

THE CHURCH
ON THE
ELIZABETH RIVER:

A MEMORIAL

OF THE

TWO HUNDRED AND TENTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF NORFOLK, VA.

1682-1892.

BY ORDER OF THE SESSION.
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RICHMOND, VA.:
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THIS little volume contains some interesting facts concerning the early history of Presbyterianism in the United States. Shortly after the present pastor, the Rev. James I. Vance, took charge of the First Presbyterian Church, Norfolk, Va., his venerable predecessor, the Rev. George D. Armstrong, D. D., LL. D., who had just completed a happy and useful pastorate of forty years duration, stated it as his conviction that "the Church on the Elizabeth River" was the oldest Presbyterian organization in America, and that the First Church of Norfolk was its successor. He also suggested that some fitting celebration be held, commemorating so important a fact. It was accordingly determined to hold a memorial service, and on the 27th day of November, 1892, such service was held, the historical sketch, sermon and addresses published in this volume being delivered on that occasion.

While further research has not demonstrated the truth of Dr. Armstrong's surmise as to the historical primacy of "the Church on the Elizabeth River," it has established that this organization is at least two hundred and ten years old, and is antedated by only one or two other Presbyterian organizations, which, while claiming an older date, have their origin somewhat involved in doubt. Containing, as it does,

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the portraits and sketches of the pastors of the First Church, and a brief history of the growth of Presbyterianism in and around Norfolk, this memorial will be gratefully welcomed by those who are marshalled under the blue banner in this "city by the sea." It is also hoped that this modest pamphlet will be a small, but not valueless contribution to the early history of American Presbyterianism.

At the request of his brethren of the session, the terse history of the Sunday-schools was prepared by Ruling Elder George Tait, who for the past seventeen years has been the faithful and efficient superintendent of the First Church Sunday-school, and during whose incumbency there has been a steady growth and an increasing prosperity.

Thanks are due the Rev. E. B. McCluer, pastor of the Park Avenue Church, for the faithful and compact sketches of the Norfolk churches; and also the Rev. W. S. Lacy, D. D., pastor of the Second Church, for the laborious work entailed in the preparation of the graceful sketches of the pastors. It has been the greatest disappointment to be compelled to leave out the eloquent and scholarly address delivered by Prof. W. W. Moore, D. D., LL. D., of Union Theological Seminary. Prof. Moore's duties at the Seminary were so exacting as to leave no time for furnishing the printer a manuscript in time for publication.

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PASTORS
OF THE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF NORFOLK.

REV. FRANCIS MAKEMIE, -----	1683-1692
“ JOSIAS MACKIE, -----	1692-1716
“ BENJAMIN GRIGSBY, -----	1801-1810
“ JOHN H. RICE, D. D., -----	1810-1814
“ JOHN D. PAXTON, D. D., -----	1814-1819
“ JOSHUA T. RUSSELL, -----	1820-1824
“ SHEPARD K. KOLLOCK, D. D., -----	1825-1834
“ JOHN D. MATTHEWS, D. D., -----	1835-1840
“ SAMUEL J. CASSELLS, -----	1841-1846
“ S. J. P. ANDERSON, D. D., -----	1846-1851
“ G. D. ARMSTRONG, D. D., LL. D., -----	1851-1891
“ JAMES I. VANCE, -----	Oct. 2, 1891

RULING ELDERS

OF THE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORFOLK.

1. JNO. MCPHAIL,-----	} Date of election unknown; re-	
2. WILLIAM R. MCKINDER,--	} elected in-----	1814
3. WM. MAXWELL, LL. D.,-----	Elected in	1814
4. ROBERT SOUTER,-----	“ in	1814
5. ROBERT ROBERTSON,-----	“ in	1814
6. GEORGE W. CAMP,-----	“ in	1817
7. JOSHUA MOORE,-----	“ in	1827
8. ELIJAH BROWN,-----	“ in	1827
9. H. B. GWATHMEY,-----	“ in	1832
10. BENJAMIN EMMERSON,-----	“ in	1836
11. WILLIAM D. BAGNALL,-----	“ in	1836
12. ROBERT SOUTTER, JR.,-----	“ in	1836
13. JAMES T. SOUTER,-----	“ in	1836
14. R. C. GALBRAITH,-----	“ in	1844
15. DR. N. C. WHITEHEAD,-----	“ in	1844
16. RICHARD D. BURRUSS,-----	“ in	1844
17. GEORGE F. ANDERSON,-----	“ in	1848
18. WILLIAM H. BROUGHTON,-----	“ in	1848
19. JAMES G. POLLARD,-----	“ in	1854
20. WILLIAM D. REYNOLDS,-----	“ in	1866
21. DAVID HUMPHREYS,-----	“ in	1870
22. ROBERT W. SANTOS,-----	“ in	1872
23. WILLIAM H. BURROUGHS,-----	“ in	1872
24. GEORGE K. GOODRIDGE,-----	“ in	1872
25. R. FRANK VAUGHAN,-----	“ in	1873
26. JAMES R. HOLT,-----	“ in	1873
27. GEORGE TAIT,-----	“ in	1873
28. WILLIAM H. COLLINS,-----	“ in	1886
29. FRANK T. CLARK,-----	“ in	1886
30. EDMUND STRUDWICK,-----	“ in	1886
31. RUDOLPH S. COHN,-----	“ in	1889

DEACONS
 OF THE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 OF NORFOLK.

The church had no deacons until 1842.

1. F. F. FERGUSON,	Elected in	1842
2. JOHN GORMLEY,	“ in	1842
3. JOSEPH M. FREEMAN,	“ in	1845
4. GEORGE L. CROW,	“ in	1870
5. ROBERT REID,	“ in	1870
6. GEORGE K. GOODRIDGE,	“ in	1870
7. R. FRANK VAUGHAN,	“ in	1872
8. K. B. ELLIOTT,	“ in	1872
9. T. J. BLOXSOM,	“ in	1874
10. A. L. HILL,	“ in	1879
11. T. WOODSON CLARK,	“ in	1882
12. J. E. KEELING,	“ in	1882
13. FRANK W. BLAKE,	“ in	1890
14. E. BLACK,	“ in	1890
15. JNO. W. SMITH,	“ in	1890

THE EARLY HISTORY
OF
THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
OF NORFOLK, VIRGINIA.

BY REV. GEORGE D. ARMSTRONG, DD., LL. D.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN THE VALLEY OF VIRGINIA.

THE old Presbyterian Churches in the Valley of Virginia were made up of Scotch-Irish immigrants from Pennsylvania. Cooke, in his *History of Virginia*, writes: "The exodus thither"—that is, to the northern portion of the Valley—"began about the year 1732. The Scotch-Irish, who were good Presbyterians, were the pioneers, and established their homesteads along the Opequon, from the Potomac to above where Winchester now is. As soon as they had built their houses, they proceeded to build their churches; and the Tuscarora meeting-house, near Martinsburg, and the Opequon Church, a little south of Winchester, are, it is said, the oldest churches in the Valley of Virginia. They are still standing." (Pages 322-'23.)

Of the settlers in the more southern portion of the Valley, now embraced in the counties of Augusta and Rockbridge, Cooke tells us: "They were, nearly without exception, Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, men and women driven out of Ulster by the English persecutions there, and the pioneer was John Lweis, the founder of a distinguished family. Lewis belonged to a Huguenot family which had taken refuge in

Ireland. He put to death an oppressive landlord there, and escaped to Virginia, where he obtained a great grant of land. It covered half of what is now the large county of Rockbridge, and Lewis was to settle one family on every thousand acres. He brought over from Ireland and Scotland, in 1737, about one hundred families, and from these families descended some of the most eminent men of Virginia; among them, Archibald Alexander, James McDowell, Andrew Lewis, and others. These Scotch-Irish Presbyterians were conscientious, law-abiding persons. Calvinists of the strictest sect, pious, earnest, grave of demeanor, not at all sharing in the fox-hunting and horse-racing proclivities of the tide-water Virginians, but bent upon doing earnest work. They devoted themselves to agriculture, to erecting mills, to educating their children, to making their new homes comfortable, to all the arts of peace, and above and beyond all, to the firm establishment of their church. The stone meeting-house, or Augusta Church, near Staunton, was one of the first erected in the Valley. When war came, then or afterwards, there were no better soldiers in the commonwealth, for the list that begins with Andrew Lewis ends with Stonewall Jackson." (*Cooke's History*, pages 325-'26.)

Respecting these Scotch-Irish Presbyterian settlers in the Valley, Cooke tells us further, that "from the first, they were intent on securing all their rights." The Synod of Philadelphia petitioned the Governor of Virginia (1738), that those of their denomination removing to the Valley of Virginia, might have "the free enjoyment of their civil and religious liberties"; and the writer of this petition, John Caldwell, grandfather of John Caldwell Calhoun of South Carolina, received from the Governor a satisfactory answer. The presence of these men was needed on what was then

the western border of the settled portion of the State, as a protection against the Indians, and hence the special privileges granted them. The structure of most of the old Presbyterian churches in the Valley bears witness to this state of things, being built of stone, to serve as places of retreat for the settlers and their families when attacked by the Indians, as well as places of worship. More than fifty years ago, when I first visited the "Stone Church" of Augusta, it was surrounded by a substantial earth-work; and the walls of the old church at Timber Ridge then showed marks of the rifles which the men of that day brought with them when they assembled to worship God.

THE HANOVER CHURCHES.

The Presbyterian Churches in that portion of Eastern Virginia having Hanover County as a centre were gathered under the ministry of Samuel Davies, whose name stands first on the roll of Hanover Presbytery, at its organization in 1755. Davies had been ordained as an evangelist by New Castle Presbytery, with a view to his laboring in Virginia. In April, 1747, he arrived at Williamsburg, then the seat of government of Virginia, and at once applied to the General Court for license to officiate at four different places of worship in and about Hanover. This license having been obtained with some difficulty, he immediately entered upon his labors, and was listened to by multitudes with profound attention. The next year, his license to preach was extended to three additional meeting-houses, so that, thenceforward, his labors were divided between seven places of worship, in five different counties, some of them being forty miles distant from others. In this field he continued to labor until 1759, when he removed to Princeton, to assume the presidency of the College of New Jersey,

where he died, February 4th, 1761. At the time of the organization of Hanover Presbytery, the several churches to which Davies ministered, numbered in the aggregate, not less than three hundred members.

I have been thus particular in noting the date of the Scotch-Irish immigration into the Valley, and of Davies' ministry, because the older churches in the Valley are sometimes spoken of as the oldest Presbyterian churches in Virginia, and Cooke styles Samuel Davies "the founder of the Presbyterian Church in Virginia." (*History*, p. 338.) Neither of these statements is true. The Scotch-Irish immigration into the Valley began in 1732, and Samuel Davies commenced his labors in Virginia in 1747; while, nearly half a century before the earliest of these dates, we have unquestionable evidence that Presbyterian churches had been established in the sea-board region of the State, on Elizabeth River, and in Accomack county, on the Eastern Shore. To what can be learned of the early history of these churches, especially the "Church on Elizabeth River," of which, I believe, the First Church of Norfolk is the legitimate successor, I will now ask your attention.

STATEMENTS OF HISTORIANS.

Dr. Charles Hodge, in his *History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States*, writes: "It might be inferred from the statements in the preceding chapter that Presbyterian churches would be formed nearly contemporaneously in various parts of the country. And such, in fact, was the case. In a letter written by the Presbytery of Philadelphia to that of Dublin, and bearing date 1710, it is said, 'In all Virginia we have one small congregation on Elizabeth River, and some few families favoring our way in Rappahannock and York; in Maryland, four; in Pennsylvania, five; in the

Jersies, two, which bounds, with some places in New York, make up all the bounds which we have any members from, and at present some of them are vacant.' Of the Church on Elizabeth River, little is known. It seems, from Commissary Blair's report on the state of the Church in Virginia, that it existed before the commencement of the last century. Some have supposed that it was composed of a small company of Scotch immigrants, whose descendants are still to be found in the neighborhood of Norfolk. Though reported by the Presbytery, they seem to have had little connection with that body. The name of their pastor, the Rev. Mr. Mackie, never appears upon the minutes as a member." (Pages 76-'7.)

Rev. R. R. Howison, in his *Historic Sketch of the Presbytery of East Hanover*, writes: "Careful historic search seems to have demonstrated with reasonable certainty, that the oldest Presbyterian church in Virginia existed, and still exists, within the bounds of East Hanover Presbytery. And we feel authorized to say that these researches have established a strong probability (which will stand until weakened or destroyed by evidence which may hereafter be discovered) that this was the oldest organized church of our denomination in America. . . . In May, 1684, Rev. Francis Makemie visited the region of Virginia lying on Elizabeth River, and there found an organized Presbyterian church. In a letter written by him during this visit, preserved in the Massachusetts Historical Library, he says: 'I found there a poor, desolate people mourning the loss of their dissenting minister from Ireland, whom the Lord had been pleased to remove by death the previous summer.' . . . The inference is assuredly reasonable that this church on Elizabeth River had been in existence for some years prior to 1683. If so, it was older than Snow Hill or Rehoboth,

in Eastern Maryland, planted by Makemie, and which have hitherto been considered the oldest Presbyterian churches in America." (Pages 4, 5.)

Such is the conclusion to which Dr. Hodge and Mr. Howison come, and such are some of the facts on which that conclusion rests. In that conclusion I concur, and will now present in more logical order these facts, with some others which have come to light since Mr. Howison wrote his *Historical Sketch*, that we may see just what ground there is for the opinion expressed above.

THE OLD CHURCH ON ELIZABETH RIVER.

(1), That there was an organized Presbyterian church on Elizabeth River as early as 1710, is proved by the letter of the Presbytery of Philadelphia to that of Dublin, Ireland, quoted by Dr. Hodge.

(2), That this church was in existence before the beginning of the eighteenth century, is proved by Commissary Blair's report on the state of the church, also cited by Dr. Hodge.

(3), That it was in existence when Makemie visited the Elizabeth River district in 1684, and had then been in existence for several years at the least, is placed beyond doubt by the extract from his letter quoted in Sprague's *Annals*, III., page 6, in which he speaks of it as "mourning the loss of its dissenting minister from Ireland, whom the Lord had been pleased to remove by death the previous summer"—*i. e.*, the summer of 1683. Makemie was ordained by the Presbytery of Laggan, Ireland, with a view to his coming to America, toward the close of 1681; he preached at Barbadoes for awhile, and then came to Virginia, certainly not earlier than 1683 (see Sprague's *Annals*, III., page 1). So that the organization of this church must ante-date that of Snow Hill or Rehoboth, both organized by Makemie.

Of "the dissenting minister from Ireland," of whom Mackemie speaks, we know nothing except the date of his death—not even his name. Of the Rev. Jonas Mackie, spoken of as the pastor of the Church on Elizabeth River, by Dr. Hodge, we learn from the records of Norfolk County Court, that in 1692 he was licensed by the court to preach at three points, viz., "At a house of Mr. Thomas Ivey, on the Eastern Branch; a house belonging to Mr. Richard Phillpot, in Tanner's Creek precinct, and a house belonging to Mr. John Roberts, on the Western Branch, and in 1696, a house of Mr. John Dickson, on the Southern Branch, was added." To these four points the present city of Norfolk is about central—I say, *the present city of Norfolk*, for it was not until October, 1705, that Norfolk was regularly established as a town, and not until 1737, that it received its royal charter as the "Borough of Norfolk." (See *Frost's History of Norfolk*.) As is common in such circumstances, the Presbyterians to whom Mr. Mackie preached at these several points were all united in one church organization, as is proved by the fact that they are spoken of as the "one small congregation" (or church, for these terms are used in the old records as synonymous) "on Elizabeth River," in the letter of Philadelphia Presbytery to that of Dublin. The time of Mr. Mackie's death, 1716, we learn from the records of Norfolk County Court, which contain a copy of his will, marked with the date of "proving" the same, viz., November 16, 1716.

THE NORFOLK CHURCH OF 1800.

At its session in Philadelphia, in May, 1801, the General Assembly appointed Rev. Messrs. Logan and Grigsby missionaries, for two months, "to itinerate through the lower parts of Virginia." (See *Minutes for 1801*, p. 231.) Under

this appointment, Rev. Benjamin Grigsby, then a member of Lexington Presbytery, visited the Borough of Norfolk, and preaching to the satisfaction of the people, he was "unanimously invited to remain as pastor," at a meeting of the congregation held on the 17th of March, 1804. This, with certain other facts hereafter to be mentioned, I learn from an old volume of records of the trustees of the church, which has recently been recovered. Early in the year 1800, the enterprise of erecting a Presbyterian church building in Norfolk was inaugurated, and a subscription of the money needed for that purpose secured, the subscribers holding their first recorded meeting April 15th, of that year.

Respecting this enterprise, the following facts, all established by the recently recovered volume of records, are worthy of notice: (1), The church then erected was of brick, is still standing, and cost a little over \$12,000, all of which was subscribed by persons living in Norfolk, or its immediate vicinity, and who expected to use the church, as the amount subscribed was to be allowed them in their purchase of pews when the building was completed. This \$12,000 was not subscribed in large sums by a few rich men. The number of subscribers was eighty-seven; the largest subscription was \$300, the smallest \$25, but most of the subscriptions were of \$100 each. (2), As indicated by their names, while many of these subscribers were of Scotch or Scotch-Irish extraction, yet a large number were of English blood, and belonged to some of the oldest families in this part of the State. In this particular, the composition of this congregation was similar to that of the old Elizabeth River Church, is indicated by the names of the men at whose houses Mr. Mackey was licensed to preach. (3), The money needed for building this church was all subscribed, and the building itself begun, more than a year before Mr.

Grigsby came to Norfolk in 1801, though doubtless the stimulus afforded by his presence and labors hastened its completion. From these facts it is evident that at the time Mr. Grigsby came to Norfolk, there existed here a strong Presbyterian church—strong for that day—and of this church the present First Church is a continuation, as is proved by its records.

A QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED.

Was the Norfolk Church of 1800, a continuation of the Elizabeth River Church of which the old records speak?

To giving an affirmative answer to this question, the principal objection is, the absence of all regular church records from 1716 to 1800. In estimating the force of this objection we should consider the facts:

1. That during all these years dissenters were subject to severe persecution in Virginia, especially in the eastern portion of the State. On this subject, Dr. Hodge, giving Bancroft for authority, writes: "Virginia was so completely an Episcopal province, and the laws against all non-conformists were so severe, that we can expect but few traces of the Puritans in her early history. Unity of worship was there preserved, with few exceptions, a century after the settlement of Jamestown. . . As early as 1633, severe laws were made for the suppression of dissenters, who had begun to appear in the colony. In 1643, it was ordained that 'no minister should preach or teach publicly or privately, except in conformity with the constitution of the Church of England, and non-conformists were banished from the colony.' During the time of Cromwell, a spirit of greater moderation prevailed, but with the restoration of Charles II., the Assembly revived all the laws against separatists. Strict conformity was demanded, and every one was required to con-

tribute to the support of the established church. The whole liturgy was to be read, and no non-conformist might teach, either in public or private, on pain of banishment. In 1663, these laws were made still more severe. Attendance on the ministry of the non-conformists was punished by severe fines, and the rich were made to pay the forfeitures of their poorer brethren. Ship-masters were punished if they brought dissenters into the colony." (*Hodge's History*, pp. 45, 46.)

As illustrating the severity of this persecution under Sir William Berkley's rule, Cook tells us: "The law was rigidly enforced. The dissenters, or Independents as they styled themselves, had a large congregation in Nansemond. . . . But the pastors had to go, their enemies were too strong for them. Some were fined, others imprisoned, nearly all were driven out of the colony, and retired to Maryland and New England. . . . The Virginia adherents of monarchy and episcopacy fought the Independents who came to their soil, just as the Independents of New England fought the Church of England people there. It was all wretchedly narrow and shallow, of course, and we wonder at it to day, seeing clearly, now, that religious freedom is the corner-stone not only of good government, but of society; that without it the state grows gangrened, and all progress stops. But the old time Virginians could not see that, then, or for long years afterwards." (*History of Virginia*, p. 173.) Dr. Hodge also tells of the breaking up of a Congregational Church in Nansemond. (See his *History*, p. 45.) All this occurred about the middle of the seventeenth century, some thirty years before Makemie came to Virginia.

Of the persecution at a later date, Cooke tells us: "In June, 1768, three Baptist preachers, John Waller, Lewis Craig, and James Childs were arrested by the sheriff of Spotsylvania. They were offered their liberty if they would

promise to discontinue preaching; but that had no more effect in their case than in the case of John Bunyan. They gloried in their martyrdom. As they went to prison through the streets of Fredericksburg, they raised the resounding hymn, 'Broad is the road that leads to death.' Through the windows of the jail they preached to great throngs of people. When this had gone on for more than a month, they were released; they had resolutely persisted in making no promises to discontinue their efforts. Their persecutors even were ashamed. When they were arraigned for 'preaching the gospel contrary to law,' Patrick Henry, who had ridden fifty miles to witness the trial, suddenly rose and exclaimed, 'May it please your worships, what did I hear read? Did I hear an expression that these men, whom your worships are about to try for misdemeanor, are charged with preaching *the gospel of the Son of God?*' The solemn voice is said to have deeply moved all who heard it. The state prosecutor turned pale through agitation, and the court were near dismissing the accused. Elsewhere the persecution went on. In Chesterfield, Middlesex, Caroline, and other counties, men were imprisoned for their faith. It was a reproduction of the monstrous proceedings in the mother country." (*History of Virginia*, page 391.)

It was not until 1784, when the war of the Revolution was over, that the memorial of Hanover Presbytery in favor of "religious freedom" was presented to the General Assembly of Virginia, of which Cooke writes: "The noble memorial of the Presbytery of Hanover, which may yet be seen on the yellow old sheet in the Virginia archives, sums up the whole case with admirable eloquence and force. It is trenchant and severe; but that was natural. It is the great protest of dissent in all the years." (*History of Virginia*, page 392.) And it was not until a year later that the

“act for the establishment of religious freedom,” drawn up by Jefferson, was passed, and persecution for religion’s sake in Virginia came to an end.

It is difficult for us, in our day, to realize the condition of things here during the years intervening between 1716 and 1800 ; but in this I think all will agree, that the continued existence of a Presbyterian Church throughout these years, without sessional records should cause us no surprise. Such records would, had they in any way fallen into the hands of an enemy, furnish evidence upon which every person therein named might be fined, or imprisoned, or driven from his home. No sessional records seem to have been kept during Mr. Mackie’s ministry of twenty-four years, nor from 1801 to 1814, during the ministry of Mr. Grigsby. In 1814, Norfolk church came into regular ecclesiastical connection with East Hanover Presbytery, and from that day our sessional records are continuous and complete. And this state of things is not peculiar to the Norfolk church. In so far as I have been able to learn, none of the old Presbyterian churches of Virginia, neither those in the Valley nor those in the Hanover region, have sessional records extending farther back than the time at which “religious freedom ” was established in the State, viz., 1785.

2. That the name of the church does not appear on the roll of Hanover Presbytery, nor on those of Philadelphia or New Castle Presbyteries, during the years under examination, is sufficiently accounted for by the fact that it had no ecclesiastical connection with these bodies ; but like the old churches of Charleston and Savannah, and other sea-board cities trading directly with the mother country, it seems to have been organized as an independent church, and to have maintained that position until 1814. The churches of Charleston maintained their independent condition much

longer, and the church of Savannah, though strictly Presbyterian in its faith and form of government, is an independent church to-day.

Mr. Mackie came directly from Ireland to Virginia, and during his twenty-four years ministry never attended the meetings of any Presbytery in this country, as Dr. Hodge tells us. Mr. Makemie was ordained by the Irish Presbytery of Laggan, and was sent out by that Presbytery to this country in response to a request from Col. Stevens, of Maryland. (See *Spragues Annals III.*, p. 1.) There may have been other ministers who visited this church between the years 1716, the date of Mr. Mackey's death, and 1801—and tradition intimates that such was the case, from Ireland and from the older Presbyteries in this country—of whose visits we have no record. Within the last few weeks I have seen a private letter from Hugh Blair Grigsby, a son of the Rev. Benjamin Grigsby, addressed to John Whitehead, Esq., in which he speaks of a visit made by his father to the Norfolk church in 1792.

CONCLUSION.

In view of all these facts, I feel constrained to answer in the affirmative the question: Was the Norfolk church of 1800 a continuation of the Elizabeth River Church of the old records; and in conclusion would ask especial attention to the facts:

- 1, That the First Church of Norfolk, with five other churches which have been formed from it during the present century, occupy the position and cover the exact territory of the Elizabeth River Church at the time of Mr. Mackie's death in 1716.

- 2, That its composition, as to the nationality of its members, as indicated by their names, is the same with that of the

old Elizabeth River Church. That church was not a Scotch colony, as Dr. Hodge supposes possible. Ivey and Phillpot are certainly English names, whatever may be thought of Roberts and Dickson.

3, The existence of so large and active a church as that which in 1800 set about building for themselves the house of worship on Bank street, seems to me inexplicable except upon the supposition that it was a continuation of the "old church on Elizabeth River," which had maintained a struggling existence through years of sore trial.

According to this view, the course of this church is not unlike that of one of the "sinking rivers," as they are called, found in lime-stone regions, which, after running the first part of its course like other rivers, suddenly disappears, and then, miles away, as suddenly reappears, bursting up out of the earth as a bold spring, ready at once to do a river's work; its identity being determined by its general course, the character of its waters, and the boldness of the spring which forms its second fountain-head.

In view of all these facts, what we claim for the First Church of Norfolk is—not that it is the oldest Presbyterian church in America, as Mr. Howison intimates—for recent investigation has proved that the churches of Southampton and Jamaica, on Long Island, N. Y., founded by English Presbyterians, the one in 1640 and the other in 1656, antedate the "old church on Elizabeth River," but that it is not only the oldest Presbyterian Church in Virginia, but the oldest within the bounds of our Southern Presbyterian Church.

SKETCHES OF THE PASTORS
OF THE
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA.

FIRST in the memorable list of those who have served the church on Elizabeth River is "that unknown, but never to-be-forgotten-minister who died in the summer of 1683." From *Sprague's Annals*, Vol. III., p. 6, it is learned that there is in the Massachusetts Historical Library, a letter from Francis Makemie, addressed to Dr. Increase Mather in 1684, written soon after a visit to Elizabeth River in May, 1684, in which it is stated that he found a "poor desolate people" mourning the loss of their "dissenting minister from Ireland," whom the "Lord had been pleased to remove by death" the summer before. Beloved, lamented, his name, unrecorded here, is written on high.

REV. FRANCIS MAKEMIE.

1663—1692.

The Rev. Francis Makemie was born near Rathmelton, Donegal county, Ireland, the date being unknown. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Laggan in the latter part of 1681. Upon application to that Presbytery from Barbadoes

in 1678, and from Maryland in December, 1680, for a minister, Mr. Makemie was ordained *sine titulo*, and preached first at Barbadoes, and then came to America. The earliest record we have of his actual ministerial service is the letter from which extract has been made of his visiting Elizabeth River in May, 1684. It is probable, as occasion offered he ministered to this people until the work was taken up by Rev. Josias Mackie. Traditions and memories, fragrant and precious, connect his name with churches on the eastern shore of Maryland and Virginia, as the founder of Snow Hill, Rehoboth, and others. His home was in Accomack county, Virginia, having married in 1690, Naomi, daughter of William Anderson, Esq., a wealthy merchant of Accomack county. Becoming thus possessed of considerable means, he managed his business affairs with such prudence as to increase his property. He made generous provision for the maintenance of gospel ordinances, and his bequests showed the estimate he held of a learned ministry, in the disposal of his valuable library. He died at his home in Accomack county in 1708.

Although engaged in business, Mr. Makemie's labors were abundant and fruitful. His name is perpetuated and his memory treasured on the eastern shore of Maryland and Virginia, where he chiefly spent his ministerial life. He was a man of broad views and wise foresight, deeply interested in the welfare of the country and the progress of Zion. He went to England and Scotland to secure ministers for America, and plead for the cause of religion in the colonies. He endured persecution for righteousness' sake, having been imprisoned and tried in New York for preaching the gospel. His courage and ability and fearless defence of himself won high encomiums. Mr. Makemie was Moderator of the Presbytery of Philadelphia in 1706. Of him, Dr. Miller, upon the authority of some venerable men of the generation

immediately succeeding him (*Sprague's Annals*, Vol. III., p. 4), speaks as "a man of eminent piety, as well as strong intellectual powers, and an uncommonly fascinating address."

REV. JOSIAS MACKIE.

1692—1716.

According to the statement in his will, on file and duly recorded in the records of Norfolk county, Rev. Josias Mackie was the son of "Mr. Patrick Mackie, sometime of St. Johnstone, in the county of Donegal, of the kingdom of Ireland." There is no record of the date of his birth.

The earliest authentic record of him, and his residence and ministry on Elizabeth River, bears date June 22, 1692. He then took the three oaths, duly preserved in the County Records, renouncing all connection with the Roman Catholic Church; declaring his approbation according to law of the "Articles of Religion," with certain exceptions, as allowed in the case of dissenters, and promising faithful allegiance to their majesties, King William and Queen Mary, and received permission to preach at certain points. (Dr. I. W. K. Handy in *Sprague's Annals*, Vol. III., pp. 6, 7.)

From the meagre memoranda gathered, Mr. Mackie seems to have had three places of preaching—one in Eastern Branch, one in Tanner's Creek precincts, and one in Western Branch—to which, in 1696, he added another in Southern Branch. So wide a circuit implies labor. He seems, too, to have been a planter and merchant, and successful also as a stock-raiser. He owned, also, a valuable library. These facts appear from his will.

He was unmarried, and at his death, which occurred between the 7th and the 16th days of November, 1716, the children of three sisters in Ireland were the residuary legatees. For nearly a quarter of a century he lived, therefore,

on Elizabeth River. The only reference to him in the minutes of the Presbytery of Philadelphia was in September, 1712, when his "melancholy circumstances" were made mention of, and the sympathy of the Presbytery expressed for him. In the sketch already quoted from, Rev. Dr. Handy says: "It is certain that he was a good man, a true Presbyterian,—bold, active, and laborious."

REV. BENJAMIN PORTER GRIGSBY.

1801—1810.

Of those who ministered to the church on Elizabeth River from the death of Mr. Mackie, in 1716, to the beginning of the nineteenth century we have no record.

The Rev. Benjamin Porter Grigsby was the accomplished and successful pastor from 1801 till his lamented death in 1810. Mr. Grigsby was the son of James Grigsby and Frances Porter, his wife, and was born in Orange county, Virginia, 18th September, 1770. At an early age his parents removed to what is now Rockbridge county, and the son received his literary training at Liberty Hall Academy (the foundation of Washington and Lee University), at the hands of that peerless teacher, the Rev. William Graham. From Mr. Graham also he received his thorough theological education, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Hanover in 1792. In the same year he was commissioned, with Rev. Archibald Alexander, as a missionary to Eastern Virginia. At Petersburg the young ministerial friends separated, Mr. Grigsby going further east, and Mr. Alexander westward along the North Carolina line. (*Life of Doctor Archibald Alexander*, by his son, pages 125 *et seq.*) During this missionary tour it was, doubtless, that he became known to the people of Norfolk, so that a few years afterward he was called to be their pastor.

His first charge was the care of the churches of Lewisburg in Greenbrier county, and of Union in Monroe county. Here his labors were greatly blessed, and his memory, and even his name, were commemorated and revered by the descendants of his original flock many years after his departure. He was called to the Presbyterian Church in Norfolk in 1801. During his incumbency the church on the corner of Bank and Charlotte streets, now known as the Bell Church, was constructed, and the congregation greatly strengthened. Mr. Grigsby's fine social qualities, his literary taste and scholarly attainments, his elegant manners, and his pulpit abilities, combined to make him greatly beloved, popular, and useful. He was a man of handsome appearance, imposing address, and engaging manner.

He was married in 1806 to Elizabeth, only daughter of Hugh McPherson and of Liliias Blair McPherson. His death, to human vision, seems untimely and sad. He was summoned Sunday afternoon, to attend the funeral of a sailor who had died of yellow fever, and on Saturday, following, 6th October, 1810, he died of the same disease, having caught it in this service, and was buried on Sunday at the same hour at which the sailor was buried a week before. He left a widow and three little children, the eldest but four years of age, who became afterwards the distinguished scholar and historian, Hugh Blair Grigsby, Esq.

Thus, at the early age of forty, he died, closing a career brilliant and effective, a life of great honor and usefulness.

REV. JOHN HOLT RICE, D. D.

1810—1814.

After the death of Mr. Grigsby, the vacant church was (according to traditions "most surely believed" among the Presbyterians of Norfolk) ministered to from 1810 to 1814

by that deservedly honored and distinguished divine, the Rev. John Holt Rice, D. D. In the records of the session, the earliest records extant, there is a minute of a congregational meeting held April 14, 1814, presided over by Rev. John H. Rice, *of Richmond*. In the *Memoir of Dr. Rice*, and in various sketches of his life, no record is made of residence in Norfolk, or of a stated relation to the Presbyterian church. But it is more than probable that while living in Richmond, interested as he was in the welfare of his beloved church, and industrious in all labors, he cared for the church on the sea-board, and thus is remembered as in charge of this church.

Dr. Rice was born in Bedford county, Virginia, 28th November, 1777. His parents were Benjamin Rice, a lawyer and an elder, and Catherine Holt his wife. He early manifested a love of letters, and received academic instruction from his uncle, Rev. John Holt, an Episcopal clergyman, and Rev. James Mitchell, and further pursued his studies at Liberty Hall Academy, under the eminent educator, Rev. William Graham, and later privately with Mr. (afterward Rev. Dr.) George A. Baxter. At the early age of nineteen he was tutor in Hampden-Sidney College, and thus became associated with his life-long and distinguished friends, Rev. Archibald Alexander and Rev. Conrad Speece. He studied theology under Mr. Alexander, and in 1803 he was licensed by the Presbytery of Hanover, and in 1804 was ordained and installed pastor of Cub Creek Church in Charlotte county. Here he remained until May, 1812, when he removed to Richmond, of which church he was installed pastor in October of that year. He continued in charge of this church until called to be professor in Union Theological Seminary, in 1823 (of which institution, as a distinct institution, he was the founder), having declined the presidency of the

College of New Jersey (Princeton) to which he was called at the same time. Meanwhile he had been abundant in labors with his pen, wielding an influence second to none in the South, and of national reputation. He was Moderator of the General Assembly in Philadelphia in May, 1819. He issued many pamphlets and tractates on important subjects, and was editor of the *Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine*, a magazine of incomparable excellence. His reputation as a preacher was not based on the charms of gesture or voice or diction, but on majesty of thought and argument. The Rev. Dr. James W. Alexander says, himself no mean judge, (*Sprague's Annals*, Vol. IV., pp. 332, 333,) "His frame was tall, bony and ungraceful. His gesture was confined, but, under excitement, powerful. His voice though strong was unmusical. He therefore owed nothing to the mere graces of oratory—I believe he even despised them. Yet there were times when he was unquestionably eloquent, when he gradually kindled as he advanced, when his argument grew better and better, and his reluctant frame seemed informed by an unwonted inspiration, while his whole soul glowed through his great, speaking eye." Dr. Rice was married in 1802 to Miss Anne Smith, daughter of Major James Morton, of Willington. He died, deeply mourned and lamented, 3rd September, 1831.

REV. JOHN D. PAXTON, D. D.

1814—1819.

Of the Rev. John D. Paxton, who had charge of the Presbyterian Church in Norfolk from 1814 to 1819, it has been impracticable to obtain any information except such as is contained in the records of the session of the church, and subsequently in the Minutes of the General Assembly.

On the 23rd of April, 1814, at a meeting of the session,

William Maxwell, Esq., was appointed to prepare, on behalf of the session, a petition to the Presbytery of Hanover, to meet in Petersburg, 7th May, 1814, asking for the ordination of Mr. Paxton, *sine titulo*. The petition was duly presented by Elder John McPhail. From this it appears that Mr. Paxton was a licentiate of Lexington Presbytery, and, though no record appears thereof, that he was ordained by the Presbytery of Hanover in 1814 or 1815. As it was desired that he should be ordained, that during a year of further service he might be able to administer the sacraments, and as the call for pastoral relation was not then presented for reasons given, (one being that Mr. Paxton might have further experience and evidence of his acceptability); and as he continued to serve the church faithfully and acceptably, it is probable he was installed pastor in 1815.

On the 25th August, 1819, he announced to the session and the congregation, that he would ask leave to resign his pastoral charge, to take effect 1st October. The resolutions adopted by the session and approved by the congregation, assenting to the dissolution of the pastoral relation, attested his worth as a man, his high character and faithful services as a minister, and sincere regret at the parting.

Mr. Paxton probably went west, though no minute so informs us. In 1845 he was pastor of Mulberry Church, near Shelbyville, Kentucky, so continuing with great usefulness, as evinced by the steady growth and development of his church, until 1855, when he removed to Vincennes Presbytery, taking charge as Stated Supply of a church at Princeton, Indiana. Hence, in 1860, he removed to Highland, Kansas, and though infirm, ministered to a church at that point. We find no record of the date of his death, though the story of his life is not traced further than 1861.

From the brief memoranda obtained, he seemed to have been a man of stern and strong type of piety, a faithful and conservative adherent to the Presbyterian faith, as portrayed in the Confession and Book of Order, and left the impress of strength and godliness wherever he lived.

REV. JOSHUA T. RUSSELL.

1820—1824.

The Rev. Joshua T. Russell was called to be pastor on the 25th September, 1820, and was duly installed on the third Thursday of November, by a committee consisting of Rev. Dr. John H. Rice, Rev. Dr. Benjamin H. Rice, and Dr. Blair, the last named not attending.

Of Mr. Russell nothing has been learned except from the sessional records, to wit, that he came from Washington, and preached during August, and that the call for his services was presented at a meeting of Presbytery (Hanover?) held in Lynchburg 21st October, 1820, of which Presbytery Mr. Russell had become a member.

On the 5th January, 1824, he tendered his resignation that he might accept an agency for a Theological Seminary (which seminary is not known), pleading also financial embarrassment. The congregation assented thereto, adopting resolutions appreciative of his character and services.

It is regretted that nothing further concerning him has been ascertained, and that these notes of him are necessarily so brief and meagre.

It is proper to add that his pastoral services seemed to have been abundantly blessed, and his ministry in this church was fruitful in accessions—eighty having been added to the communion in a little more than three years, proportionally a considerable number.

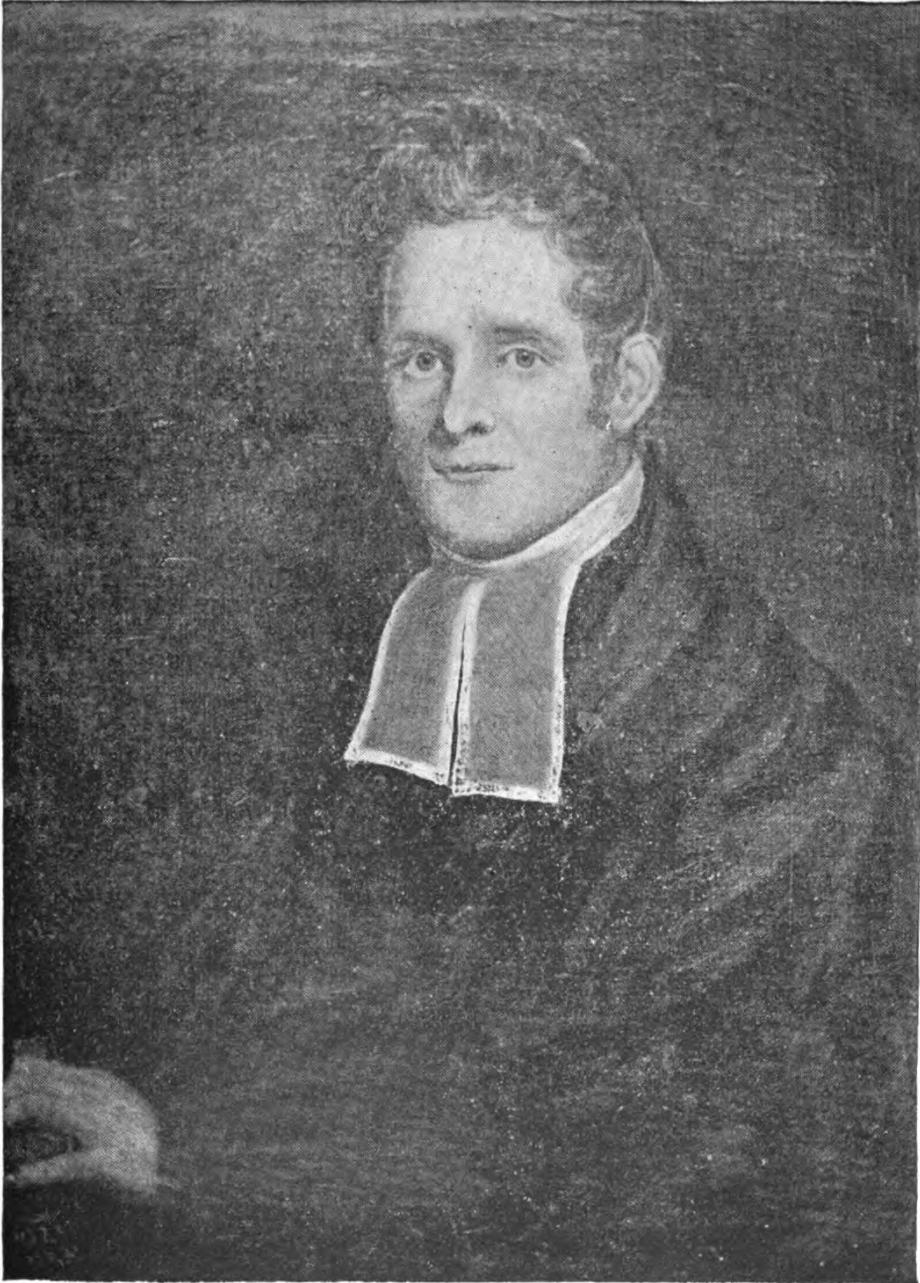
REV. SHEPARD K. KOLLOCK, D. D.

1825—1834.

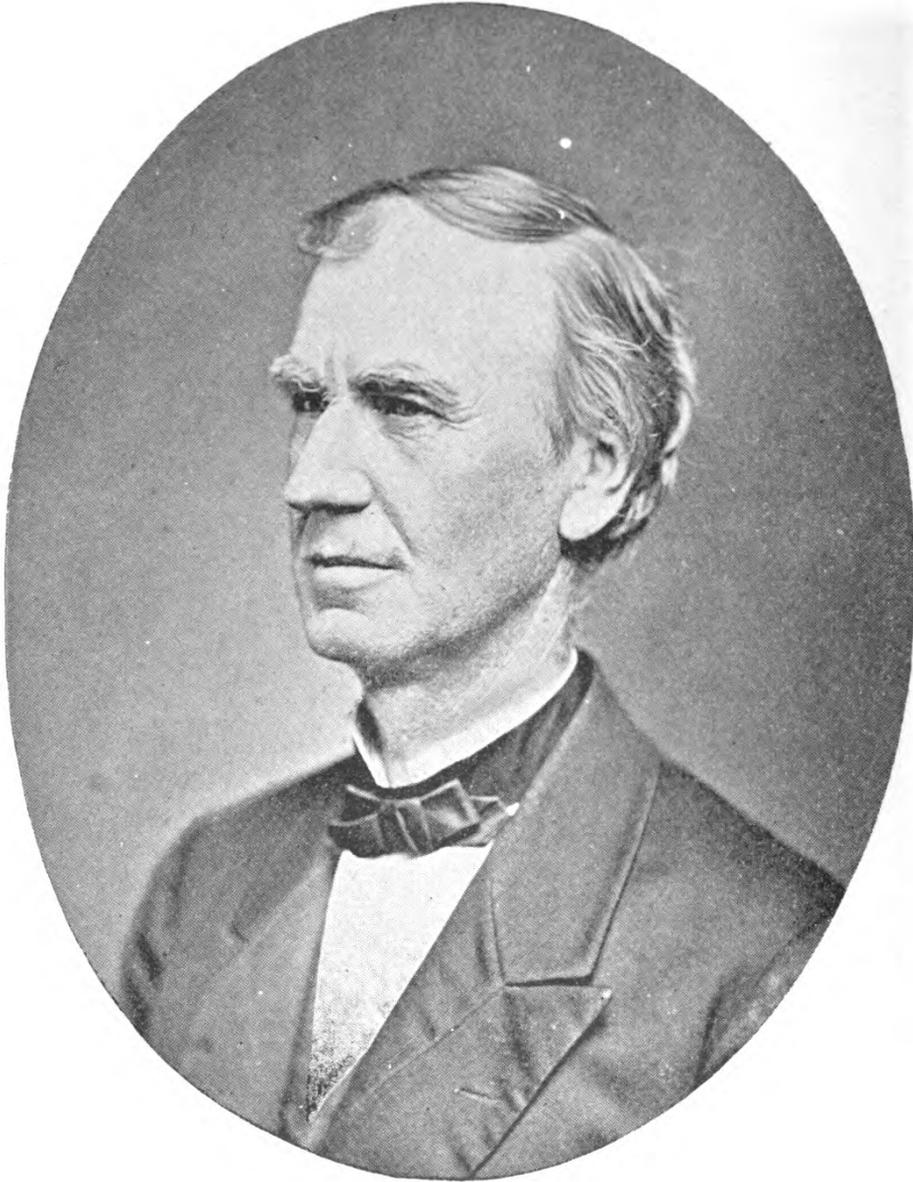
The Rev. Shepard K. Kollock was pastor from 1825 to 1835, a man whose benign presence, dignity and culture are remembered with affection and admiration by some of the oldest attendants upon the services of the First Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Kollock was born in Elizabethtown, N. J., 29th June, 1795, and his father, an officer in the Revolution, and greatly admiring the Polish leader, gave his youngest son the name of Kosciusko. He was graduated with high honors from the college of New Jersey in 1812. He studied theology with his distinguished brother, the Rev. Henry Kollock, D. D., and the Rev. John McDowell, D. D., and was licensed by the Presbytery of South Carolina in 1814. After preaching in Georgia and South Carolina, he became pastor of the church in Oxford, N. C., being ordained by the Presbytery of Orange in 1818. Thence he removed to Chapel Hill, and became professor of logic and rhetoric in the University of North Carolina. During this residence at the university the portrait of him was painted, of which the engraving in this volume is a copy. In 1825, he took charge of this church, continuing its pastor about ten years. Returning to New Jersey, he was agent for the Board of Domestic Missions for three years. Afterwards he was pastor of the church at Burlington till 1848, and then took charge of the church at Greenwich, till, owing to advancing infirmity, he resigned, and made his residence in Philadelphia in 1860, where he died, 7th April, 1865.

Mr. Kollock was successful in his ministerial work, a man of ability and of unusual culture. Scholarly in his tastes, and accomplished in his attainments, his writings were elegant and learned, as well as rich in thought. He contri-



REV. SHEPARD K. KOLLOCK, D. D.



REV. JOHN D. MATTHEWS, D. D.

buted frequently to the *Princeton Review*. And his *Hints on Preaching without Reading* and *Pastoral Reminiscences*, were translated into French and published in Paris. He received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Princeton College in 1850.

REV. JOHN D. MATTHEWS, D. D.

1835—1840.

The Rev. John D. Matthews was called to be pastor 13th April, 1835, and entered on the duties of his office 14th June, 1835.

Mr. Matthews was the son of Rev. John Matthews, D. D., a distinguished divine, author and theologian, whose last years were spent as professor of Theology at Hanover, Indiana, of whose sons three became ministers of eminence and usefulness.

Mr. Matthews continued as pastor of the church till 1841. During his incumbency the new church was constructed on Church street, now occupied by the First Presbyterian Church. His term of service seemed to have closed between the 14th and 25th of March, 1841, though no record is made of congregational or presbyterial action thereon in the minute book of the session.

Mr. Matthews went to Lexington, Kentucky, becoming pastor of McChord Church, and so continuing until 1845, when he became agent for one of the boards of the church, being a member of West Lexington Presbytery. He then supplied for a number of years the church at Paducah, in Muhlenburg Presbytery, and afterwards the church at Henderson. In 1856, he became pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Lexington, Kentucky, filling this post with great wisdom and acceptance until 1869. In 1870, he became pastor of Portland Avenue Church, Louisville, and a member

of the Presbytery of Louisville, remaining and serving till 1878, when he performed editorial work, and afterwards was without ministerial labor until his death, about ten or twelve years ago.

In person, Dr. Matthews was striking, being tall, angular and bony, of large frame, and imposing appearance, and withal a graceful, impressive, and eloquent preacher. He lived in troublous times in Kentucky, when fierce and firm contention was demanded to maintain the crown rights of the Church's King. Dr. Matthews was among those who held to the non-political nature of the Church, and came with the Synod of Kentucky in the union with the Southern Presbyterian Church,—after it had been compelled to assert its independency and make known its protest and testimony against the assumptions of those who held that the Church could determine the question of loyalty. This course separated him even from his brother in the same State, and from many dear friends, but attests his courage and devotion to principle.

REV. SAMUEL J. CASSELLS.

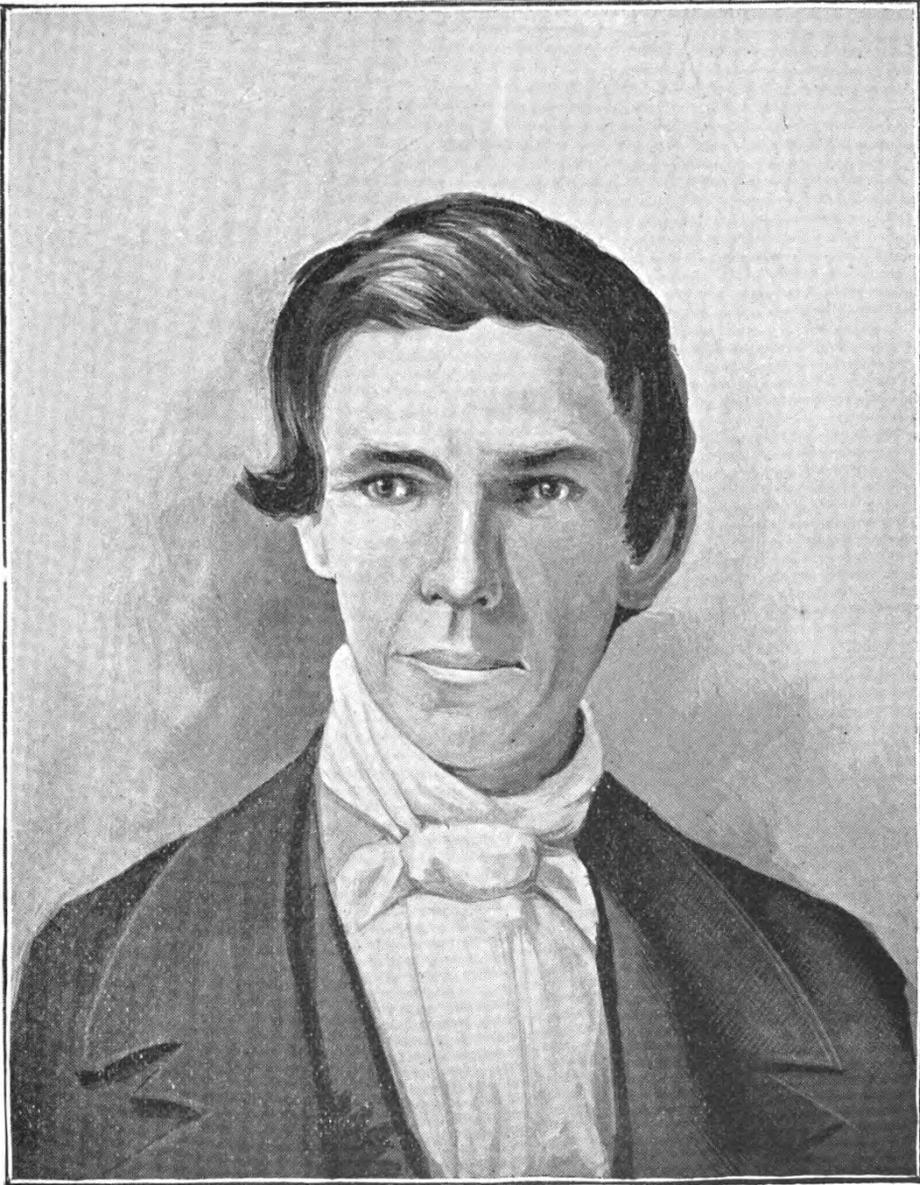
1841—1846.

It is very much regretted that no memoranda, however brief, have been obtained of the life of the Rev. Samuel J. Cassells, from 1841 to 1846 the pastor of this church. His name and services are affectionately remembered by some still living, though his brief pastorate began more than fifty years ago.

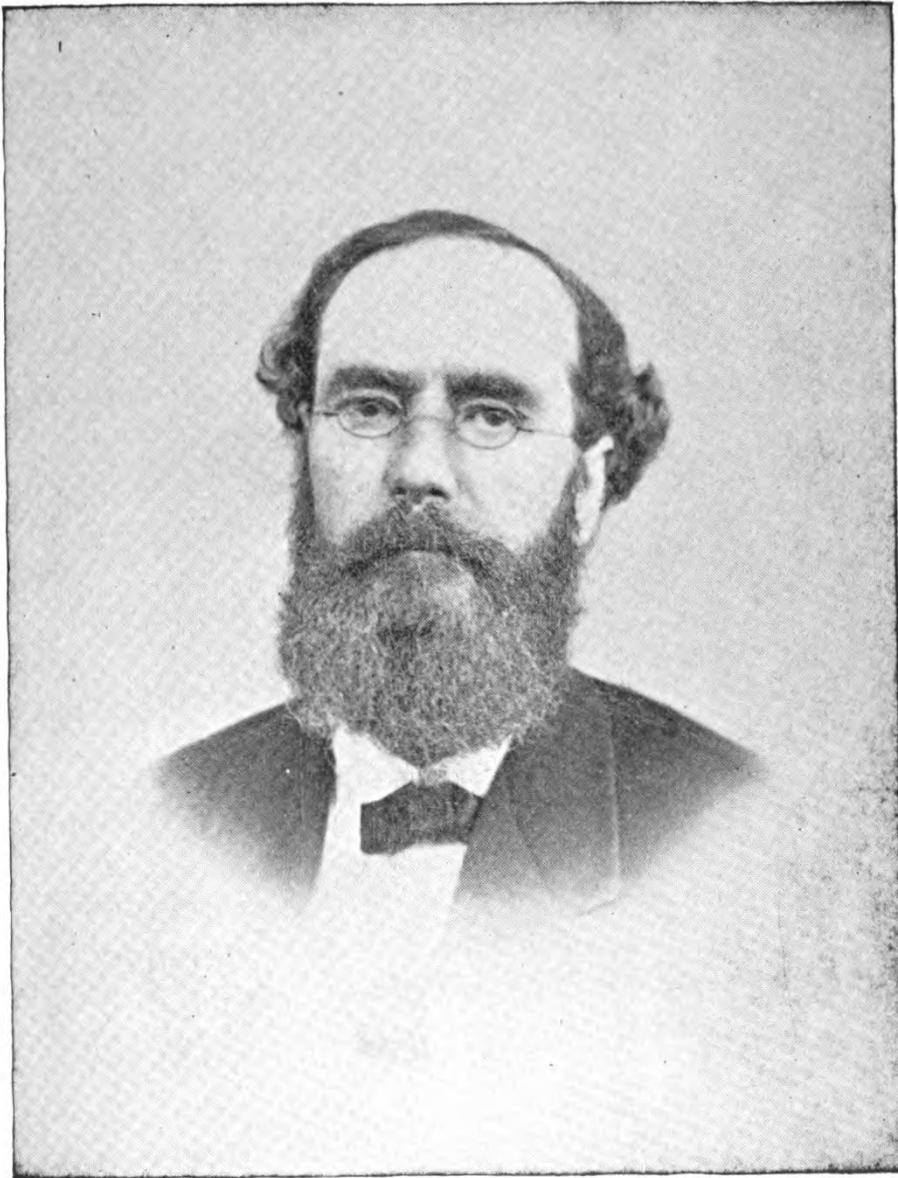
REV. SAMUEL J. P. ANDERSON, D. D.

1846—1851.

The pastorate of the Rev. Samuel James Pierce Anderson extended from 1846 to 1851, a period of five years.



REV. SAMUEL J. CASSELLS.



REV. S. J. P. ANDERSON, D. D.

Mr. Anderson was born in Prince Edward county, Virginia, 25th December, 1814. Of his parentage but little is known. His father, however, had his son taught at his country home by a private tutor and fitted for college. His literary course was taken at the University of Ohio, at Athens, and at South Hanover College, Indiana, from which institution he was graduated in 1835. His theological course was pursued at Union Theological Seminary. He was licensed by West Hanover Presbytery in 1839; ordained by Orange Presbytery the same year, and installed pastor of Oxford and Grassy Creek churches. Thence he removed to Danville, Va., where he was pastor from 1841 to 1846, when he became pastor of the church in Norfolk. In 1851, he was called to the pastorate of the Central Presbyterian Church, Saint Louis, Mo., where he continued until 1869. Then, owing to a throat affection, he resigned, and taught a few years in Nashville, Illinois, where he died, 10th September, 1873.

Dr. Anderson was a man of usefulness and ability. In Dr. Nevin's Encyclopædia, he is said to have been "a preacher of marked ability—earnest, evangelical and eloquent"; "a man of fine scholarship, large reading, and almost faultless taste" . . . "His sermons were not only sound and able, as expositions of gospel truth, but they were usually finished productions as they came from his hand, abounding in happy illustration, delivered in a pleasant, captivating style, and with a voice the richness and sweetness of whose tones lent a charm to every word he uttered."

REV. GEORGE DODD ARMSTRONG, D. D., LL. D.

1851—1891.

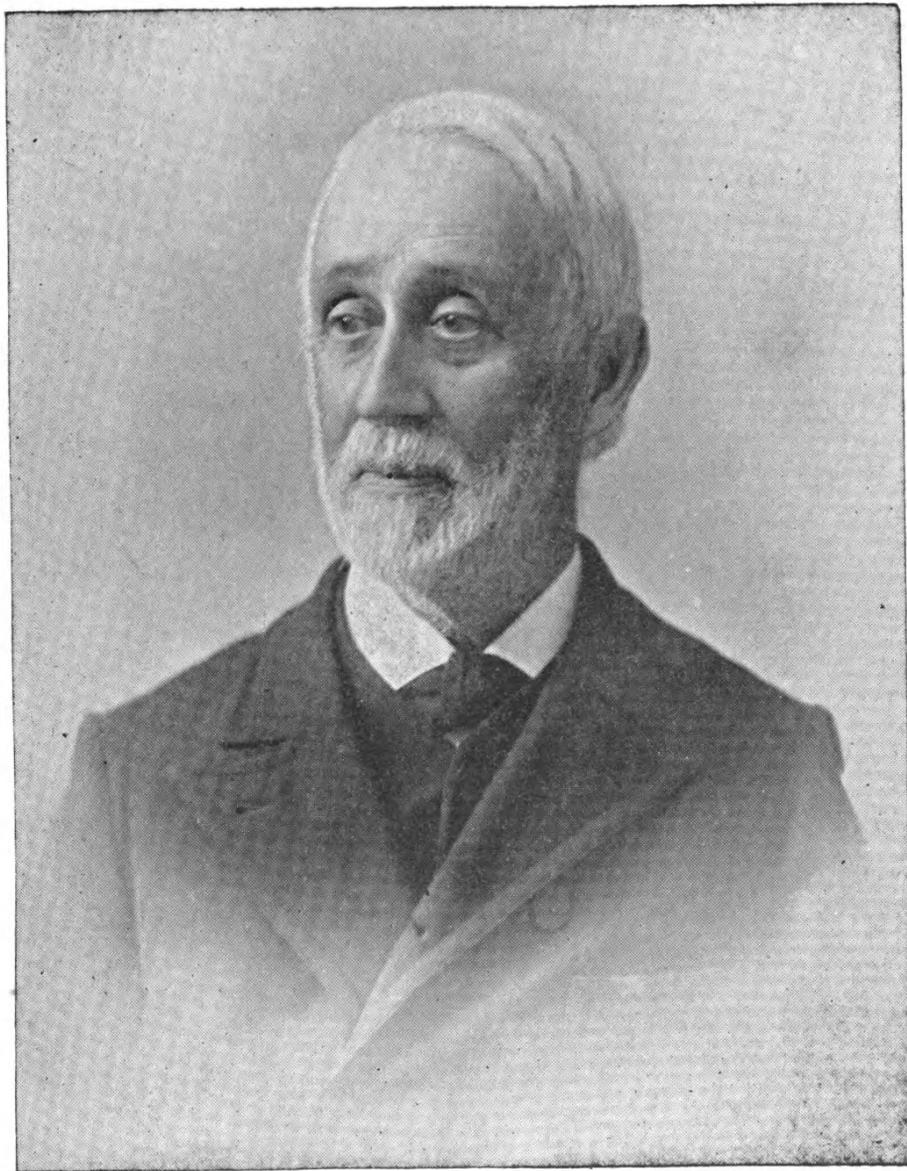
The Rev. George D. Armstrong, D. D., LL. D., succeeded Dr. Anderson as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church,

entering on the duties of his office in July, 1851, and after forty years of continuous, memorable, and successful pastoral service, laying down the burdens of the office in July, 1891.

Dr. Armstrong is the son of Rev. Amzi Armstrong, D. D., and was born in Mendham, Morris county, New Jersey, in 1813. He pursued his literary course at Princeton, and was graduated in 1832. After a brief residence with his brother, Rev. Dr. William J. Armstrong, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Richmond, Virginia, and teaching a few years, he entered Union Theological Seminary in 1836. In January, 1838, he became professor of chemistry and mechanics in Washington College, now Washington and Lee University. He was licensed by the Presbytery of Lexington in 1838, and ordained in 1843. He supplied Timber Ridge Church from 1839 to 1851. In 1851 he resigned his professorship to take charge of the Presbyterian Church in Norfolk.

Dr. Armstrong's long pastorate has been one, eventful and memorable. Through the pestilence of yellow fever in 1855 he remained at the post of duty, a friend and counselor and loving pastor, until himself stricken down, losing from his family four out of seven members. During the civil war, too, he remained with his people as long as permitted to do so, suffering with them, and bearing himself personal indignities and imprisonment. His pastoral labors have been abundantly blessed, and the church has grown steadily under his ministry, and there have been seasons of precious and continuous reviving. His preaching has ever been marked by "simplicity both as to manner and matter," and is "distinguished for clear, vigorous discussion, and for its evangelical character." (*Nevin's Encyclopaedia.*)

During these years of faithful and unremitting pastoral



Geo. D. Armstrong

labor, Dr. Armstrong has been busy with his pen, and contributed freely from his stores of scientific and theological learning to reviews and magazines, chiefly *The Southern Presbyterian Review*, *The Presbyterian Quarterly*, and *The Princeton Review*. He has published many pamphlets on themes of importance from 1841 to 1890. The following is a list of the volumes issued by him: *The Summer of the Pestilence*, 1856; *Doctrine of Baptisms*, 1857; *The Christian Doctrine of Slavery*, 1858; *The Theology of Christian Experience*; *An Exposition of the Common Faith*, 1860; *The Sacraments of the New Testament*, 1880; and *Nature and Revelation*, 1886.

Dr. Armstrong's influence and reputation as a presbyter and ecclesiastic are, as may be inferred, parallel with his usefulness as a pastor, teacher, and author. As a debater on the floor of the Synod or General Assembly—and he has been often chosen to represent the Presbytery in the highest courts of the church—he is clear, able, and convincing, and has ever proven a wise and faithful ruler. Modest and unobtrusive, he has nevertheless been firm and immovable, when assured of his positions.

At the close of his unbroken pastoral service of forty years, his congregation held a commemorative service, so marked by spontaneity of demonstration, admiration for distinguished and successful labors, and warm personal devotion, as to prove a most grateful and fitting testimonial of the esteem in which he is held by the people, not only of his own church, but of all churches, and the whole community.

Dr. Armstrong still resides in Norfolk, abundant in labors, responding to the needs of vacant churches as he has opportunity; but when not thus engaged, worshipping in the old church and with the people he loves so dearly and

served so long and faithfully. May his bow long abide in strength.

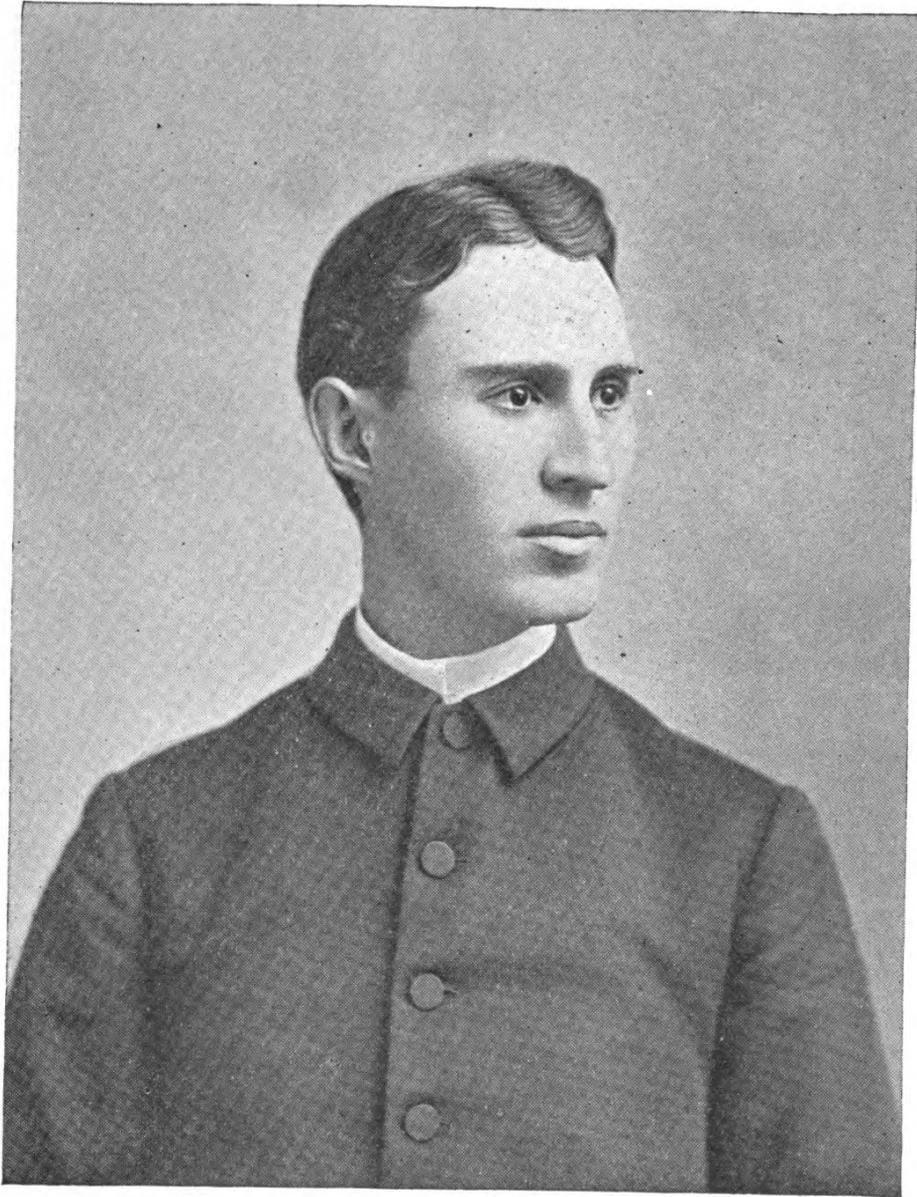
Dr. Armstrong has been twice married, first to Miss Porter in 1840, and in 1857 to Miss Lucretia, daughter of Charles Reid, Esq., of this city.

REV. JAMES I. VANCE.

OCTOBER 2, 1891.

The Rev. James Isaac Vance succeeded the venerable and honored Dr. Armstrong, having been installed pastor 1st October, 1891.

Mr. Vance is the son of Charles R. Vance, Esq., of Bristol, Tennessee, an attorney in that city, and a ruling elder in the First Presbyterian Church. He was born 25th September, 1862. He is of Scotch-Irish extraction, and his people have been Presbyterians for generations. On his father's side he is closely related to John Sevier, a hero of Revolutionary fame, and first governor of the State of Tennessee. Mr. Vance received his classical education at King College, Bristol, Tennessee, from which institution he was graduated in 1883. He obtained his theological education at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, graduating from that institution in 1886. He was ordained and installed pastor of the church of Wytheville by the Presbytery of Abingdon in May, 1886, and on 1st December, 1887, he took charge of the Second Presbyterian Church of Alexandria. From this charge, where his labors had been specially blessed in large accessions to the membership, in increased liberality, and in the spirit of harmony and Christian zeal cultivated and developed, he has come under peculiarly auspicious circumstances to the First Presbyterian Church of Norfolk. In this church, the labors of a year have been signally blessed also, and in like particulars.



James A. Vance,

Mr. Vance is a man of fine presence, rich, strong voice, and impressive delivery. His sermons are clear and forceful, abounding in effective illustration. His social qualities, and his ability as an organizer, make him attractive to the young, and give promise of great usefulness.

Mr. Vance was married in 1886 to Miss Currell of South Carolina, sister of Dr. W. S. Currell, professor in Davidson College, North Carolina.

SKETCHES OF THE CHURCHES.

BY REV. E. B. McCLUER.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN.*

IN 1801, the General Assembly at Philadelphia appointed Rev. Benjamin Grigsby to "itinerate through the lower parts of Virginia." By invitation of the church in the "borough of Norfolk," of which church John McPhail and William R. McKinder were ruling elders, he became identified with its work, and during the years 1802-'3 succeeded in having a building erected at a cost of \$12,000. This building still stands, corner of Bank and Charlotte streets, in good preservation; and the church organization in the "borough of Norfolk" also continues to this day, and is known as the First Presbyterian Church.

The rest of the acts of Benjamin Grigsby are recorded in the sketches of pastors, in another part of this volume, as are also the names and lives of his successors in office; but it is worthy of record here that the elements of communion have been furnished to the church by the immediate family of Mr. Grigsby, and conveyed from the one old home, at communion seasons, in unbroken succession from his day to the present time.

In 1814 the church, which had hitherto been independent, was received under the care of East Hanover Presbytery by a committee of which Rev. John H. Rice, D. D., was

*The earlier history of this church is given in the paper prepared by Dr. Armstrong, and published in this volume.

chairman. The number of communicants at this time was forty-three. This new relation, more thoroughly Presbyterian, was congenial, and the church prospered. In the year 1840, the congregation, which now numbered one hundred and twenty-two communicants, removed to the new building which had been erected on Church street, and which is the present spiritual home of the large and flourishing assembly of their descendants and successors.

In the year 1851, Rev. George D. Armstrong became pastor, and for forty years continued in this relation, sharing with the church the joy of her achievements, as well as the sadness and burden of her trials. These latter were no ordinary dispensations, such as are common to men, but scenes of bleeding hearts, and want, and death—of pestilence and war.

In "Sketches of East Hanover Presbytery," the following brief account is found of these crises in the church's history:

"In 1855, during the 'summer of the pestilence,' she was brought almost to desolation. In April, out of her 296 enrolled members, about 250 lived in the city. By the first of September only 87 remained in Norfolk. Some had died, but the larger part had left. The pastor remained. Of this small number of 87, very few escaped the pestilence, and 32 died. On the first Sunday of September, when the sun was bright and a fresh sea breeze was moderating the heat, the pestilence was yet 'walking in darkness.' This First Presbyterian Church and St. Pauls Episcopal Church, across the street, were the only sacred buildings opened for service. A handful of people attended in each, and in the first, after a brief service in reading the Scriptures and prayer, the pastor pronounced the benediction, feeling that all would never meet again in the church below; and so it proved.

Yet when the pestilence passed away, hope returned and the blessing of God revived the church, and she kept on her way until the war came on, and again her trials were multiplied. Her pastor was removed under an arbitrary military order, and consigned to a harsh exile of fifteen months. Then was shown conspicuously the value of a faithful and devout ruling presbyter. He was Wm. D. Bagnall. His pastor rendered the following public testimony concerning him: 'When, in the season of sore trial to his church, he stood up on the Sabbath to expound the Scriptures, or kneeled by the bedside of the sick, to lead in prayer, or conducted the funeral services of the dead, (and in all these ways he ministered to the church) he was enabled to do all in such a way as to endear him to God's people, and greatly to honor the office to which the Holy Ghost had called him.'"

After the war prosperity returned to the church. The winter of 1870-'71 was a period of deep and continued spiritual activity and revival. Though no special preaching services were held, there were 107 accessions to the communion, chiefly on profession of faith.

The church has continued to be a centre of light and of moral and spiritual power in the community, a foremost exponent of evangelical Christianity, and a perpetual admonition against all unrighteousness.

In July, 1891, the congregation celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the installation of Dr. Armstrong as pastor. This anniversary also marked the termination of the pastorate that had been so long and tenderly cherished.

On October 2, 1891, Rev. James I. Vance was installed pastor by a commission of Presbytery, consisting of Drs. Hoge, Kerr and Armstrong. Under his efficient and aggressive administration the church has developed most marked

activity and unwonted wealth of resource. With ample equipment, great liberality in contributions, and a membership of 425, the First Church of Norfolk holds a name and place in the front rank of the sisterhood of churches of our glorious Southern Presbyterian family. Though a mother of churches and venerable with age, she shall yet "grow as the lily," and her "beauty shall be as the olive tree."

PORTSMOUTH CHURCH.

The history of this church is deeply interesting, and is published elaborately in pamphlet form. The merest outline is here recorded. In May, 1822, the Middle-street Church was dedicated by Dr. Benjamin H. Rice, of Petersburg. On the same day a church was organized with five members. For several years frequent Presbyterian services had been held by pastors Paxton and Russell, of Norfolk, often in Trinity Episcopal Church. Charter members of the new organization were, Francis Grice, Mary Grice, Dorothy King, Jane Dickson, and Abigail Maulson. Francis Grice, a naval officer, was installed ruling elder, and served twenty years. Rev. J. J. Peirce was supply until January, 1823, supported by the congregation and a missionary society of Norfolk.

Rev. Mr. Clancy was in charge for six months in 1823, during which time eight members were received from the Norfolk church.

Rev. Mr. Campbell was supply in 1824.

Rev. Mr. Nimmo served 1827-'29, during which period there was a season of deep religious interest, resulting in a number of accessions.

Rev. John C. Smith was installed September, 1829, by a commission of Presbytery, consisting of Revs. J. H. Turner, William J. Armstrong, and S. K. Kollock. This pastorate

continued three years, and closed with a membership of sixty-five.

In 1833-'34 the church was served by Rev. R. F. Cleveland, father of Ex-President Grover Cleveland, who has recently been so signally and triumphantly reëlected President of these United States.

Rev. Mr. Neill was chosen pastor in 1834, and continued in service until the "Old and New School division" in 1837. A majority of the members adhered to the new school, while the minority, with Mr. Neill, were Old School in allegiance and became disorganized, a part of them uniting with the Norfolk church. Under the ministry of Rev. James Stratton, in 1842, there was a revival and thirteen accessions. This pastorate continued seven years.

Rev. James M. Kimball was installed in April, 1848, and died a few months later, as the result of a fall received in Washington city. His death was greatly lamented, for he was "very popular." Mr. K. had a twin brother, between whom and himself there was a most remarkable likeness. Some months after the minister's death, the brother arrived unawares to the people, from his distant home. Without warning he entered the church during the weekly prayer-meeting and caused "great consternation," many believing it to be an apparition of their departed pastor.

Rev. G. W. Noyes was supply 1849-'51, when the membership again became sixty-five. Afterward, Rev. Charles Evans became supply for a few months. During his term Dr. Trugien was made elder, of whom it is said that, although a physician with large practice, he was noted for being regularly in his place at public worship. He died while in professional service during the yellow fever. Mr. Evans was succeeded by Rev. Alex. Porter. About this time the High-street church (Old School) was formed.

During 1852, a prosperous Sunday-school was conducted by resident members of the Norfolk church, weekly services were held by Dr. Armstrong, a lecture-room was built, and in October the church organized with seventeen members. Rev. Robert J. Taylor became pastor, and continued in office until 1862, when he entered the Confederate service as chaplain. The communicants then numbered fifty-eight.

Dr. J. W. K. Handy became pastor of Middle-street Church in 1854. Under his ministry the membership grew to one hundred and twelve, eleven having died during the pestilence. Dr. Handy went North in 1862, and was arrested and imprisoned at Fort Delaware and held for fifteen months; afterward he wrote his experience of prison life in a volume entitled, *United States Bonds*. The two churches remained without pastors until the war closed, when they became one, with one hundred and seventy members. The first pastor of the united church was Rev. James Murray (now well known in the Synod), who served acceptably for eighteen months. Rev. D. C. Irwin was installed in 1867, and during his ministry a handsome church was erected, at a cost of \$10,000.

Rev. J. M. Rose became pastor in 1873, the church having been served for an interval by Dr. Armstrong. In January, 1877, the church was burned, but was rebuilt during the year, the location having been changed, and dedicated in September by Dr. Murkland, of Baltimore. Mr. Rose continued successful service until 1881.

In April of this year Rev. R. Henderson became pastor, and continued in service three years.

Rev. T. P. Walton assumed the pastoral office in November, 1884, and resigned in August, 1885. He is commended for his cordial manner and earnest preaching.

Rev. R. L. McMurrin was installed in October, 1885, and

continued in active service until June, 1892, when his health failed; after a vacation of three months, spent in the mountains, he returned home, expecting to preach on the third Sunday of September. Early that morning he died suddenly, and passed to his rest and reward. He was a noble spirit, loving truth and holiness—a lofty type of Christian manhood. The church is now shepherdless, but has just closed the most prosperous pastorate of its history. It has one hundred and seventy-eight communicants, a splendid building, and lecture and Sunday-school rooms recently completed.

SECOND CHURCH.

The Second Church of Norfolk was organized by a commission of East Hanover Presbytery, consisting of Drs. Hoge and Rutherford, and Rev. D. C. Irwin, in response to a petition signed by fifty members of the First Church; the question of such an organization having been previously considered by meetings of the session and congregation. The new church was constituted July 2, 1872, and at once completed its organic structure by electing officers as follows: Ruling Elders—W. H. Broughton, W. D. Reynolds, and David Humphreys. Deacons—J. M. Freeman, H. S. Reynolds, and Luther Sheldon.

In February, 1873, Mr. N. M. Woods, a student of Union Seminary, was called to the pastorate, entering at once upon the work, and was installed the following October. In the meantime the present church building was erected, corner Freemason and Boush streets, at a cost of \$15,000, and dedicated October 17; sermon preached by Dr. Hoge.

After the retirement of Mr. Woods, Rev. E. O. Frierson was called to the field, where he labored for several years, enforcing truth by earnest and loving precept, and illustrat-

ing it by lofty character. For fifteen months preceding the formation of the next pastorate, the church was served by Rev. R. Moreton, as Stated Supply, whose ministry was greatly blessed.

In October, 1888, Rev. William S. Lacy, having been called to the church, was installed pastor, and now continues in able and efficient service. The communicants number 165. The church life has been characterized by great vigor, in abundance of labors, in loyalty to historic principles, in marked liberality toward the Lord's treasury, in exemplifying Christian integrity in private and social life, and in heroic eagerness to press forward the conquests of truth at home and abroad. While long lists of names have not thronged its rolls, the blue banner has never been furled nor ever trailed the dust. Indeed, her offspring now bears aloft the unconquerable standard amidst the isolations of far off Korea, the imperial hermitage; a tribute more honoring and significant than an ambassador with the seal of state.

COLLEY MEMORIAL.

This church had its germinal origin in a union mission Sunday-school, at a date that is not accurately known; prior, however, to the organization of the Second Church in 1872. During that year Ruling Elder W. H. Broughton and other members of the church conducted a prayer-meeting and the Sunday-school under the direction of the session.

Rev. L. H. Baldwin became identified with the enterprise, as a mission of the Second Church, in April, 1880. After a prosperous career of more than three years, it was determined that the work had assumed proportions that justified the organization of a church, and accordingly, on December 30, 1883, the Colley Memorial Church began its organic

existence. Rev. Mr. Baldwin was elected pastor, and was installed by a commission of East Hanover Presbytery, January 13, 1884. This relation continued until December, 1889. Rev. R. A. Robinson, the present vigilant and aggressive pastor, was elected January 26, 1890, and installed in April of the same year. The number of communicants is one hundred and thirty. The church has a substantial building, with good equipment, and owns commodious and valuable grounds, on which the manse is located.

The material stability of the church may be taken as analogous to its spiritual character, which is impressed, not only upon itself, but, by reflection, upon the community surrounding. Like others of our churches, it has a constituency not originally Presbyterian, but now thoroughly grounded in the faith. Those who knew the beginning regard the present consummation as illustrious.

PARK AVENUE.

During the summer of 1879, a chapel was erected on Park Avenue by the First Church, and in October following, a Sabbath-school was organized. Mr. C. A. Field finally became superintendent of this school, which was conducted as a mission. Dr. Armstrong preached in the chapel at frequent intervals, until April, 1873, when Mr. E. B. McCluer took charge of the enterprise, under direction of the session of First Church. The mission prospered, and during the summer of 1884, the present substantial building was erected. An organization, to be known as Park Avenue Church, consisting of forty members from the roll of the First Church, was formed November 9, 1884, by a commission of East Hanover Presbytery, Dr. Armstrong presiding. Three ruling elders and three deacons were elected and subsequently installed. Rev. E. B. McCluer was elected

pastor April 11, 1886, and installed by a commission of Presbytery in November. This pastorate continues. The church owns a commodious manse, and has erected a mission chapel in the northern part of the city, known as the Walton Chapel, in honor of a beloved ruling elder who died in October last. The church is old fashioned in its methods of work, has a strong set of officers, and the rank and file of its membership are solid. The "Historical Sketch of Presbytery" contains the following estimate of the church's work: "We believe it has given tone and character to the entire community, which must be permanently, from every present indication, a choice and influential part of the city of Norfolk." The number of communicants is one hundred and sixty-nine.

ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL.

The Armstrong Memorial Church of Berkeley had its beginning in a Sunday-school, organized by Rev. Mr. Irwin and Col. Geo. Tait of the Portsmouth Church, in 1872. In September, 1873, the First Church of Norfolk took charge of the enterprise, with Ruling Elder R. F. Vaughan as superintendent. Rev. L. E. Scott and Rev. E. B. McCluer preached occasionally and statedly until 1889. During the summer of this year, Mr. C. E. Sullivan, a student of Union Seminary, was placed in charge and worked up the organization of a church. This was consummated June 16, 1889, by a commission of East Hanover Presbytery, consisting of Rev. Geo. D. Armstrong, D. D., Rev. Wm. S. Lacy, D. D., and Ruling Elder F. T. Clark; fourteen members being transferred from the First Church of Norfolk to form the nucleus of the new organization.

Work on the present beautiful building began September 22, 1890; corner-stone laid October 29th; opened for wor-

ship April 12, 1891; dedicated June 14th; sermon of dedication being preached by Dr. Geo. D. Armstrong, in honor of whom the church is named. Cost of building was about \$6,000, and present membership eighty-seven.

Rev. H. G. Miller began work in connection with this church in October, 1889, and was installed pastor July 1, 1891. Under his active administration the work has steadily advanced in the midst of environments quite unfavorable to Presbyterian progress. The church now commands a position of influence in the prosperous community in which it is planted, and wields increasing power in behalf of truth and righteousness.

THE SABBATH-SCHOOLS.

BY COL. GEORGE TAIT.

THE first record having any bearing on work for the young of the church occurs in the minutes of session, May 19, 1825, and reads as follows: "The Moderator communicated the pastor's intention, with the advice and concurrence of the session, to take measures for the biblical and catechetical instruction of the youth and children of the congregation," whereupon it was resolved, "That the session, highly approving the pastor's said intention, do desire that he proceed forthwith to establish classes for the biblical and catechetical instruction of the youth and children of the congregation, and that he instruct them agreeably to the orders and recommendations of the General Assembly on the subject."

A Sabbath-school had, however, undoubtedly existed in the church for years previous to this date. One of our elderly members, herself now a teacher in our school, remembers hearing from her mother of her having taught a class in the old church, corner of Catherine (now Bank) and Charlotte streets, in 1816, and the venerable Charles Reid, Esq., recalls his work as a teacher in the same building about 1819 or 1820.

Women were then, as they have ever since been, especially earnest in the work, the school being at that period under the superintendence of Mrs. Holmes, a saintly woman, the

sister of William Maxwell, Esq., who was afterwards a ruling elder in the church.

This school, so far as we are able to learn, was the first ever organized in the old Borough, and was for many years the only Sabbath-school in the town, and although strictly Presbyterian in its teachings, was attended by children from all denominations. We can find no record of its numbers, but in 1820 it probably did not exceed a hundred. Ten or twelve years later, according to one of our present teachers, who began teaching in 1832, it had become quite a large school, the classes being assembled for instruction in the galleries of the church.

In the minutes of session, January 1, 1827, we find that Presbytery had enjoined on the churches the formation of Auxiliary Boards of Education; but whether these were to operate in connection with church or with secular schools is not stated. The following note occurs in the minutes of the next meeting of session, February 25, 1828: "*Resolved*, That the members of session meet the Sunday-school belonging to the church alternately in the following rotation, viz.: on the first Sabbath, Mr. McPhail and Mr. Soutter, on the second, Mr. Roberts, and on the third, Mr. Brown, and after in the same order."

The Second Church (now known as the First Presbyterian Church) was organized November 19, 1836, and the session, at its meeting December 23, 1836, ordered "That the session meet the children of the congregation in the basement of the church every Sunday afternoon, an hour before the time of service, for catechetical instruction." From some cause, this arrangement does not seem to have been satisfactory, as we find it ordered on September 18, 1837, that "the catechising of the children be discontinued until a further order on the subject."

In 1843, an attempt seems to have been made in the line of instructing colored children, as appears from the resolution of session, December 18, 1843, "That session forthwith appoint a superintendent and teachers, whose duty it shall be to hold a regular Sabbath-school for colored children in the lecture room on every Sabbath afternoon, and to be uniformly commenced one and a half hours before afternoon service," and that godly ruling elder, the late W. D. Bagnall, Esq., was placed in charge of the work, which appears to have grown and flourished for some years, giving every prospect of developing into a church, until the derangement consequent on the outbreak of the civil war destroyed that hope.

From this time onwards, there appears no record on the books of session of anything in connection with Sabbath-schools until 1871, when the missionary spirit begins to show itself, and on June 6, 1871, Ruling Elders W. D. Reynolds and David Humphreys were appointed "to move in the matter of a Sabbath-school in the vicinity of James street," and on August 8, 1871, this school reported fourteen teachers and forty-six scholars, soon increased to seventy-five scholars, which school might perhaps be considered the genesis of the present Second Presbyterian Church.

Early in 1872, a prayer-meeting in Atlantic City was begun by Ruling Elder the late W. H. Broughton and others (mostly members of the Second Church), which speedily developed into a school beginning with seven teachers and forty scholars, and ultimately into the Colley Memorial Church.

In 1872, a small school, under the care of no particular session, was started in the then small village of Berkley, and on September 2, 1873, it was formally taken under the care of the First Church, as appears from the following minute, "Whereas a Sunday-school having been organized and sus-

tained for some time in Berkley by Presbyterians, some of whom are members of this church, and this session being informed that the teachers desire that the school shall be under the fostering care of the session of this church, therefore: *Resolved*, That this church do now, in compliance with said request, assume the care and control of the Berkley Presbyterian Sabbath-school." Ruling Elder R. Frank Vaughan was appointed superintendent, and reported on December 2, 1873, ten teachers and fifty-five scholars. This school, after varying fortunes, started with renewed life in 1884, under the superintendence of Ruling Elder Frank T. Clark, and in 1889 had grown into the vigorous and active church which now has for its home the beautiful Armstrong Memorial Church.

In July, 1874, session appointed a committee to inquire into the propriety of establishing a mission school on Mosely street, and its report being favorable, the school was opened on September 8, 1874, with twenty-eight scholars, Ruling Elder R. W. Santos being superintendent. This school did good work until October, 1879, when it was deemed advisable to remove it to the growing suburb of Brambleton, Ruling Elder W. H. Burroughs being then superintendent, succeeded in May, 1881 by C. A. Field, Esq. The wisdom of the change from Mosely street to Brambleton has been fully justified by the fact that the feeble school transplanted is now the large and growing Park Avenue Church, which itself in turn has a flourishing mission school.

A mission school held in the house of one of our members in Huntersville was started on February 3, 1885, under charge of Ruling Elder R. Frank Vaughan, but the few Presbyterians living in that suburb having moved away, it was deemed advisable to close the school in July, 1886. This Mission was again taken up, under the superintend-

ence of Ruling Elder R. S. Cohn, early in the present year, with brilliant prospects of success, encouraging us to believe that under the blessing of God it will speedily grow into a church.

With regard to the Portsmouth Sabbath-school, the records of that church give no information as to the time its school was established, but, as no one remembers the time when it did *not* exist, it is doubtless coeval with the church, which was organized in 1821.

It has been heretofore stated that in the early part of this century, children of all denominations attended the school of the First Church, and it may be well to mention that its missionary character continues to this day, probably not less than one-fourth to one-third of its members being children whose parents have no connection with this or any other church, and through the instruction given to this class, not only have many of them been brought to Christ, but their parents have been led to better lives and in some cases into taking their places among the people of God. The total number of actual scholars who have been received into the communion of the church on profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ during the past seventeen years is one hundred and forty-four.

During the same period, the collections in the school amounted to \$5,402.89 (which, of course, does not include the moneys raised by the Young Ladies' Mission Band, the Young Men's Society, and the Cot Society). Great interest has always been taken by this school in missionary work in China, the Infant class having contributed to that work for many years, and in March, 1877, the school undertook the support of a day-school in Hangchow, and kept it up until the present year, when it was deemed advisable to unite with the church in sustaining its missionary to Korea.

Great attention is paid to instructing the scholars in our church doctrines, and one hundred and eighty-one of these scholars have recited perfectly the Catechisms to the present superintendent during the seventeen years of his incumbency.

We have in the library, in excellent condition, for the use of our school 1,200 volumes of good sound reading.

The work which has been accomplished by the Sabbath-schools of the mother church and her children in this community can be known only at the last great day. That work has been of a quiet, undemonstrative character, making little noise and never seeking to attract children by any sensational features, but only by the faithful teaching of the love of God for perishing souls; and that God has been pleased to bless the work of his servants to the salvation of many and to the upbuilding and extension of his church in our midst, will appear from the annexed table, giving the number on the roll of the various schools at this time.

	TEACHERS.	SCHOLARS.	TOTAL.
FIRST CHURCH, Church School,	47	305	352
“ “ Huntersville Mission,	10	70	80
SECOND CHURCH, Church School,	22	130	152
“ “ Washington St. Mission,	11	60	71
COLLEY MEMORIAL, Church School,	13	150	163
PARK AVENUE, Church School,	17	150	167
“ “ Walton Chapel Mission,	6	55	61
ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL, Church School,	12	95	107
PORTSMOUTH, Church School,	29	170	199
Grand total,	167	1185	1352

Apart from the work at home, the gifts of these schools to feeble struggling churches and schools in our own and other Synods, have been neither few nor small, while the grace of God has made them to abound in systematic, conscientious giving for the cause of missions in heathen lands.

SUPERINTENDENTS OF THE SABBATH-SCHOOL OF THE MOTHER
CHURCH.

1816—1818,	UNKNOWN.		
1819—.....,	MRS. HOLMES.		
1820—1832,	UNKNOWN.		
1832—1842,	MR. DANIEL C. FISK.		
-- -- --,	MR. JAMES M. McRAE.		
-- -- --,	MR. H. B. GWATHMEY, Ruling Elder.		
-- -- --,	MR. ROBT. SOUTTER,	“	“
1843—.....,	MR. JAMES T. SOUTTER,	“	“
1844—1845,	MR. R. C. GALBRAITH,	“	“
1846—1847,	MR. JOHN GORMLEY, Deacon.		
1848—1863,	MR. GEO. F. ANDERSON, Ruling Elder.		
1864—1865,	MR. J. M. FREEMAN, Deacon.		
1866—1873,	MR. W. D. REYNOLDS, Ruling Elder.		
1873—1875,	MR. JAMES R. HOLT,	“	“
1876—1892,	MR. GEO. TAIT,	“	“

PRESBYTERIANISM AND THE FUTURE.

ANNIVERSARY SERMON.

BY REV. PEYTON H. HOGE, D. D., WILMINGTON, N. C.

“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”—Acts ii. 39.

THE Old Testament is naturally a book of promise. In the earliest dawn of the gospel we have the seed of promise. To the church delivered from the flood, God gave the bow of promise. To Abraham in his old age was born the child of promise, and in due time his seed inherited the land of promise. So, too, all the symbols of the priestly law, all the developments of the civil government, the song of psalmist, the vision of seer, the exhortation of prophet, were all fainter adumbrations or more distinct pledges of that which the future held, and the fulness of time should unfold. But when that fulness of time had come, and all the promises of God were made Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus, it might have been supposed that the period of promise was over, and that the era of perfect and complete fulfilment was at hand. So thought the disciples during the days of our Lord's flesh. So thought they with fuller assurance after his triumphant resurrection, as with eager hearts they come to him with the question, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom unto Israel?” But gently and gravely, as of yore, he puts them off: “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.” And when in a moment he is parted from them, the last word that falls from his lips as he is re-

ceived up into glory is a word of promise—the promise of power, the power of the Holy Ghost, that they might bear witness for him unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Again the disciples wait upon the Lord until promise is crowned with fulfilment, and on Pentecost the Spirit descends, and they are filled, and clothed, and transformed with power. But when Peter, standing forth that day in the fulness of that new-found power, upon the threshold of that new dispensation it had ushered in, speaks the creative words of the Christian Church, they are still words of promise—“the promise is unto you.” And lest any one should limit that promise to the present, and its immediate fulfilment, we see it glancing along to future ages, and bursting abroad to distant lands: “The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off.” Promise is still to be the forming principle of the church’s life, and the inspiration of the church’s activities. Nor is it only at the beginning of the Christian life of those who in successive generations compose the Christian Church, that promise is to play its part. When the Holy Spirit enters the soul, its full measure is not reached at a bound, and the very highest development of his power and glory here is still only an earnest of that which is beyond. Hear the aged apostle, who surpassed even Peter in the “abundance of revelations,” when far on his earthly course: “This one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” And when he unveils the trinity of Christian graces that are to “abide” with the Christian throughout this life, and with the church throughout this dispensation, there is not only a Faith to look up, and a Love to look out, but a Hope to look forward.

To-day we stand as did the Apostle Peter, though to an humbler degree, at one of those points where fruition has followed promise. But let us learn, like him, at such a time to fix our gaze not only upon the past, but also upon the future. As we think of the little, struggling vine planted in faith and hope over two centuries ago, and then cast our eyes around at the six vigorous churches that stand where once it stood; when we look out farther and see the more distant shoots that have sprung into life and activity from its side; and when we think of the rich fruitage that from these vines is now ripening here for heaven, and the still larger vintage that has already been gathered into the garner above, our hearts may well swell with gratitude to God for the blessings of the past. But when we remember that the harvest of the present is the seed of the future, when we think how that seed is being scattered broadcast throughout our land, and has already been borne to other shores, we may well pause before we exclaim, "The former days were better than these." This church has had noble pastors, and none nobler than he who for forty years—nearly one-fifth of its whole history—served it with such devotion, with such tenderness, and with such ability, that to-day it has no more precious treasure than "that good gray head" that has whitened in its service; but these men have labored, and others, coming after them, will enter into their labors, who will see greater things than they. It has had devoted members in the past—men who have put their lives in jeopardy for the sake of the gospel, men who have never flinched in the times that tried men's souls; but no one can know the heights of Christian heroism to which God may call some of these little ones that sit before us to-day. It has set in motion many beneficent activities, that have brought light and gladness and blessing into countless hearts and homes,

but only eternity can reveal how far will reach the widening circle of its beneficence in the ages that are yet unborn.

The same principle holds true when we take a wider survey and consider that great family of Christian churches to which this congregation belongs. There is no more fascinating pursuit than the study of those causes, small and great, that brought into being the great Reformation movement. And as in this year of grace we celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of that discovery which added a new world to the arena of human effort and progress, we look on with adoring wonder at the silent moving of the divine hand by which Lollard and Bohemian, Huguenot and Hollander, English Puritan and Scotch Presbyterian, were, through toil and sacrifice, persecution, shame and death, working out those principles, and shaping those institutions, that should not only form the fabric of our ecclesiastical structures, but should lay the foundations of our civil and religious liberties. But while the memory of these mighty dead shall last as long as history, while their devotion to truth and duty must ever nerve our hearts to like endeavor, while they have bequeathed to us much that we can never forsake without being recreant to every duty both to God and man, yet we cannot rest in their attainments. The faithful study of the past will do much to direct us for the future. It has lessons of warning and lessons of encouragement. It can save from much error and lead into much truth. But he who would shape the future altogether by the past, is like the mariner who should steer his ship by the track it has left in its wake, instead of by the changeless stars of heaven, or the needle ever constant to the pole.

History has precious lessons indeed, but its truest and best is this: that the best is yet beyond, and that fruition in the past is the pledge and promise of a richer fulfilment

in the future. It is these considerations that have led me to ask you, on this day freighted with the memories of the past, to take a glance with me at the subject I have selected, "Presbyterianism and the Future."

When we look a little more narrowly into the text we see that it outlines certain elements or conditions that are essential to the success of the church or of any part of the church. These elements of success are revival, perpetuation, enlargement, and all in accordance with a sovereign, eternal and gracious purpose: *revival*, because the "promise" is the promise of the Holy Ghost; *perpetuation*, because the promise is not only unto you, but "to your children"; *enlargement*, because it is also "to all that are afar off"; and in its application among all these, by a purpose that must be sovereign, and must be eternal, and must be gracious, because it is divine, it is limited to "as many as the Lord our God shall call."

I would miss my purpose very far if any one were to understand from anything that I shall say that I claim for Presbyterianism and the Presbyterian Churches a monopoly of any or all of these elements of success and blessing that are promised in the text. But with the fullest catholicity of spirit, it is surely our right to point out that Presbyterian principles require us to seek for, and strive after, each one of them; that Presbyterian doctrines reveal the true method of their attainment; and that Presbyterian organization presents a most favorable channel for their exercise and development. If these positions can be maintained, Presbyterianism has nothing to fear from the future, but will be found to meet the scriptural conditions of a church for all times, and a church for all peoples.

I ask you, then, first, to observe with me that the conditions of the divine promise given in the text, upon which all

these elements of blessing depend, is the cardinal principle of that theology of which our church is the avowed and recognized exponent. "The promise," with all that it includes, is "to as many as the Lord our God shall call." That God has a people chosen in love from all eternity, whom he has predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; that upon them he bestows, each in his own time, the effectual call of his Holy Spirit; that by that call being made partakers of the divine nature, they turn from sin in faith and repentance unto God, and that without that call and the kindling of the divine life within them, they are certain to continue in sin because of the deadness of their moral nature; and that the bestowment of that call includes every gift that pertains unto life and godliness, and every grace that is necessary to keep them from falling, and present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy—this, as I understand it, is the system called Calvinism; and this, as I understand it, is the creed that we confess; and this, as we have seen, is the doctrine of the text. Now it is not essential for receiving the blessings of the text that we understand and receive the doctrine of the text. The sovereign grace of God is not limited to our finite and fallible understanding.

"The love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind,"

and many a man who has spent his life in the vehement denial of the sovereignty of grace, has been himself a most conspicuous monument of that sovereign grace. But assuredly those who recognize the divine condition of blessing are in the most favorable attitude for receiving blessing; and those who have recognized God as the sole and sufficient source of salvation, and all that leads to it, are on the only sure road for finding it. "Them that honor me, I will

honor," saith the Lord; and honoring God, we need not fear what man can do unto us, or say of us.

It has been said that every Christian is a Calvinist upon his knees. If this is true, and no one who carefully observes the prayers of devout men of whatever shade of belief can well doubt it, it in great part accounts for the large measure of blessing bestowed upon churches whose formal creed denies the distinctive doctrines of grace. But the church that professes and teaches these great doctrines has an overwhelming argument in her mouth to *bring men to their knees*, pointing them to the only source of help and blessing, lest seeking to climb up some other way they be cast out as thieves and robbers, or, at least, come short of the glory of God. And what the church of the future needs that she may have a larger measure of blessing is not that she should cast aside, or curtail, or soften her creed, but that her creed should get down into her heart, and bring her down upon her knees, waiting upon the Lord for his blessing, until his grace shines forth in her life, and all men are pointed to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world—until all shall hear the voice, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

When, in the second place, we look at the elements of the promise in detail, these thoughts find illustration and emphasis. I have used the term "revival" as including all that is involved in the promise of the Holy Spirit. It is a term that implies *life*. There is no blessing for a dead church. Its creed may be unexceptionable in its orthodoxy, its worship may be faultless in its beauty, its ministry profound in their learning, their conduct above reproach and their orders beyond suspicion; but if life be not there, if the Spirit of God be not there, orders and dignity and learning,

æsthetic worship and orthodox creed will not save it from the stagnation and corruption of death. A dead church is not bringing men to Christ; a dead church is not seeking and saving the lost; a dead church is not doing the only work that gives her a right to be. But if the Spirit of God breathes upon these slain, instead of bleaching bones, we will have a living army to do the work and fight the battles of the living God.

Again, the term revival implies a *renewal of life*. Some may object to the term on this ground, and say that intervening periods of depression and death are implied in its use, and that this is not a normal state of the church, but one to be regretted and deplored. But renewal of life does not necessarily imply that the previous state was one of depression; it means the heightening or quickening of the previous state, whatever it may be. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." If we undertake to cross the mountain ranges that traverse the eastern slope of our continent, we ascend one ridge only to descend into the valley on the other side; we cross the valley, ascend another ridge and again descend, and so until the whole system has been crossed. But if we go to Siberia and ascend from the eastern coast we have a very different experience. By and by we come to the mountains, but when we have ascended, instead of a descent into a valley beyond, we have a broad table-land, gently rising upward from the summit of one range to the base of another; we climb that and continue to repeat the same experience, always ascending and never descending; at times more rapidly than at others, but still always upward. From the weakness of our human nature our revivals are too apt to be like our own mountains, with valleys of depression between, but they need not be so.

Every true revival should bring the church up to a higher plane of Christian life and experience from which there need be no descent, but a steady march onward and upward from the height attained, until a new influx of spiritual life and energy fits us for ascending to yet greater heights. Revival, thus understood, is the true and normal state of the church and of the Christian, and not an occasional spasmodic effort that spends its force and leaves no lasting benefit. It is God's law of the church's growth, and without growth there will be, by a law that can be ignored in the spiritual no less than in the natural world, retrogression, decay and death. Let us look then at some of the effects or manifestations of revival.

There is first the spiritual quickening of the children of God. As rain refreshes the parched earth, so the Divine Spirit poured out upon the souls of believers causes every grace to spring and grow afresh. On every side there is verdure and bloom and ripening fruit. God's word is studied with a fresher interest; prayer has new power and fervor; praise has a higher note of joy; God's house is thronged with eager worshippers. Love flows upward to God and outward to man. Broken friendships are renewed, neglected duties are performed, and slumbering consciences are aroused.

With the renewal of other duties comes the renewal of Christian testimony. If neglected before, the duty is now performed; if performed before, it is now done with new power. Christians speak often to one another and often to those that are without. The power of the Holy Ghost is upon them to witness for Christ, and so with the growth in grace comes the increase of numbers, and the Lord adds daily to the church of such as shall be saved.

But more than that: out of every great revival arise those

new teachings of truth, and those new movements in behalf of the truth, that lead the church on to higher and better things. The Reformation was the fruit of revival. The modern evangelistic movement was the fruit of revival. The great movements in the interest of the young people of the church are all the result of revival. And no individual church enjoys a true revival that some more practical view of its duties, and some more active prosecution of its work, is not the result.

Revival, then, in whatever aspect it is considered, is essential to the church's life and growth. Nay, it *is* the church's life. How, then, and whence shall we look for revival? Human nature in its short-sightedness, human nature in its impatience, human nature in its pride, often suggests various human methods and instrumentalities by which revivals may be "gotten up," as the vulgar phrase goes; forgetting that a revival, like water, can rise no higher than its source, and that a revival of human origin can give no more than a human blessing. The Calvinistic theology comes in as the true and only correction of human ignorance, impatience, and pride. Keeping its eye fixed upon God as the only source of revival, since he gives the promise, and the promise is unto as many as he shall call, it cautions us to use just those means that he has commanded, and to wait upon him for the life-giving power, without which all our efforts must be vain.

To this same conclusion, not only its doctrine, but everything in its worship and order tends. Neither condemning, nor dependent upon, fixed forms, its worship has always been simple and free from adventitious ornament. With the Spirit of God in it, it is fresh, satisfying, inspiring; without his presence it is lifeless and bald; thus making us feel the constant need of his life and power. Its main strength and

reliance is upon the "foolishness of preaching," which God's word and all experience teach to be powerless to save without the Spirit of God. Insisting upon an orderly entrance into its ministry and other offices, it at the same time claims for them no "indelible character," no power of salvation by manipulation, no official grace or virtue, but solemnly charges all that only as they personally seek and find the grace and power of the Holy Spirit can their ministry be effectual in bringing revival blessings to his church. For this reason it has no temporary or "expediency" officers in its organization, but solemnly sets apart those officers that it finds in the word of God, recommending them to the grace of God. If the Presbyterian Church is not a revival church, it is nothing. And the more thoroughly it masters its own principles, the more continuously and increasingly will it be a revival church, and the brighter will shine for it this promise of our Lord: "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him."

The next element of promise in the text is *perpetuation*: "The promise is unto you, and to your children." This manifestly has to do with the future. The church that would take hold of the future must lay its hand upon the hearts of the young. Here, again, we only need a more thorough application of our own principles. Denying on the one hand the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and on the other, repudiating the exclusion of infants from the church, the Presbyterian Church has always taken its stand on God's unrepealed covenant, and said to its little ones, "Ye are the children of the covenant." Admitting them to the privileges of the church on the basis of God's covenant promises, it has always insisted that God's little ones should be

trained for him. Long before the modern Sunday-school was dreamed of, the Presbyterian Church in her parish schools, in her parental training, and in her pastoral catechisings, was instructing her children in the word of God and the doctrines of that word, with a thoroughness that modern methods have rarely equalled and never surpassed. Seizing hold of the new instrumentality because of its wider scope and better opportunities for reaching those that are without, she has incorporated it into her system, and devoted to its development her highest and noblest energies. And if she has relaxed in any degree her former instrumentalities, there are not lacking indications of a wise return to the parish school, while parental training will always revive with a revived church.

But in our own days a new demand is made upon the church. The church is realizing its call to personal service as never before, and with that call comes the call to train its children not only to know Christ, but to serve him. Innumerable forms of organization for accomplishing this work have sprung into being, some within church lines and some without, some wise and some otherwise. It is gratifying to note that the venerable Synod of Virginia, upon the motion of your pastor, has appointed a committee to inquire into the best method of organizing and developing the energies of its young people. One thing is certain: the church cannot restrain these movements if it would; and it ought not if it could. God is in them, his word is behind them, and what the church needs to do is heartily to encourage, and wisely to direct, the efforts of its young people in channels most conformable to its own life, and most conducive to their spiritual growth. But these movements considered in themselves, and apart from any question of particular form or method, are evidences that the revival promise is reaching

unto our children, promising to us and to all who encourage them, the perpetuation of the blessings of the present, and the more abundant manifestation of those blessings in the future.

The Presbyterian Church has peculiar advantages from its form of government for the instruction and guidance of its children and youth. It alone has an order of men regularly set apart for the direction of God's house, whose very name is derived from the family. The elders are ordained to be the spiritual fathers of the congregation, and shepherds of the flock. As fathers, they cannot neglect the children; as shepherds, they cannot forsake the lambs. As the fountain of government in the congregation, it is theirs to direct and organize the church until "the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." As the years go on, this office becomes not less, but more, important. And as elders more fully realize the nature and responsibility of their office, they will more effectively discharge this work of developing and organizing the Christian activities of the congregations under their care. In such organization children and young people must have a large and important part, and in their wisely directed zeal, consecrated in their youth to the Master's use, the church will not be slow to see its best and brightest promise for the future.

But we must now turn to look at the last element of promise—the promise of *enlargement*; for the promise is not only unto you and to your children, it is "to all that are afar off." When we contemplate this promise, as the events of these last days have given it meaning, we are tempted to exclaim with the prophet: "Who are these that fly as a

cloud, and as doves to their windows?" "Behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north and west, and these from the land of Sinim."

While we cheerfully award to another denomination the palm for the inauguration of the modern missionary movement that has just completed its first century, it should not be forgotten that as early as 1620 a Presbyterian professor in the University of Leyden founded a missionary college, whose graduates went forth to the Dutch East Indies, and did work which anticipates all that is best in modern missions. And if in the missionary revival led by Carey, a Scotch General Assembly at first turned a cold shoulder upon the enterprise, it is none the less true that a member of that Assembly pointed to the Great Commission as the final and sufficient argument for missions, the answer to all objections, and the end of controversy. But whatever the original attitude of the Presbyterian Church, no one will deny that it has assumed its full share of the work now. Those who, at the recent great Council of Presbyterian Churches, heard upon one platform Presbyterian missionaries from India, China, Africa, Korea, the New Hebrides, and the wilds of Northwest America, and who saw two great churches packed at the same hour with Presbyterian congregations to hear the messages they brought of the progress of the gospel in all lands, could have no doubt of the present attitude of the Presbyterian Church towards missions.

And how could it be otherwise? The first missionary sermon that I ever preached was in this city more than ten years ago, and this was my text: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." And to this day there is to my mind no stronger missionary ap-

peal than that. The man who has taken down into his heart the belief that God has an elect people scattered throughout this world, whom he calls upon his church to find out with the message of life, can have no rest day or night while anything remains undone that he can do to carry out Christ's purposes of grace, and bring to the Lord his own. The encouragement to Paul to stay in Corinth was that the Lord had much people in that city; and the knowledge that the Lord has chosen ones in all lands is the best encouragement to the church to go everywhere preaching the word. And while we have in our doctrines the strongest possible motive for missionary effort, we have in our polity a system that is capable of world-wide expansion. Like the banyan tree, wherever a branch touches the ground it takes root. With all the elements drawn direct from the people, it develops a native organized church on any soil in which it is planted. It commends itself to the judgment of the intellectual Brahmin, and is comprehensible to the mind of the simple Papuan. It is complete in all its elements on the tiniest islet, and is elastic enough to cover the broadest continent. It is capable of realizing a world-wide organic unity, but in the equality of all its rulers, and the freedom of all its integral parts, it is more solicitous of maintaining the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

The Presbyterian Church is then peculiarly adapted to be a missionary church. And it has come to recognize missionary activity not only as a duty to the heathen, but as an essential part of the church's life. Enlargement is as necessary to the church as perpetuation. The outgoing of the church's energies is as necessary to its life as is exercise to the body. The more it puts forth, the more is its strength increased, and the fuller the pulsations of life and grace that flow through its members from the great heart of Christ.

To live, to endure, to expand. These are the elements necessary to a church for all times and for all peoples. And these, from the promise of the text, we may, in humble dependence upon God, claim as ours.

We do not claim that our church, just as it stands, is the church of the future. God doubtless has many lessons yet to teach us, and some of them we might well be learning now. I believe that every great church has some deposit of truth that it is her mission to contribute to the church of the future. Some may contribute a more varied and responsive form of worship, yet without reducing everything to set forms. From the same source there may come the effective administration of the diocesan bishop without the diocesan's rank; from another source there may come the power derived from freer personal testimony for Christ; from others, something yet different, that God now sees but that we do not. But of one thing I am persuaded. That which the Presbyterian family will contribute is that which makes it Calvinistic and which makes it Presbyterian; a doctrine that gives glory to God and a polity that gives liberty to the people. For this it is that insures to us the promise of revival, perpetuation and enlargement, until the multitude of the redeemed have all been gathered in, and the Lord shall be king over all the earth.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOUR.

BY REV. JAMES I. VANCE.

GOOD deeds are immortal, for they are the incarnation of great truths and generous emotions. The men who perform them die; but the deathless spirit of all that is good goes marching on from generation to generation, and has an ever-growing power and widening sphere in the history of the world. Hence there is a mighty inspiration that comes down to us from a noble past.

Scotland is but a tiny bit of God's earth, a miniature landscape of blue towering mountains, and deep transparent lakes, and heather-covered hills, and rock-girt shores—a little, little land, and yet Scotland has done much to make the modern world, and the explanation of her tremendous influence must be sought in her peerless history. Every foot of Scotland's soil is historic. Over her hills and valleys have surged the strifes from which have come the precious liberties of church and state. Under her bonnie blue flag great souls have contended. Upon the very face of her hills and by her riversides the story of greatness and goodness has been written, and time will never efface that record. And because it is historic Scotland, there has gone forth from the storm-lashed shores of that little land, a something which has been a quenchless inspiration to the sturdy and God-fearing manhood of the world.

Thank heaven for the inspirations of history, and for all the good men and women who have done their work well,

and dying, have left posterity the legacy of a blessed memory!

We build monuments with which to perpetuate the influence of such heroes, and standing in the shadow of these memorials, the story of glorious days becomes more vivid, the fire of devotion begins to burn, and the spirit of the fathers is aflame in the hearts of their children. Dull indeed must be the faith that cannot be quickened by the recital of faith's triumphs, and feeble the love that does not leap into a swifter zeal at the memory of love's achievements.

The Presbyterian Church has a precious history. God has granted her to stand in perilous places, to do valiant service at some of the great crises of time; and wherever in the darkness of the years, when the world was all but dead, the voice of God has called: "Where art thou?" Samuel—like the church of the elders has answered: "Here am I."

Striving for the truth, contending for "the faith once delivered to the saints," her ranks have been decimated by persecution and martyrdom, and yet with the memorable *nec tamen consumabatur* as the secret of her deathless testimony, our Presbyterian faith has "quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness was made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens," until the watch-fiers on the hill-tops can now signal to one another the whole earth 'round, and we can claim to be catholic in area, as we have always been catholic in spirit and creed.

With 91 great Presbyterian Churches in the earth, grouped in 1,249 Presbyteries, led by 23,951 ministers, and 120,933 ruling elders, having an actual membership of 4,092,965, and a nominal membership of 8,894,546 communicants, and

a constituency of 35,578,184 adherents, Presbyterianism, with all its blessed and God-given past, stands as the foremost denomination of Protestant Christendom.

It is an humble and modest chapter of Presbyterian history that we have been celebrating to-day. It fills but an insignificant niche in the temple of our beloved church; and yet to us it is more precious than gold and more beautiful than the flowers of spring.

Some of those who hear me have in their veins the blood of godly ancestors, who lived and toiled in those pioneer days of our country, who worshipped God when it was not always easy to worship him, and who, for conscience's sake, dared to dissent when the edict of a bigoted king added to the perils of dissent.

Blessed of God forever be the memory of the men and women who, from the days of Francis Makemie and of that unknown minister who went before him, labored on this neck of land by the sea for the maintenance of the covenant faith! May the love of them endure from generation to generation, so long as God needs valiant ones to stand for him among men! That little "church on the Elizabeth River," battling amid adverse surroundings, waif-like, on an unkindly shore, has not perished, for within it was the life and light of him who dwelt in the bush. True, for eight decades, its history suffered partial eclipse, and it lived, like Elijah at Cherith, the world forgetting that a prophet of the Lord was there; but Jehovah never suffers any good thing to perish, and that little historic church on the Elizabeth, even as did its Lord in his tomb, kept an unquenched heart through all those eighty years of gloom, and in God's good time came to the front once more for service; until now the church that Makemie discovered, and Grigsby re-discovered and re-organized, has grown to six strong churches, with

their many missions and flourishing Sunday-schools; and that little company of saints gathered under the ministry of a pastor whose name must be sought in the registries of heaven, has grown to 1,200 Presbyterian believers and their children, to say nothing of the many, many who have gone from service to rest, from labor to reward.

It has been a precious thing to many of you, my brethren, to gather around the hearth-stone of an old home to-day and listen to the voice of our venerable and beloved father, Dr. Armstrong, as he brought these things to mind; and then to wait upon the wise words of these gifted men of God, as they have called us to a wider vision of the doctrine and polity, the history and destiny of our Presbyterian faith. Especially has it been a boon to us, in the midst of all these fragrant memories and sacred incentives, to gather around the table of our Lord, and there remember him, "who loved us and gave himself for us." And now, what remains but to bring all these blessed things together into one divine inspiration for service in the days to come?

The past is behind us, and in the future our work must be done, if done at all. The opportunity which God has given us is larger and more inviting than that granted to those who went before.

The "City by the Sea" has had a new birth in the last decade, and unparalleled activity in commercial and industrial life is only opening larger doors of usefulness to the church of Christ. Our opportunity is unprecedented, and our responsibility is commensurate with our opportunity. Nevertheless, I would remind you that we need no new and untried equipment for this enlarging ministry. A few weeks ago, in the old village of Drummond Town, and from between the parchment-covered lids of a volume two and a half centuries old, I copied these opening lines from the last will and testament of the Rev. Francis Makemie.

“In the name of God, Amen. I, Francis Makemie, in the county of Accomac, in Her Majesty’s dominion of Virginia, being weak and infirm of body, but in perfect soundness of mind and memory, and sensible of the universal frailty of human life and an approaching dissolution by death, desirous to settle that estate which God in his bounty hath been pleased to bestow upon me, and for preventing future differences which may arise concerning the same; committing my body to the dust, decently to be interred, and my immortal soul to an almighty and most merciful God, in hope of a glorious and blessed resurrection unto eternal salvation through the efficacy of the powerful merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, our blessed and glorious Redeemer, I do hereby give and bequeath.”

After nearly two centuries of varying fortune, we have none other gospel than that. We worship the same “almighty and most merciful God”; we are sustained by the same hope of “a glorious and blessed resurrection unto eternal salvation”; and we have our salvation only “through the efficacy of the powerful merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, our blessed and glorious Redeemer.”

It is the same Bible, the same Spirit, the same sweet evangel, the same magnetic story of the cross. We need no new creed, no different polity. The armor that has been tried in a thousand battles needs not to be changed now. It is only needed that the spirit of the sires descend upon the sons; and if God please, may a double portion of that spirit be upon us!

The history of past achievements is a snare, if it does not become an inspiration. Over this day’s doings God is writing for the church of Norfolk that word which sent Israel over the sea and into the land of promise—“Forward!” God save us from a dead orthodoxy, and from that

self-conceit which is the narcotic of the sluggard and the fatal foe to all progress. It is said of Charles G. Finney, that "at a time when the American Church was well-nigh enwrapt in a dead orthodoxy, and vital godliness was in peril, this wonderful man swept like a flaming evangelist through the churches, kindling into a fierce fire the smouldering embers on God's altars. Tens of thousands of formal Christians were quickened into life, and converts sprung up like willows along the water-courses."*

The spirit of Pentecost is not dead; but may this day witness a revival of his power, that will send us out from these stories of the past with an ardor for our church and a love for our Christ that cannot be quenched. It is not necessary that we wait longer for a better preparation. The duty of the hour is SERVICE.

Some one has well said, that there come times when the "cup of God's preparation overflows." At the two hundred and tenth anniversary of a church, surely the cup of preparation should be overbrimming, and all things ready for splendid service. Go forth and possess the land which the Lord your God has given you.

And now, as a benediction from all the years of blessing which this day celebrates, and as an invocation to all the years of service which this day inaugurates, there is a single word, an imperative duty, which I would sound into your souls with all my heart's energy. It is—PRAYER!

Prayer is the secret of the truest progress, and the inspiration that sends us to our knees, will sustain us on the field, for it is born of the Holy Ghost.

It was wise counsel given by that gifted and consecrated Japanese preacher, the lamented Dr. Neesima, when he said: "Advance on your knees!"

* Rev. A. T. Pierson, D. D.

Among the superb paintings that adorn the Pantheon of Paris is one of St. Genevieve, the patron saint of the city. It portrays a striking contrast of history. The upper portion is filled with marching soldiers, bearing the rich spoils of successful battle, attended by captives in golden chains, and insolent and boastful with the triumph of victorious war. Just underneath this is another and a far different scene. Some humble Christians are gathered around a rude couch, on which St. Genevieve lies dying. A modest convent cell and some believers at prayer—that is all; but as we look we are convinced that there is more power in that dimly lighted cell and its circle of prayer than in marching battalions of armed soldiery.

Prayer and service! May the "Inspiration of the Hour" lead to these; in the might of an unflinching faith may we meet our work; and may the God of our fathers give us the victory!