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Pulpit Criticism:

WITH

ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE.

A WEEKLY SHEET.

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EXTRA PULPIT CRITICISM.

A VISIT TO THE CHINESE.

One of the forms of heathenism in Toronto is that which has been imported from China; in striking contrast to that "disobedience to parents" which prevails throughout this Dominion, and the States, and which, according to the Apostle Paul, (2 Tim. iii. 3,) is one of the characteristics of "the last days;"—in contrast with this, the Chinese render their parents the most abject devotion while living, *and worship them when dead*: one of those who now assemble in an "upper room" in Shaftesbury Hall in the afternoon of each Lord's day, told his teacher, with hands uplitted, by way of suiting the action to the word, that he worshipped his father and mother once a month. There are certainly not a few in Toronto who if they have something to teach these poor fellows, have also a lesson to learn from them. There are also doubtless many who have cherished kindly feelings towards them, but who, owing to the barrier to intercourse with them presented by their knowing so little of our language, have been unable to manifest their sympathy: inasmuch however as "love" notoriously "laughs at locksmiths," one young man, and now several ladies, have discovered a means to overleap the barrier of language. Mr. David McLaren, an aspirant to the ministry, by persevering acts of kindness, contrived to secure the confidence of first one and then another of the Chinamen, and in teaching them to read the English language, soon sought means to acquaint himself in some measure, with the Chinese, and this he accomplished partly by availing himself of a Chinese New Testament which he procured from the depository of the Bible Society, and partly by availing himself of a dictionary and hymn book: he found that it was easy to pick up the doxology in the Chinese language, from the hymn book, which of course had the English side by side. The celestials, being eminently discriminating individu-

als, manifest the correctness of their judgment, by evincing a decided partiality for teachers of the opposite sex ; and certainly, it is not of the nature of flattery to observe that they could not be more privileged in regard to teachers than they are ; it is remarkable how circumstances have transpired, under the prospering hand of God, to further this unique and praiseworthy undertaking ; first, a comparatively advanced Chinese scholar crops up to help Mr. McLaren, then a gentleman who had spent eight years as a missionary in China, next a son of a Chinese missionary, who is himself being instructed in a Toronto school, and lastly a lady who has been actively engaged for a twelvemonth in one of two comparatively large classes of Chinese in Chicago ; this lady, in common with all who have endeavoured to benefit the Chinese, speaks of the heartfelt gratitude which they manifest toward their teachers ; prior to leaving Chicago, she was present at an entertainment given by the teachers to their scholars, and at a return festival given on the Chinese new year's day by the Chinamen to their teachers ; the pupils presented each of their teachers with a bouquet on this occasion ; the repast was of a most sumptuous description, was served by negro waiters, and "the little bill" in relation thereto amounted to \$500. The work of the little band of teachers in Toronto is pre-eminently a work of faith, and consists mainly in teaching their pupils the rudiments of English ; this they do, in the consciousness that the pupils have for the most part, no more lofty aspirations than those involved by an endeavor to facilitate the acquisition of the dollar ; that they may nevertheless be "caught by the guile" of the ladies, one may expect when one perceives their aptitude to teach ; one of them endeavored to explain to her pupil what a jug is, and when she illustrated it on a slate, the celestial exclaimed, "O, pitcher ;" in answer to her enquiry as to what gum is, being too gallant to mention

ladies in such a connexion, he replied, "what boys chew ;" another lady, in explaining to her pupil, the nature of a medal, adroitly connected her explanation with a prize medal for *starch*. As the pupils advance, they will be introduced to such lessons as the following, from a book prepared by Dr. Loomas of San Francisco ; Chinese proverbs are contrasted in the lesson-book with Scripture, in the following manner--Confucius said, "The doer of good, Heaven will reward him with blessings : the doer of what is not good, Heaven will recompense him with calamities." The Bible says ; "The wages of sin is death ; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Confucius said : "He who sins against Heaven, has none to whom he can pray." Jesus says : "Whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Chwang said : "He who does good to me, I must still do good to him." Jesus says : "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you, and persecute you." Mencius said : "If man does what is not good, he may acquire fame ; men may not hurt him, but Heaven will surely destroy him." The Bible says : "The triumphing of the wicked is short. God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." It is impossible to foretel the ultimate benefit that may arise from an effort so apparently insignificant as that of instructing some half-dozen Chinamen in the verities of Scripture, and this is of course the object of those who at present, can do little more than teach them the rudiments of the English language ; but it is encouraging to learn a little of what has come of efforts of a similar nature in New York, and in Chicago ; a Chinaman who had been instructed by a lady in New York, and through her instrumentality, had accepted the testimony of the Bible, set sail with the intention of going to New

Zealand; the vessel which bore him put in at the Mauritius, where he found seven thousand coolies from China in a state of heathenism, who up to that time had been unapproachable; the Bishop of the Episcopal church had longingly desired to reach them, and when the converted Chinaman arrived, that bond which the individual love of Christ alone can cement, united these otherwise divergent natures, and the seven thousand coolies are as a consequence, listening for the first time, to the marvellous story, conveyed to them in their own tongue, of the mercy of God, as displayed in the mission of his Son; that this (to us) familiar narrative should be embraced, as it is by thousands of the heathen, and should produce its necessary effect in changing the whole tenor of their lives, converting the wolf into the lamb, &c., affords perhaps one of the most striking testimonies to its Divine origin; "see how these Christians love one another," was the involuntary testimony of the early heathen, before the church had sold itself to the world, and wallowed in corruption. One of two schools for the Chinese in Chicago is attended by sixty scholars; and the celestials, who have no idea of singing, until they have been instructed in the art, have shown their appreciation of this branch of their tuition by presenting the school with a parlor organ; a class of forty Chinamen is accommodated in a Methodist Sunday school in the city; one result of the efforts to benefit these orientals in Chicago is that a missionary from China, who has also had some experience in San Francisco, has been secured to labour among the Chinamen in Chicago. That the fair sex of that Queen City of the West is as much appreciated by their pupils, as it is in our own, is manifest from the circumstance of one of their pupils, having absented himself on a certain occasion; on the previous week, he had been taught by a gentleman; when interrogated as to the cause

of his absence, he replied he "had no teacher last week, man teach him." The writer hopes to visit the Toronto school again shortly, and consequently to say more about the Chinese.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

AGNES STREET.

Had Chillingworth's famous sentiment—"The Bible and the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants," been reduced to practice, much wrangling would have been avoided in the past, and doubtless would be in the future also, but so surely as men begin to daub with their own untempered mortar, the structure of the living God, do they open the way to boundless and fruitless contention. It is probable that the founders of the sect whose public worship is the subject of the present notice, were actuated by sentiments similar to those just enunciated, when they decided to adopt the designation which figures above, and they were not deterred from their selection of the title, by any implication it might appear to cast on other Christians who revere the Bible. The community which has adopted the designation of Bible Christians is one of the outgrowths of Methodism, and arose, as did primitive Methodism, out of an ardent desire on the part of a certain "local preacher" to exceed the limits prescribed by "the Conference," in the interest of the denizens of a coal mine. One of the incidental consequences of such an origin is the comparatively humble degree of attainment required on the part of the community, of its ministers; an average miner in the early days of Methodism, differed only from the heathen in that he was not a cannibal; a knowledge of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages on the part of the men who sought "the highways" of the mine was therefore not indispensable; to the present day, no one of those languages is deemed requisite, by this community, as a qualification for its ministers; the demand on

the part of the uninstructed masses, *for some kind of ministry*, and the amount of time and money needed to obtain acquaintance with these languages, render their acquisition, on the part of all but the comparatively few, a matter of impossibility, hence the exceedingly low standard of qualification on the part of average ministers of almost all sects, and their inability to edify (build up) believers, and to withstand the onslaught of unbelievers. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith Jehovah," may be a convenient apology for ignorance, but the same God who caused that to be written, caused Paul to quote Greek plays, in the course of his letters, and this, of course, as a means of enhancing the force of his arguments: it is more than time that they who have a voice in the training of ministers take care that *their Biblical knowledge at least* shall be adequate to the increasing requirements of the age. Mr. Roberts selected his text, on this occasion, from Romans xv., having read the chapter during the service; as he had been re-appointed by the Conference of the community to the pastorate of the church, he endeavoured to apply the 30th and 32nd verses of the chapter to his own case. "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in prayers to God for me; that I may come to you with joy, by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed."

After dilating on our relation to our Creator and our several social relations, the reverend gentleman commented, as his order is wont to do, on the grace of the Macedonians, whose "contribution for the poor saints in Jerusalem," Paul conveyed to the said saints; these exemplary Macedonians, "in a great trial of affliction," and in "the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty, abounded to the riches of their liberality," etc.; of another exemplary person, who, when occasion served, occupied himself in tent-making, and wrought night and day, rather than be chargeable to any man, we heard but little, at least in this connection. In the course of the preacher's remarks, which for the most part, were such as the subject would suggest; he observed that when God enjoins a duty, He gives his reason for so doing, and that the Apostle Paul did the same; he reminded us of what many would be apt to overlook, namely that the Apostle was not personally acquainted with the Church *in* Rome, when he wrote his epistle; the concluding chapter, however, would appear to give evidence of his personal knowledge of several of the members of that Church. It appears that there is some prospect of a reunion of this branch of Methodism with the parent stock, and if union be strength, and division feebleness, such a reunion must be in a high degree desirable.