SUMMER SERMONS

From New York and Brooklyn Pulpits Yesterday.

THE BURDENS OF LIFE.

Mr. Frothingham on the Papal Anniversary.

SERVICES IN THE GOSPEL TENT.

CHURCH OF THE DISCIPLES.

SERMON BY REV. DR. HEPWORTH—HOW TO LIGHTEN THE BURDENS OF LIFE—FAITH AND SCEPTICISM—DYSPEPSIA BAD FOR RELIGION.

Rev. Mr. Hepworth yesterday morning preached to one of his usually large audiences from the text—St. Matthew, xi., 30—"For my yoke is easy and my burden is light," taking as his theme, "How to lighten the burdens of life."

THE SERMON.

The preacher said:—I desire to call special attention to the last clause in that verse—"My burden is light." For that is the utterance of a profound philosopher who evidently discovered a truth which men have often sought for yet not always found. It contains the secret of all happiness, the means of discovering beauty everywhere, the means by which the tear is changed into the smile, and the frown into a golden crown of glory. One of the chief thoughts embodied in the passage is that man's life at its very best is a burden. We are living in the midst of perplexities; we grow despondent in failing to forecast the future and so escape the evils that continually threaten us. A second thought is that most men choose the greater burden rather than the less. We trust too much to our personal judgment and in our pride look to the results of this as the means whereby we may control the exigencies by which we are surrounded. But the truth is that he who trusts himself goes his own way to heaven, while the man who trusts God goes under the authority of the Chief of the Universe. It is a difficult thing to give ourselves up to the directing character of another, and yet if we are thoroughly convinced that that being is thoroughly interested in our welfare, and guiding and guarding our every interest, we surely ought to be willing to yield to Him even when His commands contravene our judgment. Still another thought that grows out of the text is the golden one that religion as it has been revealed to us in the life and death of our Lord and Master gives lightness to the burdens of our lives, guides us without mistake, and if we trust to it and follow its precepts to the end we shall secure greater happiness here and hereafter, and attain a larger spiritual, manly and moral growth, than can be attained in any other way. An unconditional surrender to the voice and will of God will win us the victory. But look a little further. What does Christ mean when He says, "My burden is light?" I answer by asking the question, What is the difference between an attitude of obedience and an attitude of disobedience? The Bible tells us "the way of the transgressor is hard." The meaning is not that the end of the journey is awaited by punishment, but that punishment follows us all along the journey, for this is a world of trouble. There is a species of philosophy that, although shrewdness and dishonesty are punished in the end, so far as this life goes, they pay well. The Bible puts its foot on that doctrine emphatically, and all experience proves that it is illogical. Evil ways cannot bring joy, and unless a man is guided by moral principles, such as God himself approves, naught can follow but restlessness and misery. These are but the natural results of the want of peace in the conscience—of peace with Heaven and peace with mankind. No bad man can, in the nature of things, be happy, for "the way of the transgressor is hard," and beneath all the apparent joy and contentment of the evil doer there is a craving and an unrest that forbids the peaceful sleep that is enjoyed by his Christian brother, to whom God comes sometimes in his dreams saying "Forget the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

FAITH AND SCEPTICISM.

Look again at the difference in the attitude of faith and that of scepticism. What is it that makes the life of our Lord precious to many of us? Why is it, on the other hand, that so many are in constant rebellion against the decrees of God? Why is it that when disappointments threaten to crush us and domestic trouble throws its shadows around us, we stand aghast and bewildered, not comprehending the significance of the event and not being able to say, "Thy will and not mine be done." It is because we cannot pursuade ourselves that God's will is just and right. The difficulty, my friends, is not in events but in our own hearts, for when these are right everything else is right. The man who looks out upon the splendor of the firmament through diseased eyes sees almost nothing.

DYSPEPSIA VERSUS BAD THEOLOGY.

The man afflicted with dyspepsia can scarcely be cheerful in his social intercourse or religion. He becomes gloomy and morose, and this gives a character to his faith which is cold, hard and forbidding. You will find him speaking against all innocent amusements, and insisting that they must be wicked because he is incapable of participating in their pleasure. There is a great deal of bad theology in the world that comes from physical disease; a great deal of religious harshness that has its cause not so often in a misapprehension of the Scriptures as in some personal defect or defect in education. Oh, brethren, how often you and I have talked this matter over when there was trouble in your households, for the skeleton is everywhere, and how often you have been told that God only requires faith and implicit obedience to overcome the perplexity, distrust and tears from which you suffered. Accept what God says as an everlasting truth; put it in practice in your daily lives, and you will find as you near the end of your journey that the burdens will all be lifted and forgotten in the presence of that mansion not made with hands that God keeps illuminated with the sunlight of His love. Faith is the golden key that will unlock the gate of the New Jerusalem.

PLYMOUTH CHURCH.

MR. BEECHER ON THE INFLUENCE OF GOD ON MAN AND THE PROGRESS OF MODERN THOUGHT.

Plymouth Church yesterday morning put on for the first time this season its summer aspect; the doors were open on all sides. There were several pews partly occupied, and there was no crowding of strangers at the different entrances. The floral decorations of the platform were abundant and of great variety of color. The subject of Mr. Beecher's sermon was the action of the divine nature on man, and an opportunity was taken to comment on recent scientific theories that are generally supposed to be antagonistic to orthodox belief. The text selected was the thirteenth verse of the second chapter of the Epistle of Paul to the Philippians—"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. This passage, said Mr. Beecher, is going to be a point of much greater interest than it has ever been, although it is always precious. It is really a philosophical statement of the relation of the Divine mind to the whole phenomena of nature, and has within it questions that are just now agitated by various discoveries and the relation of theology to science. These are questions that are pressing just now upon the minds of all thoughtful people, and the result of any change in philosophy is always to breed doubt, unless very carefully acted upon. It is always necessary to remember that the statement of a truth may vary and be different from what it was a hundred or five hundred years ago, and yet that the truth in that statement remains. We are apt to think that because it comes to us in a different form the truth itself has been abandoned. We have here the statement that God is the cause of vitality. When we look within and without in the physical realm and in the spiritual world we see that God inspires the activity of the general or normal condition of our nature.

WHAT WAS ONCE THOUGHT.

Look at the progress of human thought on this subject. Originally it was held that everything proceeded from a direct act of the divine sovereignty; that God made all the countless myriads of life, and that it was derived from a local and direct action of God. Everything was foreordained; all the phases of social and national life were the direction of God. Men thought that God put judgments on kings, and that it was all thought out in heaven, and that He directed even the strategy of battles. Nobody adopts this philosophy as the method of the divine action in these days. The government of God is intermediate. God is not working out your salvation, He is working in you for you to work it out. Men at first began to feel that there were natural laws; and then they made further progress by beginning to recognize the individuality of the human will, and thus men began to feel responsibility, which was an impossible emotion unless they could control their own conduct. Then they began to feel that nations and armies were under the influence of certain laws. It was almost blasphemous at one time to say that God was on the side of the strongest battalions. Nobody thinks it blasphemous now. Then men are fast beginning to think that this is the true philosophy of the intellectual realm; that all intellectual products are the result of great mental laws, and that the energizing influence may be from God, but that no man can do more than his mental powers will allow him to do. It is the same in the spiritual realm, yet men, for the most part, say that this is the Holy of Holies, and that in this realm God shuts Himself up. Yet it is not so. In the sphere of religious experience, as of every other experience, the effect is general upon you. It is God that worketh in you. A man who studies mathematics don't pray to God to solve his problems for him; he may pray that God may give him vitality of mind and energize his nature, but that is all he has any right to expect. This thought will revolutionize religious life. Men pray to God to get them out of trouble. In that act of prayer their faith is exercised, their minds get calmer and clearer, their brain becomes more active and the man is better fitted to go to work and to extricate himself.

GREEN AND RIPE THOUGHTS.

I have been blamed for not preaching all that I thought. I preach for the sake of educating men into a larger activity, and in the first place I know enough to know that the things which I think are oftentimes green, and that I have a right to wait until they are ripe and see if they will keep over winter into the next year. It is a dangerous thing for a man when he has a new idea to go and proclaim it at once to other men. It is a very responsible business to preach religion and morality to men. A man should prove things to see if they are really true, and prove them, too, from the mother's standpoint—that is, speaking the truth in love. A man that is a public teacher must bear in mind that he is dealing with God's children. No man must talk dangerous truth until he is sure how it will work on the living consciousness of men. This ideal I have set out for myself, not to rush into the pulpit with rash opinions, and not to preach things before I think men are able to take them. When a man has been sick, and is just beginning to get well, I don't go and cut off a large piece of beef and take it in to him and say, "Eat it." I make beef tea first and give him a teaspoonful, and if I find it good for him continue it and give him a tablespoonful next time, but if I think that it is not good I stop it. I never will hoodwink people. I never will daily lightly and foolishly trifle with your faith and with your consciences. I never preach anything to you unless I have come to the final conviction that it is the truth and in adaptation to your special wants; and if any one says, "What do you think is the effect of your preaching?" I will point to Plymouth Church that has gone through five years of conflict and trouble with a unity unparalleled in the history of Christianity, and say, "That is what I think."

MASONIC TEMPLE.

MR. FROTHINGHAM'S DISCOURSE ON THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE POPE'S CALL TO THE EPISCOPACY.

Mr. O. B. Frothingham delivered yesterday morning in the Masonic Temple an address on the subject of religious superstition. Before entering upon his discourse the learned speaker treated his hearers to the reading of an appropriate extract from sacred anthology. It was the story of King Vena, who devoted himself to the equitable government of his kingdom and the practice of an austere religion. One day a person of splendid form and appearance entered, sat in the royal assembly and said to the King, "Knowest thou me as an adorning virtue, before whom even gods must bow, for virtue is the source of all honor. Listen, O King! I perform no ceremonies; study not the Vedas; practise no austerities nor incantations—my aim and highest work is to reverence the holiest man. He alone is the true worshipper of God—the Brahmin or pariah—who cherishes all beings with generosity or compassion." After this interview King Vena ceased to govern by austerity or blind adherence to old customs, and began to do so by natural right and equity between man and man. After a lapse of time seven rajahs came to King Vena and said:—"These acts of thine are such as shall be performed by mankind at the entrance of Kahli or the last sinful age." The wrath of the Menis, the seven sons of Brahma, spread out the sacred grass, and, having performed a holy mantra over it, burned King Vena to ashes. A Puranic myth says that from his right hand sprang one who milked the earth of wealth and wisdom, and the very great Prithu, lord of the earth, versed in virtue was he, through whom King Vena was raised to the blessed seat of Vishnu.

THE PALE FACE OF SUPERSTITION.

The speaker said that the members of the Roman Catholic Church all over the world celebrate to-day the fiftieth anniversary of the elevation of Pope Pius IX. to the episcopacy as Bishop of Spoleto. The Pope has issued a special proclamation promising plenary indulgence and forgiveness of their sins to all who in humbleness of heart do partake of the sacrament. The Jesuit Fathers would make it appear that there is nothing at all harmful or wrong in this. But the injury is great to humble, ignorant Catholics who believe that out of the celestial treasury, which is at the Pope's command, they shall be paid for their works done in the Church—all their sins be wiped away and a new account commenced with Heaven. The condition upon which the faithful are to receive these eternal benefits is allegiance and obedience to the Catholic Church. This Church arrogates to herself the power of conducting men safely through this vale of sin and lodging them at last in heaven. The Pope, as the Vicar of Christ, is supposed to possess—of course, under Divine guidance—the power to allot to all members of his fold that amount of heavenly grace for which each one is fitted. This sort of belief is the heart of superstition, as understood from its Greek and Latin origin—*superstare*—to stand above; some one standing supreme above our heads. Superstition is the recognition of the powers that stand above, and the belief that the incantations and machinations of those who stand above are partaken of by us who stand below. Sometimes the power reverenced is a church, an altar, a priest, a prediction, a belief, a book, the flight of a bird, or the entrails of a beast. Sometimes it consists of necromancy, waiting upon the dead, as Saul did when he went to the Witch of Endor to call up the shade of Samuel, and as Macbeth did when he consulted the witches on the heath in order to learn his fate in battle.

SUPERSTITION STILL RAMPANT.

It is a mistake to say that the days of superstition are among the past and an error to believe that it belongs to the Asiatic more than to the European nations—to the South more than to the North. Here, in this great city of New York, the metropolis of a so-called civilized and free country, it is to be found as rampant, wild, frantic, grotesque and absurd as it could be found anywhere in former days or places. The Roman Catholic Church teaches to-day precisely the same superstitions, severe rules and rites that it did 1,500 years ago. In Paris a little book, called "The Holy Crusade," has lately been published. It has gone through sixty editions, and is approved by the bishops and priests as being a work which gives the best directions for the battle of life. What are its arguments? None. The Church never argues. It gives an amulet for a reason, a scapular for a proof, and refers you to the altar as undoubted evidence for all its dogmas. It says your military decoration is the medal struck in honor of the immaculate conception; the artillery to be used, the fervent voice and upturned eye in prayer. An amulet, a scapular, a cord, a bit of wood—these are the weapons which the Roman Church at this very day employs to combat modern philosophy and the logic of potent facts. This is the quintessence of a dangerous because degrading superstition.

"ALL TARRED WITH THE SAME STICK."

The Protestants rightly charge the Roman Catholics with superstition, but those who live in glass houses should not throw stones. Is there no superstition about the Protestants' exaggerated belief in the Bible; the sacred holiness of the Sabbath; their fury of prayer and the idea that by its efficacy blessings can be reached which are not otherwise attainable? Protestants are careful to urge that those who remain away from the communion table are in danger and darkness, and the priest says "Eat of this bread and drink of this cup, which are the body and blood of Christ, that your souls may be saved from everlasting death in the next world." These are the teachings of superstition; ay, and the question is, Can the Christian idea inculcate aught else but superstition? Hear Moody and Sankey; attend any church in New York and you will see that all, including the Universalists, believe in the worship of the Christ—who is unseen by the eye, unfelt by the senses, but still there present, somehow, yet unapproachable. Superstition will not pass away till this habit of applying for relief to some supposed power outside ourselves, perhaps latent in ourselves, shall have passed and disappeared. The method to combat it which was employed by Voltaire, Diderot, Thomas Paine and in the French Cyclopædia, of denouncing it, is not the right way to conquer superstition. An attack in front by this means only makes men who are about to abandon the fort run back into it and defend their cherished error with more zeal than ever. Superstition, in the bosoms of such admirable men as Dr. Samuel Johnson, Sir Thomas Moore and other great and good characters, is a misfortune to the human race.

Here the speaker told the historical anecdote of Pompey's succeeding in capturing the citadel of Jerusalem, after all other means had failed, by attacking it on Sunday, at a time when the Jews would not fight, and when they superstitiously expected the Lord God of Hosts to work their salvation as He is said to have done at Jericho with an army of angels. He alluded to the species of superstition found in the celebrated Oliver Cromwell, who said to his troops when crossing a water to attack the King's army, "Put your trust in Providence, but take care the water does not touch your powder." That saying rang the death note of superstition. It was then argued that a general raising of the intellectual temperature all over the land, by means of education, would thaw out superstition, as snow yields to the gentle influences of a spring sun.

BROOKLYN TABERNACLE.

THE PASSAGE OF THE JORDAN—SERMON BY THE REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE.

Mr. Talmage preached his last sermon for the season yesterday morning. He is about to enjoy a vacation until the first Sunday in August. During his absence the pulpit will be in part supplied by the Rev. Dr. Fowler, of the Methodist Church, and editor of the *Christian Advocate*. Mr. Talmage prefaced his remarks yesterday morning by saying that one of the religious papers had misrepresented the financial condition of his church. He desired, therefore, to state that during the year the revenue was $41,117 78, and the debt had been reduced $11,450 46. He hoped the time would soon come when the entire debt would be wiped out. The text for his sermon Mr. Talmage took from Joshua, iii., 15-17, a description of the passage of the Jordan by the Israelites.

CROSSING THE JORDAN.

Standing on the sand of that river of Jordan, said Mr. Talmage, I learn for myself and for you, first, that obstacles when they are touched vanish. The text says that when the priests came down and touched the edge of the water with their feet it parted. Almost all the obstacles of life need only to be approached in order to be conquered. Difficulties touched vanished. The fact is that a great many things that cross our pathway are only the phantasms, the apparitions, the delusions of life. Any duty undertaken with a confident spirit becomes a pleasure, and the higher the duty the higher the pleasure. Difficulties touched are conquered, Jordan advanced upon vanishes. There are a great many good people who shudder in passing a graveyard, and they hardly dare think of Canaan because the Jordan intervenes. But once down on a sick bed all the terrors are gone.

Again the text teaches me the completeness of everything God does. When God put the invisible dam over the Jordan it would have been natural for the river to overflow and flood the land above. But God put a dam on both sides of it. Oh, the completeness of everything that God does! A complete Saviour, a complete Bible, a complete universe, a complete Jordanic passage.

Again I learn from this Jordanic passage that between us and every Canaan of success and prosperity there is a river that must be passed. There is a river of difficulty between us and everything that is worth having. That which costs nothing is worth nothing. God does not intend this world for an easy parlor, through which we are to be drawn in a rocking-chair. We are to work our passage, climb masts, fight battles, scale mountains, ford rivers. God makes everything valuable difficult to get at, for the same reason that He puts the gold down in the mine and the pearl clear down in the sea. It is to make us dig and dive for them. We acknowledge this principle in worldly things; oh, why not in religious things? It is so in regard to the acquisition of knowledge. The ancients used to say that Vulcan struck Jupiter on the head and the Goddess of Wisdom jumped out, illustrating the truth that wisdom comes by hard knocks. So, my friends, there is a time of tussle and trial and push and anxiety through which every man must go before he achieves worldly success. You admit it; now be wise enough to supply it in religion. No man just happens to get good. It is by digging, toiling, pushing, running in the Christian life that that man got so strong for good. In a hundred shipwrecks he learned how to swim. Tears over sin, tears over Zion's desolation, tears over the impenitent, tears over graves made a Jordan which that man had to pass. There are mourning garments in every wardrobe, deaths on every family record. The Christian has passed through his Red Sea of trouble and he finds that there is a Jordan of death between him and heaven. As he comes toward it his breath gets shorter and his last breath leaves him as he touches the stream. But then it is parted and God shall wipe away all tears from his eyes.

A HEAVEN FOR BRUTES.

When I see the Israelites going through the Jordan and all their flocks and herds following right on after them the suggestion comes over my mind that perhaps, after all, the best part of the brute creation may have a chance in the great future. You say, "Harmonize that with the passage, 'The spirit of the brute goes downward.'" I can harmonize those two things a great deal easier than the annihilation of the brute creation and the treatment they here receive. When I see a Christian man maltreating his horse my common sense tells me that that horse ought to have in the future a better time than his driver. I should like to see them the moment they cross the river, their necks cured, their foundered knees straightened and their coughing distempers healed, free from the gall of the tight checkrein and at liberty to range in the celestial pasturage forever. I should be glad if not only all the Israelites got into heaven, but if the brute creation got in after them.

CONSOLATION FOR THE BERREAVED.

But there is one thing certain, we have a right to expect our families to be there. You let your children down on this side of the bank, they are all ready to help you up on the other. We cannot all go there together; we must go one by one. What a pleasure to look round and see all your children present. Oh, I pray for all my people a safe Jordanic passage. One word of comfort for all the bereft. You see our departed friends have not been submerged or swamped, they have only crossed over, not sick, not dead, not exhausted, not extinguished, but with healthier respiration, stronger pulsation, keener eyesight since the physical and mental disquietudes of life have been left this side—an eternal flow of impassable obstacles between them and all human sorrow. I congratulate all the bereft that their departed Christian friends are safe. Would you have them back again to take their risks in the temptations of the world? The Jordan of death will part for us as it parted for them. May our Great High Priest go ahead of us and with his foot touch the water and then shall be fulfilled the word of my text.

THE GOSPEL TENT.

INAUGURATION OF THE SUMMER SEASON OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

The summer season of religious services in the Gospel Tent, Thirty-fourth street, near Sixth avenue, was inaugurated yesterday morning at eight o'clock by a prayer and temperance meeting. The morning services were very brief, and but few persons were in attendance.

THE TEMPERANCE MEETING.

Mr. Bunting opened the exercises. "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emanuel's veins," was sung, after which Brother Carter prayed. The hymn commencing "What a friend we have in Jesus" was followed by the reading of that portion of the tenth chapter of St. Luke in which is related the story of the Good Samaritan. Brother Bunting then delivered a short address, in the commencement of which he said it filled his heart with joy to see so many people present. His heart is very easily filled, for the array of empty seats was only too painfully evident. He said that rum was one of the greatest hindrances to the dissemination of Gospel truths and had caused the downfall of more men than all of the other vices combined. The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin and the light of the world was Jesus. He would not detain the audience with any extended remarks, as there were many present who would testify to the saving grace of the crucified Redeemer.

Mr. Marsden then took the stand and gave a running sketch of his past career, and the baleful effects of intemperance were illustrated by his own experience. "I have," he said, "not only tasted but drank deep of the bitter dregs of intemperance. I do not see the man before me who has been brought so low by reason of the intoxicating cup as I have been. Through it I occupied a cell in the State Prison and wore the convict's garb of infamy. It not only sent me to the State Prison but it impoverished my wife and children. Through it I deprived my wife of a husband's proper treatment and my children of a father's love. Mine has been an unfortunate career. When but a young man I threw off all restraint and resolved, as too many young men do, that I would do just as I pleased. As long as I had money I was a good fellow. The rumseller welcomed me until my money was all gone; but when it was all gone I was nobody. Night after night have I walked the public streets, with the rain from heaven pouring down and drenching me through and through, and had not even a hole to crawl into. Even the dogs could get some place of shelter, but there was none for me. I had but one idol, the bottle, and but one object—to keep the bottle full. But blessed be the Great Jehovah, He sent the still small voice to whisper to my soul, and I became a reclaimed man. My wife was always a good Christian woman, but what sorrow and disgrace did I plunge her into! Now, thank God, she is happy, and I can go out into the world and clasp the hand of any honest man."

A NEW CONVERT.

The next speaker was a gentleman whose name was not given. He was above the ordinary class of "reformed drunkards" who testify at meetings of this character, for his personal appearance, address and language bespoke the gentleman of refinement. He said in substance that it was only four weeks ago that he found himself in this city alone, penniless and hopeless. He had been on one long, protracted spree. The money he brought with him was not only all gone, but every article of value he brought from home had been pawned to satisfy his craving for rum. For days he had been contemplating suicide, or rather a method of suicide, which would leave no trace of who he was behind. By accident he roamed into a meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association, and the night he thought would be his last on earth was the birthday of a glorious hope in Christ. He described the horrors of delirium, to which he freely admitted he had more than once been a victim, and told of pledges made by the dead bodies of his beloved children, pledges made only to be broken when the madness of thirst was upon him. For four weeks not a drop of liquor had passed his lips and he had not the slightest craving or desire for it. He concluded by making an earnest appeal to any who might be present and were addicted to drink not to lose a moment in making Christ their safeguard.

THE EVENING SERVICE.

The evening service was well attended, as it was understood that several of the prominent preachers of the city would be present. There will be services every evening during the coming week, except on Saturday, and at stated intervals yet to be agreed upon. Revs. George H. Hepworth, J. D. Herr, W. Lloyd and J. Bennett Anderson, of England, will preach.

THE AMERICAN FREE CHURCH.

REV. MR. M'CARTHY'S SERMON AT THE NEW YORK UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS—TEARS AND FLOWERS.

"There is no tear shed in this world by a suffering heart that is not bottled by the angels and looked upon by God with loving tenderness," said the Rev. Mr. McCarthy yesterday morning, as he peered over a diminutive flower garden upon his diminutive congregation in one of the schoolrooms of the University Building.

Notoriety in the pulpit usually draws a crowd, but in this instance such was not the case, for not more than fifty men and women were present. Upon a blackboard behind the desk was chalked the inscription, "God bless the American Free Church," a portion of which was negatived upon the back of the reverend gentleman's coat during the delivery of the sermon. His text was chosen from the Epistle to the Hebrews, iv., 15-16, relative to the trial of the High Priest. By way of an explanatory opening, he said that the Bible differed from all other books in that the reader had always ready access to the author when necessary to preserve an understanding. The sympathy of God for man was wondrous, and His voice to the soul in times of hardship was tender beyond measure. While in the flesh, struggling with the trials of life, we found ourselves, like Peter, sinking with our weight of sin, then came the cry of sympathy to the soul, and we were lifted once more upon the treacherous billows. Mr. McCarthy said that mere human sympathy was a great blessing, and whenever we reach that feeling in another we reach Christ. "Some people," said he, "confound pity and mercy. For my part, though I do not wish to be considered eccentric, I have ceased to ask God's mercy. It was given to me long ago, but I do need and earnestly pray for his pity."

DWELLING ON HIS TRIALS.

Mr. McCarthy then referred briefly, but with characteristic earnestness, to his personal afflictions, with which the public have lately been acquainted. "I cannot conclude this sermon," he remarked, "without saying how much the sympathy of my good people has sustained me, and how much their love and appreciation have strengthened my efforts in the struggle of the last ten days—I may say the last twelve months. Angels have been watching over my sorrow and through the persons of my friends have lent me aid. They supported me when with studied secrecy and covertness a trap was sprung upon me, and my character was submitted to a test which, had I known of its coming, would have broken me down. Fortunately, I was not allowed to anticipate the full extent of the attack and have been enabled to bear it."

During the delivery of the above few lines the reverend gentleman shed tears, which had the effect of producing more copious weeping among the female portion of the congregation. Every fair listener sought refuge behind a handkerchief and fan, and when the reference was made to his angelic guardians, sobs were distinctly audible from several parts of the little room. This impressive devotion was observable during the remainder of the delivery, and only the doxology could wipe away the final traces of grief.

"How merciful of my Heavenly Father," the preacher concluded, "thus to tender me in the midst of my great trials, His divine sympathy and aid! All these messages of love have strengthened my heart; and it is my highest pleasure to know that I can go to God and say, 'I am poor and have no means to show my gratitude; now, Father, be Thou the father of this debt, and I know that he will do it.'" At the conclusion of the services Mr. McCarthy's hand was warmly pressed by nearly every member of the congregation, and hopeful smiles beamed from all faces.

ANNIVERSARY OF AN OLD CHURCH.

Had it not been for the excessive heat there is little doubt that the Forsyth Methodist Episcopal Church would have been crowded to its utmost capacity yesterday morning upon the occasion of the eighty-eighth anniversary of its organization. As it was, the pretty little building was only partially filled. Rev. Nathan Hubbell, who has been pastor of the church since April 1, occupied the pulpit, and, before the services commenced, announced that Bishop Peck, who was advertised to be present, had not appeared, and he was at a loss to guess the reason of his absence. The Bishop had written to him on the 4th of May and promised to take part in the exercises and preach an anniversary sermon. Since then he had heard nothing more from him, and had flooded the West with postal cards and circulars, but without eliciting any response. At this juncture the door opened and in walked the Rev. Dr. Miley, President of Madison University, and a former pastor of the church, who was at once seized upon and compelled to deliver a sermon without previous preparation—"Methodist ministers being," as Mr. Hubbell said, "ready at all times to preach or to die."

Dr. Miley did his best under the circumstances, taking for his text the words of Paul, "For we are saved by hope," which the Doctor proposed to amend by substituting the word "sustained" for the word "saved." It is the element of hope, he said, that gives faith its practical power. It was the element of hope in the Roman character that made Rome the conqueror of the world; it is the lack of hope that has kept the Chinese nation behind all Europe for thousands of years. It was the mighty inspiration of hope that made the Revolution a success. Our forefathers did as much for their posterity as for themselves. When Gibbon, the great historian, looked forward to the end of his life, "sadness came upon him." He was a sceptic; he had no future in hope; that was the trouble.

After the sermon Mr. Hubbell produced a number of parchments and papers relating to the early history of the church. It was erected in 1790 in what was then an almost uninhabited portion of the city, and was the second Methodist church in the country, coming next to the old John Street Church. It originally stood on the opposite side of Forsyth, then called Second street, on land that had been confiscated when the tories left the city. At that time there were only 522 Methodists in the city, and since then there have been nearly three times that number in this church alone. The church was rebuilt on its present site in 1833, and has recently been made as good as new. It is handsomely frescoed and sufficiently large and comfortable. It labors at present under a debt of $60,000, and to meet some important expenses a collection of $100 was taken up after twelve o'clock. In the afternoon a love feast was held.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ANNIVERSARY.

Five hundred happy children arrayed in their brightest summer dresses and singing their favorite hymns is a sight to glad the eye and cheer the heart, and it is just such a spectacle that met the gaze of all who attended the semi-centennial anniversary of the Fourth Presbyterian Church yesterday afternoon. The handsome stone building on Thirty-fourth street, near Broadway, was filled, despite the heat, and the occasion may well be remembered by the children who were present, and recalled, when they are men and women, at the centennial anniversary just fifty years hence. The children of the school, which numbers over six hundred members, occupied the seats in the central aisles, the remaining pews on the ground floor and the two capacious galleries of the church being filled with visiting friends. The scholars of the mission schools joined with the afternoon school in all the exercises. After singing the hymn "Rejoice and be glad" three or four babies were baptized by the pastor of the church, Rev. Joseph R. Kerr, by whom the various announcements were made and hymns read in stentorian tones that might have been heard by the deaf. Those who occupied seats far removed from the pulpit lost nothing of the services. After the baptism came a prayer by Mr. Kerr and the reading of Scriptural passages, with responses from the congregation. Then followed another hymn and the reading of a summary of the Sunday school's history by the Superintendent, Mr. Frederick Blume. The Sunday school was organized in 1827, in the Fourth Presbyterian Church, which at that time stood at the corner of Grand and Mercer streets, but was removed in 1853 to the corner of Grand and Crosby streets. Twelve years later and just twelve years ago the present costly structure on Thirty-fourth street, near Broadway, was first occupied, and now the school is larger than it ever was before. The membership has greatly increased, and the weekly attendance is fully double what it was in 1827. Mr. Blume concluded his report by reading a list of the various superintendents and teachers who had work in the Sunday school from the day of its commencement. Four of the ex-superintendents were present, and one of them, Mr. John Aitken, who had been connected with the school for forty years, addressed the children in a few well chosen words. His example was followed by Mr. James Mitchell, who was a teacher in the school twenty-five years ago and who recognized some of his colaborers of 1843 still at the head of their classes. Mr. Mitchell spoke at some length, addressing his remarks chiefly to the children. In his childhood, he said, hymns were not sung in the Sunday school, nothing but the Psalms being allowed. It would be well if that custom still prevailed, for he had never heard so much trash as was sung by the children at the Brooklyn Jubilee a fortnight since. The Sunday school, he incidentally remarked, was a good place for young men to choose wives. The next speaker was Mr. Ralph Wells. The exercises concluded with the benediction. Between the different addresses, &c., the Sunday school and congregation sang hymns.

HEBREW SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

EXERCISES AT THE FORTY-FOURTH STREET AND PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUES.

Our readers may not be aware that the institution of Sunday schools is in full vogue among our Hebrew fellow citizens. Every large congregation, whether worshipping in a temple or synagogue, has its school attached, in which the elements of the Jewish faith, history and the Hebrew language are taught. Such Sunday schools are attached to the following congregations, the rabbi of which performs the functions of superintendent, aided by a numerous Board of Education:—The temples Bethel, Emanuel and Ahawath Chesed; the synagogues Gates of Prayer, in Forty-fourth street; the Sons of Jesurun, in Thirty-fourth street, and the Portuguese congregation, which occupies the Harvard Rooms and is the largest of the downtown synagogues. These schools assemble every Sunday morning for instruction, and generally on several evenings in the week.

GATES OF PRAYER.

Yesterday the annual closing exercises of two of the above were held—that of the Gates of Prayer and of the Portuguese. The programme at the former consisted of reports of progress and studies made in the respective classes during the year by the teachers, hymns, recitations and dialogues, interspersed with pleasing duets. One little Hebrew maiden, by name Rachel Levi, about the age of nine, sang Claribel's well known song "Early Morn" with exquisite taste. She possesses a flexible and sweet voice, rare in one so young, and elicited the heartiest applause. The pieces were naturally all of a religious nature. Some of the greatest truths of life were prettily pronounced by infant lips. The great feature of the entertainment at this synagogue was the debate, which is quite a novelty on these occasions. Some score of young ladies and gentlemen of maturer years earnestly argued upon some of the vital points whereon Christianity and Judaism clash. It was quite interesting to note how these young minds had grappled with them. Dr. Mendes took occasion to inform the audience that the ideas were strictly original with the children, he only having dressed them in fitting language. The novelty was evidently pleasing to the audience, for they listened to it with the utmost attention. The proceedings were on several occasions interrupted by presentations, among others one to Mr. Morrison, chairman of the School Committee, who received a pair of candelabra from the lady teachers and superintendent, and Dr. Mendes, who was made the recipient of a diamond ring and a set of Smith's Encyclopedia of the Bible.

After Mr. S. M. Isaacs, the retired rabbi of the congregation, had made a few laudatory remarks, the main business of the gathering, the distribution of the prizes to the successful contestants was proceeded with. The principal recipients of prizes were Rachel Levi, Philip Poznanski, the Holtzmans (brother and sister), Bessie Schrieber, George Benjamin, Florence Davis and about thirty others of lesser note.

PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUE.

Contemporaneously with these exercises, the Portuguese congregation had their festival in the neighboring Harvard rooms. The programme was much of the same nature. The principal of the school is Dr. J. J. Lyons, who yesterday celebrated the forty-fifth anniversary of his entrance into the ministry. Short addresses were delivered by Dr. H. Gomez, H. P. Mendes and the principal. The speakers suggested that the Board of Education of the city should be petitioned to allow Hebrew children to quit the public schools at two o'clock P. M. in order to attend the Hebrew religious schools.

AMERICAN TEMPERANCE UNION.

From the full attendance at Science Hall yesterday afternoon it was evident that the sweltering weather was not allowed to interrupt the progress of the war the American Temperance Union is waging against King Alcohol. The hall was nearly or quite full and the heat must have ranged high up among the nineties. Walter Logan, the President of the Union, occupied the chair. After the usual reading of the Scriptures and prayer and singing of temperance songs and hymns from Moody and Sankey's collection Dr. J. R. Taber, of Brooklyn, was introduced as the principal orator of the occasion. The Doctor went over pretty much of the field used by way of illustrating the evils of intemperance. He showed how men and women had fallen, how homes had been invaded and desolated by the curse of liquor. He presented several cases of more or less horror. He urged them all to work perseveringly in the cause of temperance. Any work, great or small, however so little, might do good. Anything that they did would merit and receive God's praise. He opposed the license law. He was opposed to legislating on the liquor traffic, unless it could be legislated out of existence altogether. He showed the inconsistency of the liquor law, wherein it allowed men to sell liquor and punished them for so doing. He would have the law and the rum traffic abolished forever.

FREE TRADE IN SHIPS.

WHAT AN AMERICAN SHIPOWNER SAYS—HOW FOREIGN SHIPS IN WAR TIME MIGHT CARRY OUR FLAG IF THE SHIPPING LAWS ARE CHANGED—HOW AMERICANS MAY OWN FOREIGN BUILT SHIPS—THE REAL REMEDIES NEEDED.

The question of free trade in ships is exciting a good deal of attention in America at present, in view of the opportunities to which a general state of war in Europe may give rise, and a HERALD reporter was despatched to the representatives of various New York shipping firms to learn their opinions. Mr. Frederick C. Schmidt, a large owner of shipping, gave the writer his impressions on this subject, as follows:—

"I think the popular cry of 'Free trade in free ships' a fallacy. Half the people who are seeking a panacea for existing evils in free trade do not know what it means or do not know what they are talking about. My own impression is, there is a fund raised by British capitalists in order to operate in Washington to repeal what is known as the Navigation laws. This would give Americans the privilege of putting foreign built ships under American registries or enrolments. As the law now stands there is no debarring an American citizen from owning a foreign built vessel, but he is restricted, in the most positive way, in regard to the trade in which he is to be employed. For example, such a vessel can be used in commerce between Great Britain and the East Indies or Brazil, or, in fact, to any portion of the world except to the United States. They are not granted a registry or enrolment, but entitled to fly American ensigns, and carry with them a documentary certificate from the customs that the vessel is owned by American citizens and entitled to all protection as a regular registered craft. Here Mr. Schmidt turned to the customs regulations, printed by the Treasury Department, and pointed out the act under which this can be done. It is found in chapter 3, page 50, articles 93, 94 and 95, and have not before been published, save by the government:—

ARTICLE 93.—Foreign built vessels purchased and wholly owned by citizens of the United States, whether purchased of belligerents or neutrals during a war to which the United States are not a party, or in peace of foreign owners, are entitled to the protection of the authorities and the flag of the United States, as the property of American citizens, although no register, enrolment, license or other marine document prescribed by the laws of the United States can be lawfully issued for such vessels.

ART. 94.—To enable, however, the owners of such a vessel so circumstanced to protect their rights, if molested or questioned, the Collector of the customs, though forbidden by law to grant any marine document or certificate of ownership, may lawfully make record of the bill of sale in his office, authenticate its validity in form and substance, and deliver to the owner a certificate to that effect, certifying also that she owner is a citizen of the United States. Those facts thus authenticated, if the transfer was in good faith, entitle the vessel to protection as the lawful property of a citizen of the United States, and the authentication of the bill of sale and of citizenship will be prima facie evidence of such good faith.

ART. 95.—In all cases, therefore, where the evidence of the purchase of a foreign vessel by a citizen of the United States, with proof of citizenship and of the *bona fide* character of the purchase, shall be furnished to a collector of the customs, he will, if the proof be satisfactory, and purchase deemed in good faith, record the bill of sale in his office and deliver to the party the original, with a certificate indorsed thereon in the following form:—

FORM NO. 29.

I, ——, Collector of the customs for the port of ——, in the state of ——, in the United States of America, do hereby certify that the within bill of sale, bearing date of ——, of the —— (here follows description of vessel), sold and transferred by