

75

*Rev. St. Andrew's*  
*40*

July 22nd, 1882.

No. 28

# Pulpit Criticism:

WITH

ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS TO THE BIBLE.

A WEEKLY SHEET.

BY DAVID EDWARDS.

Published on Saturday, and sold at Hawkins & Co.'s, 67 Yonge St., Toronto

PRICE \$1.00 PER ANNUM.

Copies of any single number can be had, in quantities, at 15 cents per dozen.

OLD ST. ANDREW'S

(SECOND NOTICE.)

It is related of a certain negro whose philosophy was of the character to recognize that "time is money," and that prayer might possibly not involve that consideration, that he adopted as an expedient of brevity, the plan of committing his supplications to a scrap of paper, and tacking the scrap to the wall of his sleeping-room; as morning by morning he awoke to the consciousness that his Maker's compassions failed not, his orizons were tersely presented by pointing to the scrap on the wall, and saying with uplifted eyes, "Please God A'mighty, them's my sentiments." The Presbyterianism of the present day, (as it is exhibited in the great majority of Churches), might learn a lesson from the negro, and content itself with the formal *elevation* of the Bible, and thereby imitate a corresponding ceremony in a sister church; the Presbyterians (who have already manifested a disposition to conform to the spirit of the age) could still express the hollow aspiration—"The Lord bless the exhibition of the binding;" this would

be about as sincere as the present mode of presenting its adherents with what is comparatively the shell, to the utter neglect of the kernel; the Presbyter's "thirdlies" might then be developed into "ninthlies," and yet it is to be feared that some of us would be heterodox enough to exclaim with Jeremiah, "What is the chaff to the wheat, saith Jehovah?" (Ch. xxiii. 28). Presbyterians do not appear to recognize that to that Church which they so industriously denounce, is their practice of sprinkling babies to be traced, hence a considerable portion of the time which was supposed to be devoted to public worship, was occupied by the reiteration of what the minister would expect to be styled arguments in favor of sprinkling the newly-born: one of these may be compared to laying hold of a sword by the blade instead of by the handle—"Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the gentiles, baptizing them &c." Not to comment on the context, it may be necessary to remind the advocate of this performance that in

the corresponding passage in the Gospel of Mark, one of the connected contingents is "*he who believeth and is baptized*" ver. 16. is it necessary to remind him that all the cases of baptism recorded in the New Testament are connected with the profession of individual faith, and that the Apostle Peter declares "the answer of a good conscience toward God" (1 Ep. iii. 21), to be the qualification for the ordinance; does not the reverend gentleman know that this "corrupt practice" of "baptizing" infants is traceable to the third century, and why does he not, as they did in that age, and still do in the Greek Church, administer to them the bread and wine of the Eucharist? The fact is that the mass follow the few, as sheep follow the bell-weather, and what John Knox, John Wesley, and others did not perceive, is not apprehended by those who are more or less ranged under their respective banners. Two hundred years of this era had rolled by, and it was not until the corruption of Christianity had had the opportunity to develop itself, which that lapse of time involved, that any one discovered that the ceremony of "baptism" was beneficial to a baby; "in the third century we find one case of the baptism of infants."\* In the nineteenth century, we find any number of so-styled Protestant ministers unconsciously adopting the teaching of the Vatican, and supporting it by reference to Abraham's knite, and to "households," in which they fail to prove that there were any infants who realized Peter's pre-requisite condition—"the answer of a good conscience toward God:" but Mr. Milligan has concluded that there is *more light* in this century than has ever hitherto dawned on the world, that the said world is *better* than ever it was, and that the Bible was *never so well interpreted* as in the present day. "*If the light which is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*" It is a satisfaction to be able to concur with the infants in their "muling" protest against this ancient superstition (involved in their

baptism) albeit one knows full well that ignorant sentimentality on the part of their seniors of both sexes, is unlikely to relax its hold of the delusion. As the fifteenth chapter of John's Gospel proved, in Mr. Milligan's hands, to be as devoid of furnishing food for reflection as was the forty-fifth of Isaiah, it may be well to indicate that in its opening verse we have a purposed contrast with "Israel is an *empty vine*, he bringeth forth fruit *for himself*," Hos. x. 1. The transition from the portion just cited, to the first verse of the following chapter, with its twofold application, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt"—this transition, had Mr. M. but possessed the disposition, he does not lack the power to render interesting. Any Greek scholar ought also to substitute *pruneth* for "purgeth every branch," in the second verse, unless indeed he prefer the singularly stupid rendering of the revisers, "cleanseth." That the thought of the sixth verse is identical with the fourth verse of Eze. xv., is worth a passing notice; the circumstance of this being noticed in the margin of Ezekiel, and not in the gospel, will serve as one of many illustrations of the carelessness with which the references were selected in the Bible Society's Bible. The extent of the love of Christ for us, being measured only by the Father's love for himself, (ver. 9.) and the command that Christians should love each other according to the measure of Christ's love for them (ver. 12.) are considerations on which a gentleman could hardly be expected to enlarge, when the mainspring of his position is as completely mercantile as is that of any auctioneer. As well might one expect a hardware-man to dilate on the marvels of Divine love, when selling his saws behind the counter. Probably the reverend gentleman was not much alarmed at the prospect of "the world hating" the assembly at Old St. Andrew's, for he could not but know that "the world loves his own," and will have small reason to quarrel with the commercial principles which have superseded the

\*Dean Stanley on Baptism.

divine, and will be no more likely to "hate" the display in the churches than it will hate the vanity and vice of King St. The doctrinal explicitness of the twenty-sixth verse, in days wherein Swedenborgianism, and other aspects of Unitarianism are increasingly rampant, should not, in the writer's judgment, be passed without comment in any public reading of the Scriptures. Our good friend, Mr. Milligan, has given us so much to do, in commenting on his derelictions, that (perhaps happily) he has left but little space in which to enlarge on his essay; it is to be feared that he will be less fortunate than his friend the student, and will fail to secure a first prize for it; not that there was any lack of ability in its elaboration, but on the contrary a deplorable waste of that quality in "piling up the agony" on such a foundation as "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day," Prov. iv. 18. The reverend gentleman properly explained that the thought of "justified" lurks behind the word "just," he cited the cases of Enoch, and Abraham as those of justified persons, dwelt on the encouragements and instructions for such persons, on the certainty of their knowledge, and on their progress; and he drew—on his imagination—in relation to a supposed chorus of birds at early dawn. One of the best wishes the writer has for the good man, (and he has none but kindly ones,) is that he may have light and grace enough to disenthral himself from his present position, and "come out from among them, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing." 2. Cor. vi. 17.

#### THE SALVATION ARMY.

In crossing Centre street while a corps of this body were singing in front of one of their tabernacles, the writer decided to listen to them, and was sufficiently impressed with the conviction of their sincerity, to follow them to Albert Hall. He would be glad if he could speak of them with unqualified praise, but the fatal practice of tale-telling led their "com-

mander" to make statements which exceeded the bounds of credibility—A certain occupant of a penitent-form had *forgotten* the little incident of a murder which he had committed until he found himself on the form! Who after that would disparage the value of *forms*? In order to help us to realize the filial relation of one who has become able to address the Almighty as "Abba, Father," a story was fastened on a group of old women who were said to have become excited over the supposed circumstance of a child uttering the word "Father," so soon as it was born. Whatever body it be which perpetrates such fictions as these "that good may come," is simply abetting the cause of the foe.

#### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE MERCER INSTITUTE.

The Government of Ontario, unlike the majority of Ecclesiastics, recognizes that reformation, and not retaliation is the object of punishment; it therefore judiciously renders substantial aid to the bands of teachers who from week to week endeavour to reach the hearts of that section of the criminal classes which bears on their several persons the legal brand of crime; the Government defrays the cost of the cabs which convey the teachers to their several destinations; the writer availed himself of one on the second inst., and was consequently enabled to pay a second visit to the Mercer; on entering the building, he was met by the Superintendent of the school, who was surrounded by a batch of feminine teachers; the Secretary of the Y. M. C. A. of Glasgow, who has been making an extensive tour in the States, was present also, and ultimately delivered an address to the scholars; prior to proceeding to the room in which the prisoners assemble in the character of scholars, and where there are also children in a state of quasi-imprisonment, the Superintendent sought to elevate himself and his staff to a state of heart and mind in harmony with their undertaking, by singing the single verse—

“Just as I am, without one plea,  
 But that thy blood was shed for me,  
 And that thou bidst me come to Thee,  
 O Lamb of God, I come.”

He then made a few exhortatory remarks on Isa. xxxvi. 8, which passage would be more in harmony with the preceding verse, and more intelligible, if it were read as follows—“In the paths of thy *lavos*, O Jehovah, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy *name*, and to the remembrance of thee.” As stated in a previous issue, wherever the word “name” occurs in such a connection as that above-written, we learn from Philo, that we are at liberty to regard it as relating to Christ. After the Superintendent had playfully urged the scholars to “forget there’s such a thing as a door,” by which suggestion he intimated that they need not trouble themselves to scan every successive arrival, Mr. Oates, the gentleman from Glasgow, addressed the scholars from 1 Tim. 15, a passage which he stated had been the means of the conversion of a brother of his own. Mr. O.’s address was earnestly and kindly delivered; but when he represented the Apostle Paul as de-

scribing himself as a greater transgressor than any recorded in Scripture, he probably exceeded the meaning of the Apostle; there is, of course, a sense in which he was “first” or foremost in rebellion against the Lord, and in relation to the circumstance he adds, “Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me *first* Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering,” etc. The writer observed a sorrowful looking fallen one repeating the words as they fell from Mr. O.’s lips—“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” That law, commended long ago by Lemuel’s mother, the law of kindness, is manifestly the ruling sentiment in this institution, and one result of its realization is that a correspondence is, in certain cases, maintained between teachers and scholars for years after their connection at the institute has terminated; a felicitous result this of a term of imprisonment!

It will be for inspectors to consider whether the healthy influence of the teachers be not frustrated by the intermingling of old and hardened criminals with comparative novices in crime.