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SUNDAY, JANUARY 2, 1898.

DEFECTS IN CRITICISM.

we have referred to the difficulty of arriving at right conclusions as to new books published by reading the announcements of publishers and the opinions of newspapers even of the more pretentious class. The difficulty arises in the variant and antagonizing opinions of critics of supposed taste, judgment, acquisition and ability, and the excessive praise bestowed by leading literary exponents on both sides of the Atlantic. The Messenger has commented upon the laudations of books of ephemeral career and the great extravagance indulged in by critics of the gifts of writers of the last one or two decades. We have pointed out that so great is the indulgence in adjectives as applied to new writers, that if the greatest geniuses of the world in the literature were to reappear there would be no language strong enough left with which to characterize their powers and productions. You will find the same exhaustive terms applied most freely to the recent poets and to recent novelists as are applied discriminatingly to the great masters in the ages from Homer to Tennyson, and from Richardson and Fielding to Thackeray. Dickens and George Eliot. Recent critics so laud and magnify late contemporary writers that the readers not thoroughly versed in the literatures of the last three centuries will conclude that in Weyman, Doyle, Hawkins, and a dozen others of the romantic and historical school you have full rivals of Scott, Hugo, Dumas, the elder, and any others of the greatest of that fascinating school. When Meredith, Hardy, Blackmore, Mrs. Ward and some others of the cleverest novelists of the last thirty years are considered, you will be induced to believe that they are essentially greater, not only greater than Bulwer, Trollope, Charles Reade, Mulock, Charlotte Bronte, Charles Kingsley and his brother, but greater even than Fielding, Jane Austen, Scott, Thackeray, Dickens, and George Eliot. All this is brought about by the violation of taste, sanity of judgment, a proper appreciation of terms and that penetration without which there can be no sound interpretation of genius, and in reliable information as to merit municated. Holding this through years, as we have been mis and again by the indulge latives in criticism, we see signs of a return balanced criticis ectives must

newspapers and be utterly misming. We have read novels by trusted, and our and far imparable to the des below the rank assi muct satisfaction we read with a London "Literature"

a critical e Age of Superlatives." It way so much in accord with our own conclusions previously stated and from time to time through at least two or three years, that we naturally felt glad to see a first rate literary English weekly discussing the grossest abuses of criticism and apply the cautery so promptly, for the essay appears in the seventh issue of that able critical gazette. It is so vigorous and direct in its censure of critical outrages upon sense and taste and judgment, that we take leave to copy a passage or so. The

ight judgment,

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The.

"For, indeed, the immense reading public,' so called, of today-that gross indiscriminate feeder upon all printed matter which has anything of an appetizing appearance-never stops to distinguish between either the quality or the source of its food. To the guileless consumer of gossip about books and their authors every 'puff' paragraph is a 'criticism,' and the ignorant or interested raptures of the casual scribe who penned it become the authoritative promouncement of a critic. * * Criticism,' of the kind to which he (a contributor) refers has become a mere orgie of superlatives. A young rhymer cannot produce a volume of creditable verse without being acclaimed as a *great' poet; a new novelist writes a stirring romance of adventure, and he is paraded before us as the legitimate successor-possibly the future rivalof Scott; an experimentalizing essayist turns out a series of pretty papers on the 'carving of cherry stones,' and he is discovered to have begun where Lamb left off; a word painter, just recently started in business, dashes off a sim booklet of impressionist studies,

Ruskin; a rhapsodist rhapsodizes about his own or somebody else's emotions, and an awe-stricken public is informed that he has 'added a new music to English prose."

Among American newspapers and weeklies and monthlies that give particular attention to criticism we read the New York Tribune, Evening Post, and Mail and Express, (dailies), the New York "Bookman," "Book Buyer," (occasionally) and "Atlantic Monthly" among the magazines devoted strictly to literature, and also read more or less of critical articles in New York "Current Literature." We often read some of the opinions of such famous English representatives in literary criticism as the London "Spectator," "Saturday Review," "Athenaeum," and "Literature." Of American criticisms. we read, as a whole, we rather incline to the "Atlantic" as the safest guide when New England is not up for examination. Mr. Stoddard, who writes for the Mail and Express, is more nearly of our own heart in taste and opinion than any other writer connected with the dailies, when writers of the past are under discussion. The Tribune Several times in the last two years is very interesting, generally able and acute in judgment of contemporary writers, and shows learning combined with insight in discussing historical and other works. The Evening Post gives more time to literary discussion than any American newspaper. It has a vast amount of criticisms on books, but it is very learned and ample and to us dull often, for it reviews many classes of work in which we take no special interest. The English criticisms are quite sure to be able and interesting, but now and then the prejudices of culture as well as peculiar bent of taste will assert themselves in opinions that will hardly be received as either sat-

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isfactory or final.

RELIGIOUS EDITORIALS FOR SUNDAY.

Some year or so ago, perhaps, it was, we had something to say of the late Rev. Charles Spurgeon in more than one issue of The Messenger. He was a most extraordinary preacher and did a most extraordinary work. We hold his memory in highest regard, for he was a genuine Christian and was firmly based on the everlasting Gospel of the Son of God. He was a prodigious work er of great administrative ability, an admirable preacher, one of the best of in the century, and one of the greatest of all the centuries. We have read with profound interest scores of h sermons, and they are excellent t ing for any household, be it or altherwise. We refer to English Baptist preaches a very interesting or and aulishman who flour f real exmanhood, who nguished reputhoor of pla a tribute to Mr. cellence. was in the early remarkable ministru is too sond, too prophetic, We reproduce what Wies said of the marveliful pulpit orator who took id by surprise, and his name in almost every man's mouth. A clergyman by the name of Davies gives the story. While at student at Regent's Park College, Mr. Knowles had been recently baptized and apointed tutor of elocution in the college. The students presented "a brand old man," as he geon. We quot

on entering, Mr. "Imm exclaimed, Boys, have you Both the Cambridgeshire lad?' None us had heard him. 'Then, boys,' he continued, 'go and hear him at once.' This was after Mr. Spurgeon had been preaching at New Park Street Chapel two Sundays. Go and hear him at onice of you want to know how to préach. His name is Charles Spurgeon. He is only a boy, but he is the most wonderful preacher in the world. He is absolutely perfect in his oratory; and, besides that, a master of the art of acting. He has nothing to learn from me, or any one else. He is simply perfect. He knows everything. He can do anything. I was once lessee of Drury Lane Theatre; and were I still in that position, I would offer him a fortune to play for one season on the boards of that house. Why, boys, he can do anything he pleases with his audience! He can make them laugh, and cry, and laugh again, in five minutes. His power was never equalled. Now, mark my word, boys, that young man will live to be the greatest preacher of this or any other age."

Probably Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker is the foremost preacher in London today. We saw it stated a day or so since that Archdeacon Farrar is, but we do not believe it. Dr. Parker is a very distinguished, gifted and admirably equiped man. His commentary on the entire Bible, a very voluminous publication and the work his alone, is highly indorsed by theologians and Biblical critics as of unique excellence, Preaching recently, he said his text was the greatest text in the Bible, and it was "Our Lord Jesus Christ." Thesse words he said embraced the whole New Testament. We copy a part or summary of his discourse:

"The preacher said the point of the text was the 'our' appropriation. In the first place it wan an intelligent appropriation. We know when we have believed. It was a voluntary appropriaand we are invited to hail another acceptance of this Saviour's sovereignty. He answers more questions, satisfies more necessities, soothes mor pain, and gives sleep to deeper weari ness. Therefore it is our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not a sentimental appropriation. You cannot have Him as a mere perfume, as a mere idol of sentiment. Jesus Christ is a standard of conduct, a living discipline. He stretches us on the Cross, and nails our hands, and if we love Him after that. He takes care of us forever. None shall pluck us out of His hand. He is a Christian who is in Christ, who is "They are no less active and vitale grafted into Christ, who is one with day in the face of present problems." the blood of Christ, and does the conmandments of Christ."

This will suit the Christmas holidays as well as any other time, for all need to remember what some one has written in the following:

"Because he is our Father for love's The load we cannot give him he will

His gracious heart compassionates our There is not even need of spoken pray-

Though we forget the 'God be merel-Our troubles reach him. God is pitiful."

There is a very injurious, fallacious d'angerous opinion that has taken root in latter days relative to the actual need of the Gospel and the redemptive scheme taught therein. The world, in estimation of not a few, can get along very well without the love of God in the soul and the blood of the Cross of Christ. It is somehow believed by people not otherwise unintelligent, that the world can work out its own salvation in its own way without God's favor or the love of Christ and grace to help. Bob Ingersoll teaches, we believe, something of this, and even divines, who profess to be called of God, preach such diluted doctrines, and so eliminate Calvary and Christ and the love of God, as to save man by the plans of men, and to perfect holliness, not in the fear of Jehovah and by the Divine truth, but by doing good to our fellows, bestowing charity, and being honest and so on. This is not a new gospel, but the destruction practically of God's revelation and plan of salvation. The idea, more or less, prevails that if God helps man at all to rise to higher levels of goodness, morallity, of benevolence, that through Christ, not as the God, who was crucified for tion of men, to take aw the world, but as a " not as God a "perfect me Saviour, h

divine glory or really the express image of God's Joctrines are perverted, the f Gold is contemned, and man in vain to be practically his own viour. The New York Observer, a very able and long established Preshyterian paper, seeing the tendency of the times, the danger lurking in the popular theology of the day, has these pertinent reflections, of which we are glad to avail ourselves. It says, and we think it wholly true:

"The fear of singularity, of graveyard sadness, of looking away from the unseen and eternal-this is what the church has to contend against first of all. It is not merely the inconsistencies of her members. There is many a thing which the world once counted an inconsistency which it does not notice now. The church itself includes a great number of fashionable and wealthy people whose presence the world demands at social functions and whose participation therein will cause no word of adverse comment. The church is entrenched in society just as truly as society is entrenched in the church. But if ever it shall be deemed necessary Bible. Mr. Knowles took occasion to the gy, to emphasize greater loyalty to the give his prophecy con the Mr. on to deto preach once more a sterner theolodraggingbe arts by which the world is spiritual levels, then the outcry will be heard as it was once heard against the stern and unbending Puritans. This is the age of partial compromise. How long can that compromise be maintain-

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HOME FOLKS.

railroad commissioners—Th Russell set-seem to regard railroads as public enemies without rights or privileges, but subject to regulation entirely by people outside. Remove the railroads now in North Carolina, and a man would about as well be in China or Thibet or, Central Africa, we started to add, but remember that even railroads have penetrated that hitherto dark and rarely frequented region. Railroads know more of their business, the cost of running, the verious needed expenditures, the proper rates to charge in order to live and let live than Russell's intruders car possibly know.

-It was reported in an exchange that Dr. Edwin A. Alderman, president of the University, addressed the recent meeting of the Association of Academies at Raleigh, but it was a mistake. He was not present. He addressed the School Superintendents. He ad dressed a letter to Professor Hugh Morson, president of the first body named, and from it we take the following, which has the right ring and the wide swing:

forms of public education, and a believer in the right and duty of the state to maintain and strengthen its educational system, I am none the less a staunch friend of the academies and secondary schools. They builded our civilizations in the past. They have kept alive the love of liberal learning in unpromising times. The brave men. the Wilsons, Caldwells, Horners, Binghams, Graves, who gave their lives to the cause, have furnished examples of heroic effort to all succeeding times. "They are no less active and vitaleto-

"If there be any antagonism between these great agencies and the college and the University, let them be removed temperately and in the spirit of wisdom. Any irrational relation between the parts of the great whole is confusion and folly. For the whole system is one and inseparable I stand ready to do all in my power to promote the purposes of your organization, which I assume to be the just expansion and increased usefulnes of the alcademies and secondary scrools of North Carolina.

According to The Ashevill Gazette in the Iredell chain gang a respectables, it has been ascertained, that forty-two voted for McKinia and but a beggarly and lonesome hree for Bryan. This shows how stelligence and virtue went in force for the very pure, trustworthw and note party known as republican. The Gazette has a very suitable comment that seem just to all. It says:

"There comes that civil service law again, giving places to democrats which justly belong to republicans. Those three Bryan men should be kicked off the gang, and their places given to republicans, who, by aiding to elect McKirley, are fully entitled to the positions these men hold.'

When the tax-payers foot up all of Russell and Company's bills and ge to the end of the cost of the "refor party," they will groan and be to lift the scalps of their ressential mies and betrayers. Units an an avcrats a legislature "reform" 1895 \$72,604.

Messenger ga respectively for to participate in the When you sts prepared by the gang, s to a great luxury, and not g either the "fixens" and things balck in the kitchen. The figures re derived from The Pittsboro Record that has been looking into the matter.

ENAPS.

Rah! But little hope for Hanna now. There would be none but for his "money

During the year 1,000 ships cleared from Baltimore. They carried 61,000,000 bushels of grain

Mr. A. B. Shepperson thinks that low prices will be certain to force a large reduction of the cotton crop for 1898. They ought to do this.

The Spanish government forbids Weyler to publish his protest. The talk is that the butcher may be prosecuted. Give it to him.

Buck Duke, president of the Cigarette Trust, is in St. Louis trying to "gobble up"two large cigarette plants. That foul trust wants the earth. If they can get control of all digarette plants won't they make the farmers squeal? Watch.

It is announced that the British Hoisery Company of Rhode Island will remove its plant to the south. It will go to Nashville. Others will soon follow. They are fast learning "up there" which side their bread is buttered.

Think of a farm containing 1,500,000 acres. Such an one is in Louisiana. It has thirty-six miles of railway and 300 miles of navigable streams, and \$50,-000 of fencing. It is owned by northern men and steam ploughs are used. Catthe raising is the chief business.

The papers continue to rake President McKinley for his free hand in pardoning thieves. The Boston Herald lifts his hair because of this and says "his heart is even bigger than his head." The truth about it is that the Major was never a man of much brain power. It is perhaps as much a case of "softening of the brain" as of "softening" of

Adlai Steverson must have no hope of future success in politics or he would not become counsel of the American Trust Conipany. Think of a fellow receiving any votes except from ignorance and the negroes in North Carolina who stood forth as a candidate for public office who was counsel for the American Cigarette Tobacco Trust Company.

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It certainly looks like it, but there is really no trick about it. Anybody can try it who has Lame Back and Weak Kidneys, Malaria or nervous troubles. We mean he can cure himself right away by taking Electric Bitters. This medicine tones up the whole system, acts as a stimulant to the Liver and Kidneys; is a good blood purifier and nerve topic. It cures Constipation, Headache, Fainting Spells, Sleeplessness and Melancholy. It is purely vegetable, a mild laxative, and restores the system to its natural vigor. Try Electric Bitters and be convinced that they are a miracle worker. Every bottle guaranteed. Only 50c a bottle at R. R. Bellamy's drug store.

Why allow yourself to be slowly tor-tured at the stake of disease? Chills and Fever will undermine, and eventually break down the strongest constitution. Febri-Cura (Sweet Chill Tonic with Iron) is more effective then quinnie, and being combined with iron is an excellent Timic and Nerve medicine. It is pleasant to take, and is sold under positive guarantee to cure or money "last as good" kind don't effect cures. Sold by J. C. Shepard, J. H. Hardin "While I am a staunch friend of all and H. L. Fertress.

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