

lands, the intelligence, culture, and religion of America. They furnish the means by which men roll in wealth, sit in their crimson pews, and live in lordly dwellings. But few think of the sailor to whom the metropolis is indebted for its high place among the nations of the earth, or attempt his elevation.

XXV.

FULTON STREET PRAYER-MEETING.

EARLY DUTCH CHURCH. — FOUNDER OF THE DAILY PRAYER-MEETING. —
FIRST NOONDAY MEETING. — ITS PERSONALE. — AN INSIDE VIEW. —
FLIES IN THE OINTMENT. — FINALE.

EARLY DUTCH CHURCH.

WE cannot separate Fulton Street Prayer-Meeting from the Collegiate Church of New York, for this body founded the prayer-meeting, and has so far sustained it. The Collegiate Church is the original church of Manhattan. Our Dutch ancestors were a pious race. They scattered themselves from the Battery to Westchester, and from Hackensack to Wallabout Bay. Within the fort at the Battery they built a church as soon as they landed. It was a rude place of worship, but precious to them; and to the sanctuary they gathered every Sunday. Distance was no hinderance. Some lived twenty miles away, and they walked the whole distance. They would not travel on the Sabbath. They started on foot Saturday afternoons, to reach the sanctuary before midnight. Worshipping on the Sabbath, they remained until after midnight. When the Sabbath was fully past, they took up their line of march. With the songs of Marot they beguiled

their way, and reached home in season for their work on Monday morning.

The Island of Manhattan belonged to the Dutch by all the rights known to colonists. But they chose to purchase the soil from the natives who claimed it. They bought it as really as Pennsylvania was purchased. They paid the full price demanded, sixty-six years before William Penn landed in the New World. With great Christian liberality the Dutch extended the hand of friendship to Trinity Church, and shared the Sabbath services with the houseless congregation. When Trinity settled her first rector, she was short-handed, and the ministers of the Dutch Church assisted at the installation. From the Battery, the church established itself in what is now known as Exchange Place, in the rear of the Merchants' Exchange. A new church was reared, and is now occupied as a post office. In 1769, the North Church was dedicated. In the revolutionary war it was used as a prison by the British, and marks of bayonets and pikes are still seen in the sandstone. Two cannons, placed near the doorway by the British, still remain. A benevolent Dutchman presented to this church an estate known as the Manor of Fordham. Another member gave a small farm, outside of the city at that time, and it was considered of very little worth. It was that plot of ground, on either side of Fulton Street, running from Broadway towards the East River, and is now one of the most valuable sites in New York, occupied by massive and imposing warehouses. This property makes the Collegiate Church, except Trinity, the richest ecclesiastical corporation in the land, and with this body the Fulton Street meeting began.

FOUNDER OF THE DAILY PRAYER-MEETING.

In 1857 there was a general revival of religion. The lower part of the city had become a moral waste. Trade and a foreign population had taken possession of the city below the City Hall. The dwellings where the rich men at one time resided were pulled down to make room for stores. The dwellings that remained were either boarding-houses, or occupied by a tenant population. The pulpits in which the giants of New York had preached the gospel were no more. Spring, Mason, Potts, Phillips, Alexander, and others, removed to other parts of the city. Lower New York was deserted. The Old North Church remained. It was put in complete and elegant repair. A learned and eloquent ministry occupied the pulpit. The house was thrown open to all who chose to worship God within its walls. It secured a missionary, in the person of Jeremiah Calvin Lanphier, a man of rare and peculiar gifts, of unshrinking courage, and marked piety. He was not far from forty years of age, tall, and of a fine presence, a winning face, and a manner affectionate and attractive. He possessed great energy and perseverance, was a fine singer, gifted in prayer and exhortation, easy of approach, and a welcome guest to any house; very shrewd, and possessing tact, with good common sense, he was eminently fitted for the position he was called to fill. Anxious to be a blessing to the poor, the neglected, and the perishing, he was equally anxious to reach the merchants of New York, and lay his hand in kindness on young men in business.

Walking in the street one day, this idea suggested itself: Why not have a meeting of prayer for business men, at the hour of noon when all go to lunch, made up of singing, prayer, and speaking, allowing persons to come and go during meeting as they please? He had been a merchant, and knew how difficult it was to attend a devotional meeting in the evening. The hour of noon was one of leisure for merchants, clerks, draymen, and men of toil. He resolved to open a daily meeting of prayer from twelve to one; a union meeting, free from sectarianism, from which the cold and formal routine of prayer-meetings should be banished; made up of brief songs, brief prayers, and brief addresses. No one should be allowed to speak over five minutes. No controverted or doctrinal points should be introduced. No one should be obliged to stay a moment longer than he chose. Parties could come in and go out at any moment without interrupting the meeting. Such was the plan.

FIRST NOONDAY MEETING.

On the 27th day of November, 1857, the small consistory-room connected with the North Dutch Church was thrown open for service. At twelve o'clock no one was present but the missionary. He sat alone one half hour. A solitary step was then heard on the stairs, and a person entered the room. All told, six persons composed the little company. The next day twenty persons gathered; the next, forty. In October the central room of the consistory building was opened, and from that time to this, for more than ten years, the meetings have been continued with unabated zeal,

ever the fullest and most remarkable prayer-meeting in the world.

THE PERSONALE OF THE MEETING.

There is no plainer room in New York than the lecture-room of the Dutch Church where the daily prayer-meeting is held. It is in the second story of the consistory-rooms on Fulton Street. The walls are covered with gilt frames, holding the rules, mottoes, and notices. The seats are hard, crowded together to make room, and are very uncomfortable. The surroundings are unattractive, and little suited to devotion. In the centre of the busiest portion of New York the prayer-meeting is held. The bells of the horse cars, the shouts of carmen, the noise of artisans, the hammer and saw of the carpenter, the whistle of the steam-engine, the blowing off of steam, with other noises of busy life, come directly into the room. The singing is congregational, without instrument or artistic attraction. Old tunes, revival tunes, and experimental hymns, are sung. The missionary who originated the meeting has conducted its music for ten consecutive years. At twelve precisely the leader rises and gives out a hymn. This is a business men's meeting, and a layman usually presides. He may be educated or illiterate; dressed as a merchant or as a carman. Perhaps he may be an old man, with his hair frosted by years; he may be a young man, just commencing a Christian life; but he is a warm-hearted Christian. Before the meeting closes the room will be packed. Earnest men and women will fill all the standing room. Every denomination is here represented. Men come from the sea,

from the mountains of Asia, from the hot sands of Arabia, from India, from the Old World, and all parts of the New. This daily meeting is the Religious Exchange of New York. Eminent men, clerical and lay, from all parts of the country, and of the world; eminent ministers, lawyers, merchants, look in on the meeting. They bring tidings from every part of Zion. Those who want to see and hear distinguished men, know they will find them in this place of prayer. Earnest prayers are offered, the swelling chorus of song, thanksgivings for remarkable answers to prayer, make the hour all too short. Requests for prayer come in from all the world, covering every variety of want and suffering peculiar to humanity. The tone of the requests shows that the writers regard the Fulton Street meeting as the pool of healing to the Evangelical Church.

AN INSIDE VIEW.

The room is reached from Fulton or Ann Streets, up a covered pathway. The floor is covered with matting, the room filled with settees. The missionary stands at the door, and with his tiptoe tread, bland face, and resolute will, makes the ladies move up and sit close. Precisely on the minute the service is opened. Such congregational singing would be popular anywhere. The audience is trained to sing, being composed of the cream of the churches. The tunes are familiar, and the hymns are associated with the heart's warmest affections. Borne on the tide of full, warm, and deep emotion, the swelling song of praise is wafted to heaven. The reading of the requests follows, and

they are numerous. They come from missionary stations, from the islands of the sea, from the dwellers in the habitations of cruelty, from all classes and conditions in our own land.

FLIES IN THE OINTMENT.

Men who have hobbies to ride often annoy the meeting. Men with impracticable theories persist in presenting them. Sometimes men who have oratory in prayer come with high-sounding phrases, pompous words, colloquial addresses, to the King of kings, and are an abomination. Sometimes women try to speak. This is contrary to the rules. One day a lady arose to make an address. She was informed that it was against the rules, and immediately she sat down. A tall, masculine woman arose, and in a tone of marked anger, with a loud, harsh voice, and a decided Scotch accent, cried out, "I'll not attend this meeting again. I am a converted woman myself. If our sister is not allowed to speak, the Spirit of God is not here. I am a converted woman. I say that. But I'll not come here again!" and she flounced out of the room. Men have attempted, over and over again, to change the tone of the meeting. Impulsive men have tried to break the rules; have appealed from the ruling of the leader to the audience; votes have been taken; people have tried to sell books, build churches, and beg money out of the meeting. To all this one answer has been steadily given: "This is a Union prayer-meeting. All who approve the plan on which it has been

established are welcome. Those who do not must find a place of prayer that suits them."

FINALE.

About a fourth of the meeting are ladies. A very large number are young men. They come with blank-books in their hands, pencils behind their ears, memorandum-books peeping out of their pockets, and marks of trade about them. They come not simply as spectators, but they bear an important part in the meeting. Carmen and draymen drive up to the curbstone, leave their teams, and come in with frocks on and whips in their hands, and join heartily in song, prayer, and speech; bankers, expressmen, merchants, and mechanics unite in the service. Such a grouping of classes, conditions, trades, and sects can be found nowhere else. The formal Churchman, the conservative Dutchman, the ardent Congregationalist, the quiet Friend, the impulsive Baptist, the stately Presbyterian, sit side by side, while the hearty "Amen" ringing through the chapel indicates that the Methodist element is not wanting. As a success, as a meeting of power, with a fame of ten years which has followed the drum-beat of nations round the world, this simple, plain, unpretending meeting of united Christians for daily prayer is one of the most wonderful institutions of the metropolis.

XXVI.

BUSINESS REVERSES IN NEW YORK.

MIRAGE OF WEALTH. — RAILROAD CONDUCTOR. — A RAILROAD KING. —
SARATOGA BELLE. — ROCK IN THE CHANNEL. — SUCCESS A COY THING. —
OLD-SCHOOL MERCHANTS.

MIRAGE OF WEALTH.

MEN who visit New York, and see nothing but the outside aspect which it presents, imagine that success is one of the easiest things in the world, and to heap up riches a mere pastime in the city. They are familiar with the name and history of the Astors. They know that Stewart began life a poor boy, kept store in a small shanty, and kept house in a few rooms in a dwelling, and boarded his help. They walk through Fifth Avenue, and look on the outside of palaces where men dwell who left home a few years ago with their worldly wealth tied up in a cotton handkerchief. They stroll around Central Park, and magnificent teams, gay equipages, and gayer ladies and gentlemen, go by in a constant stream; and men are pointed out who a short time ago were grooms, coachmen, ticket-takers, boot-blacks, news-boys, printer's devils, porters, and coal-heavers, who have come up from the lower walks of life by dabbling in stocks, by a lucky speculation, or