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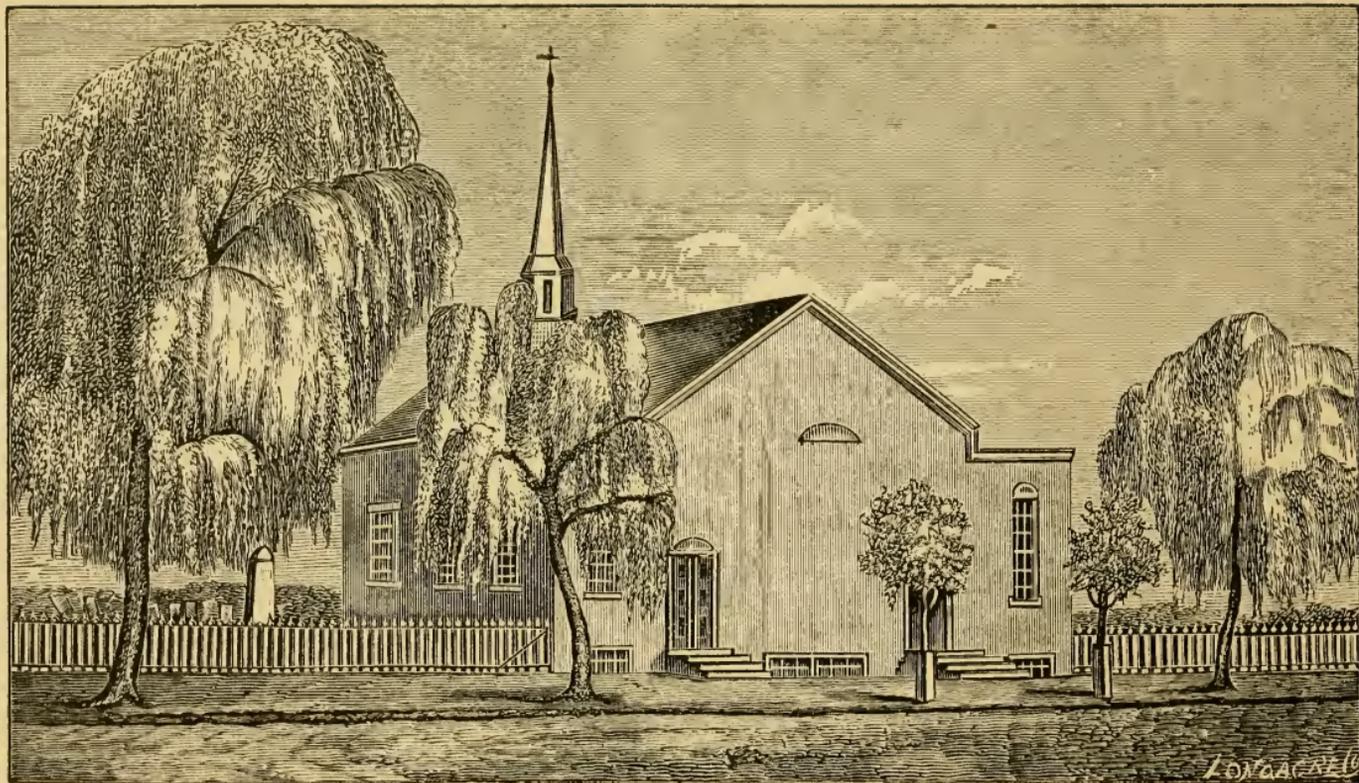
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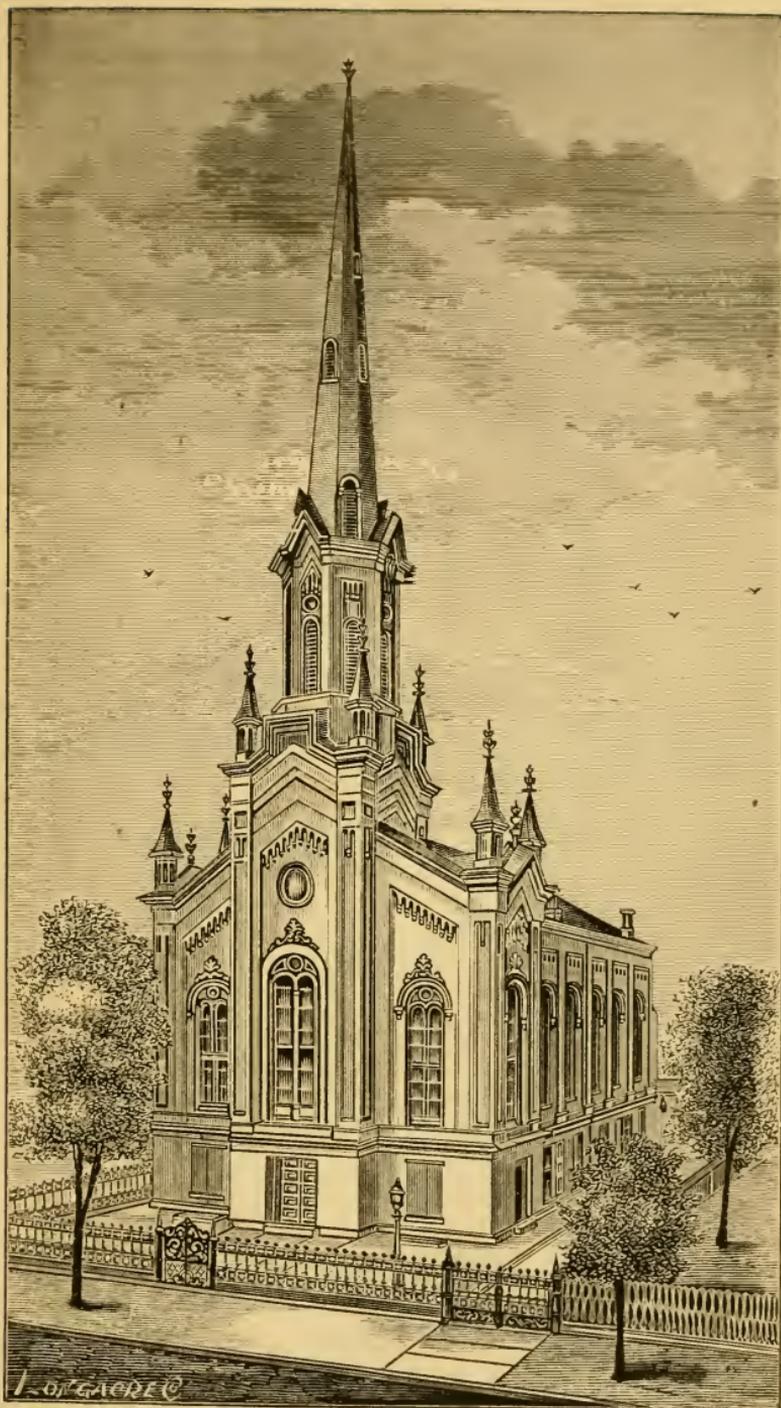
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Bannard, William.

An historical discourse



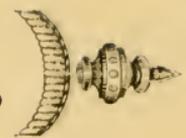
THE OLD CHURCH.



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, SALEM, N. J.

—A N—

HISTORICAL

 (DISCOURSE,) 

DELIVERED IN COMPLIANCE WITH A RESOLUTION

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

—IN THE—

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SALEM, NEW JERSEY,

JULY 16th, 1876.

BY THE PASTOR

REV. W. M. BANNARD, D. D.

SALEM, NEW JERSEY:

M. S. WOOD, PRINTER, No. 166 E. BROADWAY.

1876.

TO REV. WM. BANNARD, D. D.

Salem, N. J., July 19, 1876.

DEAR SIR:

The "Historical" Discourse preached by you on Sabbath, 16th inst., in compliance with the request of the general assembly, is such a complete, impartial and interesting history of the Presbyterian church of Salem, N. J., from its organization until the present time, and contains allusions so just and beautiful to many of the departed dead that we, members of Session, in behalf of the church and congregation, respectfully request a copy of the same for publication.

Yours Truly,

REUBEN HINCHMAN,
QUINTON GIBBON,
JNO. P. MOORE,
WM. B. ROBERTSON,
H. M. RUMSEY,

Members of Session.

DEAR PASTOR:

We listened with so much pleasure and profit to the Historical Discourse which you delivered on the 16th of July, that we are sure we represent the general desire of the church and congregation when we request a copy for publication.

Yours Very Respectfully,

MASKELL WARE,
A. W. SHERRON,
CHAS. W. CASPER,
JNO. LAWSON,
HENRY D. HALL,
JNO. C. BELDEN,
CALEB WHEELER.

Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church, Salem, N. J.

TO THE TRUSTEES AND ELDERS OF THE }
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH. }
SALEM, NEW JERSEY. }

GENTLEMEN:

It gives me pleasure to comply with your united request for a copy of my Historical Discourse for publication. In view of the delicacy and difficulty of its preparation, it also gives me special pleasure that it meets with your approval as "complete, impartial, and affording general satisfaction."

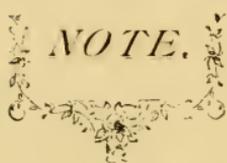
Very Sincerely Yours,

WM. BANNARD.

Salem, N. J., July 26, 1876.



NOTE.



Besides access to the Records of Session and of the Trustees, to printed Sermons and Memoirs of Rev. John Burt and Rev. Daniel Stratton, the writer in preparing this sketch acknowledges his special obligation to manuscript histories of the church prepared by Miss Emma Vanmeter and Mr. Johnson Hubbell.

A N

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

PRESBYTERIANISM in Salem, N. J., and its vicinity, dates back to 1748. "when a deed of trust was made to the Deacons and Elders of the religious Society of people called Presbyterians, agreeable to the Church of Scotland, in Penn's Neck, and to their successors forever, for the building of a meeting-house or church."

Thirty years after this date, or in 1778, a church was organized in Penn's Neck, though there had been preaching there since 1773 by Rev. Samuel Eakin,

great-grandfather of our townsman, C. Eakin, Esq. Next to Whitefield Mr. Eakin was esteemed the most eloquent minister that had preached in this country.

In 1797 Rev. Samuel Harris was ordained pastor of the united congregations of Penn's Neck and Alloways Creek, each of which places is about six miles from Salem. In 1803 these churches, according to the minutes of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, had eighty members, and were able, in conjunction, to support a pastor. In 1805 they became destitute of a regular minister and steadily declined in numbers until the church at Alloways Creek become extinct, and the church at Penn's Neck was dissolved by Presbytery and its members organized into the church at Salem.

In 1812 an effort was made to repair the building belonging to St. John's Episcopal Church in Salem. It had fallen into ruins, having become a burrow for rabbits and a resting place for swallows—its velvet hangings were torn and faded, and it was unfit for public worship. At a meeting presided over by Bishop White and attended by two Episcopal ministers, Rev. Messrs. Wilmer and Fowler, it was agreed to raise money and repair the building on the express condition that Presbyterian ministers should preach in it when the pulpit was not occupied by an Episcopalian. There was much discussion on this

point, and after listening to it Bishop White said: "Let the gentlemen conduct the business as they think proper. It is a mixed society of people and they know best how to manage it."

Upon this understanding Col. Robert G. Johnson and Judge Thos. Sinnickson contributed four-fifths of the money expended for repairs, while Drs. James and R. H. Vanmeter, with others, contributed the remainder. This arrangement continued in harmonious operation for eight years, or from 1812 to 1820. Presbyterian ministers preached as occasion offered, and Episcopalians and Presbyterians worshipped together as Christian brethren. About this time the wardens and vestrymen of St. John's church held a meeting, at which it was Resolved: "That the permission of the rector, or in his absence of a majority of the wardens and vestrymen, be required to entitle a clergyman of this or any other denomination to preach in the pulpit of said church." When this action became known to Col. Johnson, he inquired of the rector, Rev. R. F. Cadle, if it was intended to exclude his particular friends, Rev. Messrs. Janvier and Freeman, neighboring Presbyterian ministers, who had occasionally preached in that church. He was told that as rector he could not allow such ministers to preach in his pulpit. When an appeal was made to the action of 1812 at which it was agreed to allow other ministers to preach in it when

not occupied by an Episcopalian, and also to the fact that this agreement had been carried out for eight years, the rector admitted the fact, but pleaded that the agreement was only verbal; that it was contrary to the canons of the church which he had recently and solemnly promised to sustain; that he could not in conscience allow his people to listen to erroneous doctrine, which he regarded such ministers as preaching; and moreover that the officers of the church concurred with him in this position. On a Sabbath in December, 1820, Col. Johnson, understanding that the rector would be absent and the pulpit therefore unoccupied, invited his friend and guest, Rev. Ashbel Green, D. D., President of Princeton College, to preach in the Episcopal church. On coming to it they found the door locked and the large company that had assembled in the grave-yard were refused admission. It was understood that this exclusion was by direction of the rector in accordance with the resolution of the vestry. As they were thus summarily shut out and the arrangement abruptly ended, and as there was no appeal from this decision, the Presbyterians were obliged to make other arrangements to enjoy their worship according to their convictions. They therefore withdrew and held religious meetings for a time in the Academy building and in the Court House. At the suggestion of Col. Johnson preparations were at once made to organize a Presby-

terian church and erect a building for its worship. Col. Johnson belonged to an Episcopal family, but he had been educated under Presbyterian influence at a school at Pittsgrove and at Princeton College, at which he was graduated. He associated with him Dr. James and Dr. Robert H. Vanmeter, Presbyterians and natives of Pittsgrove township, where their family resided in 1720. Their father, Benjamin Vanmeter, was an Elder in the Pittsgrove Presbyterian Church. Both these brothers are highly spoken of. The biographer of Dr. James says: "No physician, I believe, ever lived in this county possessing a more spotless reputation, nor did there ever die one more sincerely regretted. In his professional and private life he was a blessing and an ornament to the community." Dr. R. H. Vanmeter was an active and energetic man and staunch Presbyterian, thoroughly devoted to the church, and one who gave to it his time, prayers and money with cordial zeal and affection.

Col. Johnson and these gentlemen entered with enthusiasm into the enterprise of establishing a Presbyterian church in Salem. Their energy and liberality were shown in the fact that \$400 were collected in one day—a large sum for the times and for the few who were interested—and in the further fact that the corner stone of the new building was laid March 6, 1821, about three months after Dr.

Green was forbidden to preach in the Episcopal church; while the building itself was completed and opened with religious services July 14, of the same year, or in about four months. This building was of brick, 30 by 50 feet, with a gallery across the northern end. It was located on what is now East Griffith street, and on the southern side of the Presbyterian cemetery. Col. Johnson contributed half an acre of ground for its site, which is now part of the cemetery. He also gave \$1200, or nearly one-half of the cost of the building, which was \$2,443. The remainder was contributed by the Vanmeter brothers, Messrs. John Congleton and Mathias Lambson, various citizens of Salem, both town and county, and others in Cape May County, Elizabethtown, Kingston, Princeton, Philadelphia and elsewhere. The names of many of the donors have been preserved and they show a widespread interest and sympathy in the enterprise.

Besides half an acre of land and nearly half the cost of the building, Col. Johnson gave the mahogany pulpit now in use in the Lecture Room; Dr. R. H. Vanmeter gave the stove; Mrs. Ruth Vanmeter gave the pulpit hangings, and a bookseller in Philadelphia gave the pulpit Bible.

When the building was erected East Griffith street was not laid out. It was approached from a road that entered Market street between Maskell Ware's house and the Episcopal church. It pointed North, therefore,

and not South as afterwards; while the steeple was also on the North end.

The ceremonies connected with the laying of the corner-stone were conducted by Messrs. Freeman, Janvier and Ballantine. Mr. Janvier made the address on the occasion, and the evening previous Mr. Freeman preached an appropriate sermon in the old Baptist meeting-house. At its dedication, July 14, 1821, a sermon was preached by Rev. G. W. Janvier from II. Chron. v : 13, 14.

In 1831 or 1832 pews with cushions were put into it, the seats having previously been plain benches with backs. The cost was £662. These pews are now in use in our Lecture Room. This work was done during the ministry of Rev. A. H. Parker. It is said he observed in this church, one Sabbath, a wealthy mahogany merchant of Philadelphia, with whom he was acquainted. After the service this gentleman cordially gave him his hand, and said: "What a plain Church you have." "Well," replied Mr. Parker, "how much mahogany will you give to make up into pews?" This gentleman generously sent almost enough for the alteration of the benches. Mr. Parker also went to Philadelphia and solicited planking, paints, &c., which, with the generous contributions of the congregation, were ample to modify and re-seat the building.

In 1835, as the congregation increased and the

building became too small, it was again improved and enlarged. Twenty feet were added to the length, making it seventy feet long and giving twenty new pews. The floor was raised three feet, and the ground under the front end was dug out four feet, forming a basement Lecture Room, which was used for Sabbath school and weekly meetings. Owing, however, to its dampness and its proving a favorite resort for toads, it was not very popular. These improvements cost \$3,000. The building resembled the letter T, with a door each side of the pulpit, which was also at the Southern end. The pews, therefore, looked towards the door, so that on entering the church you faced the audience. As thus constructed, one writes: "It was a curious specimen of architecture; oblong in shape, with a T transept. It would seat three hundred people and, though quaint, was comfortable and genteel."

In 1838 an organ was placed in it at a cost of four or five hundred dollars, of which Calvin Belden gave one-half. There was opposition to an organ at first from some of the older members of the church; but it died away, and especially in view of its necessity, as there were few singers at this time in the congregation. Public worship was held in this old church for the last time the second Sabbath of Oct., 1856; but its bell continued to call the people to worship in the new church until the last Sabbath in December, 1857. This bell, by the way, was sold to the Fenwick Fire

Engine Co., and its notes were heard in the uproar and din that ushered in the morning of the Centennial Fourth of July.

I have given what I could learn of this old building because it was the first visible symbol of Presbyterianism in Salem, and because it is no doubt associated with pleasant memories in the minds of many present. Its erection was an event of great importance in developing and establishing a Presbyterian Church in this community. It was an arduous enterprise at the time, and regarded by many as a rash and hopeless undertaking. In contrast with our present costly and beautiful building, it marks the progress our church has made in numbers and resources, as well as the change which has occurred in the taste and style of living of the people. When it was opened hardly fifty persons attended its services, and a part of these were the scattered remnants of the Penn's Neck and Logtown churches. But while these have become extinct, this church, with God's blessing, has prospered and grown to its present position of influence and usefulness.

The first Presbyterian Church in Salem was organized by a committee of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, on the 13th of Nov., 1821, four months after the dedication of the building. This is the record from the minutes of Presbytery: "A petition was sent to Presbytery from the inhabitants of Salem and Lower

Penn's Neck, signed by Robert G. Johnson, Elijah Dunn, Samuel Dunn, James Vanmeter and Robert H. Vanmeter, to be organized into a Presbyterian church, called the First Presbyterian Church of Salem. Presbytery then appointed Rev. Messrs. Freeman, Janvier, Biggs and Ballantine to meet in Salem, Nov. 13, 1821, at 11 o'clock, for this purpose and to dissolve the old church organization at Penn's Neck."

Writing in 1832, Col. Johnson says, the Church was organized with six members, and in the minutes of the first meeting of Session it is recorded that the following persons were transferred to this Church by the dissolution of the Church at Penn's Neck: Sarah Lambson, Sarah Kean, Martha Burden, John Congleton, Sarah Congleton and Sarah Lumly. If not the original six, they were among the earliest members of the church, as were also Robert H. Vanmeter, Samuel Burden, Robert McMillen and Lydia McMillen.

After a previous election, the following were ordained as Ruling Elders, viz: Samuel Burden, Robert McMillen and Robert H. Vanmeter. Mr. Burden had been a member of the Penn's Neck church, Messrs. McMillen and Vanmeter of the Presbyterian church, at Pittsgrove.

Jan. 24, 1822, an election for Trustees resulted in the choice of the following gentlemen, who were duly inducted into office by taking the oath prescribed by the law of the State: James Bartram, Dr. James Van

meter, Dr. Edward J. Keasbey, Joel Fithian, Samuel Copner, Samuel Dunn. All of them have passed away except Joel Fithian, who resides in Ohio.

The Presbytery furnished supplies for the pulpit until the fall of 1822; the Trustees then employed, with consent of Presbytery, Rev. Moses T. Harris, from Philadelphia, who performed pastoral duties until October, 1823, or for one year. In November, 1823, Rev. John Burtt was invited to preach, as stated supply for six months. At the end of this time he received the unanimous call of the congregation to become their pastor, and was ordained and installed June 8, 1824. Rev. W. M. Engles preached the sermon from II. Cor., V: 20. Rev. Dr. W. Neil recited the proceedings of Presbytery, explained the nature of the ordinance, and offered the ordaining prayer. Rev. E. S. Ely gave the charge to the pastor and the people. Rev. Messrs. Janvier, Ballantine, Hoff, Jones and Lawrence were present at the service.

There is preserved this interesting notice, dated Nov. 15, 1824: "The Salem Church has been organized about three years, and has increased from six to thirty-one members. The number who generally attend the ministry of Mr. Burtt is about two hundred. The congregation agreed to give Mr. Burtt three hundred dollars, and his fire wood, and find him a house to live in. The people are mostly of common circumstances, and the sum that can be conveniently raised

among them will not exceed two hundred and fifty dollars. From the attention given to the ministry of Mr. Burt, it is confidently expected by the goodness of Divine Providence, that in a few years the Society will be so far increased in numbers that they may be able to support their minister without the aid of their bretheren elsewhere. At present they will be thankful to their Christian friends for any pecuniary assistance they may feel disposed to confer upon the infant church at Salem." It is gratifying to know that this expected increase in numbers and resources came, and that this church has abundantly repaid in her contributions to the benevolent work of the church, any aid she may have received in her infancy and feebleness.

At the congregational meeting, at which Mr. Burt was chosen pastor, Col. R. G. Johnson was unanimously elected Ruling Elder. This was March 23, 1824. September, 1828, or in about four years from his ordination, Mr. Burt notified the congregation that he should apply to Presbytery for leave to resign his pastoral charge, assigning as his reason, "the present divided state of the session, which he hoped would be healed under other pastoral administrations." This desire of Mr. Burt did not meet the views of the church, and he was led to abandon his purpose for the present. It led, however, to the election of three new Elders, October 29, 1828, viz: Dr. James Vanmeter, David Johnson and Isaiah Wood.

In April, 1830, Mr. Burtt again pressed his wish to resign his charge, to which the congregation now assented, and the Presbytery dissolved the relation between him and the church at its meeting April 20, 1830. Mr. Burtt served the church therefore as its pastor six years, and previous to his installation, six months as stated supply. At the close of the first year of his labors we have seen the church numbered thirty-one; when he left it there were fifty-two members, an increase of twenty-one in six years, as rapid a growth under the circumstances as it has made in any subsequent period of its history.

While the church met its pecuniary engagements with Mr. Burtt, it was all that it felt able to do for the support of the gospel until December, 1828, when the Session recommended it to adopt the plan of the General Assembly's Committee on Missions, and to ask each member to contribute annually at least fifty cents to its objects. This seems to have been the beginning of the contributions of this church to the Boards of the General Assembly, in which it has persevered, and towards which its liberality has abounded as it has grown in resources and as the Boards have multiplied. During Mr. Burtt's ministry a pastor's library, valued at \$50.00, adapted to his special tastes and wants, was presented to the church by Elias Boudenot, Esq. A Sabbath-school library, valued at \$25.00 was also presented by Miss Ellet,

of New York. Some of the books of the pastor's library remain, while those given by Miss Ellet formed the nucleus of the Sabbath-school library, which has been enlarged and replenished from year to year.

Mr. Burt⁸t was born in Scotland, May 23, 1779. He early showed a taste for learning and used every opportunity to improve his mind. When only sixteen he was decoyed into a boat and impressed into the British Navy, where he served five years, and at last was relieved from his painful position by an English officer, who had become interested in him. After his release he came to America, studied theology at Princeton, was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and in June, 1824, was ordained pastor of this church. Subsequently he was editor of the PRESBYTERIAN, later of the STANDARD, a religious paper of our church. He received calls as Professor to Washington College, Pa.; to Hanover Theological Seminary, Ind., and to Oakland College, Miss. He was pastor for some years of the Fifth Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati, and for seventeen years of the Church at Blackwoodtown, New Jersey. He translated for years the French letters printed in the PRESBYTERIAN, and was the author of many articles that did not bear his name. Mr. Burtt was a ripe scholar, a profound theologian, a laborious and faithful minister. He attracted the thoughtful by his

preaching, and was well calculated to build up a church in its infancy. The Presbyterian church in Salem gained a decided impulse from his labors, and some who were drawn to its worship by its simplicity and novelty, were led at length to unite with it. His life abounded in self-denying labors, and when his strength failed and his work seemed done, he chose Salem as his resting place. Here, he had first preached the gospel; here, numbers had been led by him to Christ; here, some still lingered who regarded him as their spiritual Father; here, his name was as ointment poured forth. The last time he publicly officiated in this church was at a Communion service, when his mind seemed to fail, after which reason became entirely dethroned, and God at length gave his weary spirit the rest that remaineth for his people. His sepulchre is with us unto this day. The ladies have set his portrait before you to-day to remind you of the face you have often looked upon, and of the lips from which you have heard the word of life.

In 1830, after the dismissal of Mr. Burtt, the congregation invited Rev. A. H. Parker, formerly of Vermont, more recently of Cape Island, to preach for them until the meeting of Presbytery. In April, 1831, on application of the Session, Presbytery appointed Mr. Parker stated supply for one year. He is spoken of as a gentleman of many amiable qualities and as a good scholar, though not remarkably attractive as a

public speaker. The church prospered under his care; for at the close of his year's service there were sixty members reported in full communion. It was during Mr. Parker's ministry that the church received a legacy of nearly \$1,000 in bank stock from Mr. John Congleton, a former Elder in the Penn's Neck church.

The church building was also repaired at this time, and the salary of the pastor, which had been raised by subscription, and which had been contributed chiefly by a few individuals, was now raised by an assessment on the pews.

Mr. Parker was succeeded in 1832 by Rev. Amsi Babbit, who continued as stated supply for eighteen months. Mr. Babbit is described as a plain man, not very social in his habits, but a talented speaker.

After him came Rev. Thomas Amerman, of New York, who remained only five months. Mr. Amerman was a polished gentleman of fine attainments, though not an attractive public speaker. These three last named ministers were stated supplies and not settled pastors.

At a meeting of the congregation, presided over by Rev. J. Kennedy, a unanimous call was extended to Rev. Alexander Heberton, of Kingston, Lucerne County, Pa., to become their pastor. He accepted the call and was installed December 15, 1834. Rev. Mr. Kennedy preached the sermon and put the con-

stitutional questions. Rev. G. W. Janvier gave the charge to the people, and Rev. S. Lawrence the charge to the pastor. Mr. Heberton's ministry continued six years. During this period the church building was enlarged, carpeted and re-dedicated. The organ was purchased and placed in it, which is now in use in this building. The monthly concert, the first Monday evening in the month, was established; also, a meeting for prayer in behalf of Sabbath schools, the second Monday evening in the month. A Sewing Society for the benevolent work of the church, and a Dorcas Society for the relief of the poor, were formed in the congregation and collections regularly taken up for the different boards of the church. Mr. Heberton's salary was \$375 a year. He preached morning and evening in the church at Salem, and occasionally Sabbath afternoons at Woodstown, Sharptown, Quinton's Bridge and Elsinboro. He ordained as Elders, George C. Rumsey, Calvin Belden and John Wetherby. Many will recall Mr. Heberton, who has visited us so recently, as the polished gentleman, the warm friend and efficient pastor. He was affable alike to rich and poor. His purse was open to the needy, his sympathies extended to the afflicted, and his house was the scene of generous hospitality. He was devoted to the interests of the church, both temporal and spiritual, and obtained from his wealthy friends donations for its enlargement and for the purchase of

the organ. The congregation greatly regretted his removal, while he also left it with unfeigned reluctance. He has since been abundant in labors and highly blessed in them; and if his life is spared until the coming October, he will have been fifty years in the ministry.

Mr. Heberton was installed by the Presbytery of Philadelphia, but dismissed by the Presbytery of West Jersey. This latter body was composed of the churches south of Trenton, and organized November 5, 1839. Since this time, it is hardly needful to observe, the Salem church has been in connection with the Presbytery of West Jersey.

Very soon after Mr. Heberton left, the Session invited Rev. J. I. Helm, of the Presbytery of Nashville, Tenn., to preach to the congregation. Mr. Helm began his labors June 25, 1840, and continued as stated supply until October 1, 1842. Then a call was regularly made out for his services as pastor, and he was installed by a Committee of Presbytery October 17, 1842. Rev. G. W. Janvier presided and gave the charge to the people; Rev. J. W. E. Ker preached the sermon, and Rev. Dr. S. B. Jones gave the charge to the pastor.

Mr. Helm's pastorate continued nearly twelve years, including his term as stated supply. During this time many changes occurred. Dr. James Vanmeter and George C. Rumsey, who had served the church as

Elders, were called to their reward. Col. Johnson, the founder and benefactor of the church, resigned the office of Elder and withdrew from the congregation. Col. Johnson's withdrawal was greatly to be regretted. From the first he had been the ardent friend and active supporter of the church, which, indeed, grew out of his suggestion and was carried forward for years largely through his liberality. He welcomed to his hospitality ministers of different names, and was warmly attached to the friends of religion. He was elected Elder in 1824, and served the church faithfully in this office for twenty-three years. He withdrew in 1847. Henry Freeman was chosen Elder in 1847, and Thomas W. Cattell, Reuben Hinchman and Henry B. Ware were elected to this office in 1851. A library for the use of the congregation was established during Mr. Helm's ministry and chiefly through his efforts. Miss Prudence I. Keasbey bequeathed £1,000 towards the erection of a new building that was in contemplation. Dr. James Vanmeter also bequeathed a farm in Pittsgrove township, the income of which is to be perpetually used to sustain the preaching of the gospel. Dr. Vanmeter's will was not witnessed and the legacy could not, therefore, be legally claimed; but his son, Dr. Thomas J. Vanmeter, gave a deed of the property to the church, in accordance with his father's wishes. The Trustees accepted the gift with a cordial vote of thanks to Dr. Vanmeter

and his family for promptly and voluntarily confirming the intended bequest of their father to the church.

In 1847, and largely through the faith and zeal of the ladies of the congregation, the building was purchased, which is now occupied as a parsonage. The cost was \$2,800. Twelve hundred dollars were raised by a general subscription, and six hundred contributed by the ladies' sewing society. This sum of \$1,800 was paid when the deed was drawn; the balance, \$1,000, was paid at different times, but the mortgage was cancelled May 4, 1852.

In 1847 there was also a reorganization of the Board of Trustees and an election of six new members, viz: George C. Rumsey, John Lawson, Dr. Charles Hannah, William J. Shinn, Calvin Belden and Thomas W. Cattell. F. Lambson, who had been elected in 1831, constituted with these the seven Trustees required by the civil law, and under their direction the temporalities of the church were conducted for several years. The church enjoyed a good degree of prosperity under Mr. Helm's ministry. After many trials and reverses it became a united and influential society. Mr. Helm sustained himself partly by teaching the Academy, and through his labors this church materially promoted the interests of education in this community. His salary was what the Treasurer could collect, never exceeding five hundred dollars a year. Half of the time he paid for a house from his salary, the remain-

der of the time he occupied the parsonage. One speaks of him: "as a man of talent, eminent for scholastic and Biblical learning, sympathizing and devoted as a pastor, and in view of his feeble health, abundant in labors."

He says in a letter at my request: "I came to Salem as a young man with considerable acquisition for my age, but with inexperience and no taking popular gifts. The field was difficult and discouraging, but interesting and requiring chiefly and largely the strong virtues, patience, steadfastness and hope, even against hope. The town itself was small, population 2008, not growing, and its life moving in a leaden flow. The congregation was small, not homogeneous, containing little wealth or business enterprise, and under an enormous pressure of outside adverse influence. At my arrival it was in a very distracted condition, yet it contained some precious material; the tone of Christian life was good; an earnest ministry was welcome. It was my privilege to gain and retain the thorough confidence of my parishioners. They were very dear to my heart. This was the case when I left and I have good reason to believe continued so for years. The brief facts of my ministry would make a very inconsiderable sum in statistics; yet they fill a large place in my life—a larger still in the memory of my heart. Should I visit Salem now I should be a stranger to a generation that knew me not—dear,

kind, faithful people. The greater part have gone to their rest. I, too, feel the shadows lengthening towards the evening. The tasks of life must soon be laid down; 'but there remaineth a rest.' "

Mr. Helm was dismissed April 20, 1852. The Session, in behalf of the congregation, expressed their sorrow at the separation, their confidence in his character and respect for his talents, with their best wishes for his future prosperity and usefulness. Mr. Helm, as is well known, subsequently entered the Episcopal church and ministry, and is now settled in Sing Sing, New York.

After giving a unanimous call to Rev. Robinson P. Dunn, which he declined, the congregation cordially united upon Rev. Daniel Stratton, of Newburn, N. C., at a meeting held June 23, 1852.

Mr. Stratton was installed October 14, 1852, by the following Committee of Presbytery: Rev. G. W. Janvier, who presided and proposed the constitutional questions; Rev. S. K. Kollock, who preached the sermon; Rev. Dr. S. B. Jones, who delivered the charge to the pastor, and Rev. John Burt, who gave the charge to the people. Mr. Stratton's ministry continued fourteen years and ended with his death, August 24, 1866. He had written his fourteenth anniversary sermon, which he expected to preach on Sabbath, August 12; but it was read after his decease

by Rev. Joseph W. Hubbard, August 26, who the following day preached his memorial sermon.

Mr. Stratton won to an extraordinary degree the love and confidence of his people and the respect and admiration of the community. I need not dwell upon his life and character with which you are familiar, and which have been set before you on previous occasions. A native of Bridgeton and graduate of the College of New Jersey, he studied theology at Princeton and also at Union Seminary, Va. He was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of West Hanover, and for fourteen years was pastor of the church at Newburn, N. C., where he was respected and beloved by his own charge and by large numbers beyond its bounds. When Mr. Stratton came to Salem the church was weak and distracted; when he was called away by death, after a pastorate of fourteen years, he left it enlarged in numbers and influence, entirely harmonious in feeling, accustomed to do liberal things for Christian benevolence, alive to its mission and imbued with his own beautiful spirit. Mr. Stratton was a man of rare good sense, symmetrical in character, highly honored as a pastor, preacher and Presbyter. He was alive to every interest of the church and the country, courteous and dignified, a genial companion, faithful friend and wise counsellor. Though an invalid, he was diligent in his work, while his peaceful death was a fitting sequel to his holy life. Presbytery and people, his family and

the community mingled their tears in view of his departure, while they blessed God for his example and usefulness.

The present beautiful building was erected during Mr. Stratton's ministry. The congregation took action in reference to it at a public meeting July 5, 1853, at which they unanimously adopted the following: "Resolved, that in view of the inadequate provision now offered by the building in which we stately worship, and in view of the increase of population in this town, we believe it to be expedient, in dependence upon God, to erect a more commodious house of worship for the use of this church and congregation." The following were appointed a building committee to carry out this resolution: Thomas W. Cattell, Moses Richman, Jr., Reuben Hinchman, Calvin Belden and Samuel Prior, Jr. The corner stone was laid with appropriate ceremonies July 17, 1854, about one year after this action of the congregation. Rev. Daniel Stratton presided and offered prayer, Rev. J. I. Helm made the address, while Rev. Drs. Kollock and Jones and Rev. Messrs. Allen H. Brown and G. W. Janvier took part in the highly interesting services. Records of the church, religious and city papers, with other documents of interest, were deposited in a case surmounted by a white stone slab, in which was cut the date of the founding and building of the church. This was the corner stone. The architect was John

McArthur, of Philadelphia; the mason, Richard C. Ballinger, of Salem; the builder, A. Van Kirk, of Trenton. Its dimensions are 48 feet wide by 86 feet long; height of steeple, 184 feet; cost, \$27,000.

It was dedicated October 15, 1856; sermon by Rev. Dr. Jones; reading of the scriptures and other exercises by Rev. Dr. Kollock, Rev. G. W. Janvier and John Burt, former pastor. The Building Committee on finishing their labors reported December 24, 1856, that the cost of the church edifice, lot, sheds, furniture, &c., amounted to \$27,047.59. They add: "a period of about two years and a half have elapsed since the corner-stone was laid. The work has advanced slowly; but circumstances unforeseen and beyond the control of your committee occasioned the delay. A kind Providence has enabled us to complete the building without any serious interruption, while the almost unexampled liberality of the congregation and friends of the church has tended greatly to encourage us and lighten our labor in the prosecution of our enterprise. The entire cost has exceeded the original estimate; but we have been prompted to these increased expenditures by a pardonable zeal to present to the congregation a handsome and substantial edifice in which we and our children may worship the Lord our God." The names of those who gave the largest amounts for this building are Calvin Belden and family, Reuben Hinchman, Rev. Daniel

Stratton and family, including \$1,000 from Miss H. E. Hancock, Mrs. Margaret Rumsey and family, Thomas W. Cattell and family, and Dr. Thomas J. Vanmeter and family. The sums contributed by these donors amounted to \$13,773.50. The liberality of the whole congregation and of friends in other places was generous and cordial. Entire harmony prevailed. The ladies showed their accustomed activity and furnished the church at their own expense from the profits of their sewing society, except the chandelier, the Bible, cushion and communion table. These were gifts from other friends. Sabbath-school was first held in the new building the second Sabbath of November, 1856, after a recess of two weeks, the only recess it had had in its history of thirty-two years. This was occasioned by the dismantling of the old church of its pews to seat the Lecture Room of the new church. Tuesday evening, November 11, the first weekly lecture was held in it, and Thanksgiving was observed in it November 20th.

This building was spoken of in the papers at the time, "as beautiful and worthy of the taste of the architect and liberality of the people, as furnished throughout and an ornament to the town. It was regarded as a noteworthy fact that a church of one hundred members and eighty families had contributed \$17,000, while there had been from the beginning of the enterprise an increase in the numbers that attend-

ed public worship. The demand for pews was such as to surprise the most sanguine, and a new interest was given to every religious service. The history of this enterprise, it is added, shows it is a wise liberality to erect substantial houses of worship; for it advances the temporal and spiritual prosperity of the people." The sum of \$1,526.50 was received as premiums on the sale of pews, and the Trustees felt able to raise the pastor's salary from \$600, which he received at his settlement, to \$1,000, together with the free use of the parsonage.

After Mr. Stratton's death no candidates were heard for three months, from respect to his memory; Rev. Robert J. Burtt supplied the pulpit. Several months later, or December 28, 1866, the congregation elected Rev. F. W. Brauns, of the Presbytery of Baltimore, as their pastor, at a salary of \$1,500 a year, with the use of the parsonage.

Mr. Brauns' first sermon on coming to Salem was from the text, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" The congregation were so well satisfied with it they concluded it was he that should come, and it was needless to look for another. Mr. Brauns was installed April 25, 1867. Rev. William Cornell presided, Rev. Dr. William C. Cattell preached the sermon, Rev. E. P. Shields gave the

charge to the pastor, and Rev. Dr. C. R. Gregory the charge to the people.

Mr. Brauns was a patient student, a ripe scholar, a decided Calvinist, and an earnest preacher of marked ability. He won the respect and confidence of the congregation and greatly to their regret, after a ministry of sixteen months, accepted a call to the Seventh Presbyterian church, Cincinnati. Mr. Brauns' health afterwards failed, and for some years he has had no regular charge of a church, and has only preached occasionally.

November 15, 1866, John Lawson, William B. Robertson, William Patterson and Maskell Ware were elected Trustees; Vice, Dr. Charles Hannah, Calvin Belden and John Lawson, deceased, and William J. Shinn removed from the bounds of the congregation.

In 1867 the ladies, with the consent of the Trustees and aided by a committee of gentlemen, repaired and enlarged the parsonage at an expense of \$2,500.

The church was without a pastor for six months after Mr. Brauns left. During this time the pulpit was supplied under direction of the session. Different candidates were heard, and on January 25, 1869, the congregation unanimously called Rev. William Bannard, D. D., of the Presbytery of Albany, N. Y. He was installed by a Committee of Presbytery April 27, 1869. Rev. H. H. Beadle preached the sermon,

Rev. John S. Steward gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. Robert J. Burtt the charge to the people. His ministry has thus far extended over seven years, and its incidents are familiar to you. Peace and progress have attended it. The church debt of \$6,000 has been paid as a memorial offering. The church building has been improved and repaired at a further cost of \$4,000, while a goodly number have been added to its membership, and its prosperity has at least equalled that of any previous period of its history.

It will be seen from this brief outline that the growth of this church has been gradual but constant. The field for its labors at the beginning was limited. Few Presbyterians were found in the community. The population of the place was small, not exceeding six hundred; for it had only one hundred voters. Other denominations had the ground and were thoroughly established. It encountered prejudice and opposition, and only by patient and persistent effort grew in numbers and resources. Its teachings were assailed, its necessity disputed and its right to exist called in question. But it has vindicated the wisdom of its establishment by its steady progress, and has proved by its fruits that it is a vine of the Lord's planting. Its ministers have held forth a pure gospel, and its members have illustrated in their upright lives and active charities its saving power. It is not too much to claim that Salem is the better every way

for the presence in it of the Presbyterian church. Its tasteful and commodious edifice is an ornament to the city, while the culture of its people, their enterprise in business, their public spirit and readiness for every good work have added to its social attractions and material prosperity. It has brought into the Kingdom of Christ numbers who might never have been reached by other influences. It has raised up those who have become active workers for education and religion. One of its former members is President of a College, another is Professor—both of them are preachers of the gospel; while three others are settled pastors. Several of its young women became wives of ministers. Its young men are found in prominent cities and other places doing, let us hope, faithful service for God and man. Many rise up and call it blessed as the channel through which divine grace has brought peace to their sin-burdened hearts, As its beautiful spire, rising above surrounding objects, attracts attention from all directions, so its influence has gone out in many ways; while its works of love have made it as a city set on a hill that cannot be hid.

Since its organization in 1821, with six members, 554 have been added, an average of about ten per year.

From 1822 to 1830, a period of nine years, including Mr. Burt's ministry, fifty-nine were received to the church, an average of six and five-ninths a year.

From 1830 to 1835, under supplies, twenty-eight were received, an average of seven a year. From 1835 to 1840, under Mr. Heberton, the additions were sixty, an average of ten a year. From 1840 to 1852, or during Mr. Helm's ministry, ninety were received, an average of seven and a half a year. From 1852 to 1866, under Mr. Stratton's ministry of fourteen years, one hundred and fifty-one were received, an average of nearly eleven a year. From 1866 to 1869, including Mr. Brauns' ministry of sixteen months, forty-four were received, an average of fourteen a year. From 1869 to 1876, or during seven years of the present pastorate, one hundred and twenty-two have been received, an average of nearly eighteen a year.

These figures show steady and increasing growth. The additions have been few each year, but no year has passed without them. Three hundred and sixty have been added by examination, and two hundred by letter; the larger portion, therefore, have been received on profession. There have been three seasons of special religious interest, followed by larger ingatherings than usual. The first in 1858, in the earlier part of Mr. Stratton's ministry, when twenty-seven were admitted to the church—twenty-one on examination. The second in 1866, in the last year of his ministry, when the church welcomed thirty-one to her fellowship—twenty-nine on examination. And again in 1869, during the present pastorate, when thirty-

five were received—thirty on examination, the largest number admitted in any one year of the church's history. These additions greatly encouraged both ministers and people, while their influence remains unto this day. They are also a standing encouragement and call to work and pray for even larger blessings in the adding of greater numbers to our Communion.

If we compare five hundred and sixty, the total number that have been in communion with the church up to April 1876, with the two hundred and two we then reported as our membership, we see the church has lost by death, dismissal and removal, three hundred and fifty-eight members. As an illustration of its losses and changes, it may be noticed that in 1870 we reported one hundred and eighty in communion. This year, or in 1876, we report two hundred and two, though there have been received in the mean time one hundred and twenty-two. The church has lost therefore the past seven years by death and removal, *one hundred members.*

These figures show that the additions to it have been more numerous in its later than earlier years and prove, therefore that its growth, though slow, is increasing; we may hope, too, that as in nature the tree of slow growth is most valuable and enduring, this church

will continue to flourish with increasing years and bear richer fruit as it gains in members.

The constant drain on it arises in part from its location in this city where so little employment is found for our enterprising youth, who find it needful therefore, to leave their homes and seek business in other places. This state of things results in the forming of few new families in the congregation. The young men who go from home, generally marry away from home, while the young ladies marry out of the congregation and go to other places or other churches.

The past year has given us fresh evidence of this tendency; for of some ten marriages in the congregation within the year, not one new family has been added to it, but almost all who have married have gone from it.

These facts, however, should not discourage, but incite us to constant effort to make good these losses by gathering in those who are connected with no religious society.

The pecuniary liberality of this church is one of its marked features, and no doubt, one cause of its prosperity. For "the liberal soul shall be made fat"

From the first it has been self-sustaining, and though it could pay but a small salary to its pastor, it was large for the number of its members, and compared favorably with salaries at that time. It has also given freely to general objects of benevolence and to all the Boards of the General Assembly. It has thus

shown its loyalty to the church and confidence in its wisdom as well as its interest in the work of spreading the gospel through the world. Up to 1835 no record was kept of the contributions of the church. From that year we have its annual report to Presbytery. In six years under Mr. Herberton its contributions to benevolence were \$899.55. The next twelve years under Mr. Helm they amounted to about \$2,800.00, which sum does not include \$2,000 paid for the parsonage. In fourteen years under Mr. Stratton the congregation gave for benevolence \$5,966; for its own expense including salary, care of church and a new building \$50,992; congregational expenses were not reported until 1852. We cannot estimate them, therefore, previous to that date. They could hardly, however, have been less than \$500 a year or \$9,000 for eighteen years.

The next three years, including the sixteen months of Mr. Brauns' ministry, there was given for benevolence \$2,187; for congregational expenses \$11,909. During the past seven years \$6,983 have been given for benevolence, and \$28,185 for the uses of the congregation. This includes \$6,000, the amount of the debt on the church, and \$4,000 paid for repairs and improvements. The church has, therefore, given during this last period nearly \$1,000 a year for benevolence, and over \$4,000 a year for its own debts and uses. This is not a bad showing for a membership of less than

two hundred on the average, while it also illustrates the progress of the church in the grace of giving, as it has advanced in other respects during this time. Its gifts, therefore, since 1835, or for a period of forty-one years, amount to £18,835 for benevolence; and to \$101,084 for congregational purposes, making a total of \$120,919; nor does this large amount include all that the people have given; for many sums are not reported to the officers of the church and have not therefore been put upon its records. Presbyterianism in Salem must, however, have vitality when it freely gives this large sum to sustain its own doctrine and worship, and to extend the gospel to others.

The Sabbath School has been an important element in the success and growth of this church. It has afforded a field for christian effort and attracted to itself the active and zealous members of the church. It has secured the love of the children and youth, attached them to its doctrines and order, trained them for its services and led many of them into its communion. It has been blessed from the first with devoted superintendents and teachers, while the ministers have rightly regarded it as a prominent and promising department of their labors.

The beginning of Sabbath Schools in Salem is veiled in obscurity. Dr. Murphy who carefully examined the subject a few years ago, concludes that the first Sabbath School in this city was a First-

day School established in 1813, and continued until the year 1818. It was held in the school house on Margaret's Lane, afterwards South, now Walnut street. This school was under the care of Friends, and was intended for secular rather than religious instruction. It was held on First-day to accommodate all who wished to attend, and especially for those who thought they had no other time to avail themselves of its opportunities. There are those living who remember this school, some who were scholars in it and who recollect seeing old men and women there learning to read. The second Sabbath School in Salem is supposed to have been the Union School, established in 1819, and held in the Academy building. It embraced all the children of Salem that attended Sabbath School and was sustained with regularity and interest. It had upwards of sixty scholars and was not disbanded until denominational schools were organized. It was carried on chiefly by the ladies, in co-operation with their pastors, among whom may be mentioned, Mrs. Yorke, Mrs. Cooper, Mrs. Van Meter, Mrs. Rumsey, Mrs. Clement and Miss. Dick. The Presbyterian Sabbath School was probably organized in 1824, soon after the settlement of Mr. Burt, when the different denominations organized schools of their own and the Union School was disbanded. A catalogue of books belonging to the "Sabbath School Association of the First Presbyterian Church, Salem," and

printed by Samuel Prior in 1837, states it was organized in 1824. About this time Mr. Burt purchased for the use of the teachers a copy of Jewish Antiquities, and Miss Ellet sent twenty-five dollars worth of books for a Library. Library books, therefore, were early introduced and they have been supplied to the school through all its subsequent history. There is before me a catalogue of books in manuscript, dated 1827, with by-laws for the regulation of the library and signed Mary Van Meter, secretary; R. Van Meter, superintendent. These, no doubt, were the first books used in the school and numbered two hundred and eighteen volumes. The present library contains six hundred and ninety-seven volumes. The catechisms of our church have been diligently taught in the school and the aim has been to instruct the children in its doctrines, as well as to bring them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Mrs. Ruth Van Meter was the first superintendent and held the office until the election of Calvin Belden. Mr. Belden resigned in 1856 after serving the long period of nearly thirty years. Henry B. Ware was his successor, who held the office for nineteen years, or until his lamented death in July 1875. The present superintendent is W. N. Bannard, elected October 1875. The school has on its roll two hundred scholars and teachers, of which its infant class under Jno. P. Moore, numbers sixty-five. The school began early to contribute to the missionary work and during

the past seven years its gifts have amounted to \$1395.-97. During the same time the congregation have given \$500 for its current expenses, and in this way, as well as by the efficient labors of its officers and teachers, have shown their unabated interest in it.

The Ladies in this, as in other churches, have been a power for good. Their attendance at its services and co-operation with its pastors have greatly encouraged them. Their believing prayers and active efforts have proved a perpetual benediction. Their faith and zeal have risen with its emergencies, and if others have faltered they have never grown weary in denials and offerings for its sake. They have stimulated others to meet its wants when they have been beyond the compass of their own resources. In the Sabbath School and weekly meetings, in the Choir, in their sewing and benevolent society, in the purchase and repair of the parsonage, in the furnishing and improvements of the church, they have helped to carry its burdens and share its work; they have sympathised in its reverses and rejoiced in its success. It confirms this estimate of the value of their services to state that within the last ten years they have contributed by their individual exertions \$6,500 to the uses and needs of the church.

The church owns at present the following property:

First, This edifice which originally cost \$27,049

and has recently been freed from debt and refitted at a further cost of \$10,000. There is no church edifice in this city superior to it, hardly any in this part of the state. If spared from fire and other disaster it will stand for generations a monument of the taste and liberality of this people and of their desire to rear for themselves and children a fitting house for God's worship. And now that it is free from debt, and, except the basement and a new organ, in complete order, we may well thank God for it, while we congratulate ourselves in its possession.

Second, There is the parsonage whose first cost in 1847 was \$2,800, and whose repairs and enlargement in 1866, through the efforts of the ladies, cost \$2,500; other improvements have been made on it at different times to the value of at least \$700, so that its entire cost to the congregation has been \$6,000. This building is also a desirable acquisition to the congregation. Pleasantly located on one of the finest streets of the city, ample in size, supplied with what is needful for the comfort of a family, convenient to the church and neat in its appearance, it is a suitable residence for your pastor and a standing proof of your care and affection for him.

Third, There is the farm in Pittsgrove township, bequeathed to the church by Dr. James Van Meter,

and now valued at \$10,000. Under the skilled management of the trustees this farm is in excellent condition. Good buildings have been erected on it; it is well fenced, laid out in fields of suitable size and brought up to a high state of fertility. It yields to the treasury of the church annually about \$500.

Fourth, The church owns, also, the cemetery in East Griffith street, consisting of about one acre. The original half acre was the gift of Col. Johnson by a deed dated February 12, 1822, for the site of the old church building; the remainder was the gift of his daughter, Mrs. Annie G. Hubbell and her son Johnson Hubbell by a deed dated December 13, 1865. This is God's acre, a spot doubly consecrated, first to the erection of a building for his worship and again as the resting place of the bodies of his saints. It has been carefully laid out with suitable walks and trees; a vault has been constructed at an expense of \$211.41; monuments begin to dot its surface and already it has gathered within it a larger number than usually tread these courts. Its interments have been three hundred and seventy-eight. There connect themselves with it endearing, though painful associations. Many of those you have loved and honored there await the voice of the Son of Man on the morning of the resurrection. The bodies of two

of the ministers of this church, the only two that have departed this life, rest within its peaceful enclosure. Many here expect to join them there in God's good time. As it grows in beauty by the growth of its shrubbery and improvements it must also grow in interest from the number it continually welcomes from life's strifes and cares to its own repose and refuge.

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"Nor pain, nor grief, nor anxious fear
 Invades these bounds; no mortal woes
 Can reach the peaceful sleeper there,
 While angels watch the soft repose."

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This church has been favored in its officers. Besides the original three, Messrs. Van Meter, Burden and McMillen, the following have served it as Ruling Elders, viz.: Robert G. Johnson, James Van Meter, David Johnson, Isaiah Wood, George C. Rumsey, Calvin Belden, John Wetherby, Henry Freeman, Thomas W. Cattell, Moses Richman, Henry B. Ware, Reuben Hinchman, John P. Moore, Quinton Gibbon, Henry M. Rumsey, Wm. B. Robertson—the last five constitute the present session. Seven trustees were

elected in 1822, viz.: James Bertram, James Van Meter, Edward J. Keasbey, Joel Fithian, Samuel Copner, Mathias Lambson and Samuel Dunn. The following have since then been elected, viz.: Thomas F. Lambson, Geo. C. Rumsey, John Lawson, Charles Hannah, Wm. J. Shinn, Calvin Belden, Thomas W. Cattell, Thomas J. Van Meter, [declined] Reuben Hinchman, George B. Robertson, John Lawson, Wm. Patterson, Wm. B. Robertson, Maskell Ware, D. Wolcott Belden. John V. Craven, Albert W. Sherron, Henry M. Rumsey, John P. Moore, Charles W. Casper, Caleb Wheeler, John C. Belden, Henry D. Hall.

The present board are Maskell Ware, John Lawson, Albert W. Sherron, Caleb Wheeler, Henry D. Hall, John C. Belden and Charles W. Casper.

As we read this list of Elders and Trustees we are struck with the numbers that have been called to their final home—some of them so recently that their loss is keenly felt as a fresh sorrow. Indeed next Sabbath is the anniversary of the death of that one of them with whom I have been most intimately associated in the care and work of the church. I should do injustice to my feelings, and to the proprieties of this occasion, if I did not remind you briefly of the great loss to us all in the death of Henry B. Ware.

How much we have missed his counsels, his sympathy, and his prayers the past year. How cordially had his life and strength been spared, would he have engaged in these services, commemorative of the church he so ardently loved and for which he so faithfully labored. But his work here is done, and, with others, he has gone to his reward; while for him and for them, we are persuaded, "it is far better." I wish there was time to give a particular account of the character and labors of each of the deceased officers of this church. They are known to you, however, better than to me. They live in your memory and affection. Each had his own trials and excellencies, as each did his own peculiar work. I can only say the church prizes their services in her behalf. She has preserved in her records the expression of her regret for their loss and her high sense of their virtues. They cheerfully gave to her their prayers and efforts. They delighted in her success and spared neither themselves nor their means to promote her interests.

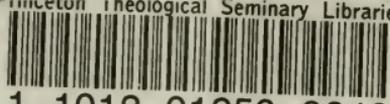
We might well spread flowers on their graves as we recall to day their names and recite their zealous, unselfish and self-denying attachment to this church, and to the cause of religion in this city. As we remind ourselves of their virtues let it be our purpose to follow their example. For there remains to both officers and members of this church a wide field of christian activity. The price of its prosperity in the future, as

in the past, is unceasing diligence and fidelity in its work.

Let us be encouraged then by this brief history to give ourselves with fresh hope and ardor to whatever will increase its numbers and widen and perpetuate its influence. Before another fifty-five years have passed away most of us will be numbered with the dead. Shall we not then with God's help so conduct ourselves, that those who follow us will esteem it a privilege to commemorate our course, as we to-day bless the memory of the Fathers and praise God for their life and labors ?



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