RELIGIOUS.

Yesterday's Sermons Here and Elsewhere.

Orthodox Orations on Popular Subjects.

The Parsons' Lessons to the Politicians.

Tammany's Turmoils and Troubles.

The Value and Need of a Saviour.

INFIDELITY OF THE AGE.

Discourses by the Rev. Drs. Armitage and Thompson, Rev. Messrs. Dunham and Pullman, Rev. Fathers McInerny and Hecker.

One by one the churches which have been closed or undergoing repairs during the past few weeks are being reopened and crowds again flock to the places in which they were wont to worship. Yesterday the churches generally were well filled, and although in many the sermons were good in themselves, yet there was nothing remarkably striking in any of them. Those, however, which were more worthy of comment will be found condensed in the following reports.

CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR.

Pastor Pullman's Peculiar Prophecies—His Bolts of Vengeance Hurled at Tammany—Placing a Rose in Your Buttonhole and Stealing Your Waller—Sensation Among the Saints.

The Church of Our Saviour—a pretty little tabernacle in which the Sixth Universalist Society worship the living God—is situated in West Thirty-fifth street, near Broadway, and has been closed for some weeks during the absence of the pastor, Rev. J. M. Pullman. Yesterday it was reopened, and although the congregation was not so large as usual the pastor availed himself of the occasion to hurl the thunders of his voice at the parties who are charged with the perpetration of

FRAUDS UPON THE CITY.

The reverend gentleman chose for his text for the semi-political disquisition on frauds, Proverbs, xi., 11:—"By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, and it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked."

In opening his address the pastor stated that he ought to have chosen another text, but after meeting with this he ceased to try, and selected it as applicable to the subject upon which he contemplated to speak:—"The responsibility of the citizen." He said that he wanted to consider what it is that bears heavily upon the heart of every honest man above all other considerations—the duty of man to his God, his country and himself. He spoke of the paternal government of man and the democratic system of government, and drew the parallel between them, showing that in the early history of the world the paternal or autocratic system or religion was believed most suited to human comfort, and had elevated their spiritual minds. As the world advanced in intelligence the democratic system of religion and government which were calculated to make man more responsible to his fellows were adopted. Self-government to-day, he said, is establishing itself everywhere. This brings to the citizen a vast responsibility. It makes a man think, gives him freedom, which involves responsibility.

THE AUTOCRATIC SYSTEM

appeals to self-interest, as under it the man expects the autocrat of government to care for him; but the democratic system also appeals to self-interest, but of a different kind. If a man finds his freedom is enlarged, then what appeals to his self-interest takes the designation of unselfishness, as what is to his interest benefits his fellow men. The true self-interest of one individual is the interest of every other subject, and it becomes unselfishness, for it is for my brother as well as for me. If it is more blessed to live under a republican form of government than under an autocratic one, it follows that as the blessing is greater so is the responsibility of the individual increased. If a man comes to this city, makes money, erects fine buildings, but refuses to display the same ability in benefiting the masses as in benefiting himself he is your enemy. The minister here illustrated the subject of man's responsibility by referring to a plague likely to overtake a city. If a man said "In a certain place is a plague spot, but you can't expect me to take a hoe or a broom and remove it; you cannot expect me

TO WASH DIRTY BABIES,"

he is guilty of dereliction in his duties. God don't make any distinction in persons. The pestilence creeps up to the windows of the rich as well as reveling in the haunts of the squalid. No citizen can neglect his duties under our system of government. Suppose that

THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE WAS THE CENTRE OF

ABOMINABLE FILTH,

collected from the slaughter houses, to scatter the seeds of disease throughout the city how long would your sense of responsibility rest quiet under these circumstances? Would that state of things be as bad as the existence there of a moral pestilence that has appeared during the few years past? It has penetrated nearly every household—nearly every Sabbath school—corrupted the minds of every young man who could not resist its influence, and you are responsible for allowing it to taint itself in your faces. You are responsible for this moral corruption, and you encourage it. The minister next passed to the consideration of the Tammany frauds. In this city, see how you have shirked your responsibility. You have allowed your narrow self-interest to carry your thoughts away from the public interest. You have

ABANDONED THE BALLOT BOX

and become cowards. Your creed is that every man given an opportunity will steal to advance his own personal interest. You have brought upon yourselves all these evils. The culmination has come. It began on the 12th of July, and it has worked up to a mountain. Two things have been proven—

FIRST, THE ACT OF WITHHOLDING THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

could not have been the act of an honest man; second, silence under charges can not be the act of honest men. That is enough. (Sensation.) The fact that you are under a government of a centralized form is not dangerous. The result is what you have to look at; we cannot have perfection under all government. We see that the character of the voter is being degraded year by year, and, owing to your neglect to participate they are the majority and their rulers are devoting them. These charges are not secret ones; they are openly made and not denied, and, therefore, now if we submit to them

WE BECOME HOPELESSLY DEBAUCHED.

But there is an attempted justification for these frauds—the great work done on the public parks, the building of granite seawalls and other improvements to beautify the city. This is the justification. It is always the justification for fraud. Louis Napoleon for twenty years executed just such works as his justification for robbery. They say the money has been spent to beautify the city, to please the eye and give health to the masses. If they had erected the parks in thickly populated districts this would be more plausible; but they have been located in thinly settled neighborhoods. This justification is that of the thief who, professing to beautify your person, with one hand places

A ROSE IN YOUR BUTTONHOLE,

while with the other he steals your property. (Suppressed laughter.) The chief danger of this hour is that you will let these things blow over or

ACCEPT SOME DEGRADING COMPROMISE.

I tell you if you do not act promptly this cloud is sure to burst and send down upon us

BLOODSHED AND DEVASTATION.

Go out of this church and make public opinion. You may be satisfied in your mind because this man is a democrat he must be a thief, or because that man is a republican he is dishonest. This is wrong. It is not true that

EVERY DEMOCRAT IS A HORSE THIEF,

but it may be true that every horse thief is a democrat. (Smiles.) If a man is honest he ought to go to the Legislature to amend the charter; but he should be a statesman as well as honest. The pastor advocated a careful administration of the metropolitan laws and minority representation, and in conclusion declared that this is

THE LAST TIME TO ADJUST OUR WRONGS;

that unless it was done at once every avenue in the city would soon present the scenes that were enacted on Eighth avenue on the 12th July. Then those who neglected the warning would look back and see that it was owing to their cowardice, avarice and neglect that so dire a calamity had befallen the city. From him to whom much is given much will be required.

During the delivery of the discourse peculiar smiles flitted across the faces of the majority of the audience, while an insignificant few scowled disapprovingly upon the reference to political affairs which largely composed the sermon.

FIFTH AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH.

The Forgiveness of Sins—Sermon by Dr. Armitage.

Notwithstanding the pleasant weather yesterday the attendance at this church was small. "Te Deum" was admirably rendered by the choir; Miss Palmer and Beebe sang, "He Shall Feed His Flock like a Shepherd," from Handel's "Messiah," with effect. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Mr. Armitage, who took for his text the words found in Mark v., 21—"Who can forgive sins but God alone?" He said Christ had admitted the truth of this statement to the Pharisees, but at the same time proceeded to show that God had lodged the remission of sins with Himself as the Son of Man, and he gave them the proof of his ability to forgive sins by healing the palsied man before Him, thereby establishing by matter of fact the doctrine of mediatorship between God and man. Yet in those days that doctrine is rejected as a relic of the terrible and the barbarous, so that men ask you if it is not unworthy to think God as

UNWILLING TO FORGIVE

upon the same principles on which men forgive one another. This is wrong, as God is infinitely greater than man, and could not forgive as men do men. If He were to do this He would put Himself on an equal with man, or rather put man on an equal with Himself.

In the healing of this palsied man and forgiving him his sins Christ assumed the position of mediator between God and man. This is proved by the fact that if He were not a mediator He was a false teacher, and misrepresented God. This we know could not be, as He abided in the Father and the Father in Him. As a teacher He was wise and unerring, and done the will of His heavenly Father in teaching us to pray after the manner "Forgive us our trespasses," thus showing that they needed to be forgiven by Him and through a mediator. Now, dearly beloved brethren, let us fully understand what is meant by forgiveness. Forgiveness implies the entire remission of the punishment due to the offence or

THE OFFENDER

whether it be between God and man or man and man. Forgiveness can be given in many ways. For instance, if I offend a man he may forgive me without any sorrow or restitution on my part. The reason of this is that we are perfect equals, and because we are equal he may restore me to my former position just as if I had never offended him. This forgiveness stands on the law of equality. A crime against society cannot be forgiven by society, for if society were to forgive she would bring herself to an equality with the malefactor. She may release the murderer from prison, but she cannot restore the injury he has done, nor can she make him the same man he was before he committed the crime. She cannot restore quietude to his agitated conscience, peace to his troubled soul or solace to his aching heart. There is another difference in forgiveness: the offended one may forgive when

THE JUDGE COULD NOT.

The highest order of forgiveness is where one who is suffering unjustly—as in the case of Stephen the martyr—who pardons and prays for his tormentors while they murder him, and have no sorrow for their cruelty but a bystander cannot pardon those bloodthirsty men as the martyr himself can, simply because he is acting as judge of the guilt of the murderers and feels indignant at seeing innocence trampled under foot. The consequences upon themselves and

THOSE THEY INJURED

are endless, and in this lies the difficulty of forgiving and the utter impossibility of restoring them to what they were before. Now, then, can God forgive an offender who is in no sense on an equality with Himself? In order to maintain His inexorable government He sent His Son to act as a mediator between God and man, thereby lifting him up to a sympathy with Himself and in some sense to moral equality in character through His Son. Christ therefore rendered it possible for God to forgive sins upon the principles of justice as well as of mercy. Hence it is strange that such condescensions should excite resentment in the heart of man as if God were unwilling to forgive at all simply because He chooses to forgive on the

EQUAL GROUNDS OF EQUITY

and love. Then why do men puzzle themselves with the mystery of Divine forgiveness? As to the mystery of Divine forgiveness on these principles we have little to do; the fact is that in everything, great and small, that relates to the mystery of life, be it

MATERIAL, INTELLECTUAL

or otherwise, a thousand things are left unsolved, and the things which are the most simple are as mysterious as the profoundest purposes and plans of God in human forgiveness, so that instead of rejecting Divine forgiveness because we cannot comprehend it, its mysteriousness should be evidence to us, and should only make us love, wonder and admire.

ST. PAUL'S REFORMED CHURCH.

Reopening with the Full and Blessed Gospel of Christ—Sermon by Rev. Dr. Thompson.

After nearly three months' vacation the pastor and people of this church, in Fortieth street, near Sixth avenue, assembled yesterday for worship and mutual greetings. The members had prepared an abundant floral welcome for their pastor. High up on the chancel wall over the communion table, in flowers of varied hues, was wrought the words "Welcome home, A. R. T."—the initials of Dr. Thompson's name. And suspended from this was a floral heart. On the communion table there stood a lily white cross, wreathed with red flowers, and on either side large and beautiful bouquets. The reading desk and the railing and lamps on each side were tastefully garlanded with crosses and wreaths and bouquets, and the preacher seemed to be standing in the midst of

A GARDEN OF ROSES

while he read the Sacred Word and expounded unto the people the Scriptures. The chancel wall bore the inscription in evergreens on either side of the pulpit, "Now is Christ risen" and "O grave, where is thy victory?" The side walls announced that Jesus Christ is "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," and proclaimed "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." The preatory service consisted of a ritual condensed from the Protestant Episcopal Church. The sermon of Dr. Thompson was based on Romans xv., 29—"I am sure that when I come unto you I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ." Paul makes in this epistle a positive point in his ministry not to build on another man's foundation. He had not planted the Church on the seven hills, and it is not known even now who did, for when Peter preached his first and great sermon on the day of Pentecost there were devout strangers from Rome present at Jerusalem. Whoever founded that Church, Paul eloquently, courteously and clearly changes his tone toward them, and speaks advisingly to them rather than as instructing or controlling them. He desired, ere he finished his life work, to stand before them and declare the life work of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in all its fulness and blessing. He had a presentiment that he should preach Christ's Gospel at Rome, and he tried so to arrange the time that he might visit that city whensoever he took his journey into Italy. He did not want to finish his life here until he had preached to the people of Rome also; but he did not want to build on another man's foundation. He would go

ALWAYS AS CHRIST'S PREACHER;

but he would go in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. Here we are shown what Paul's habit was. He was not at all abashed by the power and greatness of Rome, the capital and mistress of the world; but with the heroism which sustained him before the assembled multitude on Mar's Hill, and which compelled him to adventure himself into the theatre at Ephesus, he was ready to stand before Nero and his court also. We shall never fully understand this wonderful man, who, next after Christ, is the most remarkable man that our race has ever produced. We must examine his uncommon heart and life and see what was the controlling motive of all his actions. He had an abiding consciousness that he was sent by God and was ever under Divine control. But other men before him and since his time have asserted the same thing, and yet the world has treated them as fanatics. We never can understand any man who has left his mark on the world unless we come to see and to feel as they did that they were messengers of heaven. But far deeper than this consciousness of divine power was the controlling spring of Paul's life. It was that Christ had had mercy on him; that Christ whom before he did not know—whom he once persecuted; that Christ who in marvellous love and in the most wonderful and glorious manner had stepped out before him and arrested him on his way to Damascus instead of allowing him to follow the bent of his own persecuting passions and go to ruin.

CHRIST HAD OVERAWED HIM

with His glorious love and from that moment Saul of Tarsus became another man. He was overcome with the love of Christ, who had called him while he was yet a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious and placed him in the ministry. It is a grand, an intoxicating thing to know that we go in Christ's strength on a divine mission; that the King of Kings has had mercy on you and with His crimson hands has washed you white as snow and with His love redeemed you. From his own personal experience the preacher could understand something of the Apostle's feeling and realize the greatness of the salvation of Christ. He needed nothing more now. It was not merely that Christ had called him and sent him forth to preach the Gospel; but back of all this, that Christ had had mercy on him. And there is nothing more than this in all Christian preaching. The stream cannot rise higher than the fountain. A man can't tell what he does not know. We are sometimes alarmed at the utterances of "Free Thinkers;" but there is really no need to be afraid, for the truth can never suffer. They have nothing to present but negations, which we can easily and readily meet with a positive. "I know the themes whereof I speak." They may argue that there is no such thing as this Gospel which we preach nor this consciousness of sins forgiven whereof we affirm. But of what avail is it when our parched lips have tasted the cool water and our souls have been fed and strengthened on the bread of life; when our weary feet, treading through the tangled jungle with a living Christ before us comes at last to

REST UPON THE ROCK?

Paul knew there was a gospel of Christ, that it was full and blessed, and in his soul there was room for nothing more. What else could he ask? and in the fulness of this blessed gospel he was minded to come and preach to the Church at Rome.

Dr. Thompson then drew a contrast between Paul's spirit and preaching and Peter's, and advised his people that they must not expect every preacher to minister the same truths in the same way. No one man has more than a fragment of human nature, and each one differs from another and in their discrepancies we have the living proof of the truth of what they preach. One stands here and another there.

ST. PAUL WAS A CATHOLIC

in the best sense of that term, and he (the preacher) thought the word too good to be resigned or given over to the Roman Church. He proclaimed Christ for men, and every man, because of his manhood, is entitled to this fulness of blessing of the gospel of Christ. Peter could not find room for any man unless he entered Heaven through the Jewish Church and the Lord had the greatest trouble to convince him that that which He had cleansed was no longer common or unclean. But this intensely cosmopolitan Paul saw in every man a brother and an heir of salvation. It is not always pleasant to know more than other men, and the first announcement of a new truth is invariably pronounced heterodoxy, and few men could understand Paul as he declared right and left to Jew and Greek, barbarian and Scythian, bond and free, that because they were men they were entitled to

THE SALVATION OF CHRIST.

The Doctor then related a little personal experience of his own during his vacation in preaching to the "heathen Chinee" in California and to promiscuous assemblages in the Sierras, by the light of fires ten feet high, the same full and blessed Gospel as he had now proclaimed. And with a few words of thankful greeting for the kind remembrance of his people he closed the services.

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL.

Sermon by the Rev. Father McNierney—Death and Preparation for It—The Folly of Not Being at Peace with God.

At St. Patrick's Cathedral yesterday High Mass was said by the Rev. Father McNamee and the sermon preached by the Rev. Father McNierney, who took his text from Luke vii., 11-16.

Death, ever sure to come to all of us, is one of the consequences of Adam's fall. It is the penalty we have got to pay for the sin of the first man whom God created. Our whole lives should be a preparation for

THAT AWFUL MOMENT

when the soul leaves the body. Then the world ends and eternity begins. But now little do we think of this during life, or reflect upon the difference between the future of misery and that of bliss! It would seem, judging from men's acts, that they were unaware that God is just and punishes as well as rewards. A life of sin or of virtue must meet with different consequences; yet, look around and

BEHOLD THE INIQUITY

that reigns on every side. With experience of how suddenly death steals on us at times, we go on blindly and recklessly in a career of sin, never pausing to ask ourselves what shall be the judgment of God upon us. While in health and strength people forget that there is a God; when sickness seizes us we are in hopes of recovery; but it too often happens that even with death staring us in the face we do not make our peace with God. What should be

THE ONE GRAND OBJECT

of our lives is the least thought of. The world can avail us little when the time comes to leave it, and all that was struggled for, prized and worshipped sinks into insignificance when the summons goes forth that brings the sinner before the judgment seat. As death approaches and the world is fading from us quickly there are many terribly serious thoughts to fill our mind, and in this distraction and painful state there is always danger. After a life spent in

GRATIFYING EVERY PASSION

the few hours before death are not sufficient to prepare to meet God, and the knowledge of this, which is ever sure to be experienced, increases the difficulty and causes more danger to the soul. Hence, death-bed repentance is but a poor thing to depend upon, and it is difficult to understand how so many sinners, remembering that there is an eternal hereafter, will trust the safety of their souls to this chance. It is a sad sight to see the death of a sinner; to see the despair that settles about him,

THE HOPELESS APPEAL

to God for mercy, the self-accusations and the ineffectual longing for more time on earth to do penance. But on the other hand there is something heavenly in the closing of a life spent in the service of God and in the preparation for the next world. The calm serenity and

HOPE AND JOY

with which death is awaited tell plainly the heart at peace with God. There are no fears about this world or the next; death means simply the passing away from a world in which there was no real rest to a world in which there is eternal rest and happiness. By leading virtuous lives we prepare for death; by leading sinful lives

WE DEFY GOD.

There is more peace of mind, more real pleasure and greater contentment in a virtuous life than in a life of sin, and death always has less terror for those at peace with God than for those whose minds are enslaved by the world and its vanities. The preacher then exhorted all who were in sin to avail themselves of the chance they had of becoming reconciled with God before it was too late, and thus prepare for death, which was certain to come some time, and perhaps suddenly.

CHRIST CHURCH, FIFTH AVENUE.

The Mystery of the Incarnation—A Highly Interesting Doctrinal Discourse—The Angel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary—How Christ was Born; and How God is Man and Man is God—A Sermon by Rev. S. F. Dunham.

Christ church, Fifth avenue and Thirty-fifth street, a costly edifice, and one of the most tastefully finished church structures in the city, was well filled yesterday morning, the major portion of the generally wealthy members of the congregation having returned from their accustomed summer resorts. The music, which has long been noteworthy in this church, was yesterday especially good, particularly the singing of the boys, whose accurate time and harmonious intonation were the subject of remark as the audience left the church.

THE SERMON

was delivered by Rev. S. F. Dunham, who, with the Incarnation as his theme, selected as his text John i., 14—"And the Word was made Flesh."

Having declared his subject by reading the text, he, in a richly melodious voice, entered upon his subject with the saying that for 4,000 years God had given man up to his misery, without allowing him to rejoice in a Redeemer except through hope. God had thus

ABANDONED MAN,

in order to make him fully comprehend the value of a Saviour and the need of a Saviour. For if man had been redeemed immediately after the fall he would not have comprehended his favored condition, he could not have believed himself capable of so great baseness, and therefore would not have appreciated the gifts of God. It was, then, worthy of Divine wisdom to defer the ineffable benefit which He wished to confer upon the earth. In this connection he felt that we should never forget to express the gratitude we owe to God in permitting us to be born after the birth of our Saviour, rather than during the 4,000 years which preceded His glorious advent. Without doubt we could have been

SAVED BY FAITH

in the promises which were graciously vouchsafed in a Redeemer, but how much superior is our present condition. Then we would not have had the example of a God to encourage, the doctrine of the Holy Gospel to direct us; then we would not have had the blessed sacraments to sustain us, which fortify while they raise the soul into the paths of everlasting life. We would not have had the Church with her sacred teachings. How thankful, then, should we be that God could have caused us to be

BORN BEFORE OUR SAVIOUR,

and permitted us to see the light, by a compassion wholly gratuitous, in the better times of His gospel. He said that the fulness of time appointed in the eternal designs of the Father being accomplished, God sent from the foot of His throne

THE ARCH ANGEL GABRIEL,

to her in whom would be accomplished that mystery by which the human race would be saved. If before the fulfilment of the designs of God, it had been announced to man that God was about to take upon Himself humanity, in the bosom of a woman, where would the imagination have sought the Mother of God? Would it not, without doubt, have chosen some princely family, the occupant of an illustrious throne, surrounded by a brilliant court and dwelling in all the magnificence of a royal palace. But how different are God's ways from man's ways! The angel Gabriel directed his steps towards a lowly abode, where dwelt a humble virgin, named Mary,

THE SPOUSE OF A POOR MECHANIC,

and announces to her that she is to become the Mother of God. Mary believes and, adoringly, consents, and that declaration and acquiescence became for the world the announcement of salvation. The Holy Spirit, in fact, immediately formed in the body of the virgin a human body. He joined to it a soul similar to our own, and at the same instant the Word of God, the second person of the adorable Trinity, united Himself to that body and that soul, and that sacred combination is Jesus Christ, the Saviour of men, and the mystery of that ineffable alliance is what is known as the

MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION.

But when it is said that the Eternal Word united itself to the body and the soul formed by the spirit of God—in the body of Mary—he held that it was not to be understood that a union like that formed between two friends, but which makes of two friends a single heart, a single soul; not a union similar to that which God establishes with the just soul—a union of which our Saviour, in speaking in the name of His Father, by the Holy Spirit, thus designates.—"If a man love Me he will keep My words, and My Father will love him and We will come into him and make our abode with him." This union of affection differs essentially from the union which operated at the moment of the incarnation between the Word of God and the body and soul formed by the Holy Spirit.

THE UNION OF TWO FRIENDS

does not prevent the one from being distinct from the other. Each preserves the control of his actions and his proper personality. The one is not at all responsible for the acts of the other. And this, said he, is true of the union of the just soul with God. Although God unites Himself with the soul of the faithful that man exists as a distinct person from God; each equally preserves his own personality. The action of the just soul cannot be called the action of God. But in the unutterable mystery of the incarnation the Creator unites Himself so intimately with the creature that from the Creator and the creature there results one sole person. The Word of God absorbs the personality of the human nature, so that the

DIVINE AND THE HUMAN NATURE

exist as a single person. It is a union like that which unites the body and soul. The alliance of the body and the soul does not constitute two persons. The body and the soul are so united that both together form but one single person. In the same way, in the incarnation, the divine nature and the human nature are so closely united that from them result but one sole person, of such a nature that the actions of the one are characteristic with the other, and are imputed to it, of such a nature as that God must say that

"GOD WAS BORN,"

that God suffered, that God died. It is true, said he, that the divine nature cannot be born, since it is eternal; that it cannot suffer, since it is impossible; that it cannot die, since it is immortal. But it is no less correct to say that the divine nature is born in the human nature; that it associates itself with that person; that the divine person has suffered in the human nature; that

THE DIVINE PERSON DIED

in the human nature with which it was associated. This union, said he, is so close that one can and should say that "God is man" and "man is God." And from this we can realize to what an elevation God has raised our soul in the mystery of the incarnation. But, although this union be so intimate, we must not conclude that it goes to alter or confound the divine nature and the human nature. After adding authority and illustration to the declaration, showing how Jesus Christ is known to be perfect God, considering in what manner the faith teaches us that the divine nature and the human nature of our Lord have each their respective understanding and will, and setting forth the reverence which Christ in

HIS HOLY INCARNATION

commands, or should command, he concluded with an eloquent reference to the love we owe the incarnate Word. At what period of the world's history, said he, speaking of Jesus Christ, was His advent? It was at a time when the world was darkened by crime and error—when men prostrated themselves before deified passions and every conceivable vice; at a time when everything was God except God Himself, "The Word was made Flesh!" What heart of stone does not melt at the contemplation of this inestimable gift, given by so great a Benefactor?

CHURCH OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE.

Sermon by Father Hecker on Holy Faith—The Infidelity of Our Time.

The magnificent church of St. Paul in Fifty-ninth street was thronged, as usual, yesterday by a brilliant and intent congregation. The ceremonies were impressive, and the choir performed its part with great satisfaction. High mass was celebrated by Rev. Father Dwyer, and, at the appropriate time, the Very Rev. J. T. Hecker ascended the pulpit, and delivered a very able discourse on faith. Being of a logical cast of mind, Father Hecker generally seeks to stamp convictions of the truths which he propounds on the minds of his hearers, and afterwards embellishes his stern doctrine in a truly poetic manner. It is to the cold rationalist as well as to the too fervent traditionalist that the discourse of yesterday shall prove most interesting. His text the preacher took from I. Corinthians, xvi., 13—"Watch ye,

STAND FAST IN THE FAITH,

do manfully, and be strengthened." What is it, he said, that makes faith to be of priceless value? Why should we esteem it more than places and lands and relatives—yea, more than life itself? We may estimate the worth of things in two ways—viz., by the value of their inherent qualities, and by that which men are willing to suffer in order to possess them. Let us consider the value of faith from each of these standpoints. There are many things which men prize highly. At certain seasons men cross the seas and endure fatigue in every form simply to admire nature, to survey streams and mountains and perfumed flowers, and revel in the songs of birds. And why do men prize these beautiful scenes? There must be, there is, something valuable in them; for has not the prophet exclaimed:—"The heavens and the earth are full of Thy riches!" The same can be said in regard to the works of men. Why do you love poetry, music, painting, sculpture? Why have

THE VERSES OF HOMER

and Shakspeare been the delight of ages? A whole nation feels honored in having an Angelo, a Raphael or a Dante. We are delighted to hear the strains of Beethoven and Mozart. We are struck with emotion when we look upon majestic ruins, why? Because they, more than other things, embody the divinity, the beauty and the attributes of God. But, more than anything which can be found in nature, faith elevates the soul of man, brings it nearer to God, and inspires him with a far greater knowledge than he can find in nature. How much more, therefore, should not faith be esteemed than those temporal delights? We know how many men are devoted to science, who seem to live alone for that knowledge. The astronomer, gazing on the planets, discovers great laws and finds that they govern the universe; he then looks on all his labor as naught, because by unfolding new truths he is lifted nearer to God. And the reason is obvious. All truth is in harmony. The truth in nature is from the same source as the truth in our souls and in the Scriptures. If men imagine that there is a contradiction between these it is because they pursue a

SCIENCE FALSELY SO CALLED.

This capacity to perceive beauty in nature, art and laws, belongs to our reason, and is a title which cannot be esteemed too highly. Why then should we look on faith as something more precious than all things? Because the light of faith is given to enhance and to illuminate all other things. The light in nature does not satisfy man; he wants to come nearer to infinite truth, and have those aspirations more fully satisfied. Christianity has no other aim than to bring the human soul nearer to God, and to establish more intimate relations between them. This is done by the light of divine faith. Hence it is that if you value anything on earth, you must value faith still more. If you love nature, art, science, that is way you should be a Christian, and all the better because Christianity brings us nearer to the object of research than all our reason. The light of faith—what

AN ORNAMENT AND CROWN

to the human intelligence! It brings us to God as children, not as creatures; it shows Him, not as the Great Cause, nor as Providence, but as Him to whom we may cry out, with the utmost affection of our hearts, Abba, Father. If anything is truly valuable it is so because it brings us nearer to God; but faith brings us nearer to Him than anything else. Here is the essence of Christianity. It will make us participators in His divine nature; it shall fill our souls with torrents of delight and inundate them in His glory and beatitude. Is not everything else as nothing when compared to it? Faith being thus valuable by its qualities let us see what men have done for it. Christ, to bestow that gift, inspired the prophets, and did not fear to become man, so great was the gift to His creatures. He suffered the death of the cross to accomplish the

ELEVATION OF MAN

to the divine order by the gift of faith. That for which the God-Man did so much must be of inestimable value. The apostles before they obtained it were timid; but when they had received it they suffered and gloried therein, because it was for Jesus, who had given them so precious a gift. And when the faith was published in pagan Rome honors, wealth, joys were renounced for it. In France, Germany and Ireland multitudes abandoned everything for it; nations have been wiped away for it. In modern times Christians have refused knowledge when poisoned with heresy. And you who have left dear old Ireland, why are you here to-day? Because you loved your faith above every endearment in life. Had you chosen to abandon it you could be prosperous to-day. Look at the throng of converts who have cast aside wealth, and power, and fame for that holy faith which afterwards made them heralds of truth to the nations. Do we appreciate this gift as they did? If so, then for us the words of the Apostle have a true and living meaning. If ever

WE SHOULD WATCH

it is now. The nations to which the Church gave birth, and which have become great under her wings, can no longer be looked upon as defenders of the faith. The very countries in which we are numerically strong are governed by infidels. Watch, and stand fast in the faith. What do we behold in the literature of our time? Calumnies, lies, misrepresentations. What in the press—the most powerful engine of modern times? Enmity to our religion; and if we attempt to claim those rights which we should claim, we should be told that we were stirring up strifes, &c. The very atmosphere we breathe is poisoned with

ATHEISM AND INFIDELITY.

Do you appreciate faith? Keep it in view and make it the standard of your judgments, political as well as religious. Ask yourselves the question, Do we live in the great truths, paradise, eternity, hell, and yet sacrifice our faith? Can men say what they please about our religion; and shall we not lift our voices against them? Holy faith, it is true, can never be opposed, except by calumny. It should therefore be our aim to resist such calumnies, and that, too, in political as well as in private affairs. We cannot suffer by so doing, for no man is esteemed who is false to his own convictions. Let us act manfully, as our forefathers did. If we do, we shall be strengthened to vanquish all our enemies, though they be ten thousand. Father Hecker concluded by offering a prayer to the "mother most faithful" to obtain for all men the gift of faith.

SIXTEENTH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH.

Sermon by Rev. W. S. Mikels—The Children of God in the World.

After the usual exercises at the Sixteenth street Baptist church yesterday morning, Rev. W. S. Mikels, the pastor, preached a very interesting sermon, taking for his text, "Ye are children of God through faith in Christ Jesus." (Galatians iii., 26.)

All mankind are children of God by creation, but they become Christians by special grace. St. John says, "To them who receive this special grace is given power," &c. This blessing is received by faith in Jesus Christ as in context. The text presents a new revelation in reference to Christians being

BROUGHT TO GOD BY FAITH

in Jesus. "Ye are children of God through faith in Christ Jesus." Behold what manner of love God had for us when He gave His Son to save us. And we are told that we are His children. What manner of love that we should be called children of God. "Not by might, not by power, but by My spirit," saith the Lord. Redemption and regeneration are both essential for salvation. One is not sufficient without the other. We must be regenerated. "Because ye are sons God has sent His spirit."

WE ARE NO MORE SERVANTS,

but children; we are sons of God. The world reviles and despises Christians, but they are the children of God. The others have wealth and plenty; but, alas! how sad would it be if this was all that was to be given to them. We find people of the world proudly claiming kindred with, or tracing their descent back to, some noble or learned or celebrated person. The Jews boast of their being sons of Abraham; David asked if it was not great to be the son-in-law of a king? But how proudly can the Christian point up towards God and say, "Thou art my father. Whom God loveth He chasteneth." Yet also He says, "I spare them

AS THE MAN SPARES THE CHILD

he loves." When you find yourself oppressed by sorrow and almost ready to despair. When your way is in darkness, with no light to guide your steps, hope in God and stay yourself on your God. When you can realize the words, "Now you see through a glass darkly," when it seems as if the light would never come, there will be a rent in the dark, overhanging clouds, the bright, cheering sunshine will pour through, and you will then perceive that through all your journey you have been led along by the hand of a loving Father to a higher plane. In His wisdom He sends trials for our good, to fit us for the reception of the inheritance prepared for us, beyond reach of "moth and rust and thieves." If we

ARE CHILDREN OF GOD

we not only ought to love Him, but we do love Him. For this very love is an evidence of our new birth or regeneration. In addition to loving God we ought also to fear Him; not with a servile fear, such as a servant has for his master; but with a filial fear, such as the fear of a son for a kind parent. A fear of offending Him because we love Him should actuate us and keep us from doing ought to displease Him. Have we faith in Christ Jesus, and are we by faith made children of God? To the latter part of the question the text furnishes us an answer. "Ye are children of God through

FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS."

The reverend gentleman closed his discourse with a fervent appeal to his hearers to preserve this faith in Christ and to persevere until the end, until they should see Him face to face, and hear fall from His lips the welcome words, "Come my children, enter here; this is the inheritance I have prepared for you."

BROOKLYN CHURCHES.

Beecher's Brother on Confession of Christ—Exemplification of Christian Unity at the Tabernacle—Father Moran on Moral Death.

PLYMOUTH CHURCH.

Confessing Christ—Sermon by Rev. James Beecher.

Plymouth church was well filled yesterday morning, though the pastor still lingers away from his platform and his people. Mr. Camp was in his seat in the choir, and at his right the sweet-voiced soprano, Mrs. Hoyt, but Mr. Zundel's place was filled by Mr. Harry Duncan, a promising young musician, who presided at the organ with skill and effect.

Mr. Beecher preached upon the duty of men who accept Christ in their hearts and receive strength and guidance from Him, to confess Him before men. He said:—The most of our Saviour's teaching was in short, sharp, terse, sweeping sentences. His teachings were the seed of truth, and out of every one of his sentences there were whole harvests to grow. He taught by

SHARP, DIRECT, ACCURATE EXPRESSIONS

of truth, each following after the other and each supplementing the other, so that if you want to know the words of our Lord you must know the whole of his words. There can be more contradiction and misunderstanding made out of the words of the Son of Man than out of the words of any man. We turn to a sample teaching, "Whosoever will confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father who is in heaven. And whosoever shall deny me before men him will I deny before my Father who is in heaven." Can you imagine two more startling and distinct statements bearing on eternal destiny? How shall I confess Christ before men? There isn't a word about this. How do men deny Christ? Not a word in reply.

THIS IS INSCRUTABLE

to us. Unless we let our Lord also be the interpreter our speculations won't amount to much. He who spoke must also interpret. The New Testament is not a biography. I believe it to be vain work trying to make a harmony of the Gospels. They say Matthew and Luke do not exactly agree in the time of two incidents, and so commentators put their heads together and try to get up a chronological sequence. Now, this is all nonsense in my humble opinion. The incidents in the Testament are only to illustrate the teaching of our Lord. You will find the study of the New Testament greatly increased in interest if you set yourself to watching the teachings of Christ and the illustrations. We have one of these illustrations this morning. Christ says, "Whosoever shall confess me before men him will I confess before my Father who is in heaven," and immediately following is His conversation with Peter, which does not stand by the side of the lesson by accident, but by inspiration. We are commanded to confess with the mouth. Why? I say, first,

THROUGH COMMON HONESTY.

No true man will receive a favor without acknowledging it. There is no more apparent duty than that of acknowledging what we have received. Your whole life is what it is because of Christ, and you are derelict if you withhold your confession of His gifts. Now, I think that we, as Christians, are especially at fault in respect to confessing Christ by word of mouth. Those whom we love we talk about freely, and confess our love if we are true in those relations. Inasmuch as our earthly loves become a part of our inner life, so much more do we talk of our loves. We recognize that principle in society. But even among Christians I doubt if any relation is spoken of less than that which includes all the blood relationships of life; for did not Christ say, "He who doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my mother and sister and brother." I am pained beyond measure that this should be so, and I for one mean to try to

GET RID OF THIS RESTRAINT,

and to confess Christ out of the pulpit as well as in it. We see a whole room full sitting as though they were under a tremendous wet blanket. Why is it so hard to speak of Christ? We do not mean any despite to Christ. We do love Him; but there is something wrong. What must irreligious men say? What must inquiring men say? Doubtless the foundation of a true confession is in a well formed life, reproducing the life of Christ. But this life loses a part of its power unless the life is shown to be from Christ. The life is not complete without the confession of the mouth. I can conceive of no more hurtful denial of Christ than to do the works and refuse the confession, and they who do the most harm today are the men who from the grace of God live true, noble lives and yet abstain from giving the glory to God, from confessing Christ. They are true and honest everywhere, excepting to God and Christ. It will be a poor excuse at the last day to say:—"O Lord! I was a better man than that poor fellow in the Church."

I HONOR HONESTY,

integrity; virtue, but they are gifts of God, and if through the grace of God a man lives through temptation and keeps his high standing, he should confess that "the life he lives he lives through the Son of God." "How confess Christ?" you say. The methods of confession must vary according to each man's characteristics. The confession should never be formal; it should be the uprising of gratitude and love that flow out spontaneously. They should not be made boastfully, for if a man is filled of Christ, it proves that he was empty before. It should not be made uncharitably. The true Christian life should have its roots in the ground while it has its branches in the heavens, and when seeming growth begins to pull the roots up the roots should be attended to. I am aware that harm can be done by speaking of Christ. You may yourself have been prejudiced by unseasonable talk of Christ. A man who speaks of Christ to men must have his

HEART FULL OF TRUE SYMPATHY.

We must calculate men, understand character, use our brains, our senses. I suppose it to be the duty of every man and every woman to