

## The Religious World

**Grace Chapel** We have referred before in these columns to the beautiful group of buildings which have been erected by Grace Parish in East Fourteenth Street. They were dedicated with fitting services on Wednesday, February 12. The audience in attendance was very large, and the address by Bishop Potter worthy of the occasion; indeed, it was one of the strongest utterances in regard to the spiritual need of the destitute portions of our cities which we have read from him or from any one. The rector of Grace Parish is the Rev. W. R. Huntington, D.D., a man who has many times refused bishoprics, and who bids fair to make of Grace Parish a large and important diocese in itself. The buildings in East Fourteenth Street constitute a great institutional or people's church, and are thoroughly equipped for every department of religious activity. They prove that the Episcopal Church in New York is alive to the needs of the city. Probably no parish in the country, with the single exception of Trinity, is now so well equipped for a large and aggressive ministry.

**What Bishop Potter Said** We make a single extract from the strong and impassioned sermon of Bishop Potter at the dedication of Grace Chapel. It deserves careful reading, and every word of it is true. He spoke as follows:

The growth of wealth and of luxury, wicked, wasteful, and wanton, as before God I declare that luxury to be, has been matched step by step by a deepening and deadening poverty which has left whole neighborhoods of people practically without hope and without aspiration. At such a time, for the Church of God to sit still and be content with theories of its duty outlawed by time and long ago demonstrated to be grotesquely inadequate to the demands of a living situation, this is to deserve the scorn of men and the curse of God! Take my word for it, men and brethren, unless you and I and all those who have any gift or stewardship of talents or means, of whatever sort, are willing to get up out of our sloth and ease and selfish dilettanteism of service, and get down among the people who are battling amid their poverty and ignorance—young girls for their chastity, young men for their better ideal of righteousness, old and young alike for one clear ray of the immortal courage and the immortal hope—then verily the Church in its stately splendor, its apostolic orders, its venerable ritual, its decorous and dignified conventions, is revealed as simply a monstrous and insolent impertinence!

**A New Church Paper** The announcement that a new religious paper is to be published in Boston under the title of "The Church," and to be edited, not in the interest of any party or faction in the Episcopal Church, but of the Church as a whole, will excite very wide attention. The character of the new paper is more significantly suggested by the list of contributors than by its statement of aims. That list will include Professor A. V. G. Allen, the Rev. Percy Browne, the Rev. Dr. Leighton Parks, Dr. E. Winchester Donald, the Rev. Drs. Greer, Huntington, and Grant, of this city, Drs. McConnell, Gould, and Batten, of Philadelphia, Dr. McKim, of Washington, and Dr. Holland, of St. Louis. These names commit the new journal to what may be called the liberal movement in the Episcopal Church. "The Church" will follow the general form of "The Nation," and for the present will be published monthly, with the design of ultimately issuing it weekly. The price for yearly subscription is \$1, and subscriptions and communications should be sent to the publishers, E. P. Guild & Co., 308 John Hancock Building, Boston, Mass.

**The Time-Limit in the Methodist Church** The "Christian Advocate," of New York, has published a very interesting series of articles on the Time-Limit in the Methodist Church. Dr. Joseph Pullman proposes a new plan—namely, that the pastoral term shall be four years, and that exceptions shall be allowed to the rule of the pastorate under unusual conditions. Whenever these indications point to a longer pastorate, a preacher may be returned for a second term of four years, provided the Quarterly Conference request the same by a vote that is practically unanimous, and the Presiding Bishop approves. Mr. Hiram L. Sibley argues in favor of removing pastors "for cause, and not by counting changes of the moon." He closes his article by saying: "What I advocate is a return to the principles of Wesley, the early years of the Church, and of Asbury, whereby removals were made for cause alone. Give to the episcopacy its proper authority according to the structure of our system, and hold it to strict account for its exercise." Dr. J. F. Chaffee answers objections to the time-limit, while the Rev. Joseph Irons, by a study of statistics, comes to the conclusion that no advantage would be gained by such change. The Rev. H. H. Beattys gives four reasons in favor of removing the limit: (1) The time-limit prevents the stability of work by engendering a spirit of restlessness, both among the ministry and the churches. (2) The time-limit cripples the minister's power and weakens his influence. (3) The time-limit is a playing fast and loose with Divine Providence. When God seems to ap-

prove a long pastorate, the Bishop says, "Move on." (4) The time-limit makes the institutional church impossible. The Rev. Edwin Genge argues in favor of the present limited time of service as proved by the growth of Methodism in the large cities. There is evidently a wide difference of opinion in the Church itself. The battle seems imminent both in this country and in Great Britain. What the result will be cannot be definitely predicted, but, so far as we can judge from the experience of the past, we should say that there are likely to be other changes in the near future, as there have been since the time was limited to two years. There are doubtless advantages and disadvantages in the present system. We have long felt that the true ideal, if it were possible to arrange it, would be some combination of the itineracy and the settled pastorate. There are, however, difficulties in the administration of such a plan which might be almost insuperable. The Methodist Church would doubtless gain in large centers by a change in the time-limit of its pastors, but we doubt very much if it would not lose by such change when the whole country was considered.

**The Immersion of Dr. Pierson** A dispatch from London announces that on February 4 the Rev. Arthur T. Pierson, D.D., who has long been known as an eminent Presbyterian pastor, had been immersed by the Rev. James A. Spurgeon. When Dr. Pierson was supplying the Temple in London after the death of the Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon, there were repeated suggestions that he was to become a Baptist in order that he might succeed Mr. Spurgeon. That rumor, however, was denied, and nothing more has been heard of it until the cable dispatch which announced that in the church of which his friend, the Rev. James A. Spurgeon, is pastor, at Croydon, London, he had received immersion at the hands of his friend. No one who knows Dr. Pierson will doubt that he has taken this step conscientiously, and no one can now intimate that it is because of any ulterior or selfish motive. His greatest friends in recent years have been men like Mr. Spurgeon and Dr. A. J. Gordon, and they have doubtless had much to do with influencing him to take this step.

**The Difficulties of Missionaries in Japan** We have several times in these columns referred to the condition of missionary work in Japan, and some of our references have aroused criticism from those who are working in that Empire. The latest we have seen is a statement in a recent number of the "Examiner" protesting against our declaration that the Kumi-ai Churches are not alone in the troubles which they are having to meet on account of the religious unrest among the people. A Baptist missionary affirms emphatically that "the theological unrest does not exist outside of the Kumi-ai Churches of the American Board to any perceptible degree. . . . The Methodists and Presbyterians are also numerous, and they do not have it. . . . A deal of the theological disquiet is due to the fact that there is not as much of solid, old-fashioned, vigorous theology in the American Board's missionaries' preaching as in that of missionaries of other denominations. The Presbyterians seem to have not the least trouble, nor have we Baptists." We have no desire to enter into any controversy, and shall not refer to this matter again, but it is due to the Kumi-ai Churches and to the missionaries of the American Board to say that the statements which have here appeared have not been without the best evidence. On the testimony of an eminent Methodist missionary, who knew from personal experience of many years of what he spoke, we made our statements concerning difficulties among Methodists of the same kind as those in the Kumi-ai Churches. On the testimony of one of the most eminent Baptist ministers in Japan, who knows Christian work in Japan perhaps as well as any other man in it, we have stated, and fully believe, that, in proportion to the numbers, the difficulties are as great in that denomination as in any other. Our informant is not a witness to be impeached. The Rev. Henry Loomis, of Yokohama, has assured us very positively that there are no difficulties among Presbyterians, but, on the other hand, we have been told by other Presbyterian missionaries, and still more positively by some of the most eminent of Japanese themselves, and by a missionary official in New York, that the same unrest prevails, though perhaps not to so large a degree, among the members of the Presbyterian churches. We do not mention names in any of these cases, because the testimony was given in private conversation. As to lack of fidelity to Biblical truth on the part of the missionaries of the American Board we need only say that we know positively that the statement is entirely without foundation. A more faithful, consecrated, and absolutely true body of Christian ministers is not to be found in any mission field or among pastorates in any country. If any reply is made to this paragraph, all that we should be able to say in return would be that evidently workers and eye-witnesses on the ground interpret the same facts differently. All our evidence comes directly from the field, from Japanese Christians and from missionaries of the Presbyterian, Baptist, Reformed, Methodist, and American Boards. The most that can be said on the other

side is that opinions differ—and there we must leave the whole question.

**Lenten Readings** A growing custom among non-Episcopal churches is that of having a course of Readings through Lent, which are open to all, but which, in the nature of the case, are chiefly attended by women. The first course of the kind of which we have known was that in the Congregational church at Montclair, where the custom has been observed for about ten years. The plan adopted is for the pastor to take some book of current interest, reading from and commenting on it for about an hour and a half one day each week. The reading is followed by a conference, and in this way great interest has been excited and the attendance has been large. Among the books which have been already read are Bushnell's "Christian Nurture," Maurice's "Social Morality," the Life of Christ with "The Light of the World" as an outline; "The Epic of the Inner Life," by Genung; "Education," by Herbert Spencer; "Culture and Religion," by Shairp; "Immortality," by Gordon; and this year the audience will be taken through a course of instruction on the Bible as Literature, with the usual conferences. Other churches in which this plan has been followed are the Congregational church at Glen Ridge; that at Upper Montclair; that at Westfield, under the ministry of the Rev. G. H. Patton, who has now gone to Duluth and who writes that the book which he will read to his people this year is Dr. Bradford's "Heredity and Christian Problems." The interest which has attended these meetings shows that large numbers in our congregations are hungry for careful and systematic study of the profoundest questions of the religious life. These readings are usually prized in proportion as really great subjects with bearing on practical life are selected. Each pastor must adjust the plan to his own conditions, but there are few churches in which such a course of reading would not be a blessing both to the minister and to his people.

**A Great Paper** One of the greatest religious newspapers is "The Guardian" (London), representing the Church of England. Its first number was published January 21, 1846, and it has just celebrated its fiftieth anniversary by the publication of a special historical number. All the matter is valuable and interesting reading. Among the various subjects treated is one on the progress which has been made in the direction of spiritual freedom. We quote as follows:

In the border-land between the citizen and the Churchman, in which ecclesiastical and civil questions cross and intermingle with one another, the last fifty years have seen many changes. Acts have been passed whereby Jews, and non-Christians generally, have been admitted to the Legislature; compulsory Church rates have been abolished; marriage has been made, for those who choose, a mere civil contract; and burial has been disjoined from any necessary connection with the Church. In the long discussions which have preceded all these measures our influence has been uniformly thrown on the side of freedom, but with the condition that the same freedom should be extended to the Church which was granted to her opponents. We have not desired to coerce unwilling recusants, but we have always claimed for ourselves the same freedom from coercion in the exercise of our spiritual functions. And, on the whole, this object has been fairly, if not as yet completely, gained. The re-establishment of Convocation, the multiplication of bishoprics at home, the renewal of the useful office of Suffragans, the great expansion on freer principles of the Colonial Church and the Colonial and Missionary Episcopate, all bear witness to the extent to which the hands of the Church have been untied from the legal fetters which were supposed—often erroneously—to have bound them.

**The Anglican Church and Other Churches** Perhaps the most interesting article in the historical number of the "Guardian" to which we have referred is the one by Canon Charles Gore on "The Relation of the Church of England to Other Christian Bodies." It will be remembered that Canon Gore was for a long time Master of Pusey House in Oxford, and that he is a High Churchman ecclesiastically, and a Liberal theologically. He is now a Canon at Westminster, and perhaps the most prominent figure in the ecclesiastical life of the Established Church in London. In speaking on the subject he takes the following positions: "The Church of England has come to stand more on its ecclesiastical principles, both before the world and in the minds of its supporters, and less on the basis of its established position." He makes substantially the same claim for Nonconformists, for he says: "On the whole, the Church of England and the Nonconformists, both Roman and Protestant, are found to have passed from a position determined by their relation to the State and to society into a position determined by ecclesiastical or anti-ecclesiastical principles." He calls attention to the fact that the attitude of Church people fifty years ago toward Nonconformists was largely determined by the fact that they were Dissenters; they were a sort of rebels to be classed with other disturbers of society. But now the expressed objections of Churchmen to Nonconformity rest almost entirely on ecclesiastical principles. He finds great changes both in the Church and among Dissenters. He says: "The chapel is no longer what the chapel was—as in Silas Marner's youth, or in Robert Browning's 'Christmas Eve.'" In Protestant Nonconformity the dogmatic, evangelical elements are tending

to retire into the background, while the political and social have become prominent. When he speaks more positively of his own Church, Canon Gore says that it may be called "Liberal Catholic," for four reasons: (1) It declines Scripture without tradition; (2) it declines tradition unchecked by Scripture; (3) it appeals in the maintenance of its position to the facts of human nature; and (4) it makes its appeal to historic evidence. Canon Gore makes two statements worthy of special notice. He says: "If we are to do our work in promoting a general unity, we must first promote more vigorously than we are doing at present unity among ourselves on the basis of our own principles." The Church of England must be truer than it has been to its essential principles, and by exalting them it will make its best contribution toward the unity of the Church. Later he says: "We must be conscious that any work she (the Church of England) will eventually do toward the reunion of Christendom will be done in a large measure unintentionally." His position is, briefly, that by being true to herself the Church of England will rid herself of everything except those essential truths which have in them the principle of universality. He believes that the time is not far distant when Nonconformists in larger numbers will return to the hospitality of the Anglican Church. We are not interested at this time in controverting any of Canon Gore's positions. One of them, however, is especially worthy of emphasis. The Anglican Church and all other churches will do most toward promoting that unity for which we all pray, by emphasizing the principles which they have been chosen in the providence of God to champion. Not by stifling our inmost convictions, but by being true to them, and finding some common ground on which we can meet and harmonize with the convictions of others, is ultimate unity to be realized.

**Anniversary at Duluth** The Pilgrim Church of Duluth, Minn., of which the Rev. C. H. Patton is pastor, has just celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with exercises which are reported to have been peculiarly helpful and inspiring. The church was organized under the ministry of Dr. C. C. Salter, and it has already colonized two or three times. The sermon at the anniversary was preached by the Rev. E. M. Noyes, of Newton Center, Mass., who preceded Mr. Patton in the pastorate. Greetings from the churches of the State were presented by Dr. Ingersoll, of St. Paul, while a historical paper was read by Mr. W. S. Woodbridge, who has been with the church from its organization. Pilgrim Church is one of the strongest in the Northwest, and it has for its pastor in Cornelius H. Patton a man who has proved himself, by a peculiarly useful ministry in New Jersey, to possess many eminent qualifications for ministerial leadership. Duluth is one of the most enterprising of American cities, and Pilgrim Church and its pastor cannot fail to exert a wide and beneficent influence in the development of the city and of the State.

#### Brief Mention

A letter from Tokyo, under date of January 17, states that Brigadier Powell (second in command to Colonel E. Wright) was about to start a corps in Yokohama—the first city "opened" outside Tokyo, the capital.

Another conspicuous illustration of the fact that ministers are often indifferent to mere pecuniary considerations is the fact that the Rev. Cornelius Woolfkin, of Brooklyn, recently declined a call to succeed Dr. A. J. Gordon, of Boston, at an advance of \$4,000 over his present salary. Similar cases are not difficult to find.

Work is soon to be started on the Phillips Brooks Memorial Library, to be erected in Hyde Park, Mass. It is the gift of Mrs. E. F. Stetson, of Boston, whose country home is near the site of the proposed building, and who is deeply interested in the Blue Hill Chapel, where Bishop Brooks preached his last sermon. The building will cost about \$1,000, and will be given to the Directors of the Blue Hill Chapel.

One of the most prominent men in the Methodist Episcopal Church was the Rev. Dr. Sanford Hunt, of the Methodist Book Concern, who died in Cincinnati on Monday, the 10th. He was the senior agent of the Methodist Book Concern, and had long occupied a distinguished position in the Church. He was an author as well as a preacher, but his most distinguished service was as manager of the great business interests connected with the publication departments of the Church of which he was a member.

The Liberation Society of Great Britain, which is composed of representatives of all branches of Nonconformity in the Kingdom, and which is the recognized leader in the movement for Disestablishment, holds its anniversary in the City Temple, London, May 6. It has invited the Rev. Amory H. Bradford, D.D., of Montclair, N. J., and of the staff of this paper, to be the speaker at that anniversary. The letter conveying the invitation contains these words: "It is desirable that citizens of the United States should appear on English platforms just now, if only as a protest against policies and sentiments calculated to make bad blood between two Anglo-Saxon countries."

The Newspaper Sermon Association, in behalf of the Boston "Herald," recently offered prizes aggregating \$500 for the best sermon for newspaper publication. Nearly three hundred sermons were received by the committee. Of the number four were so nearly equal in merit that the prizes were equally divided. The committee making the awards were the Rev. E. A. Horton, the Rev. J. B. Werner, the Rev. George Hodges, D.D., and Mr. W. E. Harmon; and the four among whom the prizes were distributed were the Rev. George R. Vandewater, D.D., New York; the Rev. Robert E. Campbell, Bellevue, Pa.; the Rev. Henry K. Hannah Lexington, Mass. and the Rev. Charles James Wood, York, Pa.