CONSECRATION SERVICES

OF

TRINITY CHURCH, BOSTON,

FEBRUARY 9, 1877,

WITH THE

CONSECRATION SERMON, BY REV. A. H. VINTON, D. D.

AN

HISTORICAL SERMON, BY REV. PHILLIPS BROOKS,

AND A

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH EDIFICE,
BY H. H. RICHARDSON, ARCHITECT.

BOSTON:
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1877.

HISTORICAL SERMON.

BY THE REV. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

1 KINGS VIII. 57.

THE LORD OUR GOD BE WITH US, AS HE WAS WITH OUR FATHERS: LET HIM NOT LEAVE US, NOR FORSAKE US.

AT last the work is done. The cares and perplexities which have filled these last four years, the unsettlement and restlessness are over, and we stand, a strong and happy parish, in this noble Church, which on last Friday we consecrated to Almighty God. I see to-day for the first time, your well-known faces in the unfamiliar pews, which yet have given you such a large, motherly welcome, that it does not all seem strange. We look around upon these walls which are to make the home in which we shall more and more love to live. This first parish service opens the long series of thousands of such services, in which we and those who come after us shall here worship the Lord in whom we trust. Let us ask together that, in fulfillment of the Psalmist's prayer, the Lord may indeed "send us help from the sanctuary, and strengthen us out of Zion."

I want to-day not merely to look forward with you, but to look back. My text is taken from the great prayer which was read at our Consecration Service, the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of his completed Temple. At the end of the chapter which precedes that prayer, there is a verse which always seems to me to be full of significance and beauty. We read that "So was ended all the work that King Solomon made for the house of the Lord. And Solomon brought in the things which David, his father, had dedicated; even the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the Lord." The sacred things of the father were brought into the temple of the son. It is a picture of the way in which the piety of the generations always must be bound together. We would not have our Church unblessed by all the past faith and devotion of our parish. It seems to me that to-day is the time for us to remember what has gone before us in the history of Trinity Church, and so in our way bring in the things which our fathers have dedicated, and put them among the treasures of this house of the Lord which we have built. I think that there is no fitter use to which I can give this first Sunday morning sermon.

For a parish has a continuous life, which is not broken by the change of generations. And a parish

which for years has filled a place and done a work like ours in Boston, cannot forget its past. This is the same old parish which your fathers loved. These walls repeat the walls in which they worshiped. We must not let the historical continuity be broken. It has been rich in strong, wise and good men. It has blessed many souls, and enriched the life of our beloved city for almost a century and a half. Let me to-day, then, try, in such brief outline as a sermon will allow, to tell its story so that we may see upon how deep a foundation of the past we are to build the future, with the hopes of which our hearts are full.

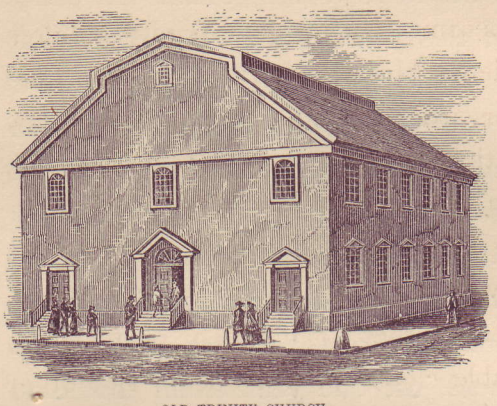
The beginning of the Episcopal Church in Boston was not hopeful. The Puritans, who had brought from the mother country a prejudice almost amounting to hatred for the Church of England, were naturally jealous when they found that Church desirous of establishing itself on this new soil, and so one attempt after another came to nothing. It was not till the year 1686, when Boston was more than fifty years old, that the first Episcopal services were held in the Town House, which stood where the old State House now stands. There "Mr. Ratcliffe was granted the east end of the Town House, where the deputies used to meet, until those who desire his ministry shall provide a fitter place." He was refused the use of either of the three meeting houses of

the town. The same year Sir Edmund Andros came to Boston, and, after various fruitless negotiations, in the next spring he tyrannically took possession of the Old South meeting house for the worship of his own Church; and on Good Friday, March 24, 1687, the sexton opened the doors of that Puritan temple under the command of Andros, which ordered him "to open and ring the bell for those of the Church of England." On Easter Sunday the Governor again occupied the same place, and had the full service; and during the rest of his administration the Governor used this house as a place of worship, whenever he wished.

The next step was the erection of King's Chapel in 1689, with gifts and privileges from the crown. From that time the worship of the Church of England may be said to have been fairly established in our city. It was not the worship of the people. It belonged to certain classes, but always there were people here who loved it, and it grew. An attempt to have Bishops consecrated for this country was made, but failed. The Church labored under the inconveniences of dependency. Every minister must go to England to be ordained. Yet still it grew. The King's Chapel was enlarged in 1710, and in 1723 the number of Episcopalians had so increased that a new Church was founded in the north part of Boston, and called Christ Church.

So stood our town in 1728. An old wood cut shows the King's Chapel, a hard, angular, wooden building, with a low, square tower, surmounted by a tall finial bearing a crown, and, far above the crown, a cock for a vane. The new Christ Church stood as it stands in venerable dignity to-day, and as we hope it may stand for many years to come. But in this year, 1728, "by reason that the Chapel is full, and no pews to be bought by new comers," the first steps were taken for the building of a new Church to be called TRINITY. The land was bought at the corner of Summer street and Bishop's alley for £514 7*s.* 2*d.*, and the corner stone was laid on the 15th of April, 1734, by the Rev. Roger Price, Rector of King's Chapel, and commissary of the Bishop of London. The first service was held just one year from that day. "The Rev. Mr. Roger Price, his Lordship's commissary, preached the first sermon," so say the ancient Records, "from the tenth chapter of the Hebrews and twenty-third verse: — 'Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering,' which sermon was preached before a large number of people, his Excellency, Jonathan Belcher, Esq., being present, and likewise were the subscribers, Thomas Child, William Price, Thomas Greene, Committee." And so, in a service like that which we are holding here to-day, the career of Trinity Church began, April 15, 1734.

That first structure is not beyond the memory of many who are with us. It was of wood, ninety feet long and sixty broad, and the old pictures of it show us an exterior of such exemplary plainness, as would delight the souls of those who grudge the House of God the touch of beauty. "It had neither tower, nor steeple, nor windows in the lower story of the front. There were three entrances * in front, unprotected by porches." Indeed, its exterior is almost exactly what one sees in multitudes of Pennsylvania Quaker Meeting Houses. But the interior, as all bear witness, was bright and pleasant and impressive. Its roof was a great "arch, resting on Corinthian pillars, with handsomely carved and gilded capitals. In the chancel were some paintings, considered very beautiful in their day." On the whole, no doubt, a goodly, sober, pleasant Church, where the people worshiped, and the children grew up with happy love for the Gospel which



OLD TRINITY CHURCH.

* Our engraving is from Drake's "Landmarks of Boston," published by Roberts Brothers.

they heard, and for the place in which they heard it, and their children followed them, generation after generation, for almost a century.

The first minister of Trinity was the Rev. ADDINGTON DAVENPORT. He had been assistant minister of the King's Chapel, and became Rector of Trinity Church soon after it was opened. He was born in Boston, and was a graduate of Harvard. He was the brother-in-law of Peter Faneuil, and that distinguished citizen occupied, we find, Pew No. 40 in old Trinity. During his brother-in-law's Rectorship, he gave the Church £100 towards the purchase of a new bell; and about the same time Governor Shirley presented the Communion plate which we still use, and the table cloths, prayer books, and other gifts, which show the kindly feeling that existed toward the new Parish. Evidently it had taken at once a most respectable position in the town.

Of our first Rector we do not get a very clear impression: all that we hear of him impresses us with good sound sense. He evidently knew how to be firm and yet conciliatory. In some trouble which occurred between Mr. Price of the Chapel and the new Church, Mr. Davenport bears himself with quiet dignity. There are on record some conditions which he made when he accepted the Rectorship, which show his foresight and

judiciousness. In all that he did he evidently intended work. He was Rector for six years, and then, in failing health, he went to England, where he died in 1746.

What was the character of the preaching which they heard in those days in that ancient Trinity, it is not hard to guess. The Church in the Colonies echoed the Church in England, and the Church in England, during the first half of the eighteenth century, has a character that is clearly marked. It was not a time of ardent piety. From the time of the Restoration, enthusiasm had been in disesteem. The philosophy of John Locke held sway in the schools. Christianity had come to be considered as perpetually on the defensive, and the religious literature of the time consisted in large part of the statement of the external evidences of the faith, the reconciliations of its requirements with human reason, the historical arguments for this or that form of government, or the enforcement of some moral duty. There was great ability and learning among the theologians and the preachers. The age of Barrow, and Tillotson, and South, was past, but Waterland, and Berkeley, and Doddridge, and Sherlock, and Warburton, and above all, Bishop Butler, were keeping high the intellectual standard of their time. But everything shared in that uninspired character which has fastened itself irrevocably to the early part of the eighteenth century.

The English Deists were uttering what they called the religion of common sense. It was the time of which it has been said that it was "an age destitute of depth or earnestness,—an age whose poetry was without romance, whose philosophy was without insight, and whose public men were without character:" an age of light without love, whose very merits were of the earth, earthy. The credibility of the Christian religion, and the advantages of virtue,—these were the perennial topics. The infidel was convicted of unreasonableness, Sunday after Sunday. The sinner was proved to be unthrifty, over and over again.

These were the subjects, beyond a doubt, to which your fathers listened from the lips of our first ministers. It was not the loftiest preaching. It did not go to the deepest motives or results. It dealt with no profound experiences. It had nothing rapt or mystical about it. It was clear as crystal. It was cold, no doubt, as marble. Under its coldness was preparing the great spiritual outbreak which the last quarter of the century witnessed in many forms. But while we see that it was not the highest preaching, we may still own that there was in the preaching of those days a sturdy common sense, and a stout moral fibre, which could not help bringing forth good results in the natures which were ripened under its influence.

But to return to Trinity. Our second Rector, the successor of Mr. Davenport, is a man who stands with considerable distinctness before us. The Rev. WILLIAM HOOPER had been Pastor of the West Congregational Church, in Cambridge Street, ever since it was gathered in 1737. Suddenly, in the autumn of 1746, without the slightest notice of his intention, he broke away from his old associations and became an Episcopalian. It must have made a great talk in the little town. He had been beloved and honored in his Church, and everybody was filled with surprise. At once the proprietors of Trinity Church chose him to be their Rector, and he sailed for England, and came back in 1747, in full orders. He took charge of our parish immediately, and retained it for twenty years, till in 1767 he suddenly fell dead as he was walking in his garden.

He seems to have been thoroughly a man of his time. He left the Congregationalists, partly because of the argument for Episcopacy, but mainly because of the more liberal and rational theology which he had imbibed. The latitude of the Church attracted him. The Scripture and natural reason were his oracles. He was an honest and brave man, and his ministry must have been thoroughly wholesome. One of his successors, Dr. Bartol, the present minister of the West Church, wrote of him twenty years ago, "If he had faults, of which the register does

not appear, though some may think his desertion of his people implied them. I am confident they were not those of hypocrisy or double-dealing in any form; and his summary leave-taking of his charge, showed, perhaps, only a nature whose first necessity, like that of all great natures, was conformity between its action and its thought." It does not sound strange to us, after this, that his son was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

It was during the ministry of Mr. Hooper, that the Greene Foundation for the support of an assistant minister was established, by the gift of the heirs of Mr. Thomas Greene, supplemented by the contribution of other members of the parish. It has done good service, and has brought into connection with us many men of great ability and eminence. Its last and best work has been the re-establishment of the parish of St. Mark's Church in this city, which is now so full of hope and promise.

The first Assistant Minister on the Foundation was Dr. WILLIAM WALTER, and on the death of Mr. Hooper, he became the Rector of the parish. He had been bred a Congregationalist, but became a member of our Church, and went to London for ordination. For ten years he served Trinity with faithfulness, and then the beginning of the Revolution came. On the 17th of March, 1776, Boston was evacuated by the British, and the minister of Trinity went with General Howe and the British troops

to Halifax, in Nova Scotia, where he remained until the Revolution was over. Then he returned to Boston, and became the Rector of Christ Church. He died in 1800, and his funeral sermon was preached by his successor in Trinity, Dr. Parker. That sermon gives us a good idea of the faithful and earnest parish minister, and though in those hot days of patriotic zeal there was no chance for one who was out of sympathy with the cause of the Colonies, to be the preacher here, the very fact that when the war was over the royalist could come back to Boston and become again the Rector of a parish in the town, bears witness to the honor in which he must have been held.

The Revolution then had come. The English Church, which was to the people here the Church of their oppressors, most naturally fell into dislike, even greater than that with which the old Puritan feeling had regarded it. Every patriotic soul distrusted it. It was a hard time for Episcopacy here in Boston. Christ Church was closed from 1775 to 1778. King's Chapel was shut up, after its minister had fled to Halifax, until, by a poetic justice which seemed to revenge the arbitrariness with which the Old South meeting house had been seized and used by Sir Edmund Andros in the century before, the Old South people worshiped in the Chapel from 1777 to 1783. Only Trinity stood through the war, always open for

worship and keeping alight the endangered fire of the Church.

This post of honor, this good record, she owes mainly to Dr. SAMUEL PARKER, who had been the Assistant on the Greene Foundation from 1773, and who became minister of the Church after Dr. Walter's sudden departure. His long ministry gives a large part of its character to our history. He is the first of the three personages who stand out clearest and strongest in our picture. His calm, judicious, dignified behavior, evidently made possible the continuance of our services in Revolutionary times. His catholic spirit is evident in all his actions. Once he even allowed a Requiem Mass, with the full Roman Catholic ceremonial, to be celebrated in Trinity Church, to the great disgust of at least one of his parishioners. He was a clear, strong, unbigoted Churchman, to whom the Churches naturally looked for counsel and example, and to whom in his later life they turned by ready instinct when they were seeking for a Bishop. His children's children, and their children, are with us now; and his family, in every generation, has made a large part of the strength of Trinity.

It must have been a strange, exciting day, when on Thursday, the 18th day of July, 1776, Dr. Parker called the Wardens and Vestry of the Church together, and told them that "he could not with safety perform the

service of the Church for the future, as the Continental Congress had declared the American Provinces free and independent States; had absolved them from all allegiance to the British crown, and had dissolved all political connection between them and the realm of England." The news had evidently just arrived from Philadelphia. "He told them that he had been publicly interrupted the Sunday before, when he read the prayers for the King. He was sure that he could not read the service as it then stood, another Sunday. He begged their counsel and advice." The Wardens and Vestry were wise and prudent men. Probably they were also Americans and patriots. They concluded that "it would be more for the interest and cause of Episcopacy, and the least evil of the two, to omit a part of the Liturgy, than to shut up the Church." And they hoped "that, in this sad alternative, it will not be imputed to them as a fault, or construed as a want of affection for the Liturgy of the Church, if under these circumstances they omit that part of it in which the King is mentioned." So Trinity threw in her lot with the country, and under her wise Rector lived through those troublous times. "To the noble conduct of our deceased friend," said Dr. Gardiner of Dr. Parker, in his funeral sermon, "must doubtless be attributed the preservation of the Episcopal Church in this town." So that we to-day owe him a debt which is

easy to trace, and pleasant to acknowledge. In this new chancel a memorial window is to tell of his perpetual honor in the parish.

So time passed by. The open doors of Trinity welcomed those few who would still attend the English service; and after a while the war was over. Independence was secured. The Colonies were States. The nation had begun to live. Then came the long and doubtful struggle whether the Episcopal Church in this country should still maintain its life. This is not the place to tell the story of that struggle. It was the existence of a few parishes like this of ours, which mainly insured the possibility, and ultimately brought about success. Slowly the Church renewed its life, and rooted itself among the people, changing its character to meet the changed times, making itself an American Church. It has grown with the growth of the country from that day to this. We can never be thankful enough for the wisdom that directed her then. Keeping her reverence for all sacred associations of the past, she did genuinely cut herself free from all authority of the Church of England. She enlarged the freedom of her standards. She simplified the methods of her government. She established herself a free Church in a free State. Therein was her strength and hope. Therein her hope and strength must always be. If ever our Church goes back,

and cumbers herself with the precedents, and submits herself to the influence or authority of the English Church, her power in this land is gone. She must be part and parcel of this people. She must be in heart and soul American, or she is nothing. She must have her sympathies here, and not across the sea. She must have her gaze and enthusiasm fixed upon the future of America, and not upon the past of England: or else she loses that fair heritage, which the eye of faith might have seen opening before her on the day when the Wardens and Vestry of Trinity voted that they would not close the Church, but that they would cease to acknowledge the King; voted, in a word, that they and their Church would be American.

Dr. Parker was chosen Bishop of Massachusetts in 1804. But he died in the same year, before he had done any Episcopal service in his diocese. Before his death another ministry had begun, which was destined to be long and influential in the history of Trinity, and which reached to a period which not a few of those who are now listening to me can well remember. The Rev. Dr. JOHN SYLVESTER JOHN GARDINER was chosen assistant minister of this Church in 1792, and in 1805 he was made its Rector. He was in charge of the parish when he died in England, where he had gone to seek for health in 1830. Through those twenty-five years Dr.

Gardiner administered the affairs of the parish alone, letting the income of the Greene Foundation accumulate, that it might be sufficient to render to the parish the aid which it has since afforded.

Dr. Gardiner's ministry must always be one of those which give character to the history of our parish. His broad and finished scholarship, his strong and vigorous manhood, his genial hospitality, his kindly pastorship, his fatherly affection, and his eloquence and wit, made him for forty years a marked and influential person, not merely in the Church but in the town. Dr. Doane, who was his successor, preached a sermon at his death, in which he commemorates the man, the scholar, and the Christian minister, in terms of glowing eulogy, which evidently appealed with confidence to the affection of those who listened, for their full justification. It is pleasant to know that the memory of Dr. Gardiner, too, will be honored by one of the memorial windows, which before long will fill our chancel. The remembrance of his ministry will never pass away, and we pray that his descendants may always make a valued and honored part of our parish, as they do to-day.

The events of such a useful, honorable ministry as his are few. What events there are, melt together, as we look back upon them, into one smooth and even flow of prosperous life. In 1811, the Church reported

fifty baptisms and one hundred and fifty regular communicants. In 1819, the movements began which led to the establishment of St. Paul's Church, which has done so much good work, and is now gathering itself up anew for a work as good, as noble, as any that it has done before. All this was full of interest for Trinity.

But now the time came when the old Church building, which had stood almost a hundred years, was growing weak with age. Perhaps the town, also, and the parish were growing rich and luxurious. The old sanctuary no longer satisfied the people, and those first movements which portend the building of a new Church began to show themselves. We, who have labored for the last four years, and watched with such anxiety and satisfaction the rising of this House of God, can understand the experiences of our fathers. The Proprietors voted, in 1828, to take down the venerable structure, which Mr. Commissary Price, long since gone back to England and gathered to his fathers, had dedicated almost a century before, and to build a new one. This new Church was finally consecrated by Bishop Griswold, on the 11th of November, 1829. There were some ancient people who never ceased, up to the day when the flames wrapt its granite walls in glory, and devoured the painted pride of its interior, to call the building where we worshiped till within five years, "the new Church."

It was a noble building in its day. It was one of the first of the Gothic buildings of this country which were built after Church architecture had begun to waken and aspire, and few that followed it equalled its dignity and calm impressiveness. The lighter and more fantastic styles of building sprang up in the city. The timber spires that made believe that they were stone, leaped up with unnatural levity into the sky; the cheap stone sculpture covered and deformed great, feeble fronts; the reign of imitation came; and in the midst of all of them Trinity stood, in its exterior at least, strong, genuine, solid, with its great rough stones, its broad, bold bands of sculpture, its battlemented tower, like a great castle of the truth, — grim, no doubt, and profoundly serious, but yet able to win from those who worshiped there for years, an affectionate confidence, and even a tender, yearning love. It lost, in course of time, its personal association with Dr. Gardiner, as this building will lose in time its immediate

TRINITY CHURCH, SUMMER STREET.

connection with those who have been most interested in its erection, but Dr. Doane, in 1830, said, in the then new Trinity, of the just departed minister,—"This noble edifice is the enduring monument of his performances." He had lived only to begin his services there after its consecration, when death summoned him away.

The death of Dr. Gardiner was followed by a somewhat rapid change of ministers for a few years. Dr. George W. Doane became Rector, and Dr. John Henry Hopkins, in the following year, was made assistant. In the next year, the Rector was made Bishop of New Jersey, and his assistant, Bishop of Vermont. In 1833, the Rev. Dr. Jonathan M. Wainwright was elected Rector, and for five years, which many of you that listen to me still gratefully remember, he served the parish, enriching its life with his graceful culture, and conscientious, pastoral care. Then he returned to New York, where he was shortly made Bishop. Two years later, with the election of the Rev. Dr. Manton Eastburn, began a third of those long and notable ministries, which have characterized the history of Trinity Church.

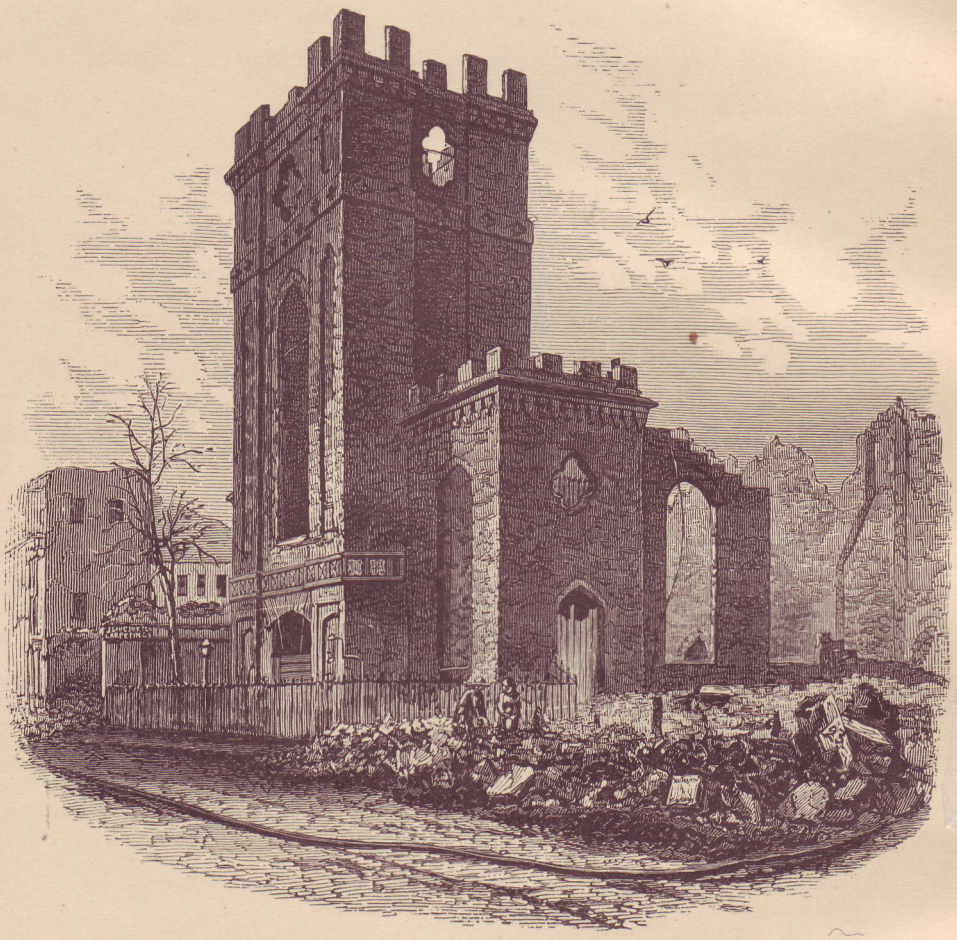
But by this time a change had come over the theology and preaching of the English Church, The great revival movements of the last quarter of the eighteenth century had taken place. Methodism had shaken the torpid Church from end to end. The evangelical revival, with

its sturdy and earnest leaders and representatives, Wilberforce, Newton, Romaine and Simeon, and Henry Martyn and Venn, had filled men's hearts with the spirit of piety and prayer. The Church in this country had felt the reäwakened life. Whitefield had been here in Boston, and though he might not be allowed, Church of England minister as he was, to preach in Trinity, he had aroused a great revival.

The evangelical movement had its zealous men here and there throughout the land. The peculiarities of that movement were an earnest insistance upon doctrine, and upon personal spiritual experience, of neither of which had the previous generation made very much. Man's fallen state, his utter hopelessness, the vicarious atonement, the supernatural conversion, the work of the Holy Spirit, — these were the truths which the men of those days, who were what were called evangelical men, urged with the force of vehement belief upon their hearers. They were great truths. There were crude, hard and untrue statements of them very often, but they went deep; they laid hold upon the souls and consciences of men. They created most profound experiences. They made many great ministers and noble Christians. It was indeed the work of God.

To those of you who were his parishioners and friends, who heard him preach year after year, and

knew what lay nearest to his heart, I need not say how entirely Bishop Eastburn was a man of this movement. His whole life was full of it. He had preached its Gospel in New York with wonderful success and power. He bore his testimony to it to the last in Boston. A faith that was very beautiful in its childlike reliance upon God; a sturdy courage which would have welcomed the martyrdom of more violent days; a complete, unquestioning, unchanging loyalty to the ideas which he had once accepted; a deep personal piety, which, knowing the happiness of divine communion, desired that blessedness for other souls; a wide sympathy for all of every name who were working for the ends which he loved and desired; these, with his kindly heart and constancy in friendship, made the power of the long ministry of Bishop Eastburn. The teaching of this parish through twenty-six years was most direct and simple. There was a dread, even, of other forms in which the same awakening of spiritual life was manifest. The High Churchman and the Broad Churchman found no tolerance. But the preacher was one whom all men honored, whose strong moral force impressed the young and old, whose sturdy independence was like a strong east wind, and who went to his reward crowned with the love of many and the respect of all. It seems but yesterday that his familiar figure passed away. His voice is still fresh in our ears.



RUINS OF TRINITY CHURCH, SUMMER STREET.

The old Church comes back, and he stands there in its pulpit, as he must always stand, among the most marked and vigorous figures in our parish history. It would not be right to renew our Church life without cordial remembrance of his strength and faithfulness. To him, too, we will give a window in our chancel; and between the memories of Parker and Gardiner, the memory of Eastburn shall shine, the central memory of the Church he served so long.

Bishop Eastburn's ministry was illustrated by a line of assistants who, among the foremost men of our Episcopal Church, have done much for the parish, and left their memory among us. Dr. WATSON, Bishop CLARK, Dr. JOHN COTTON SMITH, Dr. MERCER, Dr. POTTER, have won successively the confidence and grateful recollection of the parish.

My story is almost done. What has come since the resignation of Bishop Eastburn in 1868 is yet too new for history. They are years that always must be memorable. The first talk of the removal, the discussions that ensued, the first study of plans in the spring of 1872, the fire that swept the old Church off at four o'clock on the morning of that terrible Sunday the 10th of November of the same year, the driving of the first piles here in 1873, the long summer months of work and winter months of waiting and thinking, the worship of the parish

in the hospitable Technological Hall, the patience and faith and generosity of the people, and finally, the noble liberality which, in these last weeks, has paid for the great work which had been done, and then the Consecration of last Friday, all these he who shall preach the sermon in this house, then grown venerable with mellowing time, a hundred years from to-day, will gather up with reverent hand, as I have gathered now the story of the century and a half that is already gone. It is mine only to note with thankfulness, which I cannot express, the glorious consummation of our hopes, and in one word to indicate that which no accumulation of words could tell, — the endless debt of this parish to those who for five anxious years have given their time and care, almost their whole lives, to the great labor.

I cannot resist the temptation to lay my remembrance on the grave of him who was with us when our work began, and whose death was the great loss which added new darkness to our darkest days. I would fain associate the name of Mr. DEXTER with the opening of this new Church, which he saw in faith and for which he so cordially labored and hoped. But it is our Building Committee, and the other members of that body will only echo my feeble tribute when I say that it is the Executive Committee of three, to whom, under God, the coming generations of this parish will owe their dear and noble

Church, and towards whom we all bear a debt of gratitude to-day which nothing ever can begin to pay. May God's blessing be on them, as they see the great completion of their labors.

The noble structure shall speak the genius of the architect. Its glowing walls declare the artist's inspiration. Its unshaken solidity proclaim the builder's skill and care, but only the gratitude of the people's hearts and the good work that shall be done here, can rightly honor the devotion of those who so long have been the wise and willing servants of the parish.

And so I close this hurried sketch of the long history of Trinity. I look back from this pulpit where I stand to-day, and all this is behind us. I see those who have gone before me, and their ministries come crowding round me when I speak. I see the congregations of the past, and the long-vanished pews in which they sat. And out of all there rises up one strong impression which covers all the history. For that impression I thank God in the name of Trinity. It is an impression of manly vigor; of strenuous, faithful character. Men may read over this history which we have to show them, and say that they miss this or that, but one thing every man who reads must find there. It is full of manliness. These men of whom I have spoken to you this morning were real men. Davenport, Hooper, Walter, Parker, Gardiner,

Eastburn, they all had strong convictions, true honesty, independent hearts. There is not one of them that did not say the thing he thought. There is not one breath of cant in all our history. There is no weak spot of unreality, or fantasticalness, or nonsense, anywhere. And so it seems to be no unfit thing that the architecture of our parish, whether in the old Church in Summer street, or in this new and noble temple, should be of the strong, and solid, and massive sort. There has been little that was light and graceful, little of the inspired speculation of genius or of the play of frolicsome fancy in our annals. It has been the sturdy, genuine strength of sense and character. Men whom other men learned to respect, have given the parish a strong though quiet power in the community. It is in this true ring, this sense of genuine and generous humanity, this strong, live, human healthiness, that the clearest impression of our parish lies. On its sound manliness the power of godliness has shone, and made it good to look back upon, as we look back upon it now, in its clear, intelligible, robust, straightforward dignity.

With so much character and common sense, acting within that wide comprehensiveness which is the life and glory of our Church, it is not strange that our parish should have borne witness in itself of the changes in the world of thought and action which went on all about her.

She had her men of the eighteenth century, of its first half and its second half, so different from one another. She has had her men of the nineteenth century too. She had for her minister one of the representative evangelical men of our Church in this country. She is ready for whatever newest and truest view of His truth God may manifest to His people in the years to come. She was the only Church of our communion in Boston where a patriot could pray during the Revolution. Nor did her pulpit fail of its duty in the war of the Rebellion. Men have called her the very pattern of conservatism. But as I look back upon her history, I see in her a true conformity to the varying times. Not the conformity of a weathercock, which shifts with every zephyr, but the conformity of the deep laden ship, that feels the profound tide, and knows the difference between it and the ripples which are on the surface of the wave.

And to-day I do not believe that there is any congregation in our town which, having positive convictions of the Christian truths, is more ready, nay, more earnestly waiting for fuller light, for richer, deeper knowledge of our Lord than it has yet attained, than is this Church of ours. That is what we want,—strong, deep convictions which are unshakable, and then a glad and constant expectation of new and richer light from God forever; a perfect assurance of the safety of the ship in which we

sail, and then a perfect willingness to sail into whatever new seas God may open to us; an absolute certainty of the sufficiency of Christ, and then a passionate desire that no Christ of our own fancy may satisfy us, that He may show Himself to us more and more completely as He really is; the rock under our feet and the limitless air over our heads. O, let us pray that both may become more perfect to us in our new career, the rock more solid and the air more vast, the truths we hold more certain and more precious; the hope of more light on those truths, the watchfulness for deeper revelations of God, more vigilant and eager. Those be our prayers: — More strength; more light. More constancy; more progress.

Again, I have mistold the story of the parish, unless you have seen that in it there has been a continual presence of earnest piety. That has been the real unity of our parish life through all its changes. The man of the nineteenth century thinks very differently from the man of the eighteenth, but the love with which he worships God, is the same love. The Evangelical has different dogmas from the old Georgian Churchman, but they bow before the same mercy-seat and resist the same temptations by the same grace. We can conceive of a parish going on, the same parish still, though thought shall

change and all religious speculation flow in new channels. But if men's souls cease to repent, and trust, and live by the divine communion, all is gone; the Church is dead; the spiritual building crumbles in decay. There has been no such time with us. Always there has been prayer and faith. The stream of belief seems, perhaps, sometimes to run very thin, but always it is there, with strength to widen and deepen when God's time shall come.

It was not far from the time when this Church was founded, that Bishop Butler wrote in England words which seem strange, I think, to us as we read them now. He said, "It has come to be taken for granted, by many persons, that Christianity is not so much a matter of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious." And, after all that, see what life came out of what men called dead. A great many people are saying now what people used to say in Bishop Butler's day, but it is no truer now than it was then. The signs of spiritual revival are already in the air and in the sky. It must be the piety, the love and faith of Christian men and women, the religion of the Churches, that runs through all times and makes the unbroken line to which the departures always return, and round which all the revivals congregate.

And, yet once more, every one can see who reads our

history, how truly ours has always been a parish Church. A body of worshipers, bound together by the habits of their worship, knowing each other as the people of the same Trinity Church, bearing one another's burdens, sharing one another's joys, baptized, confirmed, married, and hoping to be buried in the old parish Church,— this, the people who have called this Church their Church, have always been. Nay, more than this. There are few parishes where the hereditary chains are so many and so strong. To many and many a worshiper, this parish is dear because it is where his fathers worshiped. The names that stand on our pew roll to-day repeat, in very large degree, the names of those whose good deeds stand thick along our records, and at whose entrance into the higher life our Church both sorrowed and rejoiced.

I am very thankful for this. I would not have, and I am sure that you would not have, our close connection and our historical associations broken. We are a parish. We will not degenerate and dissipate into an audience. Very sacred is our relation to each other. But I know that you will more than accept under the great, glowing, all-embracing hospitality of this bounteous roof, you will enthusiastically assert, that such a Church as this, has no right to exist, or to think that it exists, for any limited company who own its pews. It would not be a Christian parish if it harbored such a thought. No, let

the world come in. Let all men hear, if they will, the truths we love. Let no soul go unsaved through any selfishness of ours. These galleries set free forever, and the assurance of what larger welcome may be needed and may be in our power to supply, bear witness that our Church accepts her responsibilities, and will try to speak the Gospel of the Lord she loves to all who will come and hear.

These ideas are more familiar and more pressing in our days, than they were in our fathers'. Through our fathers' wisdom and devotion, we must become wiser and more devoted than they. Friends, we must rise to thoughts beyond our fathers, or we are not our fathers' worthy children. Not to do in our days just what our fathers did long ago, but to live as truly up to our light as our fathers lived up to theirs, — that is what it is to be worthy of our fathers. The Church has new standards, new ambitions, new ideas of work. This is the modern notion of a Church,—not luxury, but work. God help us to cast off every thing old and avoid every thing new which can keep our Church from doing perfectly that great work which we can hear our Lord calling her to do for Him.

And so may the Lord our God be with us as He was with our fathers. Let Him not leave us nor forsake

us. In all the happy light of this first Sunday, let us bind ourselves anew together, as minister and people, and then as a grateful parish devote ourselves anew to Him. May He teach us of His Fatherhood. May He give us the salvation of His Son. May He fill us with His Holy Spirit. And so make this Church the Church of the Trinity forever.