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THEOLOGICAL

HISTORY

OF THE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

OF

EWING, NEW JERSEY

The substance of a discourse preached by the REV. GEORGE L. SMITH, Pastor
of the Church, in the First Presbyterian Church, of Ewing,
N. J., on July 2, 1876.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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Those who heard this sermon delivered, will observe some omissions as it now appears in print. It will, however, perhaps be remembered that what has been left out was simply appeals to action in some matters which seemed to call for present attention. These, of course, would not be of permanent interest, and, hence, for that, as well as for other reasons, it was thought best to drop them. Without other material change in the sermon as pronounced in the pulpit, we give it to the press, hoping that in its perusal some pleasure may be afforded to those who love that Church and all its surroundings, and all that is connected with it; and begging a charitable consideration from those who may see in it many and glaring faults. G. L. S.

EWING, N. J., July, 1876.

“Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations.”—*Deuteronomy, XXXII Chapter, 7th Verse.*

We cannot live in the past, neither can we change any of its events; but, nevertheless, we may sometimes, perhaps, profitably dwell in thought upon it, and receive instruction and inspiration for present action, while we are pressing on toward some high mark in the future. A glance at the past may stimulate to earnestness at the present, and a beam of light from the shining course of others may cast a brightness upon our pathway.

It was, perhaps, some such motives as these, together with the far higher one of observing God's ways and dealings with them, that influenced Moses, in the words of the text and context, to urge the remembrance of the days of old. Probably, too, motives of this kind have influenced our General Assembly and the Presbytery to which we belong to take the action which they have with reference to historical sermons on this first Sabbath in July of our Centennial year.

In attempting to give something of a history of this Church, we desire at first to acknowledge our indebtedness to our honored predecessors, the Rev. Dr. Cooley and the Rev. Messrs. De Veuve and Atwater, who, in the records which they have left, and in the published sermons which particular occasion called out from them, have furnished much material from which we have drawn. We desire, also, to ask the kind and charitable consideration of you who have for so long a time lived upon this ground, and among the scenes of which we shall speak, and from your own experience know, of course, of some things much more than we from records can gather.

It is, perhaps, well known that the formation of this Church, the exact date of which cannot probably now be determined, evidently ante-dates, by more than half a century, the commencement of our nation's existence. So that, while in a few hours we shall hear the booming of cannon

and the sweet strains of martial music, which shall unite with unnumbered other demonstrations to proclaim to the world a nation's joy upon the one hundredth anniversary of its birth, we can rejoice in more than a century and a half of years that have been added to our existence as a Church.

While the exact date of its organization is not known, the time of some other transactions is given definitely, and by these we can at least presume, with a good deal of confidence, about what the date must have been. In the year 1702, Mr. John Hutchinson gave to Hopewell township two acres of ground for burial purposes, and upon which to build a house of worship. The Presbyterian and Episcopalian families united in putting up a house upon that ground, which lies near the Lunatic Asylum in this township. But, in 1712, the Presbyterians had erected a log house upon this piece of ground upon which we to-day stand, which had been given by Mr. Alexander Lockhart, in 1709, from his farm, and where, for more than a century and a half now, has there stood a house of God, to which His people have repaired for prayer and praise.

In 1715, the Rev. Robert Orr was settled here, and ministered to the Presbyterian families living in what is now Lawrence, Hopewell, Trenton, and Ewing, until 1719, when it is mentioned on the Minutes of Philadelphia Synod that Mr. Orr is without charge.

It would seem quite probable that the Church was organized here before Mr. Orr commenced his labors in 1715, and very likely when the Presbyterian families began to worship by themselves, in their log Church, in 1712, they were at once formed into a Church. Moreover, Dr. Hall states, in his book on the history of the Presbyterian Church of Trenton, the following:—"As an old tablet, now in the walls of the First Church, in the City of Trenton, gives 1712 as the year in which the Presbyterian Church was formed, that is supposed to be the date when the parent congregation was formally organized, in view of taking possession of the ground conveyed by Lockhart in 1709."—*History Presbyterian Church, Trenton, N. J.*, page 41. The exact date of the organization, however, is a matter of comparatively little importance; but is it not a matter of

very great interest to feel that this ground, on which we to-day have met, has been for more than a century and a half pressed by the feet of those who have come up hither for the worship of the same God whom we to-day adore? Fathers, and fathers' fathers, on the most sacred errand that ever engaged the thoughts and attention of men, have come to this sacred spot. Hither have they come to meet Him who has promised to be where two or three are gathered in His name. Hither have they come to seek blessings from Him who has said, "Seek and ye shall find." Hither have they come in times of joy to render thanksgiving and praise to Him from whom all blessings flow; and, in times of deepest sorrow, hither have they come to mingle together their sympathizing tears, and seek the comfort of Him who, like as a father pities his children, pities those who fear Him; and, as one after another loved one has passed away, while the spirit took its flight into eternity, this ground has opened its friendly bosom and received the precious form, a sacred trust, until the trump shall awaken them to life again.

But we must not stop too long to linger over such contemplations, but hasten on to consider the men who have lived and the works they have done.

A number of persons preached here after Mr. Orr, but probably there was no settled pastor until the year 1735, when Mr. David Cowell was ordained and installed pastor of the Church here and that in the city. These two Churches were then, probably, regarded as but one, as there was but one eldership and one set of trustees. The Rev. Mr. Cowell died in 1760, and from that time till 1769 the Rev. William Kirkpatrick officiated, who, although he received a call at an early date, declined to settle, and in the year 1769 accepted a call from Amwell.

In this year the Churches of Lawrence and Trenton called the Rev. Elihu Spencer to preach an equal portion of the time in each of the three Churches. Mr. Spencer accepted the call, and labored with them until 1785, when he departed this life. In the Autumn of this year Mr. James F. Armstrong received a call from these same congregations to settle among them, but, as he was employed as Chaplain in

the army, it was not until April, 1787, that he accepted their call, though he had been preaching for them some time previous to this.

In 1790, the congregation at Lawrence asked for the labors of Mr. Armstrong for one-half of the time, and it was granted; and in this year *this* congregation asked for the labors of the Rev. Joseph Rue, who was settled in Pennington, for one-fourth of the time. To this request Mr. Rue and the congregation at Pennington assented. This arrangement lasted for ten years, until 1800, when this people requested the services of Mr. Rue for one-third of the time, and, as both parties agreed, he preached here one-third of the time until 1821, when Mr. Rue asked to be released from this part of his charge, and his request was granted.

Up to this time, you perceive, this Church had probably never had the entire services of a pastor, but had united with others and had a minister but one-third or one-fourth of his time.

From 1821 to 1823 the Rev. Dr. Charles Hodge, now Professor in Princeton Theological Seminary, and with a world-wide reputation as a theologian, and the Rev. Jared D. Fyler supplied the congregation most of the time. But, in 1823, the Rev. Eli F. Cooley, whose life and labors are so familiar to most of you, came to this parish. A record found in the Session Book says:—"At the commencement of the year 1823, the Church and congregation made out a call for the Rev. Eli F. Cooley, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Middletown, Monmouth County, N. J., which call he accepted, and removed with his family to this place April 16, 1823, and was installed pastor of the congregation and Church the 4th of June following, by the Presbytery of New Brunswick."

Of course, little can be known of most of those persons who lived and labored here before Dr. Cooley came. The memory of but very few now living here will go back much distance into the preceding pastorates. But, Dr. Cooley, in his semi-Centennial discourse, says:—"It appears, from the testimony of persons who have sat under the ministry of all the persons mentioned" (referring, we believe, to most of

those we have mentioned as serving this Church), "except Mr. Orr, that they were beloved by their people; were faithful, useful, and honored servants of God." But of the life and work of this man, who, for more than thirty-four years, was pastor of this Church, much more is known, for there are many living epistles who can testify concerning this.

When he came here, Dr. Cooley states that he was unable to find a sentence of history relative to the proceedings of the Church Session. There was a paper given him containing the names of one hundred and eighteen members of the Church. After strict inquiry, it was ascertained that out of the one hundred and eighteen, there were but seventy-six residents here at the time. This pastorate, which was a long one, reaching on to July 19, 1857, seems to have been a prosperous one. This pastor came from other fields, in which God had greatly blessed his labors, to perform services here, upon which God smiled, and which He caused to bring forth rich fruit. There are, of course, many here to-day who recall with great delight many of the scenes of those years: some who sat in his Bible class, and listened to his words of instruction there; many who listened to his kind appeals from the pulpit, and his words of affectionate interest as in private he directed them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. There are still ringing in the ears of some here to-day, the pleasant words he spake as they in childhood drew near to him, when he visited in their father's house. Some have not forgotten the words of comfort he spake when, with tearful eyes and heavy hearts, they gathered around their beloved dead and laid them away in the grave. But there is a memory sweeter than all others with some. It is of the time when by him they were led into the fold of the Good Shepherd, and welcomed into the visible Church.

Some seem to have been added to the Church at different times until 1827, when there must have been a great awakening, which lasted about one year, and during which time about ninety persons indulged the hope of being born of the Spirit of God; sixty-four united themselves by profession to this Church. Other years, also, witnessed many

additions to the Church: in 1833 there were ten; in 1841, twenty; in 1842, twenty-one, so that, during his pastorate, Dr. Cooley states that there were added to the Church: on profession, two hundred and six, and seventy-three by certificate.

This, however, does not, of course, measure the extent of the results he may have been instrumental in achieving during his life here. During his pastorate here there was a stir in the Temperance cause. It was a movement in which, doubtless, many great and good men took opposite sides. Dr. Cooley took a decided position in favor of Temperance, and, with a firm support and aid from some at least, seems to have accomplished a great work in this; and, very likely, to-day, in our peaceful, quiet, temperance neighborhood, we are reaping the pleasant fruits of the seed then sown. In his semi-Centennial discourse, he says:—
 “At this day this community is under great obligations to a certain female” (he referred to Mrs. Esther Melvaine) “of our own number, who, with a praiseworthy zeal and Christian courage, persevered, amidst no small opposition, in endeavoring to win children to adopt the noble and salutary principles and practice of Temperance.”

He remained here, performing the duties of pastor of this Church, with many to which he gave attention beyond, until the infirmities of age came upon him, when, for a little time, he laid aside the active duties of the pastor, which he had so long performed, to live without this burden upon him, in the midst of the people he had so long and so faithfully served, and to whom he was bound by so many and so tender ties, until April 22, 1860, when death came, and the life which had gone through so many years, and which had been to so many such a rich blessing, quietly went out. The earthly was laid aside in yon churchyard, where it awaits the trump that shall awaken the slumbering dead, while the immortal spirit took its flight, as we trust, to its everlasting rest.

Among the records of the Mercer County Bible Society is found the following, which is testimony to his worth which comes from beyond the limits of this Church and congregation:—

“Eli F. Cooley, D.D., one of the Vice Presidents of the Mercer County Bible Society, departed this life April 22, 1860.

“Dr. Cooley was one of the founders of the American Bible Society, organized in May, 1815, in New York City. To the last he was a supporter of the Bible cause, and the constant friend of that large class of benevolent and humane institutions which, owing their origin to Bible Christianity, have been founded since the commencement of his public career.

“Having for sixty years experienced and manifested the transforming power of the word of God; and having for fifty years proclaimed from the pulpit its blessed truths, he was beloved, esteemed, and honored. And, having well finished his work on earth, he came to his grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season.”

It may be a matter of interest to some, and we note it in passing, that a note found in the Minutes of Session reads thus:—

“It was resolved, in Presbytery at New Brunswick, April 23, 1850, that the congregation heretofore known on the records of the Presbytery as the ‘Trenton First Church,’ be hereafter known as the ‘Church of Ewing.’”

This, you, perceive, gives the date of the changing of the name of this Church.

Another quotation from the records will introduce to our notice the next pastor of this Church, the Rev. Prentiss De Veuve. We find it written there:—

“The Rev. Eli Field Cooley, D.D., having ministered to the Ewing Presbyterian Church for the unusually long term of thirty-four years and three months, resigned his pastoral charge on the 19th of July, 1857.

“On the first day of August (being the Saturday prior to the usual communion occasion), Mr. Prentiss De Veuve, a licentiate of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, came to Ewing, at the request of the Session, and preached the preparatory lecture and the sermon at the Communion, Dr. Cooley dispensing the Sacrament.

“On the ensuing Sabbath he preached again, and was requested by the Session on that day to remain still another Sabbath, which his engagements permitted him to do. His ministrations proving acceptable to the people, he was unanimously called to be their pastor on the last day of the month. This call, after due consideration and prayer, he saw fit to accept on the 17th of September.

“A meeting of the Presbytery of New Brunswick was held in the Ewing Church, on the 15th day of October, to ordain and install Mr. De Veuve, and, in spite of a severe storm, a large congregation assembled on the occasion.

“The Rev. Eli F. Cooley, D.D., presided and put the ordaining questions. The Rev. Charles K. Imbrie, of Jersey City (by special invitation), preached the sermon, from II Corinthians, iii chapter, 5th verse. The charge to the pastor was given by the Rev. Samuel M. Hamill, and (owing to the absence of the Rev. Prof. McGill, D.D., who was appointed to deliver it) the charge to the people by the Rev. John Hall, D.D.

“All the discourses were excellent, and a deep solemnity pervaded the audience.”

Thus was Mr. De Veuve heard, called, ordained, and installed pastor of this Church.

His pastorate seems to have been begun almost with an addition to the Church, for the records show that at what was probably the first Communion after the ordination of this young pastor, six persons were received on profession of their faith.

At a meeting of the congregation held on the 28th of September, 1857, it was resolved that the use of a parsonage be added to the pastor's salary, already mentioned, which was \$800, and that this be inserted in the call. Further action was at that meeting taken with reference to the matter, which, with some preliminary steps taken by individuals, resulted at length in the erection of the pleasant and commodious building which is now your pastor's home.

Mr. De Veuve's pastorate was not a long one, but there are doubtless many here to-day who remember the many kind words that he, as their pastor, has spoken with joyful memory. His was a ministry that God owned and blessed by adding many unto the Church who will doubtless love and honor him on earth as the instrument by which they were led to look unto Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and who, in eternity, will bless God for his services.

Mr. De Veuve closed his services here in May, 1864, and was followed by Mr. David J. Atwater. Another note found in the Session Book will perhaps best tell the story of his coming. It is as follows:

“The Ewing Church was left without a pastor by the resignation of the Rev. Prentiss De Veuve, and the dissolution of the pastoral relations between him and the Ewing Church by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, in May, 1864. On the first Sabbath of July, Mr. David J. Atwater, a licentiate of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, by invita-

tian of the Session, supplied the pulpit. His services proving not unacceptable, he was invited to supply the pulpit upon the Sabbath following, as also upon the third Sabbath of August. Other persons were also invited to supply the pulpit. In the month of August a call was extended to the Rev. Mr. Pearce, of New York State, which he declined. On September 20th, a call was extended to Mr. Atwater, which, after prayerful deliberation, he accepted. The commissioners appointed by the congregation to prosecute the call before the Presbytery (Messrs. James H. Bruer and S. S. Cooley) did so at its meeting in New Brunswick, October 4, 1864. The call, being found in order, was put into Mr. Atwater's hands, and he signified his acceptance of it.

"The Presbytery appointed November 25th as the day of ordination and installation, and the following members to take part, viz.: The Rev. R. K. Rodgers, Moderator, to preside, propose the constitutional questions, and make the ordaining prayer; the Rev. Dr. Atwater to preach the sermon; the Rev. Dr. Macdonald to give the charge to the pastor, and the Rev. Dr. Hall to give the charge to the people.

"On the 25th of November the Presbytery met in the Ewing Church. The appointments previously made were fulfilled, with the exception of the charge to the pastor, which was delivered by the Rev. President Maclean (Dr. Macdonald being prevented from attending and performing the services assigned him, by a funeral), and that to the congregation, which was delivered by the Rev. Mr. De Veuve. The day was most favorable. A large congregation was present. The exercises were interesting and impressive."

Mr. Atwater has lived among you so recently, his works are so familiar and so fresh in your memory, that for me to speak to you of them, to call them up from the darkness of forgotten things, would seem superfluous. The mere statement of facts, which may be interesting in years to come, as facts with reference to the far past are now interesting to us, might seem too cold and too formal to be spoken of one the memory of whom is so vivid. The records show that the Lord smiled upon his labors, as many were added unto the Church. But the faithful warnings he gave; the tender sympathies he expressed; the affectionate appeals he made, and the responsive gratitude and love which these excited and stimulated, are things that are known to you, perhaps, better than to me; and I might do violence to tender and sacred feelings if I should attempt to describe them. One work was accomplished during the time of Mr. Atwater's stay, to which we should refer, and that is the building of this house of worship.

In Dr. Hall's book called "History of the Presbyterian Church, Trentón, N. J.," he says, referring to this spot:—"The first Church on this ground was built of logs (1712); this made room, about 1726, for a frame building, which was used until 1795, when one of brick was erected. In 1839 the Church was remodelled."—*Page 37.*

This brick Church, built in 1795 and remodelled in 1839, so familiar to almost every one here but the speaker, who never saw it, and associated in the minds and hearts of so many with the fondest and the tenderest memories, was leveled to the ground in March, 1867, and this present substantial and pleasant structure was reared in its place.

By the records it appears that at a meeting held on the 21st of March, 1864, some action was taken looking toward the building of a new Church. This action had reference also to some action which had been previously taken. A letter had been received from the pastor, who, at that time, was the Rev. Mr. De Veuve, which had been submitted to the trustees, and, upon their report, a committee was appointed to procure plans and estimates for a Church, and to report to a special meeting called for the purpose. Shortly after this action, the relations between the Church and the pastor were dissolved, and nothing further was done until March, 1865, previous to which time Mr. Atwater had settled here. At this time no decided action seems to have been taken, except to appoint a meeting for October 2d, at which to consider it. At this meeting committees were appointed, and the work fairly begun. This meeting of October 2, 1875, appointed one committee to see where sand could be secured at the best advantage, and who would be willing to cart the same, and how much. This committee consisted of Messrs. Elijah L. Hendrickson, John M. Vaneleve, and Alexander B. Green. Another committee was appointed to look after the raising of the money, which committee consisted of Messrs. James B. Green, Abram Skirm, John R. Hendrickson, Jacob Hendrickson, Joseph B. Anderson, and Randolph S. Hunt.

The above committees were also authorized by a resolution to confer together, and, if they have encouragement to proceed, that they procure stone and endeavor to get them

carted during the winter, by the congregation, free of charge.

There was also a committee appointed, styled a "building committee," who should have power to purchase and make contracts, and commence operations for a new church, as soon as the fund committee should think that they had encouragement for the necessary funds. This committee consisted of Messrs. James B. Green, Thomas F. Howell, William A. Hough, Henry P. Green, and John R. Hendrickson.

The remainder of the year '65 and the whole of '66 must have been occupied in the preparatory work by the committees and trustees. We have the record of the meeting of the committees and trustees on the 4th of January, 1867, at which time they determined on calling a special meeting of the congregation. At this meeting of the congregation, held January 7, 1867, the committees and trustees were authorized to go ahead, and some further committees were then appointed. They, having received such authority and instruction, seem to have very promptly responded. One meeting was held at the Church, on the 15th day of January, to consider a plan for the new Church, and another at the store of Mr. Theodore Cook, in Trenton, for receiving proposals from contractors for building the Church. Upon this day, after the examination of the proposals, the contract was awarded to Mr. Smith E. Hughes, for the sum of \$19,265, and the 12th of February fixed upon to sign the contract; and, on the 12th of February, this was done, at the office of the Trenton Banking Company. The names of the trustees who signed Mr. Atwater's call in '64, and which also appear to the report submitted at the meeting March 16, 1868, and who, we presume, therefore, must have held this office during the entire time of the building of the Church, were John M. Vancleve, James B. Green, E. L. Hendrickson, E. W. Lanning, Jacob Hendrickson, William H. Cox, and Abram Skirm.

This, of course, gives only the merest outlines—the bare skeleton. Of what was done in the few months that followed, while the walls of this structure were gradually rising up, and this house was assuming its present propor-

tions and comeliness, there are many here that could tell more than I. You know, better than I, the toils, the cares, the anxiety it cost. None of you will probably ever forget those busy days, and weeks, and months: nor how, upon the Sabbath, you used to come to worship beneath the sheds where to-day the tired horses, reclaiming the position from which you for a time drove them, rest.

You understand the details of some of these transactions better than I; and yet, from a similar experience in another place, I can comprehend something of how much of himself a man may build into a structure like this; how much of bone and muscle, and how much of mind and heart. How much of joy and satisfaction is there, too, when the work is done.

That 20th day of November, 1867, was doubtless a day of great rejoicing in Ewing, when the people who had labored and struggled to rear this house, gathered within its walls to dedicate it to the worship of Almighty God.

On that occasion the sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Hall, from the XCVIth Psalm, 9th verse; the dedicatory prayer was offered by the pastor, the Rev. D. J. Atwater; the Rev. Messrs. Blackburn, Kennedy, Studdiford, and Swinnerton took part in the devotional services: brief addresses were made by the Rev. Drs. Hale, Macdonald, and Atwater, and the pastor.

Probably almost every one before me to-day had some share in that work, and to-day have a share in the enjoyment that is derived from its construction. Resolutions passed at a meeting of the congregation on the 16th of March, 1868, giving thanks to those who had been engaged in the work or contributed to it, and specially mentioning certain individuals as particularly deserving these expressions of gratitude, indicate something of the good feeling and pleasure that was then felt, and an appreciation of the services rendered by these individuals.

But Mr. Atwater's pastorate here at length came to an end, and for a few months after the pulpit was supplied by different ministers, until the second Sabbath in July, which was the 9th day, 1871, when the present incumbent for the first time preached in this pulpit.

However much we might desire it, if we would complete our work we must not stop here. Our history should end only with the close of a century of our nation's existence. Let us, therefore, continue our recital of events.

For four successive Sabbaths in July of '71, the speaker preached here, and on the 31st a call was given for his services. The call was accepted, and on the 14th of September he moved to the parsonage; and on the following Sabbath, which was September 17th, preached again in this Church. The call was laid before the Presbytery, and by that body formally put into the hands of your pastor, at a meeting held in Flemington, on the 3d of October. Arrangements were made for the installation on the 25th, and on that day the services were held in the Church, the following persons taking part in them, viz.: the Rev. Daniel R. Foster presided and preached the sermon; the Rev. David J. Atwater gave the charge to the people, and the Rev. R. H. Richardson, D.D., gave the charge to the pastor, while the Rev. Messrs. Manning and De Veuve took part in the devotional exercises.

Thus began a pastorate which has now lasted not quite five years, but during which time many changes have occurred.

I am greatly relieved from the embarrassment which might be felt in speaking of one's own doings, by the fact that there is so much to record in which the people stand prominently out. Some other occasion might afford a better opportunity to detail the vast number of events that have wrought changes in our congregation, and great changes in the families which compose it; and which have crowded these few years with scenes that have left their impress both upon the external, the visible, and also deep in the hearts of many. But much of this we must let pass, and look simply upon some of the most prominent features of this pastorate.

Let a stranger look in upon us to-day, and he would doubtless acknowledge that, to a good degree, this is a working Church. Look at our organizations and appliances for labor, and (we hope we may not seem to boast; most of all, that he who speaks may not appear arrogant,) they do

seem to indicate that there are at least symptoms of life. Its power is not all told in records and reports which place names and figures before the eye. These societies and organizations, which have been accomplishing so much, make the influence of this Church felt at home and abroad. Those who have been connected with them, we doubt not, will testify of the good they have received; while there would be myriads, could they be summoned to the stand, who would bear witness of the rich blessings they have scattered abroad.

The "Pastor's Aid Society," with its noble band of Christian workers, has exerted an influence which will not cease when they shall die, but will go on through all time; and many a kind word spoken, and many a truth scattered upon the printed page, shall produce effects, doubtless, that shall be known in eternity only, and shall there receive their reward.

The "Woman's Foreign Missionary Society," and that other—which may be termed its offspring, but which has grown to such proportions that, in some particulars, the child might vie successfully with the parent for the leadership—"The Children's Band," are lifting up in foreign lands the standard of the Cross; and, by telling those who are sunken in the ignorance, and superstition, and vice of Paganism, of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, they are sending light, and peace, and joy into many a dark abode, and happiness into many a family circle.

The "Ladies' Sewing Society," in sending out its boxes of clothing, has been doing a noble service, and, as we believe, one which would call forth our blessed Saviour's commendation. We seem to hear him say:—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto these, ye have done it unto Me."

While the "Temperance Association," with its officered regiment, is to-day marching on, if not so much in a crusade or open war with that great and bitter enemy of our race—Rum—is marching on, nevertheless, in a path that is, to those who keep in it, safe from the approaches of the enemy.

These seem some of the prominent features of these last

few years. Our Church-roll, although it has been frequently pruned by removal and death, has, nevertheless, received additions, so that to-day it numbers about two hundred.

Another time and place might be more appropriate for any lengthy consideration of our nation's history; and yet, perhaps, it may not be amiss to notice some of the changes which have occurred in the world around us, since they have given to us new opportunities and new facilities for doing good, and have thereby laid upon us new responsibilities. Since this Church began its course our nation was born, has passed through the various stages of its existence, and arrived to the maturity of almost a century of rolling years. This Church witnessed the great struggle of our fathers for their freedom from oppression; and some who were in some way connected with it, took part in the war. It has witnessed, too, that other struggle through which this nation passed when, like a patient thrown into spasms in an effort to cast off the poison he has taken into his system, it was thrown into terrific convulsions, apparently, by the great Physician, to rid itself of an evil that was destroying its life. It has not been a mere disinterested and idle spectator, but it has done noble service for the nation. To the nation's call it gave a hearty response, sending forth its brave and true sons to fight our nation's battles; and to-day, when the war is over, some are welcomed back among us again to enjoy in peace the fruit of their hard service. Others fell, and in the bosom of this churchyard, sacred by so many hallowed associations, lie their lifeless forms, unseen and silent, but not forgotten.

But what rapid strides the nation has made in almost everything that goes to make a nation great! What advance in the facilities for travel, and in almost all communication! The use of steam has, to a great extent, supplanted the means of travel enjoyed by the founders of this Church, and distances that then required days or weeks to overcome, are now traveled in a few short hours. Thought is sent at lightning speed along the metal tracks which are stretched all through our land and across the sea,

like sensitive nerves through a human frame. And, by the rapid circulation of the emanations from the press, the most distant points are brought near, and we live, like one family, in constant intercourse with each other.

And the world around us is not standing still. It has advanced, and is going on, and we, too, are being swept along in this mighty current of advancement and improvement. It is only necessary to stand in the open air and look over these farms of yours to see how we have come along. Mark the change, as to-day the boy who can guide his father's team mounts the reaper or the plow and accomplishes the work that in the days of our fathers would have required many men with their rude sickles and hoes and wooden plows to do.

Even a score of years ago, if the pastor of this church had risen in his pulpit and ventured to predict that in this year which should complete a century in the existence of our nation, passengers from New York to Philadelphia would be whirled along by steam across your farms, and that you could take a seat in a railroad car almost at your own door and fly away to well nigh the farthest bound of our continent, you would, perhaps, have laughed at his credulity. Perhaps you will not do more if I venture the suggestion that it may be that in another score of years, or, at most, in another half century, these farms, of which we all feel, perhaps, a justifiable pride, will be cut hither and thither with intersecting avenues; and dotted with palatial residences here and there, and clusters of thriving homes; and the hum of business and the whistle of the factory shall be heard where now there is only the lowing of the cattle, the neighing of the horse, and the bleating of the sheep. A change like this is not impossible; and how a change like this would change our congregation! Sometimes we hear a doleful lament that our congregation is waning; we are suffering losses. And so we are. But let us allow no fearful forebodings to influence us to give up, or to slacken our pace in the least, in every good enterprise in which God, our Heavenly Father, permits us to engage. 'Tis God who has brought us thus far, and 'tis He who is to take us on.

Has He not, in His past dealings with us, given us enough to encourage hope and stimulate to earnestness and zeal, as we press forward into the future? If He has given us a work to do, let us never be restrained from undertaking it through fear that we are growing weak, and are soon to fall into decay. There is, perhaps, no more effectual means to produce the condition that we may dread, than to yield to the fear and sit down in idleness. No one, probably, would presume to charge us with that folly now. Let us beware, so that they shall never have an opportunity.

I cannot leave this task, which will doubtless be sadly imperfect when done, without addressing a few words to each individual before me to-day. Let me ask you, my beloved friend, amid all these changes which you have observed, and in the midst of which you have lived, what change has there been in yourself? There are some, of course, which may appear to all. You have been growing older. You have not stood still, but have advanced through all these years. While you have been advancing towards eternity, have you prepared for its solemn realities? In the part you have taken in the operations of the past, you have commended yourself to your fellow men, it may be. They, perhaps, speak well of you, and you deserve their praise. Have you also done that which you know must be pleasing unto God, who so loved the world that He has given His only begotten Son to die, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life? Have you believed? Have you taken Jesus Christ as your Saviour?

You may have erected many monuments of your enterprise, and zeal, and benevolence, and interest in religious things; but remember that, though in His name you have taught, and cast out devils, and done many wonderful works, yet, if you have failed to do the one thing needful, if you have failed to take Jesus Christ as your Saviour, it shall all be of no avail. Have you done this? You may have laid up many and rich treasures upon this earth, but have you laid up treasures in Heaven? We speak of changes that may come in the world around us in a few

years, but this is all only our imagination. Of some things, however, we are certain. In a few years you and I will be gone. This building will doubtless stand, but it will be filled by other faces. In a few years, at most, another will stand in this pulpit, and speak to other hearers, while you and I, my dear friends, will be in eternity. What preparations are we making for it? What?

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