

[Third Universalist Society, New York City]

THE RIVAL PASTORS
MR. M'CARTHY ON HIS DEFENSE.
INFIDELITY IN THE BLEECKER-STREET SOCIETY—A SUNDAY-SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENT WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION—
THE SKELETON WHICH THE DEFENDANT DRAGGED FORTH

The crowd in attendance at the trial of Rev. C. P. McCarthy yesterday morning was greater than on any day since the commencement of the case. The greater part of the morning session was occupied in the introduction of testimony to prove that the charge of infidelity against the Bleecker-Street Church, so far from being invented by Mr. McCarthy was borne out by the facts, and that several of the leading church members were notorious advocates of skeptical principles. The first witness was Mr. Edward Millen. He testified that he had been a member of Mr. Sweetser's church up to the time that McCarthy was dismissed from the temporary pastorate; the reason why he [the witness] had left was because, in his judgment, Mr. McCarthy had been ill-treated; Mr. Sweetser had, prior to his bringing the charges against Mr. McCarthy, called at the house of the witness and had a conversation with him; the persons present were Mr. Sweetser, Mr. Elwell, Mr. and Mrs. Cole, and himself; Mr. Sweetser said that he thought Mr. McCarthy was a bad man, and that he wasn't justified in preaching the farewell sermon.

Mr. McCarthy—What else did Mr. Sweetser say against me?

A.—He denounced you generally I don't remember his exact words; witness afterward went to Sweetser with a proposal from Mr. McCarthy that he [Sweetser] should withdraw his charges and apologize, but Mr. Sweetser refused, saying that he would "fight it out to the bitter end;" at that time the prosecutor told witness that "he was surprised that witness should stick to a man like McCarthy." Mr. Millen also testified to Mr. Robert F. Smith's stating that a child had asked him whether he believed in the resurrection of Christ, and that he [Smith] had said that he could not tell the child a lie, and that he had therefore said "No." Mr. Smith had also expressed a disbelief in the divinity of Christ.

Mr. McCarthy—Paul and Christ were two tremendous heretics according to this. [Laughter.]

On the cross-examination, the witness stated that the proposal from Mr. McCarthy referred to did not include the withdrawal of the suit for \$10,000 damages against Mr. Sweetser.

At this point the counsel for the defense announced that they had been informed that the committee had Monday afternoon held a private conference with the prosecutor, and asked, in justice to their side, that what passed at that conference should be revealed to them. This request the committee peremptorily refused, without, however, venturing to deny that such a conference had taken place. One of the members defended it on the ground that the civil courts had a right to consult with the District Attorney.

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Mr. Shook—Yes, but Mr. Sweetser is not the District Attorney. [Laughter and applause.]

Mr. Isaac P. Valentine testified to the expressions of infidel opinions charged against Brother Smith and others, but threw little new light on the case.

At the evening session Mrs. John Biddle was called as the first witness. She testified that she had been connected with the church some 25 years, and that up to the date of the present troubles she had respected and admired Mr. Sweetser for his preaching; she left because she thought Mr. McCarthy had been unjustly treated; she had learned that the Superintendent of the Sunday-school did not believe in the resurrection of Christ, and she did not wish to have her children imbibe such sentiments. The witness stated that Mr. Sweetser, shortly after his return from Europe, had had an interview with her, in which he admitted that this infidelity existed in the church, and that Messrs. Smith, McAdam, and Ormsby were the leading spirits in it.

Mr. McCarthy himself was the next witness. He said his name was Charles Peter McCarthy, and that he had been a minister in the Universalist Church in this country since the year 1850. Witness testified in answer to the questions of his counsel that he had heard the two farewell sermons he had preached in the Bleecker-Street Church, (laughter), and positively denied that they contained any false or injurious statements concerning the church, its Trustees, or its Pastor. Mr. McCarthy also testified that he had admitted to Mr. Sweetser that the article in the *Herald* was true only so far as the "statement" was concerned, and that the rest of it had been woven by the reportorial ingenuity out of the ideas contained in those two sermons. "As to those two sermons," added Mr. McCarthy, "if the court desires it, I will preach them over again here for its edification, and," turning to Col. Allen, for yours also, Mr. *Amicus Curiae*. [Loud laughter.] Later on in the course of his examination, the defendant stated the episode of his uncompleted call to Nashua, N.H., adding that he had been told that the Nashua church had the reputation of being "coquettish"—"something in the manner of which our respected *amicus curiae* is giving us such a beautiful example." This palpable hit at Col. Allen, who had been wiling away the dull intervals by animated conversations in an undertone with several of his fair neighbors, called forth prolonged laughter and applause, in which the Colonel good-humoredly joined. At the conclusion of the direct examination, which covered the principal points in the defendant's opening address, Mr. Sweetser asked a few unimportant questions by way of cross-examination, and the court adjourned until to-day.

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