RELIGIOUS.

What Was Done at the Churches and What Was Said by the Preachers.

MR. BEECHER ON SELF-CONCEIT.

The New Ritualistic Movement—Services at Christ Church and the Church of the Holy Light.

Bishop Potter on Auricular Confession.

The First Sunday of Advent at the Catholic Churches.

Laying the Corner Stone of a Catholic Church in Brooklyn.

Discourses by Bishop Potter, Dr. Ewer, Revs. Henry Powers, Hepworth, Andrew Longacre, Frothingham, Fathers McCready, McKerney and Dwyer.

CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH.

Mr. Hepworth on Hereditary Transmission—He Believes in "a Fall of Some Kind and at Some Time."

Mr. Hepworth's text was taken from Matthew xxiii., 31-32:—"Wherefore be ye witnesses among yourselves that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up, then, the measure of your fathers." These words, said Mr. Hepworth, are partly defiant and partly sad. The Master did not fear anything which the Hebrew hypocrites could do. He knew the stuff they were made of, and was perfectly aware that the bad blood which they exhibited was a moral taint transmitted to them from their ancestors. The Hebrews had never treated their prophets with any consideration. They were a stiff-necked and rough-handed people. When excited their rage knew no bounds, and instead of resorting to the milder measures of the law to redress their grievances, they took the law into their own hands, and sent the poor victim of their prejudices to heaven by erecting a cross on the highway and nailing him thereto. But how could He help being sad that He should Himself suffer such a fate from people whom He sought to bless? No wonder that He shrunk within Himself when He saw the mob stooping to pick up the very stones with which they had killed the prophets in order to pelt Him to death.

However, it is not with the particular incidents of the story that I care to deal this morning, but with the principle that is suggested. That principle is suggested by our own homely proverb, "Like father, like son." The transmission of certain qualities or tendencies of character is a fact which has a very direct bearing on

OUR MORAL OBLIGATIONS.

It is sufficiently evident to every observing mind that the man of to-day is not the man who came from the hands of God. I should be very sorry to believe that his selfish, war-loving, cruel, tempted and passionate creature was just what God made him or what the Almighty intended him to be. There has been a fall somehow, of some kind. This is acknowledged in the natural theology of every people; in the revealed theology of Christians. From the East to the West every nation has accounted for the present condition of man by some story of great temptation and of actual disobedience. If you should see a house with its gable ends in ruins, with its broken pillars lying in heaped-up confusion on the ground, half covered up with trailing weeds and moss, you would not hesitate to say, This building has suffered damage at some time; it was not like this when it came from the hands of its builder. I say the same of man. He is not in a normal condition. He has had a tumble, and now our business is to recover as far as possible.

Angels will have angelic children, and devils will have children with devilish impulses. On this fact the whole of Darwin's theory is based. Qualities, be they good or bad, can be inherited from father or mother. This is true of man's body. Have you not seen children who were perfectly healthy up to a certain point, but when at that particular point began to fall away with some fell disease? I have seen

WHOLE FAMILIES SWEPT OFF

in this manner. The father or mother had the seeds of the trouble in them, and their children paid the penalty. How true it is that cultivated and refined parents are apt to have children who have naturally refined tastes. So delicately but truly do the laws of nature impress the qualities of the father upon the boy, and of the mother upon the girl. Sometimes a peculiar superstition or hallucination will run through several generations, until, at last, it seems to waste away. Well, what is true of body and mind is still more forcibly true of soul. Moral qualities reappear. The man of the world is apt to have worldly children, a moral sensitiveness or stoidity is pretty sure to transmit itself. The girl of a drunken mother sips rum as the girl of good parentage drinks milk. The debauched father pays the penalty of his guilt in the shrivelled and puny body of his boy. To be born of crime is to insure a career of crime. Five Points fathers and mothers beget Five Points children. Aristotle tells of a man who, being remonstrated with for beating his father, replied, "My father beat his father, and his father beat his. It runs in the family."

Now, was there ever a stronger argument for good living? The awful question comes up, Can we insure to our children and to our children's children good and healthy bodies and sound minds and sensitive moral natures? Most assuredly we can. Pray, what was

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

preached for if not to teach us exactly that? What did God send Christ into the world for if not to redeem us from just such fatal sins as those I have spoken of? What are all these churches building for except to enforce and emphasize Christian obligations? Is religion selfish? True religion would save you first of all. That is its primary object. But its secondary object must not be lost sight of. In saving you it saves all who come from your loins. If you will be pure and true, noble and chivalrous, trusting and faithful; if you will curb your passions and with a determined effort yield to the laws of God, you will save yourselves from misery here and hereafter, and by the same act you will do a great deal toward saving your children. If it is true that a pointer or a setter dog will surely transmit its own wonderful peculiarity to its offspring, how much more true is it that the moral qualities of those who are to be born are to-day latent in the bodies and hearts of our men and women. Consecrate young and you scatter seed which will produce a plentiful harvest. Looseness begets looseness, and the prayers and the faith and the love which make

YOUR LIFE BEAUTIFUL

will throw a slanting ray far down into the future and bless those whom you will never see.

CENTRAL METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Discourse by Rev. Andrew Longacre—Practical Holiness Within the Reach of All.

Rev. Andrew Longacre yesterday morning, at the Central Methodist Episcopal church, in Seventh avenue, near Fourteenth street, delivered an impressive discourse to a very large congregation on the subject of practical holiness. He took for his text I. Peter, i., 15—"As He which hath called me is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." The minister said he had taken this very simple precept of the Word of God in the hope of removing some of the doubts that obstruct the minds of the Christian.

A DREAD OF THE WORD HOLINESS

he had found in many good people; a sort of awe in the word that induced them to have doubts and troubles and fears that it was unattainable. This was an error; man could attain holiness according to his light. As we have listened to the words "Holy, holy, Lord God Almighty," we may have felt that there was something deep in the word holy—something beyond the grasp of sinful man and only applicable to the Lord. Holiness is goodness, mercy, truth and justice. John the Baptist was called holy, so it appears that the word is applicable to man also. We are taught "Without holiness

NO MAN SHALL SEE GOD."

In the text it is applied to man, and when so applied it is practically the conformity of a man's life to the principles and words of God. Every little precept casts a new light upon it. To the Christian it seems sometimes unattainable. He will say, "I ought to be holy, but I cannot. How can we ever expect to have holiness when it expands before us as we reach for it, and seems

STILL FURTHER OFF?"

With this doubt people will sit down and say, "We shall always pursue holiness, but not attain it." I have met this difficulty, said the pastor, with earnest Christians. This is one of importance. We all believe in growing light that comes down from the Word of God; we believe that the closer a man follows the Bible the better he will understand it, and that the holier a man is the better he will understand it; we believe, further, that a man may, by the grace of God, be enabled to live up to the light as it comes. To every enlightened conscience in the world there must be some

PRESENT CONVICTION OF GOD'S WILL—

what he should be in his heart and life. The more the Christian tries to serve God the more he sees is required of him. Every man has a judgment of what God wants him to be, and he sees what God requires of him. The more light he obtains the plainer he will see his duty, and his ideas of duty will be larger to work on than they are to-day; for we know that there is an infinity of holiness above and beyond us

REACHING ALL THE WAY UP TO GOD.

We find the rule of holiness when we look at the Word of God. It teaches the rule of present practice. To us the law of God, which is the rule of holiness, clearly defines what God wants us to do. This law, which points man to his duty, is meant to be obeyed; and as he sees that God wants more and more he rises into a higher life. Practical holiness is that condition of the soul that enables us to live up to the light given us by God, so that we are kept

UNBLAMABLE BEFORE GOD IN LOVE.

There is only one way of being holy, that is by having faith in Jesus Christ. You can ask Him to forgive your sins and allow you to live up to what God wants of you. But faith is also necessary. No man can do the will of God by trying unless he have faith also, and that grace which is ours in Jesus Christ. It is not in toil in prayer that man gets holiness; but in coming to Jesus Christ and losing himself there he can rise in His love. Why should you not trust the Saviour to keep you from evil in the lesser as well as the greater? To trust Jesus every day, and when the new light dawns take it to Jesus and ask for grace to live up to it is practical holiness.

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL.

First Sunday of Advent—Preparation for the Great Festival of the Nativity—Sermon by the Rev. Father McNerney.

Storm or sunshine, there never appears to be any diminution in the attendance at the Cathedral; and yesterday being the first Sunday of Advent—the period of four weeks preceding Christmas appointed by the Church to be observed in honor of the approach of the anniversary of Christ's nativity—the edifice was crowded to the doors. The last mass was commenced at half-past ten o'clock, the Rev. Father Kearney officiating as celebrant. At the conclusion of the first gospel, the Rev. Father McNerney ascended the pulpit, and before preaching the sermon reminded the congregation that the collections taken up at all the masses would be appropriated towards the completion of

THE NEW CATHEDRAL.

The Most Reverend Archbishop McCloskey, he said, had the finishing of the Grand Temple very much at heart; and as it would be a monument to the memory of his illustrious predecessor, who would ever be gratefully remembered by the faithful, it was the duty and desire of Catholics to assist in its speedy erection. The reverend gentleman took his text from the Epistle to the Romans, xiii., 11-12—"And that, knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than we believed." The reverend gentleman explained that, in order to awake mankind from the lethargy of habit and of routine, and, perchance, to withdraw them from the influence of criminal passion, the holy mother, the Church, knowing thoroughly the wants of men, had set apart certain days when she exhorted them more particularly to approach more closely by fervent prayer

THE THRONE OF DIVINE GRACE,

and seek greater strength and purer consolation in more serious and more profound contemplation of God's holy works. During those days she prepared men for a more devout celebration of the mysteries of religion; hence the holy season of Advent, which was now ushered in, was employed by her to prepare in men the ways of God. For this certain dispositions were required. The first should be one of profound gratitude to God for the grace accorded to men in the mystery of the Incarnation. In order to excite more effectually this disposition there should be considered the wretched condition to which the human race was reduced at the time of the coming of Christ and the depth of the misery from which mankind was rescued. With the exception of one privileged people all the nations of the earth were immersed in

THE GROSSEST IDOLATRY.

The one only true God was unknown while vice was authorized and the worship of false gods reigned supreme. The original sentence pronounced against our first parents still held mankind under the ban, and the gates of heaven remained closed against them. It was from all this that Christ came to free them by taking upon Himself our nature, and offering Himself an expiatory victim to His heavenly father. He restored man to the rights of his inheritance and showed him the path to heaven. Another disposition should be an ardent desire that our blessed Lord should enter our hearts. This advent or coming of Christ into our hearts took place in each one, when Christ entered therein by his grace and by the communication of His holy spirit. Whatever advantage Christians might expect to derive by the advent of Christ depended upon His coming into the heart and soul of man and his entrance into this world would avail nothing if He took not possession of our souls by His divine grace. It should be the desire of all Christians to procure this divine coming of Christ into our souls, otherwise the great mystery of the Incarnation would individually avail us nothing. The third disposition men should entertain during the holy season of Advent, should be one of

SORROW AND COMPUNCTION

to awaken in our hearts the most heartfelt contrition. The Church called attention not only to the first divine entrance of Christ as the redeemer of the world, but also to the time when He would appear as its just judge, when he would reward every man according to his works. The reverend gentleman concluded by urging on the congregation the necessity of prayer and mortification. They should at least by their good will and the earnestness of their disposition supply other deficiencies. They should be calm in their thoughts, in their words and in their actions, and they should endeavor to overcome every vicious habit by avoiding every sin which heretofore had been the obstacle in the way of their salvation. By doing this Christ would enter into their hearts at the close of the holy season in

THE SACRAMENT OF HIS LOVE.

The musical selections were, as usual, appropriate and well rendered. They included a "Kyrie" by Haydn, "Credo" by Chemti, and the "Sanctus" and "Agnus Dei" by A. Van Bell. At the offertory the "Gloria Patri," a beautiful terzetto, was sung by Mme. Chome (soprano), Mr. Groschel (tenor) and Mr. Urchs (baritone), Professor Gustavus Schmitz, as usual, presiding at the organ. The services terminated about noon.

NEW ENGLAND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

Sermon by the Rev. Henry Powers—Different Conceptions of God—Each Nation Sees in God Their Striking Trait—The Attributes and Infinitude of God.

The New England Congregational church, corner of Madison avenue and Forty-seventh street, was well filled yesterday morning by a large and fashionable congregation. Rev. Henry Powers, of Elm place Congregational church, Brooklyn, occupied the pulpit. He had exchanged for the morning with the pastor. After singing, prayer and the ordinary prefatory exercises he commenced his sermon, choosing for his text Matthew vii., 11—"If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him." "In conversation one day," says an Oriental scholar, "with the Jungo Kistes, head pundit of the College of Fort William, on the subject of God, he told me one of their parables: In a certain country there existed a village of blind men, who had heard of an amazing animal called

THE ELEPHANT,

but they had no way by which they could form any idea of his shape. One day an elephant happened to pass through the place; this was the opportunity long desired, and they all crowded around him, one laying hold of his trunk, another seized his ears, another his tail and another one of his legs. After thus trying to gratify their curiosity they returned to the village, and sitting down each began to give his idea of what they thought the wonderful animal most resembled. The man who had felt of his trunk said the elephant was like the body of the plantain tree, and the one who had felt his ear thought he was like the fan, with which the Hindoos cleanse the rice. The other two thought, respectively, he was most like a snake and pillar. An old blind man, of considerable reputation for sound judgment, was called upon to reconcile these conflicting versions. He said, 'You are probably all correct; that which was taken for the plantain tree resembling a fan was his ear, and so for all the rest.' Respecting God we are also blind men, groping around and grasping, but a part, consequently forming no just conception of the whole. It is only by comparison we can do this. To one man God is a terror, to another an infinite perplexity, to another the supreme love; to one He is a power, beyond all power, to another a limited and struggling principle. To one He is a grim Eastern despot, to another a father forgiving and kind. His face beams with love to this one, to that it is black with vindictive vengeance. And so men form different

CONCEPTIONS OF GOD.

The Frenchman who could not stay to morning mass, but left his card upon the altar, flashed a light across the world that revealed the real history of the French notion of soul as vividly as you could see were you to watch and study in the Church of the Madeleine at Paris for months. When the Scotchman for the first time in his life went away from kirk to hear an Episcopal service, in which a fine organ played a prominent part, said, as he came away, "Oh, it was very bonnie, but an awfu' way of spending the Sabbath," he touched the deep, stern Scottish character, that, as some one has said, "delights to praise the Lord by singing infinitively out of tune." When Lord Macaulay said that the Puritans of England objected to a bear fight not so much because it gave pain to the bear as because it gave pleasure to the spectators, he hit off by an apothegm that prevalent Anglo-Saxon gloominess of mind which gives to all

THINGS HERE AND HEREAFTER

a certain sombre and sad reality unrelieved by a gleam of brightness and joy. In short the glass through which men see God is darkened in a measure by their own breath. Some of the shadows which we cast upon it is of our own free will; but the shadow, which is cast by blood and circumstance and climate and education for all men, save perhaps one in a thousand, determines for them whether their supreme God shall reveal himself in the thunder of Sinai, amid the sorrows of the Mount of Olives, or with the glories of a New Jerusalem shining round about them:—

The Ethiop's god has Ethiop's lips,
Black cheek and woolly hair,
And the Grecian god a Grecian face
As keen-eyed, cold and fair.

He next proceeded to show that if we examined the Bible we will find the same variety in its representations of the supreme Jehovah, with varied descriptions of His varying attributes. He rebuted the idea, however, that there is any anger, jealousy or wrath in God, but insisted that the sacred writers ascribed such attributes according to apprehensions of ignorant and wicked men, to whom he never can appear otherwise." Speaking of the

DOCTRINE OF INNATE DEPRAVITY

he insisted that God is not such a monster who damns little children that have not sinned and then asks us to thank Him for doing it; that He is not a God who made the heathen and the millions on millions who never heard of the Saviour, for sin here and eternal misery hereafter. Such views of God are only the black visions of a seasonless fear or a heartless logic whose product is a Molock, a Juggernaut or a Satan. Such is not

OUR GOD

revealed in the blessed Gospel. Our God is one who, while hating sin and consuming it by his punishments, pities and loves the sinner, who wills not that any should perish, but that all should come unto Him and live; who entreats us to come unto Him and love Him as He loves us, and who will never leave us nor forsake us, but be with us for evermore. He next showed that the punishment of sin is sinfulness, which carries its own consequences, and closed with describing the eternity of God:—

God liveth ever,
Therefore soul despair thou never;
Let earth and heaven, outworn with age,
Sink to the chaos whence they came;
Let angry foes against us rage;
Let hell thrust forth its fiercest flames,
Fear not death, was Satan's thrusts,
God defends who in Him trusts.
Soul, remember in thy pains,
God over all forever reigns.

ST. STEPHEN'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Eloquent Discourse by the Rev. Father McCready—Vivid Portraiture of the Day of Judgment—The Contrast Between Christ the Saviour and Christ the Judge—A Terrible Scene—Invitation to Rest in God.

At St. Stephen's church yesterday morning, owing, doubtless, in no small degree to the clemency of the weather, the congregation was very large. The winter fashions were amply displayed by the lady worshippers, who, as usual, were the majority of the audience. Miss Emma Howson was in excellent voice, and sang a "Veni Creator" after the Gospel with all the sweetness and fidelity of tone for which she is justly noted. Mr. Danforth, the organist, also displayed his usual ability.

High mass was celebrated by the Rev. Father Lovejoy. After the first Gospel the Rev. Father McCready ascended the pulpit, and preached an eloquent discourse from Luke, xxi., 25, 33—"And there shall be signs in the sun, the moon and the stars," &c. Such is the picture drawn by the hand of the mighty artist who created the heavens and the earth by His omnipotent word of that day which Job calls a day of calamity and misery, the great and very bitter day when God shall come to judge and to destroy His own work. On to-day,

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT,

the Church inaugurates her ecclesiastical year. On last Sunday she terminated the year that has just gone by with an invitation to meditate on the awful portents and prodigies which are to precede and to usher in the day of eternal doom. To-day she again presents us with the same subject for reflection. There is something unusual, but by no means unaccountable, in this seeming persistency of the Church in placing before us on two consecutive Sundays the same identical subject for reflection. But in this, as in all things else where man's salvation is concerned, the conduct of the Church elicits our admiration. In the present instance her action is very wise and very natural. She closes the old and commences the new year with a meditation on the last judgment, to remind us that this great accounting day shall be

THE LAST OF TIME AND THE BEGINNING OF ETERNITY:

to teach us that all our deeds must begin and end in view of that day when the most secret thoughts of our lives shall be revealed before the world—that day when, before the assembled universe, shall be bestowed praise or censure, reward or punishment, according as our works shall have been performed in unison with the dictates of conscience and in consonance with the measure of God's holy law, or according as they shall have been performed in opposition to those tests. She has set apart and dedicated to works of penance, prayer and humiliation the four weeks preceding Christmas, in order that her children may prepare for the anniversary of our Lord's first advent in a manner pleasing to Him and profitable to ourselves. On this first Sunday of Advent, however, she carries us in imagination beyond His first to His second coming. This she does in the hope that, by reflecting on the coming of our Lord as

THE TERRIBLE AND JUST JUDGE,

she may arouse her children to receive with faith, contrition and love that same God whose advent she will in a few weeks commemorate as the weak, helpless Babe of Bethlehem. Separated as these two advents are by centuries, they are, withal, intimately connected. By the terrors of this last we are awakened to a sense of the duties and obligations entailed on us by His first coming. "It is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment," says the Apostle. But, besides this particular judgment to be passed on each individual at the moment of the separation of soul and body, it is an article of Catholic faith, of which we make profession in Apostles' Creed, that all mankind shall be judged in the Valley of Jehosaphat. Thus the Apostle says to the Corinthians:—"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the proper things of the body according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil." As this is a scene in which we must all take part "let us judge ourselves now that we may not be judged." It is needless to pass in review the dire precursors of this manifestation of our Lord in His advent in might and power. "There shall be signs," says our Lord, "in the sun, the moon, the stars and on the earth distress of nations by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea and of the waves; men withering away through fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world; for the powers of Heaven shall be moved, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and majesty." But high above all this clamor and confusion and dismay

THE MIGHTY VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL'S TRUMPET

shall go forth, and in tones louder and more deep than the roar of the cataract or the starting peal of the thunder storm He shall proclaim, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." And in a moment—in the twinkling of the eye—the same omnipotent power, at whose fiat the heavens and the earth came into existence, shall again reanimate the bodies that have for ages lain mouldering in the dust. At the same moment the gorgeous mausolea on land, the deep caverns of the ocean and the unmarked tombs of the victims of many a deadly strife shall give up their long forgotten tenants. The good and the bad shall be there before the judgment seat. But the angels have to separate them. Presently the heavens open and the Son of Man appears; but how different this from His first coming. Then He appeared as the tender infant, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying on a little hay in the rude manger. Now He comes as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, in whose sight those who once rejoiced in the name of mighty and powerful are as nothing. Then He had for attendants Mary and Joseph, while

THE OX AND THE ASS SHARED HIS ROOF.

Now myriads of angels wait upon Him, the hosts of heaven do Him honor and countless thousands of His redeemed and sanctified are caught up in the clouds to meet Him, singing "Hosannah to the Son of David; blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord." He was once the loving Saviour; He is here the stern Judge. It is not now the solitary star directing the Magi that tells where is to be found the long-wished-for of nations, but the resplendent cross borne by angels, proclaiming that the crucified is coming to avenge Himself. And the sight of that cross, while it fills with joy and happiness the souls of the elect, strikes terror into the hearts of the reprobate.

Here the speaker gave an eloquent description of the last judgment, drawing a contrast between the position of the saved and the damned and exciting

A SHUDDERING FEELING

by his portrayal of the unavailing remorse and eternal wretchedness of the doomed. He then continued to exhort his hearers to constant vigilance and preparation. In the epistle of to-day God calls on you through His apostle, sweetly inviting you, before using His gospel threats, to arise and shake off that fatal lethargy which compels his displeasure. "And that knowing the time, that it is now the hour to arise from sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we believed; the night is passed, the day is at hand; let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light." With the psalmist, I would say:—"To-day if you hearthis voice harden not your hearts." And God will speak to your heart. He will whisper to you:—"Arise, shake off your sloth; come to me, I will receive you with open arms, but if you refuse I will come upon you on the last day and in my wrath I will destroy you." Return to the Lord, then, confess your sins while it will avail you, and He will forget them. Seek to be numbered among those to whom at the last day He shall say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father."

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY LIGHT.

The New Ritualistic Congregation—Sermon by Dr. Ewer on the Coming of Christ and Advent Sunday.

The unpretentious, plain-looking little Church of the Holy Light, on Seventh avenue, is just now the object of considerable interest to those who are interested in the great ritualistic controversy that is going on in the Episcopal Church. The recent trouble at Christ church, arising from the efforts of its pastor to introduce the confessional and all the imposing forms of the early Church, resulted in his resignation, with a portion of his congregation who have endorsed his views. The little edifice is entirely destitute of the ornaments and surroundings requisite to ritualistic ceremonies. Its only ornament is a large cross composed of gas jets. The walls are bare and unpainted. The wooden seats are cushionless and the floor is covered with the plainest ingrain. Yesterday the services in this church were rendered by Dr. Ewer before a small congregation, composed chiefly of ritualists. The Doctor is a fine-looking man, about thirty-five years old. He has a long, silky beard and mustache, bright, expressive eyes, an excellent figure and pleasant voice. Previous to the sermon an appeal was made for teachers and assistance in teaching and taking care of the numerous poor children under their supervision, and there was a request also to those who wished to become members of the new church to join as quickly as possible, for the Bishop had given his canonical consent to their organization. A meeting was appointed for Monday, December 11, to elect wardens and vestrymen.

The sermon was upon the text found in Matthew xviii., 11—"For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost." These very appropriate words for Advent Sunday went to show that by nature we are in a lost state, and while all are willing to admit it, but few realize it. To realize it is

THE FIRST STEP TOWARD SALVATION.

No man so low but admires the possessor of religion and is prompted by his inward sense to seek salvation. That yearning and self-condemnation give us a sense of unrest that remains until we give ourselves up to Christ. No man is at peace who is not right with God. Let us ask what it is to be lost eternally. Popular theology teaches that after death there is a sharp boundary line drawn between saints and sinners, each saint receiving an equal share of reward and the sinners the same of misery, never to be increased or diminished. Nothing in nature or the Bible warrants such a belief. "There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon and another glory of the stars, each differing from the others in glory." So with the punishments and rewards in the next world, which are awarded in proportion to the wickedness or goodness of the soul. Endless life is endless change. Movement is the order of existence. Nothing rests here; nothing can rest in the world of spirits.

THE SOUL NEVER RESTS,

it must either go upward or downward. In this world it can, and often does, oscillate between evil and good; but the career of the soul, once fixed by death, is forever downward or upward. The capacity of the soul for misery or happiness is constantly increasing. The lost soul will descend expansively through its sad career, widening and deepening its capacity, forever increasing its volume of misery. You stand at the beginning of an infinite ascending or descending career. Choose now which you will pursue. This life is a serious matter. Trifle not with your future. As a messenger of God I must not say to you, peace! and preach moral harangues, when there is no peace. I must be true to you. I have come here that I may be free to be true to you. The wrath of the lamb is not like that of the lion, whose nature it is to be ferocious. Beware of the wrath of one to whose nature anger is foreign. The Son of man came to save that which is lost, not that destined to be lost. You stand on the edge of a precipice and Christ is near to save you if you will take His hand. Baptism is the gateway standing between the termination of the descending and the commencement of the ascending road. Pass through that gateway and come to Christ—He is the acknowledged centre and towering light of the Church. "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." Our liberal sight recognizes the visible—through faith we see the invisible. "Thy faith shall make thee whole."

CHURCH OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE.

The General Judgment—Sermon by Rev. Father Dwyer.

At the gorgeous edifice of the Paulist Fathers, on Fifty-ninth street, solemn high mass was celebrated yesterday by Rev. Father Young, Father Bodfish officiating as deacon, Father Searle sub-deacon and Mr. Brady master of ceremonies. A number of strangers are always to be found here at the high mass to hear the eloquent discourses for which the Paulists are so distinguished. The sermon yesterday was preached by Father Dwyer, who took his text from the Gospel of the day, Luke xxi., 27—"And then they shall see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with great power and majesty." We are now, he said, celebrating the commencement of the solemn season of Advent. No flowers adorn the sanctuary, the chanting of the "Gloria" has ceased, the ministers are robed in purple. Let us lay aside what is worldly, and look with seriousness to that day when Christ shall come to judge the world, and when every man must accept the reward of his actions, whether good or evil. The terrible signs that shall portend the coming of that dreadful day are no exaggeration; they are the words of Jesus Christ, and His word shall not pass away. We know not the time, neither do the angels of heaven, but it

SHALL COME SUDDENLY,

like a thief in the night. Men shall be at their ordinary occupations, youths shall be at play, the wicked man will be wallowing in crime, the sick shall be dying and the dead shall be moving to the grave amid the tears of relatives and friends. As it was in the days of Noah, when sinful mortals were unexpectedly overwhelmed, so shall it be at the consummation of the world. Then the mountains shall be cleft as with an axe, there shall be paralyzing peals of thunder and flashes of lightning, the seas shall deluge the people; and those who escape the fury of the elements shall "wither away through fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world." The hills shall melt as wax, and fire shall consume the world at the coming of the Lord. And when the last mortal shall have perished, then the Archangel will come with the trumpet whose notes shall pierce to the depths of the sea, to heaven and to hell, and every soul shall hear the mandate, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." Then the graves shall cast up their dead, the ocean will vomit forth its victims, and hell shall loose its prisoners. The bones shall assume flesh.

"WE SHALL ALL RISE,

but we shall not all be changed." Those that appear black and deformed on that day shall be the damned, and those that shine like the sun will be the blessed of God. On the one side shall appear the murderer, the calumniator, the perjurer, the one who blasphemed and would not go to mass, the young lady that wasted her body in idleness and the round dance, the young man who, in a reckless and sinful life, found destruction and an early grave. Drunken children shall appear by the side of drunken parents, and among all the infidel who denied this doctrine, and the atheist who scoffed at it. That day shall reveal to you what folly there was in those extravagances of dress and those fashionable nudities and deceitful pleasures. The peoples shall be hurled by the power of God as by a hurricane into the valley of judgment, and not one soul shall escape the scrutinizing eye of its Creator. Then shall appear in the heavens the luminous cross of the Saviour. The very nails shall cry out against sinners, and "all the tribes of the

EARTH SHALL MOURN,"

because "it will be more easy for sinners to endure the torments of hell than to see the face of the Lord." It shall be "the day of the Lord," as it is justly called. For man has his day; his will is free, and he freely pursues his course here below until death sweeps him into eternity. No wonder, then, that God should have one day on which to manifest His ways to all men, so that the religion of the cross may be vindicated, and that those who lifted their voices against the Pope and the Church may be overwhelmed with confusion. Who will be able to bear that manifestation? We know how hard it is for a criminal to hear his crimes read before men. He would sometimes dream of terminating his existence through shame. How much greater shall be the confusion which must press upon the wicked at the last day! Then the mask must fall from the face of the hypocrite and crimes of a lifetime be exposed to universal view. See that magistrate who in degenerate times got his goods through

THE TEARS OF WIDOWS

and orphans; that young man, who was reputed to be of good standing, virtuous and sincere; he was an impostor. "I will show thy nakedness to the nations and thy shame to the kingdoms," saith the Lord. Then shall they laugh at you, and you shall call upon mountains to fall on you. But your request shall be made in vain. Your anguish shall be intensified by the words which Jesus shall speak to the glorious beings on the right:—"Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom which was prepared for you." On the other hand the wicked man shall be placed, with Satan, and may vainly address his Redeemer in such terms:—"Is there not some mistake about my condemnation? I am a Catholic; I bear upon my soul the marks of thy precious blood; I am signed with the sign of the cross; I have frequently gone to mass, and have knelt more than once at the confessional; is there not salvation for me?" But Christ will answer:—"You were indeed a Catholic, and often drank of my blood; but you fell as often again, and returned like a dog to the vomit." Not every one that calls upon the Lord shall be saved. Then shall the damned be subjected to the harrowing sorrow of parting forever with Him who was once their Creator, their Redeemer and their all. The pangs of a mother on parting with a child who journeys to a foreign land, or perhaps goes to the battle field, are indeed great, but they are as nothing compared to those of the wicked on parting with Christ upon the day of wrath. O you who have lived so long, do you not feel glad that this day has not yet come? Do you not feel as if you would give up sin some time? I am sure you do. Then, while the holy sacrifice goes on, make an act of contrition for your sins and determine to go to confession within a week. By conduct such as this you may hope for mercy and for a place among the saints at the right hand of Jesus on the judgment day.

CHRIST CHURCH.

The Pastoral of the House of Bishops Read—No Row or Disturbance—Auricular Confession, the Worship of the Saints and the Virgin Mary Condemned.

The fashionable edifice at the corner of Fifth avenue and Thirty-fifth street, known as Christ church, which has become celebrated or notorious lately for its connection with Dr. Ewer's troubles and subsequent vacation was yesterday comfortably filled by a congregation who anxiously awaited any allusion which might be made by the Right Rev. Bishop Potter, who officiated in the services, assisted by the Rev. Mr. Pratt, of Staten Island. But, much to the disappointment of many present, the courtly old gentleman who fills the Episcopate of New York, and who is, by all his tastes naturally averse to any row among his flock which may be fomented by either lay or cleric, simply contented himself with reviling the pastoral letter of the House of Bishops, which lately met at Baltimore, to his congregation. This letter was very voluminous, and it is only certain parts of it that may be interesting to the Episcopal readers of the HERALD. The letter, as read by the Bishop was in substance as follows:—We counsel you to bear in mind that while on the one hand we must not suffer ourselves to deny any real good by reason of mere popular outcries against ritual forms, so, on the other hand, we are never to allow professions of self-denying labor and service to blind us to the actual dangers of any movement in the Church. What is known as "Ritualism" is mainly

A QUESTION OF TASTE, TEMPERAMENT

and constitution until it becomes the expression of doctrine. The doctrine which chiefly attempts as yet to express itself by ritual in questionable and dangerous ways is connected with the Holy Eucharist. That doctrine is emphatically a novelty in theology. What is known as eucharistical adoration is undoubtedly inculcated and encouraged by that ritual of posture lately introduced among us, which finds no warrant in our "office for the administration of the holy communion."

AURICULAR CONFESSION.

In speaking of the dangers connected with present movements in the Church there are other points on which your bishops must not be silent. The first relates to private confession. Whenever a human soul is possessed of searching and sincere repentance, and a longing after a deeper spiritual life, there come also with these things a keener sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and a desire for an authoritative assurance of forgiveness. And then, on the other hand,

FRIVOLOUS AND WORLDLY PERSONS,

simply because they desire to rid themselves of any sense of present responsibility or future retribution, seek for the same assurance. Advantage is taken by some teachers in the Church of these two entirely different spiritual states to insist upon private confession to a priest as either the absolute duty of all Christians or as essential to any high attainments in religious life. Meantime, the fact that pardon is granted to any child of God on his repentance, accompanied by prayer and reliance on the promises in Christ, as well as in the use of the means of grace, is utterly passed by.

WORSHIP OF THE SAINTS.

Another point of danger is a tendency towards saint worship, and especially its culmination in

THE WORSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

The annals of our race under the covenant dispensations, as well as beyond their limits, show that there is nothing to which our fallen nature is more inclined than the worship of the creature rather than the Creator. And this propensity to evil has always found its most attractive development

IN A SENSUOUS DISPOSITION TO

deify and adore the tenderness and love of womanhood. The error of which we speak has arisen chiefly from this.

THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

in this matter is plain and clear. She permits and offers to her children the opening of their griefs in private to some minister of God's Word. But she does not make this the first resort; she does not provide for its frequent recurrence or uniform practice; she does not impose by ecclesiastical ordinance; she does not hold or declare it necessary for the forgiveness of sins, or the attainment of high degrees of spiritual advancement; nor does she connect with it blessings which can be secured only by its observance. She simply offers and commends this privilege to those of her children who cannot quiet their own consciences by self-examination

IMMEDIATE CONFESSION TO GOD,

with faith in Christ, repentance and restitution. Wherefore to make this seeking of comfort and counsel not exceptional but customary, not free but enforced (if not by actual law at least by moral obligation and spiritual necessities), is to rob Christ's provision of its mercy and to change it into an engine of oppression and a source of corruption.

HISTORY DEMONSTRATES THIS.

The experience of families, and even of nations, shows that the worst practical evils are inseparable from this great abuse. To pervert the godly counsel and advice which may quiet a disturbed conscience into the arbitrary direction which supplants the conscience is to do away with that sense of moral responsibility under which every man "shall give account of himself to God."

There is no sin more continuously and decisively marked by the signal displeasure of God than that of idolatry in its manifold varieties. Hence, although we do not anticipate a general prevalence of tendencies to Mariolatry, which some have done much to encourage, we nevertheless feel that their slightest indication demands our immediate and decided reprobation. The bare suggestion that

THE INTERCESSION OF THE VIRGIN MARY,

or any other saint, is in any way to be sought in our approaches to the throne of grace, is an indignity to the one only Mediator and Intercessor which we, His apostolic witnesses, cannot too strongly nor distinctly forbid in His holy and all-sufficient name.

LYRIC HALL.

Who Have Reason To Be Thankful and Who Have Not—The Great Problem of Life and How to Solve It—Sermon by Rev. O. B. Frothingham.

The same familiar faces to be seen every Sunday morning at Lyric Hall were there yesterday morning; the same prefatory exercises were gone through with, and then Rev. Mr. Frothingham preached the same sort of sermon he usually does—a grandly prosaic form of mingled intelligible and unintelligible utterances—but which was listened to with the same earnestness his sermons always are. He based his discourse on the text, "In everything give thanks." This was his Thanksgiving sermon. When people meet on Thanksgiving it is not all thanksgiving. Every heart has its memories. As the cup is drunk to the memory of departed friends it is filled with tears. There is a

HEAVY CROSS FOR ALL.

Is there a thanksgiving in Persia, where thousands are perishing from famine? Is there thanksgiving in France, with a government unstable and so much of humiliation connected with the recent past? Is there thanksgiving in England, where her Queen sits in anxiety by the bedside of her first born? Is there thanksgiving in the South, where everything is so unsettled, where the work of reconstruction is not yet complete? Ministers say, "Have faith." And so we must. We must believe in the

LOVABLENESS OF GOD.

An old theologian says that God lives in an eternal now. If there is a God He is here and now. If the account books of the world were to be balanced this instant they would come out square. The world is full of glory that is infinite. The gleam of the sun on a crystal is magnificent. We only know the alphabet. We can only throw our lines in shallow water. There is a general conviction that in this world we do not get our deserts. What means desert? It means merit. It carries with it some performance. In making this claim we throw down the challenge to God. Suppose this grim power asks which has given most. I gave you, says God, life. I gave you conscience; I gave you inspiration to lift you up. Have you improved the