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# Pulpit Criticism.

WITH

ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE

A WEEKLY SHEET.

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## THE NEW JERUSALEM TEMPLE.

The circumstance of a minister having found his way to this Church, since the writer was last present in it, and the further consideration that the writings of the community represented by the church are industriously circulated on the usual assumption that they "are the people," led the writer to endure a second sitting within its pale. It may be well to premise that no one need approach this, or any kindred assembly, unless he or she be ready to assume that all they have ever previously read or heard in relation to scripture is erroneous; the centuries until the birth of Emmanuel Swedenborg are supposed to have rolled by, only to leave the race as benighted as they found it, and it was the lofty mission of Swedenborg, first to ascend in vision to the abodes of bliss, and then to disseminate the light thence obtained. An element, and some will regard it as an important element, in these considerations is that Swedenborg is acknowledged to have been, during a portion of his life a sufferer from mental aberration; we are not disposed to enquire too minutely at what period this malady is supposed to have manifested itself,

and when it is believed to have been overcome; that which to our mind, is far more serious, and saddening, is the consideration of the number of intelligent persons who accept this man's writings, as authoritative, and who speak of them in relation to scripture as "the writings and the word." In endeavoring to convey some idea of the impression received while attending the morning service at this "temple," one must make bold to assume that one was in possession of one's faculties on the occasion, and it may be permitted to remark parenthetically, that how long one might retain the said faculties if condemned to be repeatedly present, it would be hard to foretel. The first object which would strike any unenlightened observer, on entering this "temple" would undoubtedly be the copy of the dialogue which faces one on entering, and this accompanied by the 14th verse of Rev. xxii; "Blessed are they who do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." The writer, for his part, must decline to stultify himself to such an extent as not to maintain his capa-

bility of perceiving the aim of this combination, whatever "internal senses" may be supposed to attach to the respective portions. It is somewhat unfortunate for the persons who made this selection from the Book of Revelation, that the late Samuel Tregelles regarded the altered reading of the passage which is here given, as one of the brightest rewards of his life's labours amongst the ancient manuscripts—"Blessed are they who wash their robes."\* Among other statements made during the service, to which we should decidedly take exception, was this, that the Sabbath and the Lord's day are identical; according to our mode of reading Scripture, "the *seventh* day is the Sabbath" (Ex. xx. 10), and is as distinctly separate from the Lord's day as words can render it; "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first of the week" (Matt. xxviii, 1, and Mark xvi, 1, 2); we have, on previous occasions, described the ordinary mode of confounding portions of Scripture which relate to widely differing dispensations, as kaleidoscopic, and the mode of treating the sacred volume, on the part of Swedenborgians, differs only in this, that with them the confusion is a matter of design, the object being to teach unitarianism in the name of philosophy. Psalm cxxxvi, was the first distinct portion of Scripture read during the service, and it was not in accordance with whatever "internal senses" these gentlemen may think they apprehend, to tell us that this Psalm derives a special interest from the fact of it having been sung in celebration of the laying the foundation of the temple on

\* He says with regard to it, "To me it would be a reward for years of toil, to be the means of bringing one such text forward with the full light of clear and certain evidence bearing on it." The recent revisers have availed themselves of this reading.

the Jew's return from Babylon, Ezra iii, 11. A reference to 2 Chr. v. 13, will show that it was sung at the consecration of the first Temple; that it was sung again "when Solomon had made an end of praying, (and) the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of Jehovah filled the house," is manifest from 2 Chr. vii, 3, and by the order of Jehoshaphat, when the armies of Israel went forth to war; 2 Chr. xx. 21, see also the consequences of the singing it, vs. 22-30. If these people were not too enlightened to learn, they might discover from the third verse of this Psalm, that "the Lord" there celebrated is none other than the Messiah; in order to apprehend this, it would be necessary to track the occurrences of the name so printed, throughout the Old Testament, and to see the mode in which such a passage as that of Psalm cx, 1, is treated by Christ himself in Matt. xxii, 44, 45; this can be accomplished by anyone possessed of what is termed common sense, without the aid of any "inner sense" such as that on the realization of which, the disciples of "the New Church" plume themselves; in order, however, to avoid being misunderstood, we will observe that our own measure of apprehension of the depths of the Bible is sufficient to warrant the statement that we should never be surprised at the disclosure of previously unknown fathoms (so to speak), but this is vastly different from such an averment as that "it has been revealed to me that angels' spiritual bodies are occupied with all that is vile, adulteries, etc."; we cannot pretend to have so tender a regard for individual or sectarian sensitiveness, as not to affirm that such an assertion as that just quoted, carries with it its own condemnation, and one cannot but lament

that intelligent persons can deceive themselves into relying on such a teacher ; had they been adequately grounded in the subject of the evidences of Christianity, it would appear to be impossible that they could accept such drivelling as this, as the offspring of a sound mind. Evidence of ignorance of the truth of (God appeared to the writer to be redundant throughout the service ; this congregation has failed to learn a lesson from the history of the Israelites, as recorded in Ex. xxiv, 7, hence they echo the pledge given to the Almighty, by the people of Israel in that passage, and they have thought it worth while to substitute the word "hear" for "be obedient ;" one of their responses is as follows :—"All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do. *and hear ;*" the second portion of scripture read during the service, was from verse 19 of Matt. vi, to the end of the chapter ; in this instance the huge blunder of translation. (on which we have commented before) occurring in v. 27, was passed without notice, and we were left to suppose that the Lord taught that it would be impossible "by taking thought to add eighteen inches to our stature." The passage from Is. lii, commencing "How beautiful on the mountains" was chanted, but "inner senses" notwithstanding, we did not learn that the passage ought to be translated "How *opportune* on the mountains are the feet of him who bringeth good tidings, etc." As we have remarked before, the Lord will arrive when all the distressing confusion which obtains at the present time, shall have culminated in active hostility to the people of God : he will come most opportunely. The harangue on this occasion was based on Matt. vi, 22 : The light of the body is the eye : if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full

of light." The prevailing idea which characterized it was, that every literal thing in the world has something spiritual to correspond with it ; the spiritual body was stated to be equivalent to the character which we have formed ; among other statements made with regard to this imaginary body, it was said to be the fossilisation of all our loves ; for our own part, we are not disposed to waste more time in recording these ravings ; we think that the proper way to treat all persons who deceive themselves or others, in regard to any revelation they may represent themselves to have received, is to apply the test provided by the Almighty himself in Deut. xiii and xviii, and 2 Cor. xii, 12, respectively, as referred to in the criticism on "the Catholic Apostolic Church," in No. 13 of these papers. The childishness of this whole "philosophy" may perhaps be regarded as condensed in the subjoined verse which was sung in the "temple," as descriptive of the abodes of bliss :—

Sweet fields and bright arcadian bowers,  
Stand dressed in living green :  
And groves and gardens, fruits and flowers,  
Adorn the angelic scene.

GENEROSITY IN TIME OF NEED.

The members and congregation of the Queen Street Methodist Church, in view, no doubt, of the manifold "afflictions" of the esteemed stock-jobber, under whom they sit, have (we understand) recently presented him with two purses ; one of the two, we may presume, was the empty one belonging to one of the dupes who have been fleeced by this spiritual shepherd. The incident of the presentation of the purses by these unsophisticated dupes has recalled to the writer's mind a project for enumerating the institutions at

the Western end of the city, which at least possesses the merit of brevity of description. Instead of persons saying "I am going to the asylum for the insane, I intend to call at Trinity College, I am bent on being present at the *matinee* at St. Matthias', I am thinking of investing in Temperance Colonization Society's stock at Queen Street Methodist Church," they will adopt the curt style of the present age, and say—"Bound for 1, 2, 3, or 4," according to their several predictions.


#### POLICE PROMOTION.

The number of rogues of "the upper fifty" whom no one would think of arresting on a charge of *petty larceny*, is such as to have suggested the idea of constituting an "upper" order of police by way of counterpoise. Instead of the upper-class policemen being selected on the ground of their services as political flunkies, we should advocate the claims of personal merit, as evinced in a long course of faithful service in the ordinary police force. When the upper-class force is in course of organization, we may possibly enter the list of candidates for the distinction of acting as "policeman's nose;" we should "commence" this work of "judgment at "the house of God," and direct the attention of the new force to the combination of "revi-

vals" and stock-jobbing frauds at the Queen Street Methodist Church; we should put them on the track of an immensely generous supporter of a sect whose wealth is traceable to frauds on the Government, putting the money of the Bible Society into his private Banking account, without allowing interest for it, and perpetrating any amount of sharp practice throughout his career. We should possibly put the new force on the track of a pious lady who entertains a profound horror of the social evil, and has been active in endeavours to suppress it, but is sufficiently acquainted with a "touch of nature which makes the whole world kin" to have sought the assistance of medical skill, minus conscience, in order to procure two abortions, in her own case, &c., &c., &c.

"D. D."

Seeing that the arrogation of the distinction above indicated, has but served to bring it into contempt, it is thought that the prefixing the letter "R." to the degree, will at least possess the charm of novelty, and will render it more correctly descriptive; the degree of "R. D. D." will then be understood to express "Ruler of the darkness of the diocese," or "Ruler of the darkness of the district," as the case may be.

 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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