

1751-1896.

First Presbyterian Church,  
Baltimore, Md.

Rise and Progress,

By

Rev. Patrick Ellison, D. D.

1793.

Historical Discourse,

By

Rev. John C. Backus, D. D.

1859.

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BALTIMORE :  
C. STANLEY STIRLING & CO.,  
1895.



An Historical Discourse on the First Presbyterian Church, delivered on the last Sabbath of September, 1859, by the Rev. John C. Backus, D. D., fourth Pastor, having long been out of print, The Session and The Committee have reprinted it for the information of the present members of the Congregation—and have prefixed thereto an original sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Church up to 1793, as prepared by the Rev. Patrick Allison, D. D., first Pastor. The last named Paper is in the archives of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Philadelphia, and is now published for the first time.

Baltimore, December 1, 1895.



THE  
RISE AND PROGRESS

—OF THE—

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

—IN—

BALTIMORE TOWN,

BY  
PATRICK ALLISON,  
PASTOR.



THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN  
BALTIMORE TOWN.

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The advantageous situation of the Town for Commerce induced a few Presbyterian Families from Pennsylvania to settle in it about the year 1761, who, with two or three of the same Persuasion, that had emigrated from Europe, soon formed themselves into a religious Society, and had occasional supplies, when they assembled in private Houses, though the owners were liable to a Prosecution on this Account, as the then Province groaned under an unrighteous and *irreligious* Establishment for the Support of which all Denominations were taxed, and the Law required every House of Worship, used by Dissenters, to be

registered and licensed. They, proceeded, however, in this way undisturbed, and soon raised a small wooden Building for the more orderly Celebration of Divine Service. The Rev. Hector Alison of New Castle Presbytery, having preached among them several Months, it was proposed by some to have him settled as their minister—but the proposal did not succeed, and in the Fall of 1763, though the infant Society contained not more than eight or nine families that seemed to be permanently fixed, the Subscriber, a licensed Candidate under the Care of the second Presbytery of Philadelphia, accepted an Invitation to remain with them a year, in the Character of a constant Supply. The Connection, thus begun, proving mutually agreeable, was prolonged and he became and continues to be their Pastor. In 1765 they purchased a Lot 80 feet by above 250, for their Church and Burying Ground, as also another contiguous, 40 Feet by 300, for a Parsonage—on the last a handsome convenient Dwelling was erected in 1780—on the first a Decent Brick Building had been finished in 1766 for holding religious assemblies, which received Enlargement in 1772, when an adjoining Lot 40 Feet Front was added to the other and their Numbers still increasing, in 1789 they were induced to remove the old Pile, and commence the

Erection of a spacious elegant Church, in nearly the same site, capable of accommodating above one thousand Hearers, which was opened in 1791, is now nearly completed, and remains a noble Monument of the Builders' generous Zeal.

The first Burying Place, which lay contiguous to the Church, having appeared insufficient, after a short Trial, and improper in other Respects, Interments in it were discontinued and two extensive Squares were enclosed for the Reception of the Dead, one on the East, and the other on the West Side of the Town, (and no such Receptacles should be in any Town), the former a liberal donation of William Fell, Esq.—the latter a purchase.

It has been proposed at different times, to form another Presbyterian Church in the Town, and raise a separate House of Worship, for which purpose a lot of ground was some years ago generously given by Col. John E. Howard; however the Design seems to be waived for the present, though there can remain no doubt but that such a Measure must become necessary in a short space.

In all public meetings for transacting Congregational Business of any kind, and these have been frequent, the utmost Harmony has prevailed among the People, nor has the Spirit of Forbearance, Candor

and Conciliation ever departed from them on any such occasion, and they are now a respectable flourishing Church, comprehending above one Hundred and Sixty Families. Their Secular Affairs are managed by a Committee, who meet at each others Houses in the Evening, commonly once a month.

[Signed.]

PATRICK ALLISON.

Baltimore 17 April 1793.



AN

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE :

ON TAKING LEAVE OF THE OLD CHURCH EDIFICE OF THE  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION IN BALTIMORE.

BY

JOHN C. BACKUS,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.



## DISCOURSE.

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PSALM LXXVIII, 2—4.

“ I WILL UTTER DARK SAYINGS OF OLD : WHICH WE HAVE HEARD AND KNOWN, AND OUR FATHERS HAVE TOLD US. WE WILL NOT HIDE THEM FROM THEIR CHILDREN, SHEWING TO THE GENERATIONS TO COME THE PRAISES OF THE LORD AND HIS STRENGTH, AND HIS WONDERFUL WORKS THAT HE HATH DONE.”

To-day we assemble for the last time in this our long accustomed place of worship. There are few probably belonging to this congregation, who are wholly unaffected by the thought, that a spot so long the scene of our religious solemnities, hallowed by the prayers of so many among the venerated dead, and rendered sacred by associations so solemn and tender in the experience of many still among the living, is about to be resigned into other hands, to be employed for valuable but very different purposes. Voluntarily

indeed, at what seems a call of Providence, but with no feelings of indifference, do we leave these venerable walls, these familiar pews, this endeared place of our sacramental observances, this sacred desk. Here many of you have been dedicated to God in baptism, first listened to the public proclamations of the gospel, became enlightened in the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and openly espoused his cause and professed his name. What wrestlings in prayer have been here witnessed, what effusions of the spirit received, what seasons of communion enjoyed? You have worshiped here with pastors, parents, husbands, wives, children, brothers, sisters, companions, friends, who were very lovely and pleasant in their lives, but are now no more, having been removed to the upper sanctuary. To some of ardent sensibilities and fervid imaginations, "the very stones seem to cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber." These ceilings might seem to some frescoed all over like the ceilings of the Vatican, only here invisible to the eye of sense, with what has been heard, felt, resolved, done within these courts. The power of association ministers the warmth and light, which bring out into distinct view the unperceived writing of the memory. It is not surprising that many of you take leave with solemn and tender

regret of a place rendered sacred by so many associations. It must be remembered however that these are valuable, not on their own account, but because of their relation to the end with reference to which this principle has been implanted in the human constitution. This power of association is a part of that delicate mechanism, by which a wise Providence is pleased to keep alive healthful impressions, for the sake of their influence upon the character and destiny of men. And the moment they are so cherished as to interfere with their legitimate ends, an important principle of our nature is perverted, and becomes a savor of death unto death, instead of life unto life. As long as this building is suited to promote the ends for which it was erected, these associations tend to further its design, and may render it more pleasant and profitable to those who assemble here. But when, for any reasons, it ceases to be suitable for this, our still clinging to it merely because of such associations, would become rather hurtful than profitable, and convert our Bethel or House of God into a Bethhaven or House of Vanity. Bowing therefore to what seems a plain intimation of God's providence, we have come this day to take our final leave. And in so doing, desiring to direct your meditations in some congenial channel, I have thought that it might

be both interesting and profitable, to spend these last moments in reviewing the history of God's dealings with the congregation, during its occupancy of this sacred edifice.

It may be well however briefly to premise, that the origin of this church, like that of most of the churches, which came into existence in the earlier periods of the history of this country, is involved in some obscurity. Composed at first of very few families, imperfectly organized, and worshipping, like the primitive christians, in private houses and upper rooms, they came very gradually into the form of regularly constituted bodies. There seems to have been quite early a small band of Presbyterians, sparsely scattered over this region. In the minutes of the mother Presbytery in this country, there is a record, under the date of September 21st, 1715, to this effect; Mr. James Gordon having presented a call from the people of Baltimore county in Maryland to Mr. Hugh Conn, the Presbytery called for, considered and approved the said Mr. Conn's credentials, and made arrangements for his ordination among the abovesaid people. In 1740 Mr. Whitfield, after his first visit through this region, says that he found a close opposition from the Presbyterians in Baltimore. In 1751 Mr. (afterwards President) Davies sent Dr.

Bellamy of New England, an account of an extraordinary revival of religion about here, and says that he learned that Mr. Whittlesey, a Presbyterian minister, was about to settle in this region. Dr. William Lyon, and at least some others who originally formed this church, had then resided here some years. In 1760, as we learn from a manuscript\* in the possession of the Presbyterian Historical Society, Donegal Presbytery appointed Mr. John Steele to preach one Sabbath in Baltimore. In 1761 Mr. *Hector* Alison preached here several Sabbaths; and application was made by the Presbyterians of Baltimore town to the Presbytery of New Castle on his behalf. But on their sending a commission here in November, 1761, it was judged that the proposals were so unsatisfactory, that it was inexpedient to suffer such a call to be placed in his hands. The congregation was small, without a house of worship, and unable to support a minister. Mr. Alison removed soon after to Williamsburg, South Carolina, where he died. As he had been ordained in 1746, he in all probability had a family, which would render it more difficult to sustain him.

These facts make it evident, that previous to 1761

\*This is one of the papers placed in the hands of Dr. Green by the General Assembly for the purpose of preparing a history of the Presbyterian church.

there was a small congregation of Presbyterians in Baltimore, meeting together for public worship, seeking and receiving supplies from the nearest Presbyteries, and earnestly desiring a settled ministry. Dr. Patrick Allison however, the first stated minister of the church, considered the year 1761 as the date of its more formal commencement. In a brief history of the congregation, which he prepared by direction of the General Assembly and of the Presbytery near the close of his ministry—which has been preserved and is in the possession of the Presbyterian Historical Society—he says: “In 1761 the advantageous situation of the town of Baltimore, induced a few Presbyterian families to remove here from Pennsylvania, and these, with two or three others of the same persuasion, who had emigrated directly from Europe, formed themselves into a religious society, and had occasional supplies, assembling in private houses, though liable to prosecution on this account, as the province groaned under a religious establishment.” Among the original ones was Dr. William Lyon, from the north of Ireland. Among those said to have come from Pennsylvania, were Messrs. John Smith and William Buchanan, who removed here from Carlisle in 1761; and were followed the next year by Messrs. William Smith



and James Sterret, from Lancaster county ; and soon after by Messrs. Mark Alexander, John Brown, Benjamin Griffith, Robert Purviance, and Wm. Spear, from different parts of Pennsylvania and Maryland ; Drs. John and Henry Stephenson, from Ireland ; and Mr. Jonathan Plowman, from England.

In May, 1763, and again in August following, they requested the Presbytery of Philadelphia to send Mr. Patrick Allison to preach to them—their attention having been directed to him, as I learned from the late Robert Purviance, Esq., by some youth from Baltimore, who were pursuing their studies in Newark Academy, where Mr. Allison was acting as tutor. Although invited at the same time to become the pastor of what was then a much larger church in New Castle, Delaware, his prudent foresight led him to express his preference to accept the call from this church, to which accordingly the Presbytery sent him, and in which he continued till his death in 1802. Very soon after he came here, the congregation leased (December 5th, 1763) two lots on Fayette (then called East) street, in the rear of the edifice at present occupied by Christ Church, on the corner of Gay street. There they erected a small log church, which in about two years was sold to Mr. Charles Ridgely. About the time that I came to Baltimore

(twenty-three years ago) it was used as a carpenter's shop, which some now present no doubt remember—one having himself worked in it. In March, 1765, feeling the disadvantages of worshipping in so poor and incommodious a building, they purchased a part (eighty feet) of the present sight from Alexander Lawson. In 1772 this was added to, the remaining portion of the lot being leased from Andrew Buchanan and afterwards purchased in fee. Here they erected a plain brick church, forty-five feet long by thirty-five feet wide, containing thirty-six pews. The building was completed in November, 1766, and all the pews rented except two. In 1771 that building was enlarged one-third, so as to contain more than fifty pews. About eighteen years after this enlargement, (1789,) the congregation finding the house still too strait for them, met together, and after some deliberation resolved to erect the present edifice. It was made ready for occupancy in 1791; and after some time the portico and towers were added, and the building was completed, then one of the largest and finest church edifices in the country—an ornament to the city, and a credit to the congregation.

The period from that date to the present time, embraces the history that I desire briefly to review, in the hope of awakening our gratitude, deepening our

sense of obligation, and constraining our more devoted consecration to the great purposes, for which this building was erected, and in which it has been so long, and we may hope not unprofitably, employed. With this view permit me to direct your attention to the period of the world in which it has existed, the human instrumentalities with which it has been favored, the divine blessings it has enjoyed, and the services it has been enabled, under God, to render to this community, to the country and to the world. The theme is one of wide extent, and the time, which it is proper to devote to this exercise, will only permit me to glance cursorily at the topics, which have been suggested for your consideration.

I. Let us then first take a brief view of the period, which had just dawned when this edifice was being reared, with special reference to its bearing upon the objects to which christian churches are devoted.

1. Then, if I mistake not, had the rights of man come to be recognized, in the establishment of this free government, with more distinctness than ever before. The great struggle for civil and religious liberty, which had been going on for ages, then achieved a most remarkable success. The federal

constitution had just been adopted and this new born republic had commenced its career of unexampled prosperity, affording the widest field for the great mission of the christian church.

It has been said that winter, which seems so like the death of nature, is in reality its birth—the season when its buds and germs are insensibly and mysteriously maturing for their bloom and fragrance in the spring. So the period, which preceded the colonization of this country, was the winter and seemed to be the death of human liberties. But in it were conceived those principles to which civilization and freedom owe more than to any other. At no previous time, in no other country, had the great principles of civil and religious liberty been more clearly developed, than in Great Britain during the time of the Puritans. Those great events, which marked the preceding century as one of the most glorious in the history of the world, and which roused christians from the long sleep of the middle ages, had begun to work out their beneficent results and to put a new aspect on society. The revival of letters through the influence of Grecian scholars, who were dispersed over Europe on the fall of the Eastern Empire—the introduction of that new and better method of investigation, whose exposition has made

Bacon's name so illustrious—the perfection of the compass, opening new fields of discovery, and increasing the facilities of intercourse between distant nations—the invention of gunpowder, which has changed the whole art of war by putting into the hands of genius and skill a power to resist brute force, thus affording right a protection against mere might—the invention of printing, by which knowledge was diffused and made common property—the reformation of the sixteenth century, in which individual responsibility, the right and duty of private judgment, were asserted and established, involving the germ of equal rights, and the true foundation of self government—these great events, to which human civilization owes so much, had not only taken place, but had brought forth their first fruits.

The Presbyterian body, with which we are connected was among the last of the religious denominations, that obtained a distinct and permanent settlement in the country. The persecutions which drove so many of the earlier colonists to these shores, fell first upon the Independents, the Quakers and the Catholics. The Presbyterian, being the established Church of Scotland, was not directly molested by James after he ascended the English throne. And when, in the reign of his infatuated son, the attempt

to accomplish its overthrow was made, it led to a protracted struggle, which continually encouraged hopes of the success, with which it was eventually crowned. When the earlier colonists emigrated, the agitations out of which came those principles that received so glorious a development in the time of the commonwealth, had but just commenced. The later colonists were retained in a school, in which these great principles of civil and religious liberty, although by dear bought lessons, were more effectually taught. And thus was there a more complete preparation for asserting them in our Declaration of Independence. I need not dwell upon the progress and glorious issue of that revolutionary struggle. When this church was erected, that war had closed, the independence of the country was acknowledged, the Federal constitution was adopted, and the freest people on the face of the earth were launched on a career of prosperity and glory, of which the world has witnessed no equal example. "The political system of Europe was indeed, as has been said, just plunging into a state of frightful disintegration. The reigns of the oldest monarchies were slipping, besmeared with blood, from the hands of the descendant of thirty generations of kings. But although the United States were drawn at first, to some extent, into the

outer circles of the terrific maelstrom, they soon escaped and continued safely on their course."\* And from this time has the country afforded one the most favored fields for the enjoyment and promotion of religion, to be found on the earth.

2. Then too had just commenced the age of the greatest improvements in everything pertaining to the material interests of society. In no similar period have science and art made such advances, more especially in the direction of human comfort and well being. Almost ceasing to be pursued as mere matters of speculation, curiosity, or intellectual gratification, they had begun to be studied and practiced with more indefatigable assiduity, with reference to the great practical purposes of life—relieving human drudgery and multiplying human comforts. So that it has come to pass that no investigation in science is so recondite, no speculation in philosophy is so daring, that we do not expect from it some useful practical result, some new power over matter, some valuable accession to human welfare. Every natural law and agency has been put into requisition; the wind, the waves, steam, electricity, magnetism, have all been harnessed to the car of improvement and made to

\* Edward Everett.

work for man, propelling his machines, manufacturing his food and fabrics, transporting his merchandise, transmitting his messages, and diffusing knowledge. The productions of human industry, the achievements of human enterprise have thus been increased ten thousand fold; the necessaries, the comforts, and the luxuries of life have been greatly cheapened. So that the laborer can now live, eat, dress and move about, better than princes of former centuries, and at the same time redeem leisure for mental and moral improvement. The average duration of human life too has been not inconsiderably lengthened by the advancements that have been made in the science of medicine, the improvements that have been brought about in political economy, and the increase that has taken place in the comforts of living. And while man has been relieved from so much of the drudgery of toil, knowledge has been increased, not only by the discoveries of science, but also by multiplying the means of education in common schools, by cheapening books and newspapers, awakening inquiry and diffusing intelligence. At the same time remote continents and separated people have been brought into closer proximity. For, while the distances on the globe are the same at this day as at the creation of the world, the facilities of



communication have brought Europe, Asia and Africa virtually as near to this country now, as its present extremities were to each other two centuries ago. When then we consider that it is the great object of the church to raise man to his true dignity, happiness and glory, through the gospel of Christ, and to extend the Redeemer's kingdom throughout the world, is it not a privilege to have existed, as a congregation, during a period in which such material facilities have been afforded for its proper work.

3. To this we may add that the period, when this church was erected, introduced an era, especially in this country, of very gracious revivals of religion. "In the year 1792," says Dr. Griffin, "commenced that series of general revivals, which has greatly distinguished the American churches and has never been entirely interrupted, and may we not hope from present indications, never will be till the whole earth is filled with the glory of the Lord." Seasons of special religious awakening date indeed as far back as the days of Seth, and may be traced through those of Joshua, Josiah, Ezra, John the Baptist, Pentecost, the Reformation, and the revival in the first half of the last century in connection with the labors of the Wesleys and Whitfield. They seem to have consti-

tuted the divine method of promoting religion under different dispensations in all ages. These however were widely separated eras.

After the last of these great awakenings, which proved so great a blessing to this country as well as to Great Britain, an unusual decline in religion had manifestly taken place. From the year 1745 to that of 1792, the Holy Spirit withheld, in a great measure, his general copious influences. The fifty years, that followed that season of refreshing, were years of war and civil commotion in this land ; first, by reason of the conflict of twenty years between France and England for the ascendancy on this continent ; then, of the struggle of the colonies for independence ; and lastly, of the unsettled state of the public mind, which preceded the adoption of the federal constitution.

These causes, in connection with the constant anxiety produced by the incursions of hostile Indians, and the toils and hardships incident to the settlement of a new country, kept the minds of the great mass of this people so agitated, that religion was almost overlooked and forgotten, and Zion languished. The crimes and vices, which everywhere prevailed, the dissipation, profaneness, Sabbath desecration and infidelity, which camp-life, in connection

with French influence, engendered, together with the destitutions and wants of the new settlements, induced however the deepest solicitude and a spirit of fervent prayer among christians. Like Israel, at the Red Sea, they were driven to cry mightily unto God. And the fruit of all this was soon seen in extensive revivals of religion, which have continued to characterize the country and to be known, as American revivals, throughout the christian world. Their history we have not time now to trace; and it is sufficient for our present purpose to note the interesting fact, that just when God in his gracious providence was introducing this new era, the edifice in which we now worship for the last time, was erected. It has therefore existed through a period more distinguished in this respect than any other of equal extent in the whole history of the world.

4. Lastly, and most intimately connected with this feature of the period we have just considered, we may notice that the time, when this church was built, was also the introduction of an era of active christian benevolence. While the committee of this congregation were planning with anxious solicitude this then expensive edifice, Carey, Fuller, and others in England were conferring, in the face of ignorance,

prejudice, bigotry and mammon, about the formation of one of the earliest of those benevolent institutions which have distinguished modern christian charity, and now cover the whole face of Protestant christendom. Previous to that time, missionary, bible, tract sunday school and other kindred institutions, were comparatively unknown ; the aggressive character of christianity had been almost entirely undeveloped ; the church seemed to have sunk into the profoundest slumber in regard to the extent of her great commission. In the year 1793, commenced that severe struggle in the British Parliament, in which the practical wisdom of Grant and Fuller, the burning eloquence of Wilberforce, and the indefatigable perseverance of Carey and others contended for the right to seek the christianizing of India, and which triumphed so gloriously in the year 1813. Since then these enterprizes have multiplied so greatly, that every christian country and every christian sect, has its various organizations in active operation for the conversion of the world to Christ. A lively christian interest has been awakened—christian liberality has been developed—an extensive acquaintance with heathen nations has been acquired—prejudices against this christian work have been removed—partition walls have been broken down—sealed empires have

been opened to the gospel—access to the remotest tribes has been gained—the bible has been translated into numerous languages—missionaries of the cross have been sent to various countries—and facilities for fulfilling the Saviour's last command, such as had hardly been conceived of since the days of the Apostles, have been improved.

Such are some of the features of the era that was introduced when this church was erected. May we not see in them cause for profound gratitude on the part of this congregation ?

II. Let us then turn in the next place to contemplate the human instruments with which, in the providence of God, the church has been favored for meeting the emergencies of its destined mission during this period.

They may be viewed in connection with the several pastorates in which were developed successively, in this particular congregation, the several characteristics of the age to which we have been adverting.

1. The first was in connection with the ministry of Dr. Allison. When he came to this church, Baltimore contained not more than thirty houses. From the time when Mr. Fleming's farm of sixty acres was laid out by legislative grant as a town, till the adop-

tion of the federal constitution, it did not seem to flourish; and that notwithstanding Braddock's defeat, rendering the Indians more lawless, had driven many of the scattered population of the interior into the towns for protection, and a considerable body of French neutrals had sought refuge here from Nova Scotia, when it was taken by the British. At the commencement of the revolution it was still a village of not more than five thousand inhabitants. And even at the close of that struggle, notwithstanding a spirit of considerable enterprise, it contained only about eight thousand. When Dr. Allison died, it had become the third city of the union in magnitude; and this church, which arose from five or six families, one of the most flourishing congregations in the land.

Of this gratifying growth Dr. Allison and his respected associates were permitted to be the honored agents. It affords me great pleasure, after having carefully reviewed their public spirited, self-denying, efficient and judicious labors, to hold them up to your veneration and gratitude as the founders of this church—the instruments by whom it was brought to its highest outward prosperity.\*

\* The members of the Committee during this period were Messrs. John Stevenson, John Smith, William Lyon, Wm. Buchanan, William Smith, James Sterret, William Spear, Jonathan Plowman, Dr. Alexander Stenhouse,

The character of the men, and the spirit that actuated them may be seen in the report made by the committee to the congregation, on becoming settled in this building in which they give a detailed history of the administration of its secular affairs, during the time it had been managed by them. From this it appears that, during this period of a little more than twenty-eight years, two church edifices, besides the original log building, had been erected, one of them had been enlarged, a parsonage had been built, the lots for these buildings and one for a burial ground had been purchased, the annual salaries had been collected with unusual accuracy, inferior expenses had been defrayed without applying to the congregation or to the public fund, and the temporalities of the congregation brought into the most flourishing state. For this they disclaimed any personal credit, ascribing it all to the great body of the people. And then, after stating that only\* one of their number had remained a member of the committee from first to last, they add, “should it be now alleged that the

John Boyd, Samuel Purviance, John Little, Samuel Brown, James Calhoun, Robert Purviance, William Neill, Hugh Young, John Sterrot, David Stewart, Nathaniel Smith, Joseph Donaldson, Robert Gilmor, William Patterson, Christopher Johnson, Stephen Wilson, John Swan, Col. Samuel Smith and Dr. Brown.

\* This was Mr. William Smith, who served on the committee from 1764 to 1814.

individuals of our body have acted improperly, and might have their places better supplied; should it be feared, in these days of commendable jealousy for the rights of man, that the institution itself is defective and ought to be altered; \* \* should the society, for these or other reasons, desire to introduce a new system and to employ other agents, they have an unquestionable authority. As members of the church, a connection we value more than being members of the committee, we declare our readiness to consult, advise and act with our brethren in a congregational capacity on whatever plan may be proposed for accomplishing the great design for which we have voluntarily joined ourselves together in a christian assembly, not questioning but the harmony, candor and mutual forbearance we have heretofore enjoyed will continue, and prove no less honorable to our reputation than auspicious to our affairs." These were pre-eminently the men for the times. Nor should it ever be forgotten, that all that we have since enjoyed as a congregation, we owe under God to their noble, self-sacrificing, successful labors. May this people never prove recreant to their principles, nor unworthy of their fame.

Dr. Allison was a pastor worthy of such a congregation and committee. Coming here in early youth,



with distinguished talents, accurate and extensive culture, a firm friend of learning and order, zealous for civil and religious liberty, but eminently conservative, he acquired, during a period of nearly forty years, a reputation and influence second to no other in the community. As a preacher, he was rather didactic and argumentative than rhetorical. His sermons were addressed to the understanding more than to the passions. Although he read closely, and his manner was not animated, his style was yet so chaste, lucid and nervous, that his discourses always awakened attention and interest. It was however in his aptness for public business that he stood especially pre-eminent. From the origin of the Presbytery of Baltimore he was a leading member of that body, being its moderator during the first seven years, and taking a prominent part in every important measure. In the higher judicatories of the church he exerted no less commanding influence. Coming upon the stage with the most distinguished lights that have adorned the annals of our church—the Tenants, Gillespie, Bostwick, Davies, Blair, Rogers, Ewing, Witherspoon, Nisbet and others—men renowned for learning, piety and influence, he undoubtedly, says Dr. Miller, held the first rank of American clergy. For the perspicuity, correctness, sound reas-

oning and masculine eloquence of his speeches in ecclesiastical assemblies, he was long admired and had scarcely an equal. Dr. Stanhope Smith, president of Princeton College, pronounced him the ablest statesman in our General Assembly. And the general estimate in which he was held by the church at large, is clearly evinced by the important duties that were assigned to him. When after the revolution measures were taken for establishing the Presbyterian church in this country on its present basis, he was made a member of almost every committee appointed to conduct the business, viz. that to arrange the several judicatories—that to revise our public standards—that to mature a system of discipline and government—and that on psalmody. The same talent for managing affairs that he displayed in the church, was also manifested in his relations as a public spirited citizen. He was one of the original founders of the Baltimore College and the Baltimore Library, and united in the earliest efforts here made to establish schools. Trained too in revolutionary times, he was an ardent friend of civil and religious liberty. The only writings that he ever printed, were a funeral discourse on Washington, and some able newspaper articles published over the signature, "Vindex," (which were subsequently printed in a

pamphlet,) against what he regarded as an attempt of a sister denomination to be recognized as having a legal relation to the state.\*

Early in 1800, Dr. Allison's health began to fail. He became much depressed in spirits; so much so that he was induced to apply to Presbytery for permission to resign his charge and demit his office. To this the congregation was opposed, and urging him to suspend his labors and seek a restoration of his health, offered to secure for him an assistant. The Presbytery therefore recommended him to withdraw his resignation. But although his health was temporarily recruited, he soon relapsed into a deeper depression, and died August 21st, 1802.†

In the previous month of February, Dr. Inglis was elected as assistant pastor, by a small majority

\* Governor Paca had recommended to the Legislature, to make some provision for the support of religion, and an application to that body was regarded by Dr. Allison, as an attempt to have the Episcopal, which had been the established church, still recognized as holding a special relation to the state.

† The committee met as soon as the melancholy event was made known, and adopted measures suited to the occasion. It was arranged that he should be interred in the Western burial ground, at the expense of the congregation, at 4 o'clock on the next afternoon, which was the Sabbath; and the clergy of the city were invited to attend as pall bearers. The churches generally were closed, and the ministers of the various denominations were present. It was also resolved to erect a suitable monument in the church as a memorial of the veneration and esteem in which this its first pastor was held. Dr. Inglis preached a funeral sermon on the next Sabbath.

over Dr. Glendy, who was then settled in or near Staunton, Va.\*

2. The second period in the history of the church, which was principally in connection with the pastorate of Dr. Inglis, was that after it had attained its maturity and was firmly established as an able and influential congregation. It was a period of great outward prosperity. We have traced the slow and gradual growth of the city and congregation, through many difficulties and discouragements, to the time when this edifice was erected. After the revolution, the Federal Constitution being adopted, and the national debt funded, public and private confidence was restored, and commerce revived. Commercial houses from Holland, Hamburg and Bremen were soon established here, and rapidly drew nearly all the tobacco trade of the state, which had been pre-

\* At a previous election, in December, 1801, Dr. Archibald Alexander, subsequently professor of didactic theology in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J., was chosen. He had been on a tour through New England, and on his return to Virginia, passed a Sabbath in Baltimore, with his friend, Mr. Priestly, and preached in the pulpit. It being understood however that a considerable minority was opposed to him, under the impression that his views on the subject of discipline were stricter and more rigid than those to which they had been accustomed, he declined.

Dr. Inglis graduated at Columbia College, New York, and entered the office of Alexander Hamilton, as a student of law. At the close of the three years term of study he was admitted to the bar. But in the course of a year he abandoned that profession, and commenced the study of theology, under Dr. Rodgers, and was licensed by the Presbytery of New York, in 1801.

viously carried on, to a great extent, by wealthy planters from their own landings, like Elk Ridge Landing. Flour too was so largely exported to the West Indies, that Baltimore became one of the largest flour markets in the world, as it is now one of the most important.

The location was peculiarly favorable to commerce, presenting the nearest market to the western country, which was then gradually filling up, and concentrating a great proportion of the trade of the Chesapeake. The geological features of the country around these head waters of the bay were found, moreover, most admirably adapted to the employment of water power. The streams running into the Chesapeake at this point are numerous, and as the country gradually rises in successive ridges, the waters fall rapidly in their progress to the bay. So remarkably is this the case in this neighborhood, that several of the principal streams were denominated by the first settlers Falls; as Jones' Falls, Gwynn's Falls, &c. It has been asserted that there is no equal space of ground in the United States that has more natural water power, united with so many local facilities, as the circle of thirty miles radius about Baltimore. From the Potomac to the Gulf of Mexico there are very few in comparison; and this

is true, to a great extent, throughout the West.\*

In connection with this advantage of location, we may notice that in 1793, when the revolution in St. Domingo took place, many of the inhabitants fled from the Island, and fifty-three vessels arrived in Baltimore, on the 9th of July, with one thousand white, and five hundred colored inhabitants; and in the next three months nearly as many more. This proved highly advantageous, not only by the accession of such a number of active, industrious people, but by opening up an almost exclusive trade with that island when its commerce was very profitable. It led also to a very important carrying trade with the other West India islands. Europe being involved in a protracted war, this whole country, freed from entangling alliances, enjoyed very great prosperity. The southern situation of Baltimore, and its possessing an abundance of the staple commodities for the West India market, gave it uncommon facilities for this trade. Ship building, in which the Baltimore artisans had become peculiarly adept—constructing a class of fast sailing clipper vessels—attained great importance, and with this all the common branches

\* General Harper stated that a semi-circle of twenty miles radius, of which Baltimore is the centre, contains sufficient water power to employ a million of looms.—N. A. Review, 1825; from which some of these statements have been taken.

of business flourished, adding very much to the growth and wealth of the city. And even when, after the peace of Amiens, in 1801, the commerce of the country was very fluctuating—the continental system putting a severe check upon neutral trade—her fast sailing vessels afforded peculiar advantages to this port for a traffic which, from its very difficulty, was exceedingly lucrative. This state of things continued, with the exception of the time of the blockade of the Chesapeake, till near the year 1818. During this period the city grew with a rapidity almost unequalled. Inhabitants came in from England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Holland, New England, the Middle and Southern States with a spirit of enterprise, which gave the greatest impulse to every branch of business. The population increased from 1790 to 1800, from thirteen to thirty-six thousand; and in 1818 to sixty thousand. Real estate advanced, turnpikes were built, banking was expanded, and a spirit of reckless excess was engendered, which resulted in one of those wide spread revulsions, which have, on various occasions since, so desolated the country. Previous to this however the church had become thoroughly consolidated and enjoyed most remarkable outward prosperity. The colony, which went out on the election of Dr. Inglis and,

erecting the Second Church, called Dr. Glendy, was large and respectable. But the vacancies thus made were soon filled, and the congregation continued eminently prosperous. In 1811 an organ was introduced into the church, which at first gave some dissatisfaction, but it soon passed away, although one or two valuable families left the church.

The old parsonage which stood on Fayette street, east of the church, was removed for the opening of North street, which was previously an alley, and a new one was erected on North street, in the rear of the church. Dr. Inglis however did not live to occupy it.

During this season of remarkable outward prosperity the spiritual interests were not overlooked, although the church enjoyed no such revivals as distinguished the succeeding pastorate. Measures however were adopted that helped much, under God, to prepare the way for these favored seasons.

In 1804 the church was for the first time regularly organized, according to the provisions of the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, by the election of Messrs. Robert Purviance, David Stewart, Christopher Johnston, George Salmon and Ebenezer Finley, as ruling



elders.\* From this time the spiritual interests of the church seem to have gradually improved. There were indeed many causes operating powerfully to interfere with the progress of vital piety. Never was the tendency to infidelity stronger in our coun-

\* In 1781 the following entry is found in the Records of the Committee: "The peculiar circumstances of our Society, at its first formation, especially the small number able and willing to discharge public trusts therein, obliged some persons to fill different employments, in the capacity of both what are called elders and deacons or committee men. But our respectable establishment and happy increase now furnish means of removing this inconvenience. Be it therefore remembered that the following gentlemen, Dr. William Lyon, John Smith, William Buchanan, and James Sterret, who, originally acted in both these characters, being previously chosen by the congregation, agree to serve under the former (that of elders) alone. And it is agreed that persons be introduced into the committee after notice and by election.

In 1804 we find another volume of records, (that of the session,) opening as follows: "Be it known, that Messrs. Robert Purviance, David Stewart, Christopher Johnston, and George Salmon, having been previously elected to the office of the Eldership in the First Presbyterian Congregation in the City of Baltimore, were, on the first day of April, 1804, solemnly ordained and set apart to said office according to the provisions of Chapter xii, 'Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church.' And at the same time, Ebenezer Finley (previously an elder in Pennsylvania) was also elected." Records of Session.

In 1802 the subject of the full organization of the churches under its care had been introduced into Presbytery, and a pastoral letter adopted urging upon the churches the election and ordination of elders. Previous to this but few of the churches in this region seem to have had regularly ordained ruling elders, or to have kept any sessional records. The delegates that had been sent from this church to Presbytery and Synod, were simply trustees, unordained representatives of the congregation; nor were any sessional records kept previous to 1804. "About this time," says Dr. Muir in his brief account of the Presbytery, "we have at last fallen into a degree of order, and our churches are organized according to the directions of our Form of Government. None of late have been ordained by us who have not at the same time been installed, and steps have been taken to instruct our people in forms of discipline and government, as practiced by our church."

try, than when Dr. Inglis entered upon his ministry in this church. The public morals had been very much unsettled by the revolutionary war; French writings had become very popular; and infidelity was considered fashionable. In 1799 the General Assembly uttered its testimony against the prevailing coldness and irreligion in a pastoral letter. Christians were constrained to renewed exertions for the preservation and promotion of vital religion. The result was seen in extensive revivals, which were extending throughout the Presbyterian church during the whole of Dr. Inglis' ministry. And although this congregation was not then visited by any season of special awakening, the preparations for such a blessing may be clearly traced.

In 1809 we find the first account, in the Presbyterian minutes, of a free conversation on the state of religion. The subject of pastoral visitation and the religious instruction of the young began to engage more serious consideration. A growing attention to spiritual religion is clearly perceptible. In 1814 Messrs. James Mosher, Thomas Finley, David Boisseau and Dr. Maxwell McDowell were ordained elders. The session, agreeably to a recommendation of Presbytery, resolved to commence a Register of Baptisms. And in this year, for the first time, appli-

cants for admission to the church appeared before the session, and on being received had their names recorded. From this time too the Lord's Supper was administered four times a year instead of twice, as had been the case previously. The Presbyterial report of the state of religion within its bounds states that public worship is better attended in all the churches, a greater sense of religion prevails, family worship is more generally practiced, infidelity is less openly avowed, the catechism is universally taught and meetings for social prayer have been established. We also find the following minute in our sessional records : " The session having frequent occasion to remark the auspicious bearing of meetings for social prayer upon the religious state of Presbyterian, as well as other congregations, deem it expedient to attempt the institution and maintenance of such associations, and also that the pastor be authorized to express the sense of the session on this and similar means of quickening the people in religion." In 1815 a weekly lecture was instituted, being conducted by the pastor on every Wednesday evening, in the church, there being then no lecture or session room. About the same time Mrs. Stephen Williams, then a member of St. Peter's church, having during a visit to Philadelphia witnessed the happy effects of Sab-

bath Schools, was the means of introducing them into Baltimore. The first was commenced by the ladies of St. Peter's church, which was soon followed by one under the care of the ladies of this church, which was held for some time in a room over the engine house in McClellan's alley, and with it was connected a weekly meeting for social prayer.

In December, 1817, when the spiritual prospects of the church were becoming increasingly promising, Dr. Inglis solicited the Presbytery to dissolve his pastoral relation to the First Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, for reasons which he assigned. The Presbytery resolved that, if the congregation consented, the request should be granted, but if they refused, the congregation should be cited to appear by commissioners and show cause why they would not consent. In consequence of this resolution, Dr. Inglis called a meeting of the congregation, Dec. 12th, 1817, to take his request and the resolution of Presbytery into consideration. At this meeting a committee was appointed to wait upon the pastor, to ascertain his reasons for the request. This committee reported, as the result of an interview, that Dr. Inglis had consented to continue their pastor, if the congregation so desired, which desire was at once expressed by an almost unanimous vote.

At the same meeting it was determined to elect a new bench of elders, and to make the election of these officers annual, as in some of the Reformed churches. The adoption of this plan, which, although not necessarily a departure from sound Presbyterianism, is nevertheless contrary to the constitution of our branch of the Presbyterian body, caused a warm discussion in Presbytery. That body passed over the irregularity, but the Synod censured the Presbytery for so doing. And the congregation never carried out the resolution to elect annually.

Dr. Inglis died suddenly on Sabbath morning, August 15th, 1819. He was one of the most distinguished popular preachers of his day. "He was largely gifted," says Mr. Jonathan Meredith, "with many of the essential elements of oratorical power. His voice was full, clear, and capable of great varieties of modulation. His enunciation was deliberate and distinct, his action subdued but graceful, always appropriate and seemingly unstudied. His whole manner was eminently dignified and impressive. He was accounted a sound theologian, a good classical scholar, and familiar with the best English literature. \* \* He usually preached with his sermon before him, but did not confine himself to it, the most striking and eloquent passages being evidently

extemporaneous." His style was exceedingly concise, but clear and elegant. Dr. Dwight spoke of him to his class in rhetoric, as the most signal instance of precision in style that he had ever met. He possessed in a pre-eminent degree the talent of so managing his voice and action, as to produce the most profound impressions with the simplest sentence. Those who were accustomed to hear him testify that no adequate conception can be formed of the effect of his preaching from his published discourses. Dr. Sprague represents him as one of the most eloquent preachers to whom he had ever listened. Anecdotes are related of his eloquence which seem almost incredible. In private intercourse he was cheerful, affable, and eminently agreeable. He shone in conversation, and was full of amusing anecdotes. In the sick room he was extremely tender and faithful, and peculiarly appropriate and happy in devotional exercises. Such indeed was his general character, such his power of attracting and influencing others, that the devotion of his people amounted almost to idolatry. The application to Presbytery to dissolve his pastoral relation, which cast a shade over the last days of his ministry, never interrupted for a moment the affection of the congregation.

The temporal affairs of the church during Dr. Inglis' ministry were eminently prosperous. In addition to those members of the committee who survived Dr. Allison, Col. Stricker, Messrs. Geo. Salmon, James McHenry, Amos Williams, and others who will come under subsequent notice, took an active part in their management. The social position, the political influence, and the commercial standing of these gentlemen gave to the congregation under their administration the greatest weight in the community.

3. The third period of the church, which was during the ministry of Dr. Nevins, may be characterized as that of gracious revival.

The rapid growth, the unexampled prosperity of Baltimore during the period we have just reviewed, led, as has often been the case, to that excessive banking and over-trading, which soon involved the community in one of those great commercial revolutions which spread devastation and distress so widely over the land. This happened in 1818, not long before the death of Dr. Inglis. The value of real estate was greatly reduced, and the aspect of the city is said to have given evident marks of decline. This no doubt had its influence in the wise overrul-

ing of divine providence, as we have seen a similar state of things recently, in impressing the minds of men with a sense of the vanity of the world, and the importance of eternal interests, and thus in preparing the way for those gracious visitations, that distinguished the period we are now considering.

Before the consequences of that commercial revolution had entirely passed away, Dr. Nevins was elected the third pastor of this congregation.\* During the first years of his ministry here there was nothing remarkable in the results of his labors. Possessing a bril-

\*The church continued vacant for about one year after Dr. Inglis' death. During that time the attention of the congregation was directed to several promising preachers, who had just entered the ministry. Among these were the Rev. Sylvester Larned, Rev. Matthew Bruen and Rev. William Nevins. The predilections of the respective friends of these gentlemen were very strong, and the first election lasted two days. At length the choice fell upon Mr. Larned, then recently settled in New Orleans. Mr. Larned was highly gratified with the call, but promptly yielded to what he regarded the claims of duty, and signified his refusal. He had been stationed in New Orleans by the voice of the church. A large and promising congregation had been gathered there by his eloquence, faithfulness and piety. And his brethren and fathers in the ministry felt, that his abandoning the enterprize at that critical juncture, would peril its success. He, therefore, stood firmly to his post and became a martyr to duty, falling a victim to the climate, universally lamented as one of the most promising and eloquent ministers ever raised up in the Presbyterian church. On the second election, Mr. Nevins was chosen pastor of the congregation by a large majority, and became the instrument of the most important spiritual blessing to the church. He was born in Norwich, Ct., October 17th, 1797. At an early age he applied himself to commercial pursuits, but soon abandoned them for a liberal education, and entered Yale College, where he became hopefully converted. On leaving college he entered the Theological Seminary, at Princeton, N. J., and after the regular course of study, was licensed to preach the gospel by the Association of New London, Ct., September, 1819. He labored a short time in Richmond, Va., and settled in Baltimore, October, 1820.



liant imagination, a sound judgment, a refined taste, warm affections and an ardent temperament, his pulpit performances attracted general admiration and proved highly gratifying to an intelligent congregation. In his social intercourse there was a frankness and guilelessness, a ready sympathy with others, that rapidly endeared him to all classes of his flock. A somewhat variable temperament, and a manner marked by great simplicity, playfulness and wit, led some, who met him only casually at this time, and became subsequently better acquainted with him, to suppose that his religious character underwent a very important change after the first few years of his ministry. And, unquestionably, his settlement in life, increasing years, the responsibilities of so important a charge, and, above all, divine grace gradually sobered his feelings and led to a more rapid development of his religious character. But those who knew him most intimately at an earlier period, had perceived from the first, evidence of the same views and experiences that characterized him at this late period. No one, says Dr. Sprague, could hear him pray in the seminary, without being convinced that his utterances were from a heart accustomed alike to self-communion and godly sorrow.

There were various circumstances which tended to

prepare the way for these gracious seasons of refreshing, which rendered this the most important period in the history of this church. The weekly lecture and prayer meeting, which seem to have been discontinued about the time of Dr. Inglis' death, Dr. Nevins early revived, and also secured the formation of more private meetings for special prayer. The present lecture room, (although at first only half of its present size,) was erected, and the sabbath school removed to it. About this time, too, most remarkable revivals were enjoyed in various parts of the country. In the District of Columbia, which was embraced within the bounds of the Presbytery of Baltimore, the churches seem to have greatly awakened. In 1819 the Third Presbyterian Church in this city was organized, and enjoyed the ministrations of pastors, who, if not always judicious in the measures they employed, had yet conceived a strong desire to promote a true revival of religion. This general subject was discussed with increasing interest at the meetings of Presbytery. In the spring of 1825 Dr. John Breckinridge became the pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in this city. He after a short time united with Dr. Nevins in establishing a Bible Class, embracing a large number of young men of both congregations, most of whom subse-

quently became subjects of the revival in 1827. Having recently reviewed that season of refreshing in a discourse on "Revivals in Baltimore," I take the liberty to quote one or two paragraphs :

"In March, 1824, the Rev. Mr. Summerfield, whose brief ministerial career produced so happy an impression upon Christians of all evangelical denominations in this country, on his second visit to the United States, was appointed, by the General Conference of the Methodist Church, Missionary in Baltimore, where he labored with the greatest acceptance during the winter of 1824-'25, and produced the profoundest sensation. With this remarkable man Dr. Nevins formed a very close intimacy, which he ever afterwards spoke of as one of the most precious blessings of his life. About the same time his mind became deeply exercised on the subject of baptizing the children of parents who did not profess saving faith in Christ. After careful examination and prayer, he became persuaded that such administration of the ordinance was unmeaning and unauthorized. And he at once determined to decline practicing any longer upon what has been styled the lax plan. In coming to this conclusion, he clearly foresaw that it would produce no little agitation in such a congregation ; and he even apprehended that it

might lead to a dissolution of the pastoral relation. But having made up his mind, he fearlessly announced his intentions. It was soon apparent, however, that he was sustained by a large majority of the congregation, although some few left the church on this account. This is worthy of more particular notice, not only because it is natural that such a stand would lead those, thus deprived of what they had been accustomed to regard as an invaluable right, to serious reflection, but also because it has been ascertained that it did actually produce the first serious impressions upon some, who afterwards became subjects of the revival. From this time, too, one who has carefully examined Dr. Nevins' manuscripts, testifies that there may be discovered a decided increase of solemnity, directness, pungency, and unction in his sermons. And no one, who peruses the touching entries in his diary, can fail to observe striking evidences of this change.

“Such was the state of things on Sunday, March 7th, 1827. There was no expectation beyond what is implied in an ardent longing for the blessing. There had been no attempt to get up a revival, but a simple waiting upon God—upon him only. That morning Mr. Nevins preached from the text, ‘Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.’

The sermon, which is still preserved, is plain, practical and pungent ; but not at all remarkable. It is not, indeed, equal in power and directness to many of his other discourses. He was not himself conscious of anything special in its delivery. He did not even discover anything unusual in the appearance of the congregation. But it was accompanied with the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. In the interval between the morning and afternoon services, the older and more experienced teachers in the sabbath school were surprised to find a number of the younger teachers and of the more advanced scholars, who were not professors of religion, in the deepest anxiety respecting their salvation ; so much so, that it entirely interrupted the regular proceedings of the school. At the same time several members of the congregation visited Mr. Nevins at his house, in a similar state of feeling. The next day and throughout the week, wherever he went, he found the deepest tenderness and anxiety. Whole families were impressed by they knew not what. He at once invited all such to meet him at his own residence on Monday evenings. And in the course of a few weeks, the spirit of inquiry had so spread, that as many as seventy or eighty were found in attendance upon these meetings for counsel and instruction ; some in overwhelming distress.

“ As the immediate result of this gracious outpouring, more than two hundred persons united with the two churches. Quite a number became most useful—some of them distinguished ministers of the Gospel. A large portion of the young men have subsequently become officers in the various churches now existing. And others have ever since been among the most active, zealous, and useful of our church members. Nor was the influence of this revival limited to these more palpable and recorded manifestations. It infused fresh life into the churches, animated and encouraged the ministers, and gave a new impulse to the cause, such as it never before received. Sunday Schools, Prayer Meetings, and Tract Visitation, were established in various parts of the city. The Fourth Presbyterian Church was the result of one of these enterprises. Another was established at Crook's factory, to which Mr. Musgrave received a call that resulted in his useful settlement in the Third Church. And altogether an amount of good was accomplished, that will never be fully estimated this side of eternity. Dr. Nevins testified on his dying bed, six years afterwards, that he had seen no reason to be ashamed of any who had come into the Church at that time. From that period, as his diary shows, his constant anxiety was to labor—*agonize*, as he says—

for a renewal of the work. It manifestly produced in him a deeper sense of dependence upon the Holy Spirit, confidence in the Divine power and grace, and desire to be taught and guided in his ministry from above. When preaching his tenth anniversary sermon, he mentioned that two hundred and sixty had joined the church under his ministry, chiefly, as he thought, through this revival. In 1831, the First Church enjoyed a similar season, though neither so marked nor extensive.”

I need not now dwell further upon the character of that devoted servant of Christ, who was taken away from the most promising prospects of usefulness in the very dew of his youth. His memory is so fresh in the recollection of this congregation and community, even after nearly a quarter of a century, that his name needs only to be mentioned, to awaken the most tender and grateful associations.

Early in 1835 he was constrained to leave his charge, broken in health and spirits, in the hope that a sea voyage and a temporary cessation from his arduous duties, would recruit his exhausted strength.\* These

\* In 1832 Dr. Nevins had an attack of bilious fever, which laid him aside for more than two months, but which he felt had been greatly sanctified to him. In 1834 he was again arrested by disease. Incessant labor produced symptoms of bronchitis; he lost his voice, and was disabled during the whole summer. Relaxation and travel however had apparently recruited his wasted

means however proved entirely ineffectual. And early in the autumn of that year he returned to his desolated home, soon to find a resting place by the side of his beloved companion and child, who had recently preceded him to the grave. On the 14th of September the "session" and "the committee" were summoned to record his death with heartfelt expressions of respect and sorrow, and to make arrangements for his last obsequies.

Mr. William Taylor and Col. Mosher were the only members of Session when Dr. Nevins was installed. In 1829 Dr. Maxwell McDowell was re-elected\* to the office, in connection with Mr. George Morris, previously an elder in one of the Presbyterian churches in Philadelphia. Mr. Taylor resigned the

strength, when the sudden death of an almost idolized wife by cholera again prostrated him in sickness, and prepared him for a premature grave. His feelings have been so touchingly portrayed by his own pen in his "Practical Thoughts" and "Diary," that no other need attempt to describe them. He employed his time during this sickness in writing the articles for the N. Y. Observer over the finals M. S. and several tracts, which have had an extensive circulation. He preached but once after this time, on the first day of the year 1835. Some of his most beautiful and effective discourses were delivered on New Year days. The winter and spring of this year he spent in the West Indies, without however the benefit anticipated by his friends. He returned only to struggle patiently through the summer, and early in the autumn breathed out his soul in the midst of a most affectionate and devoted people.

\* Dr. McDowell, Messrs. Mosher, Finley, and Boisseau, then comprising the whole Session, retired in 1817. In 1818 Messrs. William Taylor and Col. Mosher were elected.



next year, and died shortly after. Col. Mosher continued to serve as the oldest member of Session until about 1846, when at an advanced age he felt constrained, on account of increasing infirmities, to withdraw from the active duties of the office. In 1834 Messrs. David Courtney, John N. Brown, and William L. Gill were added to the Session. Mr. Gill alone remains with us at this time, although the other two serve different Presbyterian churches in this city. Those last elected however belong more properly to the succeeding period, as they came into office only a short time before Dr. Nevins' decease.

Of Mr. Morris and Dr. McDowell, I may say with that filial affection and respect that I ever entertained for them, that few more valuable ruling elders ever served any church. When I first came here, young and inexperienced, it was my happiness to find them the oldest, but still active, members of the session of this church. Mr. Morris, owing to a natural reserve of disposition and manner, was never as well known by the congregation generally, as it was desirable that he should have been. For sound judgment, practical wisdom, scrupulous integrity, unbending firmness in his principles, in connection with the humblest modesty, the most ardent philanthropy, and the most devoted piety, I have never known his

superior in the office. He had an accurate and comprehensive acquaintance with our system of doctrine and polity, both in theory and practice, and ever proved a judicious and prudent counsellor. Dr. McDowell was a worthy associate. Differing in many traits of character and manner, they were united in views and affection ; and ever exerted the most happy influence in our sessional meetings. It is a source of unfeigned gratitude to me, that my early ministry was exercised, and my pastoral character formed, in connection with two such men.

4. This brings us to the period of the last pastorate, which has been more particularly characterised by the development of those activities of the congregation in the departments of church extension and general christian benevolence, for which the previous periods had so remarkably prepared the way. During the preceding ministries the church had attained a position of great influence in the denomination and community to which it belongs. Since, it has had but little else to do than to set in order and employ the materials of usefulness, with which it has been so liberally provided. As the business of acquiring wealth is not always most favorable to its expenditure, (the habits of mind being

for the most part opposite,) so that of establishing and consolidating such a congregation does not always allow of the most efficient efforts abroad. The present generation however became the heirs of no small measure of material and spiritual wealth, for the employment of which the providence of God soon afforded the most abundant opportunities and calls. Hence is that saying true, one soweth, another reapeth. I sent you, said the Savior to his disciples, to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor : other men labored and ye are entered into their labors.

When the present pastor\* entered upon the duties of this charge, he found here General Samuel Smith,

\* In December, 1835, he passed through Baltimore on his way to New Orleans, in the service of our Board of Domestic Missions, and preached in the church without the slightest expectation of ever seeing the place again. In the February following the Session, having received a request from a sufficient number of the congregation, convened a meeting for the purpose of going into an election of pastor, if the way should be clear. That meeting was adjourned to the 11th of April, when the present incumbent was chosen, and having, after no little deliberation, and with great misgiving accepted the call, was installed September 15th, 1836, the Rev. Dr. Miller of Princeton, preaching the sermon. On looking back, I am amazed at the temerity of the step. Young, inexperienced, and with no capital, men of far higher gifts might have shrunk from following such pastors as had previously served the congregation—one of the most intelligent, influential, and responsible in the denomination. But all who had preceded me had come as young men to this as their first charge, and (through that delicate consideration and generous forbearance which so often distinguish intelligent and refined congregations) had remained through their entire ministry—a fact nearly unparalleled in our country. And I cannot but hope that, notwithstanding my fear and trembling in accepting the call, I was guided by a kind and wise Providence, who

Messrs. Robert Smith, Robert Gilmor, James Buchanan, Alexander Fridge, Alexander McDonald, Judges Nisbet and Purviance, Messrs. George Brown, James Swan, James Cox, James Armstrong, James Campbell, and Robert Purviance, who were, or had been, members of "the committee"—all now among the dead. Barely to mention their names is a sufficient indication of the character and position of the church in the community, as they were distinguished in the highest walks of civil, political, commercial and social life, with a reputation in these various departments that gave lustre, not only to the congregation, but to this city and country. They were the connecting links between the earliest and the latest periods of the congregation—its feeble infancy and its matured manhood. Most, if not all of them, had listened to every pastor the church has had during the first century of its existence. They had borne with the fathers the heat and burden of its struggling into existence. They had ministered by their wealth and social position to its highest outward prosperity. They had witnessed its doubtful beginnings, its full-

makes use of earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. By divine grace I have continued to this day, having been spared in the office for nearly a quarter of a century—a longer period than any of the pastors of the church, with the exception of the first, and being now among the oldest pastors in the city.

est strength, and its widest influence. It would afford me the greatest satisfaction to be able to dwell more minutely upon their invaluable services. As however this is impracticable on the present occasion, I may be permitted to single out two or three as specimens, not indeed to claim for them any pre-eminence in such a galaxy, but because of their peculiar relations to the history of the church.

General Samuel Smith was then the oldest living "committee man" or trustee of the congregation, having been elected in 1782, before the erection of the edifice we are just leaving. He was a true representative of the old school of soldiers, politicians, and merchants. Having during the revolution fought bravely the battles of his country, and, during the most remarkable period of the rise and progress of our city, attained the first rank among her merchant princes, and then filled the highest political positions in the city, state and general governments, he brought to the committee an intelligence, energy, resolution and executive talent, which, while they rendered him the man for emergencies, gave him the most commanding influence and control.

Mr. Alexander Fridge was elected in 1814, in the place of Mr. William Smith, who had held the office since the organization of the congregation in 1761—

a period of more than fifty years—connecting the present ministry directly by a single link with the very founders of the church. Mr. Fridge came here in time to be identified with the most rapid growth of the city and congregation. Liberally educated in a university of the Old World, (in the class with Sir James McIntosh and Robert Hall,) with sound judgment and unsullied integrity, he became a most successful merchant. I found him just recently retired from active business. A kinder, more unselfish, philanthropic heart never beat. The unfortunate poor, the forlorn stranger, the mechanic out of employment, the young man starting in life without friends or patrons, always found in him an active, liberal, kind friend, counsellor, and helper. It was however in relation to the benevolent operations of the church, that his influence at that particular time was most important. He always manifested the warmest and most efficient interest in every secular and religious charity, and never held back from any good work. His character, position, and influence rendered one having such views and feelings a most important instrument in forming and establishing that benevolent character, for which the congregation has been somewhat distinguished.

One other name must be mentioned, and it is with

a tenderness of regret, in which all who hear me will sympathise, as under a recent affliction. To Mr. George Brown this congregation owes, under God, more perhaps than to any other person for its present position in this community. With his name its reputation, influence, and usefulness are most intimately identified. Elected a member of "the committee" in 1825, he served the congregation in this capacity, with an assiduity and faithfulness second to no other, for nearly thirty-five years. During this last period of the history of the church now under review, he withdrew gradually from the pressure of active business, and gave himself increasingly to the promotion of those various benevolent enterprises demanded by our age, till he came to be almost universally looked to in all such undertakings. He not only contributed liberally of his large wealth, but also by his counsels and active services. The contributions of this church to our Boards of Missions, Education, &c., as well as to the other benevolent objects of the day, were largely made up of his gifts. And in the work of extending the church in this city and vicinity, as well as in more remote parts of our country, to no other person have we been more indebted. The new church edifice especially will be always identified with his name. Only those however who were associated with

him in carrying it on, will ever know how much it owes under God to his wisdom and prudence, his untiring vigilance, his important encouragement and timely assistance. Present circumstances forbid me to say more, less could not be said in faithfulness to this review.

Such are specimens of the men, who composed and gave character to "the committee" at the commencement of the present pastorate. General Smith was the venerable representative of the old era; Mr. Fridge of the transition period; and Mr. Brown of that in which we are now living. Each had its special characteristics and mission, not exclusively, but predominantly. And each in succession constituted the preparation for what was to come after.

The first duty to which the church seemed especially called in this last period, after having become so firmly established, so greatly prospered in outward respects, and so graciously revived as to its spiritual life, was its own enlargement and extension in this community and vicinity, and the further development of its practical benevolence through the various agencies for advancing the Redeemer's kingdom that distinguish our day. Not, by any means, that it had heretofore ignored these duties. The obligation was recognized from the beginning. Dr. Allison, the



first pastor, preached in the country one-fourth of his time for some years ; and relinquished that service only to meet the growing wants in old town, where he subsequently held frequent services, before there was any Presbyterian Church there. When the election of Dr. Inglis, as the assistant and successor of Dr. Allison, gave rise to some dissatisfaction on the part of Dr. Glendy's friends, the going out of that large and influential minority, to form the Second Church, was greatly facilitated by the previous labors of Dr. Allison in that part of the city. And as that was the period of Baltimore's most rapid growth, both churches were soon most respectably filled. An enterprise partaking more entirely of a church extension, and even missionary character, was some years after attempted in the western part of the city. This, (the Third Church,\* in Eutaw street,) was however so feebly undertaken and so imprudently managed in its earlier years, that although begun in 1819, it amounted to very little till after Dr. Musgrave took charge of it in 1830. About the year 1831 Mr. Alexander Fridge, Mr. James Campbell and others made an effort to form a new congregation and called the Rev. John Harris,

\* See a brief account of this church in the discourse on " Revivals in Baltimore," before referred to.

then a young minister, of very distinguished talents, eloquence and popularity, as a preacher. He had been raised in the congregation, and was recently from the seminary. The First Baptist Church, in Sharp street, then heavily in debt, was about to be sold, and these gentlemen proposed to purchase it. But before the arrangement was completed, the friends of the Baptist church relieved it from the embarrassments on account of which it was to have been sold, and Mr. Harris having accepted an invitation to New Orleans, the project was abandoned. It seems that some of the congregation thought that the church was not prepared to send off such a colony. Dr. Musgrave had recently undertaken to resuscitate the Third Church, which it was supposed would require all the aid that could be afforded; especially as many of the most active members had but recently come into the church in the late revivals, and needed to be kept together for some time.

In a year or two after this, it was determined to erect a Sabbath School in what was then the extreme western part of Baltimore. In 1833, Messrs. Alexander Brown, George Brown, and Alexander Fridge gave the lots on which the Fourth Church now stands. It was proposed to erect a small building for a Sabbath School on the rear of the lot, with the

intention of erecting a church edifice on the front at some subsequent day. The enterprise however was in some way mismanaged. Dr. Nevins, having been taken sick, could not give to it his personal oversight, and those to whom it had been entrusted in his absence from the city, commenced a far more expensive building than had been contemplated, and the funds, which had been collected for the purpose, were exhausted before the walls were up. Messrs. Alexander and George Brown had to advance about two thousand dollars ; and a ground rent of a thousand dollars had also to be created, before the roof could be put on and the floors laid. It remained for some years in this unfinished condition. In the meantime the Rev. S. Guiteau gathered a small congregation and promising Sabbath School. But some months after he became persuaded that in the unfinished state of the building there was very little prospect of forming a good church, and he relinquished the enterprise.

Such was the state of our churches in Baltimore at the commencement of the period now under review. About this time (1837) the Presbyterian denomination, after a protracted controversy between what were styled the Old and New Schools, was divided into two bodies. And when the attention of the

churches was diverted from the strife with which they had been agitated for ten or more years, and which terminated in this disruption, they began to engage in more agreeable, if not more appropriate work. A spirit of church extension was waked up throughout the entire Presbytery. Committees were appointed to visit various portions of the Presbyterial bounds, for the purpose of strengthening feeble churches, organizing congregations in destitute places, and seeking in other ways the promotion of religion. In a few years, old and extinct churches had been resuscitated, new ones organized, and houses of worship erected in fifteen or twenty different places within the territorial limits of the Presbytery. In this useful work, this congregation was permitted to take an important part.

It was soon felt however that the most strenuous exertions were necessary, to keep pace with the rapid increase of population in the city itself. In 1837 the Rev. George D. Purviance took charge of the Fourth Church, which had remained in an entirely unfinished state. Through the influence of his personal friends in this congregation, it was completed and furnished in a neat and tasteful manner, at an expense of between one and two thousand dollars. A congregation was gathered, to which he

ministered gratuitously with great kindness and assiduity, until the failure of his health compelled him to desist from preaching. As that congregation had never been incorporated, the property continued in "the committee" of this church. On their purchasing out the ground rent, Mr. Brown very generously and unsolicited relinquished his claim, amounting to about twenty-seven hundred dollars. Within the last few years this Fourth Church has been again greatly revived under the efficient ministry of the Rev. Mr. Lefevre.

In the autumn of 1840, Messrs. John Rodgers, David Stewart, and John Falconer were elected elders: and Messrs. Henry C. Turnbull, John Haskell, Moses Hyde, and Lancaster Ould, deacons. Early in the next year they were ordained; and in the sessional conferences, in which the deacons took part, a new impulse was given to the activities of the church. The subject of colonizing formed a prominent topic of discussion. And it was soon determined to make an effort to build a new church somewhere near the Cathedral.

Before however any plans were matured, it was understood that the Second Church also contemplated colonizing. Apprehending that the attempt to carry on two such enterprises at the same time would

endanger the success of both, a proposition was made to unite on one at a time ; and as the enterprise in old town was the smallest, and therefore most easily managed, it was deemed best to commence with that—especially as the population in that part of the city was large and increasing, and we had but one Presbyterian church on the east side of the Falls. Accordingly, in November, 1842, a meeting of the pastors, elders, and deacons of the First and Second Presbyterian Churches was convened in our Parsonage, on North street ; and after mutual conference, the measure was determined upon, a subscription was opened, committees were appointed, and all the requisite preliminary steps taken for erecting the Aisquith Street Presbyterian Church. It was completed in 1844.\* And although it had for a few years to struggle with some difficulties, it is now in a most flourishing condition, and accomplishing a most important work. The colony was principally from the Second Church ; but, one of the elders, one of the deacons, and some twenty or thirty members of this church, formed a very important part of that interesting enterprise.

\*Subsequently this congregation united in a successful effort to purchase a most desirable parsonage for that church, and also aided in building a new lecture room for the congregation in the rear of the church.

Before however that church was completed, some few members of this congregation began to consult about erecting what afterwards became the Franklin Street Church. The improvements in that part of the city were going on very rapidly. At first, Mr. William F. Murdoch, Dr. George Gibson, and Mr. C. A. Schaeffer, were the only ones who took an active part in the enterprise. These gentlemen met from time to time in the old parsonage, to confer upon the subject. One evening they were joined by Mr. Robert Campbell, when having learned that the lot on which that church now stands, was offered for sale by Mr. Robert Gilmor, although only about ten or twelve thousand dollars had been collected for the purpose, it was determined to accept the offer. Some objections were at first made to this by persons, who having selected the lot for another church, had subsequently relinquished it, but Mr. Gilmor disregarded them, and adhered to his agreement. After the purchase of the lot, Messrs. Joseph Taylor, Francis Foreman, James George, William Beatty, John Big- ham, Samuel Mactier, and Alexander Brown, were added to the committee. Plans were obtained from Carey Long, Esq., and the building was commenced, and after two years brought to a completion in 1846. Although the cost was somewhat greater than had

been expected, yet the location was found to be most eligible, and on the church being open for divine service, a large sale of pews was made and a numerous and influential congregation gathered. A colony, consisting of two elders, two deacons, seventy church members, and the families connected with them, went out from this congregation to form that church. Seldom has a more promising colony gone forth. It was composed, not of the aged, the weak, the lame, the halt, but, as all genuine sacrifices should be, of the firstlings of the flock, of the very flower of the congregation. They went, not because of any dissatisfaction with the old church, (some of the most efficient members of the building committee, as my venerable friend Joseph Taylor and others expected to remain behind,) but gave their time, money, and labors to the enterprise, with a simple desire to extend Presbyterianism in our city.

It was however a disruption of very tender ties, and much more painful than those who have not gone through a similar operation would be likely to suppose. Indeed, when it was realized how large and valuable the colony was, we were not unfrequently sympathized with and even pitied, as if the glory had departed from the old First Church; and I acknowledge I sometimes felt that, considering



the weakness of poor human nature, those who had promoted the enterprise, against all private interests and feelings, for the general good, had behaved with considerable magnanimity. And I have reason to know that few took greater satisfaction in the prosperity of the new enterprise. They would not have changed anything, they would not, if they could, have recalled a single member, however sad it was to part with valued helpers. And we may be permitted to testify, as the result of this and other similar movements, that God may be safely trusted to take care of the interests of those, who with generous self-sacrifice engage in his service and seek to promote his cause. This church is a standing monument and proof, that public spirit is not only the *duty* of individuals and congregations, but their wisest policy, under God's government.

After the colony had gone out to form the Franklin Street Church,\* this congregation resolved to remodel their own church edifice ; removing the pulpit to the opposite end, and turning round the pews. The floor, which used to be of brick, and which had to me when I first came here an appearance of the most

\* While that enterprise was going on, this congregation was called upon to assist the Second Church, from which some of the Franklin Street Church had come, in erecting the Broadway Church. This being a smaller undertaking was completed first.

primitive simplicity, so much so that I gave the committee no rest till they consented to hide it by a carpet, was removed and a new floor of wood, raised some eighteen inches on sleepers, was substituted. The four wood stoves that Mr. John Spence the sexton used always to stir up so vigorously before sermon, were removed, together with their unsightly pipes, and a furnace was placed in the cellar. A new and valuable organ was procured, principally through the instrumentality of the ladies. Mr. Spence's green arm chair was no more to be seen. That feature of the old regime I greatly missed. When I first came here, a young man, the sexton in that arm chair, with his hymn book and rattan, directly in front of the pulpit, inspired me with an awful reverence. I am not sure that I did not sometimes look around, when I made any slip, to see if he was not after me. These changes gave a new spring to the congregation. While the young colonies prospered, our own church gradually resumed its wonted appearance. And although in a part of the city that was being rapidly occupied by places of business in the stead of dwellings, we had in three years not only paid for our improvements, amounting to ten thousand dollars, paid off a long standing debt of five thousand, but our income, according to the

report of the treasurer, was greater than it had ever been before. So much for colonizing.

At this time, Mr. George Morris and Dr. Maxwell McDowell having deceased, and Mr. John Falconer and Dr. David Stewart having gone with the Franklin street colony, Mr. William W. Spence and Mr. William B. Canfield were elected elders. The next measure to which attention was turned, was the purchase of a very neat and substantial church, (recently erected by a Baptist congregation, in the most desirable part of the city,) for our colored people—as handsome a structure, I venture to assert, as is occupied by any colored congregation in the land; frescoed after the Egyptian order, in the highest style of art, and furnished with damask cushions and every comfort. In this enterprise we had the co-operation of some of the other churches. That congregation, after some hard struggles, is now in a most flourishing condition, under a talented, educated colored preacher, and with a most efficient Sabbath School, in which a number of our church members are engaged as teachers.\*

\* We have recently undertaken to pay off a ground rent of twelve hundred dollars on that church, and to purchase for it a suitable parsonage, which have been nearly effected. In few measures do I more rejoice than in this discharge of a most important obligation to this dependent class of our population.

In the autumn of 1850, the need of a church in the western part of our city was beginning to be deeply felt. And when the friends of the movement were looking for a suitable lot, it was suggested that a church might be erected on the grave yard of this congregation, on the corner of Greene and Fayette streets, without interfering with the sacred purposes to which that hallowed spot had been consecrated, and so as to prevent the ground from ever being diverted to other uses. This was felt to be the more desirable, as the remains of the founders of Presbyterianism in this city, of all the previous pastors, and of many of the most valuable members of this congregation there repose. Accordingly Messrs. Joseph Taylor, Alexander Murdoch, Archibald Stirling, Dan. Holt, William W. Spence, William B. Canfield, and the pastor of this church, with Messrs. M. B. Clarke, John Falconer, E. H. Perkins, and John Bigham, of the Franklin Street Church, and Mr. A. Fenton, associated themselves together for this purpose. The ground was broken July, 1851, and the building completed in one year, being opened for divine service July 4th, 1852.\* This church has

\* A more particular account of this enterprise is given in the discourse delivered at the dedication of the church, and which was published soon after.

proved one of the most efficient and useful in our body. Under its two most able and accomplished pastors it has enjoyed a degree of prosperity second to no other in our city ; and now constitutes a most important element of our denominational strength here.

The success of these various undertakings greatly encouraged our people in this good work of church extension. The teachers of our Sabbath School having collected a large number of scholars from Federal Hill, found that to be a most destitute part of our city. This led to their securing, through the Ladies' Missionary Sewing Society, the services of the Rev. Mr. Kaufman, just from the seminary, who soon gathered there one of the largest Sabbath Schools in our city, and the nucleus of a congregation. Just however as they were preparing to undertake the erection of a church edifice, it was urged that there was in the north-western part of the town a large number of Irish Presbyterians, who attended no church, and would be soon lost to us if some effort was not made in their behalf. Accordingly a room was rented in that neighborhood, and after a short time a committee was formed of three members from each of the three nearest churches—the First Church, the Franklin Street Church, and the Westminster Church, to

erect the present Twelfth Church, in west Franklin street. This has grown to be a most important missionary enterprise, and promises to become very soon, under its present efficient pastor, the Rev. Mr. Marshall, a self sustaining church.

As soon as the Twelfth Church was completed, the South Church on Federal Hill was commenced, in 1854. That congregation had been holding their Sabbath School and worshipping in an inconvenient hall. The interest felt by the congregation in a mission under the care of our own ladies, rendered it comparatively an easy matter to secure this most attractive of our mission church edifices. From this brief account it will be seen that our denomination has, during this last period of our congregational history, increased from three to twelve churches, in which increase this church—the mother of them all—has been permitted to be the most prominent instrument.

During all this time our city has been rapidly extending in every direction—and that central portion of it, in which our own church was located, was becoming fast converted into a mere place of business. As early as 1852, at a social gathering at Mr. Stirling's, the necessity of an eventual removal of the church was discussed. And subsequently a number of per-

sons belonging to the congregation convened at the parsonage several times, and at length determined to purchase the lot on which the new edifice has been erected. In October, 1853, the congregation was convened to consider the question of removal, and after full discussion resolved to accept the offer of the lot by those who had purchased it, and to go forward with the erection, as soon as the old church could be disposed of, or other arrangements be made. The next autumn plans were submitted by the Hon. J. Morrison Harris, the chairman of that committee, and the ground was broken July, 1854. This is not the occasion for tracing the history of the new structure. At the time of its commencement, Messrs. George Brown, A. Stirling, A. Murdoch, Joseph Taylor, William Buckler, S. Collins, William Harrison, J. Morrison Harris, A. Turnbull, J. Armstrong, J. I. Fisher, and A. Winchester, constituted the committee. Dr. Collins and Mr. Fisher resigned during the progress of the building, and Messrs. H. Easter and C. Findley were elected in their places. "If you seek their monument, LOOK AROUND YOU."

But it was not merely in the work of church extension that the activities of the congregation were especially called out during this last period of its history. The age is emphatically one of active

christian benevolence. And within the last twenty-five years our own denomination\* has become more completely equipped for the work of preaching the gospel to every creature.

It was my privilege to enter the ministry, and to come to this charge, at a most favorable period in this respect. Previously the contributions of the churches had been often large, but they were occasional and irregular. The material prosperity of the country however, and the revivals that had prevailed more or less generally for nearly one-third of a cen-

\* In the early history of the Presbyterian church in this country, as of all sister denominations, missions were impracticable. The churches had the greatest difficulty in supporting the gospel at home. The ministers were doing real missionary work in their own congregations. And although surrounded with the aborigines of the country, these led so roving, unsettled a life, and the facilities for reaching them were so few, that there was but little encouragement to undertake much, even if the church had possessed the means. Still like the Macedonians, in the great trial of their affliction, their deep poverty abounded into the riches of their liberality. The Presbyterian church, from its commencement in this country, counseled, prayed, and labored in this behalf. Its first efforts were to extend the gospel in the destitute portions of our own land, the greater part of which was missionary ground. These were prosecuted with as much earnestness as limited means would allow, till the war of Independence, which greatly interrupted everything of this kind. When however the General Assembly was formed in 1789, the state of the country was such as to afford increasing encouragement in this work. It was made, at the very first meeting, a prominent subject of consideration, and has never been lost sight of since. Nor was the subject of Foreign Missions entirely overlooked. As early as 1741, application was made to the society for propagating the gospel among the heathen, which had been established in Scotland, in 1709, and this institution appointed a



ture, in which this congregation had very graciously shared, prepared the way for the development of a more systematic benevolence. A brief connection of a few months with one of our Boards had impressed me with a sense of the importance of having the contributions of the churches more regular. The Session was entirely prepared to resolve, at one of its first meetings, that an opportunity should be afforded to the members of the congregation to contribute to each of the leading religious charities of the day, viz. Foreign and Domestic Missions, Education for the Ministry, the Bible, Tract and Sunday School Societies, and the Poor, once every year. And so far as I am aware, this has been regularly done ever since,

a Board of Correspondence in New York, which commissioned first Mr. Horton, and then David Brainerd, and subsequently his brother, John Brainerd, under the direction of the Presbytery of New York. In 1802 the work of missions had become so extensive that the General Assembly found it impracticable to give that attention to the business, during the brief season of its annual sessions, its importance demanded; and appointed a standing committee on missions to act throughout the year. This was the origin of our various Boards under which this general cause of benevolence has been developed in our denomination to its present proportions. This committee was reorganized as a Board of Missions in 1816. In 1819 the Board of Education was formed. In 1837 that of Foreign Missions—the organization taking place in the lecture room of this church. In 1838 the Board of Publication. And in 1855 the Committee of Church Extension, the duties of which had been previously discharged for several years by the Board of Domestic Missions. These constitute the special agencies of the Presbyterian church, which co-operates with the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, and the American Sunday School Union, in the remaining religious objects of benevolence that distinguish our age.

without a single omission, certainly without any exception in the case of our own Boards. And to this simple principle may be attributed a great measure of our usefulness in this department of christian duty.

For the first ten or twelve years these objects were presented principally by agents visiting the congregation for the purpose, and annual collections were made. These amounted to an average of three thousand dollars a year : besides, during that time, about ten thousand dollars contributed to special objects, including the Free Church of Scotland at the time of the disruption, the special effort for the endowment of the Seminary at Princeton, and the semi-centenary fund for the Board of Publication ; and also about ten thousand for mission churches in this city—in all about sixty thousand dollars.

In 1846, when on a visit to Scotland, Dr. Chalmers handed me a copy of his “ Christian Economies\*,” in which he developed the plan of supporting and extending the gospel, which has proved so successful in the “ Free Church,” rendering it one of the most liberal and efficient churches in christendom. He

\* This pamphlet was subsequently published, with an introduction by Dr. Hodge, through the liberality of a distinguished layman in New York, by our Board of Publication

warmly urged the adoption of something of the kind by the churches of this country. On my return occasion was soon found for testing its applicability to our circumstances. Within a few months the Franklin Street Church colony went out from us, taking a large amount of material and spiritual strength. The old plan of making contributions had previously lost something of its efficiency. And, this with the decrease of our numbers, threatened a very serious diminution of our collections; so that the necessity of some mode of awakening additional interest in this object was deeply felt. The "Free Church" plan was submitted to the Session, and after some deliberation was adopted by them, although not without some misgiving lest the want of familiarity with such a mode of contributing, and the difficulty of collecting their contributions from so large a number might prevent its success. Soon after its adoption, it was formally explained in a discourse delivered September, 1848. As we have now made trial of it during the space of ten or twelve years, it may be said that while it is not claimed to have accomplished all that could have been desired, it has nevertheless exceeded our most sanguine anticipations; requiring less toil, producing less friction, and yielding far greater results than the former plan.

The first year of its adoption, notwithstanding the congregation had been diminished by the outgoing colonies to form the Franklin Street and Westminster Churches, its contributions increased from three thousand dollars, (the previous average,) to more than four thousand ; the second year to five thousand, four hundred ; the third year to over six thousand, and so on, gradually increasing till they amounted to more than ten thousand dollars a year, notwithstanding that during this period we lost by death and removals contributors who had given twelve hundred dollars annually. In addition moreover to these regular stated contributions, the congregation has given an average of four thousand dollars annually to special religious objects, making its religious benefactions during the last eleven years double the amount of those of the previous twelve years. This has been of course independent of the ordinary expenses of the church—amounting to about forty thousand dollars, and the cost of the new building, (over and above the proceeds of the sale of the old church,) about eighty thousand more. To some this may seem a large sum for a single congregation to contribute to religious purposes—an amount that, with the divine blessing, might accomplish a vast extent of good. And yet how little inconvenience has it occasioned to even the most liberal contributors.

Such then is a cursory review of the history of this congregation during its occupancy of this building that we are now about to leave, resigning it to other hands, and for different uses. It is with feelings of no feigned sadness, that we go out to even a more imposing structure, in a more convenient location. But have we not the most abundant reason to thank God that we have enjoyed its privileges and opportunities for good, that the lines have fallen to us in so pleasant places, and that we have had so goodly a heritage so long, where we might look back upon such predecessors, into whose labors we were allowed to enter in this favored age. We must acknowledge indeed that our praises need to be tempered with the profoundest humility, in view of the fact that with so much better opportunities and greater facilities as the result of the labors of those who have preceded us, we have accomplished so much less than we might have accomplished.

But now that, through the good hand of our God upon us, we have been permitted to see our new enterprise brought to so desirable a completion, and are just about to enter upon a new era with so encouraging a past to look back upon, and so promising a future to look forward to, shall we not this day renewedly consecrate our service unto the Lord.

What may we not accomplish, if with cheerful hearts, and willing minds, with prayerful spirits, and devoted lives, we heed the call of God's providence and grace, and present ourselves a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service.

# APPENDIX.

## PASTORS.

REV. PATRICK ALLISON, D. D.,.....From 1763, till 1802.  
REV. JAMES INGLIS D. D.,.....From 1802, till 1819.  
REV. WILLIAM NEVINS, D. D.,.....From 1820, till 1835.  
REV. JOHN C. BACKUS, D. D.,.....From 1836.

## MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

NAMES.	WHEN ELECTED.	CEASED TO SERVE.
JOHN STEVENSON, . . . . .	1764 . . . . .	1765
JOHN SMITH, . . . . .	1764 . . . . .	1780
WILLIAM LYON, . . . . .	1764 . . . . .	1788
WILLIAM BUCHANAN, . . . . .	1764 . . . . .	1781
WILLIAM SMITH, . . . . .	1764 . . . . .	1814
WILLIAM SPEAR, . . . . .	1764 . . . . .	1790
JAMES STERRET, . . . . .	1764 . . . . .	1782
JONATHAN PLOWMAN, . . . . .	1764 . . . . .	1773
ALEXANDER STENHOUSE, . . . . .	1765 . . . . .	1775
JOHN BOYD, . . . . .	1765 . . . . .	1789
SAMUEL PURVIANCE, . . . . .	1770 . . . . .	1787
JOHN LITTLE, . . . . .	1770 . . . . .	1773
SAMUEL BROWN, . . . . .	1771 . . . . .	1771

NAMES.	WHEN ELECTED.	CEASED TO SERVE.
JAMES CALHOUN,	1771	1820
ROBERT PURVIANCE,	1771	1806
WILLIAM NEILL,	1773	1785
HUGH YOUNG,	1779	1784
JOHN STERRET,	1779	1785
DAVID STEWART,	1779	1818
NATHANIEL SMITH,	1779	1787
JOSEPH DONALDSON,	1781	1783
ROBERT GILMOR,	1781	1822
SAMUEL SMITH,	1782	1832
WILLIAM PATTERSON,	1785	1811
CHRISTOPHER JOHNSTON,	1787	1819
DOCTOR G. BROWN,	1787	1807
STEPHEN WILSON,	1789	1821
JOHN SWAN,	1790	1818
WILLIAM ROBB,	1792	1804
J. A. BUCHANAN,	1796	1810
GEORGE SALMON,	1804	1807
COL. STRICKER,	1807	1822
JAMES MCHENRY,	1810	1822
AMOS WILLIAMS,	1813	1822
ALEXANDER FRIDGE,	1814	1839
ALEXANDER McDONALD,	1816	1836
JAMES COX,	1817	1841
ALEXANDER NISBET,	1819	1854
ROBERT SMITH,	1821	1828
ROBERT GILMOR, JR.,	1822	1848
JOHN PURVIANCE,	1822	1854
JONATHAN MEREDITH,	1822	1828



NAMES.	WHEN ELECTED.	CEASED TO SERVE.
GEORGE BROWN,	1825	1859
ROSWELL L. COLT,	1828	1835
JOHN T. BARR,	1829	1835
HENRY BIRD,	1831	1835
JAMES ARMSTRONG,	1832	1839
JAMES SWAN,	1832	1854
ALEXANDER MURDOCH,	1834*	
JAMES CAMPBELL,	1835	1838
FRANCIS HYDE,	1836	1852
FRANCIS FOREMAN,	1836	1854
THOMAS FINLEY,	1838	1846
A. STIRLING,	1839*	
C. A. SCHAEFFER,	1839	1847
JOSEPH TAYLOR,	1843*	
J. SPEAR SMITH,	1844	1849
STEPHEN COLLINS,	1846	1859
WILLIAM HARRISON,	1849*	
JOHN ARMSTRONG,	1849*	
WILLIAM BUCKLER,	1854*	
ALEXANDER TURNBULL,	1854	1859
J. MORRISON HARRIS,	1854*	
ALEXANDER WINCHESTER,	1854	1859
JAMES I. FISHER,	1855	1859
CHARLES FINDLAY,	1858*	
HAMILTON EASTER,	1858*	
GEORGE S. BROWN,	1859*	
SAMUEL MACTIER,	1859*	
ANDREW REID,	1860*	

Those marked \* comprise the present Committee.

## R U L I N G E L D E R S .

In 1781, the following entry is found in the Records of the Committee: "The peculiar circumstances of our Society at its first formation, especially the small number able and willing to discharge public trusts therein, obliged some persons to fill different employments in the capacity of both what are called elders and deacons, or committee men. But our respectable establishment, and happy increase now furnish the means of removing this inconvenience. Be it therefore remembered that the following gentlemen, Dr. William Lyon, Messrs. John Smith, William Buchanan and James Sterret, who originally acted in these two characters, being previously chosen by the congregation, agree to serve under the former (that of elders) alone." Those elected under this resolution were not ordained.

In 1804 we find another volume of Records opening as follows: "Be it known that Messrs. Robert Purviance, David Stewart, Christopher Johnston and George Salmon, having been previously elected to the office of the eldership, in the First Presbyterian congregation in the city of Baltimore, were on the 1st day of April, 1804, solemnly ordained and set apart to said office, according to the provisions in chapter xii, Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. At the same time, Mr. Ebenezer Finley (previously an elder in Pennsylvania) was also elected.

In 1817 the congregation resolved to elect elders annually. This however was continued only one or two years, the Synod having censured it as a departure from the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

NAMES.	WHEN ELECTED.	CEASED TO SERVE.
WILLIAM LYON, . . . . .	1781	
JOHN SMITH, . . . . .	1781	
WILLIAM BUCHANAN, . . . . .	1781	
JAMES STERRET, . . . . .	1781	
WILLIAM SMITH, " . . . . .	1781	
WILLIAM BUCHANAN, . . . . .	1781	
ROBERT GILMOR, . . . . .	1781	
DAVID STEWART, . . . . .	1781	
CHRISTOPHER JOHNSTON, . . . . .	1781	
ROBERT PURVIANCE, . . . . .	1804 . . . . .	1806
DAVID STEWART, . . . . .	1804 . . . . .	1818
CHRISTOPHER JOHNSTON, . . . . .	1804 . . . . .	1819
GEORGE SALMON, . . . . .	1804 . . . . .	1807
EBENEZER FINLEY, . . . . .	1804	
JOHN MCKEAN, . . . . .	1809	
STEWART BROWN, . . . . .	1809	
MAXWELL MCDOWELL, . . . . .	1814 . . . . .	1817
JAMES MOSHER, . . . . .	1814 . . . . .	1817
THOMAS FINLEY, . . . . .	1814 . . . . .	1817
DAVID BOISSEAU, . . . . .	1814 . . . . .	1817
JAMES MOSHER, . . . . .	1818* . . . . .	1846
WILLIAM TAYLOR, . . . . .	1818 . . . . .	1830
JAMES DELACOUR, . . . . .	1819 . . . . .	1820
MAXWELL MCDOWELL, . . . . .	1829* . . . . .	1848
GEORGE MORRIS, . . . . .	1829 . . . . .	1846
DAVID S. COURTNEY, . . . . .	1834† . . . . .	1840
JOHN N. BROWN, . . . . .	1834‡. . . . .	1852
WILLIAM L. GILL, . . . . .	1834	

\* Re-elected.

† Resigned.

‡ Removed to Westminster.

NAMES.	WHEN ELECTED.	CEASED TO SERVE.
JOHN RODGERS,	1840	
DAVID STEWART,	1840*	1847
JOHN FALCONER,	1840*	1847
WILLIAM W. SPENCE,	1848	
WILLIAM B. CANFIELD,	1848	

In 1840 Messrs. Henry C. Turnbull, John Haskell, Moses Hyde and Lancaster Ould were elected deacons and served till they removed from the church.

*The following Minutes from the Session Book record the death of two of the first regularly ordained Elders of the church.*

#### ROBERT PURVIANCE.

On the evening of October 9th, 1806, departed this life, in the seventy-second year of his age, Robert Purviance, one of the Elders of this congregation, and for many years one of the Committee entrusted with its temporal concerns. Steady and regular in all his habits—firm, resolute, resigned and unrepining amidst his trials—punctual in his dealings—faithful in his duties—assiduous in his attendance on public worship and the various institutions of religion—equally respectable and amiable in social intercourse—as a father kind and provident—as a husband generous, constant and invariably affectionate and uniform; consistent, respectable through life, and also through the hasty stages of a painful malady which led him to his grave. He has left an example ornamental to the religion he professed, and worthy of general imitation.

\* Removed to Franklin street.

## GEORGE SALMON.

On the morning of September 13th, 1807, being the Lord's day, while the congregation were assembled for public worship, departed this life, after a few days of severe illness, GEORGE SALMON, one of the Elders of this congregation, and one of the Committee entrusted with its temporal concerns.

Seldom is it that society, civil or religious, sustains so heavy a loss, or the domestic circle so painful a bereavement, as occurred in the decease of this most estimable man. The felicities of this life, of which he had an ample share, instead of interfering with the claims of Heaven, as they too often do, exalted his soul in pure and unaffected devotion to the Father of Lights, the giver of every good and every perfect gift. His religion was of the modest and unobtrusive kind, although he never shrank from the acknowledgement of its obligations. His attainments in this respect were great, yet were they ever accompanied by an exemplary humility. His dependence was on the grace of God, and the merits of the Redeemer. His morality was at once invigorated and characterized by his religion. The same singleness of heart, the same meekness of temper—were conspicuous in both. Walking humbly with his God, he did justly and loved mercy in his relations with mankind. Righteousness predominated in his pecuniary transactions, and yet left room for a generosity as diffuse as ever opened the heart or hand of man. In his charities he was indefatigable, and the distinguishing features of his mind was eminently visible in them, his left hand not knowing the bounty which his right hand dispensed. This church will long have reason to deplore the privation of his

faithful services—his zealous exertions and his unremitting devotion to its interests.

“ His witness is in heaven and his record is on high.”

He died in the sixtieth year of his age.

#### EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE.

The following items have been noted in reading the minutes of the “ Committee,” and of the “ Session,” and are here inserted, with the page where the action on them may be found, as a matter of curiosity and interest.

Mr. Lee was chosen the first precentor, 1765, at £ 10 per annum. In January, 1765, Mr. Smith, having reported, that Mr. Lawson was willing to dispose of a lot of ground fit for our purpose, eighty feet front, and extending from the alley on which it is situated to Jones' Falls, for sixty pounds Pennsylvania currency. Mr. Lawson was invited to meet the committee at its next meeting, and the offer was accepted. The deed from Alexander Lawson to William Smith and others, is dated October 21st, 1765. In March, 1765, Mr. Buchanan acquainted the committee that Captain Charles Ridgely offered for the (log) meeting house and lot one hundred pounds, and all the ground rent due on said lot from the date of the lease, allowing the congregation the free use of the house till May 1766. The committee accepted this proposal.

In May, 1765, the committee agreed to purchase from Mr. Lawson forty feet additional ground adjoining the church lot, for a parsonage.

In 1770, a storm of wind carried away a part of the roof. In 1771 it was agreed to enlarge the church and build a parsonage. In February, 1772, forty feet more ground was leased from Mr. Andrew Buchanan ; and in March, 1773, the committee obtained a release of the reversion. A parsonage was erected on what is now the bed of North street, in 1781. In 1784 it was found necessary to secure the ground in front of the church with a brick wall. It was at first sloped and graded, and enclosed with a wood pailing—and then the brick wall was erected, and the steps and paved walks were made, pp. 48, 75.

In 1785 the first steps were taken for procuring the Burial ground on the corner of Greene and Fayette streets, p. 59.

In 1789 the congregation met, after notice from the pulpit, to confer and determine on the subject of a new church. Sixteen hundred pounds had been subscribed, and a committee was appointed to carry out the project, viz. Messrs. James Calhoun, George Salmon and David Williamson. The church was to be eighty feet by sixty : two stories high, with a belfry, and galleries ten feet from the floor. Messrs. Gilmor and Patterson were appointed to get plans and estimates for the new church, pp. 78, 79.

In 1790 the congregation applied for use of the Court House as a place of worship while the church was building, p. 81. This application was granted.

In 1792 Dr. Allison prepared an abridgement of the Catechism, and the committee recommended its use, p. 90.

In 1791 the new church was sufficiently completed for use. In May, after notice on three successive Sabbaths, the congregation met to inspect the accounts, and adopt a plan for disposing the pews, p. 86. In 1792 the committee made a

full report of their proceedings from the beginning—a very interesting document, pp. 91-3.

The towers were ordered to be completed 1795; Messrs. Salmon, Swan and McKean, committee, p. 103.

In 1797 the committee applied for an act of incorporation, p. 111. In 1798 it was declared to be expedient to reduce the ground around the church, p. 117. In 1800 an agreement was made with reference to opening North lane and reducing the ground p. 121. This ground had been used for a number of years for burial purposes. The congregation reserved the right to continue the parsonage on part of the street as long as it suited them, not exceeding ten years. They retained it till 1805, p. 153.

In 1821 Col. Mosher and Mr. William Taylor were appointed a committee to superintend the building of a session room, p. 184.

In 1835 the church was thoroughly repaired and the ceiling lowered three feet. In 1837 gas was introduced.

October, 1853, the congregational meeting was held on the subject of removing the church, p. 247. November, 1854, the plans of the new church were adopted.

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#### THE LAST SABBATH IN THE OLD CHURCH.

On the last Sabbath in September, 1859, the First Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, in accordance with a previous notice, assembled to worship for the last time in that venerable building. It having become known that this would be the last opportunity to engage in the sacred services of that



House of God, many who had formerly attended there, and some whose ancestors had there worshiped, met on this occasion with the present members of the congregation, filling the church to overflowing. At the morning service, in connection with the usual exercises, the preceding discourse, giving a brief history of the congregation, was delivered. At the afternoon service, the Lord's Supper was administered for the last time in that edifice. The pastor was assisted by the Rev. Dr. Smith of the Second Presbyterian Church ; the Rev. Dr. Dickson of the Westminster Presbyterian Church ; the Rev. G. D. Purviance, recently the pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church, himself born and brought up in this church, and descended from ancestors who were among the leading founders of the church, and who had, during the whole of its past history, afforded in successive generations some of its most valuable officers ; and the Rev. Stephen Williams the oldest Presbyterian preacher in Baltimore, who could almost look back to the opening of the building. Many former members, who had removed to form other churches, but desired here, amid the solemn and tender associations of the past, once more to commemorate the dying love of their Redeemer, met with us.

There were also present, with the single exception of Mr. Henry C. Turnbull, elder in the Govanstown Presbyterian Chapel, who was detained by sickness, all the surviving elders and deacons who had served in this church ; viz. Messrs. John N. Brown and John Falconer, elders in the Westminster church ; Messrs. David Courtenay and Lancaster Ould, elders in the Franklin street church ; Mr. Moses Hyde, elder in the Aisquith street church ; Dr. David Stewart, elder in the Annapolis Presbyterian church ; and Mr. John H. Haskell,

recently an elder in the Franklin street church, now a member of this. These assisted the present elders of the church in distributing the elements.

The service was opened with singing and prayer by Mr. Purviance. Then followed the reading of the words of institution, and an address by the pastor. The bread was dispensed by Dr. Dickson, and the cup by Dr. Smith. The services throughout, at this family re-union of the oldest Presbyterian church in Baltimore, were most tender and solemn. None who were present will soon forget them, but it has been thought desirable to preserve this brief memorial.







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