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Fifty years is a long time
in the life of a man; not long in the
life of an institution that counts its
years by centuries.

While commemorating the event
that fifty years ago to day, gave
to our city the Presbyterian Church
as one of its permanent institutions,
the church itself cannot well be left
out — Indeed if it were an insti-
tution deserving only the perpet-
uation the brick and the mortar,
which compose its Temple walls
would give it, it were not worthy these
commemorative services — But it is
a church whose foundation was

laid in the early dawn of Christianity, and so interwoven with the world's history, civil and ecclesiastical, as for centuries to constitute no inconsiderable part of it. — A Church distinguished ever for the uncompromising nature of her faith and practices in all the changes of the times through which she passed.

A Church, numbering in her communion men whose intellect and heroism and Christian virtues impeded themselves not only upon the age in which they lived, but to whom the age in which we live is largely

indebted for its advanced
knowledge, and the civil and
religious liberty of which it
boasts - A church, in consid-
eration of what she is, and what
she has been, and what she
has done, deserving of perpet-
-uation in the mind and heart
of all who sit

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within her temple walls as worshipers ←

After the lapse of ages, she still invites to her communion and fellowship, submitting her creed unaltered, her origin attested, her history extended, her membership counted by millions, and her churches organized in every land.

← Just now and here where the Presbyterian Church, in this locality, is redating itself, it seemed to be fitting to review her claim to the consideration of mankind, and to retrace the steps by which brethren of her faith have borne the ark of her covenant through perilous as well as peaceful times. ere it came to be deposited in this

temple ~~_____~~ I undertook the task in no high estimation of my ability to perform it.

I enter upon ~~the~~ ~~part~~ ~~assigned~~ ~~to~~ ~~me~~ in no spirit of controversy. No word of mine, I trust, will hurt or offend my brothers of another faith while I attempt the truth of history.

If while speaking of the Presbyterian Church my enthusiasm shall seem to any to partake of partisanship, I pray them to remember, it is of the Gamaliel at whose feet I was brought up I speak - that my dead kindred are all buried in the shade of her cypress trees. L

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Eighteen hundred years ago, the decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

Bethlehem sunk to her slumbers that night dreamless of the great event to her contained in the kingly mandate - The shepherd reclining upon the hills which overlooked the plain saw no signs in the heavens. But the expectation of Israel was at hand - The fulness of time had come. L

With the coming of Christ old things passed away - all things became new. Until then the knowledge and worship of the true God was confined to the Jews - The only Church the Jewish Church, whatever named, and however organized,

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or governed, there was no other. — Old as the nation itself was this Church of God.

Planned by his wisdom, controlled by his written laws, suited to the primeval ages of the world, it was "the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" — To accommodate its membership the grandest Temple the world had ever looked upon, or man in his mortal state would ever see was built — Its Architect God — its Master builder a king — so grand, so excellent in all its appointments, earth had no place for royalty itself superior to that of door-keeper in this house of the Lord.

But with the coming of Christ this Temple must fall — this ritual

service must cease; this mighty church must disband to reorganize; the prophesy of the despised Nazarene must be fulfilled; not one stone of it must be left upon another; it must no longer be said "Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship" - The church of a new dispensation must supplant the Temple and the Synagogue - L

For the building and the services of the Temple, God had given instructions to the minutest particular.

It is in remarkable contrast to this, that for the erection of houses of worship, or the kind or manner of the services which were to be observed therein,

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Christ gave no instructions. After his ascension, and the number of believers had greatly multiplied, the Apostles, verbally uninstructed, but spiritually led, proceeded to unite them into an organized body—a church. Having received no specific directions from their divine Master while he was with them, they chose as a model the Synagogue, an organization with which, as Jews, they had always been familiar, and to which they were still attached, and whose efficiency, as a system of ecclesiastical government and order, the experience of their people for hundreds of hundreds of years had abundantly proved.

Taking the Synagogue as a basis they changed it, so far as it was ~~not~~ necessary to change it, to adapt it to the new order of things, and to conform it to the new doctrines taught by Christ, in the Temple, in the Synagogue on the mountain, by the seaside, and most impressively of all, by the offering of himself the one great sacrifice upon the cross — L

In retaining as they did "the Board of Elders", found in the Synagogue — to be chosen from the people and by the people, and making it prominent in the government of the church, as it was prominent in the government

of the Synagogue, and in making, moreover, the ruling Elder equal in authority with the teaching Elder, the Apostles, as held by Presbyterians, laid the foundation upon which rests the Presbyterian Church, and enables her to rejoice in the belief, that she is not only a counterpart of the Apostolic Church, but that she may point with reverential pride to the old Jewish Temple - the Church of the Patriarch and the Prophet, and the long line of descendants, who had Abraham to their father, and claim her lineage with it and them unbroken.

But let me add in this connection, that while Presbyterians believe this church to be formed after the model furnished by the Apostolic churches, they find nowhere a command that the church, in all ages, or circumstances, should remain in the particulars of organization and methods the same; so no reason exists to hinder this Church from living and co-operating with evangelical churches of other forms, who keep with her "the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace". And as she has in the past, so she desires in the future to join hands with all such as "love the Lord Jesus and hold fast the form of sound words." L

The Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, known as the Westminster Confession, including the church government and discipline, the Catechisms and Order of Worship, was constructed by an Assembly of Divines ^{which} ~~which~~ was convened at Westminster London, in King Henry the Seventh's Chapel, on 1st day of July 1643, by an ordinance of the English Parliament, for the purpose of enlightening it on matters relating to religious questions which were dividing the people of the kingdom, and which were forcing themselves upon the consideration of Parliament, which was anxious to devise a system of religion for a state Church.

The Members of this Assembly were selected from the various sects that had grown out of the reformation under Luther.

They were chosen for their wisdom and learning and high character - the representative men of the bodies to which they belonged.

As constituted, the Assembly consisted of twelve Lords of Parliament and twenty four commoners - who were simply present, taking no part in the discussions - and one hundred and forty two Divines.

The Assembly sat as a separate body distinct from the Parliament