RELIGIOUS.

THE CHURCHES YESTERDAY.

Catholic and Protestant Views of Pere Hyacinthe's Position.

Church Authority—Belief, Unbelief, Prayer, Councils, Ceremonials, Reformers and Reformations Treated.

Sermons by the Rev. Dr. McGlynn, Bishop Littlejohn, Henry Ward Beecher, Rev. Dr. Chapin, Rev. Dr. Hepworth, Rev. Messrs. Powers, Chamberlain and Smyth.

Owing, perhaps, to the fine weather, as much as to the longing for spiritual food, the churches were generally well attended yesterday, and in almost all the churches, both Catholic and Protestant, Father Hyacinthe came in for a good share of notice, as the religious sensation of the day. The services and sermons, which were of more than ordinary interest, will be found noticed in the following reports:—

PLYMOUTH CHURCH.

Training and Development of the Soul—Sermon by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher—The Presence of Pere Hyacinthe During the Services Causes Considerable Interest—His Introduction and Welcome.

Plymouth church was yesterday crowded to the doors by a fashionable congregation. The day being delightfully fine there was, of course, a charming array of toilets, which looked quite picturesque as the genial rays of the sun shone through the spacious windows of the edifice, causing the variegated colors to blend harmoniously. The Rev. Mr. Beecher took his text from Galatians iv., 19. The reverend gentleman dilated at some length upon the early culture of the soul. When the babe came into life everything was against him, and so in like manner was the commencement of a real Christian life. Those beginning the true paths of rectitude were as infants just born; for how could they be teachers who were not practically conversant with the truths they endeavored to inculcate? Christian life must grow and be properly cultured. It was a spark, a flame, from which at first issued much smoke, and at length became a pure and burning coal. Children and youth might become disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ and might be safely gathered into the Christian fold if only their parents and their pastors would instil into their young spirits the faith of Christ. Some parents brought up their children with the expectation that when they arrived at the years of discretion they would become good Christians. But if properly instructed when young they grew up in the nurture of the Lord—some without a break at all, and others subject to certain normal disturbances. As a general working principle, however, if Christian families were early educated in the faith of Christ he believed that generations and generations of children might be brought up in the love of Christ without afterwards departing from it, so that they would be free from the usual entanglements of the soul and ordinary experiences, and would come full of faith, full of hope and purity from the cradle to church. After alluding to the great necessity of giving proper instruction to the young at an early age he went on to state that children were very susceptible and comparatively comprehensive. Thus they found the babe Jesus in the babe child, and did not discover that great Christianity looked for in after years. Feed them as little children and they would go through all the temptations and all the trials and in the end would become good Christians. There were many persons who labored under the erroneous impression that by too early introduction to the Church young persons might disgrace it. But the Church was not to be compared to the soul, for it was merely the servant of the soul. It might as well be said that a hospital was disgraced because patients died in it when doctors did their utmost to cure them, or that a school was disgraced because those who came in as fools went out as idiots. Moreover, it was not to be supposed that because a man was imperfect he was not a Christian. If a man enlisted in the army he was just as much a soldier then as he would be five years afterwards, though of course in a different stage of efficiency. So long as a man was earnest he was still a Christian, however imperfect he might be, so long as he looked up to God with the consciousness of his defects. The thing was to come into sympathy with God and receive the impulse to reorganize his life. The principles of life had two qualities—the force of nature and the voluntary drill to work in harmony. In order to grow to true manhood the eye, the ear and the hand must be educated. He must learn his trade or he must learn the profession which he intends to follow. There must be a spontaneous intentional power vigorously exercised. And it was precisely the same in the Christian life. As men drilled in anything in which they excelled, it was exactly the same thing that took place in regard to progress in religion. Nature did a great deal, but learning could only be acquired by spontaneous action and a regular course of drilling. The spirit of humility was not infused into man without prayer. To be sure many persons thought that temperance, humility, faith, patience, hope, joy in the Holy Ghost were divine gifts. So were corn, and sheep and cows upon the mountain top divine gifts, for which men must work. They were the fruits of man's industry, not his laziness. Faith could only be obtained by practice; nor did all divine gifts come, just by inspiration. They must be learned and studied as the soldier learned his steps. The experiences in life were not so promiscuous as most people imagined. There was a regular order of things. First came the leaf, then the blossom, the green fruit and then the ripe fruit; so it was in the Christian life. The later developments cannot be had before the intermediate ones; but just as some youths aspired to manhood before their time, many persons did not like to wait for the proper development. It was only when in an advanced state of righteousness that men came thoroughly to comprehend and appreciate that serene joy emanating from a sincere love of Christ. It might be said that no man was perfect while in this world, but there were those who came to a perfect state of rest; for when man came to that state of experience that he knew he loved Christ he enjoyed the triumphant feeling that he was beloved by Christ, and realized beyond the grave the great object for which he was created.

The Rev. Mr. Beecher had just concluded the benediction and the members of the congregation were about to disperse when an unusual buzz arose inside the church. Persons who had already reached the doors, and the throng that had arrived at the outer gate turned back, and a sea of faces eagerly looked towards one particular object, as if something unusually interesting and attractive had suddenly sprung from the ground. The low and inquisitive whispering which had hitherto prevailed now swelled forth audibly, and "Pere Hyacinthe! Pere Hyacinthe!" was heard distinctly through the building. The aisles were quickly packed again and curiosity was stamped on every countenance. In order to have a more complete view of the distinguished visitor some stood on tiptoe upon the seats, while others, more lucky in their natural altitude, stretched their necks with considerable earnestness, and altogether the appearance of Pere Hyacinthe in Plymouth church yesterday created a regular sensation. The surmises of the congregation were indeed very numerous. The probable cause of his arrival was discussed in the briefest possible sentences, and, truth to say, the advent of the reverend gentleman was, judging by the general expression, very favorably regarded. Had Pere Hyacinthe been the veritable Luther himself he could scarcely have excited more attention or awakened a greater feeling of curiosity. The ladies were none the less anxious to get a glimpse of him; in fact, the sudden announcement of his presence in the building actually startled the congregation. Surrounded by a throng, the eyes of all composing it riveted upon him, Père Hyacinthe, accompanied by his interpreter, had left the seat which he had occupied during the services and proceeded to greet the Rev. Mr. Beecher, who, meanwhile, having been informed of his visitor's presence, advanced to meet him. The two great pulpit orators shook hands and the reception on the part of the Rev. Mr. Beecher was, apparently, very cordial. Through the aid of the interpreter Père Hyacinthe expressed the gratification he experienced at being present; meanwhile the crowd gazed with the most intense interest, doubtless in anticipation that some important topic might be alluded to. With the exception that Père Hyacinthe was very closely scrutinized by not unfriendly eyes, nothing of importance occurred. After a very brief conversation the divines parted, the Rev. Mr. Beecher saying that he cordially welcomed Père Hyacinthe, not because he was a curiosity, but because he had asserted his independence. This brought the interview to a close. Père Hyacinthe and his interpreter then withdrew, entered a carriage and returned to the city.

CHURCH OF THE DIVINE PATERNITY.

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Chapin—Outward Ceremonials—He Recommends All Non-Catholics to Let Father Hyacinthe Alone.

The Rev. Dr. Chapin took for the text of his discourse yesterday morning Matthew xv., 20—"These are the things which defile a man; but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man." The preacher said that this was spoken by way of animadversion to certain Scribes and Pharisees. It was probable that the blow then struck at the disciple was really aimed at the Master by whose practice and example the value of traditional usage was shown. Thus traditions were held superior to the law, because it was declared that "the words of the Scribes are lovely above the words of the law; for the words of the law are weighty and light, but the words of the scribes are all weighty." Now, among these traditions was the washing of hands, and whoever neglected this requirement was considered a fit subject for excommunication and even of death. He referred to this in order that he might lead his hearers to consider the first practical lesson of his text, which was that in the declaration before them our Saviour relied not upon practice, but upon principle. Certainly he said nothing of unclean hands, but only of unwashed hands. But the great point before us here and in the preceding portion of the chapter was the importance of the inward condition in comparison with outward performances. This was what the scribes and pharisees did. "Why do ye also," said Christ, "transgress the commandments of God by your traditions?" They had found, not in the Mosaic ritual, but in the solemn decrees of the Decalogue, the words "Honor thy father and mother." So it appeared that it was not a mere practice that was rebuked—superstitious and absurd as that practice might have been—and it seemed to him that this opened to them the entire subject of tradition and ceremony in relation to moral obligations—a subject not without interest at the present day. It may be said that ceremonial was useful—that it was a help to many in their devotions, and that it leads to the deepest thought. Certainly no right-minded person could dispute that; and he thought a man not merely exposed to rebuke but below contempt who found fault with or ridiculed the religious usages of another. No matter how absurd these usages seemed to him, that man was remarkably hard-hearted who could pass mockery on them. The least we could say was they may benefit others. But when their practices were exalted—when it was said that their virtue or their very substance and essence was religious life—when they were regarded as superior to moral obligations, then it was necessary to urge the spirit of our Saviour's words. This mere washing of the hands as compared with the inward man and the state of the heart was only secondary, for "it defileth not a man." But when these practices become tyrannical, slavish and were set above the moral rules of divine law; when ecclesiastical authority was put before social and natural obligations, then we could see with what justice certain men might rise up and protest against them and even violently thrust them aside. Perhaps we could sympathize in this point of view with the stern manner of the Puritans, in laying their hands on the very altar and turning from spiritual tyranny and the transgression of God's commandment. He said the usages of the old Church, which were again creeping in among us, were looked on by the old Puritans as elements of tyranny and barbarism. While we might revere the sayings of good men and treasure up the interpretations of the wise men, nevertheless, how fatally the growth of tradition progressed, preventing the full action of the mind and soul. The sayings of men were put above the commandments of God, and that which claimed to be the Church of divine truth and love became the vehicle of oppression and a political machine. And men rose up in the very bosom of such a Church and asked "Why transgress the commandments of God by tradition?" Why should we not leave such men to follow the developments of their own self-imposed task? Certainly such a man as Father Hyacinthe, because he had assumed the position he occupies, was not necessarily a Luther. In welcoming this champion of truth and freedom here, then, those ought not to be conspicuous who, in their own narrow circles, might have nothing to recommend them but their own traditional prejudices. We should leave God's work in the hands of such men as Father Hyacinthe, to work it out in their own way. The preacher then went on in a philosophical manner to criticise and explain outward ceremony, and concluded by saying that such ceremony was of no material use; for it was the heart of man—the inward man—to which God alone looked for homage.

ST. STEPHEN'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Sermon by the Rev. Dr. McGlynn—The Authority of the Church—The Ecumenical Council and Pere Hyacinthe's Position.

At the principal mass at St. Stephen's church, on East Twenty-eighth street yesterday morning, the Rev. Dr. E. McGlynn, pastor, taking his text, Matthew xvi., 13, 19, delivered an eloquent discourse on the authority of the Church, which he considered as peculiarly opportune at the present time in view of the interest which is felt in the approaching General Council. True faith is the result of authoritative teaching by divine authority. "But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answering, said:—Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." And Christ assures him that not mere human nature, but the Father in Heaven had revealed this truth to him, and in return for his confession of Christ's divinity our Lord makes him the rock upon which He will build His Church, with the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He also promises that He will make this man Simon, whom He now calls Peter or The Rock, the chief teacher and ruler and judge in this same Church under the symbol of the keys by which he is made chief of that kingdom of God upon earth, whose threefold mission it is to teach the truth as taught by Christ, to administer ordinances and execute His law, and to intepret and apply both His law and His teachings. This was made clear by the promise that whatever Peter should bind or loose on earth should be bound or loosed in heaven. A similar promise of authority to bind and loose was given to the other Apostles (Matthew xviii.) subordinate, however, to the supreme authority of the keys which were given only to Peter. To this apostolic, teaching, governing body, so constituted, Christ gives the mission to represent Him and perpetuate His work throughout all nations and all time, to teach what He had taught, to do what He had done, to carry out what He had established. In fact, we may say that Christ's chief mission was to establish such a society, and without it His work in its bearing upon all future ages would have been fragmentary, incomplete and a failure. Hence, He says on another occasion to Peter: "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep" (John xxi.), and to all the Apostles (John xx.) "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." He makes this Church His living body with which he is to be invisibly present, and in which His Holy Spirit is to abide "till the consummation of the world." Those who will not hear and obey this Church are to be considered as aliens from His society. "Let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican" (Matthew xviii.). The reverend orator then went on to show that the teaching and governing authority of the Church was given to Peter and his successors and to the Apostolic college, and was not to die with Peter or with the individual Apostles.

The definitions and enactments of a general or Ecumenical Council, in which the bishops of the universal Church, the successors of the Apostles, assemble under the presidency of the Bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, are the highest expression of this teaching and governing authority. What is of divine institution the Church cannot change, increase or diminish. Hence she cannot add to or take from the original deposit of faith; she cannot alter her own constitution, of which she is the creature and not the creator; she cannot change these ordinances of Christ which are commonly called sacraments; she cannot cease to offer or change the essential nature of the offering of her eucharistic sacrifice. But from her very nature, as a living society for all times and all peoples, she must be endowed, and as a matter of fact has been endowed by Christ with power over her own discipline. Hence she can change, modify or abrogate the old, and enact the new in mere matters of discipline according to the emergencies of times and places. Yet her world-wide nature, the countless number and diversity of her children, her venerable character as the Church of Ages, the very prudence with which she is endowed by the Holy Spirit, who has been promised to abide with her, make her slow to change even in mere matter of discipline or ceremony; and to preserve these powerful helps to unity, she requires various ages and peoples to conform to her universal discipline, rather than stoop to catch fickle popularity by stooping to adopt the fashions or caprices of any one age or nation. Yet from time to time the bishops assemble by convocation of the chief bishop in general council to enact statutes of discipline, to reform abuses, to quicken their own faith and zeal and that of their flocks, and, if necessary, or expedient, to define the faith. They do not pretend, nay, they positively disclaim the power, to make new revelations or add to the deposit of faith. The Church simply defines what she finds in this deposit, as contained in the testimonies of Christian antiquity and in her own every-day teachings, instincts and practices; that is, she explains, interprets and places in a clearer and more explicit light some point of faith, asserts that she finds it in the original deposit, and forbids the teaching of the contrary under penalty of separation from her communion. Thus it is that she has defined from time to time in her councils old Christian truths, against the quibbles of heretics or the sophistry of scholastics. At Nice, in the year 325, she defined the divinity of Christ, and later, at Ephesus and Chalcedon, the doctrine of His incarnation. And so on through the various councils. It was in this sense that, a few years ago, the Church defined the doctrine of the immaculate conception, which, so far from being a new doctrine, was a household word of devotion to every Catholic child, and finds its implicit argument in the writings of the earliest Fathers. No weak or ill-instructed Catholic need fear a new revelation to tax his faith. If, as rumor has it, the Council should define the assumption of the Blessed Virgin, it would be but what is implied in the world-wide annual celebration of that event on the 15th of August; and if it should define the prerogative of the Pope to teach infallibly *ex cathedrâ*—that is, in his solemn judicial utterances to the whole Church, in matters of faith—it would but define what has been taught by the Council of Florence four hundred years ago, where Greeks and Latins all proclaimed him the supreme teacher, ruler, and father of the Christian Church.

At various times ambitious or disappointed or ill-advised ecclesiastics quibbled about the doctrines of the Church, or denied them, or have been rebellious to her authority, or rendered too halting an obedience. If in our time any ecclesiastic, no matter how eloquent, how brilliant, or how honored he may have been, should believe that a general council of the Church can define as of faith what is really not of faith, he already declares himself uncatholic in his belief and heretical; if he is unwilling to submit to its enactments in matters of discipline, he is disobedient to lawful authority and a schismatic. His appeal to some other council is futile, for none other can have any higher authority than this; his appeal to the tribunal of Christ is an insult to Christ, for it is an appeal from Christ and His Holy Spirit, who has promised that He and His Holy Spirit should abide with the Church in her teaching and governing capacity forever. If such a one, in place of seeking the grace of humility and obedience and submitting to lawful authority, should choose defection from the Church, we need not fear that at this late day he will have many followers. All true Christian elements, to-day more than ever, must gravitate towards the centre of unity, where alone they can find their complement and their logical and historical support. Those who may be, to their own great misfortune, guilty of such defection are objects of our pity, to be prayed for as wayward brethren rather than be feared as formidable adversaries. Their aspirations for a reconciliation between the Church and some imaginary or real spirit of the age are impossible of attainment if they would require her to change her teaching of the faith; and where they would affect mere matters of discipline they are vague, ill-defined, fantastical and unsubstantial. The Church is but too ready to use the great inventions of the age and to accept all the discoveries of science, for she holds that there can be no opposition between revealed truth and reason or its discoveries. We may well prefer the wisdom of a Council assembled in the Holy Spirit, to the imaginings of any man. And even if we had not the Christian humility to submit our intellects to such superior wisdom, even in matters of discipline, we should at least have the grace, even in spite of our notions as to what may be expedient, to respect and obey the decisions of legitimate authority.

ELM PLACE (BROOKLYN) CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

Father Hyacinthe and the Christian Law of Liberty—Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Powers.

Last evening the Rev. Henry Powers preached to a large and highly appreciative audience at the Congregational Church, Elm place, Brooklyn, on "Father Hyacinthe and the Christian Law of Liberty." The reverend gentleman selected his text from three sources. The first from the Epistle of James i., 25—"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein, he not being a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." The second text was the declaration of Luther at the Diet of Worms—"Except I be conquered and convinced by the testimony of Scripture, or by clear and sufficient reasons (for I put no confidence in the Pope or in the Councils, because they have both manifestly both often been mistaken and have often contradicted each other), I neither can nor will retract anything, inasmuch as it is neither safe nor advisable to do anything against conscience. Here I take my stand; I can do no otherwise; so help me God. Amen." The third was an extract from the celebrated letter of Father Hyacinthe, dated September 20—"With language perverted by a command or mutilated by reticence, I shall not ascend the pulpit of Notre Dame. I would not be worthy of the auditory of the archbishop of my conscience or of God if I should consent to act before them in such a *rôle*. I separate myself, therefore, from the convent in which I have resided, which, under the new circumstances that have happened unto me, renders it for me a prison of the soul. In acting thus I am not unfaithful to my vows. I have promised monastic obedience, but limited by the honesty of conscience and the dignity of my person and my ministry. I have promised under the benefit of that superior law of justice and of royal liberty which is, according to the Apostle St. James, the proper law of the Christian." Mr. Powers, having read these extracts, said that his congregation might be ready to ask, Why associate these three declarations? James they knew, Luther they knew; but who was Father Hyacinthe? why was he associated with honored names, like Luther and the Apostle James? Father Hyacinthe was a remarkable man. He had recently landed on our shores under circumstances exciting a very special degree of interest; was born—the honest child of a small farmer at Orleans, in France—in 1827, and was therefore forty-two years of age. All that was known of anything distinctive in his early youth was that he attracted some attention by his verses. He entered St. Sulpice at the age of eighteen; after four years of theological study he was ordained priest; he afterwards entered a Barefooted Carmelite convent at Lyons, becoming a brother of that order, and by his sermons in that city excited great attention. During the summer of 1864 he went to Paris, where his sermons at La Madelaine and at Notre Dame became famous for their eloquence and boldness, and he was not long in taking in the popular esteem a place of the very highest eminence, for various culture as well as for his extraordinary powers of speech, all enhanced by the unconcealed liberalism of his opinions, the intelligence of his face, the peculiarly sympathetic tone of his voice and the sacred earnestness of his manner. He has always identified himself with the progressive Catholics, and he had never rendered an unreasoning submission to the Holy See, the characteristic of the extreme ultramontane party. The characteristics of his preaching were a fiery, earnest, devoted eloquence; a deep, loving, yearning spirituality, and a liberalism to Protestants not surpassed by any divine of his Church. This was remarkably illustrated in a celebrated sermon he preached at Paris under circumstances of special interest to the citizens of this city. A lady, a member of Mr. Beecher's church, was on a visit to Paris and went to hear the father. Under that sermon she became convinced of her duty to become a member of the Roman Catholic Church, and it was on receiving this lady into the Church at Paris that Father Hyacinthe expressed himself so liberally in reference to Protestantism. His present notoriety is the result of this liberality; he stands as the representative of advanced thought in his own Church and is liberal enough towards other Churches to awaken in all Protestants a lively anxiety as to his future course. That, Mr. Powers hoped, would be to remain in the Romish Church, where he would be likely to do more good than by leaving her and allying himself with any form of Protestantism. Earnestly did he (the preachar) hope that the father would, in the excellence of his judgment, see this to be the future course of his yet undeveloped future. He would not become a modern Luther because he has appeared in an age of ideas. Luther lived and grew famous in an age of dark ideas, and it was not possible for men in modern times to awaken that notoriety that was awoke then. The thought in the Christian Church was too active; neither was it desirable that any awakening of that character should be necessary in the Church, and its necessity would be regretted by all thoughtful and well disposed Christians. What was to be said, then, of this Romanish Church? She was passing through a crisis more endangering from within than from without. Mr. Powers then read the dogmas that are to be enforced at the Ecumenical Council, and showed that they were opposed to the progress of modern thought. Queen Isabella of Spain, who had sent the Church the most munificent of presents and been its devoted follower, was now an exile, and the star of her people was rising through the war clouds of Spain and her Western islands. Austria had defied the Pope despite the paper thunders of the Pontiff, and Austria might be said to be no longer Papal. Bavaria had also declined to endorse the letter by the Ecumenical Council on the politics of Roman countries. Nineteen German bishops had met in council and declined to render submission to the Council. In France the course adopted by Father Hyacinthe had awakened considerable thought and attention. Yet amid all this dissension the Pope was preparing a tablet on which the general result of the meeting of the Council would be discounted and the world assured beforehand that it met and parted amidst the applause of the whole Catholic world and the terror of the power of darkness. Yet, strange as it might seem, Romanism was growing in Britain, and Archbishop Manning, not the least of the cardinals, had recently said that the duty of Catholics was, in obedience to the Holy Father, to enroll themselves as the opponents of the bold and terrible errors, liberalism, progress and modern civilization. Yet what was to be said of Protestantism? Why, this, that it was not in a position to profit by Romish dissensions. Some of the errors of Rome still remained in Protestantism. Priestcraft and its power was great yet among Protestants. John Milton had said that "Presbytery" was only priest written large. He (Mr. Powers) preferred one Pope of Rome to an infinite number of contemptible little Popes overthrowing the right of private judgment. The Protestant Church did not yet sufficiently endorse the royal law of liberty. It did not yet sufficiently allow conscience to talk of the things of God and embody them in the things of life. We believed in this law for ourselves, but we were not sufficiently willing to allow it to be believed in by our brother and allow him to exercise it for himself. That law of liberty must be adopted by the Church if it would sufficiently battle with the Church of Rome. The Protestant Church, too, lacked some things which the Romish Church had, namely, unity, Catholicity and its care for the poor. Protestantism was not united, sectarianism had split up its forces, and these forces must be marshalled by unity if a real, decisive action was to be taken against the enemy of Romanism. There must be more catholicity, too, in Protestantism; an acknowledgement of the action of conscience in a manly and Christian interpretation of the Word of God. The Romish Church had a hold upon the masses in which the Protestant Church was far behind. It adapted itself to the wants of the poor. The rich and poor meet together to worship one Father, and in that worship there was less distinction of class than in the Protestant Church. If the Church of Rome were destroyed without its errors being uprooted it would be a great misfortune. There was nothing in Protestantism to meet the demand that would then be made upon the Church; there was not that devotion to the work of God and the extension of the kingdom of righteousness that would compensate for her destruction. Let them pray, not for the destruction of the Church of Rome. It filled her place better than they could do it. Pray rather for its enlargement, and let them pray for the Church Catholic and the destruction of Romanism. Mr. Powers then pointed out very beautifully the useful and the truthful side of Mariolatry, and the duty of the Church to show that side of the character of Jesus which represents the womanly. The coming Church must be catholic and also progressive, and should carry off and bury the dead things of the past. After enumerating the various requirements of a church that should by its progressive character have influence enough to take the place of the Romish Church, he asked if there was not need for such a Church? Was not effort in that direction needed? Was not superstition losing the mind and spirits of men; was not idolatry and heathenism made more powerful by the coming in among us of thousands of those who in other lands had been nurtured in these deadly errors? Was there not need that we should pray God to endow us with the right spirit to fight the coming battle? Let them use the light they had, and, in the words of a Brooklyn poet, pray

Descend, O, Holy Spirit, like a dove,
Into our hearts, that we may be as one,
As one with Thee, to whom we ever tend.
As one with Him, our brother and our friend.

We would be one in hatred of all wrong,
One in our love of all things sweet and fair,
One with the joy that bursteth into song,
One with the grief that trembles into prayer,
One in the power that makes thy children free,
To follow with and thus to follow thee.

Oh, clothe us in Thy heavenly armor, Lord—
Thy trusty shield, Thy sword of love divine.
Our inspiration be Thy constant word;
We ask no victories that are not Thine.
Give or withhold, let pain or pleasure be,
Enough to know that we are serving Thee.

ELEVENTH STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The Rev. Charles B. Smyth on the Ecumenical Council.

The announcement that the Rev. Charles B. Smyth would deliver a discourse on "The Ecumenical Council" at the Eleventh street Presbyterian church, "seats free," drew a large congregation whom the reverend gentleman held in rapt attention during an effective and instructive treatment of his subject. After the usual preliminary services the preacher advanced and selected his text from Psalm xxii. 13:—"They gape upon me with their mouths, as it were a ramping and a roaring lion." The speaker began by alluding to the Papal bulls which had formed so important a part of the ecclesiastical history. Bulls had been set loose upon all doctrines which had been antagonistic to the Roman faith, and they had been no respecters of persons or prelates. But three hundred and fifty years ago, said he, there arose an obscure monk who took the bull by the horns, and backed the ferocious beast into the fires until nothing remained but his ashes. This was the achievement of Luther, and occurred in the time of Pius I. Now, the present Pope, nine times as Pius as his illustrious predecessor, has issued another bull convening the Ecumenical Council, to introduce new dogmas into the articles of faith, which was dated on the 29th day of June, 1868, calling for the gathering of bishops on the 8th of December, 1869. In the past history of the Church eighteen councils have gathered at the shrine of St. Peter's. The first met in 325, and the succeeding ones in 381, 431, 457, 553, 680, in 787 the Council of Nice, which concerned image worship; in 869, in 1123, which related to the Crusades; in 1139, 1179, 1215, 1245, 1274, 1311, 1439, 1571 and 1545. It was this last gathering of the Council which met to resist the great flood of Protestantism which was then overspreading Europe; and the one to meet by Papal bull on the 8th of December next is the only one in the crises of the Church that has been thought necessary in the lapse of 300 years. What means the word ecumenical? It signifies catholic, universal—it means *vox populi, vox dei*. Its scope would therefore include all bishops in the Christian world, whether Roman or not, and Pius IX., in this spirit, sent invitations to the bishops of all churches, but to this date it is not known that any have accepted. Formerly a gathering of the Council included monarchs, princes and heads of all petty nationalities, and the sovereigns assembled at Rome and participated in the deliberations of the august body; but now no lay members have been solicited to attend, and potentates have been excluded. What do these changes suggest? What has been wrought in an interval of 326 years? At the beginning of this period the Reformation was in its swaddling clothes, and every monarch of Europe was a vassal of the Pope; now none are so poor as to do him reverence. Then he was the king of kings on earth, now Rome bends to the imperial purple of Napoleon III. Then Catholicism was the only religion of Europe; now Lapland, Norway, Sweden, England, Prussia and other great Powers are no longer of her fold. Hungary and Austria stand aloof from Roman domination. Russia and the Eastern countries sustain the Greek Church, and Bavaria and Portugal are the two rotten crutches upon which Catholicism hobbles over the vast domains of its once great stronghold. Such are the transformations, and great and mighty have they been. The population of that world is 1,350,000,000, one-eighth of which number constitutes the Romish Church, and the rest of the Christian Church, including Greeks, Armenians, Protestants and Eastern branches, is considerably in excess of this number, and the bishops of the Roman Church are much less than one-half of those belonging to the other denominations. The Anglican Church has 107 bishops, the Episcopal in this country 44, the Methodist 31, the Greek Church 274, the Moravian and branches 76, other churches 82. The Nestorians might also come under this treatment. In the aggregate there are about 929 bishops who do not belong to Rome, and as the Bishop of Orleans, an acute and erudite man, has estimated the number of Romish bishops at from 700 to 800, there will be an excess of 129 in favor of those who do not espouse Catholicism, and that great body will not be represented in the Ecumenical Council; hence ecumenical, which means universal, is a misnomer. Yet the Council will contain learning, cunning, statesmanship and priestcraft, and the experience of ages. The reverend gentleman went on to describe what the operations of the Council would be in a parliamentary sense, and then proceeded to inquire as to the cause of this important convocation of bishops. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, as first advanced in the fourteenth century, as decreed in 1854 by Pius IX., was one of the innovations that will be brought before the Council for ratification. The preacher illustrated this point by copious quotations from authoritative announcements by the Pope himself. The other subjects to be traversed would be the press, destruction of church property, suppression of monasteries, education of the youth, civil society, the re-establishment of the Church where it has been supplanted and its extension to heathen nations. But in order to gain strength in these directions it would be the policy of the Pope to crown Napoleon III., who has no existence as a monarch in the eye of Rome, to lift the ban of excommunication from the head of Victor Emanuel, to secure a popular and pliant king for the throne of Spain and to throw a sop to the Emperor of Austria, who has defied Roman power. What the Council should truly guarantee was liberal education, free press, free Bible and salvation by grace through faith in Christ, and not the celibacy of the priesthood, the sale of indulgences and other debasing influences that have dragged the Church to its present level.

CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH.

Power of Prayer—Sermon by Rev. Mr. Hepworth.

The vast interior of this massive and magnificent church hardly suffices for the increasing congregations assembling both at the morning and evening services to hear the new minister, Rev. Mr. Hepworth. The elegant diction, chaste and ornate illustration and forcible style of utterance characterizing his sermons and giving them all the brilliancy of a finished essay, no doubt largely contribute to this result. His sermon yesterday morning, delivered to a crowded and most attentive congregation, was on the "Efficacy of Prayer." He took for his text St. Luke ix., 29—"And as he prayed the fashion of his countenance was altered." This was a description of Jesus Christ as He went apart on a mountain to pray. He did not pray to be seen of men. He sought the ear and eye of God alone, as he knelt in supplication to Him. But it was not necessary to go up mountain heights or in secret places to pray. One could pray anywhere and at all times. Silently one's thoughts and wishes could be breathed in prayer in one's walks or journeys or business. Omnipotence sits by our side. Who can tell the influence of this intimacy with God on man's character? We are God's children. Our every footfall is heard by Him and our every heartbeat. Some persons, as the old Pharisees did, put on the cloak of religion that they may better serve the devil. Many men make long prayers that they may get better credit on the street. No matter whether rich or poor, or whether living in a palace or hut, in all conditions of life, there was the same necessity of prayer and it possessed the same efficacy. There is no such thing as solving the philosophy of prayer. Logic cannot reach it more than the scalpel can reach and unravel the mysteries of the human mind. It is too deep, too subtle for any such probing. No one can tell how, by casting seed in the earth, it germinates into the flower. Out of the cold, damp sod, so dreary, comes the beautiful flower, laden with the most fragrant perfumes. It was the same with prayer. The processes are unknown. The result is high and holy. It makes the life of man more manly and the life of woman more womanly. When he sees the martyr going up to Heaven in an ecstasy of delight on the wings of prayer, forgetful of contumely and persecution, forgetful of the very flames burning his body to a crisp, he feels and knows that there is great power in prayer. When he sees the mother watching over her sick child, and when the life breath passes out of that body he sees her fall on her knees and say, "Not my will, O Lord! but Thine be done," he sees a great power in prayer. It is natural to pray. A young man is about to leave home. A stout and manly heart is his only outfit to fight the great battle of life. His father places his hand on his head and says, "God bless you, my son!" His mother, through her tearful eyes, invokes God's blessing on her loved boy. These prayers go up to God, and their influence follows that young man in his combat with the stern world. At sea let a storm arise, and how natural to go to God in prayer. Instinct leads to God in time of danger. It is not logic, it is not education. It is so in any phase of life. It is a revelation of God. The world has been taught wrongly of God. From the pulpit there has been erroneous teachings. Calvin's God is a hard, cold, distant being, a hard task master, who serves as steward over us, a stern and inflexible judge. God was no such being. His relations to us were intimate and beautiful and good. He went with us everywhere. He was always by our side, our friend and adviser, trying to lift us up to the true and beautiful. He referred to his own father and his counsels and teachings, and how they had followed him through life. He could always go to that father with trust and confidence. It was so with God. God was their Heavenly Father. If he had a brother who was about setting out in life, and this brother would ask him what would best promote his interest in the world, he would tell him "prayer." It was prayer made our burdens light, made life joyous and filled up with hope and assurance of a glorious immortality.

CHRIST CHURCH, BROOKLYN, E. D.

Sermon by Bishop Littlejohn, of Long Island—The Systems of Religion and the Unbeliefs to be Feared.

Yesterday morning the services at this place of worship, situated on Bedford avenue, near Clymer street, Brooklyn, E. D., were replete with pleasant interest, solemnity and instruction. The congregation was unusually large, caused by the reappearance in the pulpit of their pastor, Rev. Mr. A. H. Partridge, who has recently returned from an extended European tour, the occasion of the religious reunion being greatly enhanced by the presence of the Right Rev. A. N. Littlejohn, Bishop of Long Island. The Rev. Mr. Fitch, who, with signal ability and success, has officiated during the absence of the pastor, united in the ministration of the services.

At the appropriate time, after reading the lessons, Bishop Littlejohn arose, and in referring to the recent absence of Mr. Partridge said that without any formal invitation he had visited them, and it was a pleasant duty, as bishop of the diocese, to welcome back their pastor, who had nobly earned the rest which the congregation allowed and enabled him to take. There was no better way for a people to demonstrate their affection in such cases than to send one away from ordinary routine, across the ocean, to lands and a life pregnant with sights, monuments and religious history that only men of intelligence and a minister of the Gospel could appreciate. It was an investment fraught with the greatest kind of accumulation in interest, and the pastor would show it both in his teachings in the pulpit and in private life. This was a time, he hoped, when the distinguished laymen of Christ church would bring the same ability to work in the administration of its affairs and in the furtherance of the Gospel as they do in secular life, leading the way to a nobler chapter in its history.

Upon the conclusion of the additional introductory morning service of the Episcopal Church Bishop Littlejohn announced as his text, St. John xx., 13—"Because they have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have laid him." Mary at the sepulchre of Christ after His resurrection was a most affecting scene. The narrative of her grief at the changed appearance of the tomb, where the body of Jesus had lain, the two angels sitting, one at the head and the other at the foot, with the saddened and perplexed Apostles, and the sight and recognition of the Lord standing by Mary in the midst of her weeping did not require elaboration. The incident wished to be turned to account was in reference to the fast that in some religious denominations fears were deep that they are gradually allowing the Lord to be taken from them and laid away where they and millions may not find Him. There is an attempt that looks like robbing God of His own, tending to the spoliation of the Godhead. Controversies by men that strangely rage are common, not only on the outposts of the Church, but the citadel is being stormed; and although the former is of but little consequence, the latter would converge, if care was not taken, and do terrible work. The acceptance of the belief that the Lord, while more than a man, was less than God, would be the overthrow of a fundamental principle of Christianity. Partial unbelief that Christ is "head over all in all things" is viewed with profound sorrow. Creeds are abandoned and thrown over, and now there is also added to the list in the system of religions the attack upon the vicarious or propitiatory sacrifice of Christ. The denial that Jesus died as a substitute for us, and that He is accepted in the counsels of eternity as a mediator for the whole world, is laden with thoughts of great import. Another system, characterized by energy and great force of will, and that is very vigilant, and extending over a large portion of the civilized world, is Popery. Jesus Christ in such services is to an extent lost sight of—seemingly held in reserve for some great occasion, and in prayer scores of saints supplant His holy name.

Bishop Littlejohn concluded a sermon of much earnest thought by reminding his that hearers none of the thefts, robberies and spoliations of atheists, deists, rationalists, and all others of like ilk, had, in 1800 years touched one point in the great faith of Christianity. The same tears, the same trusting joy of heaven, here in the midst of sin and sorrow, as Mary had, will dissolve this false feeling of the day, swept here and there by each wind of unbelief that blows.

THE CHURCH OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE.

Sermon by the Rev. Father Deshon—Fulness of Faith.

At the high mass performed in this church yesterday the Rev. Father Deshon preached to an overflowing congregation. He based his sermon on the words of the afflicted Hebrew woman:—"If I only touch the hem of His garment I shall be healed." In language at once chaste and vigorous he pointed out how sweetly the divine and human were mingled in this sentiment. It was human because it was the cry of suffering and sorrow. It was a cry of the heart. She had spent her substance on physicians, and she was still without her cure. Her sentiment was divine, because it possessed the fulness of faith. She did not wish to employ the attention of the Saviour. She thought herself unworthy of His courtesies, though He was sweetness itself to all. If she could but touch His garment she felt she would be healed. Approaching Him with this mind she touched Him and she was healed. The disease which had bowed her down with infirmity for twenty years, and which had baffled mere worldly skill and knowledge, all disappeared in virtue of the faith which was in her.

The preacher dilated at great length and with a fine fervor and persuasive eloquence on the lesson to be learned from this narration, so redolent of redeeming charity. He reminded his hearers of the volatility of the human heart—its capability of good, its wreck and ruin when launched on slippery paths, its despairing efforts to catch the plank that would save it from eternal destruction. This Israelite was their example. Let them walk in their footsteps. Burdened with sin and its inevitable miseries, they should approach the all-healing Jesus, but not by the medium of quacks and charlatans. In the tribunal of the confessional, truly penitent for one's sins and frailties, alone could peace—that peace which surpasseth understanding—be obtained. He spoke to a discerning people, and he appealed to their hearts. Outside of this he denied there could be found peace. There might be pious feeling which looked like faith, but the strength which made a really living soul, in the spiritual sense, alone came from humble confession in the Catholic Church and entire conformity with her dogmas.

The impressive ceremonies were much hurt by a bad orchestra. An amateur choir, in which several young ladies who have not finished their musical education were very prominent, detracted largely from the otherwise edifying services conducted by the Paulist Fathers.

CHAPEL OF ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL.

Anniversary Services—Condition of the Hospital.

The beautiful little temple of worship attached to St. Luke's Hospital, Fifty-fourth street, was crowded yesterday afternoon by the friends of the institution, who had assembled to hear the annual reports read and to participate in the religious services customary on such occasions. Every seat was occupied and there was barely standing room even in the galleries.

Immediately after the preliminary religious services the Rev. Dr. Washbourne read the annual report. It was quite interesting and showed that the affairs of the institution were in a most satisfactory condition, pecuniary and otherwise. The management is still in the hands of the Sisters, who are untiring in their attention to the patients under their care. It was the subject of much gratification that, owing to the handsome offer of over one hundred of the special friends of the charity, the Hospital was guaranteed against debt, an agreement having been entered into by these gentlemen to pay yearly the amounts of expenditures over receipts. Over $10,000 had been left to the institution by will during the year, which fully covered all deficiencies. While it was an immense relief to the management to know that the payment of all their reasonable debts was guaranteed, their generous friend might remain satisfied that no unreasonable debts would be incurred. A hospital was the most costly of all charities, as it was the most worthy; but those who gave of their means to succor God's poor in their affliction and minister to their wants had an unspeakable reward. No paid apothecary was employed in the hospital, but the managers had a plan of their own in making up and distribution of medicines, which, while it saved a considerable sum of money, was said to be safer and better than that employed in other institutions of a similar kind. One of the sisters had charge of the dispensary, and not only mixed the medicines, but administered them personally to the patients, whose peculiar diseases she understood. The largest average of patients on any day last year was 160, which was somewhat less than the previous year. The total income from all sources was $38,977, and the expenditure for the same period amounted to $54,205. The legacies, bequests and contributions from various sources would cover the deficiency. It was satisfactory to be able to state that eleven new charity beds had been provided, which swelled the number to thirty-three.

The superintendent of the hospital, the resident physician and others having reported favorably of their respective departments, a large collection in aid of the hospital was taken up, and the services were brought to a close.

ZION CHURCH.

The English Reformation—Lecture by the Rev. N. H. Chamberlain.

The Rev. N. H. Chamberlain, of Morrisania, last evening commenced a series of lectures on the "English Reformation" at Zion church, corner of Madison avenue and Thirty-eighth street. The course will consist of eight lectures, to be delivered on consecutive Sunday evenings in the same edifice. In opening the reverend gentleman remarked that in giving the story of the English Reformation it would be scarcely necessary to remind his hearers that the theme was one which touched upon the most vital matters connected with their faith and practice. It would be his aim to show on what ground Christ's Church in England, and consequently in America, was founded, and he should treat the subject as a churchman and as a minister in his own community. He desired to avoid all uncharity. The priests of Christ's Church were not the janitors of Heaven, nor did the prelate who sits in St. Peter's chair hold the key. The Roman Catholic Church had called his Church and every Reformed Church schismatic and heretical. The Anglican Church was neither of these. He should show how the English Church had thrown off certain dogmas of the Church of Rome, and how she became not a new Church of Christ in England, but the old Church, with her old cathedrals, old parish churches, old creed, old sacraments and old spirit of God burning in the hearts of its believers. The English Reformation was a part of the history of the American Church, and its members were the children of that Reformation. The cross planted on Calvary had come from the British Isles to this country. At the time of the Reformation that cross was covered over with priestly things and the devices of benighted Rome.

In the providence of God heathen Rome prepared the way for the advent of the Christian faith. Cæsar built the many roads leading from the Forum to all nations for the use of his legions; but many a footprint of the soldiers of the Cross could be found upon them. His navies were not used by the Emperor, but bore messages of the Saviour. Caius Julius Cæsar conquered England, and this was the first cause of the introduction of Christianity. How or when it was introduced it was impossible to say. It was impossible to fix the year when it was introduced or the person who first propagated it. Some thought it was St. Paul and others St. James. In the year 314 the Bishops of London, York and Lincoln sat in the Synod of Annes and in 389 they attended a synod in Italy. The Gospel must have been preached long before 314, since at that time there were three settled bishoprics. It was probable the English Church was recognized and Christ preached in Briton a century after the Saviour had risen. The early English Church had two enemies—the passions of the heathen human nature and the persecutions of Rome. The heathen element was vanquished by pious men who suffered as martyrs. Heathen persecution condemned men to die, and the martyrs fell with outstretched arms to the earth in the shape of a cross, as if to proclaim to the onlookers that the very earth was Christ's. The early Church had also to suffer the persecution of heathen Rome, and as an illustration of these persecutions the lecturer related the trial, torture, and beheading of St. Alban. In planting Christianity in any realm, there are noticeable three elements, viz.:—The planting of the seed, the soil in which the seed is planted, and the skies under which it germinates and grows. The soil on which the seed fell was the English heart. The English heart is of granite, with veins of the purest gold. In 54, B. C., Cæsar found in the Britons an enemy before whom his legions again and again recoiled. The mottoes of these Britons were, "Fear the Gods," "Do no evil, "Fear no man." This was the soil the Gospel fell into. God always drives his ploughshares in the richest soil. This was rough to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but never shallow, and when the seed was sown it produced much fruit.

The lecturer then proceeded to describe the early natives of the British Isles, dwelling at great length upon the religion of the Druids, which he characterized as a superstition more shadowy and vast than any known in history. He then referred to the sending of Augustine to Britain by Pope Gregory. After tracing his actions and the result of his labors the reverend gentleman remarked that Augustine came from Rome, and he came not only for Christ but for the Pope. This was the beginning of the Pope's yoke and of his attempts to control the English Church. In this country Rome demands the submission of the Church, and this year calls a council to decide upon the future of our humanity.

THE STEAMER CITY OF BRUSSELS.

Extraordinary Passage from Queenstown—Description of the Latest Splendid Addition to the Inman Line.

At midnight Saturday the magnificent screw steamer City of Brussels, the latest addition to the Inman Atlantic mail service, arrived here from Queenstown after her first trip at sea, and under the command of the veteran navigator, Captain Kennedy. She left Queenstown at eleven in the forenoon of Friday, October 15, and anchored in the North river at midnight Saturday, October 23, making the passage in eight days and thirteen hours, including five hours' detention at sea. She had 110 cabin and a full complement of steerage passengers. Her machinery being all new it was found necessary to make a delay of about five hours to place it in perfect and satisfactory running order. There were alternate days of strong southwesterly winds, but the behavior of the vessel through the voyage was all that could be desired. Captain Kennedy expresses his belief that he can eclipse, with the City of Brussels, the best time made by the Cunard boats by sixteen hours. Judging from appearances, it will not be difficult to accomplish that surpassing feat.

The City of Brussels was launched from the shipbuilding yard of Messrs. Tod & McGregor, at Partick, Glasgow, on the 11th of August last. She is 406 feet in length over all, 40 feet in beam, 28 feet 6 inches in depth, and her tonnage is 3,000. She has four decks, divided by water-tight bulkheads having sliding water-tight doors, worked from the upper or spar deck. The forecastle, round house and poop decks are in a line fore and aft the ship's length, and are constructed with iron framing and substantial woodwork. In the way of the boilers on the upper decks are large air hatches for the purpose of creating a current of refreshing air in the stoke hole below, and in the immediate neighborhood, on the spar deck, the house is completely sheathed with iron plating, rendering the steam and ship's galleys, baker's shop, butcher's shambles, &c., fireproof. All the deck beams are on the patent principle of the Butterley Iron Company, and it may be remarked that the Inman Company were among the first to recognize the advantages of that form of beam in the construction of iron ships. The spar deck is covered with heavy steel plates across its whole breadth and all fore and aft. They serve to increase the longitudinal strength of the vessel to a degree not surpassed, if attained, by any vessel in the mercantile marine. The keelson and stringers in the lower parts are disposed in the best manner adapted to secure the full benefit of the extra strength above.

Under the poop deck is fitted what is a novelty in merchant service, viz., steam steering gear, on the same patent as that on board her Majesty's steamer Northumberland and the Great Eastern. By this arrangement it is intended to put it in the power of the officer on duty, by simply turning a handle, to control the course of the ship, although stationed at the captain's bridge, eighty yards from the tiller. The advantage of this improvement will be realized when it is considered that the ordinary manual labor system of steering a vessel of this class frequently requires the united efforts of from six to eight men to do what by the application of steam will be accomplished by a simple movement of the hand. It should be added that as a precaution no modification will be made on the steering gear as usually fitted to the steamers of the Inman line, so that if any derangement in the special machinery connected with this improvement should take place, the steam engine can be instantly disconnected and the old established mode of steering by hand can be reverted to.

The accommodation for first class passengers is very spacious and includes every convenience accessory to comfort that experience can suggest. There is accommodation for about 600 second and third class passengers, of the same description as in the other vessels of the Inman line. The dining saloon is at the after end and is capable of dining about 200 first class passengers, while ample accommodation is provided on the main deck for dining the third class passengers. Large ice houses are fitted up in the forward part of the vessel, and under the forecastle deck comfortable quarters are found for the crew and firemen.

In the machinery department this vessel is finished on a scale to take the lead of the fastest vessels of the Inman line in point of speed and efficiency. Her engines, constructed on the horizontal trunk principle, are of 600 nominal horse power, capable of indicating 3,300 horse power, having the latest improvements in surface condensation, feed-heaters, &c. Her boilers are six in number and have twenty-eight furnaces. They are arranged fore and aft on each side of the ship, and fired athwartships.

In the boiler space provision is made for the extinguishing of fire, by the fitting up of a centrifugal pump capable of lifting more than 2,000 gallons of water per minute; and there is also in the engine room one large pumping engine, to which steam can be applied from the main boilers as well as from the donkey boiler on the spar deck. There are steam winches on the roundhouse deck, fitted with all recent improvements, and connected to pumps having access to the lower cargo holds.

It will thus be obvious that ample provision is made for such contingencies as would endanger the safety of the vessel in the event of fire or any sudden inflow of water arising from collision or leakage from any cause. Water-tight sliding doors, constructed on a very simple principle and suitable for easy management, are fixed at all the points of communication in and around the spaces allotted to machinery and fuel. The cargo holds are well supplied with pumps and steam fire annihilators.