

RELIGIOUS NEWS AND VIEWS

West End Presbyterian Church Preparing to Celebrate Its Tenth Anniversary.

WONDERFUL GROWTH RECORD

Its Church Accommodations Have
Never Been Equal to the Demands,
and the Congregation Is Now
Confronted with an Un-
usual Problem.

One church in this city labors under the unique difficulty of having so many members and Sunday school scholars that it is seriously embarrassed to know what to do for the future. This is the West End Presbyterian, at One Hundred and Fifth Street and Amsterdam Avenue. It is just now planning to celebrate the tenth anniversary of its foundation. Young as the organization is, it is yet the third largest Presbyterian church in New York, and one of the largest in the United States. Four-fifths of its membership are residents of tenements and flat-houses, and yet it has been able to erect a large church foundation, with chapel and everything complete for active congregational work of the present-day kind, and at the forthcoming celebration it expects to burn a recently canceled mortgage bearing on its face the figures \$55,000. The church grew out of a Sunday school that for some months met in the Marshall mansion, at One Hundred and Fourth Street and Columbus Avenue. A small chapel was built on the Boulevard, but was not completed before it was found to be too small. A chapel was then erected on One Hundred and Fifth Street, which was thought to be large enough for a growth of at least ten years. In less than one year, however, it was overcrowded, and the foundations of the present church adjoining it were laid only two years from the time the chapel was started. The church, large and handsome, has been in use only about six years, and now is as much too small as the old chapel was, and pews are not to be had at any price. The Sunday schools, of which there are five, are fast growing, and at every communion Sunday from twenty to fifty new members are in waiting to be received. What is to be done is a serious problem with the church officers. No more land can be acquired adjoining the present buildings. Estimates have been secured on the cost of remodeling the present buildings, and discussion has been had about the erection of a chapel in a near-by street. Refusing to receive new members and Sunday school scholars and announcing that the church is not to grow any more is not to be thought of. And yet the unusual problem confronts the members, What is best to be done?

The pastor of the church is the Rev. John Balcom Shaw and the assistant minister the Rev. James Hunter. Dr. Shaw came to the church direct from Union Seminary, never having preached anywhere else. The church began with 96 members, and now has nearly 400. The Sunday school has almost 1,100 pupils. The forthcoming celebration is to take place on Feb. 6 and 7. A historical sermon will be preached by the pastor and holy communion celebrated on Sunday, Feb. 6, at which about thirty-five new members will be received. In the evening there will be a popular song service, and on the succeeding evening there will be a social gathering, at which will be shown stereoscopic pictures of the various buildings which the church has occupied during the ten years of its remarkable growth.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSON.

Notes on the International Series Se-
lection for Jan. 23.

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SUBJECT—The Beatitudes. Matthew v.,
1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT—"Years the light of
the world." Matthew v., 14.

We read in the Old Testament (Exodus iii.) that one day, as Moses was with his flock on "the mountain of God," he suddenly saw a wonderful sight, a "bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed." The sight was far beyond his comprehension, but the command—"Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground"—he instantly understood and obeyed.

We may well approach the study of this lesson with very much the same feeling. We shall not, indeed, see anything like the burning bush in it, but we are to look upon great truths, far beyond the natural power of man to comprehend. The scene is upon another mountain, and it is just as "holy ground" as that of Horeb, for the Master sits there teaching His disciples. It becomes us to approach the study of His teaching with as much reverence as was demanded of Moses.

The occasion when this instruction was given appears to have been one of those referred to in last week's lesson, when Jesus had just been engaged in healing the sick. From St. Luke's account (vi., 12-14.) we learn that after a night of prayer upon some mountain in Galilee, "when it was day, He called unto Him His Disciples; and of them He chose twelve whom he also named Apostles." As "He came down with them, and stood in the plain," a great multitude gathered around Him, "to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases," and "there went virtue out of Him, and healed them all."

Then, apparently, "He went up into this multitude, and again "went up" into the mountain, accompanied by His disciples. There He sat down, after the usual manner of a teacher, and they gathered around Him. He needed rest, and they apparently did not weary Him with any questions. But St. Luke says, "He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and St. Matthew says, "He opened His mouth and taught them." Blessed privilege conferred only on them! Others may have joined them later, for St. Matthew speaks of "the people" as present at the close of the instruction, but it was not addressed to "the multitude." They could never have appreciated or understood it. It was addressed only to "the disciples." When it was finished they were edified and strengthened, but "the people" were only "astonished." (vii., 28.)

Instruction for Disciples Only.

And yet "the multitude" to-day look upon this Sermon on the Mount as setting up a standard for their conduct. They say that if men will live up to its teaching they will need nothing more. Perhaps not. But who ever lived up to its least requirement even to his own satisfaction? The fact that it says nothing about repentance, or faith, or atonement, or the remission of sins, addressed to those who were already united to the Divine Teacher, and who gladly sat at His feet as His disciples. To them, and to all like them, He points out the great privileges, responsibilities, and duties belonging to His children. To them He offers and blessed standard for conduct but He offers no standard by the attaining of which any one can become His child. All through this matchless instruction there runs a clear line of separation between those who are His and those who are not. I upon one side of that line are "blessed." Upon all who stand on the other side rests only unutterable "woe." (Luke vi., 24-26.) It closes with the declaration of the one side and the other side are the "foolish," who build upon the sand. On the one side stand all who are "in Christ," on the other all who are "in Adam."

This is a very important point to consider in studying this matchless sermon. Last week we saw that the sum and substance of Jesus preaching to "the multitude" was "Repent." He always addressed them as sinners, whom He came to seek and to save. Evidently those whom He now addresses have heard that preaching and have accepted it. They have become His disciples. They are those who have mourned over sin and are longing to be delivered from its power. They have recognized that, as the children of Adam, they are "lost" and under the "condemnation" of God's righteous law. But they have come to Jesus as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and who came to baptize with the Holy Ghost. They have already sat at His feet as His humble and loving disciples. Now, in the privacy of the mountain stillness, He gives them further instruction. It is a gracious privilege vouchsafed to them, an

we are now permitted to sit down with them and hear what the Master has to say to His own.

Characteristics of God's Children.

In the opening verses of this sermon—the portion to which our attention at this time is particularly directed—eight characteristics of the child of God are brought before us. He is "poor in spirit," he "mourns," he is "meek," he "hunger and thirsts after righteousness," he is "merciful," "pure in heart," a "peacemaker," and "persecuted." To each one of these belongs a peculiar and special blessedness. Moreover they are not characteristics belonging to one believer and some to another. They are all to be possessed by each one, and belong to him simply because he is a child of God. These characteristics are such as the seven primary colors together make a pure white, so the first seven in this list are the elements of a perfect Christian character. The eighth marks a condition, but it is a condition which our Lord says belongs to all of His children—"in the world they shall not have tribulation." (John xvi., 33.) "There is no man," He says in another place, "that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, and in the world to come eternal life." (Mark x., 29-30.)

These characteristics are not, however, qualities which a man can acquire by an effort of his own. He cannot make himself "poor in spirit," "meek," or "hungry after righteousness," any more than he can make himself tall or short, white or black, and it is not expected of him that he should. Men sometimes think that it is, and they strive by fasting, and prayer, and self-denial and holy discipline, to become more and more "poor in spirit," more "meek," more "pure," more religious—verily believing that by so doing they will become more and more blessed. But our Lord says nothing whatever as to how much of any trait it is necessary to have. It is not said that he must be very poor in spirit, or unusually meek, or hunger ravenously after righteousness. No, the very feeblest believer is as "blessed" as the most advanced. God's blessings are not measured by man's quantities.

Moreover, He does not even say that any man is "blessed" because he possesses any or all of these characteristics. It is not written here, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, because they are poor," any more than it is written in St. Luke's narrative, "Woe unto you that are rich, because you are rich." Neither the blessedness nor the woe are inherent in the character, or in the condition, and our Lord nowhere says that they are. He says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit," not because they are poor, but because "theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." And so in every case, the blessedness is not because of the character, but because of the promise; and the "woe" is because there are no promises to those who are satisfied with the present.

What the Conditions Mean.

What now is to be understood by these various characteristics of the child of God? "The poor in spirit;" who are they? Surely they are not those who are poor spirited; those who, as Dr. Boardman says, "make it a point to depreciate themselves, walking among their fellows depreciatingly, as though apologizing for their existence, cringing like spaniels, instead of walking erect like men among peers." Neither is it those who walk in the pride of a so-called humility. But the poor in spirit are those that they are spiritually poor, utterly bankrupt and impoverished. Unlike the Laodiceans, they do not say, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," but they confess with sorrow that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." (Revelation iii., 17.) To every one of these belongs the glorious promise, "Yours is the kingdom of heaven." Surely, all such are "blessed."

So "they that mourn" cannot refer simply, or even chiefly, to those who are bereaved, or troubled through any temporal distress. It goes to the root of all sorrow, and their grief is not in the world, but in the heart. When there was no sin on the earth, there was no death and no sorrow. The true mourner, therefore, is he who feels the burden of sin, and grieves because of it, crying out with Paul, "Oh, wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii., 24.) But the promise to all such is "they shall be comforted." "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." (Second Cor. i., 3-5.)

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." When we see them, however, going in and out among men, gentle and humble, unobtrusive and modest, forbearing and patient, not seeking their own, but the good of others, it does not look to the world in which we live as if their condition was very "blessed." But the promise is sure. They have learned of Him who was "meek and lowly in heart," and they shall be partakers of His glory when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." (Rev. xi., 15.) "They shall inherit the earth." All things are theirs. (First Cor. iii., 21.)

Those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness—they shall be filled." There are two kinds of righteousness for which they hunger—a righteousness which they call their own, and a righteousness which is not their own, and more they are filled with either kind the more hungry become. The righteousness which saves is the righteousness of Christ. It is imputed to the believer. The righteousness which glorifies God is the believer's own righteousness. It is wrought in him by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. The one righteousness marks his acceptance with God. The other marks his acceptance with men. The one saves him, the other proves that he is saved. He that truly has the one must necessarily have the other. And he who knows his spiritual bankruptcy—who mourns over it—who walks humbly before God and men, because he is a sinner, is never satisfied without both the righteousness of Christ and the sanctifying of the Holy Ghost.

The Promise to God's Children.

Now, the first three characteristics we have considered mark the believer on his God-ward side. When, however, he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, as we have just seen, he presents to us both his God-ward and his man-ward side. But in the remaining three characteristics he stands before us more particularly as related to men, he is "merciful," "pure in heart," and a "peacemaker."

Unlike the ungrateful servant whose lord forgave him a debt of ten thousand talents (Matt. xviii., 23-35) the child of God, having obtained mercy, shows mercy in all his dealings with his fellow-man, and, showing mercy, he obtains mercy through Jesus Christ his Lord. And "the pure in heart," are blessed because they shall see God, even in the world that is full of corruption. They see Him now by faith, and hereafter they shall see Him face to face. So also with "the peacemakers." They go in and out among men, not only casting the oil of divine grace upon many troubles between man and man, but they are ambassadors to draw men to God through the reconciliation of His dear Son. (Second Cor. v., 20.)

Such, in brief, are some of the characteristics of God's true children. But the world in which they live neither appreciates nor understands them any more than it did their Divine Master. The world is just as true today as it was eighteen hundred years ago, when Paul wrote to Timothy that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (Second Timothy, iii., 12.) But what then? "Theirs is the promise," "Theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." It is the same promise of inexhaustible riches which is given to "the poor in spirit." Man cannot ask more, God cannot give more.

Questions on the Lesson.

How should we approach the study of this lesson, and how is it illustrated?
What was the occasion of this instruction, and to whom was it given?
What erroneous opinion is common concerning this sermon, and what line of separation runs all through it?
What was the substance of Jesus' teaching, and what should show concerning the character of His audience at this time?
What are the characteristics of God's children here spoken of, and how is their union illustrated?
What is said about the amount of Christian grace required to be "blessed"?
What is meant by "the poor in spirit," of those that "mourn," of "the meek," and of those that "hunger after righteousness"?
What difference is there between the first three characteristics of the believer and the last three?
What is said of "the merciful," "the pure in heart," and "the peacemakers"?
How does the world look upon the children of God, what is the result, and what is their promise?

The Christian Conquest of Asia.

The Rev. John Henry Barrows, D. D. of Chicago will begin a course of lectures on "The Morse Foundation" at the Union Theological Seminary, 700 Park Avenue, on Monday evening, Jan. 31, and continue on Wednesday and Thursday of four successive weeks. His subject will be "The Christian Conquest of Asia." Dr. Barrows

was the first Haskell lecturer in India, sent out by the University of Chicago, and has recently returned. It was he who organized the Parliament of Religions in 1893, and conducted it successfully to the end.

TO EXTEND MISSION WORK.

Special Effort to be Made by Presbyterians to Arouse Mission Interest.

The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church has engaged Luther D. Wishard for a year of service in the special work of the new Forward Movement. This undertaking is an organized effort to lead the wealth of the Presbyterian Church to a more adequate recognition of its obligations in the foreign mission cause. The method of the movement is to be to induce families, churches, and societies to undertake the support of individual missionaries in the field. The special work of the Foreign Board is made possible at this time by the liberality of the proprietor of a leading newspaper of Indiana. This man, who prefers not to appear in print, has long supported two missionaries, and now comes to the support of a movement that aims to get other men in the Church to support individual workers.

This Forward Movement rests upon an important Advisory Committee, now forming, composed of men of prominence in the Presbyterian Church. At its head is ex-President Harrison, and other members include ex-Gov. Beaver of Pennsylvania, the Hon. John W. Foster of Washington, Cleveland H. Dodge of this city, John H. Converse, a Philadelphia manufacturer; Samuel B. Clement, a Buffalo banker; Samuel P. Harbison of Pittsburgh, and Alexander McDonald of Cincinnati. These men are actively interested, and some of them have promised to attend meetings and speak in aid of the Forward Movement.

It is a fact little known that of the more than 700 mission workers in the field under the Presbyterian Foreign Board, about 500 are specifically salaried, leaving only about 200 that are paid wholly or in part out of the general fund of the board. The purpose of the new effort is, while not interfering with the general income of the board, to increase its effectiveness and its resources by getting individuals, families, churches, endeavor, and other societies to undertake the support of missionaries, or stations, or even of work in certain countries; in other words, to bring work, worker, and supporter into interested contact.

Meetings are to be held in all large cities to launch the movement. One of the first will be held in Pittsburgh, where the combined Presbyteries of Pittsburgh and Allegheny are to hold a joint session on the 25th and 30th of the current month, to be addressed by the Rev. Dr. Arthur J. Brown of the Foreign Board and Luther D. Wishard. Another special meeting is to be held on the Sunday of the approaching Student Volunteer Convention at Cleveland, when many prominent Presbyterian business men from all parts of Ohio are expected to attend. Still another is planned for this city.

This Forward Movement, while it has no connection whatever with the Student Volunteers, may be said to have grown out of it, and it is now admirably fitted to work in harmony with it, in helping to send to the field the men and women who have volunteered their lives and are waiting funds to start. Of these volunteers there are now about 3,000, of whom 1,100 are Presbyterians.

Mr. Wishard spent four years in a tour of mission lands, and has close personal relations with and knowledge of the field workers. He has had twenty years of service under the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association, and was the founder of the Student Volunteer Movement. Although a layman, he took theological courses at both Union and Princeton.

CHURCH WORK IN KLONDIKE.

Vivid Picture of Hardships in Store for Missionaries Who Go There.

The Presbyterian Home Board in this city has just heard from the Rev. S. Hall Young, its missionary, sent to the Klondike in September last. Mr. Young and Dr. McEwan had a terribly severe trip from Skaguay, and once lost their way, but arrived at last at Klondike City. Under that city's date Mr. Young writes: "I find we are the only American missionaries here. All others, having taken the Yukon route, are hung up at St. Michael or on the river. Not one steamboat that left San Francisco or Seattle in August has gotten through. The only other preachers here are a Catholic priest and a minister of the Church of England. I found great difficulty in finding a house in which to hold services. The large houses are devoted to gambling or saloons and cannot be had."

"At last I found a newly built house, rent to May 15, \$850. I prayed and hustled, and at length got part payment from a miner who had found gold and was willing to trust us. We were just beginning to count ourselves fortunate when fire broke out, and the building, with others, was burned. We set about finding another place, and had the promise of one when some gentlemen came forward to say they would build a public hall and let us have it on Sundays. This they did, and it is there that our services are now held."

"We have a congregation of all denominations. We have gathered thirty hymn-books of all kinds. I have a choir organized, and there are prospects of an organ in the Spring. A few women come regularly. We have a prosperous Christian Endeavor Society and a Bible class, a small Sunday school, and a union prayer meeting with the Episcopalians, and regular preaching services Sundays at 11 and 7. We keep the church open during the week as a Young Men's Christian Association and reading room. I have established an employment office and have also started a mission at the mouth of Eldorado Creek, fifteen miles away, and recently preached in a hotel at Grand Forks that is kept by a most estimable Catholic woman."

"Flour is \$1.50 a pound; candles, \$1.50 each. Groceries can scarcely be bought at any price. On the other hand, most of the mines are pouring forth gold in constant streams."

FEAST OF ST. AGNES.

To be Celebrated at St. Agnes's Church To-morrow.

The feast of St. Agnes will be celebrated at St. Agnes's Roman Catholic Church, East Forty-third Street, near Lexington Avenue, to-morrow. In the morning at 11 o'clock there will be a solemn pontifical mass, Bishop Tierney of Hartford being celebrant, and Archbishop Corrigan presiding in the sanctuary. The sermon will be preached by the Very Rev. Thomas J. Campbell, S. J., President of St. John's College.

The order of music, under the direction of William A. Brice, organist and choirmaster, is as follows:

Organ Prelude.....Gullmant
Processional Hymn, St. Agnes.....Dr. Brann
Asperges Me.....Gregorin
Kyrie (Mass in G).....Beethoven
Gloria (Imperial Mass).....Haydn
Gradual, Andante (Instrumental).....Emmanuel Bach
Credo (Imperial Mass).....Haydn
Offertory, (Soprano Solo).....Chorus.....Saint-Saens
Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei, (Imperial Mass).....Haydn
Postlude, Laudate Dominum.....Haydn

In the evening at 7:30 o'clock there will be solemn vespers. The sermon will be by the Rev. James T. Barry. The order of music is as follows:

Psalms.....From Corint, Ross, and Gregorian
Aima Redemptoris.....Costa
O Salutaris (Contralto Solo).....Rossini
Tantum Ergo.....Haydn

The music will be interpreted by Miss Minnie Hall, soprano; Miss Margaret G. Keyes, alto; George W. Campbell, tenor; John J. Cassidy, bass, and S. Van Praag, violin, with the assistance of a second professional quartet, a selected chorus, and a string quartet from the Philharmonic Society.

EPWORTH LEAGUE INTERESTS.

A Settlement House and a New York City League Proposed.

An effort is under way to establish in New York an Epworth League Settlement House. Such houses are in successful operation in Boston and Chicago, and within the past few weeks Philadelphia and Baltimore, both strong Methodist centres, have been agitating the founding of similar institutions. The district of New York in the vicinity of Eleventh Avenue and Fifty-fifth Street is

under consideration, and is deemed of especial advantage as well as need. The argument is made that while the league is not as strong in the Borough of Manhattan as in either of the Brooklyn league districts, it is still strong enough to maintain a settlement house, either on the west side or in the down-town east side. At a meeting of the down-town east side leagues, at the Seventh Street Church, last evening, the settlement houses under the leagues of Boston and Chicago were described, and the project of a similar house in New York was canvassed.

An effort is also making to unite the Epworth Leagues of New York City into one district league. The matter was projected last Winter, but failed then because the district league in Manhattan is much weaker in numbers than the combined north and south district leagues in Brooklyn, and it was unwilling to enter into an arrangement where it would be in such a helpless minority. It is thought now that the local feeling has subsided that one New York City league will be possible.

The South Brooklyn Epworth League has just extended an invitation to the North Brooklyn and New York Leagues to a rally to be held in the Brooklyn Academy of Music on the evening of Feb. 10, at which the speakers will be Bishop Nindé, President of the League Board of Control, and the Rev. Dr. J. H. Coleman of Albany. A reception will follow, at which there will be refreshments and music. At this rally the matter of union may be brought up, or, if it is not, the rally will help to make union possible.

Luther League Anniversary.

Last evening the Luther League of New York City, composed of twelve Lutheran Young People's Societies in this city, held its annual meeting in St. Peter's Lutheran Church, corner of Forty-sixth Street and Lexington Avenue. Officers were elected for 1898 by the new delegates recently appointed by the various church leagues in the Boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx. This was the tenth annual meeting, and in April the league proposes to celebrate this anniversary in a suitable manner. By a strange coincidence, though meetings are held by rotation in the various churches of the city, last night's anniversary occurred in numbers than the combined north and south district leagues in Brooklyn, and it was unwilling to enter into an arrangement where it would be in such a helpless minority. It is thought now that the local feeling has subsided that one New York City league will be possible.

Church of the Strangers' Farewell Services.

The Church of the Strangers will hold farewell services in its old building on Mercer Street to-morrow. The last communion will be celebrated at the morning service, when the Rev. Dr. D. Asa Blackburn will preach a farewell sermon. At the evening farewell service these clergymen will speak: Dr. John Hall, the Rev. Dr. George Alexander, the Rev. Dr. Howard Duffield, the Rev. Dr. David H. Greer, the Rev. Walter Laidlaw, the Rev. Edward M. Deems, the son of the late Dr. Deems, the founder of the church, and the Hon. Chauncey M. Depew. A souvenir programme of the services will be distributed. It will contain a picture of the old and new church, a history of each, pictures and sketches of Cornelius Vanderbilt, Dr. Deems, and Dr. Blackburn.