

praised, too, unconscious of the youth who yearned for a chance to praise, but to whom had been refused admission.

On the opposite side of the street and a little farther north is a costly edifice, on which is a notice reading "Third Baptist Church, Rev. J. P. Greene, Pastor."

On each side of the vestibule, immediately within the doors, are small rooms which lead into the audience room proper. At the entrance of one of these ante-rooms the reporter stopped and looked tremblingly around. The preacher was praying and several sat in the ante-rooms waiting for prayer to be over. He could see a few of the worshipers, for the door leading to the audience room was open.

He stood there for about forty seconds, when a hand was softly laid on his shoulder.

"Are you looking for a seat, dear brother?" asked a kind looking man of about 30 with a light moustache and a slightly bald head.

"Yes," gasped the vestless stranger.

"Are the seats free?"

"Certainly. Just sit here till prayer is finished and I'll seat you."

"Will you give me a seat way in there among those high-toned people?" asked the reporter in a tone that betrayed a weak mind.

"God bless you, yes, my dear brother; right in there, Christ died for you as well as for them. I'm so glad you've come to the church."

The poor brother's heart became as soft as the usher's seemed to be. "Aye, that seems a little more like Christ's teachings," he thought; "there is balm in Gilead yet."

The *Chronicle* young man sat down till the prayer ended, when the usher said: "Now, come right with me, dear brother."

"Jes' as much obliged," said the illiterate stranger, "but I guess I'll leave."

"Very well. Come again, any time," and the Christian usher bowed as low as if he had been addressing a Prince.

Just then the congregation began to sing:

Thou dying Lamb! Thy precious love
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church above
Are saved to sin no more.

"If all the church members would be as big-souled as that usher," thought the pauper, "it wouldn't take long to save 'em all."

A little farther north, and on Delmar avenue, near grand, is the First Congregational Church. By the time this church was reached the sermon had just been begun. No one appeared immediately so the reporter listened a little in the reception room. The preacher was talking on God's goodness to his creatures; how he wouldn't let a hair of a man's head be pulled without having its number entered in the great book of life, and so on. The tramp-reporter was just drinking in the idea when he was interrupted. A fairly well y t not particularly vainly dressed man, dark complexioned and about middle aged, came up behind him. Where he came from the reporter did not know, but he soon found out he was there.

"What do you want?" asked the new-comer of the reporter in a harsh, half-whispered tone.

"Are the seats free here?" ventured the poor man by way of reply.

"No, no; go on. The sermon is started, anyway. Go on out."

"Are you an usher?" trembled out the reporter, letting his lower jaw relax and holding his hat with his hand with a half-witted look.

"No matter what I am," said the saint, who apparently had authority, "I say go!"

The seeker for free salvation went, but his thoughts were not running in the salvation line. When he reached the street he cast one lingering look behind. The man with the black frock coat who had invited him to go was not there.

Who was that man who dare deny the opportunity for free salvation to a young man whose seemingly had trodden the wrong paths, but had a desire to return like the prodigal?

The authorities of the First Congregational Church may be able to answer the question. He was undoubtedly attending to his work.

A week ago last Sabbath, the congregation of St. George's church, who have their temporary home in the Jewish Temple, were visited. A similar treatment to that given by the ushers at Grand Avenue Presbyterian church was received. The reporter stood at the door at the head of the stairs at the northwest corner of the church for some time. The ushers could not help seeing him. Other people stood at that door and were ushered over its portals, but the poor saint in rags stood for fifteen minutes in vain. There was no salvation for him.

This is the church which is being torn to its center by a fight which is to decide whether it is better to build on the old site or to move out to a neighborhood where the church will have better social advantages.

At Christ's Cathedral, the Episcopal Church at Thirteen and Locust street, the very opposite reception was received.

"Have a seat?" asked a light-bearded, middle-aged man who acted as usher for the center aisle.

"Please."

"Come right up," and the awed reporter was led fully three-fourths the way up the aisle and was seated beside a smiling old gentleman with hoary locks and a beautiful young lady, possibly his daughter.

"Take this prayer-book," whispered the sweet girl; "here's the place," and she pointed her shapely finger to the paragraph.

The venerable clergyman made a pathetic prayer for the poor, which went to the poor boy's heart as straight as an arrow.

The usher at the Second Presbyterian Church, at Seventeenth street and Lucas place, asked, "Well, sir, what do you want?" and said to the answer "a seat," that there were free seats up in the gallery. He pointed to the steps twenty feet away, but never thought of taking the timid pauper up. Why?

The usher at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, on Grand avenue, offered the reporter a comfortable seat on the back row, which he took for a few minutes. The church was crowded or he might have got a seat further up. He was treated very courteously at St. Peter's.

On Sunday evening, the Union M.

E. Church received a visit. Prayer was just over and the people were singing. There was a small audience and the front seats were nearly entirely empty.

The usher, a clean-shaven young man with spectacles, soon spied the reporter and eyed him suspiciously for several seconds. He then advanced toward the door.

"Have you got a seat for me, way up? My hearin's very bad."

"You, go up to the front? You don't want to go up to the front," and the usher looked through his glasses severely. He spoke in an air of undoubted superiority and continued, "take that seat there."

He pointed to the back seat and the reporter followed. Just then a young man and lady came up; the usher left the apparent pauper whom he quickly ordered to "sit there," and then took the couple way up, while the man in the back seat held his hand to his ear to catch the sounds from the pulpit. In about five minutes the young man in the ragged clothes walked out past the young man at the door. The latter started as the hard-hearing pauper left. As he was going down the stairs the usher followed and asked:

"Hey, there, what's wrong with you?"

"Nofin."

"Where are you going?"

"I guess I'll go ter the hospital," was murmured back.

"That's the best place for you."

This last sentence was said in a sneering manner that denoted supreme contempt.

By what right did that usher refuse a man with bad ear-drums a good seat, when the good God, who is said to abide within those walls, deprived him of good hearing? The statement regarding hard hearing was not disputed. The young man had no marks of crime on his face except that he needed a shave.

The Central Presbyterian Church was called on. The usher had just signified his willingness to take the stranger up to the front seats when another couple interrupted. They were taken care of first, and by the time the usher came back the hard-looking man was gone. This usher was courteous and would have fulfilled his promise. Dr. Mathews' church took the stranger in, with open arms. The Pilgrim Congregational Church did likewise.

It was late when Centenary Church was reached. Dr. Carradine was preaching on the snares of the world and the ushers were listening. The reporter took a back seat and nobody seemed to notice him.

The Catholic Church, known as the Rock Church, on Grand avenue, has polite ushers who took the youth to a good seat and did likewise to a negro woman a moment later.

It might be of interest to cite an incident that followed the reporter's visit to the First Congregational Church. Near that house of worship he saw a motherly looking old lady sitting on the veranda of one of the best residences in the locality. He climbed the steps and asked:

"Please, madam, I'm hungry and thirsty. Will you give me a bite or two?"

"Certainly, my poor boy, come right in." The servant was ordered to spread a lunch, and the reporter ate