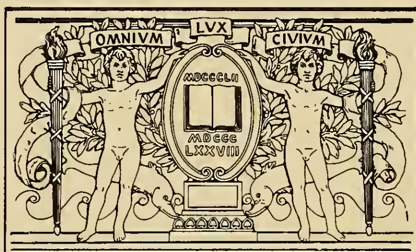

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HISTORY

OF THE

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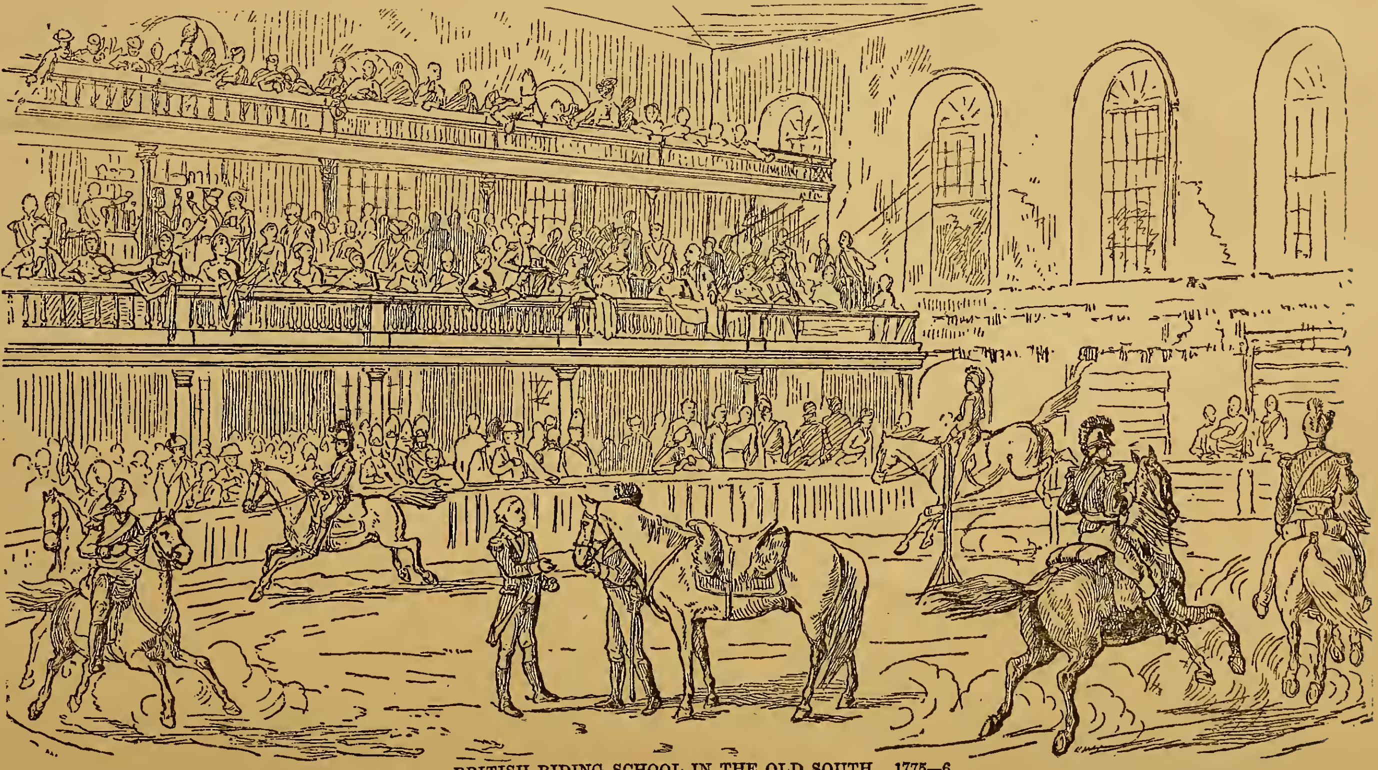

BRITISH RIDING SCHOOL IN THE OLD SOUTH. 1775–6.

HISTORY

OF

THE OLD SOUTH MEETING-HOUSE

IN

BOSTON.

THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY CHICAGO

BY EVERETT W. BURDETT.

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PREFACE.

The thousands who have felt interested in the fate of the Old South Meeting-House have nowhere been able to find a connected record of the events which have rendered it illustrious. These pages are intended to supply this deficiency, and to create a larger veneration for the monument whose history they record. The author waited long before beginning a work which would seem to be so worthy of an abler pen. But no such work appearing, this was begun and finished in the hope that it might at least be deemed better than none at all.

At the meeting of June 14, 1876, it was said that if there were time to tell to the people the story of this building, the money for its preservation would be forthcoming. "For every city, every church, every house, every man, every woman that has a dime, hearing this thing properly put before them, inspired by the memories of this place, would give and give freely that not a stone of this foundation, not a brick of these walls, not a tile of this roof over us, should be touched from this time forward, even forever."

Sharing this faith, the author contributes this sketch to the cause of preservation, and trusts that, in some measure, it may be instrumental in creating a public sentiment which will render the destruction of the Old South impossible. Though it has been found impracticable to make it a part of the official programme, it is hoped that it may not entirely fail in promoting the common cause.

This little volume does not pretend to be a *church* history. Nor does it profess to be a history of that religious corporation legally known as the Old South Society in Boston. Though having asked little and received no aid from the curator of the records of that association, the writer has suffered therefrom but little inconvenience: material from other sources has been abundant. The following sketch is simply a plain recital of the

story of one of the most historic buildings in America—the brick church, popularly known as the Old South Meeting-House. Such a recital necessarily deals to some extent with the history of the church or society; but it is most largely devoted to those associations of a particular building, which make it interesting to the general public. If the mode of treatment be found to be at all worthy of the subject, the following pages will not fail to prove of general interest. The limits of the work forbid the full development of the antiquities of the meeting-house, but the principal features are presented and enough is given to show upon what basis the fame of the Old South is founded. As to whatever inaccuracies may be discovered, the author can only promise in the words of a worthier writer, that "if the work be found of sufficient merit to require another edition, they will probably be corrected, and if no such demand is made, the book has received as much labor as it deserves."

The authorities consulted in the preparation of this history are sufficiently indicated in the text and foot-notes. Suffice it to say, that these pages have not been thrown together carelessly or without investigation. Careful researches have been made, notwithstanding the fact that the limits of the work forbade the reproduction of much of the information thus acquired. Among the most valuable of the authorities consulted were the following: A series of four sermons on the History of the Old South Church, or Society, preached by Rev. Dr. Benj. B. Wisner in 1830, and, by request, published in the same year of their delivery; S. G. Drake's "History and Antiquities of Boston," which was never brought down to a later date than 1770; Richard Frothingham's "Life and Times of Joseph Warren;" Wm. V. Well's "Life and Public Services of Samuel Adams;" and George Bancroft's "History of the United States." Besides these many other historical and biographical works relating to the same periods have been consulted.

To the sermons of Dr. Wisner the author is indebted, more than to any other source, for the material for the first three chapters of this work. But though Dr. Wisner presented a full history of the church *as a church* down to the year in which he wrote, he almost entirely neglected the civil and political associations of the meeting-house. It is to the latter that these pages are principally devoted, and it is to them that the Old South chiefly owes the celebrity it enjoys.

The proper study of the history of Boston—and of the Old South Meeting-House, for the two are inseparable—during the period embracing these events can be had from no one or several publications in bookform. Private and official correspondence and contemporary public prints are invaluable for this purpose.

If newspapers can properly be said to be "photographs of passing time," both those of the colonies in the third quarter of the eighteenth century and those of Boston and New York in the last half of the nineteenth century, well deserve the name. A notable collection of newspaper clippings upon a single topic is that in the possession of Mr. George W. Simmons, Jr., of Boston, which comprises over eight hundred articles, long and short, concerning the Old South Meeting-House. The fact that these articles have all appeared since the 7th of June, 1876, and are principally taken from the papers of Boston and New York, furnishes some indication of the interest which exists upon the subject to which these pages are devoted. Had it not been for this collection, the compilation of the last chapter of this work, undertaken after the excitement of the work of preservation had subsided, would have been a task of not a little difficulty and vexation.

The papers of the period just prior to the Revolution, when taken together and properly studied, present an accurate and animated picture of the times in which they were published. Access has been had to rare and valuable files of these publications, embracing the years 1767 to 1775 inclusive. Among them the papers which were found to be most valuable for the purposes of this work were the *Boston Chronicle*, whose publication ceased in 1770; the *Boston Evening Post*, an independent paper whose columns were open to Whig and Tory alike; and the *Boston Gazette*, the most patriotic and most popular of all the publications of the time and place. Perusing the same columns scanned by the patriots, and reading the same articles which fired their zeal or roused their indignation, one can hardly fail to catch something of the spirit of the times and to form a somewhat vivid conception of the events by which they were distinguished.

E. W. B.

MELROSE, Dec. 1, 1877.

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I.

ORIGIN AND FOUNDATION OF THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH.

Concerning theological disputes who shall say, There is no profit in them? That there have flown from them many evils, is no doubt true; but that these evils have not been unmixed with good, is equally indisputable. In New England, certainly, they have not failed to accomplish beneficial as well as mighty results. Among the doctrinal questions which early agitated the colonial mind, few, if any, were more fruitful in results than this, — "Who are the subjects of baptism?" It is sufficient to say of the importance of this problem, that it gave birth to the Old South Church. This, "like too many other churches of Christ," as has been said, "originated in bitter contentions among those who are bound, by their profession, as well as by the precept of heaven, to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."[1] That this question of baptism not only was not fruitless in good, but on the contrary yielded a most abundant harvest, is sufficiently attested by the history of the Old South Church.

The most historic of all American churches, the present edifice has won a place in the hearts of the people hardly second to that of any other spot or place in the Union. So thoroughly is it identified with those events which preceded and precipitated the disruption of the bond between the American colonies and the mother country, that its history and that of the Union are inseparably intertwined. Neither can be sundered from the other and leave an unbroken record. Within its walls some of the boldest words of America's most fearless patriots were proclaimed, and from its rostrum went forth appeals which fanned into flame a fire which drove the British from our shores. Rare Sam Adams,

[1] Dr. Wisner, Sermon 1.

who is said to have forced unwilling colonists into war, and who foresaw rebellion long before his colleagues dreamed of more than protest, led the people here. Those old walls, which now are shadowed by a Vandal hand, have resounded to the shouts of freemen, and echoed the eloquence of patriots like Warren, Hancock, Otis, and Quincy. At its doors was first heard the war-cry of the Mohawk, indicating that there were strong hands and fearless hearts ready to execute what the people had resolved. It was within its walls that Warren, in the face and eyes of insolent foemen, raised his fearless voice against standing armies in general, and the killing of unarmed citizens in particular. This is the sanctuary, profaned by Godless troopers, which served them for a riding-school and circus. Here, during all that stormy period preceding the outbreak of rebellion, the patriots of the colony met for consultation, protest, and appeal. It was from its tower that the British squadron was espied in time to provide against it; and it was from its pulpit that, in earlier times, went hence to heaven that prayer which was answered by the dispersion and utter ruin of a hostile fleet of France.

The events which happpened in and are associated with the Old South Church are so numerous and important, and are so peculiarly national and patriotic in their nature, that the following pages are devoted to them somewhat in detail. If the mode of treatment shall be found to approach, in even a small degree, the intrinsic value of the subject, the following narrative will not fail to interest every lover of America's history.

The question of who are and who are not proper subjects of baptism, was preceded by others no less problematical and vexatious. These theological quarrels were not local, but spread themselves throughout the northern colonies, and were felt in affairs of state. It is said that when the New England colonies were in their infancy, no government had ever yet completely separated church and state; that there

had then been no instance of a nation without an established church. The Puritan fathers, fleeing here to gain what they had elsewhere sought in vain, — freedom to worship God, — were not more advanced in granting religious freedom to others than were those from whom they fled. Having submitted to such unparalleled hardships to gain a foothold, even though in the midst of rocks and snow, they naturally felt themselves entitled to freedom from molestation in a place which was all their own. The new land was wide enough for every sect, they thought, and why should they not enjoy their barren corner unmolested. With views like these, entertained in common with the most rigid though sincere religious convictions, they naturally sought to erect barriers against the increase of the power of those who had little or no sympathy with their most cherished opinions and desires.

Almost from the very foundation of Massachusetts Colony, down to the time of the troubles of which we are now to speak, there had existed a real union of church and state. A single statement shows this clearly, — none but *freemen* were allowed any share in the civil government, and none were made freemen but *church-members*. All except those who enjoyed full and regular church membership, therefore, were disfranchised and deprived of the citizens' most valued rights, while they were obliged to bear the citizens' heaviest burdens.[1] Owing to the popular opinion, that, in those days, the number of citizens who were not churchmen was exceedingly small and disproportionate to the whole body politic, it might be thought that such a law could give rise to but little discontent. But just here a mistake is made. The number of male adults who, even at that early period, were not church-members, was very considerable. A petition praying for the removal of religious disabilities, presented to the General Courts of Massachusetts and Plymouth in 1646, purported to be the prayer of "thousands." And

[1] Taxation, military service, etc.

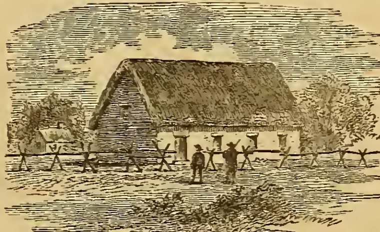
this was only *sixteen* years after the foundation of Massachusetts Colony.

The existence of so great a number of early colonists who were outside the fold of the church, is a fact forgotten by many and, perhaps, unknown to more. It, however, furnishes abundant explanation of those contentions which agitated the infant colonies, and led to the final separation of church and state in America. It is one of the glories of the Old South Church that it originated in this struggle, and won its place in the religious world as a champion of equal rights and unsectarian citizenship.

Various regulations were early adopted which bore heavily upon those disfranchised for want of the required church-standing. By reason of additions from abroad and the growing number of young persons who did not associate themselves with the visible church, the number of such persons constantly increased. In 1646 the subjects of this unjust distinction made a vigorous effort to obtain relief. Their petition cost them the seizure of their papers, and they were fined for their "contemptuous and seditious expressions."

Though signally defeated in this direction, they were not without hope. A secret current was running in their favor, which soon led to open agitation. This was the opinion which was gaining ground in the community, that the fact of *baptism* ought, in itself, to constitute a man a church-member, in so far as church-membership was necessary to citizenship. So radical a departure from the principles of the fathers did not fail to brew a storm throughout the colonies. Finally an official Council met in Boston, in June, 1657. Contrary to what we naturally should have expected from this Council, it decided, substantially, in favor of the party of progress, and declared that baptized persons were entitled to the civil privileges of churchmen. We are not surprised to learn that "the churches pretty generally" viewed the decisions of the Council "as a great innovation." The work of this body only fanned the flame into greater heat.

These dissentions continuing, they gave rise to a synod of all the ministers of the province, who met in 1662 for the purpose of passing upon two great questions which had been propounded by the General Court. One of these questions was that with which this chapter opens, — Who are the subjects of baptism? the importance of which may now be better understood after what has been submitted on the subject of religious differences among the colonists. The Synod, like the Council before it, failed to agree, though the conclusion of the members on the subject of baptism was substantially that of the latter body. A very respectable and learned minority, however, protested against the decision: and thus the efforts made to heal over differences seemed only to make them greater. Some churches accepted the Synod's decision, and some repudiated it. The First (then the only) church in Boston, conformed its practices to the recommendations of the Synod, although there were not a few of the members who were dissatisfied therewith. All trouble was avoided, however, by the Christian influence of the Rev. John Wilson, a venerable man, at that time pastor of the Boston church.



FIRST CHURCH IN BOSTON, 1632—1639.[1]

Upon the death of Mr. Wilson the pulpit was made vacant for the first time. Meanwhile the numbers of the antisynodists had increased in the society. They became sufficiently numerous to dictate the choice of a new minister, and united in calling to their pulpit Rev. John Davenport, whom Cotton Mather called "the greatest of the antisynodists." The liberals, as we may perhaps term the minority, declared that the calling of so eminent an opponent of the decisions of the Synod would be a virtual declaration against the conclusions of that body, and in direct contradiction to

[1] "Its roof was thatched, and its walls were of mud."

the proceedings of the church. But all objections were overruled, and Mr. Davenport was installed pastor.

The dissatisfied members of the church were not simply stirred upon the surface. They had opposed the settling of Mr. Davenport from principle, and could not conscientiously acquiesce. Twenty-nine, including some of the most respectable of the colonists, seceded from the First Church, and took steps towards a separate organization. This was the beginning of the Old South Church, which, as is thus seen, originated in opposition to sectarian partisanship and theological narrowness. Its foundation was one of the earliest protests against illiberal government, and one of the first steps towards complete separation of church and state. Of such a beginning, as well as of its subsequent history, the members of the Old South Society, and with them every enlightened citizen, may be justly proud. Its beginning was in wisdom, and its career has been worthy of its origin.

But the troubles of the seceders were not at an end as soon as they withdrew from the parent church. In accordance with the strict theological discipline of that day, they felt that it was necessary to obtain regular dismission from the First Society. With what measure of success their application met, is sufficiently indicated by the following extract from the records of the First Church: —

"At a meeting called on ye 29 of the 1 mo. 1669, about ye dissenting brethren: judgt. whether the church see light from ye word of God to dismiss ye dissenting brethren yt. desire it; it was answered in the negative, unanamously."

But such a failure as this could not deter them: they called a council of neighboring churches (an ordinary mode of redress among the early churches); and by this council, it seems, they were upheld and encouraged. At two meetings, held on May 12th and 16th (22d and 26th N. S.) 1669, they entered upon and completed the formation of a new church, under the name of The Third Church in Boston. Though we have had no occasion to allude to it heretofore,

there had been formed a second church in Boston, 1650. The covenant entered into by the members of the Third Church is recorded on the first page of their records, and begins as follows: —

"The Covenant made by ye Third Church in Boston, Gathered at Charlestown on ye 12 day of 3d month, 1669.

"We whose names are underwritten, being called of God to joine together in a church, in heart-sense of our unworthiness thereof, disability thereunto, and aptness to forsake ye Lord, cast off his governmt, and neglect our duety one to another; DO, in the name of J. C. our Lord, trusting only in his grace and help, sollemnly bind ourselves together, as in the presence of God, constantly to walk together as a church of Christ, according to all those holy rules of God's word given to a church body rightly established, so far as we already know them, or they shall be hereafter farther made known unto us."

The Third Church has always preserved its original attachment to the teachings of Calvin.

Though the two churches had been properly separated, their dissentions by no means ceased. Edward Randolph, writing to the Bishop of London, said that the feeling between them ran "so high that there was imprisoning of parties and great disturbances." These dissentions furnished dividing lines between the parties in the state, as well as in the church. "The whole people of God throughout the colony," says Cotton Mather, "were too much distinguished into such as favored the old church, and such as favored the new church."[1] Members of the General Court were elected upon the issues raised by these churches. The election of 1690 resulted in the choice of a majority opposed to the course of the First Church.

Thus the new church and the party which it represented achieved a public and final triumph; "a triumph," as has been truly said, "to be rejoiced in, as confirming the rights of freemen to many who had been unjustly deprived of them, and laying the foundation of all the good to be effected, in the hands of Providence, by this church."[2] Before the Third

[1] Magnalia, book 5. [2] Wisner, Sermon 1.

Church finally triumphed as just stated, thus winning a place in the religious world, steps had been taken looking towards the erection of a suitable meeting-house. But in this, as in almost everything else, they encountered determined opposition. The history of the first meeting-house of the Third Church will claim our attention in the following chapter.

II.

HISTORY OF THE OLD CEDAR MEETING-HOUSE.

So determined was the opposition of those opposed to the innovations of the Third Church, that the members of that society found great difficulty in peaceably erecting a meeting-house. Governor Bellingham, a member of the First Church, set himself and his authority against them, but was not upheld by a council which he called together to consider the danger of "a tumult; some persons attempting to set up an edifice for public worship, which was apprehended by authority to be detrimental to the public peace." The members of the new church, desiring to do all things decently and by sanction of law, applied to the selectmen of Boston, and obtained from them permission to erect a meeting-house. This they proceeded to do, building upon the site of the present edifice a church of cedar, two stories in height, adorned with a steeple, and containing the conventional high-backed, square pews and lofty pulpit of the day. This church stood nearly opposite what is now School street, upon a lot then known as "The Green." A beautiful row of buttonwood trees skirted the western boundary. These trees suffered the common fate of combustible material in the winter of 1775–6, and went to replenish the hearths of the Province House or the camp-fires of the British soldiery. The site of the cedar church was at that time considered to be in the southerly portion of the town, and for that reason early received the name of the South Meeting-House. The title of the Old South did not attach until long after the erection of the present edifice: in 1817 a church was located in Summer street, and took the name of the New South Church. To make the distinction between the two plainer, the older church received, and has ever since retained, the name of the Old South Church.

The new church, freed from former alliances, and worshiping in a house of its own, began to prosper, and, according to historians of that day, soon "proved one of the most flourishing in the whole country." It was blessed with the most eminent and pious men for pastors, the first of whom was Rev. Thomas Thatcher. Mr. Thatcher was installed in the early part of 1670, and continued his ministrations till a few months before his death, which occurred in 1678. The success of his ministry may be inferred from the fact, that, during its short continuance, the number of communicants was increased to two hundred and seventeen.

Mr. Thatcher was succeeded by his former colleague, Rev. Samuel Willard, who, next to Cotton Mather, it is said, was the most copious author the ministry had then produced. After a distinguished service of many years, he died in 1707, aged 67. Mr. Willard is especially worthy of remembrance by reason of the part he took, in 1692, in those strange proceedings concerning witchcraft. Though it required no little courage to dissent from the popular fanaticism of the day, he boldly condemned the harsh policy pursued, and exerted himself to arrest and mitigate the persecutions.

It is surprising to learn that the wives and daughters of the founders of the Old South Church were not admitted to membership till October 16, 1674 — more than five years after the formation of the society. The women, like the men, applied to the First Church for dismission, and, like them, were refused. Various methods were tried to gain the end desired without violating the rules of that theological discipline which was then so potent. But, for some reason, all efforts failed, until resort was had to a council, in 1674. This council decided that the course of the First Church towards the dissenting sisters "is not (*de jure*) binding *in foro Dei aut conscientiæ*, and is therefore no reall regular bar either unto those members from joining with another church, neither unto another church from receiving

them into their fellowship, there having been all due means used for their reconciliation to and dismission from the sd. church unto that which they find more to their edification and consolation in ye Lord." The council's final judgment was : —

"That such members may joine, and such a church unto whom they desire to joyn may receive them into their fellowship, without the transgression of any rule of church order or any just offence given unto ye church unto wch they did belong, provided they be in a capacity, by a convenient vicinity and other necessary circumstances, to walk with that church constantly in ye course of church fellowp. and come according to their church covenant."

In pursuance of the authority conferred by this council, the women were admitted to membership in the new church, the society thus receiving an addition of twenty-three members. These new members may be properly considered as among the founders of the church.

Religious differences ceased, in a measure, only to be succeeded by political troubles, which came upon the colony soon after the building of the Cedar Meeting-House. The established church of England at first found New England soil by no means adapted to the planting of a healthy branch therein. Episcopacy was sternly resisted by those sterner Christians, who, fleeing from and then establishing religious intolerance, furnished one of the most striking though pious illustrations of the art of preaching one thing and practicing another which the world has ever seen. Repeated conferences and liberal inducements had alike failed to secure for the English Church a local habitation and a home in Boston. As late as 1686 the town authorities refused to this sect the use of any of the meeting-houses, and the society was unable to buy land where it seemed to them desirable. It was not till the coming of Sir Edmund Andros, in 1686, that a foothold was secured. Edward Randolph, a governor "whose business it was," the people said, "to go up and down seeking to devour them," proposed in 1682 to introduce into the colony ministers of the Established Church, who should be

supported, in part, by public funds, and who should enjoy the exclusive right of solemnizing legal marriages. It will be readily believed that such a proposition struck alarm to the hearts of clergy and laymen alike, and that their first thought was of union and resistance. These troubles continued until the arrival of Sir Edmund Andros in the latter days of 1686. Sir Edmund, an arbitrary knight and strong Episcopalian, being armed with the power of Governor, determined to plant the English Church in Boston, in one way if not in another. All negotiations looking towards that object having failed, in March, 1687, the Governor sent Edward Randolph, chiefly distinguished by the hatred of the people, to demand the keys of the South Meeting-House. This demand was refused, the reason given being an excellent and, to a modern mind, an all-sufficient one; namely, "ye land and house is ours."[1] At a meeting of those interested, "'twas agreed yt could not with good a conscience consent yt our Meetinghouses should be used for ye Commonprayer worship." These obstacles, however, were not such as to deter Governor Andros. On Friday, March 25th, 1687, he sent peremptory orders that the South Church should be opened for the services of Good Friday. From the journal of Judge Sewall — for many years a member of the Third Church and father of the venerated Rev. Dr. Sewell — we learn that the sexton, "Godm. Needham, tho' had resolved to the contrary, was prevailed upon to ring ye bell and open ye door, at the Governor's command; one Smith and Hill, joiner and shoemaker, being very busy about it."

It would seem that this occupancy of their meeting-house must have been regarded as scarcely less than desecration by the members of the South Church; but they were forced to submit to it for many weeks. The precise period during which the Episcopalians worshiped there is not certainly known. Doubtless, though, it did not extend much beyond two years; because in the summer of 1689 the first Episco-

[1] Judge Sewall's Diary.

pal house of worship in Boston was finished, and Sir Edmund Andros was driven from office and imprisoned by the rebellious citizens. The Governor and his people worshiped at such hours as pleased their fancy, the times of meeting being not infrequently changed, to the great annoyance of the owners of the church. Under date of March 29, 1687, we read in Judge Sewall's diary : —

"Last sabbath day, March 27, Govr. and his retinue met in our Meetingh. at eleven ; broke off past two, bec. of ye sacrement and Mr. Clark's long sermon, though we were appointed to come half past one ; so 'twas a sad sight to see how full ye street was with people gazing and moving to and fro, bec. had not entrance into ye house."

Again we have an answer to the assertion, There is no profit in them, — when spoken of theological dissensions. The troubles to which we have just referred were, it is true, somewhat political in their character ; but the politics, such as they were, were founded upon religious differences. They served at least one good purpose, — they brought about the reconciliation of the First and Third Churches. For thirteen years they had been estranged. The South Church had manifested a commendable desire for pacification, but every overture in that direction had been sternly repulsed by those to whom it was directed. So bitter was the feeling, that when the new church installed its first pastor, the old church refused to participate in the exercises. In 1670 the members of the South Society addressed a formal proposal of accommodation to the brethren of the First Church which is worthy of perusal. It is found on page 4 of the first volume of the church records and runs, in part, as follows : —

"We the elders and brethren of the Third Church of Boston, being sensible of the dishoner of the holy name of God and greif on the hearts of God's people occasioned by the late divisions, and desiring that the God of love and peace may dwell among us . . . . do hereby testify or resolution what in us lys to walk on in brotherly love and communion with ye said First Church of Boston, as becometh ye churches of Christ so nearly related."

This generous tender of good will was repulsed by the

members of the First Church, who seemed incapable of forgiveness, until a common danger hushed every minor consideration. When Randolph began his course of enmity towards all and justice towards none, the First Church, in its turn, desired "to forgive and forget all past offences." The Third Church gladly accepted their proposals, and a reconciliation was effected. The correspondence which passed between the two societies was worthy of those men and women who, in one of their letters, declared their daily prayer to be : " What we know not teach thou us, and if we have done amiss, we will do so no more." Mather records, in his Magnalia, book 5, page 83 : " Unto the general joy of Christians in the neighborhood, both the churches kept a solemn day together; wherein, lamenting the infirmities that had attended their former contentions, they gave thanks to the great Peace-Maker for effecting this joyful reconliation."

That this reconciliation was genuine, is shown by an occurrence which took place in the year 1711, while Mr. Pemberton, the third minister and a very distinguished divine, was pastor of the South Church. The First Church having been consumed by a great fire which swept over a large part of the town, the South Society promptly extended a cordial invitation to its members to join them in public worship, the minister of the First Church to conduct the services one half of the time and to be allowed the same compensation as that received by Mr. Pemberton. This generous offer and a similar one from the Brattle Street Society were accepted, the arrangement continuing till the houseless brethren were enabled to rebuild.

The history of the Cedar Meeting-House would be incomplete without some reference to Judge Samuel Sewall, from whose diary we have given several extracts. Chief Justice Sewall was the most distinguished person, not serving in a ministerial capacity, connected with the early history of the Third Church. For many years a Judge of the Superior

Court, he was appointed Chief Justice in the year 1718. He also held the office of Judge of Probate for Suffolk County, but retired from both positions in 1728. He was one of the most consistent members of the South Church, and continued to adorn its membership till his death, in 1730—the same year in which the brick church was finished. To the project of a new church, by the way, he was most resolutely opposed. Although his protest was overruled, he did not live to worship in any other than the old church he loved so well. He died January 1st, 1730.

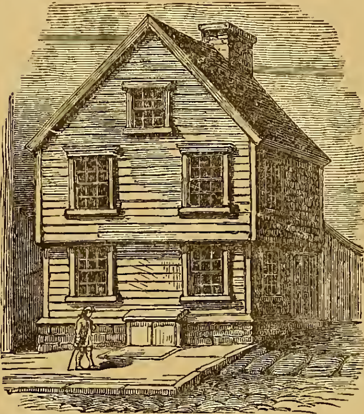
Judge Sewall was accustomed to keep a journal of the events of his day, and left several manuscript volumes of the kind, which have since proved of great value to antiquarians and historians. In connection with the family of the Judge, it is an interesting fact, that during eighty-four of the one hundred and twenty-two years from 1692 to 1814, it was represented on the bench of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts.[1]

A son of Judge Sewall—"good Dr. Joseph Sewall"—was installed pastor of the South Church in the year 1713, and continued in that capacity for fifty-six years. His death occurred in 1769, when he had nearly attained the age of eighty-one. He was one of the most Godly and venerable of men, distinguished alike for his piety and zeal. Having arrived at a ripe old age, he was considered the patriarch of the people and the father of the clergy.

In 1717 Rev. Thomas Prince was associated with Dr. Sewall. For forty years these worthy men walked together in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace. Not a solitary instance of public difference or private enmity can be pointed out in their extended ministry. Disagreements they doubtless had, but so thoroughly imbued were they with the spirit of the Master that they never allowed their views to clash in public. The secret of their strong personal attachment and unity of purpose is found in the characters of the men, strengthened by their daily habit of reliance on God.

[1] Wisner, note 30.

It was during the united ministry of Sewall and Prince that the subject of a new meeting-house was broached. The wooden structure had stood for more than a half-century, and had become inadequate to the requirements of an increased congregation. Although the time had long since gone by when, as in the case of the erection of the Cedar Meeting-House, any opposition from without could be possible, a sufficiently vigorous opposition from within was developed when a new building was suggested. This opposition, though sturdy, was unsuccessful; and the work of demolishing the Cedar Church was begun on March 3d, 1729, and completed on the following day. What would now, in these more busy days, be considered a curious proceeding, is worthy of mention in this connection, — before the work of demolition begun, *Dr. Sewall prayed with the workmen.*



BIRTHPLACE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, 1691–1811.[1]

It was found that some of the timbers of the old building were so much decayed that the preservation of the large congregation which had assembled in the church on the last Sabbath before its destruction, was considered "very gracious." Dr. Sewall accepted this evidence of past danger as an augury of future union, and made the following entry in his journal: "I thank thee, O thou Preserver of men. Reconcile thy servants who have been opposite to this work, and let there be good agreement amongst thy people in the things that are pleasing in thy sight."

After the destruction of the Cedar Meeting-House the

[1] This building stood opposite the south side of the church until 1811, when it was destroyed by fire. It was 120 years old. Franklin was baptized in the old Cedar Meeting-House.

erection of the present Old South Church was speedily undertaken and completed. The early history of this, the most historic of all American churches, must be reserved for another chapter.

III.

THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH: ITS ERECTION AND EARLY HISTORY.

Upon that part of Washington street formerly known as Marlborough street one of the most prominent objects which meets the observer's eye is the clock on the steeple of the Old South Church. Probably no timepiece in New England serves the daily convenience of so many people. The meeting-house having fallen under the auctioneer's hammer on the 8th of June, 1876, the land upon which it had stood for nearly a century and a half was no longer a lawful resting-place for the venerable pile. The work of demolition immediately commenced. The clock had already been removed when the hands of the workmen were arrested by the efforts of patriotic citizens, who, in spite of the mad haste of the times, had not lost all veneration for the past and thought for the future.[1] On the front face of the brick tower which supports the steeple, there is imbedded a stone slab which bears the following inscriptions: —

OLD SOUTH.
CHURCH GATHERED, 1669.
FIRST HOUSE BUILT, 1670.
THIS HOUSE ERECTED, 1729.
DESECRATED BY BRITISH TROOPS, 1775–6.

From this brief statement may be gathered an outline history of the most interesting church in America. These lines, however, are merely the meagre skeleton of a narrative whose incidents are full of interest and well worthy of perusal. Having already detailed the origin and foundation of the Old South Society, and devoted a chapter to the history of their first meeting-house, we now proceed to an enumera-

[1] The clock has since been replaced.

tion of those events associated with the second and present church edifice during the first forty years of its existence.

As has been already stated, the project of a new meeting-house met with considerable opposition, the venerable Judge Sewall feeling called upon to enter his written protest.

THE OLD SOUTH.

After a favorable vote had once been passed, an attempt to have it reconsidered was made, but failed. At a meeting in June, 1728, the matter was substantially set at rest by the

election of a building committee, who were directed to build of brick, and were authorized to purchase the necessary material. That the work of demolition and rebuilding was considered a very grave matter in the history of the church, is shown by the mention in Dr. Sewall's diary of a fast day, kept for the purpose of asking the divine blessing upon "ye difficult and momentous affair in which yy are engaged."[1]

Just above the pavement on the Milk street side of the church and near the south-west corner is a block bearing the characters, "N. E. Mar. 31, 1729." From the fact that the laying of corner-stones was not then in vogue, and that this block is so near the foundation, Dr. Wisner concludes that the date upon it is that of the commencing of the work. But all doubts as to the meaning of this inscription are set at rest by an item on the new church which appeared in the *New England Weekly Journal*, of the 28th April, 1729. In this sheet we read that "the stone foundation was begun to be laid Mar. 31, 7 foot below the pavement of the street." From the same source we learn that the old Cedar Meeting-House was "near 75 feet long, and near 51 feet wide; besides the southern, eastern and western porches; the length of this (the brick church) is near 95 feet, breadth near 68, besides the western tower, and eastern and southern porches." Another stone on the Washington street side bears the letters "S S," while in the rear of the building a third is inscribed "L B 1729." The building was completed in April, 1730. Meanwhile services had been held in the First Church,— another evidence of the permanency of the reconciliation of these ancient antagonists.

From a plan of "Pues on ye Lower flore in ye meeting house," we gather an idea of how the pews were arranged. Under the pulpit, and elevated high above the people, was the elders' pew; below that, but still above the common level, were the deacons' seats. A double tier of galleries ranged around three sides of the room, while in the body of

[1] See Drake's Hist. and Antiquities of Boston, p. 584.

the house there were many square, several oblong, and about a dozen long pews, all furnished with the high, straight backs of the period. The names of the pew-holders included those of many of the most illustrious and considerable of the colonists. The pulpit, appropriately termed a "tub" pulpit, was overshadowed by a great sounding-board, which added not a little to the otherwise quaint appearance of the interior. Several long pews upon the main aisle and directly in front of the pulpit were reserved for aged people.

In 1782, after its occupancy by the British, the church was extensively repaired by its proprietors, who, after a five years' possession of King's Chapel, were about to remove to their old quarters. The interior of the building has been from time to time considerably altered, until now, having been occupied as a United States post-office after the great fire of 1872, it presents a somewhat barren and desolate appearance. The pulpit has disappeared, and the pews have all been removed. The immovable portions of the church, however, are substantially unchanged; so that the building, as a whole, preserves its venerable and suggestive appearance.

The exterior of the Old South Church is neither quaint nor imposing. Now that the post-office additions have been removed, it is the same as that familiar to the fathers. Its walls are of brick, laid in the style known as the Flemish Bond, which alternates the sides and ends of the bricks in every course. This bond was peculiar to the period in which this church was built, and was adopted in the erection of the West, Brattle Street, Park Street, and other Boston churches. The steeple is one hundred and eighty feet in height. The clock is one of the best make, and for many years has been of the greatest convenience to the Boston public. In the tower the Prince Library was deposited. In early times several trees adorned the green in front of the church and the Governor's house, which was then adjacent; now a solitary horse-chestnut in the rear of the building ekes out a starved and miserable existence. A lone relic of thrifty sires, it

appears ready to yield to the march of modern progress, which has already robbed it of nearly every companion of its early days. Even a solitary tree, in its locality, must be an eyesore to our modern Vandals, whose thoughts are wholly bent on "progress" and "improvement."

The first event in connection with the present Old South Church, which claims our attention, is the death of Chief Justice Sewall. He died January 1st, 1730, several months before the completion of the new brick church. Of the career of this eminent and worthy man we have already spoken.[1]

The first sermon in the new church was preached by Dr. Sewall, whose text proved to be a veritable prophecy: "The glory of this latter house shall exceed the glory of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts." The glory of the house has been great indeed, and has come to it in more ways than one; peace also has come to it, but only through the severest trials. It is a peace, however, which insures to those who enjoy it liberty, prosperity, and public virtue.

The first glory which came upon the new sanctuary was the addition to its membership, within a period of two years, of more than a hundred converts. This was brought about chiefly through the instrumentality of that most celebrated of the early revivalists, Rev. George Whitefield. Whitefield arrived in Boston in September, 1740, and remained only about a month. During this short period, however, he had ample time to arouse the intensest interest in religious topics. He preached almost constantly, rarely failing to deliver two sermons a day. On the third day after his arrival, he preached in the Old South Church. In the afternoon of the same day, the people having again assembled at this place, the meeting was adjourned to the Common, because the multitude outside the church doors was greater than the crowd within. On the following Sunday, having gone to a church for the purpose of delivering a sermon, he was compelled, by

[1] Page 16.

reason of the dissatisfaction of the multitude who were necessarily excluded from the building, to lead them to the Common. Here he is said to have preached to eight or ten thousand people. In Drake's "History and Antiquities of Boston" we read, that Whitefield continued to preach in Boston and vicinity with increased reputation, until the second week of October, when he delivered his farewell sermon on the common "to a vast assembly, supposed to be 20,000 or more." Though Mr. Whitefield remained in Boston only a month, the excitement which he had produced was not allayed for nearly two years. As in all such cases, there were and are conflicting opinions as to the real good accomplished by the means employed. Several years after Whitefield's departure, Mr. Prince and other clergymen testified that the revival had been a real and permanent awakening. Mr. Prince allowed but one exception among the numerous converts in his church, who failed to shape his "conversation, as far as he knew, as becomes the Gospel." Drake records, that "on his return to this country, in 1744, his reception, though warm in many places, was different from that he had received on his first coming."[1] The results of his ministry as it affected the Old South Church seems, as already indicated, to have been of lasting benefit.

President Dwight of Yale College cites an incident in the Early history of the Old South Church as in itself abundant evidence of the efficacy of prayer. Whether we regard it in that light or not, it is of general interest. The circumstances were these: —

War having been declared between France and England, and the latter power having wrested Louisbourg from the hands of the former, the French determined upon a desperate effort to retrieve their laurels. In accordance with this purpose, a naval force, consisting of forty ships of war, under the command of the indomitable D'Anville, was, in the year 1746, dispatched against the American colonies. The avowed

[1] See Drake's His. & Antiq., p. 608–9.

purpose of this formidable armada was nothing less than the destruction of New England, — a task, indeed, which did not appear chimerical, in view of the strength of the expedition and the skill and intrepidity of its commander. So great was the apprehension of the Bostonians, that a day was set apart for fasting and for prayer for deliverance from a calamity which was daily apprehended. At the appointed time the congregations assembled in their several places of worship, realizing in an unusual degree their dependence upon a higher Power.

The morning is described as having been one of perfect peace and calm. No breeze ruffled the waters of the Bay, and no cloud gave warning of approaching storm. Mr. Prince conducted the services in the Old South Church, throwing into them even more than his accustomed fervor. While he was engaged in most solemn and heartfelt appeal to God for deliverance from the threatened danger, a sudden gust of wind struck the church with such violence as to cause the windows to rattle in their casings. The man of God paused for a moment, and quickly glanced around the assembly. Those before him did not fail to catch the beam of hope and expectancy which lit his countenance. He paused but for a moment, and then resumed his supplications; beseeching the great Ruler of the elements to cause *that wind* to confound the purposes of the enemy.

Whether or not we share the deductions of President Dwight, the fact remains, that that wind, having risen to a tempest, *did* destroy the French fleet, off the coast of Nova Scotia; and, by that disaster, saved New England from threatened desolation.[1]

In 1758 a great sorrow fell upon the Old South Church; in October of that year Rev. Thomas Prince was called away from his earthly labors. His death deprived the church of one of the most illustrious teachers, and sundered that beautiful union which had existed between Messrs. Prince and Sewall for forty years. Mr. Prince was considered "a bene-

1 See *post*, p. 105.

factor to his country."[1] It is said of him by one of Boston's historians, that he left "a name which will be venerated to the remotest ages, if literature shall then be valued; a name which may with pride be emulated by inquirers after historical knowledge, and the admirers of precision and accuracy in paths of history."[1] The town of Princeton was named for him.

Dr. Sewall was permitted to continue his labors for eleven years after the decease of Mr. Prince. Having arrived at the age of eighty, his health rapidly declined, but his devotion to his work continued unabated to the end. Dr. Wisner gives the following account of "good Dr. Sewall's" last days: —

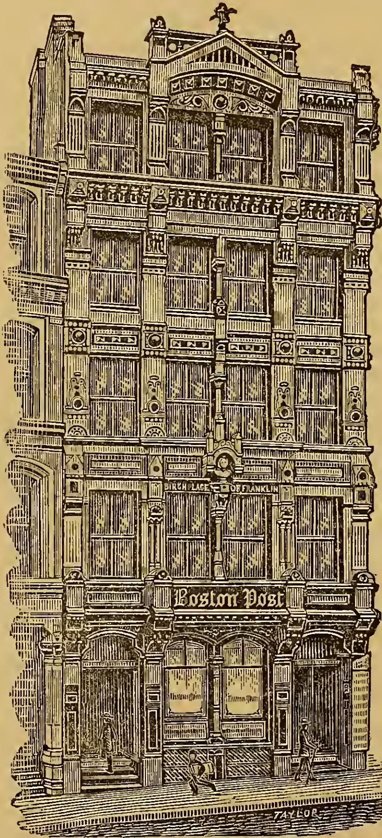
> "He had for sometime, on account of his infirmaties, been carried into the pulpit from Sabbath to Sabbath; where, like the beloved disciple of old in his latter days, he sat, and with paternal and apostolic affection and fidelity, instructed and exhorted his children in the faith. The evening he had arrived at fourscore, he preached to his people an appropriate sermon."

When he drew very near his end his tearful attendants heard him repeatedly say, with great pathos, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." How worthy such an end to so glorious a career! How beautiful such a sunset to a life whose light had shone so clear and pure! A tower of strength throughout his ministry, he came to be the father of his people in his later years. His death closed the first one hundred years of the history of the Third or South Society, of which, for more than half that century, he had been the example, monitor, and guide.

One of the most interesting members of Dr. Sewall's parish was a colored woman named Phillis Wheatley. She claims our attention as a remarkable example of high talent in a lowly station, and as a reminder of the past existence of slavery in New England. She was a pure African, and was brought to America in 1761, where she was held as a slave. Though utterly destitute of school-training, and, in a

[1] Drake's Hist. & Antiq.

great measure, self-taught, she is said to have written excellent verses. A poem addressed to Washington brought a written acknowledgement from him, which, with the verses, is found in Spark's Life of Washington. The genuineness of her productions was attested by many ministers of Boston, as well as by such men as Governors Hutchinson, Hancock, and Bowdoin. While in London, in 1773, she received much attention from the nobility.



THE BOSTON POST BUILDING.[1]

Phillis Wheatley's case draws out attention to the existence of an institution which, at this remove, seems scarcely possible to Boston. In 1753, in a total population of 15,734, there were in Boston 1544 Negroes. The following advertisement, which, with others of like tenor, were to be found in the Boston newspapers of the eighteenth century, gives us a realizing sense of the reality of the existence of bondage in New England: —

"To be sold by the printer of this paper, the very best Negro Woman in this town, who has had the small-pox and the measles; is as hearty as a Horse, as brisk as a Bird, and will work like a Beaver. Aug. 23d, 1742."

This appears in the *Boston Evening Post*, a paper which

[1] This building stands on the site of Franklin's birth-place, opposite the Old South (See p. 18.) The *Post* was established in 1831.

to-day has so illustrious a successor of nearly the same name. The *Post* was started in 1735, and was the successor of the *Weekly Rehearsal*, begun in 1731.

Let it be added, however, to the honor of the Boston public, that the town's representatives in the General Court were instructed, in the year 1767, to move for and advocate total abolition of slavery in the Province. When the question again arose in town-meeting, the people adhered to their former vote. Bostonians, therefore, were in advance of the general sentiment of the country, which anticipated the gradual but certain decline of the institution. The following testimony as to the condition of slaves in Massachusetts at that time is of a gratifying character. Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson wrote to Lord Hillsborough, in May, 1771: "A slave here is considered as a servant would be who had bound himself for a term of years exceeding the ordinary term of human life; and I do not know that it has been determined he may not have a property in goods, notwithstanding he is called a slave."

IV.

DAWN OF THE REVOLUTION.

We now approach the contemplation of those events associated with the Old South Church, which preceded and precipitated the disruption between Britain and America. In this building occurred some of the boldest, wisest and most fruitful scenes which helped to insure the liberties of a great people. And, we apprehend, it is in the narration of these occurrences that the large body of readers will find the greatest interest. The history of the Old South during this short period is so prolific in events associated with the uprising of the colonies, that it is substantially the history of the patriot cause in Boston prior to the beginning of actual hostilities. For this reason it will be found necessary to consider the course of events somewhat generally, as a failure to mention some occurrences which led to and were the sequences of those which transpired within the church walls, would render the narrative disjointed and incomplete. The attempt will be made to make the recital at once true to history and full of interest. The revolutionary incidents associated with the Old South Church were, in themselves, of a peculiarly interesting nature, and nothing can be lost by a strict adherance to historical precision. They are and ever will be remarkable for their boldness and novelty, as well as for the results they accomplished.

Though the old church walls are sacred to the memory of the fathers, and were consecrated by the immediate descendants of the Pilgrims, they "received as real a consecration when Adams and Otis dedicated them to liberty." We cannot better continue, at this point, than by using the words of Wendell Phillips, spoken in this house: —[1]

"We do not come here because there went hence to heaven the prayers of Cotton and Prince and the early saints of the colony. We come

[1] June 14, 1876.

to save walls that heard and stirred the eloquence of Quincy, — that keen blade which so soon wore out the scabbard, — determined 'under God, that whosoever, whensoever, or howsoever, we shall be called to make our exit, *we will die freemen.*' These arches will speak to us, as long as they stand, of the sublime and sturdy religious enthusiasm of Adams, of Otis' passionate eloquence and single-hearted devotion, of Warren in his young genius and enthusiasm; of a plain, unaffected but high-souled people who ventured all for a principle, and to transmit to us, unimpaired, the free lips and self-government which they inherited. Above and around us unseen hands have written, 'This is the cradle of civil liberty, child of earnest religious faith.' I will not say it is a nobler consecration, I will not say it is a better use; I only say we come here to save what our fathers consecrated to the memories of the most successful struggle the race has ever made for the liberties of man."

The troubles which beset the colonies did not come upon them suddenly. The thunderbolt of war did not burst from a clear sky, but was preceded by long-continued and ominous mutterings of popular discontent. After the conquest of Canada and the accession of George III, the home government, burdened with liabilities consequent upon the waging of war, determined to raise a revenue in America. This selection of a portion of the kingdom, which had already contributed liberally of its blood and treasure, to bear the burdens of the other, gave rise to various difficulties. The colonists complained that their rulers concerted the plan of subverting their forms of government, restraining their trade, discouraging their manufactures, and raising a revenue within their territories by authority of parliament but without their consent. First came the Writs of Assistance, which roused the flaming eloquence of Otis. Then followed the Stamp Act, which was so violently assailed by the people that it lived but a twelvemonth. Many other minor innovations were imposed upon the colonists, who grew more and more restive as their burdens increased.

A method of opposition to these encroachments upon the liberties of the people, peculiar to America, and, when adopted, novel to political economists, grew up in Massachusetts. Reference is had to the custom of assembling the

people in Town Meetings, which did not hesitate to pass upon matters of the gravest moment and in the most trying crises. These assemblies proved themselves to be among the happiest, perhaps the most invaluable, expedients adopted by the patriots. Tories branded them "hot-beds of sedition," from which sprung all sorts of infelicities for England. Governor Hutchinson recognized their power, and wrote of them to Hillsborough: —

> "We find, my lord, by experience, that associations and assemblies, pretending to be legal and constitutional, assuming powers which belong only to established authority, prove more fatal to this authority than mobs, riots, or the most tumultuous disorders."

Hutchinson and Barnard, always apprehensive of town-meetings, lost no opportunity to impeach their legality and cast reproach upon them. Otis well said, in his "Vindication of the Town of Boston:"[1] "Such an assembly has ever been the dread and often the scourge of tyrants."

Patriots as well as Tories were alive to the importance of town-meetings. They defended their legality, and esteemed them among their dearest rights. Such assemblies were invaluable to the advancement of that spirit of *union*, upon which the leaders knew their hopes depended "They served to enlighten all classes, and became the firmest cement to bind them together, when a comprehensive and combined effort was demanded."[2] They were the "arenas wherein the people were trained and armed intellectually for the great battle of independence." In them, it was justly claimed, men "thought as they pleased, and spoke as they thought."[3] Spectators have recorded with surprise the high character of these meetings, finding calm and dignified proceedings where they had expected disorder and confusion; hearing clear and forcible oratory where they had anticipated violent and unreasoning incendiarism. A friend of the colonists declared that the tone of a certain town-meeting which he attended

[1] In answer to misrepresentations of Barnard. [2] Magoon's "Orators of the American Revolution." [3] Vindication Town of Boston.

would have almost made him think himself rather in the British Senate than in the promiscuous assembly of a provincial people, had he not been convinced by the genuine integrity and manly hardihood of the speakers, that they were not tainted by venality nor debauched by luxury.[1] Making due allowances for the nature of the sources from which testimony as to the character of these meetings comes, the fact remains, that they were of a remarkably high order, worthy of any land or era. They were uniformly characterized by wisdom, dignity, and manly resolution. The justice of their cause inspired the people with both courage and moderation.

These meetings were peculiarly blessed with high-souled and brilliant leaders. What a galaxy of genius and devotion do the early town-meetings of Boston alone present! Men of arts, men of science, divines, lawyers, doctors, mechanics, merchants,—all combined their talents in the conduct of these assemblies. Participating in these popular gatherings were a future president of the United States, four governors of Massachusetts, foreign ministers, state officials, members of Congress, judges, soldiers. Led by such a band, how could these town meetings fail to be great powers for good and mighty engines of antagonism!

In Boston, the most important of these meetings were frequently, and the largest always, held in the OLD SOUTH CHURCH. The only other place in town of equal size was *outdoors*, otherwise known as Liberty Hall, which was, in fact, the open land under and around Liberty Tree. Liberty Hall seems to have been used for popular gatherings of a less formal and ordinary character than town-meetings usually were. When Faneuil Hall, the capacity of which was then but half what it is today, overflowed, resort was generally had to the Old South Church. The first of these meetings in the latter place which we shall notice, was held on June 14th, 1768, and was the largest which had ever then been

[1] Boston Gazette, Dec. 20, 1773.

known. In order to understand its significance, the events which gave rise to it must first be mentioned.

The Revenue Act which passed in Parliament in 1767 was declared in America to be not less odious than the Stamp Act had been; and the colonists determined to present as obstinate an opposition to this new form of oppression as they had to its predecessor. To collect the revenue, the Crown appointed a Commission, and fixed its headquarters in Boston. Upon the members of this Commission was at once fastened the animosity of the people, who viewed every move of theirs with misgiving and discontent. The Commissioners unnecessarily increased the otherwise unenviable odium of their positions by unfair and vexatious proceedings. They bore themselves with such arrogance in the discharge of their duties, that they secured the enmity of the colonies in general and of Boston in particular.

On the 18th of March, 1768 — the anniversary of the repeal of the Stamp Act, which was regularly celebrated — two of the Commissioners were hung in effigy. Governor Barnard had answered the application of the Board for protection in case of emergency, by acknowledging that his power in the colony was too weak to guaranty safety to anybody. The Commissioners, by magnifying and distorting the occurrences of this celebration, were enabled to secure the appearance in Boston Harbor of his Majesty's armed frigate "Romney." Until then, wrote Quincy, the Tories had threatened all sorts of condign measures of correction, but this was the first actual show of force. The mere presence of a man-of-war in their peaceful harbor, with a purpose such as the Romney's was known to be, was, in itself, enough to arouse the anger of the people; but the proceedings which followed her arrival were calculated to increase the popular indignation.

On Friday, June 10th, John Hancock's sloop "Liberty" was seized by revenue officials for an alleged violation of the law. As the seizure took place just after working-hours,

the "broad arrow" on the sloop attracted the attention of passers-by. A crowd soon gathered on the wharf. The revenue officers, as if fearing interference, cut the sloop's moorings, and seamen from the Romney moved her under the guns of the frigate. All this did not occur without disturbance, the vulgar and offensive language of the officers being returned by the insolence of the citizens. The latter, becoming greatly incensed, degenerated into a mob. Some violence, though no serious injury, was inflicted upon several of the King's people, and the Collector's pleasure-boat was dragged to the Common and burnt. The more orderly citizens, however, exerted themselves in favor of quiet and good order, and succeeded in their efforts to have the crowd disperse. By eleven o'clock the town was as peaceable as ever.

But, notwithstanding their lawful conduct, the people, as a body, were greatly excited. The leaders did not pretend to justify the mob's proceedings, but claimed that the responsibility properly rested upon the crown officials, whose insolent and arbitrary conduct had enraged the people. The circumstances of the case were all peculiarly aggravating, the name of the sloop and of her patriotic owner adding to the intensity of the townsmen's feelings.

On Saturday population indignation was, with excellent reason, greatly intensified: on that day occurred another instance of *impressment* for the royal service, which had been already practiced to a large extent. Whatever may be the opinion entertained as to the other occurrences of that period, this can have no excuse nor palliation. Here was a clear violation of the liberties of a free people. "These things," says Dr. Snow in his History of Boston, "added to the prospect that the trade and business of the town was in a manner ruined, raised such a spirit of resentment in the people, that the commissioners and their officers, with the collector and comptroller, thought it most prudent to repair on board the Romney, as did also the officers of that ship."

The greatest check upon any further demonstrations was, probably a call which had been issued for a general meeting around Liberty Tree, on Tuesday, June 14. This emanated from the "Sons of Liberty," an organization of patriots which played a very prominent part in these ante-revolutionary proceedings. Time enough elapsed before Tuesday morning to spread the news in the country round about, so that upon that day many persons came into Boston from the neighboring regions. The day being rainy and disagreeable, and Liberty Hall affording no protection from the elements, before any business was transacted the concourse repaired to Faneuil Hall. When the meeting was called to order, it was voted, that, as it had been informally called, it should dissolve. This was done after a request had been voted that the selectmen should call a regular meeting to assemble on the afternoon of the same day. The selectmen complied with this petition, and accordingly at three o'clock the meeting was opened in Faneuil Hall. "But," says a local paper of the period, "the hall not being large enough to contain one half of those who attended, they adjourned to the OLD SOUTH MEETING-HOUSE."[1]

This was the largest town-meeting which had ever then been known. James Otis was elected moderator, and proceeded to the pulpit amidst storms of applause. Since his distinguished effort against the issuing of Writs of Assistance he had been one of the people's idols. Though a man of warm temperament and vehement speech, he was endowed with excellent tact and cool judgment. He seems to have been pre-eminently qualified to direct and control the proceedings of such great popular concourses as those which assembled in the Old South Church. Among so many men, all of whom felt, in some degree, the oppression of the laws against which they protested, there were of course some whose turbulent spirits and fanatical minds always made them objects of solicitude to those of more rational under-

[1] Boston Chronicle.

standings. Such, however, had as full a right to unburden their minds in the meetings of the townsmen as the wisest among them. Honored and admired by those over whom he presided, Otis' ready tongue and good judgment always enabled him to preserve order and good conduct among them.

Upon taking the chair, Otis addressed the people, and was followed by others, all breathing a spirit of determination to resist the encroachments and oppressions of the British Parliament. It is noticeable that during the early years of the colonies' protests, their complaints were all aimed against Parliament or the ministry, and never against the King. It was only when the wise ones saw what Patrick Henry taught them, that war was inevitable, that they ventured to refer to the King in other than courteous and submissive terms.

The main object of this meeting of June 14th was to demand that the frigate Romney should be immediately ordered out of the harbor. A petition to the Governor was prepared, and was adopted after careful consideration. The uniform vigor, clearness, and perspicuity of the documents framed by the patriots of the American revolution, in which they set forth their grievances and demanded their rights, are really remarkable. They could have emanated from no other people, at no other time, in no other cause. In Boston the pen of Samuel Adams was more frequently employed in public matters than that of any other person. Of his writings it is admitted on all hands that they were remarkable above all things for their chaste and beautiful simplicity and for their unimpeachable logic. They always had a manly ring about them, being characterized by boldness, penetration, clearness, and force. He possessed that "acuteness which saw at once the weak side of an argument, went directly to the point, and exposed all fallacies with clearness and force."

We have no report of the speeches of this meeting, but

the petition to the Governor and his answer thereto were printed in full by the local papers. The petition, after a formal opening, runs as follows : —

"Your petioners consider the British Constitution as the basis of their safety and happiness. By that is established, No man shall be governed by laws, nor taxed, but by himself or representatives, legally and fairly chosen, and to which he does not give his own consent. In open violation of these fundamental rights of Britons, laws and taxes are imposed on us, to which we not only have not given our consent, but against which we have most firmly remonstrated. . . . . We find ourselves invaded with an armed force, seizing, impressing, and imprisoning the persons of our fellow subjects, contrary to express acts of parliament. . . . . . All navigation is obstructed, upon which alone our whole support depends; and the town is at this crisis in a situation, nearly such, as if war was formally declared against it." Here follows a remarkable passage : —

"To contend with our parent-state, is, in our idea, the most shocking and dreadful extremity; but tamely to relinquish the only security we and our children retain of the enjoyment of our lives and properties, without one struggle, is so humiliating and base, that we cannot support the reflection. We apprehend, Sir, that it is at your option, in your power, and we would hope in your inclination, to prevent this distressed and justly incensed people from effecting too much, and from the shame and reproach of attempting too little."

From *effecting too much*, and from *attempting too little!* Could the thing have been better expressed?

The record states that the petition to the Governor was adopted "after cool and deliberate debates upon the distressed circumstances of the town and critical condition of affairs." The Governor being at his country-seat in Jamaica Plains, several miles from the Old South Church, the petition was intrusted to a committee of twenty-two, who were directed to present it to his Excellency at once, and to convey back his reply. The meeting then adjourned till the next day at four o'clock. Before dismissing the people Otis urged upon them the necessity of peace and order. He showed his spirit, however, by the use of the following language : —

"The grievance the people labor under may in time be removed; if not, and we are called on to defend our liberty and privileges, I hope

and believe we shall, one and all, resist unto blood; but, at the same time, I pray Almighty God it may never so happen."

The Governor being at a distance, the committee repaired to his residence in chaises, eleven of which set out for Jamaica Plains together. Meanwhile his Excellency had been made acquainted with the fearless proceedings of the townsmen, which quite confirmed him in his fears of a wild and ungovernable insurrection. Warren's biographer[1] indulges the fancy, that, as the Governor "was awaiting the arrival of his confidential adviser (Hutchinson), he must have been surprised to see on the road, moving towards his house, not a noisy populace, pell-mell, flourishing pikes and liberty caps, but a train of eleven chaises, from which alighted at his door the respectable committee from the meeting; among whom were Otis, Samuel Adams, and Warren." Besides these gentlemen, the committee also included John Hancock, Thomas Cushing, Josiah Quincy, Richard Dana, Benjamin Church, Samuel Pemberton, and others of equal worth.

The Governor, vainly hoping to conciliate and compromise with the people, received their committee very graciously, or, as he said, "with all possible civility." The petition having been read, a general interchange of views took place, the Governor talking freely with his callers. Barnard realized the nicety of his situation, and, confessedly unable to command, he was anxious to win obedience. Before the committee departed, wine was handed around, and good-fellowship prevailed. The gentlemen of the committee left highly pleased with their reception, "especially that part of them," wrote Barnard to Hillsborough, "which had not been used to an interview with me."

Pursuant to adjournment, the people again assembled in town-meeting in the Old South Church at four o'clock on Wednesday afternoon. The committee which had waited upon the Governor reported that his Excellency had com-

[1] Richard Frothingham.

municated a written answer to the town's petition, which answer was then read. The Governor's letter ran in part as follows: —

"My office and station make me a very incompetent judge of the rights you claim against acts of Parliament; and therefore it would be of no purpose for me to express any opinion thereon. All I can say, is that I shall not knowingly infringe, but shall religiously maintain those which are communicated to me, as a servant of the King.

"In regard to the impressing of men for the service of the King, in his ships of war, it is practiced in Great Britain, and all other his Majesty's dominions, and therefore, I cannot dispute it in this part of them."

He promised, however, to endeavor to have the matter of impressment regulated. He protested that he had no authority over his Majesty's ships, and that it would be highly improper for him to presume to order the Romney away.

Although the Governor did not fulfil the people's demands, he pleaded lack of power to do so, and on the whole, evinced such a conciliatory disposition, that his answer was received with unusual satisfaction. Otis took pains to acknowledge the handsome treatment the committee had received at the hands of his Excellency, and went so far as to say that he believed Barnard was a well-wisher to the colony. Unless, however, some guaranty against repetitions of impressments had been given, the people would by no means have been satisfied. The assurance was received from Captain Corner of the Romney. The *Chronicle* newspaper italicized the following paragraph: —

"We are authorized to inform the public, that Captain Corner, Commander of his Majesty's ship Romney, in case he should want any more men, will not take any belonging to, or married in the province, nor any employed in trade along shore, or to the neighboring colonies."

Having adopted a long and spirited letter to the Colony's agent in London, and having chosen a committee to draft instructions to the town's representatives in the Legislature, the meeting adjourned, to meet in Faneuil Hall on Friday, the seventeenth. The following hand-bill shows the sense

of responsibility which these sturdy patriots felt was resting on their shoulders: —

"BOSTON, June 16, 1768.

"It is thought by the real friends of liberty, that *the fate of America depends on the steady and firm resolution of the town of Boston*, at the adjournment of their meeting to-morrow. It is earnestly wished and instructed, that the well-disposed inhabitants would excite each other to give their punctual attendance at so important a crisis."

As this meeting concerning the removal of the Romney was the largest, so it was the boldest regularly constituted assembly which had convened in this section. The petition to the governor was pronounced by Hutchinson to be the most extraordinary thing that had appeared, while other placemen seized upon it as conclusive evidence of the necessity of the presence of troops in Boston, — a boon which all loyalists who desired to overawe the people hoped for. Of this the first great popular gathering in the Old South Church it has been well said: "It was in harmony, in principle and in object, with the views of a great people. It was an illustration of an intelligent American opinion, appearing as an actor on the public stage. And hence it indicated, not a mere ripple on the top of shallow waters, but a ground-swell of an ocean-tide of irresistible and providential power."[1]

[1] Richard Frothingham.

V.

THE OLD SOUTH AND THE BOSTON MASSACRE.

The interval between June, 1768, and March, 1770, though not marked by any notable popular demonstrations in Boston, was nevertheless a period of great importance. Before proceeding to an account of the remarkable meeting in the Old South Church which took place on the day succeeding the Boston Massacre, it may be necessary to an understanding of its full significance to pass in rapid review the state of things in Boston since the great assembly of June, '68.

In February, 1768, the Massachusetts Legislature addressed to "the Speakers of the respective Houses of Representatives and Burgesses on this Continent" a Circular Letter, "with respect," Samuel Adams, the author, afterwards said, "to the importance of joining with them, in petitioning his Majesty." As lawful as such a proceeding undoubtedly was, it roused the fear and malignity of the royalists to such a degree, that the harshest measures were instantly determined upon. In unity of purpose and concert of action on the part of the colonies England foresaw one of two results, — either an end in the provinces of English exaction or an end of English rule. The ministry directed Governor Barnard to demand of the Assembly the prompt recision of their Circular Letter, and this command was communicated to that body on the twenty-first of June. The Legislature were sensible of the importance of their course, and debated the matter for several days. "Here was the Legislature of a provincial town," says the biographer of Samuel Adams,[1] the political and commercial center of New England, coolly bearding the terrible power of Britain, and convened to consult upon the question of refusing to comply with a direct command of the King." But the As-

[1] William V. Wells.

sembly did not falter, and on June 30th they decided, ninety-two to seventeen, to disobey the royal mandate. Samuel Adams is said to have exclaimed, "This is a glorious day!" while the sturdy Samuel Cooper added, "This is the most glorious day ever seen!" The majority were afterwards known as "The Glorious Ninety-two."

In accordance with his instructions, the Governor prorogued and then dissolved the assembly. The right of united petition was denied, and the province was left without a legislature.

The determination had already been taken to send troops to Boston, though such design was not announced to the colonists, who were well known to consider this the most dangerous form of invasion of their liberties. Hints, however, were — artfully, as he thought — thrown out by Governor Barnard, who afterwards said: "I thought it would be best that the expectation of the troops should be gradually communicated, that the heads of the faction might have time to consider well what they were about." And he was not disappointed in his purpose; "the heads of the faction" *did* consider well the duties of the hour, and acted up to the dignity of their calling.

Having vainly petitioned the Governor to comply with the spirit of an existing law of England, which declared, that, for the redress of grievances and the preservation of the laws, parliaments ought to be held frequently, the citizens of Boston invited all the towns of the colony to choose committees, which were requested to assemble in Faneuil Hall, September 22d, 1768. These delegations accordingly assembled, and were collectively termed a "Committee of Convention." The purpose of this convention was declared to be to *consult* upon and to *advise* such proceedings as the distressed condition of the country required. Although it disavowed all authority, the Governor insisted that this convention, despite its name, was nothing else than a legislative body, which, not being regularly assembled, was therefore illegal.

He refused to receive any communication from it; but, being emboldened by advices of the near arrival of royal troops, he issued a manifesto against the members, and commanded them to disperse. He said that ignorance of law (!) might excuse what had already been done, but that if his request was now disregarded, he should "assert the prerogative of the crown in a more public manner,"—which, being interpreted, meant, that he expected troops daily, and should not hesitate to use them when they came. But the Committee remained in session long enough to establish a precedent, by which, in future, the arbitrary dissolution of the people's assemblies should not be able entirely to deprive them of united consultation.

Upon the day succeeding the voluntary dissolution of the Committee of Convention, September 30th, 1768, the royal forces arrived. On Saturday, October 1st, "with insolent parade, drums beating, fifes playing, and colours flying,"[1] they marched up King Street. This force consisted of the Fourteenth and Twenty-ninth regiments, a detachment from the Fifty-ninth, and a train of artillery with two pieces of cannon. In the fall the main guard was posted opposite the State House, and cannon were levelled against the legislative hall. Well might the legislators of the following year declare: —

> "An armament by sea and land, investing the metropolis, and a military guard with cannon pointed at the very door of the State House, where this assembly is held, is inconsistent with that dignity as well as that freedom with which we have a right to deliberate, consult, and determine."

During the year 1769 the British Parliament, warned by the decrease of trade, removed the obnoxious duties from all articles transported into the colonies except tea. The *right* to tax, however, was reserved: and that was just the point where the difference between America and England was the greatest. The repeal, therefore, did nothing to remove the difficulty. A non-importation agreement was this

[1] From the inscription on an engraving of the British fleet by Paul Revere.

year adopted in Boston and rigidly adhered to. Every effort was made to ensnare the people's leaders, and proofs of treason were eagerly sought, in order that they might be transported for trial. But the patriots were as wise as they were bold, and discovered a knowledge of English law which surprised and confounded the Crown lawyers.

We cannot do better, at this point, than to employ the language of Mr. W. V. Wells in his excellent biography of Samuel Adams, in which he summarizes the condition of affairs during the occupancy of Boston by the royal forces : —

"The troops, without an enemy to fight, were standing proofs of the uselessness of their mission. The fleet, consisting of eight war vessels, commanded the harbor ; and the royal regiments had possession of the only land communications with the town. Red coats, glittering bayonets, martial music, and all the paraphernalia of war were constantly paraded in the faces of the exasperated people. The legislative halls were occupied by armed mercenaries, and cannon pointed at the doors ; the quiet of the Sabbath was disturbed, and citizens were challenged at every corner as in time of martial law. As the hatred between the people and the troops daily increased in virulence, complaints were made that numbers of the inhabitants had been insulted and arrested, jostled in the street, and thrust at with bayonets." September 4th, 1769, James Otis was assaulted in a coffee-house by one of the Commissioners, and received injuries which shortly sent him into retirement, his brilliant intellect being as sad a wreck as his injured body. "The slaves were excited against their masters, and the law was openly violated in innumerable instances. Brawls and revels by night, and outrages by day, characterized the life of the soldiers ; while, to scandalize the town and corrupt the morals of the young, hundreds of abandoned women who had followed the army from Europe to Halifax, came thence to Boston. They were the most dissolute creatures, and many soon found their way into the alms-house, and thus increased the public burdens. To keep his countrymen thoroughly aroused to the ignominy of their position under these outrages, Mr. Adams lost no opportunity of stinging the public mind to the quick with cogent essays in the newspapers, which, among the many acts of tyranny, had not yet been suppressed."

The foregoing narrative of events prepares us to understand a conflict which took place on the Fifth of March, 1770. Minor difficulties were of frequent occurrence, and

a bloody culmination was naturally expected. The crisis came on the evening of the day just mentioned, when occurred what has ever since been termed the "Boston Massacre," an affray between citizens and soldiers wherein several of the former lost their lives. Whether the name of "massacre" has or has not rightly attached to this event, is not for us to consider here.[1] Indisputable it is, however, that it was the natural result of the tyrannical policy which had stationed insolent soldiery in the midst of a proud, free, and independent people. It brought matters to a crisis, and roused the people to the determination to clear the town of soldiers, be the consequences what they might. The people had been struck in the face, and, like a proud man, they rose mightily to obtain redress — peaceably if they could, forcibly if they must.

Early on the morning of the sixth the town and county authorities waited upon Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson, who, since Barnard's recall in the previous year, had administered the government, and expressed to him the opinion that the removal of the troops was the only means of averting further collision. The Lieutenant-Governor had assembled the Council, and sent for Colonels Dalrymple and Carr to sit with them as military advisers. He realized that every resource at his command must be ready for employment. While the selectmen and county justices were still with the Governor and Council, a messenger arrived with a request from the townsmen assembled in Faneuil Hall, that the selectmen would lend their immediate presence. They instantly obeyed the summons, and found the "Cradle of Liberty" filled with an angered though orderly throng of townsmen. As highly incensed as the people were, they yet manifested a general disposition "to act with caution, deliberation, and in a spirit of unity, and doubtless with the consideration, that the eyes of the friends of their cause were upon them." [2]

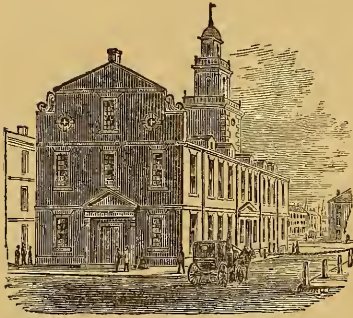
[1] See Bancroft's Hist. U. S. vol. vi, 334–341, and note, 347–9. — "Narrative Horrid Massacre." — Trial of Preston and the Soldiers. [2] Frothingham's Life of Warren.

The town officers having arrived, and a moderator having been chosen, Rev. Dr. Cooper was asked to open the meeting with prayer. Peculiarly gifted with the power of fervent and eloquent supplication, his prayer, upon such an occasion, must have sunk deep into the hearts of his hearers. After a time, the meeting was addressed by Samuel Adams, who spoke with a nervous energy and impressive force which arrested the attention of every auditor. There was so much pathos, as well as determination, in his address, that, it is recorded, every heart was moved. A committee of fifteen was appointed, Samuel Adams chairman, to wait upon the Lieutenant-Governor, and inform him that the citizens of Boston had resolved to be rid of the troops, and to beg him to use his power and influence to bring about their speedy departure. The meeting then dissolved, the people having voted to meet at the same place, in regular town-meeting, at three o'clock of the same day.

The committee immediately proceeded to the Council Chamber. The Lieutenant-Governor seemed anxious to parley, but the committee refused to discuss the matter. Hutchinson, stung by their independence, reminded them that it was treason to fire upon the King's forces. The townsmen retorted only by repeating the demand for the troops' removal, and withdrew into an adjoining room to await an answer. The Lieutenant-Governor plead that he had no power over the military; but Col. Dalrymple promised to remove the regiment which had been chiefly concerned, and to put the other under greater restraint. Hutchinson consented to meet the Council again in the afternoon, which, as we shall see, was an important point gained.

At three o'clock the town-meeting was organized in Faneuil Hall by the choice of Thomas Cushing moderator. But the hall's capacity was far beneath the requirements of the occasion, affording room for thirteen hundred only. All day long the farmers of the surrounding country had been pouring into Boston, so that the multitude was unusually great.

Adjournment was almost immediately had to "Dr. Sewall's Meeting-House," as the OLD SOUTH was generally called at that time. Doubtless the greater part of the people proceeded up King (now State) street, over the scene of the last night's conflict, and past the Town House, (now known as the Old State House,) where the Governor and Council were assembled. May we not believe that Hutchinson, looking from a window upon this great assembly, acknowledged, even in his ambitious heart, that it is a dreadful thing to stand against an injured *people?* All the preferments for which he had schemed and labored must then have seemed poor reward for the part he was compelled to play.



THE OLD STATE HOUSE.

The street leading from the Town House to the Old South was densely packed with people when Samuel Adams, at the head of the town's committee, commenced to take his way towards the meeting-house. With hat in hand, and with gray locks flowing in the air, he passed rapidly through the avenue of human forms, which, at the cry of "Make way for the committee," was opened through the crowd. As he passed along, the champion of his admiring fellows, he gave the word, "Both regiments or none," to those who trusted in his wisdom.

Arrived at the church, it was with difficulty that the committee reached their places through a crowd which filled the house and overflowed into the streets around. The pews, the aisles, the pulpit stairs, the galleries — all were full of as resolute a set of men as ever assembled in such a place. The chairman afterwards described them as "grave and sad men." The Lieutenant-Governor's answer was read to the meeting. At its close the cry broke forth, "Both regiments

or none!" Samuel Adams did not hesitate to express his dissatisfaction with the answer. After a short debate, the question was put, whether the answer of the Lieutenant-Governor was satisfactory; three thousand freemen shouted "No!" — a vote which must have struck consternation to the heart of Hutchinson if he heard its echoes. He had declared in the morning that upon no consideration would he now order the troops away, and that "he meant to receive no further application on the subject."

Desiring even yet to "keep the enemy in the wrong," and to exhaust every legal measure to obtain redress, the meeting chose a committee of seven to convey a final demand. This committee included Samuel Adams, William Molineaux, William Phillips, Joseph Warren, Joshua Henshaw, and Samuel Pemberton, who were instructed to inform the Governor that his answer to the town's request was by no means satisfactory, and that the people, in town-meeting assembled, imperatively demanded the immediate removal of his Majesty's troops.

When the committee of seven started from the church to the Town House the hazy twilight of a New England spring had settled over the town, lending a sadder tinge to the already sombre aspect. The hearts of the people corresponded with their surroundings, everyone realizing the uncertain and possibly bloody issue of the meeting. The committee immediately repaired to the Council Chamber. Their mission was of the most critical character. In their hands they bore the mandate of an incensed people; and upon the wisdom of their action and the Governor's response, hung the issue of peace or carnage. It was not an exaggeration for the historian to record: "Boston, indeed America, had seen no hour of intenser interest, of deeper solemnity, of more instant peril, or of truer moral sublimity." The people had not shed a drop of blood, nor entertained a thought of insurrection, till the blood of their countrymen stained their streets, and the conflict of reason had proved unavailing.

Having arisen in their might, they meant to see the crisis through. Be results what they may, they said, the soldiers must leave our streets. Now it was that the "incendiary chiefs," "the heads of the faction," confounded the predictions of their enemies. Surely, the time was ripe for bloody work; but these men exerted themselves to *restrain* the people, and to govern their resentment. Their object always was to "keep the enemy in the wrong," in order that the people's cause might appear to be what it really was — the honest protest of "a plain, unaffected, but high-souled people," whose rights and liberties were ruthlessly disregarded.

No one better knew the vast responsibilities of the moment than sturdy Samuel Adams. Already his hope of final compromise was gone, and he felt that there was but one solution to the problem, and that was Independence. But the time was not yet that he could even breathe his faith to his closest friends, much less allow an insurrection to force its contemplation prematurely on the country. He felt that, if necessary, all his powers must come forth today; that not an effort must be spared to effect an amicable conclusion to the crisis. Grand Sam Adams! how worthy were you of the name of Father of the Revolution!

Neither was Governor Hutchinson unmindful of the weight of his responsibility. In his report to the home government he said, "The calling of the Council could not be avoided, though I knew no good could come from it." He knew the mettle of the committee who had come to face him, and he knew the temper of the people who thronged the streets around the Town House. The multitude without was "not a dependent and starved host, wildly urging the terrible demand of 'Bread or Blood;' nor was it fanaticism in a season of discontent, claiming impossibilities at the hand of power: the craving was moral and intellectual; it was an intelligent public opinion, a people, with well-grounded and settled convictions, making a just demand on arbitrary power."[1]

[1] Richard Frothingham.

He realized then, as he subsequently wrote, that the people were "warmed with a persuasion that what they were doing was right, and that they were struggling for the liberties of America." And what man, without trepidation, can set himself against such a conviction of an enlightened people? He well knew the truth of what one of his Councillors told him: "They are not such a people as formerly pulled down your house, who conduct the present measures. No: they are people of the best characters among us, men of estates, men of religion. They have formed their plan for removing the troops out of town; and it is impossible that they should remain in it. The people will come in from the neighboring towns; there will be ten thousand men to effect the removal of the troops, be the consequence what it may."

And so these men met; the one surrounded by insignia of office and the paraphernalia of power, the other backed by great principles and upheld by the confidence of his countrymen. The royal Governor, in the midst of his Council and supported by the King's officers, seems insignificant before the gray-haired patriot, accompanied by no other retinue than six townsmen, plain men like himself.

When Samuel Adams rose to present the town's resolve, he urged upon the Governor the importance of his acquiescence. "He represented," wrote John Adams, who has given a spirited description of this interview, "the state of the town and the country, the dangerous, ruinous, and fatal effects of standing armies in populous cities in time of peace, and the determined resolution of the public that the regular troops, at all events, should be removed from the town." We have the testimony of at least one historian, that, so surcharged with earnestness was he, he communicated his own nervous trembling to Dalrymple. The reply of the Lieutenant-Governor was substantially a repetition of the plea of lack of power to comply, but expressed readiness to adhere to the offer already made, with Col. Dalrymple's concurrence, to remove one regiment.

This was the golden moment. The inconsistency of the plea and the offer did not escape the keen perception of Samuel Adams. "On ordinary occasions he seemed like ordinary men; but in moments of crisis, he rose naturally and unaffectedly into the altitude of highest dignity, and spoke as if the hopes of humanity were dependent on his words."[1] As he arose to his feet the gathering twilight ennobled his manly proportions, and wrapped the whole apartment in impressive shade. He seemed not to represent but to embody the universal feeling,[2] and his outstretched arm appeared to be upheld by the strength of thousands. There was in his very silence a nobility, in his very attitude an eloquence, which words cannot express. The energies of his great soul were roused. Fixing his searching eyes upon the Governor, he commenced to speak. An hereditary tremulousness may, perhaps, have extended to his voice. We may well believe that his words came with a nervous energy and manly force which sunk them deep into the memories of his auditors. Drawing his stalwart form to its greatest height, and stretching forth his arm, "which slightly shook with the energy of his soul," he uttered the following words in a tone, not loud, but deep, earnest, and indescribably impressive: —

"It is well known, that, acting as Governor of the Province, you are, by its charter, the Commander-in-Chief of the military forces within it; and, as such, the troops now in the capital are subject to your orders. If you, or Colonel Dalrymple under you, have power to remove *one* regiment, you have the power to remove *both;* and nothing short of their total removal will satisfy the people or preserve the peace of the province. A multitude, highly incensed, now wait the result of this application. The voice of ten thousand freemen demands that both regiments be forthwith removed. Their voice must be respected, — their demand obeyed. Fail, then, at your peril, to comply with this requisition! On you alone rests the responsibility of the decision; and, if the just expectations of the people are disappointed, you must be answerable to God and your country for the fatal consequences that must ensue. The committee have discharged their duty, and it is for you to discharge yours. They wait your final determination."

[1] Bancroft's Hist. U. S. [2] Tudor's Life of Otis.

His auditors sat spellbound. Silence fell upon all present at the conclusion of this outburst. The Lieutenant-Governor could ill conceal his discomfiture. Said Adams afterwards, in a letter to a friend: "If fancy deceived me not, I observed his knees to tremble; I thought I saw his face grow pale, and I enjoyed the sight." And well he might, for Hutchinson's discomforture meant the people's peace. The royalists forgot their haughtiness in the presence of Samuel Adams. "They shrunk, fortunately shrunk, from all the arrogance they had hitherto maintained."[1] When the Lieutenant-Governor recovered from the spell which bound him even after the patriot's voice had ceased, he consulted in low tones with the Councillors and officers. The issue was fairly presented, but even then he hesitated. After the committee withdrew a long consultation followed. The people grew impatient. The word finally passed that Dalrymple had thrown the responsibility upon Hutchinson, who now alone held out. But a decision was finally reached, and was communicated to the committee. The demands of the people were regarded, and the promise was given that every soldier should leave the town.

We find no account of the committee's return from the Town House to the church. It appears that the answer was not communicated to the people until it was announced to the assembly in the Old South Church. Darkness had fallen upon the streets before the Governor's answer was made known, and, perhaps, the committee may not have been noticed as they went towards the meeting-house. Here, however, a great concourse awaited their coming. When the Lieutenant-Governor's answer was read, we may imagine what a shout burst from the throats of the townsmen. Yet the only record seems to be that "the Inhabitants could not avoid expressing the high Satisfaction it (the answer) afforded them."[2] It may be that those "grave and sad men" were too deeply effected with the momentousness of the occa-

[1] Tudor's Life of Otis. [2] Boston Gazette, Mar. 12, 1770.

sion to be in the mood to manifest their satisfaction in a noisy way. Be this as it may, a great load was lifted from the patriots' hearts, and the danger of an untimely contest was happily averted. The officer in command had pledged his word "that he would begin the preparation in the morning, and that there should be no unnecessary delay until the whole of the two regiments were removed to the Castle,"[1] now Fort Independence.

The moral effects of this victory of a plain and determined people over the representatives of royalty were of the utmost importance. It sent joy to the heart of every patriot, encouraging the strong and strengthening the weak. It demonstrated that there was a power in the land which even Kings could not disregard; that there was an independence in the people which even bayonets could not curtail.

Even now the people were not content to relinquish an oversight of the town. The committee of seven was constituted a "Committee of Safety," who were empowered to detail such citizens to guard the town as they thought necessary. A place of general rendezvous, in case of necessity, having been designated, the meeting adjourned, leaving their interests in the hands of the Committee of Safety, which had already, in another capacity, rendered such efficient service.

Thus again the Old South Church figured conspicuously in one of the most important crises New England had ever known, and earned the name subsequently accorded it of the "Sanctuary of Freedom." Faneuil Hall and the Old South Church have since become, by reason of these occurrences, as dear to the heart as they are inspiring to the loyalty of every true American.

[1] Town Records.

VI.

THE OLD SOUTH AND THE BOSTON TEA TROUBLES.

After the withdrawal of the royal troops the community became quieter, and the life of the colonists less eventful. Important considerations, however, were seldom absent from the public mind, and affairs were quietly, but none the less surely, approaching the inevitable crisis of resistance on the one side or concession on the other. In September of the same year of the massacre, the colonial mind was greatly exercised by the Governor's surrender of Castle William into the hands of the military commander,—an act in plain violation of the colonial charter. The people regarded this measure as a new and alarming indication of the relentless and certain tightening of the hand of armed coercion, and of the increasing determination of the home government to employ whatever means appeared to it expedient, without regard to their equity or justice.

The year 1771 was uneventful. So pacific did the face of things appear, that Hutchinson wrote, "The faction is dying, but it dies hard." But the year did not pass without furnishing the patriots with fresh cause for alarm. On the twelfth of August twelve English war-vessels, mounting two hundred and sixteen guns, arrived in Boston Harbor and anchored before the city.

During all this time of comparative quiet the leaders did not rest, nor were they wanting in material to employ their energies. A stubborn contention was all the while going on between the representatives of royalty and of the commoners, which was none the less important that it did not involve popular demonstrations. The leading ideas combatted on the one hand and maintained on the other were those of local self-government as opposed to the unlimited supremacy of Parliament, and Union among the colonies. These issues

included or were provoked by those concerning the proposed dependence of the judges upon the Crown, the removal of the General Court to such places as the Governor saw fit, the legality and independence of town-meetings, and the establishment of Committees of Correspondence. For the latter event Samuel Adams labored with all his heart and soul, foreseeing in it the most formidable engine of opposition which had yet been devised. His efforts in this direction were finally crowned with success, and Boston chose her committee November 2d, 1772. It has been truly said of this step, that it "breathed life into the American Revolution, stamped with vitality all its subsequent measures, and arranged under the rules of perfect order and system what had, until then, been a series of inharmonious, desultory efforts, without concentration or method."

But the consideration which most nearly concerned the community in general was that of the duties levied upon articles of home consumption. They had all been — as a matter of *expediency*, the ministry said — removed, except that upon tea. By retaining the duty upon this most cherished article, and by reducing the revenue upon it to the mere pittance of threepence per pound, it was thought that the colonies would yield. But it was the *principle* of taxation without representation which the people denied, and they did not permit themselves to be drawn into a false position by any such subterfuge. It was resolved that tea should not be imported and that the luxury should be discarded, until the obnoxious duty was removed. It is to the development of this line of opposition that the remainder of this chapter is devoted.

On the very day of the Boston Massacre American affairs were debated in Parliament. In spite of valiant opposition, the duty on tea was retained. The opposition to the right of taxation without representation was nevertheless obstinately adhered to in America, although some were fearful that their countrymen would yield. "The whole continent

is so bigoted and devoted to tea," said a writer in the *Gazette*, [1]"that there is really some reason to fear that they would part with all their liberties, and religion too, rather than renounce it." But such fears proved groundless. The ladies of Boston entered into a voluntary compact [2] to discontinue the use of that greatest of ladies' luxuries, expressing a strong desire to render such aid and comfort to their husbands, fathers, and brothers, as lay within their power.

In January, 1770, the citizens of Boston took decisive measures to break up the traffic in tea, in which, regardless of the claims of country and unable to withstand the temptation of large profits, some of the merchants of Boston had again engaged. These dealers had previously signed the non-importation agreement, and were thus voluntary recusants to their solemn promises. In the *Gazette* newspaper — one of the January numbers — we find a long report of a meeting of merchants, assembled for the purpose of *persuading* the two sons of Governor Hutchinson, and others, to comply with their former promises. Writing to ex-Governor Barnard, Hutchinson said of this meeting: "Justices of the peace, selectmen, representatives, constables, and other officers, who ought to have discountenanced this meeting, made a part of it."

In May, 1773, Parliament granted to the East India Company the privilege of exporting tea to America duty free, except a tariff of threepence per pound upon its landing. Even Hutchinson saw the folly of the continued attempt to encroach upon colonial rights in a direction already so stubbornly contested. He wrote: "I know not what reason may make it necessary to continue the duty on tea; but I think the repeal of it, or the making the same duty payable in England, is necessary to prevent disorders in the colonies."

Public attention was first directed to the consignees appointed by the East India Company to take charge of the tea upon its arrival. Several town meetings were held, and

[1] Aug. 15, 1768. [2] Feb., 1770.

strong efforts were made to induce them to resign their commissions, but all to little effect. A month of excitement and commotion passed in anticipation of the arrival of the tea ships. Finally, on Sunday, November 28th, the ship Dartmouth, Captain Hall, the property of Francis Roth, anchored under the guns of the Castle. The *Gazette* of Monday, the 29th, announced that there was on board "one hundred and fourteen chests of the so-much-detested East India Company's tea, the expected arrival of which pernicious article has for some time past put all these northern colonies in a very great ferment." The journals of that day also reprinted a handbill which had been posted through the town, and which read as follows: —

"FRIENDS! BRETHREN! COUNTRYMEN!

"That worst of plagues, the detested TEA, shipped for this port by the East India Company, is now arrived in this harbour. The hour of destruction or manly opposition to the machinations of tyranny stares you in the face. Every friend to his country, to himself, and posterity, is now called upon to meet at FANEUIL HALL at nine o'clock *this day* (at which time the bells will ring), to make a united and successful resistance to this last, worst, and most destructive measure of administration."

It has been properly observed that the measures resorted to in the times of the tea troubles must be judged of in a very different light than that of to-day, when written constitutions of state and nation distinctly indicate lawful and peaceable methods of testing the constitutionality of all public measures. In 1773 our forefathers, devoid of better means, were compelled to appeal to natural equity, and to rely upon the strength of their own right arms.

Such complete reports of the two great meetings in the Old South Church which we are now to consider appeared in the local papers of the day, that little light is needed from other quarters. We shall, therefore, in reference to the first of these meetings, largely employ the language of the *Boston Evening Post* of December 6th, 1773, which presents the proceedings in a terse and comprehensive style.

Upon the ringing of the bells at nine o'clock, a great concourse of people flocked to Faneuil Hall, which, in point of size, fell far short of the requirements of the occasion. "Again the yeoman left his field, the mechanic his shop, and the merchant his counting-room, to turn politician and act for the country."[1] As if to put the matter squarely in issue, and to test the minds of the people at the outset, the question was, after organization, almost immediately put, "Whether this Body are absolutely determined that the tea now arrived in Capt. Hall shall be returned to the place from whence it came at all events. And the question being accordingly put, it passed in the affirmative. Nem. con." But it was evident that the meeting was too great to be contained in Faneuil Hall, and adjournment was accordingly had to the OLD SOUTH CHURCH. Here, it is said, "five or six thousand of respectable inhabitants met, — men of the best characters and of the first fortunes."[2]

The vast assembly, having reached the Old South and filled every foot of available space in the galleries and on the floor, was again called to order, and the following motion submitted: "Whether it is the firm resolution of this Body that the tea shall not only be sent back, but that no duty shall be paid thereon." Again the great meeting-house resounded to the resolute mandate of thousands of freemen. The record merely says, "passed in the affirmative. Nem con." The people had now given George III ample opportunity "to try the question with America," as he had expressed the wish to do. There was certainly nothing to be desired in the clearness and positiveness of their position. Among the most prominent speakers at this meeting we find mentioned Joseph Warren, Samuel Adams, John Hancock, William Molineaux and Thomas Young. With such master spirits guiding the proceedings, we may confidently accept the truthfulness of the high character for moderation and good order accorded to this meeting. Though no reports of

[1] Frothingham's Warren, 257. [2] John Scollay, one of the selectmen.

the speeches upon this occasion survived the day, they were doubtless worthy of such an hour. Hutchinson declared that "Adams was never in greater glory."

Some sort of a proposal from the consignees had been expected during the morning, but none came, those gentlemen having thought best to retire to the security of Castle William. The meeting accordingly adjourned to the same place at three o'clock in the afternoon.

The first business of the afternoon, according to the record from which we quote, was a motion, "Whether the tea now arrived in Captain Hall's ship shall be sent back in the same bottom. — Passed in the affirmative. Nem. con." Mr. Roth, owner of the ship Dartmouth, was present. Naturally moved by considerations of his own interest, he gave notice that he should protest against the proceedings of the meeting. This protest seems to have prompted the following significant action: "It was moved and voted, *nem. con.*, that Mr. Roth be directed not to enter this tea; and that the doing of it would be at his peril.

"Also voted, that Capt. Hall, the master of the ship, be informed that at his peril he is not to suffer any of the tea brought by him to be landed."

"In order for the security of Captain Hall's ship and cargo," a watch of twenty-five men was then appointed.

At this stage of the proceedings it was announced that the Governor had taken official steps to prevent any "routes or riots" of the people. This was only a new form of his habitual denial of the legality of town-meetings. This attempt to brand the people, properly assembled, with the character of a lawless mob, was resented by the meeting, which unanimously declared that the Governor's conduct was solely designed to forward the views of Administration, and to cast reproach upon those there assembled. Mr. Hancock stated that he was informed that the consignees had received their instructions only the night before, and therefore had had no opportunity of consulting together as to what course

they should pursue; they therefore desired further delay. "The meeting out of great tenderness to these persons," says the report, "and from a strong desire to bring this matter to a conclusion, notwithstanding the time they had hitherto expended upon them to no purpose, were prevailed upon to adjourn to the next morning, nine o'clock."

Tuesday, November 30th, the people assembled in the Old South Church according to adjournment. The long-delayed proposals from the consignees were brought into the meeting, directed, however, to one of the selectmen, instead of to the moderator. Notwithstanding this silent reflection upon the character of the assembly, it was voted that the proposals should be read. The consignees merely offered to store their goods until further orders could be received from London. Before any action could be taken upon this communication, Sheriff Greenleaf appeared, and begged leave to read a proclamation of his Excellency the Governor. Whereupon it was moved and the question put, whether the Sheriff should be allowed to read the proclamation; and it was a unanimous vote. The motives which inspired this vote were no doubt various: some, we may imagine, were actuated by a roguish curiosity to hear what their nominal ruler had to say; while others were governed by the desire to show respect to every proper mandate of the royal representative, and, if not in conflict with their chartered rights, to obey it.

In the direction of the writ the Governor took pains to ignore, or, rather, silently to deny, the legality of the assembly. The proclamation was to "Jonathan Williams, Esq., acting as a Moderator of an Assembly of People in the Town of Boston, and to the People so assembled." This opening was not calculated to win for it any greater respect than otherwise would have been accorded it. "Whereas," the mandate read, the people were "openly violating, defying, and setting at nought the good and wholesome laws of the Province, and the Constitution of the Government, . . . I warn, exhort, and require you and each of you thus unlaw-

fully assembled forthwith to disperse and surcease all further unlawful proceedings, at your utmost peril." When the Sheriff had finished reading, his loyal ears were shocked by "a loud and very general hiss." The question was immediately put, "Whether the assembly would disperse and surcease all further proceedings, according to the Governor's requirement. — It passed in the negative. Nem. con."

Having thus summarily disposed of the mandate of the King's lieutenant, the meeting turned its attention to a private gentleman who had a proposition to make. This was Copley the artist, who painted the portraits of Hancock and Adams which now hang in Faneuil Hall. A genuine artist and a good citizen, he was admired in circles of refinement and respected in the community at large. He was a relative of the Messrs. Clarkes, consignees, and was anxious to bring about some understanding between them and the townsmen. The record is as follows: —

"A proposal of Mr. Copley was made, that in case he could prevail with the Mess. Clarkes to come into this meeting, the question might now be put, Whether they should be treated with civility while in the meeting, though they might be of different sentiments with this body, and their persons be safe until their return to the place from whence they should come. — And the question being accordingly put, passed in the affirmative. Nem. con." Mr. Copley being allowed two hours to accomplish his mission, the meeting adjourned till two o'clock P. M.

Upon the people's reassembling, "a motion was made and passed that Mr. Roth and Captain Hall be desired to give their attendance."

"Mr. Roth appeared, and upon a motion made, the question was put, whether it be the firm resolution of this body that the tea brought by Capt. Hall shall be returned by Mr. Roth to England in the bottom in which it came; and whether they now accordingly require the same, — which passed in the affirmative. Nem. con. Mr. Roth then informed the meeting that he should protest against the whole proceedings, as he had done against the proceedings on yesterday, but that, though the returning of the tea is an involuntary act in him, he yet considers himself as under a necessity to do it, and shall therefore comply with the requirements of this body."

This seemed to settle matters as far as the ship's owner was concerned, and attention was next given to its com-

mander. "Capt. Hall being present was forbid to aid or assist in unloading the tea, at his peril; and ordered, that if he continues master of the vessel, he carry the same back to London." The Captain gave assurances that he would comply with these requirements.

After other persons had been summoned to attend the meeting, as Mr. Roth and Captain Hall had been, a captain of the night-watch was appointed. The character of these watches was remarkable. They were composed of volunteers, who left their names at the printing-shop of Eades and Gill, publishers of the *Gazette;* and were under the control and direction of the Committee of Correspondence. The Committee of Safety of March, 1770, were made *ex officio* members and commanders of the night-watch of that period, thus enrolling in the popular ranks John Hancock, Joseph Warren, Samuel Adams, and others who subsequently attained world-wide distinction. A future president of the United States[1] bore his musket with the rest. Thus, there was no respect of persons when the defence of common rights were undertaken. Upon this occasion it was agreed, that, in case of disturbance, the bells should be tolled by night and rung by day. Six persons were selected to hold themselves in readiness to spread the alarm in the country towns.

This business having been completed, Mr. John Rowe appeared, and informed the meeting that his ship had not yet arrived, but that he should use his utmost endeavors that the tea in her should go back as required by the assembly, and that he should give immediate advise of her arrival. Mr. Rowe had the satisfaction of learning that his answer was quite satisfactory to the meeting.

By this time Mr. Copley had returned. He had been obliged to go to the Castle, whence his apprehensive relatives had betaken themselves. "He hoped that if he had exceeded the time allowed him, they would consider the difficulty of a passage by water at this season, as his apology."

[1] John Adams.

"He then further acquainted the Body," the report continues, "that he had seen all the consignees, and though he had convinced them that they might attend this meeting with safety, and had used his utmost endeavors to prevail upon them to give satisfaction to the Body; they acquainted him, that believing nothing would be satisfactory short of re-shipping the tea, which was out of their power, they thought it best not to appear, but would renew their proposal of storing the tea, and submitting the same to the inspection of a committee, and that they could go no further without incurring their own ruin; but as they had not been active in introducing the tea, they should do nothing to obstruct the people in their procedure with the same."

The latter assurance was entirely unnecessary, as they had no choice in the matter. They had previously thrown themselves and their tea upon the protection of the Governor and Council, but had been repulsed by the latter, who contemplated with alarm the prospect of becoming common warehousemen for the East India Company and its consignees, in case they complied with the present request. The answer of the consignees, communicated through Mr. Copley, was voted, "*nem. con.*," to be "not in the least degree satisfactory." The following resolutions were then passed: —

"Resolved, That if any person or persons shall hereafter import tea from Great Britain, or shall take the same on board to be imported to this place, until the said act (referred to in a prior resolution) shall be repealed, he or they shall be deemed by this body an enemy to his country; and we will prevent the landing and sale of the same, and the payment of any duty thereon. And we will effect the return thereof to the place from whence it shall come.

"Resolved, That the foregoing vote be printed and sent to England and all the seaports of this province."

"Mr. Samuel Adams, Hon. John Hancock, Esq., William Phillips, Esq., John Rowe, Esq., Jonathan Williams, Esq.," were chosen a committee to transmit fair copies of the whole proceedings to New York and Philadelphia.

The business of the meeting was concluded by the adoption of the following resolutions: —

"Voted, that it is the determination of this Body to carry their votes and resolutions into execution at the risk of their lives and property.

"Voted, that the Committee of Correspondence for this town be desired to take care that every other vessel with tea that arrives in this harbour, have a proper watch appointed for her.

"Voted, that our brethren in the country be desired to afford their assistance upon the first notice given; especially if such notice be given upon the arrival of Capt. Loring in Messieurs Clarke's Brigantine."

The meeting then dissolved.

An account of the culmination of the tea troubles will be found in the following chapter.

VII.

THE OLD SOUTH AND THE DESTRUCTION OF TEA.

The revenue law allowed twenty days after the arrival of a ship in which to effect the landing of its tea, at the expiration of which time the vessel and cargo were subject to seizure and confiscation. As the duty was payable upon the landing of the goods, all the efforts of the citizens were directed to preventing the tea being put on shore. The guard was maintained during the whole period of the ships' probation, so that not a move on their part could pass undetected. But it was determined to exhaust every legal method to enforce the will of the people before resorting to violence. The next meeting in the Old South Church, therefore, did not assemble until the twenty days allowed the Dartmouth were almost spent.

Meanwhile two other vessels laden with tea had arrived in Boston harbor, and, by direction of the Committee of Correspondence, who were now the virtual rulers of the city, were moured in the vicinity of the Dartmouth, in order to obviate the necessity of greatly increasing the town-watch. This watch was uninterruptedly maintained, the cry, "All is well," saluting the ears of wakeful townsmen at regular intervals throughout the wintry nights. The government, also, prepared for a crisis, which, though none seemed to know exactly how, both parties saw was surely coming. The guns in the Castle were loaded, and two war-ships were stationed in the narrows to prevent the passage of any sea-bound craft unprovided with a passport.

The people were now full of resolution. They were reminded through the press and by letters from other colonies, that the eyes of America were upon them, and that upon their wisdom and firmness largely depended the happiness of themselves and their posterity. The most cheering assur-

ances of approbation of the meetings of November 29th and 30th were received from all quarters, and Boston was besought to act up to its resolutions.

December came, and the time of action was near at hand. On the 14th the following hand-bill was posted in all parts of the town: —

"FRIENDS! BRETHREN! COUNTRYMEN!

"The perfidious arts of our restless enemies to render ineffectual the late resolutions of the body of the people, demand your assembling at the OLD SOUTH MEETING-HOUSE, precisely at ten o'clock THIS DAY, at which time the bells will ring."

This notice brought together a great concourse of people. Not only were the citizens of Boston present, but also large delegations from the neighboring towns. The meeting was organized by the choice of Samuel P. Savage, "a gentleman of the town of Weston," moderator.

A motion was at once made and passed, that Mr. Roth, owner of the ship Dartmouth, be desired to give his attendance. Mr. Roth appeared and was required at his peril to apply immediately to the Collector for a clearance for his ship. A committee was appointed to accompany him. Upon their return, Mr. Roth reported that the Collector desired an opportunity to consult with the Comptroller. The meeting, desiring to give their opponents every opportunity for adjustment, voted to adjourn till Thursday the 16th at the same place.

Thursday came, — a day, says Bancroft, by far the most momentous in the history of Boston. "Beware, little town," the historian continues; "count the cost, and know well, if you dare defy the wrath of Great Britain, and if you love exile and poverty and death rather than submission."[1]

The Collector and Comptroller had given an unequivocal and final refusal of clearances for the tea ships. The twentieth day of the Dartmouth's probation had arrived. She would soon be subject to seizure, when, as it was appre-

[1] Hist. U. S. vol. VI. p. 484.

hended, her cargo would be landed under naval protection, and bloody work ensue. The people assembled according to adjournment in the Old South Church at ten o'clock. The following report is drawn chiefly from that printed in the *Boston Gazette* of December 27th.[1] The committee who accompanied Mr. Roth when he made application for clearance reported the Collector's decision. There was yet one chance left for legal adjustment of the difficulty — application to the Governor. Mr. Roth was accordingly directed to apply immediately to his Excellency, and ask from him a passport for his ship. Hutchinson, apprehensive of some emergency in which he might be called upon to take decisive ground, had retired to Milton, seven miles distant from the meeting. In order to give Mr. Roth time to go thence and return, the body adjourned till three o'clock.

At the appointed hour for reassembling there is said to have been in and around the Old South Church the largest gathering of the kind which had ever then been seen in Boston. The record of the meeting is as follows: —

> "It was motioned and voted, that it is the sense of this Body that the use of tea is improper and pernicious.
>
> "Upon a motion made, Voted that it is the opinion of this Body, that it would be expedient for every town in this province to appoint committees of inspection to prevent this detestable tea from coming into any of our towns.
>
> "It was moved and the question put, Whether it is the sense and determination of this Body to abide by their former resolutions with respect to not suffering the tea to be landed, — which passed in the affirmative, *nem. con.*"

At this point, Mr. Roth not having returned, and the early darkness of a New England night having begun to enshroud the town, a motion to adjourn was made. It was doubtless proposed by somebody who did not dream of the plan which had been matured, and, like almost all the people, knew only that the landing was to be prevented — *how* they could not tell. All were content to leave details to the Committee of

[1] A characteristic account of what transpired in Boston on this memorable day may be found in Thomas Carlyle's History of Frederich the Great, vol. VI., pp. 406–7.

Correspondence, upon whom they knew they could rely. Those present from the country hoped the motion would not prevail as the towns from which they came were "very anxious to have full information as to this matter." The most effective reason given against adjournment was that the body ought to carry out their professions *according to their resolves.* It was agreed that the meeting should further await Mr. Roth's return.

Meantime speeches were made by Samuel Adams, Thomas Young, William Rowe, and others. In the course of Mr. Rowe's remarks he asked, "Who knows how tea will mingle with salt water?" Whether many of his hearers understood the full significance of the query, or not, the idea was received with laughter and applause. Josiah Quincy, Jr., "that keen blade which so soon wore out the scabbard,"[1] now addressed his fellow townsmen. The reputation he had already attained bespoke what services he might have rendered to his country had he not died so young.[2] Bancroft calls him "a patriot of fervid feeling; passionately devoted to the liberty of his country; still young; his eye bright, his cheek glowing with hectic fever. He knew that his strength was ebbing. The work of vindicating American freedom must be done soon, or he will be no party to the great achievement. He rises, but it is to restrain, and being truly brave and truly resolved, he speaks the language of moderation." Foreseeing the conflict which must ensue, he desired his countrymen to enter into it deliberately, religiously.

"Mr. Moderator," he said, "it is not the spirit that vapors within these walls that must stand us in stead. The exertions of this day will call forth events which will make a very different spirit necessary for our salvation. Whosoever supposes that shouts and hosannas will terminate the trials of the day entertains a childish fancy. We must be grossly ignorant of the importance and value of the prize for which we contend, we must be equally ignorant of the power of those who have combined against us; we must be blind to that malice, inveteracy, and insatiable revenge, which actuate our enemies, public and private, abroad and in our bosom, to hope that we shall end this controversy

[1] Wendell Phillips. [2] Died on his return from Europe, Apr. 26, 1775.

without the sharpest conflict. Let us not deceive ourselves with the fancy that popular resolves, popular harangues, popular acclamations, will vanish our foes. Let us consider the issue. Let us look to the end. Let us weigh and consider before we advance to those measures which must bring on the most trying and terrible struggle this country ever saw."

But there could be no faltering now; matters had gone too far to permit a backward step. Retreat meant the ridicule of foe and the reproach of friend. It was resolved that the tea should not be landed.

It had now become quite dark. The church was but dimly lighted. The shadows made still more impressive the prelude to what all felt to be the closing scene. If the Governor saw fit to yield, no trouble would ensue; if not, few knew exactly what would be the consequence. It was almost six when Mr. Roth returned. He reported that his Excellency deemed it his duty to refuse a pass until the ship should be properly qualified at the custom house. Thus was the last opportunity for concession lost.

"Mr. Roth was then asked, whether he would send the vessel back with the tea in her under her present circumstances?" His answer was, that "he could not possibly comply, as he apprehended a compliance would prove his ruin."[1] Confusion ensued. Order was demanded, and the call was heeded. Dr. Young was good enough to say that he believed that Mr. Roth[2] was a good man, and that the peculiar embarrassment of his position should be considered. He conjured the people to harm neither his property nor his person. Samuel Adams now arose and said deliberately, — "This meeting can do nothing more to save the country!" On the instant the Mohawk war-whoop sounded at the door, and was echoed in the galleries. Silence was demanded, and the meeting preserved its order to the close.[3] The record concludes as follows: —

"The Body having manifested an exemplary patience and caution in the methods it had pursued to preserve the tea, the property of the East

[1] Boston Gazette, Dec. 27, 1773. [2] A Quaker. [3] Richard Frothingham. Other accounts say that the people rushed into the street as soon as the war-cry was heard.

India Company, without its being made saleable among us, (which must have been fatal to the commonwealth), and to return it safe and untouched to its proprietors; and perceiving that in every step towards this just and salutary purpose, they had been counterworked by the consignees of the tea and their coadjutors, who had plainly manifested their inclination of throwing the community into the most violent commotions, rather than relinquish and give up the profits of a commission or contract, and the advantages they have imagined from the establishment of an American revenue; and no one being able to point out anything further that was in the power of this Body to do for the salutary purpose aforesaid — It was moved and voted, that this meeting be immediately dissolved. And it was accordingly dissolved."[1]

The throng in the church immediately followed after the simulated Indians, who were running towards Griffin's (now Liverpool) wharf, near the foot of Pearl street. A strange sight it was upon which the moon looked down. Through the snow-clad streets of the quaint old city poured thousands of earnest men, led on by a small band of blanketed Indians. Arrived near where the tea ships lay, guards were quickly posted, and the momentous work began. The Indians were joined by others, and the ships were boarded. The chests were brought on deck, broken open, and their contents emptied into the waters of the bay. For several hours the operations were intently watched by citizens on the shore, soldiers in the Castle, and sailors on the war-ships. As strange as it now seems, no resistance was encountered; and we are left to conjecture to account for the fact that all the King's forces made not a single effort. Perhaps the authorites were only too glad to be relieved of the responsibility, even in such a way as this.

So quietly was the work conducted, that the noise of the knives as they cut the tea-chests open could be distinctly heard at a considerable remove. No man was touched, no other property destroyed, no tea purloined. The town, said John Adams, was never more still of a Saturday night than it was at ten o'clock on that memorable evening.

The importance of this event can scarce be estimated. It

[1] Boston Gazette.

was the Rubicon of American independence. Samuel Adams declared that in the passage of the penal laws which the tea riot inspired, "the ministry could not have devised a more effectual measure to unite the colonies." While this last bold act of Boston thrilled the hearts of all the colonists with joy, it laid upon them a tremendous burden, and aroused against them all the animosity of a tyrant ministry and all the resources of a mighty kingdom. Yet they were not dismayed by their surroundings. A fortnight after the destruction of the tea Samuel Adams wrote to Arthur Lee: "You cannot imagine the height of joy that sparkles in the eyes and animates the countenances as well as the hearts of all we meet on this occasion." The people knew what they had done, and rejoiced in any trials that their course might bring upon them. As John Adams said, "THEY HAD PASSED THE RIVER AND CUT AWAY THE BRIDGE."

VIII.

ANNIVERSARIES OF THE BOSTON MASSACRE AND OCCUPATION OF THE OLD SOUTH BY BRITISH CAVALRY.

It is foreign to the purpose and beyond the scope of this little volume to detail the events which followed the destruction of the tea in Boston Harbor. The act was one calculated to arouse the animosity of the British ministry, and to bring into requisition all its resources. Lord North was resolved anew that he would not rest until he saw "America prostrate at his feet." Parliament hastened to pass several penal enactments, tending to the entire subversion of the chartered government of the province. The pitiless Post Bill was among these laws. The recital of the effects of its enforcement would alone make a chapter as sad as it was cruel. But even distress and poverty could not extinguish the flame of liberty, which burned brighter as the darkness thickened. The clouds gathered thick and fast. The storm was close at hand, and the people saw its coming undismayed. In January, 1775, Massachusetts was declared to be in a state of rebellion. In April Lexington and Concord opened the seven-years' drama, and in June Warren sealed his devotion with his blood.

Meantime there had been unfailingly observed yearly celebrations of the "Horrid Massacre." Year by year on the fifth of March the people gathered in the Old South Church, whose walls reverberated to the fearless oratory of Boston's sturdiest patriots. The presence of soldiers seemed only to increase the general earnestness. As the city filled up with the troops of George III, the tongues of the orators seemed to catch new fire. In the strength of a great cause and armed with fearless hearts, the people's leaders announced from the pulpit of the Old South Church principles which

the patriots loved, and which their enemies could not controvert.

That the multiplication of regiments and war-ships failed to intimidate the leaders is amply shown by the following outburst of John Hancock, indulged in the course of his oration on March 5th, 1774: —

"Tell me ye bloody butchers! ye villians high and low! ye wretches who contrived, as well as you who executed the inhuman deed! do you not feel the goads and stings of conscious guilt pierce through your savage bosoms? Though some of you may think yourselves exalted to a height that bids defiance to the arms of human justice, and others shroud yourselves beneath the mask of hypocrisy, and build your hopes of safety on the low arts of cunning, chicanery, and falsehood; yet do you not sometimes feel the gnawings of that worm that never dies?"

Pointing to Monk, a shattered wreck which survived the Fifth of March, the orator continued: —

"Unhappy Monk! thou dost not live in vain. Thou livest a warning to thy country, which sympathizes with thee in thy sufferings. Thou livest an effecting, an alarming instance of the unbounded violence which lust of power, assisted by a standing army, can lead a traitor to commit."

If in the assembly there were any members of the Twenty-ninth regulars, how words like these must have alarmed their ears: —

"Ye dark designing knaves, ye murderers, parricides! how dare you tread upon the earth, which has drunk in the blood of slaughtered innocents, shed by your wicked hands? How dare you breathe that air which wafted to the ear of heaven the groans of those who fell a sacrifice to your accursed ambition? But if the laboring earth doth not expand her jaws; if the air you breathe is not commissioned to be the minister of death; yet hear it and tremble — The eye of heaven penetrates the darkest chambers of the soul, traces the leading clue through all the labyrinths which your industrious folly has devised; and you, however you have screened yourselves from human eyes, must be arraigned, must lift up your hands, red with the blood of those whose death you have procured, *at the tremendous bar of God.*"

There were many passages of exalted eloquence in this oration of the merchant-patriot. The whole production was vigorous, elegant, brave. He discussed intelligently the is-

sues of the day, as well as flamed in wrath against the people's adversaries. The course Hancock had pursued, though very useful, was not such as to lead his contemporaries to credit him with eloquence. We are, therefore, not surprised to learn that his effort upon this occasion exceeded the expectation of his friends. It was simply a fresh illustration of how thorough conviction and mighty principle can lift a man above himself.

The anniversary orations of the period with which we are concerned were delivered by the following citizens;[1] 1771, James Lovell, A. M.; 1773, Dr. Benjamin Church; 1774, Hon. John Hancock; 1772 and 1775, Dr. Joseph Warren. Mr. Lovell's oration was a short and scholarly performance; whatever merits Dr. Church's efforts may have had, they were obscured by his subsequent apostacy; Mr. Hancock's we have noticed; it now remains to consider those of Dr. Warren. By reason of the prominence of their author, and of his glorious adherance to their avowals, as well as by the occasion upon which the second was delivered, they claim a special interest.

It was in his first oration that Warren announced the belief that it was the people's loyalty alone which preserved the British soldiers from destruction. "It was," said he, "royal George's livery that proved their shield, it was that which turned the pointed engines of destruction from their breasts." When, by request of the town, this oration was published, Warren added the following note to the above passage: —

> "I have the strongest reason to believe that I have mentioned the only circumstance which saved the troops from destruction. It was then, and now is, the opinion of those who were best acquainted with the state of affairs at that time, that had twice that number of troops, belonging to any power at open war with us, been in this town, in the same exposed condition, scarce a man would have lived to have seen the morning light."

[1] These orations (for the years 1771–1783 inclusive) were published in a separate volume by Wm. T. Clap of Boston. It is from the second edition of this work, published in 1807, that we quote.

He advanced a calm, logical, but earnest protest against the supreme authority of Parliament, and depicted the evils of a standing army in times of peace. He traced the rise and growth of the idea of government, and announced the chartered rights of the colonists. Dignified and earnest, his oration did not close without spirit and enthusiasm. After depicting the glories of freedom and the hardships endured by the fathers to transmit it to their children, he exclaimed: —

"The voice of your fathers' blood cries to you from the ground: 'My sons, scorn to be slaves! In vain we met the frowns of tyrants; in vain we left our native land; in vain we crossed the boisterous ocean, found a new world, and prepared it for the happy residence of Liberty; in vain we toiled, in vain we fought, we bled in vain, if you, our offspring, want valor to repell the assaults of her invaders!'"

This oration was listened to by an audience composed of both sexes [1] and of all classes. The church was thronged with "a very respectable assembly," [2] which went away well pleased with the young doctor's patriotic sentiments. His effort was considered on all hands to have been worthy of the time and place. Hutchinson conceded to it that "fervor which is the most essential part of such compositions." Says Frothingham, his biographer: "Underlying the ornate style, the fervor, and at times extravagant metaphor, there were frankness, clearness of thought, sincerity, strength of argument, and, as has been seen in his early letter, [3] the ruling passion of his life, — a warm love of country. Behind the orator was the man."

When Warren delivered his second oration the face of things had changed. Massachusetts was officially declared to be in a state of rebellion, and measures of offence and defence were being taken on both sides. Boston was full of troops. Lexington and Concord were but six weeks distant. Interference was feared on the part of the soldiers, and the committee hesitated as to whom it should select for orator. Threats had been made that the massacre should not be declaimed against with impunity, and that the man who should

[1] Boston News Letter. [2] Boston Gazette. [3] To Edmund Dana, Mar. 19, 1766.

dare to speak with the freedom of former years should answer for his indiscretion with his life. In the face of these intimidations, Warren volunteered. He was actuated by that lofty courage and genuine enthusiasm which shortly afterwards led him on to a glorious death. Doubtless he now felt, as, in a later burst of real enthusiasm, he exclaimed: "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.*"

The day came. People attended not only from Boston but from the country round about. The streets were full. The Old South Church was again the center of interest and expectancy. At the appointed hour the house was full to overflowing. In seats elevated above the congregation sat the selectmen, the town clerk, John Hancock, Samuel Adams, and Benjamin Church. About forty British officers, in brilliant uniforms, occupied the front pews and the pulpit stairs. The pulpit was draped in black: within it was seen the handsome face of Joseph Warren. Owing to the crowd which would have made access to the pulpit difficult from the church door, he had ascended a ladder and gained entrance through a window. There he sat, the picture of exalted purpose and manly resolution. Edward Everett said of him, that "he united the graces of manly beauty to a lion heart, a sound mind, a safe judgment, and a firmness of purpose which nothing could shake." "A patriot, in whom the flush of youth and the grace and dignity of manhood were combined, stood armed in the sanctuary of God to animate and encourage the sons of liberty, and to hurl defiance at their oppressors."[1]

Before he rose to speak a solemn stillness brooded over the assembly. "Each man felt the palpitations of his own heart, and saw the pale but determined face of his neighbor."[2] Not in the least intimidated by the character of a portion of his audience, Warren proceeded to speak with that sincerity and boldness which characterized all his utterances, delivering what a British officer termed "a most seditious inflammatory harangue."

[1]Knapp's Biographical Sketches. [2]Magoon's "Orators of the American Revolution."

At the outset he announced the principle that "no man, or body of men, can, without being guilty of flagrant injustice, claim a right to dispose of the persons or acquisitions of any other man, or body of men, unless it can be proved that such a right has arisen from some compact between the parties in which it has been expressly and freely granted." He then took a retrospective view of the settlement of the country and its early struggles, in order to determine "with what degree of justice the late Parliament of Great Britain have assumed the power of giving away that property which the Americans have earned with their labor." Having, by their own hardihood alone, gained a home in the new world, they yet saw fit to ask from King James a grant of the lands they occupied. This was done to silence the cavils of enemies, for "certain it is," as Warren said, "he might with equal propriety and justice, have made them a grant of the planet Jupiter." They then purchased the land from the Indians, precisely as if there were no such place as England and no such King as James. So long as New England was poor, and so long as her settlers gained a scant subsistence by unending toil and tireless vigilance alone, she was ignored by England.

"But when, at an infinite expense of toil and blood, this widely extended continent had been cultivated and defended: when the hardy adventurers justly expected that they and their descendants should peaceably have enjoyed the harvest of those fields which they had sown, and the fruit of those vineyards which they had planted; this country was then thought worthy the attention of the British ministry . . . . By an intercourse of friendly offices, the two countries became so united in affection, that they thought not of any distinct or separate interests; they found both countries flourishing and happy. . . . .

"These pleasing connections might have continued; these delightsome prospects might have been every day extended; and even the reveries of the warmest imagination might have been realized: but unhappily for us, unhappily for Britain, the madness of an avaricious minister of state, has drawn a sable curtain over the charming scene, and in its stead, has brought upon the stage, discord, envy, hatred, and revenge, with civil war close in their rear."

The orator then proceeded to consider the reasons for this

change. He discussed the question of taxation without representation, and dwelt upon the wrongs of the colonists at the hands of Britain. This led up to the contemplation of the Boston Massacre, the horrors of which he painted in the boldest colors. "Stronger language could not have been used, if no threats had been uttered, or no English officer been present."[1] Having depicted the scenes of the Fifth of March, he exclaimed: —

"We wildly stare about, and with amazement ask, who spread this ruin round us? What wretch has dared to deface the image of his God? Has haughty France, or cruel Spain, sent forth her myrmidons? Has the grim savage rushed again from the far distant wilderness? Or does some fiend, fierce from the depths of hell, with all the rancorous malace which the apostate damned can feel, twang her destructive bow, and hurl her deadly arrows at our breasts? — No: none of these; but — how astonishing! — it is the hand of BRITAIN that inflicts the wound. The arms of GEORGE our rightful king, have been employed to shed that blood, when justice, or the honor of his crown, had called his subjects to the field."

After referring to the withdrawal of the troops and the fresh indignities heaped upon the colonists, the orator continued: —

"Our streets are again filled with armed men; our harbor is crowded with ships of war. But these cannot intimidate us. Our liberty must be preserved. . . . . . The man who meanly will submit to wear a shackle, contemns the noblest gift of heaven, and impiously affronts the God that made him free."

On the subject of standing armies in populous cities in times of peace, the boldest patriot could have desired no stronger language. Contemplating forcible contention with Great Britain, and fearless of the officers who sat near him, Warren said: —

"Her arms, it is true, have filled the world with terror: her troops have reaped the laurels of the field: her fleets have rode triumphant on the sea. — But when, or where, did *you*, my countrymen, depart inglorious from the field of fight? You, too, can show the trophies of your forefathers' victories and your own; can name the fortresses and

[1] Tudor's Life of James Otis.

battles you have won; and many of you can count the honorable scars and wounds you have received, whilst fighting for your king and country. Where justice is the standard, heaven is the warriors shield; but conscious gilt unnerves the arm that lifts the sword against the innocent."

He still hoped for peace. "Our wish is," said he, "that Britain and the colonies, may, like the oak and the ivy, grow and increase in strength together." He declared that reconciliation might still be gained by wise and honest measures.

"But if these pacific measures are ineffectual, and it appears that the only way to safety is through fields of blood, I know you will not turn your faces from your foes, but will undauntedly press forward, until tyranny is trodden under foot. . . . .

"Having redeemed your country, and secured the blessing of future generations, who, fired by your example, shall emulate your virtues, and learn from you the heavenly art of making millions happy; with heart-felt joy, with transports all your own, you cry, The glorious work is done!"

Thus the oration closed. Warren's glorious work was almost done.

Until the close of the oration the officers are said to have observed a generally correct deportment, although they were guilty of occasionally laughing, hemming, and coughing, in order to disconcert the speaker. "It was imagined," wrote a British officer, "that there would have been a riot, which, if there had, would in all probability have proved fatal to Hancock, Adams, Warren, and the rest of those villains, as they were all up in the pulpit together, and the meeting was crowded with officers and seaman in such a manner that they could not have escaped. However it luckily did not turn out so; it would indeed have been a pity for them to have made their exit in that way, as I hope we shall have the pleasure before long of seeing them do it by the hands of the hangman." It is probable, however, that the result of a disturbance would have been quite different from that contemplated by the royalists. The patriots anticipated trouble and went prepared to punish those who should inaugurate

it. Samuel Adams wrote to R. H. Lee shortly afterwards: "I am persuaded, were it not for the danger of precipitating a crisis, not a man of them would have been spared."

The officers were not only seated in the pews and on the pulpit stairs, but, according to some authorities, several of them were within the sacred desk itself. After one of the orator's boldest utterances, an officer of the Welsh Fusileers, who was seated at Warren's feet, held up several pistol-bullets in his open palm. Not at all disconcerted, the speaker quickly dropped a handkerchief over them. After the close of the oration, the meeting, which was an adjournment of a town meeting, proceeded to transact some business. It was then that the officers displayed their insolence, putting on their hats, making nominations, and voting against the unanimous expressions of the town.[1] The Forty-seventh regiment, returning from parade, passed by the Old South: to confuse the meeting, the commander caused the drums to beat. It was moved that a vote of thanks be tendered to the orator, and that he be desired to furnish a copy of his speech for publication. Upon this the officers struck their canes upon the floor, made insolent noises, and some of them exclaimed, "Fie! fie!" This was misinterpreted by the audience to be a cry of fire, and a panic ensued. William Cooper, the venerable town clerk, and Samuel Adams called loudly for order, and quiet was restored. The congregation then dispersed, having participated in exercises which added a new laurel to the "Sanctuary of Freedom." The oration of the next year was delivered in Watertown, the Old South Church being in the possession of British cavalry.

OCCUPATION OF THE CHURCH BY BRITISH CAVALRY.

The winter of 1775–6 was a hard one for Boston. Besieged by Washington's army, it was cut off from all resources save such as might come by sea. Ten thousand soldiers were quartered on its scanty store, and were in

[1] See Frothingham's Warren, 437–8, note.

actual distress for want of shelter, food and fuel. The inhabitants, dependent upon themselves alone, had to bear, vicariously, as it were, the misfortunes of the soldiers. So lawless was the disposition of the troops that Sir William Howe, who had superceded General Gage, was obliged to resort to the severest measures of correction. Some offenders were hung, some lashed: the sentence of a guilty wife of a pirate was, that she should receive "one hundred lashes on her bare back, with a cat-o'-nine-tails, at the cart's tail in different portions of the most conspicuous parts of the town, and to be imprisoned three months."[1]

The approach of a winter of unusual severity made it necessary to procure warmer quarters for the soldiers than tents afforded. The Brattle Street and Hollis Street churches were converted into barracks, the Lynd Street Church was occupied as a hospital, and the OLD SOUTH CHURCH, at the solicitation of Burgoyne, was transformed into a riding-school for cavalry. It was Burgoyne's own regiment, the Queen's Light Dragoon's, that pursued their exercises in the house of God. When, in 1865, the slab bearing the inscriptions copied on page 20 was about to be put in place, there was some objection to the word "desecrated." This view was supported by the fact, that, in the history of modern warfare, instances in which the occupancy of churches by troops has been found necessary, are frequent. But in the case of the Old South Church, it is claimed, there is evidence of unusual wantonness and malice. Its record, certainly, was calculated to arouse any vindictiveness which there might have been. The pews were all removed, the pulpit was demolished, and a portion of the galleries was torn away. Several feet of dirt and gravel were spread upon the floor, the southern door was closed, and a leaping-bar, over which the horses vaulted, was erected near the southern wall. The eastern gallery was reserved for officers and ladies, whose spiritual wants were satisfied by a bar-room in the rear. The

[1] For receiving stolen goods.

gallery above was open to the common soldiers, who, with their superiors below, daily congregated to witness feats of horsemanship. Such was the spectacle presented to those who had known and loved the Old South Church as the altar of their faith and the sanctuary of their freedom! But "the horse and his rider have perished, while the temple they profaned still stands, and the flag they hated still waves on high. *Sic semper tyrannis!*"[1]

Among the "Recollections of a Bostonian" there is the following account of a ludicrous incident which took place during the church's occupancy by the British: —

"A good old woman who frequently passed the church was in the habit of stopping at the door, and with loud lamentations, amidst the hooting of the soldiery, bewailed the desolation of the house of prayer. She denounced on them the vengeance of Heaven, and assured them that good Doctor Sewall would rise from his grave and carry them off. A Scotch sentinel was one night alarmed by an appearance of what he thought was an apparition of the Doctor. He screamed most violently and alarmed the guard of grenadiers, who were always stationed at the Province House,[2] then occupied by General Howe. There was no pacifying him, until some one asked how the Doctor was dressed, and he answered, with a large wig and gown. One of the inhabitants, who had been drawn there from curiosity, assured him it could not have been Dr. Sewall, because he never wore a wig, which restored the poor fellow to his senses. It was generally supposed to be a trick of one of the English soldiers, who wished to frighten a superstitious Scotchman, and for that purpose had dressed himself in the clerical habit of the Rev. Mr. Cooke, of Menotomy, which he had plundered on his retreat at the battle of Lexington."

This occurrence is said to have made it difficult to maintain a night-guard at the church door, as was customary. There were among the regulars many Scotch Presbyterians, who almost expected nothing better than retributive justice for the abuses to which the holy place was put.

In a note to his second sermon on the History of the Old South Church, Dr. Wisner advances evidence of the wanton manner in which, during the Revolution, the British Army manifested its hostility to all churches not Episcopalian.

[1] Speech of Rev. J. M. Manning, May 1, 1861. [2] Nearly opposite.

They "destroyed the steeple of the West Church because they supposed it had been used as a signal staff." Of the nineteen places of worship in New York city, when the war began, there were but nine fit for use when the British left it. Boston, Newport, Philadelphia, and Charleston all suffered in this particular."[1]

The demolition of such structures and parts of structures, however, as were valuable for fuel, cannot justly be charged to a spirit of wantonness or revenge. The necessity was extreme, and General Howe exerted every power to govern its supply without needless destruction. The following order shows that he was in earnest in his desire to spare the town all needless harm. The soldiers, scantily provided, and in spite of rigid regulations, demolished houses and fences, without, in some instances, waiting for the proper orders. December 5th General Howe directed "the provost to go his rounds, attended by the executioner, with orders to hang up on the spot the first man he should detect in the fact, without waiting for further proof for trial." A regular system was adopted, the most worthless houses being first selected for destruction. Richard Frothingham, in his valuable "History of the Siege of Boston," presents a just and impartial picture of the state of things at this period, and does not fail to give credit where it seems to be deserved.[2] He says that supplies having been long awaited, and none having arrived, on the 14th an order issued that the Old North Church and one hundred old wooden houses should be demolished. This is strongly contrasted to the records of that church, quoted by Dr. Wisner, which allege that this work was done "although there were then large quantities of coal and wood in the town."

The pews, pulpit, galleries, and other portions of the interior of the Old South Church went to feed the British fires. "The beautiful carved pew of Deacon Hubbard, with the silken hangings, was taken down and carried to ——'s house

[1] Note 47. [2] See pages 279–282.

by an officer and made a hog-stye." The parsonage, the ancient residence of Winthrop the first Governor of the province, which stood opposite the foot of School street, was destroyed and used for fuel. "So the roof that sheltered Winthrop went to light the mess-fires of his Majesty's troops, or to diffuse warmpth through the apartments of Gage or Howe in the Province House."[1] The beautiful row of buttonwood trees that skirted the line of Marlborough street shared the same fate. The stove in the riding-school is said to have been supplied with valuable books and pamphlets from the library of Mr. Prince, which was then deposited in the tower of the church. For such destruction, even the rigors of a New England winter can furnish no excuse.

"The Old North Chapel, built in 1677, which was in good repair and might have stood many years, was pulled down for fuel. The steeple of the West Church, built of large timber, was also taken down, and afforded no small supply. Many trees were cut down on the common, and in other places. The celebrated Liberty Tree furnished fourteen cords of wood."[2]

In March, 1776, the siege of Boston ended, and with it the occupancy of the OLD SOUTH CHURCH. The theatre of war was soon shifted to the south, and thenceforth Boston did not know the presence of a foe. The Old South Meeting-House had won an exalted place in history. It still stands, a relic of those early days, rearing heavenward the same steeple from which the wives of Boston watched the fight on Bunker Hill, and surrounded by the same walls which echoed the eloquence of heroes. Shall it not remain? Have we grown so base as to desecrate the sanctuary of out freedom?

[1] S. A. Drake's Landmarks of Boston. [2] History of the Siege of Boston.

IX.

LATTER DAYS.

During the occupancy of Boston by the British forces the Old South congregation were scattered in various quarters. After the evacuation of the city they returned to find the temple of their fathers' desecrated and unfit for occupation. Kings Chapel afforded them accommodation till the year 1782, when, having repaired and refitted the Old South Meeting-House, they resumed the occupancy of that building. Since the Revolution there have been but six pastors of the Old South Church, whose names are included in the following complete list of ministers who have filled that pulpit from its foundation to the present time.

Thomas Thatcher,	settled Feb. 16, 1670.	Died Oct. 15, 1678.
Samuel Willard,	" Apr. 10, 1678.	" Sep. 12, 1707.
Ebenezer Pemberton,	" Aug. 28, 1700.	" Feb. 13, 1717.
Joseph Sewall, D.D.,	" Sep. 16, 1713.	" Jun. 27, 1769.
Thomas Prince,	" Oct. 1, 1718.	" Oct. 22, 1758.
Alexander Cumming,	" Feb. 25, 1761.	" Aug. 25, 1763.
Samuel Blair, D.D.,	" Nov. 19, 1766.	Resigned Oct. 10, 1769.
John Bacon,	" Sep. 25, 1771.	" Feb. 8, 1775.
John Hunt,	" Sep. 25, 1771.	Died Dec. 20, 1775.
Joseph Eckley, D.D.,	" Oct. 27, 1779.	" Apr. 30, 1811.
Joseph Huntington,	" May 18, 1803.	" Sep. 11, 1819.
B. B. Wisner, D.D.,	" Feb. 21, 1821.	Resigned Nov. 12, 1832.
Saml H. Stearns,	" Apr. 16, 1834.	" Mar. 8, 1836.
Geo. W. Blagden, D.D.,	" Sep. 28, 1836.	Retired ——— ———
Jos. M. Manning,	" Mar. 11, 1857.	Present Pastor.

In length of service and devotion to his work the last but one of these divines ranks with Sewall and Prince. Just forty years ago Dr. Blagden was installed pastor of this people. He still lives, though, by reason of advanced age, he is no longer engaged in active service. Upon the twenty-fifth anniversary of his settlement, the event was fittingly celebrated. The following day being Sunday, Dr. Blagden

preached an appropriate sermon in which he said, that up to that time he had preached eleven hundred and nineteen sermons, fully written, and very many others from short notes. During the quarter century, he had, as pastor of the Old South church, officiated at four hundred and ten funerals and three hundred and eighty-four marriages.

When the War of the Rebellion broke upon the land the Old South Meeting-House was true to its longtime devotion to the principle of Union. In May, 1861, from its tower was unfurled, in the presence of crowds which filled the adjacent streets, the stars and stripes. None took more pains, upon that occasion, to recall the national memories of the place and to praise its public record, than some who have since denied its right to be. It was then declared that the associations of the place bestowed "an influence which no other riches can supply"; and the fact was recognized, that, as one of Boston's orators has said, "there is to this edifice not only a natural body, but a spiritual body, — the immortal soul of independence."

The Old South Church had escaped the fates of war, and had been saved from out of the midst of a great calamity which came to its very door, when its life was threatened by its friends. After the great fire of 1872, unprecedented in the history of the city and with hardly an equal in the history of the land, the Old South Meeting-House was desired for temporary occupancy as a post-office by the United States authorities. This proposition was accepted. A lot of land upon the "Back Bay" section of the city had been bought before the fire, and a parsonage and chapel had already been in part, at least, constructed. The building committee were now instructed to procure plans and estimates for a new church to be erected in addition.

It was necessary to petition the legislature for leave to lease or sell. These steps, which, plainly, were merely preliminary to the final abandonment and destruction of the building, were vigorously resisted by an intelligent and numerous

minority, who claimed that under a proper construction of Madam Norton's will the property could not be used for any other purpose than that of religious exercises by the successors of the original donees. But leave to lease was granted, and the United States entered upon an occupancy which continued for about two years.

A year later the society voted to petition the General Court for a removal of all restrictions or disabilities upon the sale of the old meeting-house. When the matter came before the Senate a vigorous debate ensued. An act was passed (Chap. 120, 1874,) directing that the right of alienating the property should be determined by the Supreme Court in equity, and requiring its sanction to any proposition to sell the land or building. Accordingly, in the fall of 1874, the court was petitioned for leave to sell. Long and costly litigation followed. The minority simply asked that they might retain the meeting-house, while their more ambitious brethren should be allowed to worship where they chose. The church fund, grown to an enormous aggregate, was amply sufficient without the proceeds of a sale of the old church grounds. But leave to sell was granted, and the majority — a bare majority — were left to do with it as they pleased.[1]

This result was not accomplished until the spring of 1876. The church was speedily advertised for sale. Meantime, protests came from far and near; and it began to be apparent that the interest in the building extended from Maine to California. But there was no organization, no leader; and on the 8th of June the old meeting-house was sold like cattle in the shambles. The auctioneer seemed justified in the remark, that "the heart had been willing but the purse had been weak." The hammer fell, and the building was sold for $1,350, to be removed within sixty days.

The work of destruction at once commenced. The clock had been taken from the tower, and the solid masonry had been attacked, when one of Boston's most active merchants

[1] For the case of Old South Society vs. Uriel Crocker and others, and that of Attorney General vs. Old South Society, see 119 Mass. 1-28.

filled the breach. All had seemed hopeless. The community, though profoundly moved, seemed dazed at what was being done, and protested without the power to save. At this crisis Geo. W. Simmons & Son stepped in and saved the building. On the 11th of June, the church tower bore the following words: —

THE ELEVENTH HOUR!

MEN AND WOMEN OF MASSACHUSETTS!

Does Boston desire the humiliation which is to-day a part of her history since she has allowed this memorial to be sold under the hammer?

SHALL THE OLD SOUTH BE SAVED?

We have bought the right to hold this building uninjured for seven days, and will be conditionally responsible for raising the last $100,000 to complete its purchase.

G. W. Simmons & Son, Oak Hall, Boston.

This timely act of the Messrs. Simmons was generally applauded, and a smaller number of public prints than might have been expected attributed it to mercenary motives. The fact was very generally recognized, that, in this case at least, commendable promptness and business energy were not inconsistent with disinterested public spirit. We know not what others *might* have done; we only know that the Messrs. Simmons *acted* when others were discouraged. Primarily, the preservation of the building is owed to them.

Desiring only to put the ball in motion, they were willing to retire whenever others would relieve them. Accordingly, Mr. Simmons, jun., undertook to call a public meeting. He enlisted the services of Charles W. Slack, Esq., editor of the *Commonwealth*, who, though a very busy man, found time enough for such a matter. With but a short time for preparation, Mr. Slack immediately called upon several men of prominence to lend a helping hand. But it was not without difficulty that he succeeded in perfecting arrangements for the meeting. Among others, Wendell Phillips agreed to speak.

MEETING OF JUNE 14TH, 1876.

By dint of great activity, Mr. Slack succeeded in making timely preparations for a monster meeting in the Old South

Church, which, in many particulars, ranks among the most remarkable ever held within its historic walls. When the doors were opened the waiting concourse quickly filled every available spot within. The ladies of Boston graced the meeting with their presence, and filled the galleries, which were reserved for their accommodation. The open space below, devoid of seats, was crowded with a representative Boston audience. When John, T. Clark, the chairman of the meeting, accompanied by Wendell Phillips, Wm. H. H. Murray, Charles W. Slack, Curtis Guild, Edward S. Tobey and George W. Simmons, ascended the platform under the quaint old sounding-board, the walls echoed with the cheers of the assembly. Just one hundred and eight years ago, that day, the first great meeting assembled within those walls. Mr. Slack stated the object of the meeting, referred to some of the stirring events connected with its history, and stated the question of the hour to be whether this edifice, hallowed and sanctified and glorified, should no longer be known as one of the ancient landmarks of Boston. He was followed by John T. Clark, Chairman of the Board of Aldermen, who declared that the building did not stand in the way of public improvement.

But the central event, for which all were eager with expectancy, was the speech of Wendell Phillips, the "silver-tongued orator" of Massachusetts. Nor did he disappoint the anticipations of those who expected an effort worthy of his subject and himself. Many times had he astonished Boston audiences with the faultless symetry of his reasoning, the matchless beauty of his rhetoric, and the undiminished energy of his utterance: but never before had he delivered what, in many particulars, was more worthy to be called his masterpiece. The time, the place, the subject — all were calculated to draw forth his powers. The memories of the past crowded to his mind, and he spoke as if pleading for the life of one condemned unjustly. A writer in the *Boston Herald*, whose account has been very widely quoted, wrote as follows: —

"We have heard Mr. Phillips perhaps a hundred times, upon many topics of public interest, but we have never heard him until yesterday, when he so completely realized our ideal of the master of oratory. Upon many occasions we have listened to Webster, Everett and Choate in the fulness of their great powers, by which they swept the chords of hope, desire or sympathy; but we never heard, even from them, anything so rhetorically graceful or so profoundly inspiring as this grand appeal of Mr. Phillips to the citizens of Boston."

We regret that it is impracticable to present this speech in full; but such a course would hardly comport with the general character of our work. There are no reports of the speeches of the Revolutionary period which were delivered in the old church walls: they expired with the occasions which gave them birth. That wealth of sentiment and world of eloquence to which these precincts have resounded have been preserved only in the memories of those who heard them. And, after all, such an effort as that of Mr. Phillips must be *heard* in order to be appreciated. It is no more in the power of type or pen to reproduce its flavor, than it is for the naturalist to confine the rose's perfume between the covers of a book. And when reproduced, it is but the semblance of the thing; the *essence* is not there. Not only the words are necessary, but the man who uttered them. Moreover, the occasion, the time, the place, the people — all are indispensable elements of the real eloquence of the effort. The mantle of the Revolution seemed to have fallen upon the speaker, and he appeared to be the natural successor of Samuel Adams — like him, bold, honest, earnest, patriotic. None of these accompaniments can be put on paper.[1] Having risen from his chair, he advanced upon the platform. Every voice was hushed. In a low but peculiarly impressive tone he said: "Why are we here to-day?" The effect of this simple question was almost magical. The attention of every mind was at once arrested. The audience began to feel the spell of his wonderful eloquence.

[1] The speech stenographically reported, and as corrected and edited by Mr. Phillips himself, was published in the *Golden Rule* of June 21, 1876, and in pamphlet form by the Preservation Committee.

In opening, the orator referred to what had been accomplished in America during the first century of the existence of the Union.

"We have," said he, "actually founded a Republic on the unlimited suffrage of the millions. We have actually worked out the problem that man, as God created him, may be trusted with self-government. We have shown the world that a Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King, is an actual, real, every day possibly. . . . .

"With how much pride, with what a thrill, with what tender and loyal reverence may we not hunt up and cherish and guard from change or desecration the spot where this marvellous enterprise began — the roof under which its first councils were held — where the air still trembles and burns with Otis and Sam Adams?

Except the Holy City, is there any more memorable or sacred place on the face of the earth than the cradle of such a change? Athens has her Acropolis, but the Greek can point to no such immediate and distinct results. Her influence passes into the web and woof of history, mixed with a score of other elements, and it needs a keen eye to follow it. London has her Palace and Tower and her St. Stephen's Chapel, but the human race owes her no such memories. France has spots marked by the sublimest devotion, but the pilgrimage and the Mecca of the man who believes and hopes for the human race is not to Paris, it is to the seabord cities of the great Republic.

"Go ask the Londoner, crowded into small space, what number of pounds laid down on a square foot, what necessities of business, would induce him to pull down the Tower and build a counting-house on its site Go ask Paris what they will take from some business corporation for the spot where Mirabeau and Danton, or later down Lamartine saved the great flag of the tri-color from being drenched in the blood of their fellow citizens.

"What makes Boston a history? Not so many men, not so much commerce. It is *ideas.* You might as well plough it with salt and remove bodily into the more healthy elevation of Brookline or Dorchester, but for State Street, Faneuil Hall, and the Old South.

"What does *Boston* mean? Since 1630, the living fibre, running through history, which owns that name, means jealousy of power, unfettered speech, keen sense of justice, readiness to champion any good cause; that is the *Boston* Laud suspected, North hated and the negro loved. If you destroy the scenes which perpetuate *that* Boston, then re-baptize her Cottonville or Shoetown. . . .

"The British Parliament chose Boston as the first and prominent object of its wrath. It was on the men of Boston that Lord North visited

his revenge. It was our port which was to be stopped and its commerce annihilated. It was Sam Adams and John Hancock who enjoy the everlasting reward of being the only names excepted from the royal proclamation of forgiveness. . . .

"Here, Sam Adams, the ablest and ripest statesman God gave to the epoch, forecast those measures which welded thirteen colonies into one thunderbolt, and launched it at George the Third. Here Otis magnetized every boy into a desperate rebel. Here the fit successors of Knox and Hugh Peters consecrated their pulpits to the defence of that doctrine of the freedom and sacredness of man, which the State borrowed so directly from the Christian Church. The towers of the North Church rallied the farmers to the Lexington and Concord fights, and these old walls echoed the people's shout, when Adams brought them word that Governor Hutchinson surrendered and withdrew the red-coats. Lingering here still are the echoes of those clashing sabres and jingling spurs, that dreamt Warren could be awed to silence. Otis' blood immortalizes State Street, just below where Attucks fell, our first martyr, and just above where zealous patriots made a teapot of the harbor.

"It was a petty town, of some twenty thousand inhabitants, but 'the rays of royal indignation collected upon it, served only to illuminate and could not consume.' Almost every one of its houses had a legend. Every public building hid what was treasonable debate, or bore bullet marks or bloodshed—evidence of royal displeasure. It takes a stout heart to step out of a crowd, and risk the chances of support—when failure is death. The strongest, proudest, most obdurate race and kingdom on one side—a petty town, the assailant. Its weapons, ideas—its trust, God and the right. Its old-fashioned men, patiently arguing with cannon and regiments,—blood, the seal of the debate,—and every stone, and wall, and roof, and doorway, witness forever of the angry tyrant and sturdy victim. . .

"You spend half a million for a school-house—what school so eloquent as these walls to educate citizens? Napoleon turned his Simplon road aside to save a tree Cæsar had once mentioned. Won't you turn a street or spare a quarter of an acre to remind boys what sort of men their fathers were? . . . .

"You spend $40,000 here, and $20,000 there, to put up a statue of some old hero; you want your son to gaze on the nearest approach to the features of those 'dead but sceptre sovereigns, who still rule our spirits from their urns.' But what is a statue of Cicero compared to standing where your voice echoes from pillar and wall that actually heard his Phillippics? How much better than a picture of John Brown is a sight of that Blue Ridge which filled his eye when riding to the scaffold he said calmly to his jailer, 'This is a beautiful country: I never noticed it before.' Destroy every portrait of Luther if you must, but save that terrible chamber where he fought with the devil and translated the Bible. Scholars have

grown old and blind striving to put their hands on the very spot where bold men spoke, or brave men died. Shall we tear in pieces the roof that actually trembled to the words which made us a nation? . . . . Let these walls stand, if only to remind us that in those days Adams and Otis, advocates of the newest and extremest liberty, found their sturdiest allies in the pulpit;—that our Revolution was so much a crusade that the Church led the van.

"Summon it again, ye venerable walls, to its true place in the world's toil for good. Give us Mayhews and Coopers again,—and let the children of the Pilgrims show that religious conviction, veneration for the 'great of old,' and a stern purpose that our flag shall everywhere and always mean justice, are a threefold cord holding this nation together never to be broken.

"We have a great *future* before us. How grand, human forecast cannot measure. Yes, a great future, endangered by many and grave perils; our way out of these faith believes in, but mortal eye cannot see. It is wisdom to summon every ally, to save every possible help. Educate the people to noble purposes. Lift them to the level of the highest motive. Enforce by every possible appeal the influence of the finest elements of our nature. Let the great ideas, self-respect, freedom, justice, self-sacrifice, help each man to tread the body under his feet. This worship of great memories, noble deeds, sacred places—the poetry of history—is one of the keenest ripeners of such elements. Seize greedily on every chance to save and emphasize them.

"Give me a people freshly and tenderly alive to such influences, and I will laugh at money-rings or demagogues armed with sensual temptations. Men marvelled at the uprising which hurled slavery to the dust. It was young men who dreamed dreams over patriot graves—enthusiasts wrapped in memories. Marble, gold, and granite are not *real*. The only actual reality is an idea. . . .

"The influence of these old walls will prevent men, if anything can, from becoming the tools of corruption or tyranny. 'Remember every day one good thought—read one fine line,' says the German Shakespeare. Yes, let every man's daily walk catch one ray of golden light, and his pulse throb once each day nobly as he passes these walls. No gold, no greed can canker the heart of such a people; once in their hands, neither need, greed, nor the clamor for wider streets, will ever desecrate what Adams and Warren and Otis made sacred to the liberties of man."

Thus the oration ended—an effort which added a new lustre to Phillips's name and spread wider yet the admiration of his eloquence. As a whole it was one of the best, if not the very best, contribution he has ever made to American oratory. We regret the necessity of presenting it in a way so fragmentary and imperfect.

In referring to the purposes to which the church ought to be devoted in case of its preservation, Mr. Phillips urged the claims of the mechanics of Boston, for whom he thought it ought to be converted into a mechanics' exchange. For, said he, "it was the mechanics of Boston that threw tea into the dock; it was the mechanics of Boston that held up the hands of Sam Adams; it was the mechanics of Boston, Paul Revere one of them, that made the Green Dragon immortal. . . . It was the message of the mechanics of Boston that Sam Adams carried to the Governor and to Congress—they sent him to Salem and to Philadelphia—they lifted and held him up till even purblind George III could distinguish his ablest opposer and learned to hate with discrimination."

The address of Rev. Wm. H. H. Murray, which followed that of Mr. Phillips, was so sensible, so earnest and so eloquent, that it well deserves to be quoted in full. The following is a portion of it:—

"The great underlying question of the hour is this: Is this building worth preserving? Has it any claim upon the Boston public? Is there any reason why the Boston public, meeting together to value it, should say that if it is possible to save it it would be a gain to them, individually, and to the country, to buy it?

"Well, what is it that gives value to anything, gentlemen? There is no value to anything, material or spiritual, save as it affects man. Show me any creation of God, and the gauge-line that measures its value is this:—Is the influence of this thing a healthy, educational, salutary, and sublime influence on man? . . . Whatever ministers to man is good, and worth preserving. But we all know that man has his low level, and his intermediate level, and he has his highest level also. You will agree with me that whatever ministers to man on the lowest level, has one price; whatever ministers to him on a higher level, has another valuation; but whatever ministers to man on the highest level is superlatively valuable, and should be preserved at any cost. . . Whatever ministers to the mind, to the higher functions of the intellect, above all to the immortal spirit in the finest exhibitions of its energies and powers, is worthy to have sacrifice given for it, and to have treasures, even the treasures of mortal life, poured out freely for its preservation.

"Now, gentlemen, what is it that makes Boston? Do your warehouses make Boston? Do your stores make Boston? Do your railroads make Boston? Do your miles of wharfage make Boston? Do the white sails of your many ships make Boston? Are these the things that make Boston,

and are chiefly valuable to it? No! What is it makes the man? Is it his body, his bone, his flesh, his fibre, his earthly embodiment in which he is? No! a thousand times no! The man is of importance by reason of that which is unseen; by that which is sublime but invisible; by that which is immortal, which you cannot touch, but which you sense and feel in your innermost spirit. These warehouses, these ships, these mansions, these things of iron and wood and stone are only the body of Boston, are only the iron nerves along which her interior, unseen, vital self communicates her will; only the flesh in which she is living. But Boston is that unseen something, that immortal, sublime, invisible spirit that is not in this building or that building, but which buildings suggest and advertise to the public. And here in this building there is value beyond any material valuation, because here Boston has her unseen, invisible, loftiest self suggested and expressed to the public.

"Gentlemen of Boston, can you afford to let that which is so sweet, that which is so sacred, that which is so sublime a power in its suggestiveness, pass away? Why does Boston differ from Chicago? Why do we differ here from Cincinnati? Chicago can be burned level to the ground and civilization shall lose nothing but the material loss. Cincinnati and St. Louis may be destroyed, and yet above their charred and blackened ruins the skill and money of men shall rear large cities. But if Boston is destroyed, not in the material expression of herself, but if the very blood in her arteries is spilled and let out carelessly on the ground, where is the fineness of touch, where is the subtle attraction that shall gather the spent drops from the sands at our feet, and recharge her empty veins with the noble and puissant current? .

"If in addition to the loss of the house where Benjamin Franklin was born, the old Hancock residence, and the Brattle Street Church, you shall add the Old State House, which has already been desecrated and half its sanctity destroyed, the Old South, and Faneuil Hall, then what have you, Bostonians, left in any sense different from any city that has sprung up within the last twenty years? Take away these expressions of the soul, of the life of Boston, and what, I ask, have you left beyond any other city on the continent? Your graves are no longer sacred, for you have ploughed them up and sowed them with wheat. . . When these things, when the soul, as it were, of Boston has been taken out of her body, what has Boston left, and what splendor shall ever again shine in the light of her countenance? . . .

"Many of you know I do not feign what I say in speaking in public; and I say that I have been more profoundly stirred by the thought of the Old South passing away, than by any other thought that has come to me in my public life. . . . .

"I would, had I my wish, make this building a Westminster Abbey. I

would bring here the faces of our greatest men. I would put over there the face of Adams, and here of the elder Quincy, and there I would hang Otis, and in front I would put the beautiful countenance of Warren; and Franklin should have a place, and all the great men in your early history should be here, as in no other gallery; and whenever a man on this globe, or continent, wanted to see and get the inspiration of seeing the faces of these great men, he should come to Boston, yea, even here to this building to find them.

"And there, besides the older faces, I would hang your younger men, descendants of the Putnams, and the Adamses, and the Shaws, and the Bancrofts, and the Lawrences,— those young, fresh flowers of life that were cut by the scythe of the late war or wilted in death under the fierce Southern sun,—I would bring those younger men here; for, when another century has passed on, who can tell the priceless value which the boys of that distant age, when America numbers not forty, but one hundred, or one hundred and forty millions, shall set upon such a heroic and memorable collection?"

That this excellent suggestion of Mr. Murray in regard to the best use of the meeting-house, in case of its preservation, was favorably entertained in other quarters, we shall see a little further on.

Edward S. Tobey, Esq., spoke a good word for the members of the Old South Society, declaring that they had acted in accordance with the dictates of their consciences and under sanction of the law. Many of them, he said, were ready to do as individuals what they could not do as members of the Society, towards the preservation of the meeting-house.

Curtis Guild, Esq., followed with a few apt and eloquent remarks, highly commending the part women took in such movements, and concluding with the nomination of a committee of twenty-four representative citizens to be charged with the duty of negotiating for the preservation of the building.

It was announced that Moses H. Sargent, Esq., had consented to act as treasurer of the fund, and subscriptions were called for. Several thousand dollars were subscribed at once. The meeting then dispersed—a meeting which will always be memorable as one of the most remarkable ever held within the old church walls.

The committee on preservation assembled without delay, chose Gov. Alexander H. Rice chairman, and issued an address to the people of New England. An immediate need of a hundred and

fifty thousand dollars was found to exist, and a committee of one hundred was appointed to solicit subscriptions. An extension of the time for the removal of the building till July 17th was obtained. Application was made to the standing committee of the Old South Society for a three or six months' lease of the land upon which the meeting-house stood, and for an agreement to sell at or before the expiration of the term, at a valuation to be fixed by three competent and disinterested appraisers.

On the 13th of July a long answer was returned to this proposition, in which the Society's committee doubted their legal right to submit the value to appraisement, agreed to grant *two* months' delay, and set the price of the land at $420,000 cash, to be paid on the 15th of September. All of this was accompanied with the requirement, that, if at the end of the two months granted, the friends of preservation should find themselves unable to meet the above conditions, the preservation committee should ask no extension; and to this agreement they were to bind themselves in writing.

The thing was impossible. Within two summer months, when the money of Boston was in the country or at the sea-shore, the committee were required to raise in cash almost a half a million dollars. By letter of July 15th modification of these terms was asked for and an offer made to pay interest on the appraised valuation of the property till January 1, 1877, if the time of purchase should be extended to that date. But this offer was unanimously rejected by the church committee, July 17th, who refused any modification of the terms previously announced. The preservation committee sought a personal interview, but with little if any hope that the seemingly fixed purpose of the owners could be changed.

The 17th of July had come. The committee seemed powerless. All their efforts appeared to have gone for naught. People looked to see the work of destruction begin.

At this crisis the *women* of Boston stepped in, and saved the meeting-house. Having purchased the building for $3,500, twenty Boston ladies announced to the owners of the land that its existence was secure, and that the only question was whether it should remain where it belonged, or be taken down and re-

erected in another quarter of the city. Architects had been consulted, whose opinions enabled the ladies to put the responsibility squarely upon the church committee. A lease was asked for and an offer of indemnity from any loss was made. July 20th the preservation committee held a meeting, Rev. E. E. Hale presiding, at which was adopted an address to the subscribers to the preservation fund. The address mentions the offer by the committee to purchase at appraisal, above alluded to, and then continues :—

"The offer of such an appraisal had been made by the proprietors and accepted by the Historical Society some years ago. It was publicly, last February, accompanied by an offer of $25,000. To the utter surprise of the committee the Society withdraws from its proposition, demands the assessed value of the estate and refuses a lease altogether. Even a day's extension is made dependent upon the restoration of the building at the purchase price. They asked for no rent, but they required $2,000 bonus for two months' delay and retained themselves the property.

"In such an emergency the women of Boston came to the committee's rescue. Without the knowledge of the gentlemen negotiating with the Old South, and by their own spontaneous movement, they have become the possessors of the building, and will only resign it when its preservation is secured."

This action of the ladies was widely applauded. But there was considerable division of sentiment in regard to the proposed removal of the building in case it could not remain on the spot where it had always been. Many friends of its preservation preferred to see it destroyed, rather than removed to a location foreign to its history.

The building having been secured, the next desirable thing was an extension of time for the purchase of the land. By the original bill of sale sixty days had been allowed, and these terminated on the 9th of August. Early in that month petitions to the city government of Boston, asking municipal aid in the salvation of the meeting-house, were circulated and signed by thousands of tax-payers. Governor Rice and Wendell Phillips headed one such paper, and ex-Governor Claflin another. Official action on these petitions was deferred until September.

July 24th the Council of the Massachusetts Historical Society accepted a previous offer of the Old South Society for the former association to become custodians of the meeting-house, and asked the church committee whether the advice of competent appraisers

might not be had in some legal manner satisfactory to counsel, and whether time could not be granted for the raising of the purchase money by subscription. Accompanying these requests was an offer to secure to the proprietors a fair income from the property during the time necessary for the raising of the money. July 27th an answer was returned by the church, wherein the statement of their legal inability to submit the valuation to appraisal was repeated, and a denial of any extension of the time beyond September 15th was communicated.

Then followed a period of several weeks of seeming inactivity, during which little information reached the public, though, as it subsequently transpired, the friends of preservation were not at all inactive.

The 9th of August came and passed, and yet the building was unmolested. August 11th the clock was replaced in the church tower by the fire commissioners, but without any public intimation of how long it would remain. A tacit understanding came to exist, that things should remain *in statu quo* until the middle of September.

Finally, on the 15th of September, it was publicly announced that negotiations for the purchase of the land had come to a favorable termination. Wednesday, October 18th, the papers passed, and the Old South came under the control of its friends. The purchase price was $400,000; of which sum $225,000 was advanced upon first mortgage by an insurance company, $75,000 on second mortage, without interest, by Henry P. Kidder as trustee, and the remaining $100,000, without security, by a few individuals whose names were not made public. The fee was transferred directly to Royal M. Pulsifer, who executed a deed of trust to Henry P. Kidder and Henry Lee, the latter of whom had just been chosen to succeed Mr. Sargent as treasurer of the fund, Mr. Sargent having resigned by reason of press of other business.

The trust deed recited that the trustee should hold the property subject to redemption by the holders of the preservation fund, who agreed to pay the semi-annual interest on the first mortgage,—the right of redemption to terminate on the non-payment of interest five months after due.

The building itself—which, by previous arrangement, had been

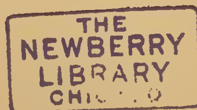
re-conveyed to the Society—passed under a separate instrument. The conditions of this instrument were, that for the term of thirty years, the meeting-house, if left standing on its present site, should be used for historical or memorial, and not for business or commercial, purposes, and should not be opened for any purpose on the Sabbath. The latter restriction excited much unfavorable comment, and was agreed to by the purchasers only by reason of the fact that it was made an absolute condition of the completion of the purchase.

Thus it will be seen that the work of preservation was by no means completed. Delay and friendly control were the only objects accomplished by the transfer. The violation of the conditions of the purchase made it lawful for the vendors to enter and repossess themselves of the property.

The condition against the use of the church on Sunday was deemed so obnoxious, that it was finally annulled by the legislature in the exercise of its right of eminent domain. By Act of May 11, 1877 (Chap. 222), the Old South Association in Boston was incorporated, for the purpose of acquiring and holding the meeting-house and the land under and adjacent to the same, "for public, historical, memorial, educational, charitable and religious uses and none other."

The first thing done by the new proprietors was to scatter the hawkers and peddlers, who, against the wishes of the preservation committee, had crowded the sidewalks around the premises during the summer months. The building was repaired and made tidy in its surroundings, and an iron fence put about the vacant space in front. For the first time in years the old monument presented the same appearance familiar to the fathers.

A series of entertainments in the meeting-house was at once arranged. The first took place on the evening of October 23d, since which time they have followed each other in rapid succession. Not only have these entertainments been given in the Old South and the public halls of Boston, but in private residences and in other towns and cities. April 9th, 1877, there occurred in Boston Music Hall one of the most extensive and elegant balls ever given in Massachusetts, the net proceeds of which, amounting to more than $2500, went to swell the fund. The time and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talents of New England's most illustrious sons and daughters have been enlisted in the cause, among them being Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, Everett, Eliot and a host of others. An appeal of the treasurer of the fund has appended to it the well known names of no less than one hundred and thirty-two gentlemen and fifty ladies — a committee which joined him in the application. "Not to have been a member of some committee, proves you to be of the common people," said a facetious newspaper.

The cherished object of some of the most zealous friends of preservation had been from the outset to transform the Old South into a historical museum, which, in its entirety, should present progressive pictures of every period of New England's history. As early as July, 1876, a meeting of those interested was held in Boston, Edward Everett Hale presiding. The result of the agitation of the subject was the incorporation of the New England Historical Society, whose object was to occupy the Old South for memorial purposes. It was said, that as this Commonwealth, then including Maine, furnished to the patriot cause one-half of the soldiers and sailors who fought the Revolution, it follows that one-half of the guns, swords and pistols,— one-half of the portraits, — one-half of the commissions, letters, and journals of that period can be found in the possession of New Englanders. Implements of peace, however, as well as weapons of war, were to be collected, and those representing earlier and later as well as Revolutionary times. Household utensils, implements of husbandry, the products of art, industry and invention, all were to illustrate the periods of our history. By means of painting and sculpture the faces and forms of New England's heroes were to be made familiar. The mere transition in costume from the steel cap and leathern hose Miles Standish wore, and from the gaudy blanket and beaded moccasin of the Indians whom he fought, down to the garments of the present day, would furnish an alcove with material. Said Mr. Hale, in an address on this subject, reported in the Boston *Advertiser* of November 29, 1876 : —

"If I might suggest the arrangement of the interior, the alcoves which are formed by the pillars of the first gallery should be devoted each to one of three great men. I should be glad to see so placed the statue of Samuel Adams, to whom we owe the independence of America; of Hancock,

whose name stands first on the Declaration of Independence, each surrounded by the memorials of his life and trials. Above the two should be the declaration which exempted them only from pardon, while all other men might bend the knee. I would place it there that boys and girls might see how the disgrace of one age is the laurel of another. Beneath the window where Warren entered to deliver his oration to a crowd of enemies I wish Warren's statute might stand. In their fit places I should expect to see James Otis—the flame of fire—and John Adams, who gave him that designation. I should wish fit memorial of Ward, who was willing to stand second to Washington,—who so forgot himself in that great renunciation that he is this day forgotten by his country. I should look for Quincy, 'who died before he heard the echo of his thunder word,' and for Franklin. . . These are names of Massachusetts heroes of the Revolution; but I would not forget the men of other generations or other birth. I would certainly not forget Winthrop, who preferred his thatched cottage where that church stands to a seat in Parliament and preferment under Cornwallis; and I should feel that the central figures of this pageant were lonely, if there did not stand among them their friend, the great head of that day when Boston last saw an enemy, the form of Washington. . . . . . Every child who looked round on the statues in this pantheon should read the history of these men's lives—should carry it home with him, should know why they are thus honored, and should come to know that thus it is well to live and well to die."

A temporary loan collection of antiquities was opened in the meeting-house November 14, 1876, and by successive extensions remained open till December, 1877. The collection improved with age, and finally came to be the best exhibit of its kind ever seen in Boston.

As these pages go to press active preparations are in progress for a grand fair in aid of the preservation fund, to be opened in the meeting-house on the evening of December 5th, and to continue day and evening for two successive weeks. It is expected that this will net a larger profit than has been received from any other venture. The interest in it is widespread; and with an active management and a generous public, it ought to take a long stride in the direction of preservation.

Thus has been traced the history of the Old South Meeting-House from its foundation to the present time. It is hoped that the narrative may have been found not only entertaining and instructive to the general reader, but inspiring to him who desires the Old South's preservation.

Said Dr. Johnson: "Whatever withdraws us from the power of the senses; whatever makes the past, the distant or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of human beings. . . . That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force on the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warm among the ruins of Iona." With how much reason, then, may we exclaim,—

> "Ah, let us hope the people's hand may save
> This proud old building from its grave;
> Their noble faith beat back the encroaching creed
> Whose central law is Self—whose god is Greed!"

[The subject of the following ballad was suggested to the poet by a friend who had read in proof the incident narrated on pages 25 and 26 of the foregoing history.]

A BALLAD OF THE FRENCH FLEET.

BY HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

October, 1746.

MR. THOMAS PRINCE *loquitur*.

A FLEET with flags arrayed
  Sailed from the port of Brest,
And the Admiral's ship displayed
  The signal: "Steer southwest."
For this Admiral D'Anville,
  Had sworn by cross and crown,
To ravage with fire and steel
  Our helpless Boston Town.

There were rumors in the street,
  In the houses there was fear
Of the coming of the fleet,
  And the danger hovering near;
And while from mouth to mouth
  Spread the tidings of dismay,
I stood in the Old South,
  Saying humbly: "Let us pray!"

"O Lord! we would not advise;
  But if in thy Providence
A tempest should arise
  To drive the French fleet hence,
And scatter it far and wide,
  Or sink it in the sea,
We should be satisfied,
  And thine the glory be."

This was the prayer I made,
  For my soul was all on flame,
And even as I prayed
  The answering tempest came.
It came with a mighty power,
  Shaking the windows and walls,
And tolling the bell in the tower,
  As it tolls at funerals.

The lightning suddenly
  Unsheathed its flaming sword,
And I cried: "Stand still, and see
  The salvation of the Lord!"
The heavens were black with cloud,
  The sea was white with hail,
And ever more fierce and loud
  Blew the October gale.

The fleet it overtook,
  And the broad sails in the van
Like the tents of Cushan shook,
  Or the curtains of Midian.
Down on the reeling decks
  Crashed the o'erwhelming seas;
Ah, never were there wrecks
  So pitiful as these!

Like a potter's vessel broke
  The great ships of the line;
They were carried away as a smoke,
  Or sank like lead in the brine.
O Lord! before thy path
  They vanished and ceased to be,
Where thou didst walk in wrath
  With thine horses through the sea!

—*Atlantic Monthly.*

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