



INSIDE TRINITY CHURCH

XXX.

TRINITY CHURCH CORPORATION.

THE WEALTH OF TRINITY. — AS A PARISH. — THE YOUNG RECTOR. — TRINITY SERVICES.

THE Dutch settled the Island of Manhattan, and were the lords of the soil. They persecuted nobody. They welcomed all sects and conditions of men, stipulating only that their own customs, sacred and religious, should not be meddled with. The worship of the Dutch was in the language of Holland, but their talk and traffic were in English. A few Episcopalians, who came over early, found New York a genial soil. They opened worship in the English language. To the great sorrow of the Dutch, their children ran off to the Episcopal Church, because the worship was in English. Yet the Episcopalians were made welcome, and were allowed to occupy the Dutch Church one half of the Lord's Day. As a separate parish, Trinity was organized in 1697. Their house of worship was a small, square edifice, with a steeple. Pews were assigned to worshippers according to rank. There was the "Governor's Pew," the "Bachelor's Pew," the "Housekeeper's Pew," "Pew for Masters of Vessels;" and others are specially named.

THE WEALTH OF TRINITY.

It is difficult to estimate the wealth of this corporation. It is estimated at from forty to a hundred millions. It originated with a farm, in the then upper part of New York, now in the centre of business, which was leased by the governor to Trinity Church. Subsequently one of the governors of the colony gave it to Trinity Church in fee. The papers were sent across the waters for approval, but the home government refused to ratify the act of the governor. In the Revolution the estate became the property of the state. It got back into the hands of Trinity; but New York has a claim which has never been settled, that may cause some trouble by and by.

Nearly all this farm is now covered with the most elegant and costly buildings of New York, and the property held by Trinity, as a whole, is in parts of the city where the land is most valuable. It lies on Broadway, between the Battery and Fourteenth Street, and spreads out like a fan. It embraces wharves, ferries, dock privileges, and depots; immense blocks on Broadway, of marble, granite, iron, and brown-stone; splendid stores, hotels, theatres, churches, and private mansions. The most costly and splendid buildings in New York stand on leased ground, and the owners pay a ground-rent. Leases usually run for twenty-one years, containing several renewals on a new valuation. A Trinity Church lease, with its peculiar privileges and covenants, is one of the most desirable titles in the city.

AS A PARISH.

Trinity is a close corporation. Its vast property is managed by a vestry of five persons, who have plenary power. Trinity is the Cathedral of America. Attached to it are three chapels in different parts of New York — St. Paul's, St. John's, and Trinity. It has a rector and eight assistants. The house of worship is the most costly and grand on the island. Daily services are held, and a choir of surpliced boys sing. Her great tower fronts Wall Street; it contains a chime of bells, that ring out the hours, halves, and quarters, announcing to the worshippers of Mammon how passes life.

THE YOUNG RECTOR.

The first position the church has to offer, superior in influence to that of a bishop, is that of rector. This official controls the immense revenues of the church. Dr. Berrian, the old rector, held his position for a great many years. Quite a number of the old ministers were looking for his place when he should depart. Among the number was young Mr. Dix, son of General Dix. He still looks like a college student. He had tact, energy, and executive ability. Dr. Berrian was very old, and could do but little business. The assistant ministers took their ease, and did not care about hard work. The laboring oar was put into the hands of young Dix. He seemed to like nothing better. Everything was done by him in time, and done well. He arranged the business that came before the vestry, drew the papers, and kept everything as systematic as a bank. The assistant ministers were very glad to have

young Dix do the work, and the old rector found it very convenient to have a young, smart assistant on whom he could rely.

The charter of Trinity allowed the appointment of an assistant rector. The position had been vacant for twenty-five years. To the surprise of everybody, Dr. Berrian nominated young Dix to that vacant position. The whole matter was a secret till the nomination was made. The seven assistants saw in the movement a successor to Dr. Berrian. They opposed the nomination, and asked for delay. The fact that Mr. Dix was youngest in years, and youngest in orders, was pointed out. But the nomination was confirmed and accepted on the spot, and Mr. Dix became, in fact, the rector of Trinity. On the death of Dr. Berrian, Mr. Dix was unanimously elected rector, and was at once inducted into office, without audience, without music, without religious service. But few of the assistant ministers were present. With the wardens, the rector walked from the vestry to the north porch, and from thence to the main entrance. Here the keys were handed to him, — an emblem of authority, — and the ceremony ended. The salary of the rector and of the assistants is any sum they may need. Annexed is a fine house well furnished, holiday gifts, tour in Europe, provision for wife and children if the husband dies, and a settlement for life. A minister of Trinity has a metropolitan fame, and distant dioceses often send to Trinity for their bishops.

TRINITY SERVICES.

The choral service is one of the specialities of Old Trinity. It was introduced, in its present order, by Dr. Cutler, who succeeded Dr. Hodge as organist. A choir of boys was introduced in connection with the voices of men; the whole, dressed in white surplices, make quite a show in the chancel. The distance of the great organ over the main entrance from the choir made it necessary to introduce a chancel organ, which was opened with great ceremony. Not the least curious was the presence of an old organist, who, over sixty years ago, played the first chant that was introduced into the Episcopal Church in this country. So strange was the performance, that the authorities of St. John's Chapel were outraged by the innovation. The vestry formally waited upon Bishop Hobart, and demanded that he should put a stop to such outlandish music. So little were chants understood or enjoyed even in the Episcopal Church at that day! The bishop declined to interfere, and chants became popular. The choral service is very taking. Everything is sung in the service that can be sung — the Psalter, the Creed, as well as other parts of the service. The people are mere spectators. The ministers and choir within the chancel-rail have it all to themselves. The music is very difficult, and it is sung in such rapid time that an untrained voice cannot keep up. The service opens on Sunday with a thronged house — aisles and vestibules full. The crowd remains till the singing is over and the sermon begins. Then it disperses, as if the performance was complete. It is very difficult to hear the

officiating ministers in Trinity. Most that they say, so far as the people are concerned, might almost as well be said in a Latin tongue. There is scarcely a good reader or speaker in the whole force of Trinity. The utterances are indistinct, and the tone low, as if the reader did not care whether the persons in the house heard or not.

At the opening service the leader of the music comes out of the robing-room dressed in a black gown, followed by about forty or fifty boys and men in surplices. The rector leads, followed by a train of clergy in white robes. On the opening of the vestry door the audience rise, and keep on their feet till the procession move into the chancel and are seated. The priest intones the service after the manner of the Catholic Church. The preacher for the day is escorted from the vestry to the pulpit by the sexton, who waits at the foot of the stairs till the minister is seated. The rector of Trinity is thoroughly High Church. He introduces into the services all the pomp, display, and ritualism that Episcopacy will permit. He models his service in as close imitation of the Catholic worship as the steady Protestantism of New York will bear.

XXXI.

CONSPIRACY AGAINST PRESIDENT
LINCOLN.

THE PRESIDENT IN THE CITY.—THE CONSPIRATORS.—FEELING IN WASHINGTON.—PLOT DISCOVERED.—VISIT TO MR. LINCOLN.

THE PRESIDENT IN THE CITY.

THE attention of the people of New York was called to Mr. Lincoln in 1860. He was announced to deliver a political address in Cooper Institute. The audience was fair, but the room was by no means full. He was a remarkable looking man,—decidedly western, tall, lank, and bony, with an enormous neck, that shot up from a low, turned-down collar, hair apparently uncombed, his dress slouchy and countrified, his oratory uninviting; and the impression he made was not very marked. A gentleman called upon him at his rooms in the Astor, and knocking at the door, received an invitation to "come in." He found Mr. Lincoln just in the act of putting on his shirt. Without the slightest embarrassment, he asked the visitor to be seated, while he continued his work, adding, "We must do this or go dirty." On his way to Washington, after his election to the Presidency, his friends received him with all honor in the city, and escorted him to the Astor House,