PULPIT LESSONS.

SERMONS ON TIMELY THEMES.

DISCOURSES BY THE REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER, THE REV. DR. H. W. BELLOWS, THE REV. DR. ALFRED S. PATTON, THE REV. DR. J. P. NEWMAN OF WASHINGTON, AND OTHERS.

The congregations in the churches of New-York and Brooklyn yesterday were diminished by the departures to Summer resorts, and possibly by the weariness and discomposure of many persons who remained in the city, but whose sleep during the previous night had been interrupted by the many noises of premature and sporadic celebrations of the national anniversary. Not a few sermons yesterday morning were upon themes suggested by the anniversary. Among these were the discourses of the Rev. Dr. Bellows, the Rev. S. B. Rossiter, and the Rev. Milton S. Terry in this city, and the Rev. Dr. J. P. Newman of Washington at Sea Cliff. Mr. Beecher's morning discourse in Plymouth Church—which was filled as full as it could hold—dealt with the requirements of the truly Christian life, and showed in how high a plane and with what nobility of aspiration and effort it behooved the followers of Christ to live in.

REQUIREMENTS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

The Rev. H. W. Beecher, at Plymouth Church (Congregational).

Mr. Beecher bade his congregation good-by yesterday morning, at the close of an impressive sermon, after announcing that he should occupy the pulpit that evening for the last time for several weeks, until he returns from his Summer vacation. He also announced that the Rev. Dr. Noah Porter of Yale College would probably occupy his place the following week. The crowd to hear Mr. Beecher was fully as large as usual, perhaps a little larger, although it is almost impossible to perceive, at least from the inside of the church, any addition to an audience which every time packs the house to its utmost capacity. A noticeable face in the gallery was that of Mr. Hull, juror No. 11, who received a few inquisitive glances from those whose presence in the court-room had made his countenance familiar to them. A number of persons were admitted to membership in the church, whose names were proposed the previous Sunday, and have been already announced in THE TRIBUNE.

The text was taken from Hebrews, xii., 2 and 3: "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God; for consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

If any one country there be war but no disturbance, if the great thoroughfares are as they have always been, everyone knows its appointed channels and follows in them. If public bodies are not convoked, if the Government shows no special anxiety or excitement, we say that it is some trifling war, some outbreak on the border, bearing no proportion at all to the force that is arrayed against it, and not of enough significance to enter in and excite the thoughts of people, of citizens. But when the whole atmosphere is hot with excitement, when men forget their daily business and shoot their daily bread; when, whatever may be private calamity or private prosperity, there is an overmastering theme, so that strangers become acquaintances and friends forget everything but the great theme, as once not long ago in our own history and experience, then I say that the conflict is tremendous; that the warfare must reach to the very bottom of things, or there could be no such preparations, no such excitements.

When you open the books of the New Testament and perceive that men are called for a new life to a higher business than that which has ordinarily occupied their thoughts and powers, what is the language of it? Is there the picture of an unwrinkled brow? Is there there a smiling lip? Is there there an empty hand? Is the voice the voice of music, dulcet and soothing? Or is the spirit of the New Testament intense, fiery, almost fierce? How does it speak of the work to which men are called as something they can take on the way? Or is it that that shall tax the understanding and task the consciences you, suppose, human endeavor and demand for its execution the downbidding of Divine power, the inspiration and guidance and the potency of the Holy Ghost? Which is the way in which the New Testament speaks of the Christian life? "The violence of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force," saith the Sacred Word. "Strive to enter into the straight gate." "Many shall seek to enter in, but shall not be able." "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." These are some of the words of the New Testament. Are these the words of the apostles that magnify with heated zeal the thought of their Master? Nay, but hear the Master Himself, saying: "If any man come unto Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and brother, and sister, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple, and he is not worthy of me." These are the metaphors all terrible—language stretching until it seems almost unnatural to bear the burden of the intensity of the Divine conception of that life to which we are called.

It is true that we are told it is an easy life in other phrases—that the yoke is easy and the burden is light, and that is true, too, just as it is true that the harvest season is pleasant, though harvesting is not pleasant. Things accomplished are noble, and satisfy, but things not yet done require all the soldierly qualities and experiences, and so it is true that we are called in the New Testament in both ways to contend earnestly; to be vigilant, to be watchful, to be fervent, to know that our enemy, the devil, goes about sometimes as the serpent, sometimes as a roaring lion. We are called upon to watch day and night and be always ready, and that the Son of Man may come when we know not. And yet we are called to all the ways are ways of pleasantness and all the paths are peace. We are called to the loveliness of the various experiences of life, now they work out the fruits of righteousness, both in its beginning, one appertaining to the beginning, the other to the consummation of Christian experience.

But the main representation of the New Testament, as addressed to men, is intense pressure; as if the things that we are like to lose were of such transcendent value that no time could afford to lose them; as if the things we are liable to incur of pain and disaster were such as no soul could endure for a moment to contemplate; as if the ends and issues to which we are called in themselves above all ordinary experiences. Wealth is as nothing compared to that to which we are called, and pleasures as they develop themselves in ordinary life are not to be mentioned in comparison with those higher ends we are to seek as Christian men. We are to go into the Christian life, not haughtily, heroiically, as it were, to be stunned into impotence, hanging on how and doing nothing ourselves. That is not the voice of the New Testament. We are to be girded like warriors. We are to put on the sword of the spirit, and every part of the armor, offensive and defensive. We are to contend, and, having done all, to stand.

Now, what is the character of this to which we are called of which such things can be true? Now, it is not true that any such exertion as this is required, or only that amount of piety is required which we see ordinarily displayed in Christian households. It is extravagant language to characterize that which is ordinarily accepted as sufficient for the life of the Christian household. Look at the condition of men that are called to a church life. Men and themselves acting wrongly; that is, they are carnes, go nowhere to church, ride out on Sunday, drink, lie, cheat a little; do a great many little things that they all say are wrong. By and by they are roused up and begin to think they are going to remain, or have remained; that they have joined the church. Now, how is it? Well, they have stopped swearing. Whatever they may think, they don't utter anything. They have stopped lying in the main—of course, all ships leak a little; but they have set out to stop. They don't ride out any more on Sundays; they go to church; pay their new rents; settle their accounts in business regularly; avoid all extremes of eating or drinking; don't steal, murder, commit adultery. They avoid all the smirking vices.

I am not ridiculing this, but this I do say, that it is absurd to apply the intensified language of the New Testament to only that. Decency and morality don't require any such strain and inspiration as the language of the New Testament requires, and a man can be a good citizen of the Commonwealth without any such paroxysms of virtue or anything else. A man can be a reputable member of the church and not put forth such extraordinary zeal. Take up your cross to join the Church! What does that mean? Why, it means that you are to be willing to take up the cross, and to tell your companions that you have experienced religion. Then you are to take up the cross, and go down into the baptistry before the congregation and be baptized. That is about the cross men take up when they join the church, in so far as the mere act of joining is concerned. Is that taking up a cross? Is that all that is meant in that extravagant language of the New Testament? If it be all, it is extravagant language.

I never that if a man lives on an average with the morality of the community in which he is, it is easier to live so than not to live so. There must be something else. Let us look then and see whether there are not certain elements in Christian life that are to be secured only by the most stringent human effort under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit itself. Long, for example, at the development of selfishness in all its multiplied forms among men. The living for yourself, at the sacrifice or neglect of others or with indifference toward others, is selfishness. Seeking your own good for its own sake first and mainly—that is selfishness. That is nature. It is that that every natural man is impelled to do. But where it begins to develop and come into the higher plane of its organization, instead of seeking its own thought and pleasure, the ambition is laid upon the child to think not of its own things alone, but of the things of others, and to love others as it loves itself, and that law is to go through the whole realm of a man's reason. It is to be the law of his imagination. It is to be the law of honor, the law of social intercourse, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," think for him, avoid wounding him just as you avoid wounding yourself, work for him just as you would for yourself, feel pain at his downfall just as you would at your own, rejoice at his uprising just as you would at your own. You are to carry that spirit of living for others precisely as you live for yourself, through the street, into politics—like—everywhere. Let a man undertake that; let a man take that simple element of self-sacrifice and undertake to live it every day, morning, noon, and night, and he is in the main succeeding, and living such a life that he can appeal to God with the daily sun, "Thou knowest I am holding myself to this—to love my neighbor as myself."

Now, then, I ask you can anybody do that easily? Did you ever do it? Did you ever try? When you think of yourself now, and when I put the question to you, "Are you living in that way," don't you stand at the idea? When this is put to a congregation isn't it the prominent feeling in that congregation—"that is metaphorical—that is very well for an ideal, but God knows nobody can reach that."

You can't do it, and are you not willing to agree with me that if a man does do it, he does it all by and in the employment of every intensive force that belongs to his nature? By will, by watchfulness, by intensity of zeal, and more than that, if in doing this he communes himself to the inspiration of God, living in the midst of multitudes of men, in all relationships, and yet attempts to live in thought and feeling, in honor and love and service as best he can, and attempts to carry out the command, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Why men believe that to love the Lord their God with all their heart, all their mind, all their strength, is easier than to love their neighbor, for they have so little to do with God. He is an abstraction in the main. But living with men, being cheated by them, in rivalry with them, in all the thousand things of life to carry yourself honestly and with dignity, and true fellowship of love toward them, to have that abide in you—can any man pursue that life? Does any man pursue it? Is there one single man that has any conception of it? Is there one who puts his hands upon his mouth, and his mouth in the dust, and says, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" And yet this is a part of the loyal law by which Heaven is governed and by which the universe is yet to be governed. And when it comes to this, "Every man is my brother; I belong to every creature on the globe and first of all to those who need me most"—who lives that life? They would silence me if I preached there is not a Trinity, or if I took a particular theory not orthodox, ten thousand voices are lifted up to denounce such monstrous teaching, but when I say "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—and love means to use yourself, even at your own sacrifice for the sake of others—that is Christ's example, that is God's deep love, that is the life toward which you aspire. "Love thy neighbor as thyself"—men say, "Well, that is enthusiasm; of course that is the kind of preaching some folks like, but it is a sort of enthusiastic gush." I bring to you the fundamental law of the universe, I bring to you that on which God's throne stands, I declare to you that the new life is a life in which selfishness is not and in which beneficence reigns. And ministers have been preaching, as before shown, so long on intellectual ideas that they don't recognize what is the very narrow, the very life and power of all religion. Men go browsing like oxen, eating like lions, gnawing each other like worms, and that is said to be vigor, that is power, that is justice, that is life. I declare to you that "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbor as thyself," and carry out that idea in your household, in your associations, everywhere. Then men say that that is the very stopping over of infeelity. Where are they who shall dare stand upon the supreme law of the universe and declare that the declaration of imperial beneficence is mere sentimentality? I will not say they are infidels. I merely say that they are Christians that "see men as trees walking;" I say they are men whose eyes have been touched by the Holy Ghost, but only once touched, and they are waiting for the second touch.

Take another matter. Look at the way in which pride acts on the human conscience. Pride which is altogether of selfishness. Look at the sense of superiority which it gives to an individual man, and that too without regard to the facts of the case. Pride is not a judgment. We are born with it; we find it in us; it plays down upon us. There are those men who have the sense of highness, of sovereignty, of superiority, of intense work; it has been in them; everybody has it more or less, and in some it swell out from their lives as mountains from the plains. Now the command of the Gospel is, "Humble thyself before God." "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Blessed are those who, like little children, look up to those who are greater. When a man has done a great many things he should not have done, and left undone a great many things he should have done, he repents and wishes to join the Church; he institutes family prayers and he becomes a different man; but what does the man do with that pride? Now, I do not undertake to say that a man must have a school in this, but I say a man must try to control temper. And how many men believe that this is a part of their Christian character—believe that they should set themselves to control this spirit of pride, which makes them feel they are gods among men. And if a man recognizes this as a part of his duty, is it a thing a man can control easily? That it can be controlled we know. In Paul we have an instance of a man who by nature was excessively proud. Pride pervaded his whole being, having for its auxiliary conscience, intense executive power, so that he felt himself to be a man called to purify the whole Jewish church; he led the van. And when he was converted on his persecuting errand, a change passed over him. Now pride was in his nature just as much at the beginning as at the end of his life; but in the beginning his pride had hard and angular corners, but in the end it was set and smooth. He had subdued this pride, so that it became the servitor of mankind, it worked for others and not for himself.

Now have ever any of you undertaken to a small way, even to diminish with pride? How did the battle come out, and what was your mark? How long have you been a Christian? How long have you been members of the church, Christian before men? Everybody says you are a respectable Christian, but do you know all the thoughts and feelings in you? Have you ever tried to subdue pride in you? Do you know that it can be made to be subservient to you? Have you undertaken to subdue your pride? If you have, has it not required all the strength of your being, and more than that, the cleansing power of the Divine Spirit to do it? Have you ever undertaken to subdue the spirit of praise? With its ten thousand temptations there is no other feeling that has so many little loopholes as this. In it there are so many little exceptions, so many plans, so many lurks, so many slips, there is nothing in the world that will stand so little as this. Have you ever taken the lens to the window and seen the particulars that come from the pure light? Such are the thoughts and feelings of those who are under the control of vanity. Have you ever set yourself at work to reform it? Have you ever taken the gauge of your strength? Have you ever said that such and such are the instrumentalities by which I will subdue this spirit? Have you ever said I will take no rest until I am conscious of having subdued that element by the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Take passion as another element—the facility of it, the facility with which you are touched and flame out in the heat of the moment, with which your temper blazes out, the fearful intensity of it under provocation, unchiness of it. But how prudent a man is when he has cooled off. How much trouble in the household between husband and wife, brother and sister, friend and friend, is caused by this uncontrollable temper of men, and how many men, when they come in the Christian life, have so far conquered it as to hold their tongue, and that is a good thing—a good thing. Why is this? What view of God, what Divine grace let down from heaven, what sense of duty, what conscious bond of obligation is there on you in this matter? Do you say of others, all men get angry, and I believe to my kind? Of course we don't expect to be saints because we are Christians? No, I don't think any of you are likely to be saints because of your religion.

It is not enough that you should say, I have sworn to believe in the Caryanistic creed, the Arminian, the Episcopal, or I love the silent church without ordinances, but in the spirit. That is not enough. It is that religion should make you like the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is by your conception as in your experience that you say the new man is not sufficient for the things of the spirit, the will is present with me but how to perform I know not—if this then be the conception that you have of the Christian life, then next do you feel how pertinent is that declaration of the writer of Hebrews, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith?" Looking unto him! Is there any matter trying to live a life of Christ who does not know and catch the conscious presence of the Lord Jesus Christ every day and every hour? Think about Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, that ideal Christ, that image of divine excellence, that pattern for us, that One who has taught us how to carry pride without sin, how to extermination selfishness, how to be royal and yet be the companion of the lowest; that noble Christ that came to Him the needy upon the earth, and was in Himself perfect among the imperfect. He was not Himself arrogant or vain. He did not look down because He was superior, but He was as equable and sweet as a mother with her children.

In the first place, our ideal of what it is to be a Christian must be every day refreshed. No shipmaster, if he can get observations every day, fails to take them every day, to know how he is sailing; and no Christian should fle less than he on the voyage of life. Christ is our model, and every day we must rectify our own conceptions of what it is to be a Christian by looking unto Jesus. We look to Him that we may keep ever before us that ideal of a transformed and spiritualized character. We look to Him because without the spirit of a heavenly sympathy like His we should be discouraged. There is nothing in public sentiment that helps a man in the spirit of true sacrifice. We are to look to Christ for that light as well as the example, that inspiration as well as that ideal; day by day looking unto him, and all the more because we are told that He Himself was made a perfect high priest, and by suffering a captain. Christ, by his suffering, by influence, by the ordinances of the house of God, exhorts upon us to bring men fully to a realization of the great invisible glory, the love of Christ, the power of that justice that comes from love, and the power of that ordinance which comes from love, the power of the adherence that springs from that love, the power of that faith which works by love, the victorious power of that faith which works by love—all this we behold in the Lord Jesus Christ, and, in all the emergencies of life, we need the same source of awakening, of delivery, of consolation and sympathy in Jesus Christ.

And now, as we are about, as a church, to separate—pastor and people—for some weeks, we that have been brought so near together by a common life in the church, and by a common rejoicing in the truths of the Gospel, and by common sympathies one with another, and by a common suffering, and by common hopes and common victories; we that are to be separated so long, so many weeks, ought to carry with us some common memorial, that we need not forget each other, and that we may have our hearts strengthened, as they have so many times before, together; and as lovers of the olden time, in parting, agreed at evening to look up at the same star and think of each other, and as many and many a time parting friends have agreed, at some particular hour, to read the same passages, or to bow the knee in prayer together that their love might minister to their real; as we could take away with us or stay at home, having with us some common souvenir, some suggestion, so let us take this one: every morning as we rise, "looking unto Jesus;" when the bell strikes 12 at noon, let us agree together, pastor and people, to say in our hearts "looking unto Jesus;" and when the sun goes down at evening, let us say together, "looking unto Jesus;" and every time you say it think of me, and every time I say it I will think of you, and every time you and I say it Jesus thinks of us all. And in this common thought of each other and of Him that loved us and gave himself for us, let us go through the fiery days of Summer, and come again when Autumn begins to robe the earth in all its dying beauty, and prefigures the glory of departure; and let us come together and report that in looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, He has grown larger and more beautiful, and has become to us all the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

HINDERANCES TO NATIONAL PROGRESS.

The Rev. H. W. Bellows, D. D., at All Souls' Church (Unitarian).

The Rev. H. W. Bellows, D. D., preached at All Souls' (Unitarian) Church, at Fourth-ave. and Twenty-fifth-st., yesterday morning. His text was Deuteronomy xxxii., 46 and 47: "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life."

All our evils and dangers, in America, the preacher said, proceed from expecting sound and wholesome political principles to produce effects which only moral and social experience and domestic and religious training can accomplish. It is not what the improvements in our political principles and order tend to do of themselves, but in what they leave other principles and methods free to do, that their real worth lies. The real power or opportunity of the American people dwells where it is not always looked for—in their escape from political interference, patriarchal supervision, and governmental direction or hinderance. It is not so much what our Government is as what it is not that deserves praise. When the Government is the nation; when what it is and does constitutes the national life; when its rulers' acts, personal or public, are chronicled with servile minuteness; when a court or a Parliament is what engages the chief attention of visitors or historians of events—then you have a mournful suppression of the people's energies, self-respect, self-reliance, and proper development. This is just what our fathers had the wisdom to provide against. What they meant by liberty was leave for the people freely to use their own intelligence, their own methods, their own thoughts and activities in getting such good out of life and circumstances as they might. They said, "We will have no hereditary class of kings and rulers; no nobles and gentry to act as our guardians; we will not allow property to be more sacred than human nature, and take away the common people's right to choose their rulers. We are not going to bury the people under the grandeur of a State, build up on a concentration of power and wealth. The world has had enough great governments, powerful dynasties, splendid aristocracies. We want a great and free and happy people, where all opportunities and blessings and privileges are universal, equally open to all; where wealth and opportunity lie at the feet of all willing to seek and gain and use them."

Once the main concern of the people in the central and State Governments was to watch jealously that the officers did not exceed their power and encroach upon their personal and local liberties. There was no temptation in their modest offices, nor in their limited powers, to make such offices and powers objects of solicitous desire. Office had no associations of money-making influences connected with it. People went to Congress for the honor, or for reasons of duty to their communities. But we have at length developed such an enormous government machine, so costly and with such vast monetary necessities, that the management and lending of it have become one of the largest of American professions; and Government Federal, State, and municipal, or government under the form of corporation, subsidized by the general treasury, has taken on most new, significant and alarming proportions, and become the chief demoralizer of our national life. It is a sad thing to acknowledge that the political principles should, in their practical development and in their degraded method, have become the chief cause of our demoralization. I do not hesitate to say that our political life of late has seriously demoralized our commercial and social life. A corrupting and ruinous policy of seeking political influence and political methods, to advance all kinds of private interests, is characteristic of this generation. It is a return, in a worse form, to the very evils our nation was framed to escape.

When people are poisoned with the idea that patient labor is not the most honorable, direct, and safe way of getting an independence; that there is some shorter road to self-support, and that they shall raise themselves in living by their wits, that is, on the labor of others, there will soon follow such a disproportion between workers and drones, or producers and exchangers of value, that the adventurers will be forced, in their rivalry with each other, to adopt methods and descend to arts marked only by shrewdness and smartness, and devoid of rectitude and principle. This it is which has lowered and degraded the commercial tone and trading habits of the nation. When we were carrying on a most exhaustive war, living in luxury and extravagance, and making a debt of thousands of dollars, there were people who said we were only enriching ourselves by our waste; that we owed the debt we made only to ourselves, and that it was only taking money out of one pocket and putting it into another. As if any nation could stop the labor of a million and a half of its most able-bodied laborers for four years and not lose all they would have produced. And now we are all wondering why business languishes, as if it such an oracle as we indulged in through the war, had no long years of necessary repentance to follow it.

The influence of the public press in America is a theme of immense importance, seldom treated with much candor by our people. When we consider the immense appetite the press has created, and how satisfactory is, for daily excitement, the time and influence of our city editors; the vast capital necessary to carry them on; the financial peril of their failure to meet the public taste; the shaking reverts seemed by success in this direction, we see what fearful temptations beset the managers of these papers. Before securing success these great corporations cannot afford to be strictly honest. They are usually mere reflectors of public sentiment, and, as a rule, give discouraging ideas of what the taste and moral and political feeling of the public are. For more than 20 years, the most widely circulated newspaper in this country was guided by an unscrupulous policy. It throve upon its recklessness and smartness, its attacks on reputable people, its profanity, and its ministry to low tastes. It used to be said that it owed its success to its superior enterprise as a newspaper; but if that were true, it showed the people valued news more than they despised vice, scurrility and filthiness. There are cases of men of ability and good character, finding the tone and style of respectable journalism too slow a road to success, who have taken to the highway, and become footpads in the editorial line, making their papers succeed by making themselves characters, as free lances, freebooters and brigands, and by dealing penalty and excess in that line. As a rule, in these journals, I observe among the writers of, enterprise, skill and even talent, but no proof of simplicity of purpose, dignity of motive, and devotion to the public good. The American newspaper is one of the most questionable of the superfluous means of national morality. It has vastly more power to occupy than to guide; to agitate and distract than to settle and inform the public mind. The newspaper is the great American gossip. To expect any fairness, real courage or guidance in competition in a popular newspaper is like looking to a weather-vane to control the winds.

The most encouraging circumstances connected with our national life is the steady attention given to our system of popular education. There is still a mistaken impression in regard to its universality, efficiency, and excellence. It is far from comprehending the whole population. The number of people not able to read and write is disgracefully large; the number of children not going to school at all is surprisingly great; the character and competency of average teachers are very unsatisfactory. But there is a genuine and becoming sense of the value and necessity of elementary education, and a fixed determination to support schools and colleges. Catholicism is an enemy to the common school system. It is seeking to dazzle by costume and pomp and majestic architecture. The benchmen on the ignorant and superstitious. If with such aids have all the machinery of monks, and nuns, and hierarchal orders (at work to stifle the breath of reason and freedom. It will be better to leave the whole system of education to private support, leaving all families and all denominations upon their own resources, than to yield to the Catholic demand for state support for their parochial schools. Liberty herself may be strangled in her own cradle. A vast self-reliance on religion, and indifference to morality, and a neglect of personal piety are the worst dangers freedom can wear, and if she mistakes them for the conditions, instead of the hindrances to her progress, she is sure to find where the light-bearing archangel did, falling headlong from the sky of Wisdom he was once the prop and the illumination.

FREEDOM ACHIEVED THROUGH CHRIST.

The Rev. Alfred S. Patton, D. D., at the North Baptist Church.

The Rev. Alfred S. Patton, D. D., editor of *The Baptist Weekly*, preached at the North Baptist Church yesterday, and took for his morning's topic "The Lord's Freeman." His text was from St. John viii., 36: "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

The Scriptures represent men to be in a state of spiritual bondage. They are described as under the dominion of the devil. From this state of moral vassalage they can only be delivered by the merciful intervention of the Son of God. He is the "stronger" who comes upon "the strong man armed" that keepeth the palace of the heart and casts him out, thus restoring to liberty such as were in bonds. In achieving this, Christ at the same time frees men from the curse of the law and the dominion of sin, so that they are brought into a state of perfect spiritual freedom. All who are thus made free are "free indeed," and are more exceedingly glad in the consciousness of their liberty. When the Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Lincoln, in 1863, its effect on the slaves of the South was to almost madden them with joy. The news swept over the land as the fire sweep over the Summer prairie. At the things, the bed-ridden leaped from their beds, the old grew young again, mothers with new feelings kissed their babes, and pressed them to their bosoms; brothers, sisters and friends, in sympathy, through tears and joy, blended into each other's arms to congratulate each other that they were free. And so, all over the land, in every hut, in every valley, on every hillside, in the cities and in the fields, there rang out the most jubilant shouts, because the day of their emancipation had at length come. The event justified their joy.

But if political freedom was an occasion for such gladness, how much greater reason have we to rejoice in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free! Moreover, because we appreciate this freedom, how desirous we should be that others may share it with us! In the days of Slavery the preacher remembered a poor escaped bondsman, who, though he had gained his own freedom, was always thinking of those he had left behind—of a dear mother and sisters and brothers still in chains. Remembering them, the sweetness of his own cup was embittered. He found no rest. Liberty to him was little more than a name until they also were free. Nor can those who have been brought into spiritual freedom be satisfied until all those who are dear to them are rescued from bondage and are introduced into the liberty of the Gospel. As under the old system of chattel slavery many seemed content to remain in bondage, so great multitudes seem to have not the subjective desire for spiritual freedom. That men should be content to live thus is only explainable by the fact that "the god of this world" has "blinded their eyes," and is so deluding them with false hopes that they are entirely deceived and do not know that they will soon be destroyed. In old times men and women were said to have sold themselves to Satan, consulting that he should have their souls at death, on condition of exercising a power to command in their lifetime by wealth, honors, any pleasure, their hearts might desire. It was a superstition, but the fabled is less material than the fact, for men are still selling their souls for money, and the old legend only faintly represents the hard bargain which Satan is still driving with men. From this state of moral vassalage Christ is able and willing to rescue us, and all who will may experience the blessedness of this great truth: "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH THIS NATION.

The Rev. Dr. J. P. Newman of Washington at the Sea Cliff Grove.

The Rev. J. P. Newman, D. D., of the Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church, Washington, D. C., preached in the Metropolitan Tabernacle at Sea Cliff Grove, L. I., yesterday to a large gathering. His text topic was "The Fourth of July." The text chosen was from Psalms cxlvii, 20: "He hath not dealt so with any nation."

This is a national psalm, said the speaker. It is remarkable for its originality of thought, beauty of diction, and its application to a day like this. I would call attention to two subjects suggested by it. The first is the superior rights and advantages which we possess as a people. The second is, our duties toward ourselves, toward others, and toward other nations of the earth. There is a Divine appointment in the geography of a chosen nation. If we look at a map we will see that between the thirtieth and sixtieth degrees of north latitude have existed all the great nations of the past as do exist all the great nations of the present time. This narrow zone indeed we may lessen and contract by ten degrees, and the same remark holds true as regards great political power and potency. There have been nations, great in luxury and magnificence, existing to the north and the south of this zone; but no one familiar with history will claim that these nations to the north or the south of the narrow belt have been potent in giving direction to the sentiments of mankind. Nineveh, Babylon, Greece, Rome, Palestine, Italy, Germany, Russia, Austria, and France are within the zone. Within these narrow limits, too, is our own Republic, on which the Divine blessing has rested for an hundred years. Our nation is far from the belligerent powers of the Old World, and has a shore line exceeding the circumference of the earth. It has a river navigation double even this vast measure, a continent washed by two oceans, and an extent equal to that of ancient Rome when her domain extended from the Euphrates to the Western Ocean. Travelers go to Italy to sit beneath her sunny skies and to spend the Winter there, but we have a finer Winter here in Florida. They go to Switzerland to look upon the Alps, but there are grander mountains in our domain. They go to see cascades, but there are none in Europe so great in beauty and grandeur as here. And where upon the globe shall we go to find a nation in which wealth is so diffused? Other lands can boast of more hereditary millionaires. There is, however, nowhere so much competency as among our people. And here too comfort waits on competency, and competency is the result of honest labor. Two facts in illustration of this point are significant. The immigrants to this country have sent within the past ten years $50,000,000 to their friends in the Old World, and on the centenary of our Church $10,000,000 were laid upon her holy altars. We may say that to be a pauper in this country is to be a criminal. To be idle is to offend against society and to sin against God.

Again, our agricultural resources are such that we can give a farm to every human family on the globe and furnish food to every person. All this should evoke our sincerest gratitude to God. "He hath not dealt so with any nation." If from the geographical and physical situation of our land we turn to the character of its population, we see the beneficence of God no less significant. Greek culture came from a race of cannibals. When Cæsar invaded England he found a band of savages. When Peter the Great began his reign in Russia he found the nation semi-barbarian. With such material did he lay the foundations of that great empire. It was not so with us. Our fathers began where others left off. It was God's purpose to have the foundations of our country laid by men of high character and intellect. Nowhere did a nation ever start with so much of intellect, of culture, of conscience—so much of all the elements belonging to a great and free people. The War of the Revolution in this country was for all men, and those grandsires of our nation proclaimed the ultimate truth of human liberty when they declared that all men are created free and equal, and that they are endowed with certain inalienable rights.

We read in History of certain great epochs, in each of which there was a special purpose to be accomplished, but each contributing to the totality which we enjoy today. Greek and Roman culture, Judaism, imperial individualism, the union of Church and State—all these had their object.

After a consideration of the character of the people, and of the influence exerted by the example of America on the nations of the Old World, the preacher said that to Christianity were Americans indebted for their prosperity. Back of the Constitution, back of Administrations, back of law, is this power exerting its influence in giving a moral sentiment to the people of the land. Virtue predominates here. Vice is not the dominance in this country.

It is to be feared, however, that the strength of the nation will prove its weakness. The grandest book we enjoy is that of religious toleration, but out of this are coming evils loosing up fatness and hoarse every day, and that very religious liberty is a place to let out the spirit of irreligion. The Government is not irreligious, but non-religious in the sense of non-interference with sects, or not allowing a union of Church and State. I would not seek to deprive a Roman Catholic fellow-citizen of his constitutional rights. He shall worship God as he pleases, say we to the Holy Father in the Vatican, to the Cardinal in New-York and to the Jesuit Fathers. But what we accord to you you shall accord to us. If you do not we will have it anyhow. I would not speak against the Catholic Church, but only against one class, the Jesuits. Wherever they have ruled they have ruined. The time is coming when there shall be a congress of Christian nations assembled in some city of the Old World or the New. They will meet together in a hallow on the dome of this shall be the cross—the symbol of universal religion; while just below it shall be the American flag—the symbol of universal liberty.

In conclusion Dr. Newman asked the listeners to take heed to the continuance of their daily lives. As is an individual so is the mass, as is the individual so is the people, as is the individual so shall be the future of the American nation and of mankind.

THE NATION'S DEPENDENCE UPON GOD.

The Rev. Milton S. Terry, of the Eighteenth Street Methodist Episcopal Church.

The services at the Eighteenth Street Methodist Episcopal Church yesterday morning were conducted by the pastor, the Rev. Milton S. Terry. During the reading of a portion of the morning lesson the pastor stated that a great deal of the political corruption, so very common at the present day, would probably cease if the civil officers were properly recognized as God's ministers for good. The great difficulty in this land seemed to be a general want among the people to associate anything like a sacred feeling in connection with their regard for civil offices. Taxes should be paid with the same punctuality that pew rents were paid. The text from which the sermon was preached was taken from Acts xvii., 26: "And hath made of one blood all nations, to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."

Several very important lessons, the preacher said, are taught in this brief sentence. In the first place, there is the assurance of the universal brotherhood of man. We are all of one blood; secondly, God determines the physical condition of men, and thirdly, he determines their place in history—the periods and epochs in the natural growth of men and of nations are ordained by Him, and He likewise ordains the time when they shall come to naught, if at all. As this fourth day of July and the 99th anniversary of the declaration of our National independence falls on Sunday, it seems an appropriate time to consider how fully these truths have been verified in our own National history. Now, as we are very proud of our National independence, and take every available occasion to boast of our free country, it may be well for us to consider in what respects we are not a free people—to look at the dependence of the nation upon the God of Sabbath. In the first place, God makes nations; they do not spring up spontaneously, or come into existence by any device or council and well-regulated plan of man. The great difficulty in the theory that large numbers of people have ever come together and agreed to live harmoniously under certain proposed laws, and thus form a great nation, is found just here—that it has no foundation in fact. No one man or set of men ever made a national code. We may therefore conclude that God makes nations, and that it is He who begins the steps by which we shall rise.

Our own national history furnishes one of the best illustrations of this fact. First come the period of discovery. Later came the settlements in different parts of the country. We continued to grow until the question of freedom, of independence of the home Government became the issue of the day, and 99 years ago to-day the Declaration of Independence was first published—that great Declaration which severed us from the Mother Country and which resulted in the perfect establishment of our independence. And yet we were not independent. As we continued to fight for our freedom, however, the want of one General Government or central head to control the affairs of State became more and more apparent, until finally there was drafted the Constitution of the United States. It will thus be seen that our development was gradual. God took several hundred years to point here the liberty-loving nation of which we are to-day so proud.

We have also the right to glory, that ours is such a goodly land, a land full of the finest scenery, the richest minerals, and the most productive soil. In all these we should be reminded of that hidden power which has raised up our country in the midst of a great sea, and which brought about its discovery at a time when there was to be a great revolution in the moral and religious world. It is worthy of note that this country was discovered just ten years before the birth of that great reformer, Martin Luther. In this we see God's purpose in discovering a place in which to plant His true religion. While the Roman Catholics did much toward discovering this country, it was left for Protestantism to civilize it and make it a free and independent nation. The consequence of this is, that we find here a purer Christian religion taking hold of the people, which is especially noticeable in the establishment of the great truth that all men are equal. No matter what is the color of the skin, every man is equally a child of God, and entitled to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Another glorious feature of our Government is that religion is not allied to State affairs. No impositions shall be tolerated here. God alone is our Master, whom we are left free to worship after the dictates of our own consciences. It is man says he does not like the Methodist Church he can go to the Presbyterian; if he does not like this he may go to the Roman Catholic; if the Roman Catholic does not suit him he may try the Shakers; or, if he desires he may set up a church on his own hook, pay its expenses, and do as he pleases. If a man will be an infidel, an infidel, or a fool, it is a matter we leave entirely with himself.

There is one other subject of great importance to our Republic, viz.: our public system of education. This is one of the greatest features of the Republic, and while it is not yet as complete as we expect to see it some day, it is constantly growing toward perfection. We want a system of compulsory education by which every child of the Republic shall be taught all the fundamental principles of a free and independent government, and morals under the same. Referring again to our position midway between the East, the cradle of ideas, and Asia, the land of peoples, is it not suggestive of the thought that we are to be a band of peoples with ideas? Having these, we shall evangelize the world; we shall civilize it; we shall present the world with the greatest nation it has ever known—a nation of peoples with ideas. Also God speed the day when it shall be thus spoken of us!

CHRISTIANITY IN POLITICS.

The Rev. S. B. Rossiter at the North Presbyterian Church.

At the North Presbyterian Church, at Thirty-first-st. and Ninth-ave., yesterday, the Rev. S. B. Rossiter, the pastor, preached upon the subject of "Religion, Politics and Patriotism." The text was from Matthew xxii. 21: "Then saith He unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

After stating that when the anniversary of the nation's birthday falls on Sunday, pulpit discourses should be somewhat out of the ordinary way, Mr. Rossiter spoke substantially as follows: These words completely overcame the subtle reasoning of the Pharisees, and showed man his duty to his Creator, to his brother, and to his country. There are things which belong to Cæsar; then give them to Cæsar. There are things which belong to God; then give them to God. Man's duty to God and to his country are closely connected. In fact, it may be said that they spring from one and the same source. Do your duty to God, and you will do your duty to your brother and to your country. The reverse of this is also true; for if one does his duty to his country and his brother, he cannot escape doing his duty to God. Our Church recognizes the State, and earnestly urges Christians to render to it full duty. "Love for God is only a semi-circle; to complete it, you must add to it love of country and of man." It is often asked, Is it part of a minister's duty to talk politics in the pulpit, or to teach God's will in politics, as he teaches it in religion? It is urged that we have enough of politics outside, and that when we enter God's house we should know nothing about them. Politics is for the world, and should not be mentioned when Christians meet to worship and praise God. These objections against "politics in the pulpit" I do not consider as altogether valid. Politics is a noble thing, a high calling, when properly engaged in; but "now politics means party craft. Let us have none of that in the pulpit," and if a minister attempts to engage in it "stop his mouth." But if politics depends upon high and noble principles, let it have calm, religious discussion, and let ministers speak with no uncertain words concerning it.

Mr. Rossiter here gave a brief history of the convulsions out