

THE HUMOROUS ELEMENT OF THE EARLY ENGLISH PULPIT.

By Hon. J. W. WALKER. We were so constituted that the sight and presence of the imperfect and incongruous could only move us to tears, then would our eyes become inexpressible.

Under the influence of such gloomy teaching as this the business of life would stand still, and the human race itself soon vanish from the earth. But the human soul was made to dwell in sunshine as well as in shade.

There is an innocency in humor that you find not in satire. Humor is always harmless in its mirth; like charity, "it thinketh no evil." It never excites passion, or stirs up those baser elements that exist in the human mind.

The old English divines never scrupled to indulge in it, where they conceived that truth could be better enforced by it. The strain on the mind relieved, or its weariness refreshed by its use.

He is never from his cure, yet shall never find him unoccupied, he is ever in his parish, he keepeth residence at all times, yet shall never find him out of the way.

He never spared either small or great, but went about his Master's business, having no mind to be a respecter of persons. No doubt he had some ecclesiastical court sycophant or time-server within the range of his vision at the moment he uttered that fierce blast against unrepenting prelates.

He is well as to the world if it leaves these beautiful relations undisturbed. They are the natural relations of the sexes, and any attempt to change them must only result in manifold evils to both.

The modern pulpit, in abandoning almost entirely a resort to humorous illustration, has by so doing, made its own weakness.

It is with this species of religion: "Like lightning, it only flashes upon the face and is gone; and it is well if it do not hurt the man." Such preachers may be conscientious and earnest, but their solemnity and asceticism, both in and out of the pulpit, cast a gloom

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