Merrimack is noted for its picturesqueness; but from the mountains to the main, there is no lovelier scene than that which meets the eye when from the summit of Christian Hill, we look down upon Lowell, and survey the varied landscape unrolled like a beautiful map before us. The spacious natural amphitheatre surrounded by hills,—the sky-blue rivers,—the long lines of mills,—the labyrinth of brick and masonry,—the obeliscal chimneys curtaining the heavens with smoke,—the spires of churches, belfries of factories, and gables of houses,—the radiant cross of St. Patrick's pointing away from earth,—the forests in the background, and the noble blue mountains of Monadnock, Wachusett and Watatic in the distance,—all combine to form a scene that must be pleasing to every eye that has been quickened to the beauties of art and nature.

CHAPTER VI.

CHURCH HISTORY OF LOWELL.


St. Anne's Church was the first edifice that was dedicated to religious worship in the present territory of Lowell, since the erection of that modest log chapel in which the Rev. John Eliot and his Indian assistant, Samuel, preached to the copper-colored Christians of Wamesit, two centuries ago.
The founders of the Merrimack Corporation made early provision for religious worship among their operatives. "In December, 1822," says Appleton, "Messrs. Jackson and Boott were appointed a committee to build a suitable church; and in April, 1824, it was voted that it should be built of stone, not to exceed a cost of nine thousand dollars." The Episcopal form of service was adopted, because Mr. Boott was an Episcopalian, and naturally desired to bring into "the Church" as many as possible of the people then flocking to East Chelmsford, some of whom had drank of one dilution of Christianity, some of another, and some of none at all. The church was organized, February 24th, 1824, and was called originally "The Merrimack Religious Society."

The first public religious services were conducted by the Rev. Theodore Edson, on Sunday, March 7th, 1824, in the Merrimack Company's School House, which was opened to pupils the same year. The church edifice and the parsonage adjoining were erected in 1825. It is a substantial edifice, built of dark stone, with Gothic doors and arched windows, and shaded by forest trees. The cost of the edifice, including
subsequent additions, was about $16,000. It was consecrated by Bishop Griswold, March 16th, 1825. The Rev. Dr. Edison, the first and only rector of this church, bids fair to celebrate the Jubilee of St. Anne's, in 1874.

In the tower of St. Anne's is a chime of eleven bells, mounted in 1857, weighing nearly ten thousand pounds and costing over $4,000. Their sonorous tones would be better appreciated had they been placed higher.

"Amid these peaceful scenes their sound
Has soothed the wretched—cheered the poor;
In them has Love a solace found,
And Hope a friend sincere and sure."

On the eighth of February, 1826, the First Baptist Church was organized. The church edifice—one of the largest in Lowell—was built the same year, the land being given to the society by Mr. Thomas Hurd, the satinet manufacturer mentioned in a former chapter. The edifice, which cost over $10,000, was dedicated November 15th, 1826, when the Rev. John Cookson was installed as pastor. He was dismissed August 5th, 1827, and was succeeded, June 4th, 1828, by the Rev. Enoch W. Freeman, who remained until his mysterious death, September 22nd, 1835. Rev. Joseph W. Eaton was ordained pastor of this church, February 24th, 1836, and dismissed February 1st, 1837. Rev. Joseph Ballard was installed December 25th, 1837, and dismissed September 1st, 1845. Rev. Daniel C. Eddy was ordained, January 29th, 1846, and dismissed after a longer pastorate than any of his predecessors, at the close of 1856. Dr. Eddy was Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1855, and Chaplain of the Senate in 1856. Rev. William H. Alden was installed June 14th, 1857, and dismissed in April, 1864. Rev. William E. Stanton was ordained November 2nd, 1865.

The First Congregational Church was organized June 6th, 1826. The church edifice was built in 1827, on land given

*See the St. Anne's Church case, 14 Gray, pp. 586-613; and Edison's Thirtieth Anniversary Sermon.
by the Locks and Canals Company, and cost, with improvements, some $13,000. The first pastor, Rev. George C. Beckwith, was ordained July 18th, 1827, and dismissed March 18th, 1829. Rev. Amos Blanchard, D. D., was ordained December 5th, 1829, and dismissed May 21st, 1845, when he became pastor of the Kirk Street church. Rev. Willard Child was installed pastor, October 1st, 1845, and dismissed January 31st, 1855. Rev. J. L. Jenkins was ordained October 17th, 1855, and dismissed in April, 1862. Rev. George N. Webber was installed in October, 1862, and dismissed April 1st, 1867. Rev. Horace James, the present pastor, succeeded him.

The Hurd Street Methodist Episcopal Church dates from 1826. The edifice is the largest Protestant church in Lowell; it was erected in 1839, at an expense of $18,500. It being the custom of the denomination to make frequent changes in
the location of their clergy, the pastors of this church have been numerous, and their terms of service brief. Rev. Benjamin Griffin was pastor in 1826; A. D. Merrill in 1827; B. F. Lambert in 1828; A. D. Sargeant in 1829; E. K. Avery in 1830 and 1831; George Pickering in 1832; A. D. Merrill, for the second time, in 1833 and 1834; Ira M. Bidwell in 1835; Orange Scott in 1836; E. M. Stickney in 1837 and 1838; Orange Scott, again, in 1839 and 1840; Schuyler Hoes in 1841 and 1842; W. H. Hatch in 1843 and 1844; Abel Stevens in 1845; C. K. True in 1846 and 1847; A. A. Willets in 1848; John H. Twombly in 1849 and 1850; G. F. Cox in 1851 and 1852; L. D. Barrows in 1853 and 1854; D. E. Chapin 1855; George M. Steele in 1856 and 1857; H. M. Loud in 1858 and 1859; William R. Clark in 1860 and 1861; Daniel Dorchester in 1862 and 1863; Samuel F. Upham in 1864, 1865 and 1866. In 1865, Rev. Mr. Upham was Chaplain of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. He was succeeded by Rev. S. F. Jones, in 1867.

In July, 1827, a society was organized under the name of the First Universalist Church. In the following year, they
erected their church on Chapel street, but removed it in 1837 to Central street. The edifice cost $16,000. The first pastor settled over this church was the Rev. Eliphalet Case, who officiated here from 1828 to 1830, but afterward abandoned the ministry to become a reformer, a politician, a post-master, a journalist, and a rum-seller. The next four pastors were Calvin Gardner, from 1830 to 1833; Thomas B. Thayer, from 1833 to 1845; E. G. Brooks, in 1845; and Uriah Clark, from 1846 to 1850, when he began to develop "Free Love" proclivities. Rev. T. B. Thayer was again settled here in 1851, and remained till October, 1857. He was much beloved by his people, and the regrets which attended his departure, were intensified by a painful accident shortly afterward, which involved the fracture and almost loss of a leg, with the additional affliction of a newspaper war with some of his own surgeons. In 1859, Rev. J. J. Twiss succeeded Dr. Thayer.

At the time of the organization of this society, the lords of the loom, under the monarchy of Kirk Boott, exercised arbitrary power, not only over the acts and votes, but also over the thoughts and even over the charities of those in their employ. To cherish the hope that the loving-kindness of the Father will attend the whole family of man through the life to come, was enough to put any man under a cloud. For contributing toward the erection of this church, and for advocating the principles of Gen. Jackson, Mr. (now Rev.) T. J. Greenwood was dismissed from his place as an overseer on the Merrimack Corporation by the direct order of Mr. Boott. Such an act of bigotry would hardly occur now. We have made some progress during the forty years of Lowell. By the way, it was in Mr. Greenwood's room, that Nathaniel P. Banks began his career as a "bobbin-boy," ere yet he aspired to become a lawyer, legislator, governor, major-general, etc.

The South Congregational (Unitarian) Church was organized November 7th, 1830. The edifice cost $32,000, and was dedicated December 25th, 1832. Rev. William Barry was pastor
of this church from 1830 to 1835; Henry A. Miles, D. D., from 1836 to 1853; Theodore Tibbetts, in 1855 and 1856; Frederick Hinckley, from 1856 to 1864. Rev. Charles Grinnell was ordained pastor February 19th, 1867.

The Appleton Street (Orthodox) Congregational Church dates from December 2nd, 1830. The edifice, which cost $9,000, was erected in 1831. The succession of pastors has been—William Twining from 1831 to 1835; U. C. Burnap, from 1837 to 1852; George Darling, from 1852 to 1855; John P. Cleaveland, D. D., from 1855 to 1862, when he became Chaplain of the Thirtieth Regiment, in the Department of the Gulf; J. E. Rankin, from 1863 to 1865. Rev. A. P. Foster was ordained October 3rd, 1866.

The Worthen Street Baptist Church was organized in 1831. The edifice known as St. Mary’s Church was built for this society. The present edifice was built in 1838, costing $8,000. The pastors have been—James Barnaby, from 1832 to 1835; Lemuel Porter, from 1835 to 1851; J. W. Smith, from 1851 to 1853; D. D. Winn, from 1853 to 1855; T. D. Worrall, of
memory like Uriah Clark, from 1855 to 1857; J. W. Bonham, from 1857 to 1860; George F. Warren, from 1860 to 1867.

The digging of the canals and the building of the mills early attracted the sons of "the Emerald Isle" to Lowell. Different clergymen of their faith attended them here, secured for the time such places as were obtainable, and offered "the clean sacrifice for the quick and dead." In 1831, a church was erected called St. Patrick's, which was replaced in 1854 by the splendid edifice which now bears that name, the cost of which was about $75,000. This building is 186 feet long by 106 wide. The height of the body of the church is 61 feet from the floor. The architecture is of the Gothic style of the thirteenth century. Bishop Fitzpatrick of Boston, assisted by Bishop O'Riley of Hartford, consecrated this church, October 29th, 1854. The pastors of St. Patrick's have been—Revs. John Mahoney, Peter Connelly, James T. McDermott, Henry J. Tucker, and John O'Brien. Among the many assistants that have officiated here, was Rev. Timothy O'Brien, who died in 1855, and to whose memory an elegant monument was erected in St. Patrick's Church-yard.

In 1833, a free church of the Christian denomination was organized under the ministry of Rev. Timothy Cole. Successful for some years, the experiment finally failed; and Cole's church, after passing through the hands of the Methodists, became first a dance-hall, and afterward the armory of the Jackson Musketeers, an Irish military company, whose muskets were taken from them by Gov. Gardner. Having mentioned the Jackson Musketeers, it is but fair to say that when the late war broke out in 1861, they forgot and forgave the Know Nothing fanaticism of 1855, and, rushing to arms among the first, illustrated on many a bloody field how bravely the sons of Ireland die for their adopted homes.

The Freewill Baptist Church was organized in 1834. The proprietors were incorporated in 1836. The spacious edifice on Merrimack street, opposite Central street, was erected in
1837, at a cost of $20,000, which was largely contributed by the factory girls. There preached the somewhat famous Elder Thurston, now no more; an honest man, and popular as a preacher, but incapable of managing important matters of business, such as he was foolishly encouraged to undertake, in connection with this church. Through his incapacity, more than ten thousand dollars was lost, in the course of six years, and a tremendous panic ensued. He was denounced as a thief, and indicted and convicted of cheating; but the Supreme Court set the verdict aside, and the prosecution of the elder was stopped.

Then arose controversies about the church property, which was under more than fifty attachments at once. These suits ended adversely to the society; and on July 29th, 1846, the deacons were forcibly ejected from the church by Joseph Butterfield, a Deputy Sheriff, on an execution issued upon a judgment belonging to Benjamin F. Butler, Thomas Hopkins, and Tappan Wentworth, who personally assisted in ousting the deacons.

That comedy might follow tragedy, the new proprietors, Benjamin F. Butler and Fisher A. Hildreth, converted the church into a museum and theatre. After being used thus for nine years, once struck by lightning, and three times burned, in 1856, this ill-starred edifice was fitted up for a dance-hall, a bowling alley, lawyers' offices, a newspaper office, an exchange, etc.

Attempts have been made to use one part of it as a lecture-hall, but without success; though the famous Lola Montez, the discarded mistress of the late king of Bavaria, delivered her lecture on Beautiful Women here. Nor have the attempts to use this edifice as a caucus-hall been any more successful. The last attempt of the kind was made in 1860. On that memorable occasion, Theodore H. Sweetser began a speech but just as he was capping his first climax, a gentleman who

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*8 Metcalf, 301; 2 Cushing, 597; 4 Cushing, 302.
disapproved of his remarks, suddenly turned off the gas, and "brought down the house" in the wildest merriment and confusion.

The strategical manoeuverings by which this edifice was transferred from the ecclesiastical proprietors to their lay successors, were none too creditable to the consciences of the manipulators. But perhaps they did not fully realize the scandalousness of their proceedings, and failed to hear the still, small voice of conscience in following the more clamorous calls of avarice and ambition.

More than twenty years have now elapsed since the perversion of this edifice into a museum. Let us hope that before another twenty years have rolled by, this church—the monument of the piety of the factory girls of Lowell—will be restored to its original purposes, and reconsecrated to the worship of the everliving God.

In 1853, another edifice was built on Paige street, costing $16,700, now occupied by this church. The pastors of this church have been—Revs. Nathaniel Thurston, Jonathan Wood-
man, Silas Curtis, A. K. Moulton, J. B. Davis, Darwin Mott, (a wolf in sheep's clothing, who finally ran away with another man's wife,) George W. Bean, and J. B. Drew.

The Second Universalist Church was gathered in 1836, and the house erected in 1837, at a cost of $20,000. The pastors of this church have been—Z. Thompson, from 1837 to 1839; Abel C. Thomas, from 1839 to 1842; A. A. Miner, D. D., from 1842 to 1848; L. J. Fletcher, who became involved in his domestic relations, and remained but a few months; L. B. Mason, from 1848 to 1849; I. D. Williamson, from 1849 to 1850; N. M. Gaylord, from 1850 to 1853. John S. Dennis, Charles Cravens and Charles H. Dutton were then settled here for a few months each. In 1859, Rev. L. J. Fletcher again became pastor, having, since his former settlement, run a varied career as preacher, play-writer, actor, gold-miner, school-master, lawyer, politician, judge of insolvency, etc. His second pastorate continued three years, and was eminently successful. Rev. F. E. Hicks succeeded Mr. Fletcher, but soon died, and was succeeded in 1866 by Rev. John G. Adams.

On July 4th, 1836, the Lowell Sabbath School Union was organized, by the pastors of the several evangelical churches, and the superintendents and teachers of the various Sunday Schools connected therewith.

The John Street (Orthodox) Congregational Church was organized May 9th, 1839. Their edifice was built the same year, at a cost of $20,000, and dedicated January 24th, 1840. Rev. Stedman W. Hanks, the first pastor, was ordained March 20th, 1840, and dismissed February 3rd, 1853. He was succeeded by Rev. Eden B. Foster, D. D., who resigned his charge in 1861, but resumed his ministrations here in 1866. During his absence, Rev. Joseph W. Backus, was pastor.

In 1840, the Third Baptist Church was organized. In 1846, the edifice now occupied by the Central Methodist Church, was built for this society, costing about $14,000. After battling for life for nearly twenty years, under the pastorate of Revs.
John G. Naylor, Ira Person, John Duncan, Sereno Howe, John Duer, and John Hubbard, this church was disbanded in 1861.

The mention of the Rev. Sereno Howe renders it proper to say, that during his seven years' residence in Lowell, from 1849 to 1856, his private life was irreproachable. That he afterward became addicted to licentious indulgencies, in Abington, may, in charity, be attributed to constitutional infirmities, against which he may have struggled long and bravely, but in vain.

"What's done we partly may compute;
But know not what's resisted."

The Worthen Street Methodist Episcopal Church was organized October 2nd, 1841, and the edifice erected in 1842, at a cost of $8,800. The succession of pastors has been—Revs. A. D. Sargeant, A. D. Merrill, J. S. Springer, Isaac A. Savage, Charles Adams, I. J. P. Collyer, M. A. Howe, J. W. Dadmun,
William H. Hatch, A. D. Sargeant, (again), L. R. Thayer, William H. Hatch, (again), and J. O. Peck, one of the gayest Lotharios that ever flourished in the Lowell pulpit. Rev. George Whittaker succeeded Mr. Peck in 1867.

St Peter's Roman Catholic Church was gathered on Christmas Day, 1841, and the edifice built the same year, costing $22,000. Rev. James Conway, the first pastor of St. Peter's, was succeeded in March, 1847, by Rev. Peter Crudden.

In 1843, the Lowell Missionary Society established a Ministry-at-Large after the style of that established in Boston by the Rev. Dr. Tuckerman. Rev. Horatio Wood has officiated in this ministry since 1844. He has also labored assiduously and successfully in Free Evening Schools, Sunday Mission Schools, etc.

The Kirk Street Congregational Church dates from 1845, and the edifice from 1846. The cost of the land, edifice, organ, etc., was $22,000. Rev. Amos Blanchard, D. D., has been pastor of this church ever since its organization.
In the substantial elements of parochial strength, this church is one of the strongest in Lowell. Yet four lines suffice for its history—it having had no changes in its pastorate, no heresy, no schism, no scamps, no scandal. "Happy are the people whose annals are barren."

The High Street Congregational Church was organized in 1846. Their edifice, which cost $12,500, was built by St. Luke's Church, an Episcopal society which was formed in 1842, and which perished in 1844, under Rev. A. D. McCoy. The pastors have been—Rev. Timothy Atkinson, from 1846 to 1847; Rev. Joseph H. Towne, from 1848 to 1853; and Rev. O. T. Lamphier, from 1855 to 1856. Rev. Owen Street, the present pastor, was installed September 17th, 1857.

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church was originally built for the Baptists, but was ill located for any Protestant sect. After passing through various vicissitudes, in 1846, it was purchased by the late Rev. James T. McDermott, and consecrated March 7th, 1847. Father McDermott's independence of mind involved him in a controversy with his Diocesan, the late Bishop Fitzpatrick; and for years this church has been closed. This
is much to be regretted; for in Lowell, as in all the centres of population, the Roman Catholic Church has a great body of the poor and laboring classes in her communion; and as Brownson remarks, “the country is more indebted than it is aware of, to the Catholic priesthood, for their labors among this portion of our population.”

In 1843, the Third Universalist Church was organized, and the edifice now known as Barrister’s Hall built for its use. But after a languid existence under Revs. H. G. Smith, John Moore, H. G. Smith, (again), and L. J. Fletcher, it was dissolved. The two last pastors of this church were not in full fellowship with their denomination, but preached independently as ecclesiastical guerrillas.

The Central Methodist Church occupied this edifice, after the collapse of the Universalist society, until 1861, when they secured the building of the Third Baptist Church, then defunct. This Central Methodist society was gathered in 1854. The pastors have been—Revs. William S. Studley,

*Father O’Brien estimates the number of Roman Catholics in Lowell to be fifteen thousand.*
Isaac S. Cushman, Isaac J. P. Collyer, Chester Field, Lorenzo R. Thayer and J. H. Mansfield. Rev. Andrew McKeown succeeded Mr. Mansfield in 1865, and remained two years. He was succeeded in 1867 by Rev. William C. High.

In 1850, a picturesque stone edifice, of Gothic style, with stained windows, was erected on Lee street, at a cost of $20,000. It was designed for a Unitarian society, organized in 1846, which occupied it until 1861, whose pastors were Revs. M. A. H. Niles, William Barry, Augustus Woodbury, J. K. Karcher, John B. Willard, and William C. Tenney.

Since 1864 it has been occupied by a society of Spiritualists. The wooden edifice on Prescott street containing Leonard Worcester's clothes-making establishment, has an ecclesiastical history that must not be lost. It was the first church erected by the Episcopal Methodists in Lowell, and was built in 1827. It stood originally at the corner of Elm and Central
streets. It is from this church or chapel that Chapel Hill derives its name. On the completion of the Hurd street church in 1839, this edifice was closed. But on the organization of the Wesleyan Methodists as a separate denomination, this church passed into their hands. In 1843, it was removed to Prescott Street. Here successively preached Revs. E. S. Potter, James Hardy, Merritt Bates, William H. Brewster, and Daniel Foster, who became Chaplain of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1857, and subsequently Chaplain of the Thirty-Third Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, and who was killed in battle at Fort Harrison, September 30th, 1864, while in command of a company of the Thirty-Seventh Colored Troops.

If Captain Foster was the last, Mr. Hardy was the most popular in this succession of pastors. He began his ministry here in 1846, and flourished brilliantly for a time, selecting the best sermons of the ablest English divines, and palming them off as his own—his too credulous people admiring and wondering at his ability and versatility.

"And still he talked, and still the wonder grew, That one small head could carry all he knew."

Mr. Hardy, however, proved anything but a good shepherd. He developed tendencies toward practical Mormonism and Free Love. He not only had one wife too many, but he was discovered in a liaison with one of the ladies of his choir, and his pastorate was brought to an abrupt termination. He subsequently "took a degree" in a New York penitentiary for bigamy, and died ingloriously.

On July 5th, 1855, the stone edifice on Merrimack street erected by the late William Wyman, was dedicated as a Methodist Protestant Church. There preached Revs. William Marks, Richard H. Dorr, Robert Crossley, and others,

*Mr. Brewster had previously been pastor of a second Wesleyan society, which long occupied the edifice on Lowell street, where Rev. Timothy Cole formerly preached.

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both clerical and lay, not the least of whom was Captain Wyman himself. But after a few years the enterprise aborted; and the edifice passed into the hands of the Second Adventists, a society formed here as early as 1842.

St. John's Episcopal church was erected in 1861, and consecrated by Bishop Eastburn, July 16th, 1863. Rev. Charles W. Homer, who had previously been assistant minister at St. Anne's, was the first rector. On November 22nd, 1862, he resigned, and was succeeded in 1863, by Rev. Cornelius B. Smith, to whom in 1866 succeeded Rev. Charles L. Hutchins. In this edifice is a Memorial Window to the late Elisha Huntington.

Besides the churches herein chronicled, others have been formed at various times, which acquired no permanent foothold, but experienced all varieties of fortune, and passed into the limbo of oblivion, leaving no discernable footprints on the ever-changing sands of time.

The number of churches now "in commission" here is eighteen. The population of Lowell is about forty thousand. If, then, we assume each church to have, upon an average, six hundred attendants, we shall have, in the aggregate, ten thousand eight hundred church-goers; and if to this we add twenty-two hundred who are reached through the Ministry-at-Large, the Mission Schools, etc., we shall still have twenty-seven thousand souls unprovided with stated religious instruction.