

In Memoriam

Rev. Paul Durgea Van Cleef, D. D.

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# Memorial Sermon

... OF THE ...

REV. PAUL DURYEA VAN CLEEF, D.D.

WAYNE STREET REFORMED CHURCH,

JERSEY CITY.

1850 ————— 1903

DELIVERED BY THE

REV. EDWARD TANJORE CORWIN, D. D.

*January Fourth,*

*nineteen hundred and three.*

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FUNERAL SERMON DELIVERED BY

REV. HENRY N. COBB, D. D.

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May we who follow in their train  
Their virtues view and deeds outdo,  
And like them strive the world to gain  
For Him who to its rescue flew ;  
Him and them may we join, among  
Thine aged made forever young.

—Dr. Wortman.

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# MEMORIAL SERMON

.. OF THE ..

REV. PAUL DURYEA VAN CLEEF, D. D.

JANUARY 4, 1903.

*1 Cor. 4: 12.*—Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

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## INTRODUCTION.

Fifty-three years ago to-day, a young man of twenty-eight stood in the pulpit of this church, and gave out this text as the text of his Inaugural Sermon. He had been in the ministry elsewhere for three years. He had come to this new and untried field, and not without considerable anxiety, begins his ministry here. The text shows that he felt the responsibility of his office, and that he also wanted the church to understand in what estimation the office should be held by them. The church should consider the minister as the servant of Christ, ministering for their benefit in the highest and most important service; for ministers are stewards of the *mysteries of God*. Appointed by God's authority to

186881

preside over his family, they must take good care of His interests and honor; they must instruct the church in divine truth; they must properly conduct her services, and give to every one his portion in due season. For "Divine Truth" under its manifold aspects, relating, as it does, to God, and Man, and Sin, and Redemption, and to Future Rewards and Punishments, these constitute the *Mysteries of God*. These things men cannot let alone, even if they would; but they can only come to understand them, as they are reiterated under some of their phases, from Sabbath to Sabbath; as they are expounded by the faithful disciple and ambassador of Christ; as light is also sought at the throne of grace; and as the Spirit reveals those mysteries in the growing experience of the believing soul. It is the delightful privilege and duty of the minister of Christ to apply these truths to the hearts and consciences of men, with suitable expositions, exhortations, admonitions; yea, with encouragements and warnings. This must be done, according to the special necessities of communities or individuals, for the conversion of sinners and the edification of believers.

No doubt the youthful pastor spoke, on that occasion, of the importance of this trust, of the dignity of the ministerial office, and of its solemn responsibilities. No doubt he expressed the desire, that he might be faithful to his Master and his church. No doubt he asked the prayers of the church in his behalf. For fidelity, in a steward of any kind, is one of the most important qualifications. How very important, then, is it in a steward who is administering the mysteries of God.

More than half a century has passed since that young minister preached that sermon from this text, and we are here assembled to hold a Memorial Service of him. His work is done, and he has entered upon his reward. And now, since his labors are over, it is eminently proper to review such a life, out of respect to him and his family, as a duty to his church, for the benefit of ourselves and others, that all may be stimulated by his example; and to consider some of the providences of God in his history, for there is a particular providence in everything, as well as to gather up some of the facts, and put on record the story of such a life.

It also gives me a peculiar pleasure to be present and take part on this occasion. I was present, a lad of fifteen, when that Inaugural Sermon was delivered. I have also never forgotten the main circumstances connected with the building of this church, and of its earlier history, and have been intimately acquainted with your pastor during all his ministry here. And if some of my remarks, while indulging in reminiscences of those times, seem to partake of too personal a character, I hope that the fact of my relation to this church from its beginning, will be a sufficient apology.

## EARLY LIFE AND STUDIES.

Paul Duryea Van Cleef was born near Millstone, Somerset County, New Jersey, on July 31, 1821. His parents were John Van Cleef\* and Jane Ann Duryea. His mother's parents were Paul Duryea and

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\* Jan Van Cleef was the first of the name in America. He was born in 1628. He had eight children, of whom Benjamin was born in 1683. Benjamin had twelve children, of whom Lawrence was born about 1705. Lawrence had six children, of whom Isaac was born in 1742, and died 1804. Of Isaac's twelve children John was born in 1786, and died in 1858, and was the father of Paul Duryea Van Cleef.

Arietta Van Harlingen. It was from his mother's father that he received his Christian names. His mother's mother was a daughter of Rev. John M. Van Harlingen, who was the pastor of the churches of Neshanic and Harlingen, N. J., from 1762-1795. This Van Harlingen came from a long line of ministers in Holland, stretching back for two centuries.

In his early life Paul lived on a farm between Millstone and Weston, and was engaged in the usual duties pertaining thereto. He received the rudiments of the usual country-school education of three quarters of a century ago. He attended the Millstone Church in his early life, then under the pastoral care of domine John Lansing Zabriskie, who was its minister for about forty years. Domine Zabriskie was a faithful preacher of the Gospel, and in 1831 enjoyed in his church one of the most extensive revivals known up to that time, one hundred and eight having been taken into his church at one communion. Paul D. Van Cleef was then only ten years old, and youths of that age were probably never received into the full membership of the church in those days. But we can easily

understand how the blessed influence of such a work of grace would touch a young heart like his, already not indisposed to the subject of religion. Every family in the community must have been deeply exercised, and the subject of religion and personal profession must have been a topic of conversation in every household.

When fourteen years of age he left home to become a clerk in a store in New Brunswick. Here he spent a couple of years which proved to be very important years to him, for they gave a new direction to his whole subsequent life. They were also years fraught with great results to hundreds of others. For during this period in New Brunswick occurred a Revival hardly equaled by any of modern times. The way had been partly prepared by the severe visitation of the cholera a few years before, and by a dreadful tornado which swept over New Brunswick on June 19, 1835. This destroyed several lives and laid whole streets in ruin. Property was destroyed to the amount of \$150,000. This, at that time, and in a town of only four or five thousand inhabitants, was an immense loss. But these calamities were only some

of the instrumentalities, under Providence, for bringing about an unprecedented work of grace.

This Revival did not come suddenly after these dire events, but gradually developed. Those calamities caused great searchings of heart. The people were unusually anxious to hear the Word. There was no excitement whatever, only there was a multiplication of the means of grace. The aid of the neighboring ministers was sought. There was hardly an individual in the city who was not affected. Some who went to the meetings to scoff, remained to pray. Whole families united with the church. Transient visitors of a gay and worldly character were converted and returned to their homes new men and women in Christ Jesus. The Revival was noted for the deep convictions of sin which were experienced. Extra meetings were continued almost daily for about five months, from May to September. As the result, during that summer, six hundred united with the various churches in New Brunswick, and of this number, one hundred and thirty-seven united with the one Reformed Church then existing there.

Frequently have I heard the converts, who passed through those scenes, declare that no one could form any conception of the wonderful power of the Spirit's work at that time, if he were not present. Dr. Samuel B. How was then pastor of the Reformed Church. He says, in his account of the Revival, that his whole congregation was affected with a most solemn awe; that it was rare to meet an individual in the city who was not willing to converse on the subject of religion. The entire graduating class of the College was brought into the church, and of the seventy students in all, but very few remained unconverted.

Now it was during such scenes that the lad, Paul D. Van Cleef, lived in New Brunswick. Was it not a particular Providence that he was there just then? He was sixteen years of age. Could it have been otherwise than that he should then have received impressions which would shape his whole future life? Thirteen of those who united with the Reformed Church during that summer of 1837 became ministers of the Gospel. How many more took this course in the other churches, I do not know; but if in the same proportion there must



have been sixty or seventy in all. The names of those who joined the Reformed Church at that time and entered upon the work of the ministry are Paul D. Van Cleef, Charles S. Hageman, William S. Moore, James A. H. Cornell, Martin L. Schenck, John L. Janeway, John A. Staats, David D. Demarest, William H. Steele, John De Witt, William A. Cornell, Abel T. Stewart and Cornelius E. Crispell. If time permitted a good account could be given of each of these men.

Suffice it to say that all of them became useful and successful ministers of Christ; three of them became Professors in our Theological Seminaries; and one was, for a time, a missionary to the heathen. Some of them have now sons in the ministry, while others of them have been instrumental, under Providence, of leading not a few others into the same blessed profession. That was certainly a remarkable group of youth, to unite with the church in the same season, to study together, and to serve in the ministry together, most of them for nearly half a century. All but three have now gone to their reward. These three are Rev. Dr. William H. Steele, who for a long

time has been an invalid ; but "They also serve who only stand and wait;" Rev. Dr. John De Witt, late Professor in the Theological Seminary of New Brunswick, and who for many years served on the Bible Revision Committee\*; and Rev. Dr. Cornelius E. Crispell, once a Professor in our Western Seminary, but who is yet in the pastorate at the age of eighty-three.

Soon after that Revival, Mr. Van Cleef, with the others mentioned, resolved to study for the ministry. He left the business in which he was engaged, and returned to his home in Millstone to begin the necessary studies. There had been a Classical School there for many years, then under the care of William J. Thompson, who a year later was elected Rector of the Grammar School in New Brunswick. With him, for one year in Millstone and one year in New Brunswick, he was prepared to enter College, which he did in 1839, and passed through the regular

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\*Dr. De Witt was especially urged to be present at this Memorial Service, as he had supplied the pulpit of this church for about a year, when Dr. Van Cleef was first stricken down in 1886, and the Consistory had given him a year's rest. Although unable to take part in the Memorial Service, he was present. He is but a few months younger than was Dr. Van Cleef at his death. He desired the speaker to express his interest in the occasion, and to testify that he had always held Dr. Van Cleef in the highest esteem.

course of four years' instruction. And still further to indicate the pervading influence of that Revival, the catalogue of the College shows that of the students of the three higher classes when he entered with those of his own class and of the three classes which entered during his course, no less than sixty entered the ministry. During the first year of his College course he was permitted to hear the sermons and listen to the prayers of that saintly man, President Milledoler. His prayers are said to have had a heavenly unction about them which seemed like inspiration. The Hon. Abraham Bruyn Hasbrouck, a lawyer, then succeeded to the Presidency, while Rev. Dr. John Proudfit was Professor of Languages and Dr. Lewis C. Beck was Professor of Chemistry and Natural History. At the same time the Theological Professors taught Metaphysics, Logic and the Evidences of Christianity in the College.

In 1843 he entered the Theological Seminary in New Brunswick. There he was under the instruction of the genial Dr. Van Vranken, who taught theology, the keen and logical Dr. McClelland, who taught

Hebrew and Greek and the Exegesis of Scripture, and the dignified and old-fashioned Dr. Cannon, who taught Church History and Pastoral Theology. It was a happy thing to be under the general influence of such men, as well as under their instruction. They were all famous in their day, and remarkable as instructors. Their pupils were noted for their scholarly traits, and their clear and analytical style of preaching. Mr. Van Cleef's own class in the seminary consisted of only nine students, of whom he was the last survivor. He had heard of the call of each of his classmates to service in the heavenly temple, and now he also has followed them. His age, eighty-one years and four months, was greater than that of any of his class, except Rev. Nathan F. Chapman, who lived to the age of eighty-one years and six months. Four others of his class reached an age between seventy and eighty. Thus has this class of workers, most of them serving for nearly half a century, all passed away. No doubt that Revival shed its blessed influences over all those years of study, giving a peculiar love of spirituality to that class, and indeed, affecting their whole ministry.

## Ministry at Coxsackie, N. Y.

Mr. Van Cleef after graduating from the Seminary in July, 1846, was speedily licensed to preach by the Classis of New Brunswick. He was soon invited to officiate at Coxsackie through the kindly offices of Professor McClelland. He filled that pulpit on August 2nd of that year.\* On October 15th, he received a call from that church, and commenced his labors there on November 1st, and was ordained and installed on November 10th.† The day was unpleasant, but the audience was large and the exercises very solemn. Mr. Van Cleef here adds a prayer in his Journal: "O God, if, indeed, Thou hast counted me worthy to be put into the ministry, make me faithful unto death, that I may receive the Crown of Life." How little could he then anticipate his more than half century of labor for Christ. And has not that prayer been fulfilled? His inaugural Sermon was from the text, 1 Thess. 2: 4, "But as we were allowed

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\*He preached on this occasion from Rom. 12: 1, and Eph. 4: 30.

†Rev. David Murdoch, pastor at Catskill, and author of that interesting book styled, "The Dutch Domine of the Catskills," preached the ordination sermon from Cor. 9: 27. Rev. William R. Betts, pastor at Leeds, delivered the charge to the pastor, and Rev. William A. Cornell, the charge to the people.

of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth the heart."

It was a not uncommon custom in those days to make certain rules for oneself. Such rules often appear in biographies of a generation or two ago. It is sometimes said that such a practice has a legalistic look. It is true, indeed, that if we were quite perfect, and if we thoroughly appreciated the love of God in Christ, that that would be all sufficient. The absolute consciousness of a real union with Christ would make us altogether superior to all wrong doing. No doubt some christians reach this state after years of growth in grace. But are not some sort of rules or pledges even yet desirable, to define the path, and keep, especially younger believers, near the line of duty. There is the Christian Endeavor Pledge, and the Temperance Pledge so necessary for many. There are but few professors of religion who do not need, in reference to some things at least, to put themselves in traces. The one Vow, that we take Christ as our Savior, covers everything, if we only fully appreciate it. But because of our imperfect apprehension of this, as well as certain sins

which so easily beset us, it is not unwise to place ourselves under certain rules. They become less necessary as we grow in knowledge and in grace. Our habits become fixed, and long companionship with Christ establishes our principles. But with the young Christian, and even with the young minister, besides his more general profession of union with Christ, it is well to hedge himself about somewhat with special vows, pledges or rules. Mr. Van Cleef, accordingly, at the beginning of his ministry, adopted a number of Rules, partly to control his conduct, and partly to develop his Christian character, such as these:

1. Think evil of no one, whatever may be the appearance of things.
2. Speak evil of no one, whatever may be the provocation.
3. Read the Scriptures daily and in order, with notes, or in the original languages.
4. Write something every day.
5. Begin divine service exactly at the appointed time.
6. Pray, sing, and especially preach, short, and be much to the point, clear, close and practical.

7. Beware of oddities, eccentricities, extravagances, enthusiasm.

8. Make your visits frequent, short, profitable. Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering, tenderness and love.

9. Endeavor to keep up the dignity of an Ambassador of Christ.

10. Be very humble, patient, faithful, zealous, wise, prudent.

11. Strive in every possible way to promote the peace and prosperity of the church.

12. Guard against selfishness, sadness, levity, pride and the love of mere popularity.

13. Meddle not with political questions, nor too much with controversy.

14. Cultivate a happy, benevolent and courteous disposition.

15. Take care of the lambs of the flock, and feed them with knowledge and wisdom.

16. Beware of envy, jealousy, and moping melancholy.

17. Do the business of a steward, watchman, pastor, faithfully; and think much of death and judgment.

While we all know the duties of the Christian life in general, yet it is by no means a bad thing to have some points thus formulated, to give more definite shape to our



apprehension of them, that we may be helped in fidelity and usefulness. These rules certainly show his anxiety to control his conduct, and to do his duty carefully and fully.

His ministry at Coxsackie lasted about three years. A minister's first charge is especially difficult and trying. There are, first of all, his ever recurring duties each week of preparation for the Sabbath and the weekly lecture. These must be attended to regularly whether he feels like it or not. Then there is the never finished duty of pastoral calls. These may be encouraging or otherwise. Speaking with the impenitent about the welfare of their souls is not always an easy task, and sometimes the efforts are repulsed. Visiting the sick and dying is a duty which often wears upon the nerves, and funeral sermons or addresses about the impenitent, with fidelity and kindness to the living, sometimes tax a minister to the utmost. The first administration of the Lord's Supper is always a matter of great anxiety to a youthful pastor. All these matters are referred to in Mr. Van Cleef's Journal. These are experiences com-

mon to all ministers in their earlier years of service.

But, then, there is the not unfrequent exchange of pulpits with some of the neighboring pastors, and the occasional visitor, who relieves him of the pressure of a week's labor. In exchanging with Rev. Benjamin Van Zandt, of Kinderhook on a certain occasion, he writes in his Journal: "Large audience; ex-president Van Buren present, but he deserves a gentle hint about coming late to church." The ex-president was a resident of Kinderhook. The neighboring ministers seem to have been very friendly as their calls were frequent. His nearest neighbor was Rev. Jeremiah Searle, of the older church of Coxsackie, whom he saw very often. He tells of visits to Dr. Gosman's at Hudson, to Dr. Wyckoff's at Albany, men of renown in their day; also to Rev. John DeWitt's, at Ghent, who is happily with us here today; also of occasional visits to his old home at Millstone. He tells of the passing of a Christmas day, of which he had hardly thought until it was almost over; for in those days the non-Episcopal churches had not yet returned to the celebration of the old Festival Days of

the Catholic and English Churches. While these had formerly been celebrated in Holland to some extent, the American Dutch Church at the adoption of their Constitution in 1792 had rather discouraged their celebration; or if celebrated, the people were to be admonished that these Feast Days had been abolished; and the minister by preaching, should endeavor to change the idleness of the people into holy and edifying exercise.

About a year after his settlement at Cox-sackie he was married to Catalena Onderdonk, on Nov. 17, 1847, in New York. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Dr. William W. Phillips, pastor of the Presbyterian church, corner of Fifth Avenue and Eleventh Street. This Dr. Phillips was a graduate of the New Brunswick Seminary in 1817, and served in this, his only charge for almost fifty years. Mr. Van Cleef's Journal shows that he often visited this church in subsequent years, and sometimes lectured for Dr. Phillips. Mrs. Van Cleef was his faithful helpmeet for twenty-two years, dying April 1, 1869.

### Settlement in Jersey City.

On Oct. 11, 1849, he received a letter from Rev. William J. R. Taylor, who had left this church the month before to settle in Schenectady, conveying to him an invitation from the Consistory of this church to supply this pulpit. He accordingly preached here on Nov. 4, 1849, addressed the Sabbath School, preached again in the afternoon, and conducted the monthly concert services in the evening. His text in the morning was Ps. 37: 4. "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." While I do not now definitely remember the details of that sermon, yet, no doubt, he contrasted the difference between delighting in worldly possessions, pleasures and distinctions, and the inherent disappointments connected with them and delighting in the Lord, knowing, loving and worshiping Him, with the certainty of having the noblest desires of the heart amply satisfied at last. In the afternoon, he preached from that rich text, 2 Cor. 3:18. "But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." As we

gaze at the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, we become like Him, are changed from one degree of glory unto another, by the Spirit ever more fully given unto us. These were simple, pure Gospel sermons, and it is the positive Gospel that the people really want and admire. Is it any wonder that, preaching on such glorious themes, he was called within a week to become the pastor of this church?

I was a lad of fifteen at that time and heard those sermons, and well remember the circumstance of his preaching on that occasion. Only a year or two ago, calling upon your pastor while he was visiting New Brunswick, I spoke to him about his first service in this church and those sermons. That occasion has often since recurred to my mind, possibly because his settlement here had an important influence on my whole after life.

On the following Saturday, Mr. John V. Brower, well-remembered by many of you, followed Mr. Van Cleef to New Brunswick whither he had gone, and put the call of this church in his hands. The following day, being the Sabbath, that young man of twenty-eight preached in the College Chapel

before the Professors and students, and in the afternoon for Dr. How, in the Reformed Church, that church with which he had united in that Great Revival, twelve years before. How must the thought of those stirring scenes have filled his mind! The next day he consulted with Professors McClelland and Cannon about his duty in reference to your call. He felt embarrassed about it, but the Professors advised him by all means to accept it.

While pondering over his duty about your call, Major Talmage came from Somerville with an urgent invitation for him to preach in the Second Church of that place with a view to a settlement there. Dr. Chambers had recently been called from that field to New York. But Mr. Van Cleef did not wish to complicate matters by preaching in another empty pulpit, and shortly after declined the invitation, although Major Talmage followed him to New York to press the invitation upon him.

Not without considerable anxiety as to his duty, he finally decided to accept the call to the church of Van Vorst, and wrote to the Consistory to that effect on Nov. 22. He preached his farewell at Cocksackie on

December 2d, and began his services here on December 9th. His installation took place on Sunday, December 30th, 1849. Rev. William V. V. Mabon, of New Durham preached the sermon, Rev. W. J. R. Taylor, his predecessor, gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. John Garretson, of Belleville, gave the charge to the people. A new organ had just been put in the gallery of the church, the usual place of the organ in those days, and was publicly played at these installation services for the first time. On the following Tuesday, being New Year's Day, he received about ninety calls, from members, "large and small," as says his Journal, of the congregation. I am happy to say that I came in among the "small."

At the same time, the ladies, by the hands of Elder John V. Brower, presented the new domine with silk for a pulpit gown. On the following Sabbath, Jan. 9, 1850, he preached his Inaugural Sermon, to which we have already alluded at the beginning of this discourse. That was just fifty-three years ago. He began his work here promptly, for the next day he began to make his pastoral calls on the families of his congregation.

His call to this church and his long term of service here, constituted his great life work. It also represents almost the entire history of this church, for it had existed only three years when Mr. Van Cleef came here. His history, and the history of this church up to the present time are almost identical, and cannot, indeed, be separated.

### **The Field. The Township of Van Vorst.**

Let us spend a moment in looking at the field, as it was when Mr. Van Cleef (he was not yet Dr. Van Cleef) settled here. The corporate limits of Jersey City at that time extended only as far west as Grove street; on the North, as far as the Great Hoboken Cove, not far above Morgan street. There were only five churches in Jersey City at that time, the Reformed and Catholic facing each other on Grand street, the Methodist on York street, the Episcopal on Sussex street, and the Presbyterian on Washington street.

In this township of Van Vorst there was a growing hamlet, mostly along the West side of Grove street, and on this block of Wayne street, which was fairly well built up on each side, chiefly through the enter-



prise of the VanVorst family. The two palatial dwellings of Mrs. Barrow and Cornelius Van Vorst, Sr., occupied the whole block on the south side of Wayne street and west of Barrow. At the westerly end of that block, Wayne street came to a sudden termination in a large swing gate, leading out into a farm. Barrow street ended in a similar manner about half a block south of Wayne. The farm alluded to, which was really a large vegetable garden, sending vast quantities of produce daily to New York,—this farm, partly upland and partly salt meadow, extended from the rear yards of this block of Wayne street to the Morris Canal, broken only by Grand street. Close beyond the Canal was the Great South Cove, then entirely open and unoccupied. Right behind the church was the playground of us boys. We watched the building of this church from foundation to roof.

There was only one other church in this village, a little Baptist Church on Barrow street, between Jersey Avenue and the Railroad, dating from 1839, or seven years before this church.

### Harsimus.

There was another scattering hamlet growing up on the north side of the Railroad, mostly along Grove and Erie streets, including some of the cross streets. This was at that time more generally known by the name of Harsimus, although it was in the township of Van Vorst. There was one little Episcopal Church in Harsimus, on the west side of Grove street, a little above Newark Avenue, which was a year younger than this church. There was also St. Paul's Methodist Church, on what was then South Sixth street, which was two years younger than this church. These four were the only churches between Grove street and Bergen Hill, when Mr. Van Cleef settled here.

The union of Jersey City and Van Vorst had already begun to be agitated. According to some of the newspaper poetry of the day it was thus expressed:

“For Jersey City, Esquire,  
To Miss Van Vorst did aspire.”

In March, 1851, by an almost unanimous vote of the two places, the two boroughs were united, and Jersey City was extended up to the base of the Hill, and to the borders of Hoboken.

## The Earlier History of the Wayne Street Church.

Suffer also in passing, a few words on the history of this church for the three years before Mr. Van Cleef settled here.

Early in January, 1846, an elder of the church of Bergen, Stephen Garretson by name, living in Harsimus, called on his pastor, Rev. Dr. B. C. Taylor, to talk about organizing a church in Harsimus. On the following day, without knowing of that elder's visit, Cornelius Van Vorst, Sr., also called on Dr. Taylor, and offered a plot of ground and \$1,000, toward the erection of a Reformed Church in his neighborhood. These two independent circumstances seemed providential, and led to a formal petition to the Classis of Bergen for a new church organization below the Hill. On the 15th day of March, 1846, elders and deacons were installed and the First Church of Van Vorst was organized; perhaps called the *First*, in view of the possibility of another in that part of Van Vorst called Harsimus, at no distant day. Of the elders, Barzillai W. Ryder was a tall, thin, nervous gentleman, and thoroughly devoted to the best interests of this church. He

lived on this block in Wayne street, four or five doors from Barrow, and was at times Superintendent of the Sunday School. Earle B. Sippel, another elder, was one of the most devout and spiritually-minded of men. It was he who most frequently accompanied his pastor in his calls. His prayers were peculiarly devotional and soul uplifting. No one could listen to them without feeling that he was a man who walked with God. He was poor in this world's goods, but rich in faith and good works. The two other elders, Stephen Garretson and John Garretson, were brothers, living in large and spacious houses in the upper part of Harsimus; the first on a hill on Erie street, long since leveled down, and the other on Pavonia Avenue, near Erie street. Both were extensive and prosperous farmers, active and devoted friends of the church, and liberal supporters. Mr. Sipple lived in a very small house on Erie street, close to Mr. Stephen Garretson's lane. The deacons were John Berry and Benjamin Bell.

Besides these six members of the Consistory there were only two other communicants who at first presented their certificates, but there were twelve families pledged

to the church. This small company, after occupying the little church on Barrow street a few times, rented a small building on the south-east corner of Railroad Avenue and Grove street, standing a little back from the street. Congregationalists had attempted to start a church there in 1841, but they did not succeed. They never had a pastor. The building was as large as an old-fashioned country school-house, and would seat, perhaps, one hundred people.

Rev. William J. R. Taylor was called to this church in July, 1846, from the church of New Durham where he had officiated for two years. He was the son of Rev. B. C. Taylor of Bergen, and was much beloved by his father's congregation; and as this new church consisted chiefly of members from that congregation, it was no wonder that he was chosen as the first pastor. He preached for about fifteen months in that small building on Railroad Avenue. He held his prayer meetings around at the houses of the members, especially in Harsimus. In January, 1848, the basement of this church was completed and occupied for service.

I remember one especially solemn communion season in the basement in Mr. Tay-

lor's time. After the celebration of the communion he made a most earnest appeal to the non-communicants present, dwelling upon and emphasizing the question, which he urged each one to ask himself and answer, "Why am I not a guest?"

The church was completed and opened for public service on May 28, 1848. In the fall of 1849, Mr. Taylor accepted a call to the First Reformed Church of Schenectady. During his ministry here, he had received fifteen on confession and sixty-seven by certificate.

It is, perhaps, generally speaking, an excellent thing for a young minister, after a few years of service in his first charge, to avail himself of a new field of labor, if Providence opens up the way. He has had, as it were, a post-graduate course. He has gained much experience. He enters on a new field with new enthusiasm. Such was undoubtedly the case with Mr. Van Cleef when he came to this church. The church had just got fairly started. Everybody now rallied around the new pastor. His Journal shows great activity in making calls in order to become acquainted with his new people. Almost every day he was engaged in this work.

How do the families of that day recur to my mind, as I turn my thoughts back to that time! There were the two families of Van Vorst, Barry, Brower, Lutkins, two families of Garretsons, Vanderbeck, Gopsil, Traphagen, Post, Ferguson, Taber, Morris, Bailey, Insley, Day, Ward, Gordon, Hasbrouck, Youlin, Ingalls, Olcott, McKay, Hope, Anderson, Smyth, Earl, Sisson, Boice, Dickinson, De Mott, Ryder, Ashcroft, Griffith, Zabriskie, McLaughlin, Hart, Cobb, Wortendyke, Kimball, Hardenbergh, Weldon, Harriman, Lauder, Sippell, Corwin, and many others. Some who joined the congregation later, I do not mention. The countenances of some others come up before me, whose names elude me.

When good old Mr. Sippell died a few years later, his pastor took the first verse of the twelfth Psalm, for the funeral text: "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men." This text showed what his pastor thought of him, and of the loss which he felt he had experienced in his death. I never read, or hear that twelfth Psalm, to this day, but that the opening verse brings up elder Sippell to my mind.

Your pastor says in his Decennial Sermon concerning him: "It was a sad day for this church when Mr. Sippell's death was announced. He had been identified with the enterprise from its origin. He knew every one in the congregation, and none knew *him* but to respect and love him. He was an example of what a man can accomplish for the cause of Christ; not with money or commanding social position, but by a consistent exemplary piety, an unobtrusive, but untiring zeal, patient labor, self-denial and love of souls."

Within two years after his coming here, Mr. Van Cleef, had received fifty-eight into the communion of this church, forty-seven by certificate, and eleven by confession, although the families had only increased in number, from ninety to ninety-five. This seems to show that many already attending this church now resolved to bring their certificates and make this their permanent church-home; that they liked their youthful pastor, and intended to rally around him. It was already beginning to be said that the church was too small. Plans of enlargement were suggested, but they were either not satisfactory, or were considered too



expensive, and were for the present postponed.

During these same two years the Sabbath School continued to flourish, as it had indeed, from the founding of the church, and of which, I had been a member from the beginning. In the school we used the Union Question Books, as they were called, issued by the American Sunday School Union, but which were prepared chiefly by Rev. Dr. Isaac Ferris, one of our own ministers in New York. We then went through an entire book of the Bible, without omitting a single verse, and were also expected to learn by heart ten or twenty verses of the Bible each week, a most excellent custom. A system of rewards was established for the largest number of verses learned. Among the superintendents whom I especially remember were Barzillai W. Ryder, A. D. Hope and Thomas Gopsil. These were also all, at one time or another, teachers of the class to which I belonged, and their teachings were most valuable to me.

These first two years of Mr. Van Cleef's ministry have been considered apart, because now a circumstance occurred which seemed a great misfortune at the time, but proved

to be a blessing. On Saturday evening, December 13, 1851, the church building was partially destroyed by fire. It was an evening ever to be remembered by those interested. Mr. Van Cleef had given on the previous Sabbath, a couple of sermons on the Prodigal Son, and had just finished his preparation of the third and last discourse on that subject, when he heard the cry of "Fire"! He lived then on the north side of Wayne street, one door from Barrow. He did not, at first, pay much attention to the cry, but leisurely made preparation to go down to the Post Office, then on the corner of Grand and Green streets. He intended, incidentally, to inquire where the fire was. But he had gotten only half way down the block, when he saw the smoke issuing from his own church. People were carrying out books, cushions, etc. He also rushed in, and through the blinding smoke hastened to the pulpit to save the large pulpit Bible, but this had already been secured. Seizing some cushions, he made his way out, but was almost suffocated before he reached the door. He thought their beautiful church was gone. But the engines now arrived; a hole was quickly cut in the roof, just be-

hind the cupola where it was known the fire was raging, for it was the organ which was on fire, and water was poured in until the flames were subdued. It was afterwards discovered that the basement door had been forced open, the library case broken into, and also a small closet under the stairway. The incendiary had then lighted the candles on the candlesticks near the keyboard of the organ, (for gas had not then yet been introduced in the church), and turned them under the wood-work of the organ. Thus the fire was gradually started, giving the incendiary time to escape.

The next day was a Sabbath, a cold and dreary day in more senses than one. Our house of worship was blackened and charred, and had been drenched with water, now frozen. I distinctly remember its desolate appearance. Word was circulated that service would be held in the afternoon in Smyth's Hall on the corner of Grove and what was then South Fifth street. There our pastor preached a sermon, (I always wondered now he found time to prepare it,) from the text, Isaiah 64: 11. "Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire; and all

our pleasant things are laid waste." You can easily imagine that this was a sad lamentation over the catastrophe which had come upon the congregation, but also an exhortation not to be discouraged, but to turn the disaster into a blessing.

On Monday a meeting was held by the Consistory to talk over matters. Messrs. Ryder and Vanderbeck were appointed to see the Fire Commissioners and the Insurance Company. There was an insurance of \$4,000 on the building and \$550 on the organ. It was also resolved to call a meeting of the congregation, to consider the present exigencies of the church. The desirability of enlargement had already been spoken of as we have seen. By the following Sabbath the basement had been put into a condition for service, and there was a large attendance, and now, that third sermon, in the course, on the Prodigal Son, was delivered. The temperature, also, during that first week of distress, was often down to zero. Some of the neighboring churches offered the use of their edifices for a part of the Sabbath, such as the Second Presbyterian, the Lutheran, and even St. Matthews Episcopal Church. They were thanked for

their brotherly kindness, but the people preferred to cling to their own hearthstone, desolate as it was.

And it is a remarkable circumstance, that while the church was in these uncomfortable quarters, the largest number of accessions to the membership occurred of any year during Mr. Van Cleef's sole pastorate, with a single exception, which was in 1858. For in that year of disaster, while crowded in the basement, thirty-four new members were received into this church, more than half being on confession. It became necessary to enlarge the basement, by throwing the hall, which had previously run from door to door, into the audience room.

I have abundant reason to remember those meetings in the basement, for it was during that time I made profession of my faith. It was touching to me to find the record in his Journal of my calling on my pastor to talk with him on the subject of religion; and of his calling on me, and advising me to unite with the church. The Communion was to have been on January 18th, but that day proved to be a terrible snow storm, so that the Communion was postponed till the next Sabbath.

But during that week of delay another event occurred, of considerable importance in the history of this church. Cornelius Van Vorst, Sr., a courtly old gentleman, but of great affability of manner, who was among the founders of this church, the most liberal contributor in its erection and in its subsequent support, a constant attendant of the sanctuary, from whom, indeed, the township and the church had received its name, had been taken suddenly ill. He had been the chief instrument in developing this section of the city, and, while a friend of religion, he had never made a profession. His pastor now called upon him, and found him very humble and very tender. He felt deeply the solemnity of his situation, for death seemed near. A day or two later, his pastor found him deeply, but delightfully exercised, and he remained all night with him. He returned again soon after breakfast, and remained till one o'clock, when he breathed his last in peace and trust in his Savior. He was perfectly conscious of his situation, and gave delightful evidence of preparation for the change. This was on Friday.

The postponed communion was held the following Sabbath, January 25th. I have

never forgotten the text of that occasion. It was Luke 24: 38, 39. "And He said unto them, why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet that it is I Myself." He showed how we might still all our anxieties and fears because the Savior who died for our sins, had conquered death and lived again, triumphant forevermore. Christ was delivered for our offences but *raised* for our justification. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the *death* of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by *His Life*. What could be more comforting than such thoughts?

Mr. Van Cleef writes in his Journal concerning that Sabbath day: "January 25, a beautiful day. Our basement was crowded this morning. The communion services were solemnly engaged in by the members, who were scattered all over the room; and others appeared to be deeply impressed. The funeral of Mr. Van Vorst was attended this afternoon by a throng, such as I never saw convened on a similar occasion before. It was composed of old and young; men, women and children; Christians and infidels; Protestants and Catholics. A deep so-

lemnity seemed to pervade the vast assembly." I may add that the funeral services were not at the church, but at his spacious residence. How did events crowd upon one another during that cold winter month. How busy were the pastor's hands.

Dark days had come upon the church, but with them unusual spiritual blessings. The people were brought into closer union. As a consequence, a spirit of liberality was awakened, and arrangements were soon completed for enlarging the church. The Insurance Company finally allowed \$1,625 for the damage done to the building, and \$550 for the organ, the full amount; and the congregation within a week subscribed \$2,000 more. The Consistory appropriated \$1,000 for a new organ. The church was reopened on June 13, 1852. The pastor preached on that occasion from Haggai 2: 9. "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts." In the evening, Rev. Dr. Thomas De Witt, of the Collegiate Church of New York, a man generally sought after on all special occasions of dedication, preached one of his characteristic and admirable sermons, from Zech. 6: 12, 13. The topic was:



Christ building the real temple of the Lord, not of stone, but of regenerate souls, Himself being the chief Cornerstone.

But while everything seemed to be thus prospering and bringing joy to the hearts of pastor and people, another circumstance was occurring, which had a contrary look for a time, but which proved to be a blessing in disguise. It was not a little trying to your pastor, at the time, for he had not been consulted; but he happened to stumble into the meeting while the thing was being done. But his noble character is seen in its quickly accepting the situation, and he helped to give it success. The people living in the upper part of Harsimus had really wanted this church, when organized, to be in their neighborhood, or at least nearer to their own locality. Almost a year was consumed before they could agree on the site; but finally, Mr. Van Vorst's offers prevailed, and the church was located here. But now, after the fire, and before this church was reopened, the friends of the other locality, as a matter of convenience to themselves, got together, and resolved to petition the Classis for a new church organization in their neighborhood. Only six

years had passed since the organization of this church. The time chosen to push this thing seems to have been a little unfortunate. But the possibility of another Reformed Church in that part of the city shows the city's rapid growth. Classis granted the petition on April 20, 1852, and Mr. Van Cleef, notwithstanding the inevitable feeling excited by a new organization just at this juncture, presided at the meeting. He wrote twenty certificates to give to members of his own church; he ordained the new Consistory, and received these twenty members from his own church, into that new church, and gave them his benediction. The third church of Jersey City, or the Park church, as it subsequently came to be called, was started on its career, and Providence blessed the enterprise. Mr. Van Cleef's kind and conciliatory conduct in the midst of rather trying circumstances, prevented any friction.

And he was rewarded for his conduct. For during that same year, twenty-three new members were added to his church. The year before the fire, he reported one hundred and fifty-one members, and the year after the fire, one hundred and fifty-

four, notwithstanding the dismissal of twenty to the new enterprise. So you, here, had an enlarged and beautified church, and there was another church organized on the same territory. This church did not feel the loss in the least, and there was a new centre of Gospel light and influence.

And to make all parties understand how well your pastor was appreciated, within a month or two after these events, the Second Church of New Brunswick, sent a committee to Mr. Van Cleef and offered him a call to that church. Rev. Dr. David D. Demarest had been there for nine years, and had just gone to Hudson. Your pastor would have said NO, at once, but the Committee would not let him do this, but requested him carefully to ponder the matter. On the following Sabbath, July 18th, he frankly told his Consistory about it and asked their advice. They thanked him for his frankness in the matter, but said they would not listen to such a thing; that the congregation would be deeply afflicted if he went away; that the regard for him was not confined to the congregation, but was universal throughout the city, and added

many other kind words. He therefore at once declined the call.\*

And here I am tempted to tell a little incident in connection with all these events. One of the elders of that new church, soon after its organization, came back to attend once more the prayer meeting of his old church, which happened to be held at the house of Mr. Thomas Gopsil. This elder was invited to lead in prayer. He referred, in his prayer, to the past history of the old church, its feebleness at the start; that it was like Jacob, traveling alone, with nothing but his staff in his hand; but it had been greatly blessed of God, and multiplied, although not worthy of the least of all God's mercies, so that now, like Jacob on his return, he could say, Lo! we have become two hands. This was a most happy presentation of the case by an elder from the new church in a prayer meeting of the old church; and at the close of the meeting there were general congratulations all around.

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\*The same week a call was approved on Rev. W. J. R. Taylor, for the new church in Harsimus. Mr. Taylor did not accept of this call, however, until he had consulted with Mr. Van Cleef, as he had been the latter's predecessor in Wayne street. Mr. Van Cleef heartily consented.

After the enlargement of the church, the pastor conducted a Bible Class on Sunday afternoons in the westerly room under the enlargement. He took us through the Life of Christ, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and all the Messianic predictions in the Old Testament. There was an excellent Question Book of the Massachusetts Sunday School Association, covering that important field of study. We had about twenty in the class.

Subsequently there were no remarkable events in the ministry of Dr. Van Cleef, or in the history of this church. The Memorial of a minister generally treats largely of his changes from one field to another and of striking incidents in different fields. But when all things keep on the even tenor of their way, and general peace and prosperity prevail, there is not so much material for history or biography proper. We may here remark, in passing, that on November 12, 1872, Dr. Van Cleef married Amelia Lent, who became the sharer of his life for thirty years. The marriage ceremony was performed in the Collegiate Church, Fifth Avenue and Twenty-ninth street by Rev. Dr. Talbot W. Chambers.

He ever felt his responsibility as a watchman standing upon the walls of Zion. He cared more for the great truths to be presented, than for their mere literary style and embellishment. The Truth in itself is ever most beautiful. He was especially anxious to win souls and to edify his flock. It was his very life to do good. All felt that he was like Barnabas, a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. He always seemed to realize that he was an ambassador of God, standing between God and men, and beseeching men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God.

He preached the pure Gospel without the adulteration of human speculations. The excellent training of those Professors by whom he had been taught, the remembrance of that wonderful work of grace during which he was brought into the church, and his own sense of propriety would all lead to the choice of such themes as were strictly Evangelical, instructive, encouraging and admonitory. The very topics of his sermons are suggestive of his fidelity. Here are a few specimens :

The example of Enoch who walked with God.—Christ, the only mediator.—Seeking

first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.—Christ, our propitiatory sacrifice.—The weary and heavy laden coming to Christ for rest.—Consecration to God; I beseech you by the mercies of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, etc.—The white stone, and the new name on it, Jesus, only appreciated by those who receive it.—Christ, the Way, the Truth, the Life.—Necessity of a new heart.—Christians the temples of the Holy Ghost.—Taking up the Cross.—The constraining love of Christ.—Mary's choice of the good part.—Family religion.—Felix trembling before Paul, as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment.—Joy in heaven over the penitent. Obedience the test of love.—Sabbath observance.

His Journal shows these topics, and of course, they are only a few out of hundreds. But where can you find more evangelical themes? How different these from mere moral essays, and ethical discourses, which do not answer the question—"What must I do to be saved?"

In his pastoral labors he was equally faithful, although such duties are often not a little onerous. Hardly a day passed when he was in his vigor, that he did not

make calls on his people, on the sick, the tempted, the distressed. His Journal shows a constant and unfailing performance of such duties. He neglected none. The contrasts in a pastor's official work are sometimes very sudden. Within an hour he may be obliged to go from a wedding to a funeral, or from a funeral to a wedding. Some of these pastoral duties work not a little on one's sympathies. And it is no wonder, that after three or four decades of this kind of work, many a pastor becomes glad to change his style of work somewhat, to relinquish some of these duties to younger hands, that he may engage in some other kind of labor for Christ and his church.

A minister's work can never be really tabulated. For there are constant, but silent influences going out which cannot be put in figures or even be expressed. And these are, no doubt, sometimes, more real and more numerous than those which get into the yearly reports. While he was at Cossackie for three years, he received only fifteen in the church, nine of these being on confession, and six by certificate. When he came to this church there were ninety families and eighty-one church members. In ten



years, the families increased to one hundred and fifty-six, and the membership to two hundred and fifty, notwithstanding the constant and inevitable changes and losses. The largest number of members which this church ever had was two hundred and seventy. This was in 1863. The largest number received in any one year was sixty-one, thirty-three being on confession. This was in 1858, the year after the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting was founded, and when there was a general revival through the whole country.

But throughout the whole period of Dr. Van Cleef's ministry, this church has enjoyed a fair degree of spiritual prosperity. There were never any very large revivals, but there was seldom a communion at which there were not some accessions. Never a year passed without additions to the church. The reports made from year to year show a steady increase. Those received by certificate, each year, were generally more than those received on confession of faith. But, taken together for the first dozen years of his ministry, the accessions run as follows: 24, 34, 34; 25, 23, 24; 29, 25, 61; 37, 15, 28. Is not this a most excellent showing?

The total number received into the communion of this church, from its organization to the present time, is about eleven hundred and fifty, of whom five hundred and eight were on confession, averaging about nine a year; and six hundred and forty-two were received by certificate, averaging about eleven and a half a year; or in all, the accessions average twenty and a half per year, for the fifty-six years of this church's life, all but three years of which were under Dr. Van Cleef's ministry; although for the last few years he has been disabled. This average is probably quite as large as it would have been, if some seasons of great ingathering had occurred, followed by periods of lesser growth.

During the first few years of his ministry, the moneys raised were not yet reported to the General Synod. But during the last forty-five years, this church has raised about \$213,000 for its own uses, and more than \$73,000 for benevolent purposes, or nearly \$300,000 in all. His long pastorate was a happy one to himself and a blessed one to the church. Until old age stole upon him, God gave him health. He was very seldom absent from the pulpit on ac-

count of sickness; and few pastors received more uniform kindness and sympathy from his people. It was when this church reached its highest degree of prosperity, that his abilities were so generally recognized, that Rutgers College, his Alma Mater, bestowed upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. This was in 1863. He was then at the height of his powers, having been seventeen years in the ministry, and forty-two years of age. But this now is almost forty years ago.

The earlier years of a minister's life are devoted chiefly to study and pastoral duties. He is getting in the harness. Such duties and labors ought never, and, indeed, do never, altogether cease, yet as he stores and disciplines his mind, his preparation for the pulpit naturally becomes much easier. After he has been in the ministry a couple of decades, he becomes well-known to the Church at large, his abilities are recognized, and in many cases the last half of his active life, especially if living near the centres of activity, is largely demanded for the more general business of the church. He becomes connected with the Boards and Institutions. His services are required on important Commit-

tees, and in the work of Synod, and in still other ways. Accordingly, in 1855 he was elected a member of the Board of Domestic Missions, and was re-elected annually, every year thereafter, as long as he lived, for forty-seven years. He was seldom absent from his post, and possessed an intelligent acquaintance with all the mission stations under the care of the Board. About two hundred and fifty new churches were organized during this time. His advice was always of great value in reaching proper conclusions. In 1891 he was elected President of this Board. He presided with grace and dignity; and when infirmities made it impossible for him longer to preside, he was elected Honorary President.

In 1869 he was elected to the Board of Trustees of Rutgers College. This showed their confidence in his wisdom and executive ability. This office required his attendance at several meetings every year for the consideration of the important questions which are ever arising, pertaining to the welfare of an Institution of Learning. He retained this office for thirty-three years, or until his death. During that period the College has made rapid strides of progress in every direction.

In 1871 he was elected Stated Clerk of General Synod. This is a very responsible position, requiring great executive ability. It involved thorough familiarity with all the business of the Church at large; the receiving and arranging for use all the papers which were to come before the Synod; the keeping of the Minutes of a large Ecclesiastical Assembly, and editing them for publication from year to year. He also carried on all the correspondence of the Synod with other Denominations. Besides all this he was for a long time, the Stated Clerk of the Board of Superintendents of the New Brunswick Theological Seminary. This position also required great care and accuracy. We cannot speak of local societies, with which he must have been more or less connected, being pastor of this church. And it was not until he was seventy-six years old, that he ceased from all these multifarious duties. The church seemed to delight to honor him, by committing many important trusts to his hands. But it would almost seem as if the burdens laid upon him were too much for one man to bear. A pastorate of fifty-three years in one church in these days of frequent change is something marvelous;

and the continued attachment of his people during all this time attests the truth of Dr. Cobb's remark at his funeral, "He was a man whom everybody loved." He performed the full duties of his office until 1886, when his first severe attack laid him aside for a time; and in 1896 he was declared by the South Classis of Bergen, *Pastor Emeritus*. Provision was made for such a title in the earlier Constitution of the Dutch Church in Holland, three centuries ago. When a minister became incapable through age or sickness to fulfill his duties, he was to be declared *Emeritus*. Literally, that means, having served out his time of labor; having merited or earned a period of rest; honorably discharged from the performance of further public duty, on account of age, infirmity, or long and faithful service. Surely, if any one deserved this title, Dr. Van Cleef did. Not only was he a faithful preacher of the truth, and a faithful pastor, but like Saint Paul himself, he seemed to have the care of all the churches.

Rev. Dr. Cornelius Wells; a pastor of the Park Reformed Church for five years, 1858-63, writes :

" My acquaintance with Dr. Van Cleef began in

1850. My uncle, Lewis Hardenberg was an elder in the Wayne street church at that time. I spent quite a number of Sundays at his house in Jersey City, while I was in the College and Seminary, attended his church, and became quite well-acquainted with his pastor. He was a young man then, but the same quiet, dignified gentleman I came to know so well in after years, when I entered the ministry. Dr. Van Cleef was one who ever commanded respect, and we all honored him. I was not sufficiently intimate with him to form any estimate of his character beyond that which I have indicated above. I know that in those early days of his ministry he was highly esteemed as a pastor in my uncle's family. When I came to Jersey City in 1858, he welcomed me very cordially as pastor of the Park Reformed Church. While I did not see very much of him, our relations were always very pleasant, and he did all that he could for our enterprise, which was then (1858) reorganized."

Rev. Dr. John H. Suydam writes:

"When I read the announcement of the ascension of Dr. Van Cleef, my mind at once recalled the relations of Jesus and Lazarus. Jesus said: 'Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.' At his grave Jesus wept, and the Jews said, 'Behold how He loved him.' I was always impressed with the conviction of a strong, mutual love between Dr. Van Cleef and his Savior. He seemed like such a one as Jesus would call *His friend*.

"It is in this aspect, that, after a test of thirty years, I would regard him as a friend.

"Others will commend his character, his public services, his steady, persistent performance of duty. They will present him as a model for the young preacher, and an example of consistent Christian faith, in all which I heartily concur; but in *friendship* there is something more. This additional element is what I

recall, and which will ever remain in my memory. The poet Lowell expressed it in his regard for his fellow-singer, Longfellow, in these words:

‘ With loving breath of all the winds,  
His name is blown around the world,  
But to his friends, a sweeter secret hides behind  
his fame,  
And Love steals shyly through the loud ac-  
claim,  
To murmur a—God Bless You.’

“As a near neighbor for more than a score of years, a fellow-pastor, a member in delightful association in Gamma Sigma, and in even closer relations in Alpha Delta; companion, counselor—in all these relations, I *knew* Dr. Van Cleef, and was strengthened and comforted by him *as a friend*. Love for Christ, friendship strong and unalloyed, these two traits in the character of Dr. Van Cleef are what most impressed me.”

This church, whose history for half a century has been identical with that of Dr. Van Cleef, will never forget him. As generations pass along his name will ever stand out clear and prominent. He will ever be remembered as a pillar of strength in this congregation and in this community. And although he has now passed to the great beyond, his influence will never die. He being dead yet speaketh. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.”

#### ADDITIONAL TESTIMONIES :

Rev. Dr. David Cole, of Yonkers :

“ Dr. Van Cleef and I first met in the Grammar School at New Brunswick, in November 1838. We sat at adjoining desks, and were intimately associated with each other during a year of preparatory study.



We entered college in the fall of 1839, though in different classes. I saw him daily, and was much with him during my whole college course. I had the very best opportunity for observing the solid character of his young manhood life. He began his studies as an avowed child of God, and with a definite determination to the ministry. And every pointing of his mind and heart from the first was true to his Lord, to the profession he had made, and to the responsibility he had assumed. Young in feeling, and responsive to all healthful college spirit, he yet upheld through his whole student life a firm Christian manhood, and commanded the absolute respect and confidence of his professors and fellow-students. No one ever knew him to be overcome by the spell of any questionable college code. What he was in his older life and through his long life in the ministry, he was when a boy and a young man—always good, noble and true.

“ If I had room, I could dwell on Dr. Van Cleef’s long career of active and useful work, on the great service he was permitted to render in the ministry through the winning of souls to Christ and the upbuilding of the household of faith, on his relations to and promotion of the causes of education, of moral reform, and of home and foreign missions. I could speak at length of the various responsibilities he sustained, and of his leadership and rare judgment and tact as shown in his official connection with Consistories, Classes, Synods and Boards. The Church from his first appearance in its councils, recognized his gentle temperament, his sustained judgment, his untiring faithfulness in every position of trust, and his scholarly precision with matters of record, and it honored him freely by calling him to, and placing him in its high positions. But I am persuaded that our ministers and people, while not failing to recall his excellence as a preacher, a teacher, an organizer, a practical worker and a general produc-

tive factor in the church, will agree that his crowning glory was his ever-preaching personal character and conspicuous Christian life. I have felt it my own special privilege, as one who knew him from boyhood, to make my testimony bear most strongly on this special feature of his memory, which I think will be uppermost in the general thought. I never knew a more simple, sweet, pure, lovely and lovable, speaking and preaching Christian character and life, than those of Dr. Van Cleef."

Rev. Dr. W. H. Ten Eyck, of New York:

"Associated with Dr. Van Cleef for twenty-five years in the service of the General Synod of our church, with never an unpleasant word between us, I came to a full appreciation of his Christian character, his fidelity to duty, and his efforts to promote the interests of the church he served.

"He fought a good fight, he has finished his course, he kept the faith, and I am sure he has received the Crown of Righteousness from the Saviour to whom he devoted his life."

Rev. Dr. Joachim Elmendorf:

"There will be no one of the assembled friends, whose regard for Dr. Paul D. Van Cleef was truer, whose affection was warmer, whose appreciation of his rare excellencies was deeper than were and are mine. Through all my ministerial life, he has seemed to me the model minister in every particular. His life and his name have been an inspiration and an honor to his brethren. While we will grieve because we shall no more see his face on earth, those of us who are nearest his years, shall ere long meet him in the rest and glory into which he has entered."

Remarks by the Rev. J. Alex. Brown,  
present pastor of the Church:

As we can tell the circuit of the whole sphere from the radius described by any segment of the circle, or as the harvest time tells of the preceding months of labor and waiting, so, one who has succeeded to the labors of Dr. Van Cleef, and who has had fellowship with the laborer himself—though for only three brief years—may claim the right to express his tribute of love this memorial morning.

It remains for others to dwell at length on the actual work of that half century and more of harvesting. From my personal intimacy with the records of this church I might have spoken of the years of toilsome ministry when, especially in the closing decade before 1892, he strove against the flood of changing conditions in this part of the city; seeing one and another of his parishioners, the boys and girls whom he had baptized and married, moving away from neighborhood and church to the newer residential sections of the city or to the church above—the dismissals and deaths during that period being 114, while 150

were received by him into church fellowship during the same time.

Generally speaking, men base their estimate of a minister by his ability to draw in new members and to augment the church treasury, and these desirable results are evidences of ministerial hard work and power among the people. But all such records fail utterly in telling the story of the life of self-denial, the nights of worry, the days of study, the discouragements and perplexities, incidental to the life of every pastor—only one in the midst of it can appreciate it all—and these we have read between the lines of the annual church reports.

It is not upon these that I would speak, however; I would speak of the man as he impressed himself upon me personally; of the man who had the care of the church for a lifetime, and of his triumphant issue from the burden and heat of the day; of the man whose personal characteristics, like that of the duration of his pastorate, were exceptional. One paragraph in our Consistorial resolutions will express this impression—"The combined strength of character and sweetness of disposition, the love for men and loyalty to Church, the power in

service and patience in suffering,"—this, and much more that is beyond the power of expression, has been the impress of Dr. Van Cleef on myself. I thank God that such a man came into my life, pointing, like the example of the Master himself, to what a minister ought to be—one having "a good report of them that are without"; one whose life is "an example to the flock"; one who serves the church "not by constraint but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind." To have had a ministry so filled with conversions, with counsellings, with comfortings, is an ambition abundantly able to satisfy, and to lift one above every present difficulty, and perplexity, and misunderstanding, and discouragement, assured of "the crown of glory that fadeth not away" at the end of it all.

Such a character as that of Dr. Van Cleef's does not require long to impress itself upon others. When I came to this pastorate, like most young men, I rather dreaded the thought of having an emeritus pastor as an auditor. But instead of the critic I found the counsellor, one whose gentle smile, and warm handshake, and

occasional commendation Sunday after Sunday, on coming from the pulpit, formed one of my strongest encouragements. It does not take long to generate love when one's interest is supplemented by respect; and as I read back into this church's history for the past half century, supplemented by my three years' personal experience of his sympathy—not alone with the work, for that was his life, but with myself in that work—I do not need to say that an affection was begotten within me for Dr. Van Cleef which is as real as that of many years' growth.

It was thus with all who came in touch with him. While not less than seventy-five per cent. of the present communicants and adherents of the church have come into our fellowship in the last decade, yet on every hand we hear the same expressions of sorrow at his going away, and of admiration for his personal qualities, and affection for his memory.

I ask myself why this general sense of loss, these expressions of regard, even among those who knew him latest and least? I have no better answer than this—with reverence we use the Apostle's words

concerning the bond between Christ and his people—"we love him because he first loved us." Dr. Van Cleef loved men because he loved God, and men were apt to recognize the unselfish, wholesouled desire of his heart to help them, and their response was as natural as the opening of the morning glory to the sunrise salutation.

No words can eulogize such a life nor sufficiently express our regard for him. If he were here this morning I know that, from his gentle, simple heart, there would go out this message—"The best eulogy, the most acceptable token of regard, will be to continue and develop the work to which I gave my life; will be by your labors of love in every way perpetuating and prospering in this old church the work of Him whose we are and whom we serve."

## ORDER OF FUNERAL SERVICE.

Reading of the { Psalm 9      REV. J. ALEX BROWN.  
Liturgy,      { I Cor: 15:35-58      REV. R. K. WICK.

Hymn, "For all the saints who from their labors rest."  
MISS LUCIE NELSON.

Prayer, REV. CORNELIUS BRETT, D.D., Bergen Re-  
formed Church.

Address, REV. HENRY N. COBB, D.D., Sec'y Board  
of Foreign Missions, R. C. A.

Prayer,      -      -      -      REV. J. A. BROWN.

Hymn, "Now the laborer's task is o'er."  
MISS NELSON.

Benediction.      -      -      REV. HENRY N. COBB, D.D.

### SERMON.

I have been asked to make a simple address on this occasion. It is not an easy or a light thing to do. In complying with the request, it is not my purpose to speak of Dr. Van Cleef's long pastorate in this church, nor of his manifold services and the positions of honor and trust he occupied in the church at large, as Stated Clerk for twenty-three years of the general Synod and of the Board of Superintendents of the



Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, as President for many years of the Board of Domestic Missions, and Trustee of Rutgers's College; nor any more of his relations to the local institutions and charities of this city in which he has so long resided. In the first place there is no time for such a survey, and in the second there is no need. This has been done already, in more fitting terms than I can use, in that service held here a little less than three years ago to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of his installation as pastor of this church. All those bodies will, no doubt, testify in due time their sense of the distinguished skill and wisdom, patient fidelity and unassuming self-forgetfulness with which he discharged the duties and met the responsibilities of them all. To him has already been given the welcome from the Master whom he loved and served so long—"Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

I prefer rather to speak of the man himself as we knew him, for at such a time the man is more to us than all his work. How greatly he endeared himself to all those with whom he was associated, your

own experience and memory will attest. "Everybody loved him." What higher encomium could be passed on any man? It was not for the fine powers of mind that he possessed that we admired and honored him, nor for his wisdom and sagacity in council that his advice was valued, sought and confided in; but that men—we all—loved him for the tender and ever ready sympathy that not only responded to every claim, but even outran the voiced appeal, and for the self-forgetting love that so freely spent itself, all his long life, on those whom he could serve and help and bless..

And what a *beautiful* life it was!

What higher beauty can there be than when, to attractive natural qualities and personality are added the deeper charm of "the comeliness" which Christ has put upon it? When Christ works through the hands, walks in the feet, speaks from the lips, and beams from the loving eyes? This beauty was his, and he would have been the first to acknowledge, "By the grace of God, I am what I am."

What a *blessed* life it was! The life of the Master reproduced in his servant and disciple. A life, not of self-seeking, but of

holy, loving, unselfish ministry. How it has gathered to itself in all these years the love of those who knew him, of the people of this church and of those who were otherwise associated with him, as it sought their good and not his own. The joys of such a life are the highest and sweetest the heart of man can know.

And what a *fruitful* life it was! It would not be difficult,—I suppose it might be easy,—to make up the record of things that can be numbered—so many sermons preached, so many prayer-meetings held and attended, so many baptisms performed, marriages solemnized, communions celebrated, funerals conducted. Yet these would not measure the *fruitfulness* of such life, even if you add to them the number of souls led to Christ and received into the communion of the Church.

Who can estimate the results of the *unconscious influence* that went forth from him? How many sorrowing hearts have been comforted; how many helpless and hopeless cheered and uplifted; how many downcast eyes and hearts raised heavenward; how many precious recollections of the riches of God's grace, made to raptured

souls; how many holy and noble aspirations and ambitions kindled; how many other lives transformed and beautified—and all because this life, such as it was, was lived among us. These are real fruits which no man can count or record. Yet their record is on high.

How *wide reaching* it was in its scope and influence! Dr. Brett has said, at the service to which I have referred, that he preached “to a rapidly moving procession.” Doubtless Dr. Van Cleef did also. Yet many must have tarried long enough before moving on, to receive lasting impressions upon life and character, through the influence he brought to bear upon them. They have gone out from under this ministry and are now scattered widely within our own denomination and beyond its bounds. Yet they look back to this church and to this man and bless God, for themselves and for their families, for the training, instruction and inspiration, they and their children have here received. Over and over again has come back to his home the assurance of those who thus bless God that they lived, and that their children were reared and trained under the ministry of Dr. Van

Cleef. Nor does the reach of his life stop here. But potent and gracious influences proceeding from him are through them blessing others who, perhaps, never heard his voice or knew his name. No human scrutiny can distinguish nor human care gather up, even as no limits can confine the streams of influence that went forth from him.

And this life *endures*.

Fifty years is a long period in the life of men on earth. Yet even when prolonged to fourscore it is but begun. He lives still in the presence of the Lord he loved, but his work goes on in human hearts and lives, and will go on forever. This is the work that *lasts*, because it is wrought in the only material that endures. It has the larger part of its process and its issues in eternity. And there where he has gone, he has already seen and shall continue to see the fruit of his life of loving labor, in the presence of the Master for whose sake all his labor was performed.

We have all deplored that this life so beautiful, blessed, fruitful and far-reaching, should for the last few years have suffered an eclipse. Yet in no part of it, perhaps,

were those traits which made him so lovable more perfectly exhibited—the gentleness, self-forgetfulness, thoughtfulness for others, even down to the very last.

And we may well rejoice that the eclipse has been withdrawn, that he has seen the King in his beauty; and, in the unfettered exercise of all his powers, is forever with the Lord.

And now remains but to say Farewell, Farewell, dear father, husband, pastor, counsellor, companion, friend! Farewell, not forever, thank God, and not for long. For him the night is past, and he lives in unclouded day. We hope to meet him and to greet him in the morning when for us also the day shall break and the shadows flee away.

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### MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS.

#### GENERAL SYNOD'S COMMITTEE ON NECROLOGY.

“Dr. Van Cleef was a preacher of rare excellence, and, as a man, and a Christian and a minister, he was amiable and affectionate, courageous and sincere, ever an ‘example to the flock,’ maintaining ‘a good report of them that are without.’ The denomination generally recognized his worth, and called him to its wider service. He was trustee of Rutgers College; he was a



member of the Board of Domestic Missions for forty-seven years of continuous service, since 1891 its President, and accorded the unusual honor of Honorary President when growing infirmity made it impossible for him to serve longer actively in the office, which thus he retained until his death. For many years he was Clerk of the Board of Superintendents, and was Permanent Clerk of the General Synod for a period covering eighteen years until 1895. Beloved by his fellow-workers in the Church, he has passed out into the full enjoyment of eternal life and the service on the other side, 'while his works do follow him.' "

Respectfully submitted for the Committee,

J. MENLENDYKE,  
CHAS. M. DIXON,  
TABER KNOX, *Chairman.*

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#### THE CONSISTORY'S TRIBUTE.

The Consistory of the Wayne Street Reformed Church, Jersey City, in which the late Dr. Van Cleef was pastor and pastor-emeritus for fifty-three years, passed the following resolutions on Dec. 4, 1902 :

" *Whereas*, In His wise providence, the Almighty has called from our fellowship in the Church militant into that of the Church triumphant, our well-beloved pastor-emeritus, the Rev. Paul D. Van Cleef, D. D.; therefore,

" *Resolved*, That we, the pastor, and Consistory, do hereby express our own and the congregation's deep sense of grief and loss. Although almost a new generation has come into the church since the days of his active ministry, nevertheless the memory and influence of that activity have come down to us as a sure foun-

dation upon which to continue building, and as an inspiration to be 'like-minded;' while his presence during the years since has been a silent benediction. We rejoice as the heirs of such a ministry of love; and, even in the immediate consciousness that 'we shall see his face no more' on earth, we strike a note of thankful triumph for the good fight he fought, for the long course that he ran, and for the faith that he kept. In all the years of a pastorate such as is vouchsafed to but few, it can confidentially be said that he had 'a good report of them that are without;' as a minister of Christ for fifty-six years he was 'an example to the flock;' as a pastor he served the Church, 'not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.' And now that he is no longer with us in the flesh, our assurance is that 'the chief Shephard' has appeared, and that he has received the promised 'crown of glory that fadeth not away.' No words can fittingly describe the combined strength of character and sweetness of disposition, the love for man and loyalty to Church, the power in service and patience in suffering, illustrated by his life. Only 'the day shall declare it,' when 'Jehovah shall count, when he writeth up the peoples,' and shall say—concerning those converted, and counselled, and comforted, through his ministry—'this man was born there.'

*"Resolved,* That we tender our warmest sympathy to Mrs. Van Cleef and her family in their bereavement, and pray that the Divine Comforter may solace and strengthen their hearts by His own indwelling, by the memory of the work well done, and the assurance of the 'joy of the Lord' into which their loved one has entered.

*"Resolved,* That an engrossed copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, that they be entered on the permanent records of the church, and a copy for



publication be sent to *The Christian Intelligencer* and the Jersey City *Evening Journal*."

Signed by the Consistory:

Elders—Nelson M. Whipple, Edgar L. Rockwell (Clerk), Frazee C. Squier, John Anderson, Morgan Decker.

Deacons—James P. Butler, Philip L. Meschutt, Clinton DeWitt, Charles H. Clark, William H. Wylie, J. Alex. Brown, President.

#### GAMMA SIGMA.

Gamma Sigma has lost from its ranks, the last remaining charter member, the Rev. Paul D. Van Cleef, D. D. The society was organized at his house, February 7, 1867, and from year to year, its members enjoyed the delightful hospitality which was there dispensed. He has remained throughout its existence, one of its most beloved and valuable members.

For the first five years he acted as secretary. The success of this Society has been largely determined by the efficient work of Brother Van Cleef during those five years.

Associated in fraternal bonds with such men as Drs. Benjamin C. Taylor, Parmly, Imbree, French and Duryee, he outlived them all.

His contributions to the literary work of the Society were always valuable for their spiritual and practical suggestions, and were always prepared with the greatest care in a lucid, yet beautiful literary style.

For the last few years we have missed him from our meetings frequently, but have been cheered, from time to time, by loving and thoughtful messages from his retirement.

The successive generations who have constituted the membership of the Society, learned to love him

as they learned to know his worth, and the present membership heartily unite in paying the highest tribute to his character, while they join in affectionate sympathy for his bereaved household.

*Resolved*, That a copy of this minute be placed on the minutes of the Society, and that it be published in the papers of Jersey City, and further that a copy be sent to the family of Dr. Van Cleef.

CORNELIUS BRETT,  
CHARLES S. WRIGHT,  
ARNEY S. BIDDLE,  
Committee.

### Memorial of Rev. Paul D. Van Cleef, D. D.

The Board of Domestic Missions would place on record their high appreciation of the life, character and service of their beloved father in the ministry, the Rev. Paul D. Van Cleef, D. D.

As a man he was amiable, affectionate, courageous and sincere. As a christian, he was consecrated to his master's service. As a minister of God, he was devoted, faithful, untiring in zeal. As a member of this Board, he was wise, prudent and indefatigable.

He was elected a member of this Board in the year 1855, and has been regularly re-elected since that date, so that his continuous service covers a period of forty-seven years. In the year 1891, he was elected President of the Board. He presided with grace and dignity. He was seldom absent from his post, and possessed an intelligent acquaintance with all the mission stations under the care of the Board; so that his advice was always of great value in reaching conclusions.

When his infirmity made it impossible for him longer to preside over the meetings of the Board, he was elected Honorary President, and his name has continued to head the list of the Board's officers up to

the present time. We rejoice in the record of such honorable service, and in the crown of life which is the sure reward of all who are faithful to the end. We assure his household of our loving sympathy in their bereavement, and pray for them the presence of the comforter.

CORNELIUS BRETT, President.

CHARLES H. POOL, Cor. Secretary.

Died Nov. 26, 1902,  
Rev. PAUL DURVEA VAN CLEEF, D. D.



## CONSISTORY

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*Minister* . . . J. ALEX. BROWN.

*Elders:* NELSON M. WHIPPLE,  
EDGAR L. ROCKWELL (Clerk),  
FRAZER C. SQUIER,  
JOHN ANDERSON,  
MORGAN DECKER.

*Deacons:* JAMES P. BUTLER,  
PHILIP L. MESCHUTT,  
CLINTON DE WITT,  
CHARLES H. CLARK,  
WILLIAM H. WYLIE.

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# Wayne Street Reformed Church

Near Grove Street, Jersey City.

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J. ALEX. BROWN, MINISTER.

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ERECTED 1848. \* \* \* \* \* RENOVATED 1903.



After a thorough redecoration there will be a series of **special** services, beginning December 13, to all of which you are hereby cordially invited—and also to all the **regular** services of the Church.

*“Strength and Beauty are in His Temple.”*—Psalm 96: 6.

If you have no regular church home, we shall be glad to have you share in the blessings and privileges of ours.

# PROGRAMME.



## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13.

Sermons and worship at 10.30 a. m. and 7.45 p. m.

The following music will be rendered :

Anthems—"Give thanks unto the Lord." . . . "Praised in Zion."

"Divine Lullaby."

Solo—Miss Clark.

## MONDAY.

### Denominational Night.

7.45—Song service.

8.00—Introductory remarks and acknowledgment of the memorial windows : the Rev. J. Alex. Brown.

Anthem—"Peace be within thy walls.

Address—The Rev. Robert K. Wick, of Jamaica, L. I.

Solo—Mrs. Lutjen.

Unveiling of mural tablet in memory of the Rev. Dr. Van Cleef, by the Pastor.

Congregational hymn.

Address—The Rev. Cornelius Brett, D. D., of Bergen Reformed Church.

Offertory—"Hear, then, in love." Quartette.

Congregational Hymn.

Benediction.

Postlude.

## **TUESDAY.**

### **Fellowship Night.**

7.45—Song and devotional service.

8.00—Short addresses by representative ministers from sister Churches.

Hedding M. E., The Rev. G. W. Gardner.

Anthem—"Rejoice in the Lord."

First Presbyterian, The Rev. Chas. Herr, D. D.

Solo—Miss Clark.

St. Matthew's Lutheran, The Rev. F. Arnold Bavendam.

Congregational Hymn.

Summit Avenue Baptist, The Rev. W. J. Swaffield, Ph. D.

Offertory—"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." Anthem.

Congregational singing.

Benediction.

Postlude.

## **WEDNESDAY.**

### **Society Night.**

7.45—Song service.

Anthem—"Make a joyful noise."

Congregational music.

Address—Mrs. Margaret E. Sangster.

Duet—The Misses Clark and Frost.

Address—The Rev. Isaac W. Gowan, D. D., New Durham  
Reformed Church.

Solo—Mrs. Chas. D. Brady.

Offertory—"The mellow eve." Quartette.

Congregational hymn.

Benediction.

Postlude.

## THURSDAY.

### Social Evening.

Music, speeches, refreshments, reports.

## FRIDAY.

### Devotional Hour.

Sermon (Preparatory to the Holy Communion)—By the Rev.  
Joseph Rankin Duryea, D. D., Grace Reformed Church,  
N. Y. City.

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20.

10.30 A. M.—Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

7.45 P. M.—Sermon by the Pastor.



*"Whosoever thou art that enterest  
This Church,  
Leave it not without a prayer to God,  
For thyself,  
For him who ministers,  
And for those who worship here."*



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