RELIGIOUS.

Political Parsons Piping Peace to France and Prussia.

The Dark Side of Religion and the Bright Side of the World.

Joys of Heaven Contrasted with the Pleasures of Sin.

The Beautiful as an Element of Morality, and Nature as an Instructor.

Sufficient Denial and Reasonable Sacrifices Required of Men.

The Liberty which Christ Gives—Vanity of Formal Piety and the Folly of Fashion—An Infuriated Local Prophet—Glorying in the Cross of Christ—Let the People Enjoy Themselves on Sundays—Infallibility of the Pope.

Not all the bells of the metropolis, though sweet in tone as those of Shandon, could entice people to church under such a broiling sun as yesterday poured its terrible rays "upon the evil as well as upon the good," nor tempt them from their homes. The churches were consequently very thinly attended; but, as if regardless of the manifest coolness of the congregations toward their suffering pastors in the pulpits, the clergy generally distinguished themselves, many of them having discussed the European question at much length and with great earnestness. The sermons given below will be found more than usually interesting and entertaining, if not instructive.

AMERICAN FREE CHURCH.

The Franco-Prussian War—The Good Fight of Faith—Sermon by the Rev. Charles B. Smyth.

The American Free church was yesterday well attended despite the extreme warmth of the weather. After the usual devotional exercises the Rev. Mr. Smyth preached a lengthened sermon, taking his text from Paul's Epistle to Timothy, vi., 12—"Fight the good fight of faith." The reverend gentleman said:—Truly, "thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Who could have seriously supposed one week ago that the whole world would by this time be filled with the almost incredible news which has been placed before the eyes of us all within the last two days? Those wonderful instruments which have been created by modern science and art, in the form of the telegraph and the steam press, and which, had they been predicted to our fathers, would only have been laughed at sceptically, have circulated to the distant ends of the earth in a moment an announcement which now agitates all men. Standing as we do in America upon

AN ELEVATED POINT

of observation, and looking down over a widely extended field, which is soon to be deluged with the blood of thousands, perhaps millions of our fellow beings, we should scarcely deserve to be called human ourselves were we to allow the coming events, which are casting their shadows before them, to be unnoticed by us. The last week has been eventful. We have had war at home and rumors of war from abroad; a disgraceful riot in our own city and a not much less disgraceful war (to be in the nineteenth century) looming up in Europe. And we have had a number of assaults and stabbings, and shootings and murders truly deplorable. A thoughtful mind may naturally ask, Why all this? What the occasion? What do men seek by such brutality one towards another? Is there any object to be gained worth so dear a price? Why do people not contend for something worth fighting for? Why are they not actuated by motives that are reasonable, and not by such only as entitle them to be numbered among savages or lunatics? Have private individuals and societies, and governments all gone mad? Is the whole world

ONE VAST BEDLAM,

where every one from prince to pauper requires a straight jacket? Oh! surely there is something better worth seeking and better worth fighting for than bloody, bitter memories, or petty ambitious or rotten thrones, or tinsel crowns or muddy empires, the climax to all of which is only a grave of six feet by two, filled with a lump of flesh to feed the hungry maws of worms. Yes, there are; and they are such as mines of gold could not purchase, nor sons of monarchs inherit, nor peoples by even a unanimous vote confer, nor armies conquer. But who sees them? Who knows them? They are not seen because they are invisible. They are not known except by those to whom they are given. They are the objects of faith—even the same to which Paul alludes when he says, "Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life." The greatest battle that ever was fought was the one that raged around Mount Calvary, and the dearest things that ever were in jeopardy or dependent upon a fight were those for which Christ died. And the war which has all along been waged between Him and the Prince of Darkness is the most terrific and exurpating that has ever existed, though unseen except by the eye of faith and though unknown unless to those to whom it is explained by the Spirit of God. It becomes us to

OBSERVE PASSING EVENTS,

and to pluck from them the means of illustrating and enforcing the high and important themes of revelation, and at a moment when the thought of war fills every mind, and the din of arms and the tramp of warlike men, and the musket's rattle and the rifle's crack and the cannon's roar are summoning the nations to a struggle which will be the most desperate and sanguinary of modern times, except our own late domestic contest, to consider what lessons we should learn therefrom as a Christian people. In the first place, the news of the week may remind us of the existence of the great spiritual war which has been raging for centuries. Since the first creation of the approaching European struggle given many weeks ago, with remarkably prophetic sight, by a distinguished journalist of this city, as he viewed the covered intentions of the two great imperial rivals through the preparations which both were making for war as yet undeclared, how many leaves of history have been turned over by editorial savans and others to make their memories peculiarly familiar with the facts of modern wars, that they might instruct the numerous and promiscuous readers. What have the clergy at the same time been doing? Have they been preparing to give lessons to their people upon the great unseen but not less real war which Christ ever since his first advent has been waging against all the combined forces of the powers of evil, overcoming all enemies and finally bringing about the destruction of death itself, which is, therefore, styled in Scripture "the last enemy to be destroyed?" This great spiritual contest is called "the fight of faith," because, first, the chiefs opposed to each other have been objects of faith rather than of sight; secondly, the achievements of the "Captain of our Salvation" are objects of belief; thirdly, the ends to be ultimately accomplished are objects of belief; fourthly, the spirit in which all who enlist under the banner of Christ is one of faith. Although this is a spiritual warfare, cognizant as such by the eye of faith only, yet many of the steps of Christ's conquests are seen and felt by all men, even while they do not acknowledge the triumphs to be Christ's.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT,

personal, social, ecclesiastical, civil and religious liberty, the art of printing, the discovery of the use of steam and of electricity; the steam engine, the steamship, the steam press, the lightning telegraph, the camera obscura and photographic art, the telescope, the microscope, and all the works that belong to modern civilization, not excepting even the revolver, the chassepot and the needle gun (which are useful in their place), are some among the numerous blessings to mankind which the great Imperial Chieftain of our salvation has achieved against the barbaric despotisms of Satan and the dark ages. And these instruments which now constitute the terrible enginery of war he will so employ and control as to make them peacemakers and to cause men finally to "beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks and learn war no more." He now sits upon the throne of the universe, thence commanding both the armies of heaven and the hosts of earth, and combating the prince of the power of the air, "subduing all things unto Himself," and, as the Apostle says, "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet," until "He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." Then shall God be "all in all" and earth one vast United States, equal in the circumference of the globe, the firmament with its blue expanse and the sparkling gems seen through it, and the Milky Way for our glorious banner of the Stars and Stripes. It should lead us to contrast the objects sought in earthly wars with those which are contended for between Christ and Satan. It should lead us to be diligent in the use of the means necessary for carrying on the war. It should, above all, lead us to contemplate and possess the mighty power of faith, as a great moral force for achieving successes. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even in faith. Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

The Rev. Mr. Smyth concluded an eloquent and exceedingly instructive sermon by urging upon the congregation the necessities of attending to the many incumbent duties upon the faithful of the Christians imposed by the present European warfare. The reverend gentleman was throughout listened to with the deepest attention. The services terminated shortly before twelve o'clock.

CHURCH OF THE STRANGERS.

"The Liberty Which Christ Gives"—Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Deems.

Owing to the intense heat of the weather yesterday the congregation at the Church of the Strangers was not as large as usual, although there was still a goodly number present. Dr. Deems, the popular pastor, preached a very able and eloquent sermon upon the subject of "The Liberty Which Christ Gives," and selected his text from the first verse of sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians—"Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." The first intent of this letter from Paul to the Galatians was to correct a false impression which had been made concerning himself, and the next to set his brethren right on the great question of salvation. After he had left them teachers came who, to break his fort declared that he was not in the apostolic success His contempt for such a succession was im rable. He was an Apostle not made by man, bearing the signs of Jesus, and that was be than any of their "successions." When a mes surpassingly great

ECCLESIASTICAL DILETTANTI

begin to examine his credentials and to inquire whether he is doing everything "orderly" and according to some "constitution;" as if personal greatness were not its own credential; as if any man had not a right to do any great or beautiful or good thing he had the power to do. All this opposition was from that set and stereotyped characteristic of Judaism which, when Jesus appeared, had made that religion powerless to do good any longer. Jesus Christ brought liberty. He freed the world. He flung the shut gates open. The Judaizing teachers were striving to pull the free Christians back to the bondage of forms and ceremonies, a ritual and sacerdotal rule. Paul urges them to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. The Doctor urged that Jesus did not introduce or encourage licentiousness. He made men free from "entanglements" and "bondage," not from law. He released men from that which kept men from being obedient to law. Men had not been

FREE TO SERVE GOD.

The sense of guilt which comes to every man who is conscious of having signed is in the way of this service. Paul says that the animation of this service is "the faith which works by love." Guilt breaks faith. We cannot trust fully one toward whom we feel guilty. So long as man feels that he has wronged God and there has been no reconciliation, he cannot trust God nor work lovingly for the interests of God, no matter what his ideas of the goodness of God may be. That is the load which Jesus lifts. He demonstrates to the world the lovingness of the Heavenly Father towards the erring child and His desire to have His children's love, and thus makes reconciliation possible and faith strong, and love sweet and active. That is one reason why such frightful sinners become such radiant saints when they are converted. It is the refound. The load which pressed them falls, the infirmity or fetter which bound them breaks, and they leap and shout and praise God.

Not only the entanglement of guilt, which is at once a memory and a consciousness, but the entanglement of loving to sin and of forming sinful habits is broken.

THE OFFERING OF JESUS

for the sins of the world sets sin in such a lurid light and makes the beauty of holiness so conspicuous that Jesus being lifted up draws men unto Himself. The love of a noble human being, however distant, lifts a man, and makes him feel a horror whenever he thinks of letting himself down below the place of that love. Many a man wants to serve God and cannot, because of his sinful habits. It is the knowledge of Jesus which proves an attraction stronger than the fascination of sin. The love of Jesus breaks the chain and sets men free to do right.

The world has never sufficiently given credit to Jesus for the power He imparts to men of breaking the entanglement of prejudice, that bad habit of reaching and acting upon decisions that have no basis in right.

JESUS WAS AN ICONOCLAST.

He broke the idols and images. He taught that the manhood of a man was inside in character and heart, not in office or profession. Pharisee or publican, phylactery or pulic, priest or centurion, all these were nothing, but truth and courage, and faith and love were everything. And you cannot tell by a man's birthplace, or professed creeds or official tokens, how much of these he has. A saint might sit on Cæsar's throne and a devil wear the high-priest's breastplate. It is not the imperial purple nor the urium and thummim, but the man! Jesus set men free from the entanglement or prejudice on account of nationality or position. The Roman was free to enter the "Holiest of Holies," and the Jew was free to roam the world and preach the gospel of love to every creature.

It was lastly shown how Jesus had set us

FREE FROM CHURCHISM.

By that word the Doctor said he meant all those ideas of a close corporation in which all were saints and outside of which all were sinners, possessing corporate powers to refuse grace or confer and transmit grace. He did not believe such a thing existed, although he knew there were a score of different claimants. He was sure that Jesus came partly to set men free from just that kind of thing. He illustrated it at some length, as in circumcision and the Sabbath laws of the rigid Pharisees, and the necessity of worshiping in the temple at Jerusalem. Jesus set men free from all these things, and Paul taught that "in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but, faith, which worketh by love," that, being in the Church, mere observance of rites would not save a man, nor could any man, on the other side, boast that he gains by not being in the Church; that being in or out was a mere circumstance; but if any man led a life wholly animated by

A FAITH IN GOD,

which was active and which was not the result of logic, not a belief reached merely by a demonstration, but was the product of love, and was kept working by love. Then he alluded to the liberty wherewith Christ made us free. Men do not love Jesus because they believe in Him, do not love God because they believe in Him, but believe in Him because they love Him. "With the heart man believes unto righteousness." Being freed from guilt and sin and the power of prejudice and reliance upon mere forms, a man thus has all his faculties "free" to serve God. There is no bond in heaven or earth so strong to hold, so sweet to wear, so hard to break as love. The perfection of love is the perfection of liberty.

In conclusion the Doctor alluded to this being the anniversary of the day on which he had begun to preach in the University, and made touching allusion to the growth and prosperity and unanimity in his church. It is understood that this congregation are to occupy a new church in the fall.

TRINITY CHURCH.

The Hatefulness of Sin—Sermon by Rev. Dr. Vinton.

Despite the intense heat of the weather a fair congregation of worshippers was present yesterday at the morning service in Trinity church. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Vinton, who took for his text the following words from the seventh chapter of Joshua, verse thirteen:—"There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel! thou canst not stand before thine enemies until ye take away the accursed thing from among you." In the midst of the victorious career of the Israelites, under the leadership of Joshua, an unexpected reverse befel them. The marched against the men of Ai, who, instead of fleeing before them, inflicted a severe defeat upon them, and pursued them with much slaughter. Joshua, amazed and distressed at the unlooked for catastrophe, had recourse to the Lord, and learned that the disaster was attributable to a sin committed by one of his followers. Achan was discovered to be the culprit, and he, together with his son and daughter, were taken outside the camp and put to death. Among the lessons to be learned from the history of Achan was that the sin of the individual

HURTS THE COMMUNITY,

and this was eminently expedient and demonstrated the wisdom of Providence. Many a man, reckless in regard to his own temporal and eternal interests, is kept in the path of goodness by considerations for the misery and shame which the gratifications of his evil propensities would entail upon others with whom he happened to be connected by social or family ties. The head of the family found in the same considerations a powerful

INCENTIVE TO VIRTUE,

as he is restrained from evil by reluctance to injure the fair fame of his children. Another lesson the story inculcated was the avoidance of vanity and covetousness. Many Christians sin like Achan because they do not accustom themselves to keep those passions in control. Finally the detection and swift retribution which overtook Achan ought to bring home to every one of us that our sin is

SURE TO FIND US OUT,

that we cannot keep anything hid from God. In conclusion the preacher urged his hearers to examine their consciences and find whether they were prepared to stand before God, who would judge them as he had judged Achan. If their consciences reproved them with any crime let them hasten to repent and make ready for the day which shall surely come for all. When our good and bad actions shall be subjected to the scrutiny of a Just and All Wise Judge.

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL.

Celebration of High Mass and a Sermon on Charity by Rev. Father McSweeny.

Notwithstanding the intense heat of yesterday the usual congregation of the faithful were gathered for the performance of their devotions in the Cathedral of St. Patrick's. High mass was celebrated by Father McGean, and the following music performed by the choir, which includes Mme. Chome, soprano; William H. Schmitz, tenor, and Mr. A. Sohst, basso, the organist being Gustavus Schmitz:—Mass by Mine, for four voices, Kyrie and chorus; Gloria, chorus and soprano solo credo; chorus, "Est in carmatus, Frio;" "O Salutaris," basso sung by Mr. Sohst.

The lesson was from the miracle of the loaves and fishes, and the sermon was delivered by Rev. Father McSweeny, who said:—There have been many occurrences in the past week which would lead any good Catholic to approach humbly the Throne of Grace as a supplicant for Divine favor and protection and cause him to remember his own weakness and sin and to trust for supporting power in the blessed Saviour. The miracles that were performed by our Divine Lord were such as teach useful lessons to us all. The five thousand who followed our Lord to the wilderness were not rich, but the poor, the miserable, and those the modern affluent ones regard and describe as contemptible. They were not of the rich who followed the Saviour, carrying with them, among five thousand people, only five loaves and a few small fishes; they were only such of the poor as found the bread Christ broke for them very acceptable. The Catholic Church is and always has been

THE CHURCH OF THE POOR,

the miserable, the despised and the contemptable, as they are called. These are the people to whom Christ came, who followed Him and whom He taught. The Catholic Church is therefore pre-eminently the Church of the poor. When men are assailed for their religion's sake in our day they are too often apt to deny their religion and to forget that it is only the assailed who constitute the body of the Church, and that now, as in our divine Master's day, we are essentially of the class called despised, miserable and contemptible. How many of our people think they have given much to the poor, when they have, in fact, given but very little of their wealth. Theologians state that one-twenty-fifth part of all our substance should be given to the poor; and, small as this apportionment is, how many are there who give this mite?

THEY SHOULD GIVE ONE CENT

of every twenty-five cents, one dollar of every twenty-five dollars and $100 of every $2,500. Yet how few do more than a small part of this in giving. Man should give to the needy all that is not absolutely necessary to support his life and his place and rank in the world and the dignity of his social position. A man need not give all in life above a bare subsistence, because what would suffice for the support of one man would not maintain another in the social position he might occupy or in the station of his birth. There are among us those who are always haunted by the phantom of poverty, who are continually in dread of losing their wealth and

BECOMING BEGGARS.

Let such give to the poor already, and, thus lending to the Lord, He will not forget them in the day of their adversity and necessity. When Christ has been so generous to us we should not fail to exhibit something of the same spirit towards our neighbors poorer than ourselves in this world's goods.

After the sermon the imposing ceremony of high mass was performed and the consecration of the wafer. The solemn chant was heard, the kneeling supplicants murmured their prayers, and the superb notes of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* echoed through the Cathedral's vaulted aisles, with the rich tones of the organ blending in prolonged strains of harmony, speaking of "peace on earth, good will to men."

ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH.

Christ the Corner Stone—Sermon by Rev. John Love.

In the Bleecker street Baptist church yesterday notwithstanding the intense heat, a goodly number of earnest worshippers assembled to hear the words of wisdom from their young pastor. Rev. Mr. Love preached a very eloquent sermom from the inspired words, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone." In these words, the speaker said, was pictured the foundation of religious belief and the eternal fixedness of truth. As the corner stone supports the building, and as on the strength of the corner stone depends the stability of the structure, so in spiritual things Christ is the corner stone and Christians may rest secure. Where anything human enters into the motives of faith there must be uncertainty, doubts and fears. Here lies the inherent

WEAKNESS OF THE CHURCH OF ROME,

and to this admixture of the human element will its downfall be due. Romanists are fixed in their belief by the dictates of a man—the Pope—whom they call the Vicar of Christ, and to whom they imagine the gift of infallibility has been handed down from St. Peter, the first Pope. Even at this very moment the bishops of the Catholic Church are assembled in Rome to force this dogma of infallibility on the enlightened men of the nineteenth century. This is a farce—nay, worse, it is a blasphemy. If the Catholic religion depends upon a man it is human, and it is ridiculous to claim for it a divine and heavenly destiny. If there is any especial meaning in the words of Christ, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church," He merely declared St. Peter the head of the Church, and did not convey the Catholic idea of a transmission of the gift of infallibility. How much happier, the speaker went on to say, were they in their religious belief. Believing the inspired words of Holy Writ they learned that Christ was made the chief corner stone in Zion, the hope and salvation of Christians, and their confidence in Him is proof against all doubts. As the Eddystone lighthouse, which is founded on and built into the solid rock, defies the fury of the waves and the violence of the storm,

IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL,

so is it with the Christian soul which rests on Christ the corner stone. Though thousands of enemies may assail it and seek to insul a want of faith the Christian souls remain tranquil and quiet. Our Lord himself spoke of the house founded on a rock which withstood all the assaults of the elements. Even so is it with the members of their church; but woe to those other churches which are built on quicksands and which are doomed to be swept away in the tumult of external and internal contentions. The Scripture says, "Whosoever believeth shall not make haste." There is a deep mystery in these words, but taken in the present connection they are easily understood. As long as a person has no settled form of belief his mind is torn by distracting doubts, he rushes from one persuasion to the other, he knows not whether to believe in the Koran or the Bible, he is in a state of misery and incertitude truly deplorable; but when at last he reaches the true faith, when he sees clearly that in Christ must his hope of salvation rest, when he verily believes in Him as the corner stone upon which the edifice of his religious belief is raised, then a divine peace takes possession of his soul and he is no longer

CARRIED AWAY BY EVERY WIND

of doctrine. He believes, and does not make haste. He feels a perfect confidence in the goodness of God, to whose fold he belongs, and he has no anxiety about his salvation. This does not imply a carelessness about salvation, but a heaven-inspired trustfulness. He knows that the blood of the Redeemer has been shed for him and has blotted out all his sins. He knows that Christ is the way, the truth and the life, and that if he believes in Him he will be saved. The preacher congratulated his hearers upon having attained this blissful state. They had reached

THE HAVEN OF REST,

and they felt that supreme happiness which those enjoyed who were on the sure road to heaven. They had only to remain faithful to the end, to trust to the goodness of God, and by reposing an unfaltering faith on Christ, the corner stone, they would secure the unalloyed happiness which is in store for the true servants of God in the realms of eternal bliss.

MURRAY HILL CHAPEL.

Public Immersion—Discourse on the Doctrine of Baptism by Rev. James Christal.

As the mercury rises in the thermometer religious enthusiasm sinks towards zero. In this broiling weather the churches are all empty, and the pious persons for whom pews are constructed are worshipping the Author of Nature in presence of His wondrous works. On the sides of airy mountains and down by the breezy seashore all the godly of Gotham (who can afford the expense) now keep their Sabbath, find "sermons in stones and good in everything," or chant hymns of praise to their Creator in chorus to the music of the waves. Thus it was that though

A RARE RELIGIOUS TREAT

was offered at the cool and cosey little chapel on Lexington avenue, near Thirty-seventh street, yesterday, the pews were almost entirely unoccupied, not more than five persons (two of whom were reporters) being present to listen to the instructive and interesting discourse of the Rev. James Christal on the subject of immersion, as distinguished from the ordinary custom of sprinkling, in the rubric of the Episcopal Church. The

ABSENCE OF AN AUDIENCE

did not dishearten the clergyman, who, with the zeal of a true propagandist, went on with the services as earnestly as though two thousand individual intelligences were there to absorb the words of wisdom to which he gave utterance. He said though he had no absolute fault to find with the custom of sprinkling water on the head of the person to be baptized, yet he thought the

TRUE FORM OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

embraced the immersion of the body in water three times, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. The reverend gentleman quoted the authority of several eminent Protestant theologians in support of his views, including Jeremy Taylor, Whitfield and Wesley, and to these he added the opinions of two eminent bishops of Rome, who supported the theory of immersion and regarded the mere sprinkling of water as scarcely complying with the divine injunction at all. In

THE SACRED WRITINGS

it is remarkable that men are spoken of as being baptized in, not with, water. Up to the sixteenth century the custom of immersion was universal in the Christian world, and except in cases of extreme necessity, such as dangerous illness and the absence of convenient means of immersion, sprinkling water on the head was never resorted to. Even to this day, after we cross the Asian boundaries of Europe, we find the custom of immersion practised altogether by

THE EASTERN CHRISTIANS,

who would not consider a person baptized unless he were immersed after the manner of their Church.

The Rev. Mr. Christal said he would like to see this custom of immersion brought back again into the Episcopal Church. For his part he meant to labor, and hard and earnestly, to that end, and devote his services gratis in so praiseworthy a movement. But in all movements of that nature it would be necessary to have some kind of an organization and to gather together all those who believed like himself, and set them

TO WORK CO-OPERATIVELY

to propagate their ideas and bring about the desired end. In doing this he would not inaugurate anything antagonistic to the rubric of the Episcopalian Church, as at present practised. He would simply wish to see the custom of immersion introduced and practised by even a few who believed in it here in New York, and he had not a doubt about its soon finding its way into all the congregations and becoming universal as of yore. Mr. Christal is

A VERY EFFECTIVE PREACHER.

His manner is engaging, his voice extremely agreeable, and his reasoning is logical and clearly put. He was listened to by his small but evidently intelligent audience with great attention throughout, and present felt convinced that they had listened to a zealous and sincere advocate of his own faith, and a learned and eloquent gentleman besides.

CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR.

The Beautiful as an Element in Morality—Admirable Discourse by Rev. J. M. Pullman—Nature as an Instructor—Let the People Enjoy Themselves.

The Rev. J. M. Pullman, of the Sixth Universalist church, on Thirty-fifth street, between Fifth and Sixth avenues, preached his farewell sermon yesterday morning previous to the summer vacation. Considering the intense heat and the fact that a large number of his congregation are out of town, the attendance was respectable. He selected for his text the fifth verse of the 143d Psalm—"I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Thy works; I muse on the work of Thy hands." In estimating the forces which are potent to lift man above the control of his lower nature and develop and refine his character moralists and theologians have commonly slighted his innate love of what is beautiful. Esthetics is not religion, and a refined and cultivated taste will not alone deliver a man from the dominion of sin. The senses are not the avenues traversed by the Divine Spirit on its mission of regeneration. But man is created with a perception of and a love for what is beautiful, and this love is one of the instruments of his redemption.

MAN LOVES MORAL BEAUTY

as displayed in character and action, and natural beauty as seen in material forms. This latter love is of two kinds—scientific and unscientific. The man of science prizes nature for its facts and suggestions to his intellect—for what it makes him think; the unscientific man loves it for its deeper suggestions to his heart and conscience—for what it makes him feel. The natural sciences are the

GREAT ALLIES OF RELIGION.

There are many, indeed, who regard them as the allies of scepticism, and therefore foes to religion. Their mistake is here:—Science is sceptical in regard to old superstitions; it is merciless in its exposure of the absurdities and follies which have been imposed upon the world in the name of religion. But towards that religion which consists in the knowledge and the love of God science is reverent and filial. It is only the pretenders to scientific knowledge or men wholly destitute of any first hand scientific attainments who discredit the verities of religion. "A smattering of philosophy," says Lord Bacon, "leads to atheism, whereas a thorough acquaintance with it leads a man back to religion." If we turn to consider the influence of the common and unscientific love of nature we shall be struck first with its universality. No man treads this green earth who does not receive an influence from the beauty with which it is clothed.

THE HARD WROUGHT LABORING

man who takes his evening or Sunday walk in the fields or woods may have no technical knowledge of trees or flowers, but as he goes he will be penetrated with an unconscious, subtle, subduing and elevating influence. The facilities for getting away to the country should be multiplied. The moral and physical health of the city demands the influences of nature. Take your wife and babies into the country or down by the sea. If you can do it on no other day,

DO IT ON SUNDAY.

Going to church is good, but this, for the time being, is better. Above all, children should have the teachings of nature. They are best taught by symbols, and nature is full of symbols. The late Thomas Starr King tells how, on his voyage to California, he took the opportunity of a cloudless night on the South Pacific to give his little daughter a lasting and adequate idea of the infinity and majesty of God. The boundless ocean served Him as the emblem of eternity; the vast vault of the heavens, with its million of sparkling worlds, was a fit type of infinite majesty. We may well believe that the lesson thus illustrated will not be forgotten. You would keep your children from the destructive teachings of the street and that evil companionship which is to a young soul as

A SPARK TO DRY TINDER,

then you must give them something else to think about. And there is no purer companionship than that of nature, none to which they more instinctively turn, none which will more indelibly impress its truth upon them, none that will be a better safeguard when the inevitable temptations of life beset them. To the child of purely cultivated tastes the common dissipations of life are shorn of much of their attractions, and it is rarely that they fall into them, or, falling, fail to right themselves at the last. Teach them to see in nature, not the capricious God of the theologies, but a God unchangeable, manifested in the divine order of the universe.

PLYMOUTH BAPTIST CHURCH.

The Dark Side of Religion Preferable to the Bright Side of the World—The Contrast Between the Pleasures of Sin and the Joys of Heaven.

Through the sweltering heat of yesterday a faithful few wended their way toward Plymouth Baptist church, in Fifty-first street, between Ninth and Tenth avenues, to hear the Rev. Dr. Wescott discourse on the contrasts between religion and ungodliness. The particular contrast to which he called attention was the dark side of religion and

THE BRIGHT SIDE OF THE WORLD,

the former being preferable to the latter. The discourse was based on Moses' choice, who, though surrounded with all the luxury of the Egyptian court, "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." (Hebrews xi., 25.) The greatest proportion of our lives, he remarked, is joyous; nevertheless we have sorrow, too, for we live in a world of trouble and trial. Religion has its sorrows and its joys, but in the spirit world there are no such mingling. That is not a world of discipline, and there these extreme phases of life will not be experienced by the same person. It is difficult to believe that the dark side of religion is preferable to the bright side of the world; but let any one attempt to prove it in his life and he will soon realize it as a fact. The Doctor then defined the term "sin" in the text, which here means not the outward transgression of law, nor the omission of moral and religious duties, but the absence of God from the thoughts and hearts of men—a living without God in the world. The joys of the world are such that a man may have pleasure here without troubling himself with a thought of the existence of God or his own responsibility to him. We are

TAUGHT TO BE INDUSTRIOUS

and to enjoy the fruits of our industry. It is not the manner but the motive of our labor that God looks at; and our first duty, as taught not only in the Bible, but in Pagan theology is to live to the glory of God. But, alas, how many there are who prosecute business, and prosecute it successfully, without any thought of God! They gather to themselves wealth, build for themselves comfortable homes and fill them with all the luxuries of this life; they lay up treasures and acquire lands and houses for their posterity, and enjoy the good things of this world to their fullest extent, but they have never a thought of God. There might be some worldly person present who in his heart is saying, "Sir, I often think of God, and refrain from sins that I might commit did I not so think of Him." Let such a one look into his own heart and see there whether he does not avoid open transgression not through any fear of God before his eyes, but because he fears and respects the opinions of his neighbors and of society. But while he (the Doctor) thus spoke he was not opposed to the pursuit of wealth, honor, fame, responsible and eminent positions among men; but these should be sought for the glory of God and the good of humanity. Amusement, too, has its pleasures, and man was made to be amused and to enjoy the pleasure of it. It is the abuse of amusements that is sinful. A few years ago the Young Men's Christian Association added an amusement feature to their rooms—either a bowling alley or billiard tables, he knew not which. But, whatever it was, it was merely a bridge thrown across the chasm that separates a strictly religious life from the devil's common.

THE SORROWS OF RELIGION,

especially of the backslider, are very deep. But the nearer a Christian lives to God the keener will be his sorrows, but they will not be like those of the backslider nor of the worldly man. He is troubled at the plague of his own heart, his ingratitude, his infidelity toward God, his coldness and proneness to stray away from the Church and from God. The Christian is sometimes grieved because he doubts whether he is a child of God or not. His anxiety for the prosperity of Zion also causes him sorrow, as do the reproaches brought on religion by faithless church members. But taking all things together he would to-day choose, as Moses did, rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of the world. Both are but for a season. Moses' sorrow and affliction ended when he stood on Pisgah's top, with heaven in his heart and God in his eye. One side of this picture ends in endless woe, the other in eternal bliss. And our light afflictions here will work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

ATTORNEY STREET METHODIST CHURCH.

Prize Racing—Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Swift.

The Rev. Mr. Swift, pastor of the Methodist Protestant church, Attorney street, between Delancey and Rivington streets, yesterday delivered a sermon on "Prize Racing." He took for his text that part of Paul's epistle to the Corinthians which reads, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible."

Everything a man did, good or bad, the reverend gentleman said, was done through some motive, which, as it were, pushed him forward to the attainment of whatever he sought. There was a stimulus to every action, and all men were more or less controlled by a propelling power to obtain things which they considered all important to themselves, which seemed to be irresistible. Men who sought for fame eagerly pushed onward over every obstacle in their way, and never flinched when difficulties that appeared to others insurmountable stared them in the face. Those who desired to accumulate riches acted in a like manner. In fact, dangers and sacrifices were as naught to the man who desired to obtain

A CERTAIN PRIZE.

Whether the prize sought for was one that was in itself bad or not, the struggle for its possession by him who coveted it was all the same; his determination and purpose were unshaken. Indeed, when a man determined to attain a certain object which it was possible, though difficult to attain, his resolve to succeed became the stronger and his efforts were redoubled in proportion as the obstacles in his way multiplied and became more and more a barrier between him and the object of his desires. There was a prize in everything that a man sought for, and when St. Paul spoke of the Grecian games to make his idea of the Christian running the race of life for an incorruptible crown he spoke of things which were in existence in his own day. He did not go back to the time of Abraham to find a metaphor by which to strike the minds of those to whom he addressed himself. He dealt with

THE LIVING PRESENT,

as people nowadays should do, as well in the pulpit as in all the departments of life. We all could see what excitement, what anxiety, the great race between the yachts Dauntless and Camoria had already given rise to; how everything about them was eagerly read; how the newspapers were scanned day after day for some tidings as to where the vessels were at a given time. And why all this excitement, all this anxiety, on the part of two nations concerning the result of the race? Because there was a prize at stake, a national prize, a prize that would make a whole nation cry out for joy or sorrow, as the case might be. And knowing all every effort would be made by the men on each of the yachts to gain the prize sought for, which only one could win. It should be recollected that St. Paul reminded the Corinthians that in the Grecian games only one could win; yet that fact did not deter many from contending for the prize and making great sacrifices to be able to contend with some show of success. Christians were racers on the course of life, and the prize of the race was an incorruptible crown—a life of eternal happiness beyond the grave, with Him who ruled the universe—but more than one could win the prize. Every Christian who contended could win the prize in the same race, and the Great Judge of it all was ready to reward every soul who had courage manfully to contend for the crown, and finally reach the goal, where the crown would be given it. No matter what men contended for in this life, the prize the winner won was always a corruptible one. It might be, as in the Grecian games,

A CROWN OF LAURELS;

but, then a few days and it would be faded and decayed. In races where the prize was an earthly object the reward could not be otherwise than corruptible. The crown which, by leading good lives and running well to the very end, Christians would obtain would never fade, never decay, but be a thing of eternity—a life of joy and glory without an end.

In the afternoon the Sunday school concert of this church took place, and, notwithstanding the terribly hot weather, was well attended. The exercises were very interesting, and addresses were made by several gentlemen, who had been invited to take part in the proceedings.

FORTY-SECOND STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The Higher Aspirations of Spiritual Life—Sermon by Professor Green, of Princeton.

While religious fervor will make some people go to church, the thermometrical fervor of yesterday will keep a great many away. There certainly was a slim attendance yesterday morning at the Forty-second street Presbyterian church, near Eighth avenue, and this notwithstanding the presence in the pulpit of a stranger of quite wide-spread pulpit renown, Professor W. H. Green, of Princeton. The stranger preacher selected for his text the latter part of Psalm lxi., 2—"Lead me to the rock that is higher than I," and a most

FORCIBLE AND ELOQUENT SERMON

it certainly was. He began with asserting that the beauty and dignity of higher aspirations were the great principles and teachings embodied in the petition to which the text gave utterance. David saw that for his progress to a better and nobler life, and to a higher and holier state of being, he must depend on God, and hence his supplications to be led to this exalted position. He showed how God had planned the way, and how Jesus Christ was the guide. The path before them showed an

IMMENSITY OF DISTANCE,

but Christ stood ready to guide them forward and upward. This upward progress was in rising superior to besetting sins, in overcoming temptation, in working out a grand mission in this life. They had constant occasion to invoke divine assistance. Christ had offered Himself as their Guide and they had a right to ask this service of Him. The path by which He would lead them was narrow and winding and toilsome and rugged. It was not as easily pursued as

THE BROAD ROAD

in which roam most of earth's travellers; but it leads to a glorious reward in the future—to heaven and its perpetual joys. Their religious progress must be a progress of faith. They must toil on, must not look back, must not grow disheartened by discouragements and difficulties, but press forward and upward to the glorious goal and bright crown of the hereafter.

Singing and benediction terminated the exercises.

PLIMPTON'S BUILDING.

Glorying in the Cross of Christ—Sermon by the Rev. Charles F. Lee.

The Rev. Charles F. Lee preached at Plimpton's Building yesterday morning before a not very large but an earnest congregation. He took for his text the fourteenth verse of the sixth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians—"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." No one, said the speaker, was more zealous for the cross of Christ than St. Paul; he was ready to fight, and, if necessary, die for the faith he loved. Taking his words for our text, let us examine into the glory of the cross of Christ. There is

A GLORY IN THE CROSS,

in the divinity which glows in the Gospel, in which all can find spiritual food and grace. None but those who would not could fail to understand and feel the divine influence of the word of Christ. Christ dealt in simple, honest truths, which went home to the hearts of men. Yet while He was so easy of comprehension He was divinely wise. If St. Paul found glory in the cross, and foreseeing the early sufferings and trials of the Church and the blessed bands of martyrs who would seal with their blood their faith in the Gospel of Christ, he gloried and wished by his zeal to be worthy of the faith of his divine Master. If there was a glory in the cross eighteen centuries ago there is no less glory in it now. The cross consoles us amid sufferings and death, making us feel that whatever may be our sufferings here there is hereafter a land "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

Our only true glory, therefore, should be, like that of the Apostle Paul, in the cross of Christ. Not that we are to contemn earthly joys when these are of a right nature. Neither are we expected to close our eyes to the progress around us. We can feel a just pride in the triumphs of civilization, But all things in this world pass away; therefore our highest affections should be placed on the imperishable life which is to come and our true glory in the cross of Christ.

ASCETICISM NOT REQUISITE.

Not that Christianity requires from us a life of asceticism or that the Gospel inculcates that God would have us gain heaven by making this life dark and miserable by penances and tears.

How many there are who can see no glory in the cross of