Gifts from friends.....	863	"
Miscellaneous and old books..	696	"

7,298

Also 10,517 single Sermons for village distribution.

The above books were distributed between 241 Baptists, 138 Independents, 243 Methodists, 144 Church of England clergymen, 34 Presbyterians, 87 Evangelists, and 27 Missionaries.

THE METHODIST CHURCH.

QUEEN STREET.

The service of this church was conducted by the Rev. Dr. Hunter, on the evening of the 2nd inst. The reverend gentleman has the reputation of apeing the buffoon of Bond Street, in the ordinary way, but on this occasion at least, he fell short of the Bond Street standard of effrontery; the ostensible subject of his discourse, on which the reading of the Scripture was brought to bear, was "Queen Street Church and 1882;" the *object* of it was to "lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes" thereof, in other

words, to enlarge it, erect new school-rooms, etc. The portions of Scripture selected for the occasion extended from Numb. xiii. 1-3; and from xiii. 21. to xiv. 24.*

It is a common practice in churches, and like many other practices, it lacks intelligent support, to exhort by illuminated texts, and otherwise, to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;" it might be instructive for those in Queen Street who find themselves confronted by these words overarching the pulpit, to inquire if by their utmost endeavour they can "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;" if they will refer to the margin of the passage (Ps. xcvi. 9), they may find in that "*new song*" which awaits a *new order of things*, Israel exhorted to "worship Jehovah in the glorious sanctuary," etc., and if they can apply such words to the present, or to the resuscitated Queen Street Chapel, the synagogue worshippers will be unlikely to enter a protest against their so doing. "The beauty of holiness" would not appear to be likely to be advanced greatly by the class of harangues which are habitually advertised in connection with the Queen Street Methodist pulpit, the latest specimen of which as announced therefrom on the evening of the 2nd inst. is, "fast-driving—a mile in 2.40." No sooner had the gentleman, whom by a stretch of courtesy we must designate "reverend," com-

* As the subjoined notes relating to the portion read, happened to be in the possession of the writer, they are given in this place. Numb. xiii. 22—"The city of Tanis is the Zoan of Scripture, the modern San or Zan. It has extensive mounds and remains of a small temple of the time of Remeses the Great, remarkable for its having at least ten, if not twelve obelisks. The name of Osirtasen III. found there shows that an older temple once stood at Tanis."

"The present desolation of Zoan shows how completely the prophecies against it have been fulfilled. Isa. xxx. 4; and Ezek. xxx. 14."

"Numb. xiii. 23—"Bunches of grapes from the vineyards of Hebron sometimes weigh 6 lbs., each grape of which weighs 6 or 7 drachms. Sir Moses Montefiore told the Scotch expedition that he procured a bunch about a yard in length."

menced his discourse than, in commenting on the cessation of the manna, and the entrance of the Israelites into Caanan, he intimated they would "go for the unleavened cakes," etc., on arriving in the promised land. That the mind of the "learned divine" is of the "fast-driving" order, especially as regards one faculty thereof, is manifest from the following considerations; he so far gave the rein to his imagination as to inform us that there are many persons in Toronto who shrunk from the "sacrifice" involved by the occupation of a pulpit; had the foregoing sentiment escaped the lips of a pastor less connected with investments in the land of the Temperance Colonization Society, it would not have been so suggestive of that activity of the imaginative faculty involved by "a mile in 2.40." Another illustration of the "fast driving" sentiment, which has evidently possessed the mind of this D.D., was that some of us were alleged to be "capering madly on the brink of the eternal pit." It is perhaps not surprising that in view of such sentiments as those just expressed, the reverend gentleman should have had some experience of what he describes as "poor, sickly, slipshod faith," and of sermons "shooting through the soul," which form of expression may be taken to mean "missing the mark." Much of the phraseology of the preacher

was as entirely beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals, as it was foreign to the teaching of Scripture; "the membership" were exhorted to "cross the Jordan to-night," the same "membership" was to be doubled on that occasion; they were to "eat the fruit of the land of Canaan, in order to get full salvation;" with regard to the question of the building of the schools, they were to avoid the example of the faithless Israelites who maintained that they "were not able" to take possession of the land; in order to convey to his hearers an adequate idea of his devotion to Methodism, the Dr. informed the congregation that "he loved his wife better than any other woman." The Lord's table was represented as "a channel of saving influence to our souls," and if we "desired to flee from the wrath to come," we were to betake ourselves thither as to a city of refuge. Nine-tenths of the congregation did not appear to desire to flee, etc., in that direction, as the church was all but empty when the table was spread. There was one sentiment which escaped the minister, which the writer can cordially endorse, and with that he must conclude this notice. "If pulpit men would return to the plough or to the shop whence they came, society would, in numerous cases, be the gainer."