

# **Dedication of the the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church.**

Yesterday the new and beautiful church edifice recently erected on the corner of Lafayette avenue and Oxford street, was dedicated to divine worship. The location is a very happy one—the ground being high, and the neighborhood rapidly improving. The church is built of the Bellville freestone, in the Romanesque style of architecture. The building fronts 80 feet on Lafayette avenue, and extends back along Oxford street 164 feet. In the front are two towers, one of which is complete, and upon the other a spire will be carried up to a proportionate height. There are entrances on the avenue and Oxford street, and the pews, numbering some 300, will seat 1,800 persons, but on a pinch, nearly a thousand more can be accommodated in the aisles. The height of the structure is sixty-six feet. The plan of the interior is almost identical with that of Plymouth church, with improvements suggested by experience. The walls and ceiling are white, and the windows filled with stained glass. Probably many would consider the building, ecclesiastically speaking, rather too white as to the tone of color. The organ is placed in a recess on the gallery floor in the rear of the pulpit. An American flag was gracefully folded over the top; and the organ itself is ornamented with stars of gold upon a blue field, representing the whole number of the United States as before the rebellion. From a flag staff in the front, the national standard waved gracefully in the gentle breezes of the Sabbath afternoon, emblematic of the fidelity and patriotism of those congregated for worship below.

At the rear of the church, but connected with it, is a building three stories high, and thirty-four by twenty-five feet in dimensions. The first floor is used as a chapel and the pastor's library; and the second and third floors are designed for the Sabbath School, Bible classes, &c. The cost of the building and the ground upon which it stands was \$65,000, of which all but \$20,000 has been paid. Hereafter the Society will be known as the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church. Heretofore they were known as the "Park Avenue Church," and worshipped at the corner of Carlton and DeKalb avenues, under the pastoral of Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, who still continues with them.

The attendance yesterday was literally immense—in fact hundreds were unable to get into the auditorium and so were compelled to leave. The church was crowded to its utmost capacity; indeed there must have been nearly three thousand persons within the walls, so great was the interest felt in the opening of this new and beautiful temple of divine worship.

The dedicatory services commenced at three o'clock P. M., and were conducted by the pastor, Rev. T. L. Cuyler, Rev. Drs. A. D. Smith, Kendall and Burchard, and Rev. H. S. Field of New York, Rev. Mr. Lowrie (Congregationalist), and Rev. Mr. Elliott of Bedford (Baptist). The exercises were opened by the pastor with prayer, which was followed by the reading of a portion of the Psalms, suitable to the occasion, by Rev. Mr. Field. An interesting letter was then read from Rev. Henry W. Beecher, stating his inability to be present in consequence of other engagements. The choir—a very good one indeed, then sang an appropriate hymn, after which the Rev. Asa D. Smith, D. D., preached the dedication sermon. He took for his text the following Scripture: "Which is the church of the living God and ground of the truth"—Timothy 3, 15. Upon this text the preacher expatiated in regard to the living Christian church, and having disposed of the doctrinal points involved, went on to say that the subject naturally connected itself with the present occasion. It was not to witness the organization of a church that they had assembled there. That work had already been done, and well done. A history of years amid all the difficulties incident to the infancy of an enterprise like that, had been replete with illustrations of the thoughts suggested by the text.

A church can hardly be considered, however, as fully established, till it has taken possession of its permanent gathering place. The groves were indeed "God's first temples." Glorious worship did the old covenants render in their mountain haunts. And when our Pilgrim Fathers sought here "a fairer shrine—"

"The sounding aisles of the dim woods rang  
With the anthem of the free."