

THE HUGUENOT CHURCH OF NEW YORK
A HISTORY
OF THE
FRENCH CHURCH OF SAINT-ESPRIT

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BY

JOHN A. F. MAYNARD

Ph.D., D.D., Th.D.

Honorary Fellow of the Huguenot Society of London

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A M. Theodore Seltzer

Commandeur de la Legion D'Honneur

Ami De Tout Ce Qui Represente Bien La France

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INTRODUCTION

A Church is not a building, or else it may thin out to a shell. It is an organization and a life idea. This is true of the Old Huguenot Church of New York. Otherwise it should cease to exist.

The origins of the French Church of Saint-Esprit go back to the very beginning of regular Christian worship in New Amsterdam, now New York, as early as 1628, as a part of what is now the Collegiate Church. Then in 1688, it developed a separate organization with a set of records of pastoral acts opening on Oct. 22nd of that year with the baptism of little Madeleine Sicard. These records, with a few others, were published, with a few minor errors, in the first volume of the *Collections of the Huguenot Society of America*. These records continued to the present time are kept in the church's safe. Photostatic copies of the more ancient parts made under the care of the New York Historical Society and its learned librarian, Mr. Alexander J. Wall form eleven volumes which can be consulted in the Library of that Society. Thus the printed records may be checked up where the spelling of proper names was wrong. As a matter of fact, there was no spelling at all for proper names. The Dutch recorders especially are very generous with porcupine-like consonants,

when they transcribe foreign names, but the French spelled also the names of their own people in a manner which alternated between the mischievous and the naive. Specialists in genealogy should have our sympathy.

The titles of the photostatic record books of the French Church are as follows:

(1) Registers of the Births, Marriages and Deaths of Eglise françoise a la Nouvelle York 1688-1804.

(2) Accounts of Collections and expenditures March 1693—April 1699 kept by Gabriel Le Boyteulx.¹

(3) Records of the French Church du St-Esprit, New York City, 1689-1710.

(4) Records of the French Church du St-Esprit, New York City, 1766-1768.

(5) Records of the French Church du St-Esprit, New York City, 1771-1775.

(6) Registre des Résolutions du Consistoire de l'Eglise françoise de la Nouvelle York, 1723-1766.

(7) Records of the French Church du Saint-Esprit, New York City, Minutes of the Vestry, Book A. 1796-1818.

(8) Records of the French Church du Saint-Esprit, New York City Minutes of the Vestry, Book B. 1819-1837.

(9) Account Book, 1801-1828.

¹ The name is also spelled Le Boyteux.

(10) Records of the French Church du Saint-Esprit, New York City. Baptisms 1797-1808, 1816-1852. Confirmations 1842-1872; Deaths 1843-1852.

(11) Marriages 1816-1835.

The fourth, fifth and sixth volumes are the most important from an historical point of view, and should be edited except where repetitions occur. Other records too recent to be of historical value are naturally preserved in our archives, but no photostat copy was made of them.

These records are to us more than historical documents; we see in them as it were an outward and visible sign of a presence as well as an inheritance.

The first attempt to write a history of this church was made by the Rev. A. Verren, DD *The Huguenots in this country*, New York, 1862. However he ignored the whole period previous to 1704.

A good survey of the period ending with 1804 was contributed by my predecessor, the Rev. A. V. Wittmeyer, in the first volume of the *Collections of the Huguenot Society of America*. This was reprinted separately as *An Historical sketch of the Eglise Française a la Nouvelle York from 1688 to 1804*, New York, 1866. This book may be supplemented by G. Chinard, *Les Réfugiés Huguenots en Amérique*, Paris 1925; p. 143-164. Less reliable is L. J. Fosdick, *The French Blood in America*, New York, 1906; p. 212-230.

A number of short articles, too hastily written, were con-

tributed by me to a modest periodical first called *Le Messager*, founded in 1926, and now called *Le Messager Evangélique*. They are listed in my article on *the two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Eglise des Réfugiés de France à la Nouvelle York* (*Messager Evangélique*, July 1937; p. 7-8). My first attempt to write this history was made rather hastily in two Church directories issued in 1932 and 1933. These stories, for they were little more than that, should be judged with charity. They are too often inaccurate and contain sad misprints, and sadder errors.

I recommended the subject of our origins to my young friend, the Rev. F. A. Liotard, pastor of the French Congregation in Washington, as a subject of a dissertation for the degree of bachelor of theology, at the protestant Faculty of Theology of Paris, under the title of: *Les origines françaises de New York*, June 1934. This thesis is only in typewritten form with the exception of one chapter: *Le Village de Harlem*, printed in *Le Messager Evangélique* (Vol. 10, 1935, Nos. 2, 3, 5).

In his last years, Mr. Wittmeyer had prepared the manuscript of a volume on the history of the Wittmeyer family. The autobiographical part of this work is quite valuable. This typewritten manuscript is available at the New York Public Library.

Some information about the recent history of the Church was handed to me orally by some of its old members, more especially Mr. Eugene P. Megnin, now 82 years old, whose memories go back to the days of Antoine Verren.

It would be useless to give a complete bibliography of the subject. A good deal of the scattered statements one finds on Huguenot history is well meant, but suffers from religious or national presuppositions, or from inaccurate or hastily gathered information. Some of that material will be referred to in the footnotes.²

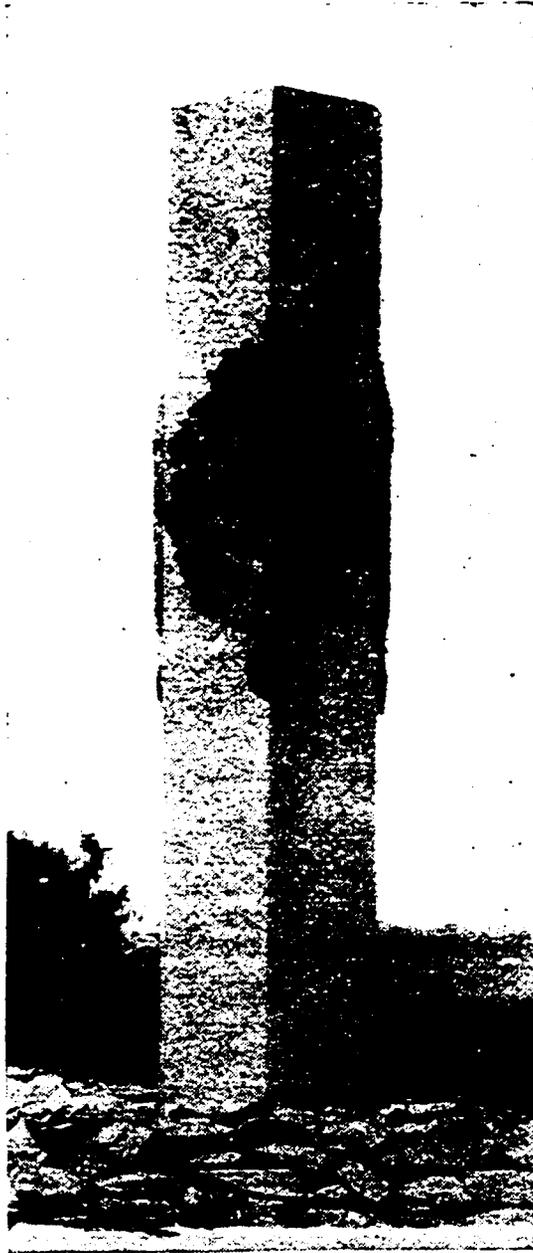
Although the French Church du Saint-Esprit is the last Huguenot Church in the United States which still uses the language of the Huguenots and is in spiritual communion with the Huguenot churches of the homeland, and although it is the oldest Huguenot establishment North of Florida, we must not forget that Huguenot emigration in the provinces of Pennsylvania and South Carolina was larger numerically. Indeed, Huguenot emigration on these shores and the settlement of other Europeans began as early as 1562, when New York was undreamed of, and in 1565, the first ordained Protestant minister was brought over to Fort Caroline, Florida. Lay ministrations to the Huguenot colonials had been available in that Fort in 1564. As early as May 1st, 1562, a short French Protestant service was held by Jean Ribault in Florida. While this settlement of French Huguenots came to an untimely end through a bloody massacre, prophetic of the St-

² We may, however refer to the bibliography on early New Amsterdam in L. E. de Forest *The Settlement of Manhattan in 1624*, Albany, N. Y. 1935 p. 37-48. Cf. Also Julia P. M. Morand. *Catalogue or bibliography of the Library of the Huguenot Society of America*, New York, 1920 which supersedes the first edition by E. G. Baldwin, 1890.

Bartholomew, it left a noble page, though a forgotten one, in American history.³

The trend on Huguenot emigration to the South did not cease with the massacre, but moved to the more hospitable province of Virginia which, in the day's parlance of the English meant all that was North of Florida. One important question was that of religious conformity, and wisely at first, the British government allowed the French settlers to preserve the form of Presbyterian worship which was that of the French Reformed Church. In some cases, the French ministers had come to prefer the Anglican service, yet as a rule their congregations did not like it. However, the sons of the refugees who knew English better than French, and for whom the French service was not so romantic, became more favorable to the Anglican Church. In 1755, all the first settlers were dead, and it was reported that the descendants had entered the Church of England. Only one Church remained faithful to the form of the French church; namely, the Church of Charleston. But even that Church had to abandon the use of the French language in 1828, when the

³ The history of the Huguenot settlement in Florida was admirably told by Francis Parkman in his *Pioneers of France in the New World*. Boston, 1899, p. 33-181, and in the French translation of Parkman by the Countess of Clermont-Tonnerre: *Les Pionniers Français dans l'Amérique du Nord*, Paris 1874, p. 1-123. See also R. B. Meunier: *Jean Ribault et ses compagnons glorifiés en Amérique*, Dieppe, 1926. Although there is now quite a literature on the subject, the sources have not yet been completely studied.



The Ribault Memorial Pillar, erected in 1924 at the entrance of Saint John's River, Florida.

congregation had been reduced to two or three persons. Until recently, the Charleston Church survived as an English-speaking congregation, ministered to by a French minister, familiar with the English language. Since the departure of the last minister of French ancestry, Dr. Florian Vurpillot, French services have been altogether discontinued. And so the last Huguenot Church in the Southern States has ceased to function for the present, except as a small independent English Congregation, yet it had not failed to remain outstanding among several Huguenot churches in America who keep the Huguenot spirit alive in the language of this land. As for the descendants of the Huguenots of South Carolina, they form a large proportion of the Episcopal and other English speaking churches of Charleston.

The Huguenot sentiment is maintained in the South by two important Southern Huguenot societies, which have members and groups over this whole country, the Huguenot Society of South Carolina and the Huguenot Society of the Founders of Manakin⁴ in the colony of Virginia. The first of these societies naturally interested in the Charleston Church, the latter in the Church in Manakintown.

We trust that this volume will be found profitable not only to people who take interest in our church or in ecclesiastical

⁴ The South Carolina group has been thoroughly studied by Arthur Henry Hirsch, *The Huguenots of Colonial South Carolina*, Durham, 1928. The Transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina are invaluable. For the Virginia group, see *the Huguenot*, a magazine published by the Huguenot Society of the Founders of Manakin.

INTRODUCTION

history, but through a number of data hitherto unpublished, that it will shed some light on economic conditions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the records of this church are acknowledged to be of unique value. Some material of genealogical value is also published here for the first time. Finally, we trust that on several points we have corrected historical misinterpretations of our predecessors in this historical field.

Unhappily, Baird's *Huguenot Emigration to America* is an unfinished work. Chinard's small volume is evidently not a standard work on the subject. Perhaps the subject has grown too big for any one man. Possibly no one can handle it until the ground has been prepared by more monographs like this present work or even larger. Our chapter V, for instance, could easily grow into a doctor's dissertation. Indeed, we feel that almost every one of our chapters could be expanded into a monograph.

The author of this sketch, is perhaps not a historian, but the subject has been thrust upon him because he had heard and read a good deal about it, and has himself been part of the history for years. Whenever there was a controversy, he tried to make plain that there was reasonable doubt.

He wants to thank the Vestry of the French Church, and particularly the senior warden, Mr. George Swahn, the junior warden Mr. Harrison Deyo, founder of the Society of the Descendants of the New Paltz Patentees, for interest, sympathy and encouragement. My special thanks go to my

friend, the Rev. Edgar Franklin Romig, D.D.D.Th. of the Collegiate Church, former president of the Huguenot Society of Pennsylvania, for a good deal of sound friendly advice, to the Rev. Withiam Walker Rockwell, Ph.D.D.Th., Librarian of Union Theological Seminary, also a descendant of the Huguenots who helped me in unfamiliar points of American Church history, to the Rev. E. Clowes Chorley, DD, historiographer of the Diocese of New York, and to Miss Frances E. Pearson, descendant of one of our old families, who kindly read most of my manuscript.

He takes great pleasure in dedicating this book to M. Théodore Seltzer, honorary vestryman of this congregation and generous friend of worthy causes.



CHAPTER I

THROUGH THE MIST OF BEGINNINGS

WE must go back a few hundred years, in what is now almost romance, to the days of conquistadores and seekers for the Fountain of Youth, for wonders of all kinds, but mostly Adventure. Then, the French navy discovered this part of America.

The Florentine Giovanni da Verrazzano, who had taken service under Francis I, had been with the French so long that he was used to being called by them Jean Verrassen. He was a sea captain by profession, a corsair as the case may be. Perhaps pirate might have been the right name, at times. West of the Azores and Canary Islands, in a general way, there were no ten commandments. French privateers very soon adopted the habit of being on the high seas, waylaying Spanish galleons and even sacking land settlements. French sea dogs anticipated those of England more than half a century.¹ Had not wars, foreign and civil, uselessly sapped French energy, they would have preempted the fame of Hawkins and Drake, and everybody would know that "buccaneer" was a French word.

¹C. M. Andrews, *The Colonial period of American History* 1934. Vol. 1, p. 17.

In 1521, when this new world was very young indeed, Verrazzano who had sailed from Dieppe on the *Dauphine*, was roving along the shores of a wild new country north of our Florida. It was tempting as the unknown always is, but there was so much of that unknown calling northward, that he sailed on until he came to a beautiful bay. He left the *Dauphine* at anchor, and went in with the ship's boat. The water was clear and pure, the hills were billows of greenness, and what seemed a wide river stretched northward between grand looking cliffs. Feathered Indians came out in their bark canoes, friendly and curious; but no contacts could be made, because a storm threatened at sea, and Verrazzano hurried back to his ship. And so, he missed New York.²

He had called the newly discovered land *Francesca*, a name corresponding to "America" and given in honor of Francis I, the brilliant French king, his patron, but the globe of Ulpius (1542) calls this country VERRAZZANA SIVE NOVA GALLIA, Verrazzana or New Gaul. This is the oldest name for the land now called United States; North of it was another great land, called by Ulpius BAC-CALEARUM REGIO, Codfishland. We find this old name in Mercator's map of 1641,³ and in a map of the Propaganda⁴

² We refer to Verrazzano here not because he really "discovered" the country, but because he influenced map-making for a long time.

³ J. Winsor, *Narrative and Critical History of America*, Boston, 1886, vol. II, p. 177.

⁴ B. F. de Costa, *Verrazzano the Explorer*, New York, 1880, p. 53.

under the form *Terra Bacalaos*. This name had evidently been given to Newfoundland by the Basques, and cartographers extended it to the mainland while they gave to the island itself another name.

Several French sea dogs probably from Dieppe, must have followed where Verrazzano had led the way. On the beach of one of our islands, they established a trading post, at least they said they did. They even called it Angoulême. The name appears on Verrazzano's map of 1529, as *Angoulesme*, after the birthplace of Francis I, whom his father Louis XII called *le gros garçon d'Angoulême*. The place may have been somewhere around Bayridge, Brooklyn. The name is still attested by Botero in 1640.

Giving names by early explorers was a pleasant pastime. Verrazzano had named harbors all along this coast; one was called Dieppe, perhaps in Georgia; another Saint-Germain, after the royal residence; another Paradis, the name of a scholar who taught Hebrew to Marguerite de Valois. We find this latter name in Ramusio's map. Botero still had it in 1640. After all, it was nothing but a name, and so perhaps was our Angoulême. At any rate, Verrazzano's map gives over this country the blue flag of France which he must have planted here, but apparently not in New York. The chart of Jacques de Vaulx (1584) maintains the royal claim strengthened nautically by the work of Jean Ribault and others. Had history taken a normal course, and had the spirit of Erasmus and of Michel de l'Hôpital ruled the Kingdom

of France, there would have been no religious wars, and North America would now be as French as South America is Spanish and Portuguese.

It might even have become so, if one great Frenchman, Coligny, had been understood, and if his life had not been taken in the crime of Saint-Bartholomew. It might have become so, if Jean Ribault had not set his heart on Florida where his, the first attempt at colonization on modern lines, came to a dreadful end. Had the settlement of Huguenots been made in his Province where the Indians were friendly, or even in what we called New England, the whole course of the history of the world would have been altered. At any rate, with the death of Coligny, French North America was doomed politically. There was to be another kind of North America settled by lieges of Coligny's lineal descendants in the Netherlands and in England.

Poor France was now the victim of a political concept which put a Church above a nation and so the way was left open to sailors and explorers of other lands, while the best of France's mariners still went after codfish in the New Found Lands of the old *Baccalearum Regio*. This seems rather absurd today.

We all know how this magnificent port and its great river were discovered, officially at least, by the clumsy eighty-ton Dutch craft named the *Halve Maen* ("Half-Moon") whose captain tried, with British obstinacy but without Dutch



Coligny, the master mind who visualized a new France.

patience, to force his way to China through the river now called after him.

The fur trade with this part of the country was now open. It brought magnificent dividends. According to John Smith, the Dutch and the French ships "made wonderful returns in furs".⁵ While the evidence for the French rather points to a more Northern section of this country, we have the important testimony of a few lines in Dutch script on the Figurative Map⁶ which testify that, even in 1614 the Indians of the upper Hudson traded in furs with French sloops. But the Dutch did more than trade, they actually began to occupy the country, not only at Fort Nassau near Albany, but in a measure on lower Manhattan. They were there in 1613, which is really the beginning of New York. Thereabout, Captain Adriaen Block having lost by fire his good ship *Tiger*, built a new one, *the Onrust* ("Restive") in the winter of 1614. This date is so close to the date of the birth of Jean Vigné, that we may well suppose that Vigné's father, a Huguenot from Valenciennes, was one of these fur traders doing business under the Dutch pavilion. We know nothing else about him, except that his wife was called Adrienne, and that is a French name. Jean Vigné was quite a respectable

⁵*Travel and Work*, 1.265 quoted by C. M. Andrews, Op. cit. p. 95.

⁶It can be seen in J. Winsor, *Narrative and Critical History of America*, vol. 4. Boston 1884, p. 433. An excellent reproduction is in exhibit in the New York Public Library. Cf. I. N. Phelps Stokes and D. C. Haskell, *American Historical prints* New York 1933, p. 2b-3a.

person in his days. Dutch records refer to him as Jean Vingne or Vinje.

They tell us that he was eschevin or alderman in 1655, 1656, 1661 and 1663.⁷ As a former eschevin, he was entitled to the title of great burgher, and so we find him on the list of twenty great burghers in 1657, headed by Stuyvesant, with Jean de la Montagne second, Domine Megapolensis the sixth, Jean Vigné being the eighth on the list.⁸ In 1653 he is assessed fifty florins for the strengthening of the defenses of Fort Amsterdam.⁹ By profession, he was a brewer. We know that he died in 1691, having been married twice and leaving no issue.¹⁰ Now such a person could not tell an untruth in public without being contradicted, and certainly without remarks to the contrary passed behind his back when he boasted to the Labadists¹¹ in 1679, that he was the first white child born in North America. He spoke the truth as he knew it, unaware of the Florida tragedy, and un-

⁷ B. Fernow, *The Records of New Amsterdam*, Vol. 1., New York, 1897, p. 61-63.

⁸ E. B. O'Callaghan, *The Register of New Netherlands*, 1865, p. 174.

⁹ Had he been born after the settlement by Minuit, he would have been eschevin at twenty-six at the most! We have here a clear *reductio ad absurdum*.

¹⁰ A. R. Stiles. *History of the City of Brooklyn*. Albany, 1869, p. 80-90.

¹¹ This kind of testimony cannot be set aside without contrary evidence. Quite another thing it would be to regard as history what was meant to be only poetical license, as for instance Benjamin Franklin De Costa's poem on *Vigné the Pilgrim of Old France*, 1894. The author supposed that Vigné's father owned his own sailing ship, and thus came to Manhattan.

knowing of some details of the story of Fort Caroline. The Holland Society was therefore right when it placed at Aldrich Court, 41 Broadway, a commemorative tablet which declared that thereabout was the first settlement of Manhattan, consisting of four houses or cabins, in 1613-1614, and where probably Adriaen Block built the *Onrust*. The tablet does not state that Jean Vigne was probably born there, although the birth of a child is to our mind as important as the building of a boat.

It does not pertain to our main line of thought to say much about the *Mayflower*. On the little ship *Speedwell* with the original group had come Guillaume Molines, his wife and his children, Joseph and Priscilla. John Alden was perhaps a Huguenot also.¹² So was, on his mother's side, Thomas Cushman who had been entrusted to William Brester, Jr. and succeeded him as elder. We mention these names, not because we claim much of a French strain in the cold experiment in religious rectitude begun by the Pilgrim Fathers, but because it helps us to understand the extremely close relationship between the Leyden English speaking group of Puritans which founded Plymouth and New England, and the Leyden French speaking group of Huguenots which played a vital part in the Dutch establishment on the Hudson River and at its mouth. Indeed, the most important testimony on the foundation of New York comes from Plymouth itself.

¹² M. C. Julien. *The Huguenots of Boston*, Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of America, Vol. III (1876) p. 53-54.

Bradford quotes in 1624, in his *History of Plymouth Plantation*, as a current objection to settlement in New England: "The Dutch are planted nere Hudson's Bay, and are likely to overthrow the trade."¹³ He admits the objection but answers: "They will come and plante in these parts also, if we and others do not." No theory of founding of New Amsterdam in 1626 can hold against this testimony. This testimony which has been ignored in the controversy which has taken place in recent years about the real date of the founding of New York. While years ago the tendency was to set it back to 1623 and even 1613, now the pendulum has swung to a later date, 1625 (F. C. Wieder, *De Stichting van New York in July 1625*, 's Gravenhage 1925 Linschoten Vereeniging vol. 26) or 1626 (Victor H. Paltsits, *the Founding of New Amsterdam in 1626*, W. R. Shepherd *The story of New Amsterdam*, 1926, reissued from the Year book for 1917 of Holland Society of New York).

Now, like most discussions, this one is based on a lack of an agreement on the premises. That the city called New York goes back to settlement usually called Manhattan (written in more than half a dozen ways), or Fort Amsterdam, or New Amsterdam later, and that the settlement was made under the Dutch is certain. This date will differ according to what constitutes a fort and a settlement. This is why we used "mist" in the title of this chapter. The facts are fairly well known. What differs is the method of interpretation.

¹³ Bradford means, of course, the mouth of the Hudson River.

The most sober discussion is by Louis Effingham de Forest, *The settlement of Manhattan in 1624*, Albany 1935.

As for us, we let modern scholars disagree, being satisfied to take the word foundation as Bradford would have done. For Bradford and for us, a fort meant a stockade with one or two houses, with a couple of cannon. It even meant a fortified house at New Palitz, almost a century after. That meant and still means a settlement.

That it was an insecure settlement is certain, that it was transitory, temporary, trespassing on Indian rights until Pierre Minuit came in 1626 is no doubt true. That the right of the Dutch was denied by the British Government some forty years afterwards, when the British Navy was strong enough to prove British claims, does not set aside Bradford's good faith or the value of his testimony. The Dutch had the good sense of using an Englishman to discover a colony, and were willing to use French speaking Huguenots to secure it, but the colony of New Netherland (called naturally in Latin *Nova Belgica*), and the trading post of Manhattan are a Dutch foundation.¹⁴

¹⁴Quite a controversy has been on the other side, for instance, R. Cronau, *Die Deutscher als Gründer von New York*, 1926, H. G. Bayer, *the Belgians as First Settlers of New York*, E. de Ghelin, *Aux Wallons qui fondèrent New York*, 1924. Better is L. G. Green, *The De Forests and the Walloon founding of New Amsterdam* (1924). There is even an Italian side on the basis of a fancied landing of Verrazzano on Staten Island. Cf. Pietro S. Moncada, *Gli Italiani nella fondazione di New York*, L'Interpetre, June 1928, p. 5. We ourselves supported a French interpretation rather far fetched, here and there, in early numbers of the *Messenger Evangélique*. For this we make due amends.

CHAPTER II

HOW THE FIRST HUGUENOT SETTLEMENT CAME TO BE

DURING the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Netherlands were a haven for those escaping religious persecution.

Many of the refugees were called Walloons. This name, which is simply a by-form of the name of Gaul¹ has been given their descendants of Northern Gaul who inhabit today the province of Liège, Namur, Brabant, Hainaut and Luxembourg in Belgium; the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in part; and in France, the departments of Aisne, Ardennes, Pas-de-Calais, also a section of the Nord. The Walloons became a part of that duchy of Burgundy which was at one time mightier than its overlord, the king of France. The Reformation

¹ The term Walloon is used as identical with French in a petition of the Church of New Paltz to the Classis of Amsterdam. (*Ecclesiastical Records State of New York*, Vol. V. 1905, p. 3208-3209.) They use the following terms "we, the undersigned, Consistory of the Reformed Walloon Church of New Paltz." "For their most holy faith our ancestors fled from France to this wilderness to escape the Roman Anti-Christ," "as French Protestant Refugees," "We, as a French Church," "a Walloon Church" are used interchangeably in this document.

movement spread over that whole region, but was swamped by the dreadful repression which made the Duke of Alba famous. About half a million of these French speaking Walloons migrated, the majority to the Netherlands, others going to the Rhine region, and to England, especially to Norwich where there were five thousand, and to Canterbury where a French Huguenot Congregation founded for them is still housed in the Crypt of the Cathedral, though quite reduced in number.

Their written language was French and like all the other provinces of Gallo-Roman ancestry they had their own local dialects which have been somewhat haughtily labelled patois.

The relationship of France with the neighboring countries of Switzerland, Luxembourg and Belgium is uncolored by political ambition. There is nothing in France which corresponds to pangermanism or panslavism. But it is a historical fact that as surely as the Flemish of Belgium belong to the Batavian (or Dutch) ethnic group, the Walloons of Belgium are just as French ethnically as the other Gauls who, like them, speak a Latin dialect with Celtic intonation and call it French, giving it what is, after all, a German name.

Now, France although a small country, is made of distinct provincial groups, and several forms of culture. Everywhere, including "Walloon" districts, and the French speaking cantons of Switzerland, you find the same fundamental qualities of intelligent obstinacy, honest pride in work well done, love of land as a solid reality, enthusiasm for clear ideas, courage

that is more human than animal, a fundamental dislike of hypocrisy, and a desire to enjoy life.

From the French town of Avesnes, then in the province of Hainaut, which passed under the rule of the Spanish Crown in 1559, has come a family more closely connected than any other with the foundation of New York so that it was claimed that our city just missed being called la Nouvelle-Avesnes, or New Avesnes. While this claim ought to be set aside for lack of evidence,² yet to a de Forest more than to any other person goes back the honor of bringing about somehow the foundation of New York.³ The history of the family is interesting and well known.⁴ Jean de Forest, a merchant-druaper born in Avesnes, when it was officially French, married Anne Maillard of Avesnes.⁵ He belonged to that French bourgeoisie which considered itself of noble blood and easily entered the Grand Armorial. He became a Protestant long after the Walloon churches had been practically wiped out

² E. de Forest, *op. cit.* p. 33-35. However the statement crops up so often that one wonders.

³ E. de Forest. *op. cit.* p. 30-33.

⁴ The last work is Michel Missoffe, *Les Notables d'Avesnes au XVIe siècle et la famille de Forest*, Lille, 1937.

⁵ For these references to the de Forest family, we are indebted to John W. de Forest. *The De Forests of Avesnes (and of New Netherland) a Huguenot thread in American Colonial History, 1494 to the present time.* Newhaven 1900, and to Mrs. Robert W. de Forest. *A Walloon family in America.* Boston and New York, 1914. Vol 1. Some important corrections are made by Missoffe. p. 119.

in Spanish ruled Belgium, and the hundreds of thousands of refugees mentioned above, had left the country. In 1601, we find him at Sedan, then under an independent Huguenot prince. There his son Jesse marries Marie du Cloux in 1601. Jesse's three sons were born there, also two daughters. One of the boys was named Henry (called later by the Dutch Hendrick). The family removed to Holland and settled at Leyden where Jesse attended the French Reformed Church. In Leyden, more children were born.

In Leyden, there were the religious groups called Separatists, because they dissented from the Church of England, not on account of doctrine, but because of the hierarchy and of the uniformity of worship. The minister, a real leader of this small group, was John Robinson. As Jesse de Forest heard that the Separatists planned to found a colony in the new world, he decided to organize among his French speaking friends, Huguenots and Walloons, a similar expedition.

The first idea was to found a colony in Virginia. The Separatists had at first entertained then rejected such a notion. The Dutch also made them an offer to settle under the auspices of their own States General. This was considered, but finally rejected.⁶

As early as July 1621, Jesse de Forest went to the Hague and presented to Sir Dudley Carleton a petition to found a colony in Virginia. This petition, written in French, gave the name of fifty-six men who signed a round robin. They

⁶C. M. Andrews. *The Colonial period*, Vol. 1, p. 255, p. 261-262.

and their families were altogether two hundred and twenty-seven people. There de Forest called himself a dyer by profession.

The professions given by the signers are many. We find among them sixteen workers in cloth, the same number of tillers of the ground (two of them vintners) one hat maker, two brewers, a printer, a furrier, a miller, a shoemaker, two sawyers, a musician, a locksmith, a coppersmith, a carpenter, one student in theology, a pharmacist, a student of medicine, two whose profession is not quite clear to us, but is apparently on the line of business.

To us it seems that the group was well prepared on the clothing line, but short on building, and relatively weak on farming which is the basis of colonization. But it must not be forgotten that every Frenchman loves truck gardening, and the raising of fowls and rabbits, and that goes a long way towards the solution of the food problem.

This group, as such, did not go to America. The Virginia Company discouraged them, and insisted that the group should be scattered among the existing settlements rather than be allowed to form a settlement of its own. It may be assumed that the composition of the smaller group of families which settled New Amsterdam was somewhat similar as far as professions went.

The Huguenot and Walloon group preferred to remain together and after due deliberation, decided to remain under the protection of the States General of the Netherlands.

There were two possibilities. For a quick financial return the better one was Guiana. The Leyden Separatists had also been asked to consider it before finally choosing New England. But they had come to the conclusion that "such hott countries are subject to greevous diseases, and many noysome impediments . . . Then too, if they should ther live and doe well, the jealous Spaniard would never suffer them long, but would displant^r overthrow them, as he did the French in Florida".⁷

Such fear did not enter Jesse à Forest's heart, for he saw only the value of Guiana; but others of the group felt like the Pilgrims. And so, when a new petition for permission to form a colonial settlement was drafted by the Huguenot-Walloon group to the States of Holland in April 1622, no particular location was mentioned. The Dutch India Company had been formed the preceding year. Prominent among its trading concessions was the control of the fur trade in the New Netherlands. There flew its flag carrying three horizontal stripes; yellow, white and blue. On the center stripe there was the monogram GWC, the initials of "Goectroyeerde West Indische Compagnie."⁸ The Company readily agreed to take Jesse de Forest's company, but the Lord's Gentlemen of the States General took four months to grant their approval.

⁷ Bradford, *History of Plymouth plantation* (1912) Vol. 1, p. 62-64.

⁸ In 1650, the yellow stripe was changed to red, and so we had the three colors of Henry IV, of the Netherlands, of the American flag, and of the French Republic; also of the British flag.

Two advanced groups of Huguenots and Walloons took separate boats, the *Pigeon* with Jesse de Forest and the *Mackerel*. The first boat reached the mouth of the Amazon, then sailed northward on what is now Brazilian territory where a small settlement was made near the Oyapok River which forms a part of the boundary between French Guiana and Brazil. The colonists, not realizing the injurious effects of the tropical climate, they carelessly exposed themselves to the terrific heat of the sun-rays. Jesse de Forest suffered two sunstrokes and died in October 1624. The eight other colonists became discouraged and returned to Holland the following year.

The *Mackerel* must have also brought a few Walloon colonists to the New Netherlands, but we have no idea of the place where they settled. Yet, we saw that there is evidence that in 1624, the Pilgrim Colony of Plymouth, which was made up of former acquaintances in Leyden was well aware that the lower valley of the Hudson was occupied.

However, the *Mackerel* was only a scout. The real expedition sailed in 1624 on the *Nieuw Nederlandt*, a name which now is nearly as famous as that of the *Mayflower*. She sailed from Texel in March 1624 under Captain Cornelis Jacobson May with thirty families. A few of these were Dutch, but the majority were Huguenot and Walloon.

The good ship *Nieuw Nederlandt* took almost two months for the voyage and made land early in May. In the harbour, she found a French vessel which had come to establish pos-

session for the King of France. This would tend to prove that if a permanent settlement was at the mouth of the Hudson River, it was so small that the French overlooked or disregarded it. At the same time, the *Mackerel* returned from their scouting expedition up the river. Together, she and the *Nieu Nederlandt* were more than a match for the Frenchman. Two pieces of cannon were put on a boat and aimed at the invader, who understood and set sail.

Small as the new group was, these new families were scattered. The larger number were sent to Fort Orange up the River. There, Sarah Rapalje was born.⁹ Some of the group went to the Delaware, others temporarily to Nut Island, now called Governor's Island, then later, in all probability, to South Manhattan.¹⁰

It has been claimed that since the Fort was not started before 1525, by Verhulst, the third director of the colony, New Amsterdam was not founded by Huguenots and Walloons. No doubt, the settlement on Manhattan was exceedingly small in 1624, and it was not called New Amsterdam; indeed, the common name remained Manhattan for more than sixty years. Besides, no one argues the point that the Huguenot and Walloon settlers had not, for the greater part, some knowledge of the Dutch language. Still less, could it be disputed that they were loyal to a Government that

⁹ R. H. Stiles History of the city of Brooklyn, 1869, p. 90. M. J. Lamb History of the City of New York, I, 1877, p. 58.

¹⁰The story of a Walloon settlement at Wallabout Bay is imaginary.

had granted them real protection and help. That the settlement of New Netherland was Dutch no one disputes. That a French ethnic Protestant group was used by them shows not only their broadmindedness, but also their wisdom. That they bent their best efforts to assimilate them and succeeded demonstrates more wisdom. This assimilation of the Huguenots and Walloons was naturally bound to happen and was aided a great deal by the State Reformed Church.

The Reformed Church of the Netherlands must be considered the very life breath of the country. Religious fortitude more perhaps than a natural desire for independence sustained the people of the Netherlands in their titanic war against Spain. William of Orange was the hero of both Church and State. His descendants on the throne of Holland unto this day have never forgotten it. And they remember also their Coligny inheritance through Louise de Coligny, daughter of one of the greatest sons of France. The greatly beloved Queen of the Netherlands maintains among her chaplains a French Protestant minister, thus witnessing to an old tradition.

Holland is a tolerant country. There the Jews who escaped from Spain and Portugal found religious liberty. Jansenism survived there and Roman Catholics were allowed complete freedom. But officially, Holland was Protestant. From the very first, the Dutch East India and West India Companies maintained chaplains for the benefit of their employees abroad, in Ceylon, Sumatra, Java, Surinam, Brazil and the

West Indies, as a matter of course, wherever the Dutch flag flew, and even in foreign commercial centers like Moscow, Archangel, Constantinople and elsewhere.¹¹

The first officially ordained minister who was sent to the little flock is Jonas Michaelius; little was known about him until a few years ago except that he understood French, and could even preach in that language after a manner. But recently, a good deal of information about him and his family was discovered by Dr. A. Eekhof of Leyden University.

His father's name was Jean Michel, sometimes called de Michel, or in Dutch cumbersome fashion Jean Michielssz. It is thought that his family originally came from Dieppe. At any rate, he was not of a sedentary type. We first find him at Norwich, England, where he was a Huguenot pastor. From there he went to Flanders and preached the Reformed faith. At this time, war with Spain broke out. When Haarlem was besieged in 1579, he was a member of a party which sought help from Sonoy. Later, he was dispatched to William of Orange, then in 1582 to England on a diplomatic mission. Afterwards, he became pastor at Grootebroeck in Northern Holland.

There, little Jonas was born. Following his father's death, his mother had him enter the Latin school at Hoorn, and finally the University at Leyden for six years (1598-1604). He was then only fourteen years old. Leyden was a gather-

¹¹ F. E. Romig, *Jonas Michaelius*, in *Tercentenary Studies*, 1928, Reformed Church in America, p. 8.

ing of intellectual giants among scholars, one of them being the French Huguenot François du Jon, better known as Junius, who was a man of courage, an acquaintance of Calvin, and the author of an excellent Latin translation of the Old Testament. In 1566, he had preached in Brussels in a room overlooking the market place, at the very moment several Huguenots were being burnt alive, so that the light of the flames consuming them flickered through the glass windows of the secret conventicle.

Another professor was Joseph Justus Scaliger, born of Italian ancestry in 1540 at Agen, in the South of France called "the greatest scholar of modern times."

The Regent himself, Johann Kuchlein was a theologian who had known Melancthon.

So that there was good scholarship in Leyden and plenty of hard learning for the young Jonas Michel who Latinized his name as Michaelius, in the fashion of the day.

After his graduation, Michaelius volunteered to be a minister among the Huguenots of Brabant, when he was persecuted by the Spanish Government during the Inquisition. After seven years of this ministry, he took a pastorate in North Holland. As he passed through Leyden, he may have met John Robinson, pastor of the English Separatists.¹²

Jonas Michaelius remained twelve years in North Holland, then was commissioned by the West India Company to be a chaplain in Bahia, Brazil (1625). He left the following

¹² E. F. Romig. *op .cit.* p. 3.

year for the Gold Coast where he remained for about three years as chaplain at Elmina, then an important Dutch commercial center.

In the meantime, a new governor had come to New Amsterdam where he was to rule for six years (1626-1632). His name was Pierre Minuit, which is sometimes written Menewee, according to the French pronunciation which must have been given by him.

Pierre Minuit was born at Wesel about 1580 in the independent duchy of Cleves on the Rhine, close to the boundary of Holland. The city had a strong German Reformed Church and was a refuge for thousands of Protestants from the Netherlands and even from England. These exiles formed French Reformed, Dutch Reformed and English Reformed congregations. The French Reformed congregations on the Rhine and the Palatinate maintained their language for three centuries, against great difficulties.¹³ In the seventeenth century, many of these refugees were compelled to emigrate again, either to Prussia or to America, where they form the bulk of the Huguenot population of Pennsylvania.

Jonas Michaelius described Minuit and his brother-in-law Jan Huyghens, store keeper of the Company, and his fellow-members as "persons of very good fame, both having formerly

¹³ Ph. Keiper, *Französische Familiennamen in der Pfaltz*. Kaiserslautern, 1891. A. Paul *Les Réfugiés huguenots et wallons dans le Palatinat du Rhin du XVI^e siècle a la Révolution* (*Revue Historique*, Vol. 157, (1928). reprint.

held office in the church, the one as deacon and the other as elder, respectively in the Dutch and French churches in Wesel."¹⁴ This sentence is somewhat involved.

Researches were made by Pastor J. D. Sardemar of Wesel. The records of the French Church had been destroyed. Minuit's name was found neither in the records of the German Church, nor of the Dutch Church. It was found, however, that Huyghens was deacon of the Dutch Church in 1612. Minuit's name appears in the civil records of Wesel on March 5th, 1619 as guardian of his sister's minor children, then on April 15th, 1625, it is recorded that he had left for foreign lands. In order to become an elder of the French Church, Minuit had been a deacon previously for a certain length of time. By profession, he was a merchant, and not a soldier as is often said. That he was able and even expected to fight was in the bourgeois tradition of those days. Rembrandt's famous picture of the *Night Watch* shows us what was probably Minuit's soldierly type. He spent a few months in Holland, and was appointed Director of New Netherland by the West India Company on December 19, 1625. He arrived at New Amsterdam on May 4, 1626.

Hitherto, the colony had been only a fur trading establishment. With Minuit, it became also agricultural, this is the reason why he purchased Manhattan Island from the Indians for twenty-four dollars, or about ten acres for one cent, value in knives, beads and seewan, a native shell money, a

¹⁴ E. F. Romig, *op. cit.* p. 9.

real estate transaction which made him famous. Minit had brought over seeds, plants, some cattle, and implements of husbandry. And so colonization began in earnest. Good relationship was established with the English of Plymouth and William Bradford their governor. Minit also kept on good terms with the Indians who had probably their own idea as to the real meaning of the sale of Manhattan.

What was relatively a tremendous development took place with the arrival of Pierre Minit. He brought along with him the lay ministers, called visitors (or comforters) of the sick, Sevastien (or Bastien) Jansen Krol (or Crol) and Jan Huyghens his brother-in-law. Their duty was to read the Bible, to conduct prayer services, to register marriages and to do some supervision of the morals of the community.

It was, therefore, quite in order that when Jonas Michaelius arrived at New Amsterdam, he relied a good deal on Minit and on his brother-in-law. Indeed, these two men, in addition to Michaelius himself, formed the first consistory, or administrative body of the Church. The fourth member of the consistory was Krol, who usually resided at Fort Orange where he had become director of the Fort, and therefore was unable to attend regularly the meetings of the consistory.

Of the community itself, Michaelius writes: "the people, for the most part, are rather rough and unrestrained, but I find in most all of them love and respect towards me."¹⁵

¹⁵ *Ecclesiastical Records State of New York*, Vol. 1. Albany 1091, page 51.

The first church service was held in a horse mill on our present South William Street, near Pearl Street. The millstones used in this mill are preserved in the basement of the Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas, the mother church of New York.

Here, Michaelius was led to organize French services for the larger part of his flock which was not familiar enough with the Dutch language. No doubt, every colonist spoke Dutch after a manner. But it is quite another thing to speak a language sufficiently well to get along with the neighbors and the government, still another thing to enjoy a religious service in an unfamiliar tongue and to listen to a long sermon such as Dutch preachers were in the habit of delivering, as often as not on the driest dogmatic topics. In a letter written on August 11, 1628 to the Rev. A. Smoutius¹⁶ of Amsterdam a very interesting account of the church is given.

“At the first administration of the Lord’s Supper, which was observed not without joy and comfort to many, we had fully fifty communicants — Walloons and Dutch — of whom a portion made their first confession of faith before us, and others exhibited their church certificates. Others had forgotten to bring their certificates with them, not thinking that a church would be formed and established here; and some who brought them unfortunately had lost them in a general conflagration, but they were admitted upon the satisfactory testimony of others to whom they were

¹⁶ Latinized form of Smout.

known, and also upon their daily good deportment, since we cannot observe strictly all the usual formalities in making a beginning under such circumstances.

We administer the Holy Sacrament of the Lord once in four months, provisionally, until a larger number of people shall otherwise require."

"The Walloons and French have no service on Sundays, otherwise than in the Dutch language, for those who understand no Dutch are very few. A portion of the Walloons are going back to the fatherland, either because their years here are expired, or else because some are not very serviceable to the Company. Some of them live far away and could not well come in time of heavy rain and storm, so that it would not be advisable to appoint any special service in French for so small a number, and that upon an uncertainty. Nevertheless, the Lord's Supper was administered to them in the French language and according to the French mode with a discourse preceding, which I had before me in writing, as I could not trust myself extemporaneously."¹⁷

The number of people in New Amsterdam is estimated at about two hundred and seventy. As the Huguenots and Walloons probably outnumbered the Dutch at that time, this may explain why Michaelius named the Walloons first and the Dutch next in his report. No doubt, Minuit attended the French services at times as well as his French secretary, Isaac de Rasière.

¹⁷ *Ecclesiastical Records*, I 53-54.

Such were the beginnings of the Collegiate Church of New York, now a most important parish of the Reformed Church in America. This Collegiate Church is now composed of several congregations. Such were also the beginnings of the French Congregation in New York, now called French Church du Saint-Esprit, which, as an offshoot of the work of Michaelius, has spiritual ties with the Collegiate Church, her mother.

Michaelius remained in New Amsterdam about three years. His opinion of the Indians, to whom, no doubt, he would have liked to preach to, is not high. Apparently, the white man and his gin did not improve them.

“As to the natives of this country, I find them entirely savage and wild, strangers to all decency, yea, uncivil and stupid as garden poles; proficient in all wickednesses and godlessness; devilish men, who serve nobody but the devil; that is the spirit which, in their language, they call Menetto; under which title they comprehend everything that is subtle and crafty and beyond human skill and power. They have so much witchcraft, divination, sorcery and wicked tricks, that they cannot be held in by any bands or locks. They are as thievish and treacherous as they are tall; and in cruelty they are altogether inhuman, more than barbarous, far exceeding the Africans.”¹⁸

Michaelius declares that they will be most difficult to convert. Someone stated that they were good savages. Was

¹⁸ The tribe he had known on the Gold Coast was the Fanti.

it Minuit? At any rate, Michaelius continues: "I cannot myself wonder enough who it is that has imposed so much upon your Reverence and many others in the Fatherland, concerning the docility of these people and their good nature, the proper principia religionis and vestigia legis naturae which should be among them; in whom I have as yet been able to discover hardly a single good point."

The food situation was not encouraging. Butter was imported from Holland. The rest of the food apparently so, for it was the same inadequate menu offered on the ships: beans, peas, barley, stockfish in winter. Michaelius had been promised some land, but he could have made little use of it for there were no horses or cows, and no laborers to cultivate a farm. Even the fort was not yet finished.

Of the climate he says: "The country is good and pleasant, the climate is healthy, notwithstanding the sudden changes of cold and heat. The sun is very warm, the winter is strong and severe and continues fully as long as in our country. The best remedy is not to spare the wood of which there is enough and to cover one's self with rough skins, which can also be easily obtained." The letter is dated: "From the island of Manhattan in Nieuw-Nederland," the name of New Amsterdam not being mentioned.

Some difficulty arose between Michaelius and Minuit. The Director left for Holland in 1632. Six years later he returned to America to found the colony of New Sweden in Delaware (1638). He perished in a West Indian hurricane in 1639.

As for Michaelius, the rest of his career is not known. He seems to have gone back to Holland in 1633 with the intention of returning to America, but apparently did not.

It seems to be the fate of the people of French race to be pioneers, and then others continue where they blazed the trail. It has been so in science, in philology, in political science, in medicine, in theology, in exploration, Jesse de Forest, Minuit and Michel, born under other flags, were thus typically French.

CHAPTER III

AN ECLIPSE, A SMOKING FLAX, AND A NEW LAMP

A PROTESTANT congregation is far from being always influenced by its minister, but without the leadership of one, it cannot live.

For several years, the successors of Minuit in the Dutch Church are not especially interested in the French part of their congregation. They minister to it as part of the Dutch flock, although they all know French to some extent. Everard W. Bogardus¹ was a Leyden graduate, like Michaelius. Johannes Megapolensis, German born, was a scholarly person as well as an active missionary.² Samuel Dries (Drisius) who was a Hollander, was able to converse in French. No doubt, these ministers speak occasionally in French to their Walloon and Huguenot parishioners, as they make their parish rounds. They read in the French family Bible, as the family sits patient and polite, not understanding quite well, but nevertheless flattered. However, the whole atmosphere of the

¹ E. T. Corwin, *A Manual of the Reformed Church in America* 1902, p. 330-332. He found the horse-mill unworthy and probably too small and opened for worship a barnlike building on Pearl Street. It served seven years.

² He knew French enough to converse with Father Jogues. E. T. Corwin, *Manual* 1902, p. 613, 615.

Church of New Amsterdam is intensely Dutch. French emigration proper was rather unimportant at first. Louis XIII, or rather his prime ministers, Richelieu and Mazarin, were fair to the Huguenots. Persecution began in 1665, gathering strength more and more under a totalitarian king, who, no doubt, was influenced by his Spanish wife, Anne d'Autriche.

The French element in the population of New York, loses its savor, because it has no church, no intellectual urge, no holding together in communion of good wills, no super-family.

The first purely French Church in Manhattan formed in the Northern part of the Island was rather modest.

There, in 1658 was founded by Governor Stuyvesant the village of Nieuw Haarlem, now called Harlem. The first settlers were four Huguenots: Slots, Pierre Cresson, Daniel Tourneur, and Jean Mousnier de la Montagne.³ According to plans made by the Council, about twenty to twenty-five families would be settled there, with fifteen soldiers to watch over the Indians. There was an eight mile dirt road to the Fort, but it was not well kept.

In 1659, a Frenchman, Michel Zyperus (Latinized from the name of Cipierre) became the minister of this small group under the supervision of the New Amsterdam Con-

³ Or de la Montaigne. The Dutch spelling is of course rather fanciful. He bought a two hundred acre farm in Harlem and hopefully called it Valley of Peace (Vredendal). He had married in 1626 Rachel de Forest, grand-daughter of Jesse de Forest.

sistory. Cipierre was not an ordained minister. In 1663, he left Harlem to go to Virginia where he conformed to the Church of England and where he died in 1672. He was replaced as rector, schoolmaster and clerk, by Jean de la Montagne who was also bilingual, but possibly used only Dutch officially.

No doubt, Zyperus had preached in Dutch and French in Harlem, where French and Walloon names form the majority. Besides the four already mentioned, we have Jean Le Roy, Philippe Casier, David Uzille, Jacques Cousseau, Philippe Presto, François Le Sueur, Simon de Ruine, David du Four, Jean Gerves, Jean de Pre.⁴ Others include Claude Le Maistre, ancestor of the family of Delamater, Vermeilles (or Vermilye, in Dutch spelling), Robert Le Main, Frederick de Vaux (de Vœ) and in particular the Demarest family. David Demarest (or Desmarest) made a very short stay in Harlem. He removed to Hackensack where he had received a patent for three thousand acres. The patent, curtailed in 1709, was called "the French patent." David Demarest had planned a Huguenot village of thirty to forty families with a French church. These plans did not altogether come to fruition, but the Demarest family did increase so that it was claimed, in 1820, that it numbered seven thousand.⁵ A family association recently formed carries on the tradition.

⁴ These last four are Walloons: F. A. Liotard, *Le Village de Harlem*. Mess. Evang. Vol. 10, March 1935, p. 11.

⁵ Cf. W. W. Clayton, *History of Bergen and Passaic, New Jersey*, Philadelphia 1882, p. 44-45.

A church school building was started in 1665 and finished in 1667. It continued throughout the year a rather chequered existence and became St. Mary's Episcopal Church in 1823. In that Church, Pastor Dries officiated once or twice a year, but probably in Dutch only, although he knew French.⁶

The inner life of the settlement was filled with quarrels and law suits. This is why the best elements, the Demarest and De Vaux moved to Bergen County, N. J., Pierre Cresson to Staten Island, and Gerard Le Maistre to Flatbush. From this point of view, the story of New Harlem differs from all the other Huguenot (or partly Huguenot) settlements where the high character of our ancestors was most conspicuous.

M. Liotard believes that this difference may be due to the fact that the first New Harlem settlers had come at a period when there was no intense religious persecution. Those who came to America were the adventurous and the audacious. With the Palatinate emigrants after 1672, we have what is usually understood as the Huguenot type.⁷

After all, the Harlem church was some kind of a light, but as a French organization, it might be regarded as "a smoking flax" rather than a lamp⁸ until the French Church in the Fort begins.

⁶ E. T. Corwin. *Manual* 1902, p. 434.

⁷ F. A. Liotard: *Le Village de Harlem*. Mess. Evang. vol. 10, September 1935, p. 7-8.

⁸ Corwin lists the French Church as beginning in the Fort in 1668. *Manual* 1902, p. 1073. We do not know on what basis he makes the statement.

Our most estimate knowledge of the colony in 1678 comes from the Journal of the Labadists, Jasper Danckaerts and Peter Sluyter.⁹ These two emissaries, who spoke French,¹⁰ and on account of their sober attire were once taken to be priests by French Catholics¹¹ in New Jersey, had been sent to this country to select a place where their sect could emigrate in complete freedom.¹²

In Danckaert's Journal, we find quite a few references to Huguenots and Walloons in the colony. Peter de la Noy (whom he calls Abraham Lennoy) bookkeeper to the collector of customs "a good fellow apparently,"¹³ inspected their baggage rather kindly. They met Jean Vigne and wrote about his claim.¹⁴ They were well received by Monsieur La Grange (Arnou de la Grange) "dressed up like a great fop,

⁹ We quote from *Journal of a Voyage to New York and a tour in several of the American Colonies in 1679-80* by Jasper Dankers and Peter Sluyter . . . translated . . . and edited by Henry C. Murphy, Brooklyn, 1867.

¹⁰ P. 148.

¹¹ Naturally the Labadists call them papists.

¹² Labadism was an ascetic Protestant sect founded in Holland by Labadie, a pupil of the Jesuits who became Protestant in 1650, was ordained to the ministry, then preached at Orange and Geneva where he developed views of his own. He died in 1674. His disciple, Pierre Yvon, was his successor. In 1727, the sect came to an end.

¹³ P. 115-116.

¹⁴ P. 114-117. These two rather austere and severe emissaries say nothing uncomplimentary about Jean Vigne. They pass remarks about almost every one.

as he was. My comrade did not fail to speak to him seriously enough on the subject . . . He had a small shop, as most of all people have here, who gain their living by trade, namely by tobacco and liquors, threads and pins and other knick-knacks.”¹⁵ Other references to him were later in the Journal. They visited the house of Abraham de la Noy, schoolmaster, “brother of the commissary in the custom house.” “There he found a company of about twenty-five persons, male and female, but mostly young people.” Abraham de la Noy was teaching them the catechism. “It looked like a school and indeed it was, more than an assembly of persons who were seeking after true godliness; where the schoolmaster who instructed them, handled the subject more like a schoolmaster in the middle of his scholars than a person who knew and loved God, and sought to make him known and loved, they sung some verses from the psalms, made a prayer, and questioned from the catechism, at the conclusion of which they prayed and sung some verses from the psalm again. It was all performed without respect or reverence, very literally and mixed up with much obscurity and error. He played however the part of a learned and pious man, enfin *le suffisant et le petit prédicateur*. After their departure, I had an opportunity of speaking to him and telling him what I thought was good for him.”¹⁶

Danckaerts speaks well of Jacques Cortelyou who had

¹⁵ P. 117.

¹⁶ P. 134.

come in 1562. He was born in Utrecht "of French parents as we could readily discover from all his actions, looks and language. He had studied philosophy in his youth and spoke Latin and good French. He was a good mathematician, and sworn land-surveyor. He had also some knowledge of medicine. The worst of it was that he was a good Cartesian and not a good Christian, regulating himself and all externals, by reason and justice only; nevertheless, he regulated all things better by these principles than most people in these parts who bear the name of Christians or pious persons." The village of New-Utrecht was named by him.¹⁷ The Labadists lent to Jaques Cortelyou *Les Pensées de Pascal* which they judged would be useful to him.¹⁸

At Wallabout Bay lived old Catherine Trico.¹⁹ "The aunt of La Grange is an old Walloon from Valenciennes, seventy years old; she is worldly-minded, living with her whole heart as well as body among her progeny which now number one hundred and forty-five and will soon reach one hundred and fifty. Nevertheless, she lives alone by herself and a little apart from the others, having her little garden."

Pierre Bayart, whom they call Pieter Bayaert, a deacon of the Dutch Church, was more according to their heart.²⁰

¹⁷ P. 128.

¹⁸ P. 166.

¹⁹ Catherine was the wife of Joris Jansen de Rapalje, by whom she had ten children. Her first child, Sarah, was born at Fort Orange, now Albany, on June 9, 1625, and not at Brooklyn, as old histories said: Sarah was the first Christian girl born in the colony of New Netherland.

²⁰ P. 343.

In Staten Island, they "went from one plantation to another, for the most part belonging to French, who showed every kindness because we conversed with them in French, and spoke of the ways of the Lord according to their condition."²¹

Before evening, they arrived at the plantation of a Frenchman whom they called *Le Chaudronnier* (the coppersmith) who was formerly a soldier under the Prince of Orange. The day after they reached the plantation of *Pierre Le Gardinier* who had been a gardener of the Prince of Orange. He had a large family of children and grandchildren, was about seventy years of age and was still as fresh and active as a young person. He was "so glad to see strangers who conversed with him and his in the French language about the good, that he leaped for joy."²²

Indeed, the French and Dutch of Staten Island who far outnumbered the British, were very desirous of having a minister. They wanted the young Domine Tessemaker who apparently spoke French, for writes Danckaert "in the event of not obtaining him, they would send or had sent to France for another. The French are good Reformed churchmen, and some of them are Walloons."²³

All this material for a French Church apparently goes

²¹ P. 145.

²² P. 146. This was none other than Pierre Cresson who had previously resided in Harlem.

²³ P. 142.

somewhat to waste because there is no leadership. As emigration brings more human material, the smoking flax will soon be replaced by a lamp. About ecclesiastical affairs, we find a considerable information in the Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York. There we find a reason for not having a French "light" in the colony. The reason was largely economic, for the cost of living was higher in the colony than in Holland. The Rev. Casparus van Zuren of Long Island declares in a letter²⁴ that the 750 guilders Holland money which was the salary promised to him (and not paid) are the equivalent of 450 guilders in Holland.

On October 30, 1681, Casparus van Zuren reported that the Dutch congregation (with five charges) have "about seventeen hundred members, Dutch and French." Out of these, five hundred were in New York,²⁵ but Domine Henry Selyns who arrived in 1682 declares that they numbered six hundred, so that St. Nicholas Church in the Fort, built in 1642, was too crowded.²⁶

In Staten Island, there were about fifty members.²⁷ Apparently, the French outnumbered the Dutch for the spokesmen of the group were François Martinou and John Boulyn;²⁸ they objected to supporting an English clergyman whose

²⁴ *Ecclesiastical Records*. II. p. 745.

²⁵ P. 795.

²⁶ P. 829, 852.

²⁷ P. 795.

²⁸ P. 844-846.

language they could not understand.²⁹ Justice Stillwell mentions the French first.

It is only in 1682 that the French Huguenot part of the Dutch Reformed Church formed a new organization under the care of Pierre Daillé, the apostle of the Huguenots, in the provinces of New York and New Jersey. Little is known about his previous life, except that he was a kinsman of the great Jean Daillé, was probably born at Chatelleraut, in the Poitou, in 1649 and, at the early age of thirty, became a professor in the Academy of Saumur, one of the four Protestant Colleges of France, where the classics and theology were taught. Saumur was for eight years "a torch that illuminated all Europe." They possessed what was then a large faculty: two professors of theology, two of philosophy, a professor of Hebrew, one of Greek, besides the principal. We do not know what was Daillé's chair. William Penn studied there. Even before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes became a legal (or illegal) fact, these Academies were closed and the professors banished. Pierre Daillé and his wife removed to the Netherlands where he received a call from the consistory of the Dutch Church in New York. But New York being a British colony, the question of relationship to the States Church of England arose, since Daillé's ministry among the French was going to be a new departure. There was no Bishop of the Anglican Church in the colonies, and

²⁹ "The French and the Dutch". *Eccl. Records*. II. p. 846.

the Bishop of London exercised jurisdiction over them. We do not know all the reasons for this act, but only that Daillé was reordained by the Bishop of London on his way to this country. From the point of view of Calvinism, there was no theological difficulty. Calvin himself did not oppose the episcopate.³⁰ Calvin only maintained rightly that the episcopate had been transformed beyond recognition in the unreformed church. Ordination being from the point of view of the church tied to a "call", and the call being in Calvinism a local affair, modalities of ecclesiastical policy might warrant the step that Daillé took without disparaging the ordination he had previously received.

As a matter of fact, the question was largely political; in 1675 there had been a case of Domine Nicholas van Rensselaer who had come to Albany in orders of the Bishop of Salisbury in the Church of England, and whom Domine Wilhem Van Nieuwenhuysen had at first refused to accept as a real clergyman because he had no testimonials from the classis. On the first of October of that year, Van Nieuwenhuysen wrote to Governor Andros as follows:

"A minister, according to the order of the Church of England, lawfully called, is sufficiently qualified to be admitted to the serving and administering of the sacraments in a Dutch Church belonging under his Majesty's dominion, when he

³⁰ J. Pannier. *Calvin et l'épiscopat* (Cahier de la Faculté de théologie protestante de l'Université de Strasbourg).

has promised to conduct himself in his services according to the Constitution of the Reformed Church of Holland.”³¹

Van Rensselaer promised, on his part, to conduct himself according to the Dutch Church, conformably to the public Church service and discipline of the Reformed Church of Holland.³² No doubt, Daillé must have made a similar declaration.

Daillé’s work was that of a missionary in the city and outside. In 1683, Domine Selyns reports about him to the Classis of Amsterdam:

“Domine Pierre Daillé, former professor at Salmurs (Saumur) has become my colleague. He exercises his ministry in the French Church here. He is full of zeal, learning and piety. Exiled for the sake of his religion, he now devotes himself here to the cause of Christ with untiring energy. Rev. John Gordon has come over from England to perform service for the English. His English service is after my morning service, and the French service is after my afternoon service.”³³

In 1684, Selyns reports of Daillé that “he is very zealous.”³⁴ The relationships were excellent, also with the English chaplain, the Rev. John Gordon. This cordial understanding is emphasized by the fact that when Gordon’s wife made her will

³¹ *Eccles. Records of the State of New York*, Vol. 1, p. 681.

³² *Eccles. Records*, Vol. 1, p. 681-682.

³³ P. 866-867.

³⁴ P. 881.

in 1685, she bequeathed half of the money due her in America to the poor of the Dutch Church.³⁵

In 1685, Domine Selyns reported that many French refugees were filling up the churches here, and that three ministers, Pierre Daillé in New York, Lambertus van der Bosch on Staten Island, and another at Boston, and one in Pennsylvania, were ministering to them.³⁶

In the same year, a petition was sent by the French Protestants of New York to Governor Dongan asking "that merchants, masters of vessels, and others who will settle in this country may have the privilege of trading provided they take an oath of fidelity to the king."³⁷ This petition, signed by Jean Bouteiller, was transmitted to London and without delay was granted. In the Council Chamber at Whitehall "His Majesty" James II, "being graciously enclined to give all due encouragement to such French Protestants as are settled or shall become inhabitants of New York. Wee have received His Majesty's Commands to signify His Royal Pleasure unto you that you give unto them all fitting encouragement soe far north as may bee consistent with His Majesty's service in those parts. And that doe forwith transmit unto us (and so from time to time) the names of such French Protestants as desire to settle in that Province, to the end of Letters of Denization may pass under ye great seal of Eng-

³⁵ P. 909-910.

³⁶ P. 936, 947-948. Cf. 945.

³⁷ P. 937.

land, whereby they may become qualified to trade to His Majesty's Plantations according to their request and the several acts of Trade and Navigation in that behalf.³⁸

In 1688, Governor Dongan was replaced by Governor Andros, who had been governor at Boston. Andros retained his New England position, but administered that province from New York. The Rev. R. Varick reported that "the French Congregation increases by daily arrivals from Carolina, the Caribbean Islands and Europe."³⁹ While the word "daily" is probably exaggerated, it should be noticed. Domine Varick adds "Lately two French preachers came over." These were Pierre Peiret and David Bonrepos. The same news is given by Selyns: "Our French ministerial brethren are doing well. Their congregation grow not a little almost daily, because of the continental arrival of French (Protestant) refugees. The French minister at New Castle (Caspar Carpentier) is dead. About five hours from here where Nova Rupella (New Rochelle) is laid out and is building up a new (French) minister (David de Bonrepos) has arrived."⁴⁰

Although a member of the Church of England, Governor Andros understood and spoke both Dutch and French and attended services at the Reformed Church in these lang-

³⁸ P. 943.

³⁹ P. 956.

⁴⁰ P. 959. He was a French Waldensian. The name has become Burpeau.

uages.⁴¹ The Andros family was closely connected with Guernsey which was then entirely French speaking.

Regular worship in French took place in the Church in the Fort, and continued there until 1692.

But there was ample work to be done outside of the town.

Every Dutch community contained a minority, sometimes a large proportion of Huguenots. For instance, we have a petition of inhabitants of Esopus for a minister of the Gospel (1676).⁴² Among them were several of the group called later New Paltz Patentees. These twelve patentees were Louis Bevier (or Beviere),⁴³ Antoine Crispell,⁴⁴ Christian Deyo,⁴⁵ Louis Du Bois,⁴⁶ Abraham Du Bois, Isaac Du Bois, Hugo Frere (anglicized as Freer), Abraham Hasbrouck,⁴⁷ Jean Hasbrouck, Andre Le Fevre,⁴⁸ Simon Le Fevre.

From the form of the names, it seems that this whole

⁴¹ P. 969.

⁴² *Ecclesiastical Records* 1. p. 683-684.

⁴³ There was a Beviere family at Avesnes. M. Misoffe. *Les notables d'Avesnes au XVIe siècle et la famille de Forest*, Lille 1937 *passim*.

⁴⁴ Among the descendants is the Roosevelt family.

⁴⁵ The name is spelled also Doyo. There was a Doye family in Valenciennes. Anselo Doye is with Jean Bayart among the first Huguenots of Avesnes. Misoffe. *op. cit.* p. 28. The name may have been D'Oye.

⁴⁶ The branch of the De Forest who remained in France were allied to a Du Bois family of Lille or the neighborhood. Misoffe. *op. cit.* p. 156-159.

⁴⁷ This is the name of a town in the French department of the Nord, which may have been their native place.

⁴⁸ Or Lefebvre. There was a Lefebvre family of notables at Avesnes.

group came from the Eastern part of the department of the Nord. They had migrated to the Palatinate circa 1640 and settled near Mannheim. These patentees established themselves in a community of their own which they called Le Palle or Le Nouveau Palle, this being their French name for the German Paltz (Palatinate), the country they came from. Unhappily, this small town took later the hybrid name New Paltz. Daillé visited the settlement for the first time on January 22, 1683, preached twice on the following Sunday, and founded a French Church with Louis Dubois as elder, and Hughe (or Hugo) Frere as deacon.⁴⁹ He came about twice a year. On other Sundays, the settlement assembled for worship under the leadership of an elder or deacon. The French language was used in that Church for fifty years. Then the remaining members united with the Dutch Church.⁵⁰

Daillé had also the care of the French at Staten Island. These would probably require a monthly service. He also visited the little church near Hackensack, N. J. established by the Demarest family.

⁴⁹ *Records of the Reformed Church of New Paltz, N. Y.* Collections of the Holland Society of New York, vol. III, 1896, p. 1-2.

⁵⁰ For the history of New Paltz, the authority is R. Le Fevre, *History of New Paltz, New York and its old families* (from 1678 to 1820). Albany, 1903, 2nd ed. 1909. Unhappily, the French records (p. 37-43) were uncritically edited; they are not better in the third volume of the collections of the Holland Society of New York, vol. III, pp. 60 ff.

A French light was now shining in New York, and to this day it shines.

This French Church, as intimately connected with the Dutch Church as the Walloon Churches in Holland, was also connected with the State Church of England through Daille's ordination.

It had no connection with the French Protestant Church in the homeland. This was normal, since Protestantism does not admit of an ecclesiastical authority outside of national boundaries.

CHAPTER IV

THE REFUGEES BUILD THEIR OWN CHURCH

THE Revocation of the Edict of Nantes marked a tremendous exodus, especially from the maritime provinces of France, Normany, Poitou and Saintonge to Holland, England, the West Indies, Virginia, New York, Massachusetts and other states. The largest number of those who came to New York were from La Rochelle and its vicinity, when they organized a community of their own, they naturally called it New Rochelle.

Pastor Pierre Peiret arrived in New York early in November 1687. The Huguenots, now so numerous in New York, could not be satisfied with a hurried hour after the Dutch and English services. They set to building their own house of worship or temple. Its location was in Petticoat Lane, later named Marketfield Street, at the corner of New Street. The site of the church is now covered by the Produce Exchange. On the wall of this building a bronze tablet erected by the Huguenot Society of America bears the following inscription:

EMPLACEMENT DE LA PREMIERE
EGLISE FRANCAISE DE NEW YORK
HUGUENOT CHURCH OF NEW YORK
ERECTED BY THE
HUGUENOT SOCIETY OF AMERICA IN 1902

"It must have been a memorable day," says Mr. Wittmeyer¹ "for these noble exiles when they were permitted for the first time to worship in this humble church in Market-field Street. In France, their churches, once so numerous and flourishing, all had been destroyed or put to other uses; and their brethren who had remained firm in the faith, had either been dispersed, or were reduced to wander about from place to place among the mountains and deserts of France. Here, on the contrary, they had once more a church of their own; they again possessed the inestimable privilege for which they had abandoned all, of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own conscience, and a bright future, full of radiant promise, opened up before them. One is not surprised, therefore, to learn that they joined with heart and voice in their simple but impressive service; that they usually filled their "temple" to overflowing; and that as often as their circumstances permitted it, their brethren of the neighboring villages came to join them in their solemn worship." "It was here," says Dr. King, "that every Sabbath day the people assembled, for twenty miles around, from Long Island, Staten Island, New Rochelle, etc., for public worship. Every street was filled with wagons as early as Saturday evening, and in them, they passed the night and ate their frugal Sunday repast, presenting a touching spectacle of purity and zeal."²

News were exchanged between groups about hardships in

¹ *Op. Cit.* p. 16.

² Baird, *The Huguenots in France and America*, Vol. II. p. 100.

the country now opened to them, but more dreadful news about the homeland which still remained dear to their hearts, news of war and piracy, and no doubt the high cost of living.

Soon after came the afternoon service with a sermon on Calvin's Catechism, good spiritual meat for the strong but indigestible to lazy minds and unappetizing to wandering thoughts. There the union of dogma and ethics, honesty and faith was set forth in a way which stamped character and formed conscience that could resist.

At about four o'clock en route to the homestead, where the children would arrive fast asleep, to-morrow's work would be easier. But the majority of the worshippers did not have far to go. New York had only about four thousand inhabitants in 1697, of this number about fifteen per cent were French.

Some days were especially important. First, of course, there were the Communion Sundays. A large number attended the preparation service. In order to receive communion, all except the indigent, had to pay their quarterly dues. Their name and the account was entered in a roll by the treasurer. A token or meraut was given to the member now in good standing. As he came to the Lord's table on the following Sunday, he passed in front an alms-trunk where he dropped the meraut.

Some other high days, were on occasions set by the Government, as on Wednesday, July 17th 1689, there was a day of Thanksgiving "because God vouchsafed to elevate to the



The First French Church in New York on Marketfield Street, then called Petticoat Lane, erected in 1681.

Kingdom of England the king and the queen." That same day, Suzanne, daughter of Elinie Boudinot was baptized after the service.

This celebration was rather late after the event since William III had been proclaimed joint sovereign of England with his wife, Mary, five months previously, to be exact, on February 13th.

This celebration took place in troublesome times, when Jacob Leisler was de facto lieutenant governor of New York.

Jacob Leisler was born in Frankfort where his father was a minister of the Reformed Church.³ He arrived in New Amsterdam as a youth of twenty, a soldier in the Dutch West India Company. He married well, succeeded in business, and became a deacon of the Dutch Reformed Church opposed to the Anglican ordained Nicholas van Rensselaer. In 1689, he was a captain in the New York militia. His company took a leading part in the local revolution which drove out the Lieutenant Governor Francis Nicholson, and proclaimed William III and Mary. Leisler appointed himself Lieutenant Governor and ruled for some twenty months with an iron hand against a great deal of opposition. Indeed, Sloughter, the new Governor, appointed by the King in August 1689, arrived only in 1691 with two companies of British regulars who were joined by militia from the countryside. Leisler held the fort with his partisans, but finally surrendered after

³ A fairly well established tradition makes him of Swiss ancestry. Such was the opinion of A. V. Wittmeyer. *op. cit.* p. 20.

a skirmish. He and his son-in-law were tried by a local court and condemned to death. The white population of New York was sharply divided by the Leisler case even after his death. The three Dutch ministers were much opposed to him and so were Daillé and Peiret when he was in power. Leisler threatened both of them with imprisonment. The conduct of Daillé was most worthy. He reproved Leisler in power, exhorted him to meekness when a criminal rebellion was in sight, and then interceded for the condemned man vainly urging Governor Sloughter to pardon him. Many of the French joined this petition for mercy, which was a just one, as was proved later when in 1695 Parliament reversed the attainder, and in 1702, the New York Assembly voted an indemnity of 2,700 pounds to Leisler's heirs. For this noble attitude, Daillé was almost sent to prison.

The French groups were as divided about the Leisler case as the rest of the population. Even families were divided by the Leisler case far into the eighteenth century. We may well suppose that the continuance of a Reformed Church minority in New Rochelle and the Molinars group in the French Church in M. Rou's time had something to do with it.

It has been supposed that M. Peiret himself had difficulties which might have come from Leisler's supporters. No doubt, M. Peiret did not always have an easy time with his parishioners. M. Rou, who had more, that "that the late M. Peiret, who was a worthy minister, lived in torment among them, as some very creditable persons who were his friends have as-

sured me.”⁴ As a matter of fact, the French have always been divided, as their ancestors the Gauls were. After the death of Jacob Leisler we find that the Leisler family had some connection with the French Church, and Pastor Peiret officiated at their baptisms.⁵

In 1692, the Church in the Fort was abandoned by the Dutch Reformed Congregation, and therefore by its French (or Walloon) section under Daillé. This group united with Pastor Peiret's congregation in Marketfield Street.

A letter from Domine Selyns dated October 12, 1692 reports: “We must not omit to mention that the two French Churches have been united, and that Dom. Peiret will perform services in the city for the most part, and Dom. Daillé in the country, all to be one church, and the income to be divided equally between them.”

Practically, things did not quite work out so well. Certainly our records show very few pastoral acts performed by Daillé in the Marketfield Street church.

⁴ Quoted by A. V. Wittmeyer *Op. cit.* p. 21.

⁵ In 1696, Thomas Lewis is baptized; his mother was François née Leisler. Elsie Leisler is godmother. *Coll. of the Hug. Soc. of Am.* 1. p. 45. The Elizabeth Leist(er) on p. 63 is probably another person (the index p. XXVI equates them).

THE HUGUENOT CHURCH OF NEW YORK

The number of pastoral acts while the congregation worshipped there is as follows:

1688	(2 months)	2 baptisms		2 funerals
1689		10 baptisms	3 marriages	8 funerals
1690		13 baptisms	1 marriage	5 funerals
1691		11 baptisms	2 marriages	2 funerals
1692		20 baptisms	6 marriages	1 funeral
1693		28 baptisms	6 marriages	1 funeral
1694		25 baptisms	2 marriages	1 funeral
1695		18 baptisms	1 marriage	
1696		29 baptisms	1 marriage	
1697		15 baptisms	3 marriages	
1698		22 baptisms	no marriages	
1699		25 baptisms	6 marriages	
1700		31 baptisms	4 marriages	

A study of those statistics shows that the parish almost doubled in 1692 although New Rochelle opened a church of its own that year. While this may be due partly to other causes, the main reason is the union of both French congregations in one. An interesting point is that we find in 1693 only two baptisms performed by Daillé and one wedding and at other times none. This shows that this self sacrificing minister was contented with his parochial work extra muros and did not interfere in the town parish.

While it was true that funerals were not always recorded, we notice that they are quite numerous at first, while one of the eight funerals of 1689 is that of a sailor who died in the harbor, it is probable that the large number of deaths was due at first to the trials of the escape from France of

which some harrowing stories are told. These are the humble martyrs of our history.

A closer study of our records reveals some interesting points. The first funeral (Dec. 22, 1688) is that of Jean Pineaud, printer. We know that there was no other printer in New York in 1687 because the legal documents in the Leisler case had to be printed in Boston.

In April 1689, a baptism is performed by a visiting minister, M. Courdil. On the basis of these figures, we estimate the population of the "parish" at about two hundred and fifty in 1688-1689, four hundred and fifty in 1692, seven to eight hundred at the end of the century.⁶ But these figures refer only to the town community. The size of the *extra-muros* parish varied; sometimes New Rochelle belongs to the parish, sometimes, Staten Island, The Hackensack and Palle churches were small. There were some scattered Huguenots at Rye where a short lived congregation may have existed also in Westchester county. Almost two thousand is about the size of the Huguenot community in what we may call the larger parish.

The *extra-muros* work of Pastor Dailé was discouraging and had been so from the very first. As early as 1686, two

⁶ Some checking up of these figures can be made from the account book. In October 1701, it seems that the average quarterly contribution of a communicant is 3 shillings. The total amount paid in October for communion tokens is 31 pounds which would represent about one hundred and twenty communicants more or less.

thirds of his flock at Staten Island to which he ministered in the midst of danger and fatigue, seceded to form a congregation under a Frenchman who called himself Dutch fashion Laurent Vandenbosch, but whose father was probably called Dubois. This French minister had conformed to the Church of England while he was in Great Britain and was licensed by the Bishop of London as he came to America. No doubt, some ecclesiastical controversy underlies his difficulties with the Dutch Reformed Church which deposed him in 1689. He finally became a clergyman of the established Church of Virginia.

We must not take at their face value the words of Selyns in the letter quoted above. "Bergen, Hackensack, Staten Island and Harlem have fallen off, under the idea that they can live without ministers and sacraments." Selyns' requirements as to godliness were exceedingly high.

Shall we include under Hackensack the little French Church of Kinkachemek whose leading spirit was David Demarest. Small indeed was this flock when Daillé visited it consisting besides the families of Jacques La Rou, André Tiebout (or Thiebaut) John Durier (spelled Du Rij by the Dutch) Daniel Ribou and Nicholas de Vaux. As Daillé left his extra-muros parish in 1696, the little church was demolished and some of its red-sand stones placed in the Dutch Church now being built on the "Green" in Hackensack. All that was left of the French settlement was the small cemetery.⁷

⁷ Francis C. Koehler. *David des Marest* 2 (in the multigraph series of *Demarest Data*).

The New Paltz Church was encouraging but small and the cost of the trip must have been almost prohibitive. The last accorded pastoral visitation of Daillé was also in 1696.⁸ In that year Daillé accepted a call to the little French Church of Boston, where he ministered until his death in 1715, a man highly respected by all.

His departure marks the breaking away of the extra-muros parish. David de Bonrepos who succeeded him at New Paltz and Staten Island, was not under the consistory of the French Church, except during a ministerial vacancy as a supply. The New Rochelle Church was independent with a consistory of its own.

How the New York Church lived is fairly well known to us. There is a very accurate book kept by Gabriel Le Boiteulx, merchant, from 1693 to 1699. It gives us the collection taken at the door of the church on Sundays (morning and afternoon), and on Wednesdays, at the close of the service which was held in the morning. It is interesting to note that on Easter day April 16, 1693, the collection taken during the service was 2 pounds 6 shillings, but the retiring collections for both services amounted to 2 pounds 2 shillings and 11 pence. These retiring collections were in a general way for the poor of the parish.

These were assisted by a regular pension which was not a charity and which in no way hurt their self-respect. We

⁸ Wittmeyer *op. cit.* p. 21, says 1692, but the New Paltz records bear our interpretation.

find that until May 1694, Mme. Bondecoux (Bontecou) receives two shillings and six pence a week. Madame Millet (or Melet) receives the same amount every week until April 30 and then on May 7.

On Wednesday, December 20, 1694 besides the collection amounting to eleven pence, there was a special offering of two gold coins amounting to 1 pound 5 shillings by M. Merlin;⁹ in 1696 also the same M. Merlin gave a yard of blue cloth worth 10 shillings.

Apparently at these Wednesday services, the good people came together for a little charity chat. Thus on March 4, 1696, we have a little roll of kindhearted men and their contributions.

M. Van Switin	18 sh.
M. Cromelin	12 sh.
M. Papin	12 sh.
M. Leboiteulx	12 sh.
M. de Lancey	20 sh. 3d
M. Barberye	30 sh.
M. Paul Droilhet	6 sh.

On Jan. 15 1694, Maitre Adam received 10 shillings for binding a Bible given to the Church by Pierre Morin.

In addition to the regular pensionnaires, some special gifts were made by the Consistory: Mme. Le Bruin (Le Brun) received one pound four shillings on Jan. 22, 1694, then two pounds on April 9 (when she is called Widow Le Bruin); she and her son were sent to Carolina by ship, the Church paying half of the passage, three pounds.

⁹ This name is not found in the pastoral acts already published.

Mme. Faucheur received one pound, four shillings on October 22nd, then on Nov. 12, Monsieur Chevallier was given one pound, one shilling and nine pence for the funeral expenses of Judith Le Faucheur. Not all funerals are entered in our books, and so only one appears here. As for Monsieur Chevallier, he has left no other trace, a Huguenot name lost for genealogical purposes.

In January 1695, there were only four pensionnaires. Mesdames Geffroy and Paillet (three shillings six pence a week), M. Michel Belin and our old friend M. Massiot. Each received one week extra for their New Year's gift, but Mme Melet was given the relatively large sum of eleven pounds sixteen shillings par ordre de la Compagnie (of the Consistory). Besides, Mme Melet received room rent amounting to ten shillings a quarter.¹⁰ Mme Prou was the recipient of two shillings a week and two men, M. Massiot and M. Jean Hain of two shillings a week. Mme Paillet and Mme Geoffroy received two shillings six pence a week until July 12, 1693, when they declared their great need for an increased pension, which brought a raise of one shilling a week. The same day, M. Leboyeux notes that Jean Hain not having come round for nine weeks to fetch his weekly pension, he credited the poor fund for eighteen shillings that he entered regularly for these nine weeks, ending June 29th. It is indeed quite extraordinary, when New York was such a small town, that no

¹⁰ Later Mme Malet went to South Carolina and married Pierre Gailard there.

one knew the whereabouts of Jean Hain. Gabriel Le Boyteux is now more careful, and because old M. Massiot comes every other week, he enters the payments accordingly. In 1694, M. Massiot was given ten shillings a quarter for house rent.

Some other expense appears in this account. Jean Latourette, a carpenter, earned seven shillings and three pence for "having done the floor of the temple and provided the iron work" (April 7, 1693). Then he went to work on the gallery for which he was paid twelve pounds thirteen shillings six pence (June 26, 1693).¹¹ This sum included material and labor. M. Gaudineau, who later became reader, was a stone mason for he obtained 1 sh. for paving the "alley" of the Temple (Aug. 31, 1693). M. Barberie himself had paid 1 lb. 5 sh., 1½d. besides towards the cost of that gallery.

We notice, in August that Mme Melet's room rent went up to 15 shillings a quarter. M. Massiot received half a cord of wood, for which Joseph Mercereau charged rather high (9 sh. 6 d.); the carter took 15 pence.

In March 1695, M. Massiot received a pair of shoes (6 sh.) In September, 2 cords of wood for him cost together with the cartage 1 lb. 10 sh. In February, 1696, he receives a new pair of shoes for 6 sh. and 2 lbs. 14 sh. 3d for a coat (casaque).

The questions to be solved by anyone dealing with the poor are the same at all times. Our Mme. Prou believed that

¹¹ This disproves the statement that the gallery was added in 1692 (A. V. Wittmeyer, *An Historical Sketch*, p. 16).

she could solve her problem by going to England. So the deacons pay 17 lbs. 10 sh. to send her there with her daughter (Nov. 1696).

We noticed elsewhere that 1697 was a hard year. Indeed, the poor fund had now seven regular pensionnaires. Prices of commodities vary; M. Massiot's pair of shoes cost 6 sh. 9 d.,¹² and the following January he receives a pair of stockings worth six pence. We find that M. Leboiteux paid 4 lbs. 8 sh. 3 d., by order of the Compagnie (of the Consistory) for Jean Renaud, sick French prisoner, the first of several war prisoners mentioned on our rolls.

In December, the board of the little Causse¹³ (no doubt an orphan) entrusted to old Madame Geoffroy costs 15 sh. a month. She is also paid 3 shillings for the making of four shirts for this little boy. The last time Mme. Geoffroy comes for his pension, she calls him le petit Cauche, that was probably her native accent cropping out. There is no further record of him. Board for an adult like M. Pierre Dupin was a shilling a day.

And so, through our books, the poor come and go, receiving allowances, fire wood, house rent, a six shilling hat for M. Bretonneau, an eighteen shilling blanket for the widow Coudret, and M. Massiot his yearly pair of shoes and pair of stockings. Some, no doubt, leave us for a better world. This

¹² In Nov. 1696 he had received his regular pair of shoes, but this time with a pair of stockings, the total cost being 10 sh. 6d.

¹³ This seems to be the reading rather than Cansse.

we may not tell, for Huguenot funeral records are not as well kept as baptisms.

Once, in October 1698, one of our pensionnaires received six yards of brown cloth at 3 sh. 6d a yard and what is called "une ruggo¹⁴ ou couverte verte" (a rug or green blanket) the price of which is one pound four shillings. As our book comes to an end, we have eight pensionnaires. Our old friend M. Massiot promoted to 2 sh. 3d. a week, Mesdames Geoffroy and Paillet who again each receive five shillings a week. Two more widows, M. Belin and finally our Madame Buren, are the last named in our books.

The financial problems of the church must have been great in its early days. None of the emigrants were wealthy, some were certainly not adapted to the new country. Happily, we have the account book kept by Elie Boudinot. In the first complete year, the minister's salary is forty pounds which was an exceedingly small amount. It was paid from the quarterly communion services in this fashion. On the Saturday afternoon before the celebration of the Lord's supper, the heads of the families came before the Consistory and received as many tokens¹⁵ in exchange for their contribution as they had communicants in their families. This amount was checked on a roll. These tokens were deposited in a special alms-box as each came to the Lord's table.

¹⁴ This is a sample of our Southern French pronunciation of English.

¹⁵ Called by the French *méreau*, *mareau* or *marreau*.

THE REFUGEES BUILD THEIR OWN CHURCH

The token collections on the Saturday and the collection at the Communion service were as follows in 1689:

Christmas Communion	Jan. 5	1.04.9	11.03.00
	Jan. 6	9. 4.10½	
Easter Communion	March 30	1.00.11	10.05.9½
	March 31	8.00.1½	
St. John's quarter	June 29	1.08.3	9.08.4½
	June 30	10.16.1½	
St. Michael's quarter	Oct. 5	0.17.4	11.13.5½
	Oct. 6	9.10.3	

The total amount collected on these four occasions, 42 lbs. 10 sh. 7d½ leaving cash in hand with the treasurer. Our ancestors did not believe in Church deficits. As the congregation grew and also, no doubt, its relative wealth, these figures show a tendency to increase, so that in 1690 M. Peiret receives also an allowance for house rent amounting to 45 shillings a quarter. In 1691, we find that the rent is only 6 lbs. for the whole year. For Easter 1690 he was given "a hat with its strings" which cost 1 lb. 5 sh. 6 d. At the following Easter he received a bonus of 3 lbs.

We gain from this account book valuable information about the cost of things in New York. On July 13 1691, a horn for an inkpot was 1 sh. 6d., and a bottle of ink and a quire of paper together were 1sh. 9d. This was good rag paper which still exists.

This same year, we find also genealogical material among some names of contributors which heretofore has escaped our notice: Mr.ie. Deschamps and the following year M. Des-

champs who gave 9 sh. 9 d., M. (Pierre) Morin gave 15 shillings and in October M. Pintard¹⁶ pays 16 sh. 1d $\frac{1}{2}$ for the whole year.

On Jan. 4, 1692 M. Peiret having been ill receives as bonus 2 lbs. 10sh. Three months afterwards he obtains again the same bonus "on account of his sickness and needs", then the bonus becomes a regular affair. Already, on Dec. 9, one pound had been paid to the Dames Paillet for four weeks board of his little daughter, probably because of that illness. This was entirely proper, because these quarterly contributions are increasing almost fifty per cent in 1692.

We never find that a salary was paid to M. Daillé, although the French congregation in the Fort joined that of M. Peiret in 1692. The receipts that year are increased, but not relatively as much as we should expect. But in 1693, we find for the first time that a reader M. Gilles Gaudineau, (or Godineau), the stone mason, had been engaged at a salary of 1 lb. 10 sh. a quarter. We learn also from the records of 1692 that Jean Roux (or Leroux in 1693) was a goldsmith, like a relatively considerable number of the members of this congregation.

All things were now improved, we note that on October 2, 1693 M. Peyret¹⁷ received ten pounds, quarterly salary and a five pound bonus including house rent which was one pound 10 shillings and that Mme. Peyret received three pounds.

¹⁶ This is the earliest occurrence of the name of Pintard. The first one in our printed records was Isabelle Pintard, godmother in 1727.

Twelve days afterwards, Miles Forster receives three pounds for sixteen yards of cloth for a gown for M. Peyret¹⁷ at three shillings nine pence a yard. As we find no charge for making the minister's gown, we suppose that Zacharie Angevin made it free of charge.

Feeling generous again on the following New Year's day, they gave him six pounds for a present and increased his salary to fifteen pounds a quarter, which really was no change, as it reduced the former bonus and house rent. But on July 9, 1694, M. Peiret received six pounds by order of the Company to help him dress up. The quarterly offerings had doubled in four years, therefore on Oct. 9, M. Peiret's salary was raised to twenty pounds a quarter. Meanwhile, in 1694, they gave him some assistance appointing as a lector M. Dumont who died early that year.¹⁸ Then M. Bondecoux (or Bontecou) was first paid one pound ten shillings like his predecessors but was raised to one pound fifteen shillings in October 1695. No doubt, prosperity was coming in a measure. In 1695, Pierre Le Roux, goldsmith, paid now one pound 4 shillings a year (instead of 13 shillings in 1693). M. Auguste Jay did likewise. On Dec. 1, 1694, Isaac Girard paid 6 shillings for a year's subscription. We already knew¹⁹ that on the following day he married off his daughter.

¹⁷ This is a new spelling of the name which is more correct.

¹⁸ His widow, Marguerite Dumont, signs as a witness in Dec. 1694.

¹⁹ *Coll. of the Hug. Soc. of Am.* I. p. 39.

In 1696, the receipts reaching a new high, a New Year's gift of three pounds was given to Mme. Peiret, Mr. Van Switin (or Van Switten) contributed a membership fee of eighteen shillings which he renewed yearly from 1696. There was a bill of five pounds 8 shillings 6d to Gared Duyckinck for window panes for the Church and for the "Commandments" M. M. (Nicholas) Malherbe and (Jean) Dubois received seven shillings for the iron supports of these commandments. That same year, there was some correspondence with the Consistory of the Boston Church where M. Daillé had gone to minister. In Jan. 1697, one shilling six pence is given for two letters from Boston and four shillings 6d for four letters to that city. In 1697, we note a gift of eighteen pounds 15 sh. 3d made by Jean Michel (unknown in printed records) probably the first legacy received by the church. Also 1 shilling 4d was realized from the sale of an old Bible belonging to the church. M. Peiret was granted a new raise, his house rent, now being eleven pounds, for a half year was added to his salary; M. Bontecou, reader, was raised to two pounds a quarter.

We already know that M. Rezeau married off his daughter²⁰ in Oct. 1697. Our account book shows that he was a far seeing man and that the door step of the church had been repaired by him in August, and that he had been paid 1 sh. 3d for that labor. There is also a record that the wife of

²⁰ Coll. of Hug. Soc. of Am. I. p. 55.

Monsieur Massiot had been buried at the end of 1688.²¹ Probably it is this M. Massiot who received a coat which, including the tailor's pay, cost two pounds 14 sh. 6d. It was the last he wore. We note that ten shillings and six pence is paid by some person toward the Church at New Rochelle, and that on Oct. 2, 1697, the tokens for the following communion were being distributed.²² This was the beginning of our interest in that mission which lasted until the departure of M. Tetard in 1766. In 1698, the sum of ten pounds 14 sh, 7½d was given for New Rochelle, and on July 4, M. Bondet received twelve pounds. In May 1698, M. Peiret had gone to Boston, his trip costing nine pounds 11 sh. 3d. which were paid by the Consistory. A Bible, sent from Boston, cost three pounds but, in order to pay this bill, seven shillings 6d. was charged for a draft.

In 1698, the offerings show a substantial decrease and there are no weddings. Had a financial storm struck our congregation, or was this evidence of the hardships caused by the long war.

In 1699, the amount goes up again to a new high and two pounds 13 sh. 7 d ½. being collected for the New Rochelle work. So M. Bontecou receives an extra pound and 4 sh. as a New Year's gift. Probably the coming of peace meant that travelling was more secure. At any rate, the attendance at

²¹ *op. cit.* p. 2.

²² The records of M. Leboiteux show eighteen pounds paid to the Consistory of New Rochelle on July 5th, 1697.

church necessitated the building of a gallery in 1699 at the low cost of ten pounds 1 sh. 8 d $\frac{1}{2}$. M. Bontecou's salary was increased to two pounds 10 sh. a quarter. The treasurer counts one sh. 6 d. profit on the exchange of one hundred reals Spanish money, but on the debit side, we find a loss of twelve sh. and 6 d. on debased money amounting to three pounds 4 sh. which was melted by M. Le Roux.

In 1702, a donation of 31 pounds 4 sh. 3 d. was made by Benjamin Faneuil (Feb. 9). The church building was being beautified, a bell-tower being made at the cost of eight pounds 10 sh. 6 d. in 1702 by Jacobus Bery (or Berry).

In 1703, the church was whitewashed in four days; the lime cost three shillings and the wages for the woman who did the work was twelve shillings. We note that M. Auguste Jay received three pounds in 1704 for the hire of his negro during one year. He probably did odd jobs around the church. This item continues in other years.

On Sunday Oct. 1, 1703, there was a payment of three pounds to M. Bondet. No remuneration for him had been recorded since 1698; probably he had preached during M. Peiret's sickness. We know that he baptized a child on Oct. 8. The funeral and other expenses for the late M. Peiret amounting to forty eight pounds 13 sh. are entered on Oct. 2. On the same day a gown for M. de Laborie the new minister is purchased for three pounds eighteen shillings 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. M. Montagne, sexton of the Dutch Church, received four shillings for ringing the bell at M. Peiret's funeral. Again, M. Benj-

amin Faneuil generously contributed three pounds 12 sh. We may note here that our account books tell us nothing about expenses attending to the purchase of land and building of the new church, and also that there was no debt on either the first or the second building. No deficit was incurred by the church until the period of M. Albert's ministry.

The French community held the balance of power in New York. They seem to have been opposed to the administration of Lord Bellomont, and that rightly. The noble lord did not hesitate to slander them; let us suppose that he was honest about it. In a report to the Board of Trade, (Sept. 21, 1698) he writes as follows:

"I must acquaint your Lordships that the French here are very factious, and their number considerable; how safe is it for this Province, which I take to be the key to all the rest upon the continent and the cheife frontier towards Canada, to incourage them to submit to your Lordship's judgment. At the last election, they ran in with the Jacobite party, and have been since so insolent as to boast they had turned the scale and could balance the interests as they pleased." And then the noble Lord adds: "There came thirty-three French to me at one time to be denizenized; they desired to be comprehended in one letter of denization without paying fees. I could have consented to that part, but I thought it became me in prudence to delay the giving them such a letter till I should first know your Lordship's pleasure therein. Some French that passed for Protestants in this Province during

the war have since been discovered to be Papists, and one would suspect their business was to give intelligence to Canada . . . Where I met with a merchant amongst the French, and known to be a good Protestant, to such I grant letters of Denization. I heare the French have wrote to England for a letter of Denization for all these people that I have delayed till I know your Lordships' pleasure, and for ought I know a great many more, and they say they will have them denized in spite of me."²³

Accusing the French Huguenots of being Jacobites appears to us rather fantastic, but it seems that the Earl of Bellomont had found himself maneuvered into the party of the old Leislerians, and so aroused the hostility of the New York merchants and therefore of the leading people coming from La Rochelle. At any rate, the Earl invited M. Gabriel Bernon who was a native of La Rochelle, and personally acquainted with a great number of the French in New York to come from the Huguenot settlement, New Oxford, Mass., and do a little propaganda work in New York for his Lordship. Bernon met M. Peyret and the leaders of the French Community, but without success, the latter declaring that they would rather go to the Mississippi rather than submit to Lord Bellomont. It appeared now that Bernon was also somewhat impatient. In a letter dated March 25, 1697, he asserted that the French were disloyal to the Governor. M. Peyret and the

²³ *Documents relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York*. Vol. IV., p. 379.

leaders of the church sought audience from the Governor and vindicated themselves, but nevertheless suppressed the salary of twenty pounds granted by the Province to M. Peyret, as well as to M. Vezey of Trinity Church.

However, we should not dwell too long on these political aspects of the life of the French community. Rather, should we let our mind study its inner life, where the voice of conscience, duty and justice never ceased to be heard, although at times, it was somewhat raucous in tone.

Huguenot piety was not negative. And our Church can claim at least one who, in another community, would have been canonized as a confessor and missionary, the saintly Elie Naud, a servant of slaves.

Elie Naud²⁴, born at Moise near Soubise, in 1661, became a seaman at the age of twelve. When he reached eighteen he went to Haiti, then a French colony where many Huguenots of his province lived. There he experienced a personal religious awakening which he thus described: "God began to speak to my heart, and granted me his love." Driven out from the island by the Revocation, he went to Boston where he remained six years, and married Suzanne Paré (the name is now Parry). Our Gabriel Le Boiteux gave him the command of his ship *La Belle Marquise* which was captured at sea by a French privateer in 1692.

Elie Naud was brought back to France and given a life sen-

²⁴ J. A. F. Maynard *Elie Naud Le Messager (Évangélique)* Sept. 1932, p. 5, 8. His name is also written Neau.

tence in the galleys as a Huguenot. In Marseilles, he was chained to the galley "*Vieille Madame*" and then to the "*Magnanime*". His exhortations encouraged other Huguenots enchained with him. He even converted a criminal who was enchained on the same bench. Being such a dangerous man, he was sent on a solitary confinement to the Chateau d'If, a prison-fortress made famous since Alexandre Dumas' novel *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*. There he was thrown into a windowless, doorless hole. From a hole in the ceiling, scanty food was thrown down to him. The floor was filled with refuse and alive with rats. During twenty-two months, he had no change of clothing. Finally, his clothes rotted away on his body. All he would have to do to be freed was to conform to the king's religion. He was released after five years of sufferings, when the treaty of Ryswick was signed (1698).

In his prison, Elie Naud composed poems. Some of these have been published. He finally returned to America, where he found his little daughter Suzanne who was baptized in our Church on Nov. 6, 1692. His name is often found in our records. He was an elder in 1704, and probably before. His sufferings had prepared him to have sympathy for the slaves, for he himself had suffered more than any of them. Thus he began missionary work among them, as a Catechist of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, while still an elder of this congregation.

Both Elie Naud and M. Peyret believed in Christian Unity.

In a letter to Elie Naud dated June 22, 1704, we learn that this saintly man was trying to bring some kind of working collaboration between the churches in New York. There were three ministers. Mr. Vezey of Trinity Church did not care to do it without instructions from the Bishop of London. The Dutch minister pleaded his ignorance of the English language. "The French minister is the only one", says Naud, "who has pushed forward and desired that a Society might be endeavored to be erected according to the Articles they had agreed upon together".²⁵

This evangelical union having fallen through, the French minister, Elie Naud and five other persons formed a little group of which the French minister was president, which met every Wednesday in a devotional meeting.²⁶

In 1705, Elie Naud conformed to the Church of England in America. It was an easy matter, confirmation was not administered in this country, and the Church was undoubtedly Protestant.

The zealous Elie Naud made a small chapel (the first rescue work in New York) in the upper floor of his own dwelling. There the negro and Indian slaves assembled, also the children of poor whites who were not wanted in the churches because they were not properly clothed. It was a "ragged school", the first in America.²⁷ In 1712, the

²⁵ Morgan Dix, *A History of the Parish of Trinity Church*, I. 1898, p. 156-157.

²⁶ M. Dix. p. 157.

²⁷ Somehow, this humble school is the beginning of Trinity School.

negro slaves rioted. Their friend Elie Naud was threatened with death by some whites, but he remained the negroes' only friend. After a time, persecution stopped and Elie Naud continued his work without interference until his death in 1722. His will left \$100 to this church for its poor, \$50 to Daniel Bondet, minister at New Rochelle, \$50 to our own pastor M. Rou, and \$250 to publish fifty-two French poems or hymns that Elie Naud has composed. Perhaps he was New York's first poet. Elie Naud was buried in Trinity churchyard, near the northern porch. The heroic and saintly life of Naud thus unites in the realm of the Spirit two of the three oldest parishes of New York.

More than the taking sides in the political life of New York, and even its economic life, this story of Elie Naud represents the Huguenot spirit. Across the haze of centuries, our ancestors are now only names, but we know the Book they read, the psalms they sang, the faith they believed, and we know them to have been good men and true, French of course, and that gave to their religious life a certain characteristic.

The continued influx of refugees overcrowded the Market-field Church. So M. Peyret and the Consistory petitioned the Assembly and were granted, in 1703, permission to sell their property, and apply the proceeds and all such other contributions that they might receive to the erection of a new and larger church, also a dwelling for the minister.

On July 1, 1704, Lord Cornbury laid the conerstone of the new building, naming it Le Temple du Saint-Esprit.

The question may very well be asked: Why did our ancestors choose so frequently this name for their churches?

The answer is that the Holy Spirit held in Calvinistic theology a place which our present theological might well re-discover. The Mastery of the Spirit was a theological principle as important as the two great principles of the Reformation: Justification by faith and the Sufficiency of the Scripture. Indeed, the name of Saint-Esprit was commonly given to the Huguenot Cross which now is used again by French Protestants.

We do not know whether the name of Temple du Saint-Esprit had been given to the previous buildings as well, as it was transmitted to the buildings that succeeded it. The old title of *Eglise Françoise a la Nouvelle York* was still used, and is even now under a slightly different form. The church building also came to be known as *temple languedocien*, the Languedoc church, although very few of the members, as we shall see in the following chapter, came from that part of France. M. Peyret did however, and that was perhaps a compliment to him. The new church site was at the corner of Pine and Nassau Street, a site now occupied by the Chase National Bank. The deed of sale remains in the possession of this Congregation, but needless to say, the land is not ours. The whole plot was not built over in 1704. The new church building which remained a New York landmark for over

one hundred and thirty years, was fifty by seventy feet. It looked very much like a country church, but of course, New York was only a country town then. The rest of the ground was used as a churchyard. No minister's house was built.

We have many pictures of the original, but they are all relatively late. The oldest, found in the margin of a picture plan of New York, represents the tower with a cupola, which was removed in 1802 when it became unsafe. No one can claim that the church had architectural beauty, except such as comes eventually with the patina of age. The church was fenced from the street and all pictures we have represent the view from the North side across the cemetery.

M. Peyret did not see the completion of the new church edifice. He died on Sept. 1, 1704. His tomb in Trinity Church yard, bears the inscription in French and Latin of which the translation is:

“Here lies the Rev. Mr. Peyret minister of the Holy Gospel who, banished from France for the sake of religion, preached the Word of God in the French Church of this City for about 17 years with the approval of all, and who, having lived as he had preached, until the age of sixty, remitted his spirit into the hands of God, with deep humility, on September 1st, 1704.”

His widow, Marguerite, left with two children, received in 1705 twelve pounds from the sum of 12,00 pounds granted by Queen Anne to poor French refugees.²⁸

²⁸ Baird. *History of the Huguenot Emigration to America*, 1885, Vol. II. p. 147.

CHAPTER V

THEIR HOME TOWNS

THE largest number of the New York refugees came from Saintonge, and the facilities for escape were exceptionally great. Indeed, some of the villages on the coast lost so much that they became obscure and unimportant places.¹

From Port des Barques, at the mouth of the river Charente came Daniel Targé, ship carpenter and Jacques Targé, sailor, who left with their families in 1681 and 1682 respectively.²

From the neighboring village of St-Nazaire, came the families of Jean Martin, later of New Rochelle,³ François Bouquet, shipmaster who took his little fortune along to New York, where we find him paying taxes in 1761, Pierre Tillou, Jean Hain who remained poor; Jean Vignaud, shipmaster who had also some wealth.

From the little town of Soubise came Jean Doublet, farmworker, Jean Pierrot and Jean Cautier, shipcarpenter. From the hamlet of Moise came Elie Naud, the confessor and evan-

¹ C. W. Baird *History of the Huguenot Emigration to America*. II. 1885, p. 14.

² The name has become Tourgee, conspicuous in American literature. C. W. Baird II. p. 15.

³ The family is now Martine.

gelist,⁴ Louis Geneuil, saltmaker, Josue and Daniel Mercereau,⁵ and Pierre Guimar who married Ester Hasbroucq of New Paltz.⁶

From Saint-Froul, between Moise and St-Nazaire came Pierre Durand (or Duran), Jean Bragaud, mariner, who became an elder in 1729 and Jeanne du Tay (or Dutais) who married Jacques Targé.

From the village of Hiers came Jean Chadeayne, shipmaster; Elie Rambert, seaman, Pierre Rusland, sailmaker, and Jacques Arondeau. These mariners left because, as early as 1630, the king showed his plan to remove "little by little" from the navy all of the Reformed Religion.

The region of Marennes was almost entirely Protestant. In 1684 order was given for the destruction of the Temple. Ten thousand people assembled for the last service and then dispersed, mourning their sorrow. From that town came Pierre Parcot, François Basset, seaman, Pierre Basset, physician, founder of the Basset family important in our Church and the Dutch Reformed, André Paillet, Timothée Archambaud. Pierre Trochon, who went back to sea, became captive of the

⁴ The inscription on his tomb in Trinity Cemetery restored in 1846 by his descendant of the sixth generation, Elizabeth Champlin Perry, widow of Commodore O. H. Perry, the hero of Lake Erie, says that he was born at Soubize in 1662. The Perry family has carried on the naval tradition of Elie Naud.

⁵Baird. p. 16-20.

⁶ Lefevre's *History* (p. 1) says that he came from Moir in Sanaigne, meaning Moise in Saintonge.

Moors in Morocco, until the age of 66, when he was liberated and, as a poor man, went to England where he later died, Benjamin Tadourneau, Elie Tadourneau, pilot and Jean Boisbelleau.⁷

From Marans came Elie Boudinot, elder of this church and founder of a family famous in American history and philanthropy. Twenty-three miles East was Mauzé, former home of Louis Guion, and Pierre Elisée Gallaudet whose family has a tablet in our church.⁸ From Benon, nearer to La Rochelle came the Vergereau brothers.

From the island of Re came Abraham Jouneau, elder, and his brother Pierre, Ezekiel Barbauld, the Gothoneau and Val-leau families, Jean Belleville, François Martineau,⁹ René Rezeau, Jacques Brouard (now Heroy), Elie Mestayer, Daniel Jouet, Jacques Bretonneau, the Vincent family, Olivier Besley, Gregoire Goujon, merchant, Pierre Bontecou whose family is now numerous, and the Le Brun family. Even to-day, the majority of families of Re could claim to be distant cousins of some of our most aristocratic New York families.

From La Rochelle, or the neighboring villages in Aunis, came the Paré family (now Parry), the brothers Faneuil, the Baudoin family, (now Bowdoin and Baldwin), the Bureau family, the de Bonrepos family, Louis Allaire, Torterue, Bon-

⁷ p. 21.27

⁸ Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, his great-grandson, 1787-1851, founded the first American institution for the deaf and dumb.

⁹ These two joined the Dutch Church in 1670.

neau, Jean Chabot, who, in 1711, subscribed 16 shillings toward the expense of building the steeple of Trinity Church, Isaac Deschamps (alias Brousard, from the name of his wife), Barthelemy Mercier, the Ayrault family, André Sigourney, Jean and Josua David, David and Elie Papin, Daniel Robert,¹⁰ Jean Auboyneau, Daniel Bernadeau, Jean Carouge, the brothers Bourdet, Pierre Chaigneau, Benjamin d'Harriette, Etienne Doucinet, Auguste Grasset, René Het, merchant in New York, Guillaume Hertin, shipmaster, François Hullin, Auguste Lucas, Auguste Jay, Gabriel Le Boiteux, merchant, the brothers Jamain, François Louraux, Jacques Marie, Paul Merlin, Pierre Morin, ancestor of John Morin Scott, Elie Nezereau who left a fifty pound legacy to the Church, Etienne Perdriau Manier, Gedeon Petit, Jean Sevehoven, Alexandre Allaire, Jean Bouteiller, Jacques Flandreau, Daniel Gombaud, Jean Hastier, the Mercier brothers, Daniel Rayneau, Ambroise Sicard, the Thauvet brothers, Jacob Theroulde, the Lhommedieu family,¹¹ the Pintard family.

From Marennes came Jacques Dubois who was a government official and died in New York in 1688.¹² His widow, Blanche

¹⁰ His descendant, Christopher R. Robert, founded Robert College in Constantinople.

¹¹ Benjamin L'Hommedieu landed in Rhode Island February 1, 1686, and was naturalized in New York Sept. 27, 1687. Ezra L'Hommedieu and Alexander Hamilton, whose mother was a Huguenot, were the joint founders of the University of the State of New York. This is another of La Rochelle's contributions to America.

¹² *Wills* New York XIV p. 54-57 quoted by Baird II, p. 28.

Sauzeau, died two years afterwards, leaving 120 acres at New Rochelle, valued 30 pounds, a young negro named Sans Façon,¹³ and other "chattels."

Some members of the Sauzeau family came to New York. Their daughter Blanche, who was only four years old when her mother died, became the wife of René Het.¹⁴ Her grave may be found in Trinity cemetery.

An orphan boy, also from Marennes, Daniel Mesnard,¹⁵ who had been brought up by Jacques Dubois, married later the daughter of François Vincent, and founded the American Maynard family.

Between the Seudre and the Garonne were villages of mariners, nearly all Protestants, who went every year to the New Foundland fisheries. From Arvert came Etienne Boyer (or Bouyer)¹⁶ Jacques Vinaux, and Anne Audebert, and Jean Dubois.¹⁷ Quite a few of our settlers came from La Tremblade, namely Jean Melet, Jean Roux, Andre Arnaud, Jean Equier,¹⁸ all mariners, Jean de Loumeau who married Jane

¹³ *Wills* N. Y. XIV p. 121-123 quoted by Baird. p. 29.

¹⁴ Baird. p. 29.

¹⁵ Baird. p. 29. The s in the name was quiescent and marked only the lengthening of the vowel which was originally *ay* going back to Frankish *ag*.

¹⁶ This is the common pronunciation of that name in Saintonge.

¹⁷ Baird p. 31-32.

¹⁸ He died in the Harbor of New York in 1689, the name is probably the same as Ecuyer. The Requa family whose name is probably Ecuyer or Lescuyer, were in Paris at the time of the Revocation, but may have originated in Saintonge.

Adrivet, Isaac Boutineau who publicly renounced the Catholic Church to which he had been compelled to submit, as did later Pierre, Jean, and Abraham Rolland. From La Tremblade came also Jean Machet, shipcarpenter who, with his wife and four children abandoned all he possessed in Bordeaux, having saved only their bodies. In his will made at New Rochelle (1694), he left all he possessed to his wife, Anne Thomas, because "all that we have, we earned together, with the labor of our hands and the sweat of our brow".¹⁹ From the same village came Arnaud Naudin (or Nodine).²⁰

Southward along the beautiful estuary of the Garonne, was the fishing village of Royan, hometown of Etienne Lavigne, Isaac Quantin (or Cantin). Nearby at St-Palais were born Daniel Lambert and André Jolin.²¹ From St-Georges came Elie Badeau, Jean Coudret and his wife Marie Gaston; from the village of Meschers, André Lamoureux, shipmaster, the brothers Many, Jean Gilles Lieure²² (or Le Lieure, or Lelièvre), Daniel Fumé, weaver, whose daughter married Isaac Quintard; Jeane Couturier, wife of Daniel Bonnet. From Saujon came Elie Chardavoine, ancestor of an important American family.²³ From Medis, three miles Southwest of Saujon, came Jean Boudin (or Bodin, or Bodine) and Daniel

¹⁹ Baird. 33-35.

²⁰ p. 35. This represents the local pronunciation of the name.

²¹ or Joline, local pronunciation.

²² This is more like the official French.

²³ Baird. p. 38.

Gaillard. From Arces, or Arse, six miles West of Meschers, came the brothers Pelletreau who established themselves as shipchandlers in New York. From Cozes (or Coses) came the Forestier brothers, from Chenac, Daniel Raynaud (or Rayneau) from Saint Seurin de Montagne, also a village on the estuary came Jean Suire and his family. Going inland we find Mirambeau, birthplace of Jean Faget who became a victualer in New York. Barbezieux is the hometown of Paul Droilhet who was an elder of the Church there and here. From Pons came Matthieu Colineau who had been a lawyer, a judge and also a deacon of the Church.²⁴

Going North, we find the province of Poitou, still an important Protestant center of France. From Chatellerault, came the Fleuriau family, Louis Carré, who became elder of this church, and Ami Cauche, whose daughter married Abraham Joneau.²⁵ From Loudun came Jacob Baillergeau, Nicholas Malherbe, whose daughter married Isaac Guion, Zacharie Angevin.²⁶ From Poitiers came the Girard family, and the Bonnin family.²⁷ From Sigournay in low Poitou came Gilles Gaudineau, a surgeon who became a lieutenant of militia²⁸ and was imprisoned by Leisler. He was an elder of this Church in 1702 and six years later became a vestryman

²⁴ P. 44.

²⁵ P. 49-50.

²⁶ It was pronounced Angevine.

²⁷ P. 52.

²⁸ In Captain Manville's Company, where no doubt a number of French refugees enlisted.

of Trinity Church. His daughter, H el ene, married Jacques Desbrosses, who was probably from the same region.²⁹

In the region of Niort the dragoons performed some of their worst deeds as early as 1681. From Niort itself came Marie T ebaux, Andr e Foucault, the first French schoolmaster in the city of New York,³⁰ David Poug n, Ren e Gilbert, Jean Coulon, the Champenois family, who had been wealthy merchants, and the Morin (or Morine) family.³¹

From the village of Thorign e, 12 miles S. E. of Niort, came Daniel Bonnet, weaver, Jacques Bergeron, woolmaker. From Benet, 8 miles N. W. of Niort came the Soulice family, the Ravard family. From Cherveux, about as far to the N. E. came Jean Juin³² and Jean Pinaud, printer. From Saint-Maixent came the Moreau family, from Lusignan came Isaac Quintard, worker in wool, who founded an important family in this country. From the village of Beaussais came the Bricou sisters who found husbands in our church.

The beautiful province of Touraine lies north of Poitou. Its capital, Tours, was almost ruined by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Jean de Neufville, physician, came from that

²⁹ Six of their children were baptized in our church. The eldest, Jacques, is often mentioned later in this history. The youngest, Elie, was vestryman of Trinity Church 1759-1770, and warden 1770-1778. A street of New York is named after this family.

³⁰ He was licensed in September 1710. Baird. p. 55.

³¹ Andre Fresneau married Marie Morin. Their grandson was Philip Freneau, the Huguenot patriot poet of the Revolution.

³² Now June.

city, as did Pierre Fauconnier who became collector of the Port in 1705 and receiver general of taxes.

When news was given out at Caen, June 1685, that royal troupes numbering 1,600 men were coming to "convert" the town, the young Etienne de Lancey fled to Holland with the jewels his mother gave him, then settled in New York where he became a merchant, an elder of this Church, and married a daughter of Stephen Van Cortlandt. His son, James, became chief justice and lieutenant of the Province of New York.³³ From Caen came also Thomas Bayeux who became likewise a leading merchant in New York, also Daniel Du Chemin, and Daniel Marchand. From Rouen, the dragoons drove out the Assire family, Jean Gancel, Pierre Chaperon, Abraham Dupont, Jacob Gosselin, Guillaume Le Conte who founded a family where scholarship has flourished.³⁴ Already in 1662, Pierre de Marc, shoemaker, had come from there. From Dieppe, came Robert de la Main in 1662, Etienne Hamel who had to abandon his plantation in the island of Guadeloupe, Jean and Pierre Le Conte, the Levilain family. From St-Lo probably came Jean Le Chevalier.³⁵ From Pont-l'Evêque came Francois Le Comte, victualer, who in 1693, confessed publicly that he had become a Roman Catholic by compulsion. From Bolbec came Nicholas Caron, jeweler. From St-Malo Christian de Lorce had come in 1659.

From Picardy had come David de Marest (in 1663), Jean Mesurole, Martin Renare, Marc de Chousoy, Benjamin de la

³³ Baird. p. 69-70.

Noy, Peter Petersen, and others who had already become important men in the colony.³⁶ In the new wave of emigration, we find the Crommelin family from St-Quentin, Jean Cottin who became a merchant, Pierre Le Grand, tobacconist both from Nohain. From the province of Artois came Mathieu Blanchard, farmer, in 1660, Nicholas du Pui in 1662, Norbent Felicien Vigneron, physician. From Lille came Arnaut du Tois in 1662. From Calais, Philippe Casier and David Uplie in 1660. From Valenciennes came Adrien Fournoi in 1659 and Jean de la Chaise in 1662. From Orleans came Daniel Streing,³⁷ his wife Charlotte Lemestre, the Thibou family, Mariette.

From Paris itself came Pierre Richard in 1663, then with the great wave of emigration, the Lescuyer family,³⁸ Henry Colié (or Collier). From Metz came Nicholas Vignon, and from its region, Abraham Rutan, whose five children were baptized in New Paltz, by Pastor Daillé.³⁹

From Sedan came Pierre Tiphaine (the name is now Tiffany).⁴⁰ From Lyon came the l'Egaré family.⁴¹ From Dauphine came the Bard and Bessonnet families. From the

³⁴ p. 75. ³⁵ p. 80. ³⁶ p. 90-91.

³⁷ Another form of the name is Strange, Estrange, l'Estrange which has the same pronunciation.

³⁸ Or Ecuyer, now Requa.

³⁹ p. 108.

⁴⁰ Baird II. p. 108. From the same city came two of present Huguenot families of the Church, Seltzer and Fassler.

⁴¹ Cf. Baird. II. 111-112.

village of Merindol, came Jean Andrivet who became a victualer in New York.

The Languedoc was a Protestant stronghold and has remained so to present times. In 1685, sixteen companies of dragoons were quartered on Montpellier to "convert" it. Many Protestants left, one of the first being Jean Aries who fled in 1663. To our Church came Pierre Monteils (or Montels) and Noe Cazelet, who was appointed constable in 1710.⁴² From Toulouse came Vincent de Laymerie, from Nimes, Louis Bongrand, merchant elected constable of the North ward in 1696 and Louis Liron, his associate in business.⁴³ Jaques Gauthier, Jean Pierre Richard and his wife Marthe Pont, Jacques Jerauld, a medical student who married Marthe du Tay, came from Languedoc. From Bordeaux came Gabriel Minvielle who was alderman in 1675 and mayor of New York in 1684, and was a member of the council under four governors. Also Henry Monye (or de Money), Jean Bouyer, Josue Lasseur, and from Bergerac, Denis Lambert⁴⁴ and perhaps Pierre Villeponteux. From Duras in Agenois came Jean Jacques Fouchart, victualer, elected constable in 1705, then from Villeneuve came Jeremie Latouche, merchant, who was elder in 1740. From Larochechalais, in Périgord, came Isaac de Lagarde. From Guyenne, came Jean Barberie, merchant, one of the founders of the Independent

⁴² Baird. p. 121-122.

⁴³ Baird. p. 132-133.

⁴⁴ p. 138-141.

French Church of which he was elder and treasurer. His son, Pierre, born in France, became a vestryman and warden of Trinity Church.⁴⁵ From Tonneins came Jean Magnon, tailor.⁴⁶ From Montauban came David de Minvielle and Francois Benech.⁴⁷ From Osse in Bearn came the Latourette family.⁴⁸

The Huguenot emigration to New York is therefore made of three elements:

From Aunis, Saintonge and Poitou came the majority as our survey shows. This group represented a cross section of society, rich and poor, city folk and farming population, sailors, salt-makers and artisans. This emigration came from the French West Indies or from England, places where La Rochelle had strong business interests.

From the Northern provinces of France, now bordering on Belgium, came a group of small industrialists and working-men, as well as a proportion of farming population. Our Church received only a small part of this emigration, for many had taken up residence in England, Holland and Germany.

From Normandy, came a few city folks, some of them wealthy. Most of the Normandy refugees went to England, for it is so very near.

Very few people came here from other parts of France. The small number that did seek refuge were from the city

⁴⁵ p. 139-140.

⁴⁶ The name became Mannion, which is the pronunciation.

⁴⁷ p. 143.

⁴⁸ p. 147.

middle-class which was not tied to land ownership as much as the farming population of the Protestant South.

As far as we can estimate, the French Church of New York received about one quarter of one percent of the Huguenot emigration. Proportionally, it received more from Saintonge and Aunis than from any other region of France. No special inducement was made by the authorities as in the case of Pennsylvania, or Narragansett, neither was the climate as tempting to a Frenchman as that of South Carolina and Virginia, nor was the great future of New York evident at that time. The large emigration of Huguenots in the period immediately preceding and following the Revocation, to the province of New York was largely the natural and logical continuation of less important Huguenot and Walloon settlements of the first part of the seventeenth century.

The expenses of transportation to America which were relatively far higher than to-day were usually borne by the Relief Committee in London. In the single year 1687, this Committee paid for the transportation of 600 French Protestants to America. In 1700, four vessels carried more than 700.⁴⁹ The crossing was not only expensive, but it was also dangerous, for the charts were imperfect and incomplete, there were no coast pilots, and at night, no lighthouse to warn of the uncharted rocks. The methods of reckoning longitude was largely guess work, and an error of one hundred miles was not unexpected. The seas were full of corsairs and even pirates. On the ship, the food was scant and mouldy, the water

⁴⁹ Baird II. p. 176-177.

brackish. Diseases, fevers of various kinds weakened and killed the passengers. Crossing took usually two months, sometimes three or four and even more.

When things went well, it was not unbearable. For instance, a contract for carrying two hundred French refugees, in 1700, gives details of what may be considered the equivalent of the tourist class today. The passengers ate in messes of eight persons. Such passengers above the age of six received daily a pound of bread, a pound of salt pork, peas (or beans) five times a week, then twice a week, a pound of salt beef (or half pound of beef and a pudding) with peas (or beans). The bread, butter and cheese was given once a week to the passengers. They did their own cooking. When the weather did not permit the boiling of meat in the "kettle", they received cheese instead. For the younger children, the parents received flour, oatmeal, sugar, butter and dried fruits. For the sick, there was brandy, sugar, dried figs, raisins and sugar biscuit. The emigrants slept in hammocks.⁵⁰

If the refugees had seen better days, they thought that this fare was rather plain. Those who had worked as small farmers, or had been soldiers, found it sufficient, though dreary.

We find a set of recommendations in a book of Charles de Rochefort which was much read in the Low Countries.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Baird II. p. 186-187.

⁵¹ (Charles de Rochefort) *Recit de l'Etat présent des célèbres colonies de la Virginie, de Marie-Land, de la Caroline. du Nouveau duché d'York, de Penn-sylvanie et de la Nouvelle Angleterre.* Rotterdam. 1681.

“There are often in London ships for these countries, but during March and April, there usually leaves a fleet of ships which, in six weeks or about, bring their passengers to the haven where they would be, by the grace of God to whom the winds and sea obey. The price asked for the passage, and for food during that time is most reasonable. We crossed twice easily and joyfully, by the blessing of the Lord, and in the same ships where we travelled both going and coming, there were rather delicate women and even small children, who endured without damage to their health the little inconveniences one must necessarily undergo in these floating houses, where one must expect to be deprived of many pleasant things one has on land. People know fairly well the provisions and dainties they should secure, and we said elsewhere what tools, furniture, crockery, clothes, linen and merchandise should be provided. But above all, one must especially have good books to keep up a devotional spirit during the voyage and to comfort oneself, once on land, by meditation of the word of God, and diligent readers of the Holy Scripture.”⁵²

“Many Protestant families, he says, scattered in various parts of Europe, were lacking free exercise of their religion, they moan, wishing the wings of a dove, to fly and rest in some place where they may worship and serve God in spirit and in truth.”⁵³

“The Bishops of England continue to take great care in sending in this colony of New York, as well as in all the others under their supervision, learned pastors and preachers who

⁵² De Rochefort. *Op. Cit.* p. 42-43. ⁵³ p. 41.

hold divine services according to the liturgy of the Anglican Church, and proclaim in its purity the holy doctrine of the Gospel. The Swedes, the Dutch and the Walloons,⁵⁴ who are established there, have also churches and faithful ministers, who preach in their language, and administer the holy sacraments according to the institution and ordinance of the Lord.”

“It is certainly true also that the English, according to their great piety, will open willingly all these vast provinces to all the Protestants who will emigrate there and that there is no country in the whole world more proper than this one to establish firmly a great number of beautiful colonies, besides those already established there, where they publicly proclaim, that their lot has fallen into a pleasant place, that they have come into a goodly inheritance, and that they are to live a peaceful and quiet life, the air being very pure, the seasons temperate, the ground easily prepared for cultivation, and most fertile, and above all, because His Britannic Majesty has pleased to send in these lands industrious governors, who endeavor to make them proper through the number of honest people that their generous conduct draws there and by the great care they take, that justice, police and whatever pertains to good order, be firmly established there and duly observed and that the frontiers be well provided and fortified to resist the enemies who would disturb them either by sea or by land.”

⁵⁴ This can mean only that ministrations were available in New York before the coming of Daillé.

The praise of New York is general. The newly arrived Dutch minister at the Esopus settlement: "We find ourselves in a country where everybody but the utterly discontented can obtain his every desire, a land of flowing milk and honey. There everything that can be wished for in the fatherland can be obtained."⁵⁵

The Rev. Charles Wolley having filled for two years the position of Church of England minister in New York (1678-1680) writes in the same way: "it is a climate of a sweet and wholesome breath. . . It does not welcome its Guests and Strangers with the seasoning distempers of Fevers and Fluxes, like Virginia, Maryland and other Plantations."⁵⁶

The learned Basnage writes likewise here: "The land is fertile and the air wholesome and temperate."⁵⁷

And so, America, the land of opportunity and⁵⁸ freedom, promised to fill the needs of Huguenot refugees, even⁵⁹ though it seemed a long way off, so that few, if any, thought of leaving it.

⁵⁵ Eccl. Records. II. p. 789.

⁵⁶ E. B. O'Callaghan. *A two year's Journal in New York*, by Charles Wooley (sic) p. 25. Again, on p. 58, he speaks of "this sweet climate of New York." Cf. also p. 26.

⁵⁷ Basnage, *Annales des Provinces Unies*, 1719. p. 683.

⁵⁸ G. Chinard, *Les Réfugiés Huguenots en Amérique*. p. 76.

⁵⁹ As a sample of what helped to portray what Chinard rightly called *Le mirage américain*, we refer to the Jollain view of New Amsterdam (1672) in the New York Public Library which is really a view of Lisbon. Cf. I. W. Phelps Stockes and D. C. Haskell. *American Historical prints from the Phelps Stockes and other collections*. New York 1933, p. 2a, 8b.

CHAPTER VI

A CRITICAL PERIOD BEGINS

M. PEYRET'S death was more of a catastrophe than anyone would have supposed. His successor, M. Jacques Laborie was a man of great value, both intellectually and spiritually, but apparently of a different kind. He was a native of Cardillac (Tarn) where his father was a physician. As all the Protestant schools of theology had been closed, he happened to be out of France at the time of the Revocation as he graduated from the Academy of Geneva on March 12, 1688.¹ He was ordained in Zurich (Switzerland) on October 30, 1688, then went to England where he was naturalized and did catechist's work in the parish of Stepney, under license of the Bishop of London. We find him officiating in some of the many French churches of London. In the meantime, he studied medicine and obtained a medical diploma in London, 1697. He came to America in 1698 under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, for the purpose of doing mission work among the Indians.² He was at the same time the minister of the French Church at New Oxford, Massachusetts

¹ A. V. Wittmeyer. *Coll. of the Hug. Soc. of Amer.* I. p. XXXV.

² Marie Graham Snitzler. *A Biographical Sketch of Dr. Jacques Laborie (Dr. James Labaree)*. Proceedings Hug. Soc. of Amer. Vol. IV, 1915, p. 9.

which had as many as two hundred families at one time, but was now greatly depleted, many of its members having moved to Boston.

The task of succeeding Mr. Peiret was a difficult one. M. Laborie's leanings toward the Church of England, and the pressure brought to bear on this Congregation, as well as on others, to conform, did not make his position easier. His salary was 25 lbs. a quarter (which was 5 lbs. more than his predecessor), besides his travelling expenses amounting to 6 lbs. 10 were paid. Moreover, the Consistory paid Mme. Peiret a year's salary of her husband, as was the custom. She also received house rent.

Financially, the church prospers. A legacy of 15 lbs. was received from Pierre Thauvet (1705). M. Benjamin Faneuil increased still more the amount he gave to the church for the support of the minister who possibly had come here on his recommendation. Indeed, in March 1706, a bonus of 10 lbs. is given to M. Laborie. We know that there were difficulties soon after between M. Laborie and the consistory, "for they paid him his wages and discharged him."³

Our financial records show a twenty-five per cent decrease which shows that the congregation did show its dissatisfaction. M. Laborie's last pastoral act was on Aug. 25, 1706. We know that he definitely joined the church of England, worshipping at Christ Church, Stratford, where the Laborie pew was known for a long time, and made his living as a physician. As sur-

³ *Documentary History of New York* Vol. III. p. 478.

geon, he served in the Connecticut provincial troops in the expeditions in Canada. From 1716 to 1731 he lived at Fairfield, Connecticut, as a physician and founded an Anglican church there after a good deal of opposition. By then he had changed the spelling of his name to James Laboree to conform to the English pronunciation. There he married Mary Burr, his second wife. His son, James Laboree Jr., became a physician,⁴ as did another son, John, and his brother, Antoine.

The Church having no minister M. Bontecou, layreader, read sermons on Sundays and so his salary was raised to five pounds a quarter. We find a small salary of five pounds ten shillings a quarter paid to M. de Bonrepos who ministered to the French in Staten Island. Still the congregation was rather generous, considering what it received for its money. The following are the quarterly contributions from 1706 the year when M. Laborie left to 1710 which saw the arrival of M. Rou; together with the number of pastoral acts.

Baptisms		Quarterly Contributions		
1706	15	146 lbs.	10 sh.	11 d.
1707	7	126	1	6½
1708	11	132	19	6
1709	4	115	19	10½
1710	15	120	9	9

⁴ It was he who married Abigail Blackbeach. Cf. Marie Graham Snitzler *Op. Cit.* p. 11. Baird. *Huguenot Emigration to America* led astray A. V. Wittmeyer *Op. Cit.* p. XXXV.



Earliest picture of the second Church (Pine Street).
Marked L

We note that, according to our records, in his ministry of more than three years, Bonrepos performed no wedding. In 1706 there is no baptism recorded during the four months after M. Laborie's departure. Again, there are no baptisms from the last Sunday of July 1709 to June 20, 1710, when Mr. de Bonrepos baptizes three children. But it must be said that after August 1, 1709, no salary is paid to M. de Bonrepos, and M. Bontecou is left alone to officiate as reader until the arrival of M. Rou.

We are at a loss to explain these statistics. The attendance at communions remained good as is shown by the amount of money paid quarterly for the tokens and as communion alms. The new church was inaugurated while M. de Bonrepos supplied the pulpit on part time in 1707. In 1709, the church received two legacies, one from M. Bignou (2 lbs. 6d) and one from M. Elie Nezereau (50 lbs.)

During M. de Bonrepos's ministry, Benjamin Faneuil and the French colony in general were slandered by some evil persons without any basis for a report that was circulated. It happened that a certain Morris Newenhuysen, master of the ship Constant Abigail, claimed to have found on board his own ship, during a voyage he made in 1706, letters written in French asserting that if the French fleet came over, it could capture New York with little trouble. The shipmaster claimed that the handwriting in one of these unsigned letters was similar to that of Captain Faneuil, whose standing in the French Church we already noted. This Church, being then the entire

French community of New York, appointed at once a Committee composed of Etienne de Lancey, August Jay, Elie Neau, Abraham Jouneau, Thomas Bayeux, Elie Nezereau, Paul Droilhet, Jean Cazals, Daniel Crommelin, Jean Auboyneau, François Vincent, Alexandre Allaire and Benjamin Faneuil to petition the British authority to investigate the matter. Newenhuisen declared that he had thrown the letters into the sea when he was captured by French privateers, and admitted that he understood little, if any French. Thereupon, Lord Cornbury issued an order in Council exonerating the French Refuge Community, but evil tongues had wagged a good deal.⁵

This period is certainly a most critical one in the history of this Congregation. We have a right to suppose that the pro-Leisler party was behind M. Laborie, who came from New Oxford. Quite a few members joined either Trinity Church or the Dutch Reformed. After M. Laborie's death, the exodus continued. For years there was no settled French minister. Printed sermons read by a lay-reader cannot be very inspiring in spite of their high quality, for the personal element is wanting in the message. Thus the congregation held together only by loyalty to race, despite these many disintegrating elements. Unless a competent minister, a man of learning and understanding, with a balanced mind was called, the Eglise des Réfugiés would soon suffer irremediable losses.

⁵ Cf. *Documentary History of New York*, Vol. III. p. 427-433.

CHAPTER VII

M. ROU'S MINISTRY

HAPPILY, a gifted successor to M. Peyret was found in Louis Rou. The tragedy of his life was that he came here a few years too late, for, had he arrived in New York shortly after M. Laborie's departure, the history of this Church would certainly have been quite different.

The only sources we have for the life of M. Rou are the notes made by him on the first pages of his sermons. The oldest sermon he preached was at Utrecht (May 1706) "before I was admitted as a probationer." Another sermon was "made" at La Haye, Sept. 1, 1706; the note continues "which I pronounced the first time as I was a probationer".¹

Apparently, he remained at La Haye, where he composed a first sermon on Mt. 9.13 which he recited on January 8, 1708 (communion day) at 2 P. M., and afterwards gave "at Copenhagen, London, in various churches and New York." This is the only evidence we have of his being with the Huguenot Church of London. Before he went there, he had been at Copenhagen according to these notes on November 4, 1708, on December 16, 1708, and in 1709.

Louis Rou was the eldest son of Jean Rou, Conseiller at the

¹ This sentence is not clear in French.

Paris Parliament, a friend of Jurieu who escaped to Holland in 1683, and became interpreter to the States General. In 1684, Louis was born. At his father's house, he met the best of that French society of the Refuge.

At Leyden, he received an excellent education in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, in addition to theology. He was ordained by the Walloon Synod at Tertholen, on August 31, 1709, at the age of about 26 years.² He married Marie Le Boyteux whose family was already established at New York and New Rochelle. With him came a large number of Huguenot settlers, probably the last considerable one. At that time the French Church was next to the Dutch in importance. Jean Fontaine passing through New York in 1716 attended services twice in the French Church, and said of it: "The Church is very large and beautiful, and within it, there was a very great congregation."³

The most cordial relations existed between the ministers of this Church and the others, as has been stated above when in 1713 some persons desecrated Trinity Church, the Consistory of the French Church offered ten pounds for their discovery.⁴ As for the Dutch Reformed Church, it was quite natural to be friendly with it. Domine Dubois of the Dutch Church performed the ceremony of marriage when, in 1713, Mr. Rou married again. These days were the greatest

² A. Wittmeyer. *Introduction*, p. 31.

³ Quoted by A. Wittmeyer. p. 31.

⁴ *Documentary History of New York*. Vol. III, p. 444-451.

ones in the history of our Church, lasted until 1724 when an unfortunate litigation occurred that dealt the Church a terrible blow.

There was constant pressure from the British Government to make the Reformed Churches and ministers "conform." Most of the French churches in the South took the step, as did the French Church of New Rochelle and most of the congregation. These were the days when almost everyone was interested in the churches and when a good deal of acrimony and important personal elements came into play. The French people of New Rochelle and New York were from the same villages and towns, and frequently intermarried. No doubt, the New York congregation felt that it might lose its identity by a merger. Of course, educated men like M. Rou knew that the Church of England was Protestant and had been almost Calvinistic for a long period. Even the question of vestments was not uppermost since the clergy put on a black gown for the sermon. As for communion, it was not administered more often in the Church of England than in Reformed churches, and, if anything, the latter made more of it by a special service of preparation which was more important than the exhortations in the end of the Communion service in the Prayer Book. It was, after all, a matter of good will and, naturally, of personal taste. Thus the transition between the Reformed Church of France and the State Church of England and its pious Queen Anne was a very easy one. However, there were elements in the liturgy

of the Church which were so new to the Huguenots that, without some good will, they could not overcome them. Yet it must be admitted that the majority of the parishioners, as we shall see, was far less vitally interested in that question than ecclesiastical historians would lead us to believe.

We do not quite know when Jean Joseph Bruneau de Moulinars entered into the picture. Apparently he was in New York as early as 1710, as appears from a letter of Colonel Hunter dated September 21, 1710.⁵ He was probably the son of Jean Brnaud, Sieur de Moulinars, but he himself did not use the *de*, being different in that from many people who easily added it to their name. No doubt he was of a puritan type. Smith declares that while "Rou was a man of learning, but proud, pleasurable and passionate, Moulinars, his colleague, was more distinguished for his pacific Spirit, dull Parts, and unblamable Life and Conversation." We know the type, faithful and rather unhappy, but apt to mistake its own limitations for a standard of righteousness. Such men work better alone. At any rate, Moulinars was not considered to fill the vacancy after the departure of M. de Laborie, not even as a supply.⁶

The name of Moulinars appears for the first time in our records, on Wednesday, November 12, 1718 when he baptizes Charles Yon, eight days old.

Then, Louis Rou and J. J. Moulinars are the two ministers

⁵ A. Wittmeyer. *op. cit.* p. 32.

of the Church apparently dividing duties. Louis Rou is the better preacher, and the more brilliant person. Not that his sermons are scintillating. They are doctrinal, replete with quotations from the Bible, sometimes more than half of the page being made up of such quotations, all these quotations being neatly underlined with a ruler. Mr. Rou even refers to Aristotle, Epicure, Plato, Socrates and the like, also to the original biblical reading in Greek or Hebrew, and even to the Chaldaic paraphrase and to Justinian's *Institutes*. For his own satisfaction, no doubt, he has footnotes to his manuscript where he quotes Cicero, Horace, Virgil, Seneca, Ovid, Perse, Juvenal, Tertullian, Varro, Minutius Felix, Valerius Maximus, Augustine. Little wonder he had quite a reputation as a scholar in our little city. There is no doubt that he deserved it, being not only erudite, but also endowed with a complete education.

The New York Public Library, Manuscript division, has eighty-five sermons of M. Rou bound in three volumes. On the first, or last pages of each sermon, M. Rou wrote the various dates and places that the sermons were preached. Unhappily, some of these dates were cut off by the bookbinder.

Some sermons were preached as many as eight times during M. Rou's ministry, others only once. About half of the sermons were divided in two sections, each being preached separately.

⁶ Moulinars was married and had at least one son, Jean, born in 1722 who became a silversmith.

In his early days, M. Rou timed himself. When he preached the whole sermon, the length was 35 to 45 minutes, but contrary to accepted notions, the sermons were not always as long, as a half sermon which usually lasted 20 to 25 minutes. According to our reckoning, these three volumes represent one sixth of M. Rou's preaching activity.

The sermons were sometimes committed to memory, but as often read. They contain no illustrations and no stories. Even two sermons on "drunkenness" one of 25 and one of 40 minutes preached in 1712 are as classical and general as the others and lack what we might expect in a French sermon on the subject. The sermons are one hundred per cent orthodox. As many as three long sermons form a group of three on the tenth section of the Catechism on the Descent into hell. One series of three is on the 53rd section of the Catechism against transubstantiation. These sermons were presented as many as three or four times. We have a first and third sermon on the Certainty of punishment in the other life, the second sermon having been lost.

Two gentlemen, unknown to us, having declared in M. Rou's presence that Jephthah, the judge, did not have his daughter put to death as a fulfilment of his vow (Judges 11.39), brought about in 1713 and 1714 his series of three sermons on *le voeu de Jephthe*, preached only once, and which are really homiletical essays. There we find naturally in the margins a lexicographical discussion on a Hebrew word, also commentators and theologians quoted abundantly. In the

text itself, he refers to the Targum called by him Chaldaic paraphrase and to the Septuagint or Greek version. There is an attack against the learned Kimchi whose name must have sounded strange to a French congregation, a good many of whose members could not write their own names. The view that Jephthah merely secluded his daughter, set forth by Kimchi, was labelled by M. Rou "une fable inventée par un *Rabbin*," with the word *Rabbin* underlined with his ruler, this being perhaps the only case where he underlined any word of his sermons which was not a biblical quotation. It will be noted that Rou was right against Kimchi, but the doctrine was a hard one to admit even then. A forty-five minute sermon was preached in 1712 in the presence of the Governor who attended the French service. The Governor did not come back.

M. Rou quotes his authorities so extensively in the margins of his sermons that we can have a fairly good idea of what his library included.

It was probably the best private library in New York. All the classical works of Reformed theology (Abbadie, Amyrault, Pictet, Leclerc, Basnage, Drelincourt, Saurin, Deodati, Laplacette), in French and in Latin, and even Pearson, *On the Creed*, so that we see that M. Rou must have learned the language of this country. He even refers twice to the *Mercur de France* of 1728, but years after, so it was probably that this was sent to him by some friend in Holland who had read it first.

We know that Jurieu had been a friend of his father, also that the son of M. Claude was a friend of the family, as M. Claude had been when Louis Rou was an infant. At any rate, M. Rou keeps up the Jurieu tradition of hostility to socinianism, although he often quotes Grotius. We did not find any reference made by him to Bayle; that is also decidedly the Jurieu tradition. M. Rou had a copy of the Prayer Book, probably in French, and some works by Roman Catholics, Huet, Fleury, Thomas à Kempis and others.

Louis Rou had an old Bible printed at Lyons in 1565, which was the translation of Pierre Robert (Olivétan) corrected, he thinks, by Calvin. He had also the new versions of Geneva and quotes *La Bible, in quarto (Edit. d'Amsterdam 1687)*, and was able to read the Bible in Dutch. Among his French classics, he prized Boileau, Pascal and Fontenelle, but knew apparently nothing of English literature. There is not the slightest touch, in his sermons of that discovery of the liberal spirit of today made by Jurieu and the pamphlet makers and journalists of Holland, who prepared the downfall of absolute monarchy and despotism.⁷ Quite naturally, M. Rou was deeply loyal to Queen Anne, for, not only do we find the proof of this once in a sermon, but also more so in one of his youthful poems, dated "in 1702, at the beginning of her reign when all things went well."

⁷ J. A. F. Maynard, *l'Origine de la Liberté Française*. *Messenger Evang.* Nov. 1937, 4-7; Jurieu, *Bossuet et le temps présent*, Jan. 1938. p. 4-7.

With the third volume of Rou's sermons is bound a number of poems covering forty-six pages under the title of "JUVENILIA ou Recueil de diverses pièces en vers composées dans ma jeunesse."

In a prefatory note, M. Rou says: "Most of these pieces were composed before the age of twenty, but since, I made several corrections, it is only a part of my first poems. I had made many more, but as they are mostly love poems, I did not care to copy them. Perhaps too many of these will be found in this Collection."

The first poem was written at the age of 17 (or perhaps less). It is addressed to Mademoiselle H. Huet,⁸ the mother, whom he calls Eudoxe, and the next a madrigal to Mlle H. (Marguerite Huet), the daughter whom he names Philis and to whom he wrote several love poems later.

The third is also a madrigal to "Mons. et Mlle" newly married to whom he wishes, rather sophistically, for a young man still about eighteen.

"Des ans tissue de soye et couronnés de bien
Des plaisirs toujours purs, un aimable lignage,
Et la Paix avant tout, si rare en mariage."

A poem to M. Claude whom he calls Tircis has this note: "Ceci a été fait en 1702; j'avais alors 18 ans." This proves that he was born in 1684. The last line is:

"Tircis, je le vois bien. Je ne suis point *Poète*."

The word *poète* is underlined. Whether Louis Rou was al-

⁸ This could be said then of a married woman.

together sincere in his humility, or was wistfully expecting praise need not be decided. Indeed, his poems are not inferior to many of the printed works of the period; they are typical of their day, just as Rou's sermons were later.

It is probable that M. Rou ceased to write poems after he entered the ministry. We wonder why he did not write religious poetry. That he was interested in it is certain since Elie Naud entrusted to him the publication of his poems, although there is no evidence that M. Rou attended to that duty.⁹

While the differences between M. Rou and M. Moulinars reached a critical point in 1724, we have a perfect right to see in them a continuation of the Leisler affair. M. Rou would most probably be found in the traditional attitude of Mr. Peyret, while M. Moulinars was temperamentally a Leislerian.

As for the New Rochelle aspect of the case, we can, in all likelihood, suppose that the non conformist body was Leislerian also.

If this hypothesis is pursued, we can test it with the very meager information found in the New Rochelle situation in Mr. Rou's manuscript entries.¹⁰

⁹ Unhappily, the archives of our church suffered greatly not only through carelessness, but willfully when a few years before I came to New York a member of the Vestry was allowed to get rid of what was supposed to be trash. Apparently this sort of thing happened before because M. Wittmeyer complained of it.

¹⁰ Unhappily, some of these were cut off when the sermons were bound.

References to preaching at New Rochelle give the following dates:

July 8, 1711—Communion at 2 P. M.

March 10, 1732—(on the catechism).

Friday, October 7, 1743.

Friday, April 13, 1744—day of preparation.

22 Avril, 1750—day of Communion.

We have another date unhappily torn out. We have a reference in our church records to regular visits made by M. Rou to New Rochelle, at least two or three times a year, according to one version, once a quarter according to another. We reckon that there were more than forty such visitations. Then traveling to New Rochelle, 26 miles from New York was not the simple trip that is today. As M. Rou did not visit this small congregation when it had a regular minister, M. Moulinars being one of these for many years, we can see that he duly performed this part of this work, when he was satisfied that he could conscientiously do it. The dates given above are those of quarterly communions. No doubt, M. Rou remained from Friday to Sunday, leaving the reader in charge of the New York services.

Apparently, M. Rou visited New Rochelle in 1711 before the Leislerian question had really been considered by him. Other visitations in 1732 and after are at a period when other issues cloud this one, and its memories could be set aside.

The quarrel between Mr. Rou and a newly elected board of elders supporting Mr. Moulinars came to a crisis in 1724

when M. Rou refused to accept these elders as elected. They were incensed at his conduct, and with the approval of a majority of the congregation, dismissed him. Soon afterwards, this group regretted the stand they had taken against their minister, for M. Rou had taken the case to court. The matter was largely a conflict of jurisdictions, and on the basis of English law, the board of elders had a weak case. Certain it is that the quarrel did not benefit anyone. There is no doubt that Governor Burnet was on the side of Mr. Rou whom he highly respected, and no one can declare that Mr. Cadwallader Colden, who decided the case in favor of M. Rou, was unfair.¹¹

A study of the Church statistics does not support the idea that the parish suffered from this conflict as much as we might suppose at first:

1700	.....31	baptisms	Peiret
1705	.....23	"	Laborie
1710	.....15	"	de Bonrepos, Rou
1720	.....15	"	Rou and Moulinars
1725	..... 7	"	Moulinars
1730	..... 7	"	Rou
1735	.....11	"	Rou

Some of the elders who lost their case against the minister

¹¹ The legal documents have been printed in *Document. History of N. Y.* III. pp. 64, 76, 77; in *Coll. of the Hug. Soc. of America.* Vol. I. We do not care here to give undue space to a law suit about which so much has already been written.

may have left the congregation. It should be noted that the parish which lives a collective life, is not always in close correlation with the leading people of a congregation. The baptismal vital statistics demonstrate a regular decrease of the "parish." On the basis of these figures we may estimate their number to have been about 900 in 1700, 700 in 1705, 500 in 1710, 300 from 1725 to 1735. This decrease was due to national social causes, one being the reduction of the parish's land boundaries.

If we study now the number of baptisms recorded in the years of conflict, we find the following figures:

1723	.....15	baptisms	Rou and Moulinars
1724	.....10	"	
1725	..... 7	"	Moulinars alone
1726	.....12	"	
1727	.....12	"	Rou alone

In 1724, Rou and Moulinars officiate together in the first half. Moulinars is alone in the second half of 1724, also in 1725 and in the first half of 1726. The situation in the second half is not clear. Apparently, Mr. Rou is now the only minister, but M. Moulinars celebrates two baptisms, probably by request. The distribution of baptisms according to months in these years does not present any great variations from the average. The number of baptisms for the years that M. Moulinars was in charge is only 17 which is less than the average of any two years in the five years preceding or

following. Apparently, from 1728, until the departure of M. Carle, the size of the parish does not change to any great extent. Therefore, the statement that M. Rou left only a handful made by W. Smith in the *History of New York* is exaggerated.

After M. Rou returned to the church, he entered in the register the baptism of his son, Jean Elie, whom he himself had baptized in his house on February 7, 1725, while M. Moulinars was in sole charge of the church. If he had performed other baptisms for his friends' children, during the two years he was in exile, he would, no doubt, have entered them also. But baptizing such children would have been considered unethical. As a matter of fact, his second baptism in July 1726 is the child of René Het (one of the elders who fought him). And in March 1727, he baptizes a child of Pierre Valette, another of these elders. In 1732, Louis Carré signs the book, when his grandson is baptized, although he had not signed it the year before for his grand daughter. In 1734, Jean Casalz is godfather to a child of M. Rou. Certainly, we have here the testimony that four elders at least have buried the hatchet. As for the two others, we do not know. Barberie remained treasurer and secretary of the church until his death, on January 9th, 1728.

The study of sources demonstrates first that M. Rou was perhaps impetuous, but that he knew how to be a peacemaker as well. These Huguenots were French; they could disagree and then see the truth.

We may note here in the case of the two baptisms, referred to above, which J. J. Moulinars performed after the return of M. Rou, that in one the father was André Giraud who had signed the petition for Louis Rou censuring the elders,¹² while in the other, the father was Daniel Mesnard who also had been on Rou's side.¹³ This proves that charity was not an unknown virtue in our church.

In the world at large, M. Rou has a special claim to fame, for he introduced chess in America, and wrote the first pamphlet on the subject in this country. He has, therefore, become quite a figure among chess players who are exceedingly anxious to find Rou's lost manuscript.

We shall let Mr. Alfred C. Klahre tell the story, as it is found in his *Chess Potpourri*:¹⁴

"In the No. 1376 for September 15, 1733, *The Craftsman*, a magazine published in England at that time, appeared a short essay on the game of chess. *The Craftsman* paper was reprinted the same year in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, also in England, pages 1473 and 1474. Almost immediately after its appearance another paper appeared in England in reply to the essay, dated September 21, 1733, from Slaughter's Coffee House, London, which was the principal London resort for chess players.

"In the following year, a copy of this rejoinder fell into

¹² *Coll. of the Hug. Soc. of Amer.*, p. 363.

¹³ P. 364.

¹⁴ See also *New York Evening Post*, April 16, 1932.

the hands of William Crosby, then Governor of New York, who showed it to a resident of that colony, noted for his ability at chess. This was the Rev. Lewis Rou, pastor of the First Huguenot Church in America (French Protestant), a man of learning, born in Paris. It is claimed that Rou taught many citizens the game of chess, the rendezvous was on Broadway, near the present City Hall building. Rou had penned a response to the brochure under the title of 'Critical Remarks Upon the Letter to the Craftsman on Game of Chess.'

"This manuscript existed in New York as late as 1858, when Professor Willard Fiske, a zealous propagandist for chess, borrowed it from Dr. G. H. Moore. At the time the latter was connected with the New York Historical Society, the Long Island Historical Society, the New York Ethnological Society, as well as being librarian for the Lenox Library, now known as the Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundation (New York Public Library).

"Professor Fiske described the manuscript as a thin quarto of 24 closely written pages and divided into seventeen short, numbered chapters or sections. It opened with title mentioned, followed by a dedication to His Excellency, W. Crosby, Captain General and Commander in Chief, in and over the Provinces of New York, New Jersey and adjacent territories thereon dependent, signed by Lewis Rou, New York, December 13, 1734.

In the year 1902, there was published in Florence, Italy, a pamphlet signed W. F. re. the lost manuscript.¹⁵

Items also appeared in the *New York Times* and the *Nation*, N. Y., and others, in which it was stated that if any person had anything to say concerning the later history of the manuscript or its final fate, such information would be appreciated.

"It will thus be seen that the Rou tract has a certain bibliographical interest bearing on the earliest composition on chess (perhaps even as the first mention of the game of chess in America, preceding Dr. Benjamin Franklin's 'Morals of Chess' by more than a half century).

At the request of Mr. Alfred C. Klahre, I went through all of M. Rou's sermons and never found any mention of his pet diversion. As a matter of fact, there are no allusions to anything modern, or to anything of personal interest. This is why a sermon preached in 1710 could be preached again in 1750.

In the meantime, what was left of the old *extramuros* parish quickly disappeared.

In Staten Island, at the death of M. de Bonrepos, the greater part of the elders and members of the congregation united with St. Andrew's parish. The old French Church building which was at Greenridge, a short distance from

¹⁵ *The Lost Manuscript of the Reverend Lewis Rou's critical remarks upon the Letter to the Craftsman on the game of Chess printed in 1734 and dedicated to His Excellency, William Cosby, Governor of New York, Florence 1902.*

Richmond, does not exist any more, and today, only a sign marks the site.¹⁶

M. Moulinars seems to have visited New Paltz from New Rochelle where he ministered to the little French Congregation until his death in 1741. Whereupon this congregation again became an annex of this church.

In 1741, the New York church was repaired. Two years later, there was placed on its wall a stone bearing the following inscription: AEDES SACRAS GALLOR. PROT. REFORM. FUND. A 1704 PENITUS REPAR. 1741 ("sacred building of the French Reformed Protestants, foundation laid in the year 1704, and entirely repaired in 1741). The number of letters in the inscription is forty three, a little scheme of M. Rou to mark the date 1743.

M. Rou died on Christmas day 1750. Sometimes later, the Church gave his widow a pension of twelve pounds a year, as M. Rou was poor and had been unable to leave her an inheritance. He was buried in the Church itself, according to the following notice which appeared in the *New York Gazette*, and again in the *Weekly Post Boy* of Dec. 31, 1750.

¹⁶ Recently Huguenot sentiment had been revived in Staten Island, but there is no continuation of the French Church. Its minutes and records disappeared long ago as well as its property. The name of Huguenot Park, S. I. is quite recent. The only Huguenot churches in New York City and its vicinity besides the Eglise du Saint-Esprit are Trinity Church, New Rochelle, and the First Presbyterian Church of New Rochelle, both of these being legitimate descendants of the French Church of New Rochelle.

“Last Tuesday night, departed this life, in the Sixty-seventh year of his age, the Rev. Mr. Louis Rou, pastor of the French Protestant Reformed Church in this city for upwards of forty years past. He was a gentleman of great learning, and unaffected piety and has left a sorrowful widow, with a numerous hopeful issue. His character in the several capacities of Preacher, Husband, and Father was unexceptionable; he is now gone to receive the reward of his labors; and is as universally lamented as known by all he had left behind. His remains were decently interred in the French Church, near the pulpit he has so long occupied, on Saturday evening last.”

CHAPTER VIII

DEPRESSION

M. ROU'S death marks the close of the most important period of the history of the Huguenot Church.

Even then, it had ceased to be outstanding. The population of our city was now about twelve thousand¹ and among them only what was called "an inconsiderable handful"² remained of the hundreds of enthusiastic, if not always easy to manage, parishioners of M. Rou's early days. There were many reasons. The French language was falling into disuse among the descendants of the Huguenots. The usual rule has been that the second generation understands it, but does not speak it well, and the third understands it badly, really not enough to follow a sermon. As a literary medium, French was really not studied much. Fewer people studied it in America than today. Then too, we do not quite see strangers speaking at least a broken French coming into a service attended by people who must have been somewhat clannish, and who formed little cliques for unimportant personal reasons. The troubles which had begun in 1724 had driven away quite a few, leaving a decreasing number of

¹It was 13,040 in 1756, 10,768 being white, and 2272 colored.

²W. Smith. *History of the Province of New York*. p. 193 quoted by A. V. Wittmeyer, p. 40.

people served by an aging minister. Now all churches have a Pension Fund and there is no excuse for a minister who remains after he has become physically unable to carry on his work. The age for retirement should even be made compulsory so that no minister reaching that age feel that the decision is a disparagement of his ability. But in those days the minister stayed on and on, and no one dared to face the fact that he was declining for fear that it might be uncharitable to tell him.

The Rev. L. L. Mayor³ supplied the pulpit. No pastoral acts are entered in the books in the years 1751, in 1752, and in most of 1753. There are in October, three baptisms of children born that very month and one in December of a child born in November. Mr. Mayor baptized two more children in January and February 1754.

Apparently the number of children born was on the average of one a month which would not be bad for a small parish, although we must remember that more children were born then than now. It also shows that the parish did not consist entirely of old people, and that even if the attendance was a handful, there was a parish population which could be reached by a new and active minister. When we check up the number of baptisms, we find that it was on the average of four a quarter in 1716, five a quarter in 1717, likewise in 1718. These were

³ The notice about him in Corwin's *Manual* 1902, p. 610, is entirely wrong, being copied from the notice on Jean Carle.

golden days in the history of the church, so that we must not take too blindly the remark of Smith quoted above. The situation of the Church was difficult, yet it was not desperate. Unhappily, no emigration took place from the Old Country. Half of the Huguenot population had now left France. Those who remained managed to have some form of religious ministrations. Out of the one hundred and ten Protestant ministers put to death (usually hanged) between 1684 and 1762, we find only three hanged after 1746 (one in 1752, and in 1754, and one in 1762). All of the fifty-seven ministers and lay-readers sent to the galleys went there before 1736. The congregations met in forests, caves and even quarries, almost as a matter of course. The religious incentive to leave France had ceased to exist for there were no bonds between the Refugees and their distant families in France. Mails were few, expensive and insecure, besides a good many of the people were illiterate. While conditions of living in France under the Old Regime were terrible for the peasants, no relations in America could inform them that they would have an opportunity there.

The ministry of J. C. Mayor was short. He must have left before the end of winter.

The new minister, Jean Carle, arrived on July 27, 1754, and was installed as pastor on August 4, 1754, and held this position for ten years until 1764. His salary was 120 pounds a year, payable quarterly in advance. He was assisted by a reader. M. Carle was probably a native of Nimes, in the

South of France.⁴ He had studied for the ministry in Switzerland, had served a church at Basle, then had removed to Holland where he was recommended to the French Church by the Walloon Consistory of Amsterdam. Strange to say, his decision to come to America was probably due to a hard rule made by the Walloon Consistory that even ministers ordained to the Reformed Church of Switzerland and Geneva had to be examined by the Classis and reordained. M. Carle refused to go through that examination and reordination. We may suspect that the Walloon Consistory was conservative and was a little curious concerning the orthodoxy of ministers trained in Switzerland, where rationalism had crept in the theological schools.

Smith, his contemporary, writes of him: "He bears an irreproachable character, is very intent upon his studies, preaches moderate Calvinism, and speaks with propriety, both of pronunciation and gesture."⁵ We find that he registered 101 baptisms and 18 marriages. This averages two marriages a year and about five children born per couple. The number of the parish may then be estimated at about three hundred.⁶ There is evidently a decline in the church.

We are almost in touch with some of these people and not

⁴ Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français, Vol. XI, p. 403-404.

⁵ W. Smith, *History of New York*, quoted by A. Wittmeyer, op. cit. p. 42.

⁶ In 1756, New York had 13,040 inhabitants, (of which 10768 were whites).

only through their signatures. For instance, Jean Carle entered in the book a baptism performed in February 9, 1729 by his predecessor Louis Rou. The father was Jean Hastier,⁷ well known silversmith, the mother Elizabeth Le Boiteux. Jacques Desbrosses signed as witness. The little girl then baptized was Catherine. Her grand parents were François Basset and Catherine Pintard. Little Catherine Hastier's psalter is in our possession. It includes the Catechism, the Liturgy and the Confession of Faith. Several times already we have used it in memorial services reading out of it the Confession of sins written probably by Jean Calvin (and often ascribed to Theodore de Beze), and part of the long ministerial prayer.

The French of New Rochelle who had refused to conform to the Anglican Church were now in a small congregation without a minister and again an annex of the Church of Saint-Esprit. To them, Jean Carle went three times a year to preach and administer the Lord's supper. For that he received eight pounds a year, the income of a trust fund.⁸ On other Sundays, they had a service among themselves, one of them acting as reader. The French Church in New York did likewise when there was a ministerial vacancy. Very interesting is an unpublished letter of Carle dated March 19, 1755, written to Desprin Defouclos of Amsterdam, re-

⁷ The s is not pronounced, being simply there to indicate a long vowel, now shown by a circumflex accent.

⁸ A sum of 35 pounds was left in a legacy by Jean Cottin as a trust fund to that effect in 1755.

questing him to send a French schoolmaster. The man would be the precentor of the church and as such receive fifteen pounds a year. "This offer is not very tempting, but you can assure him that he could earn much if he were able to teach reading, writing and speaking in French, for there is no teacher of that language in this town, where it is, however, quite necessary because of the important trade with the French."

Pierre Vallade was made an elder of this congregation on September 15, 1754, the certificate being signed by Jean Carle, Daniel Bontecou, Jean Hastier, Henry Chadeayne, and Pierre Vallade himself. His signature has a masonic sign, which shows that he was already a member of the first Lodge of New York, *La Parfaite Union* which was in very close relationship with this congregation. Unhappily, we do not know anything about the history of that Lodge, except that its existence was proved by a document dated May 7, 1763, the diploma of Michel Maret-Dumeny as master mason.⁹ That the Lodge was under Protestant auspices is shown by the fact that the quotation of John 1.11 as its leading motto is from the translation of Olivétan. This document shows among ten signatures of officers, five at least connected with our congregation, namely Pierre Vallade, elder of the church, master of the Lodge in 1763, Jean-Baptiste Rieux, past master, deacon of the church,¹⁰ Charles Gerome, whose daughter was

⁹ This document has been communicated by M. Maurice Franck.

¹⁰ *Collections of the Hug. Soc. of Amer.* p. 277.

baptized in 1762, Louis Faugere, second surveillant,¹¹ Charles Demuy,¹² George Harison, whose family had a close connection with our church. The document soon passed into the Tison family (now Tyson). The document is signed among others by Cosme Grellet, of Huguenot ancestry, but not through this congregation; the four other names are unknown to me, but that they had some connection with this church is probable, since it was the only other French organization in this city.¹³

On April 30, 1755, Jean Hastier presented the Church with a silver seal, representing a sun and with the name of Jehovah in Hebrew characters, while underneath there was an anchor, symbol of a firm faith. The legend was: 1755 - *Cachet de l'Eglise Françoise Réformée de la Nouvelle York*. This seal was replaced in 1796 with a similar one with the new date. During M. Verren's last years, the seal was unhappily replaced by a less beautiful one with a radiant cross and the address of the manse. A few years ago, the Vestry accepted my proposition to return to the design of the old seal, which should have never been abandoned. The legend and the dates had, of course, to be changed.

On the church lot at the corner of Pine and Nassau, there was some space left for a garden. A poor and honest man

¹¹ *op. cit.* p. 305.

¹² *op. cit.* p. 260.

¹³ A comparison of the signatures in our records with the Maret-Dumeny document shows that the latter was genuine.

called Pierre Dupont and his wife Marie Paris, asked leave to build a little frame building for themselves, to occupy during their lifetime. It was agreed that they would pay 20 shillings ground rent a year, and that at their death, the house would belong to the Church (Sept. 30, 1759).

At this time, the books of the Consistory contain the formula of abjuration of several converted Roman Catholics.¹⁴

On Sunday mornings, the minister preached. There was an afternoon service called "prière" when he preached on the catechism. On Wednesdays they had prayers and catechizing of the young, and on four Fridays a year gave sermons preparatory to the Lord's Supper. He also preached on festivals, namely Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter Monday, Ascension Day, Whitmonday, and the days of fasting and thanksgiving, as set forth by the civil authority. Whatever else he did, was of his own free will.

On March 29, 1755, the Consistory accepted M. Carle's proposal to discard the Bible translation used hitherto, which was probably the Geneva Bible of 1588, namely the old text of Olivetan (1535) and to replace it with the Holy Bible of Geneva with the Notes of Osterwald, for the style of the new translation was more easily understood, then too the notes accompanying each chapter were good for the edification of the assembly. This was unanimously approved by the heads of families in a parish meeting on April 13, 1755.

¹⁴ Quite often these were descendants of Huguenots converted by compulsion, others were French Canadians. Cf. *Coll. of the Hug. Soc. of Am.* p. 412.

After these reflexions had been read by the Lector, a few Sundays later two of the heads of families¹⁵ who were rather deaf, objected very strongly on the ground that the remarks were not orthodox enough, and that it was against the use of this Church. The opponents mustered apparently three families. It was, therefore, decided in April 1756 to stop reading the "Reflections" for the sake of peace and concord.¹⁶

At the special meeting held for that purpose, M. Carle, having spoken "loudly and with warmth" with these two deaf men, caught a cold and became very ill. M. Buvelot went to see the sick man who inquired whether one could not ask the Walloon Consistory of Amsterdam to contribute about thirty pounds a year to this Church, so that it would be unnecessary to ask the flock itself to maintain its shepherd. M. Carle added that a friend of his in Holland exhorted him to leave the New York Church without delay because it would fall as soon as a few persons died.¹⁷

On March 6, 1763, the Great Consistory, made up of the ministers, elders and deacons, and the heads of families, decided to apply to the Governor of the Province for incorporation. The petition was drawn in the name of Jean Carle, minister, Pierre Vallade and, Jacques Desbrosses, elders, Daniel Bonnet and Charles Jandine, deacons. It recites "that a considerable Part of this Province and Particularly of the

¹⁵ Only the initials of their names are given. They are probably J. Desbrosses and F. Basset.

¹⁶ *Records* 1771-75 fo. 33.

¹⁷ *op. cit.* fo. 34.

City of New York, the Counties of West Chester and Richmond and a Tract called the Paltz in Ulster County have been long since settled by many of those unhappy People who flew from the Persecution in France upon the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685.

“That those who established themselves in the City of New York were enabled by an Act of the Legislature of this Colony passed in 1703, to purchase and set apart a Lott of Ground on which in the succeeding Year they erected a descent Edifice for the public Worship of Almighty God according to the usage of the French Protestant Churches, and the Residue they devoted to the use of the Cemetery or Church Yard for the Interment of their Dead.

“That they have ever since maintained a Succession of Ministers there, who have dispensed the Ordinances of divine Worship in the French Tongue once to a very numerous and flourishing Congregation, now indeed unhappily reduced by various Causes to a less popular Assembly.

“That besides the said Church and Lott of Ground, they enjoy the Rents of a House and Parcel of Ground in the Township of Breucklin on Nassau Island; charitably given for the better Support of the Gospel amongst them.”¹⁸

The petitioners hope that “their congregation will speedily grow numerous by foreign Accessions, and are extremely

¹⁸ The original title deed and the land (four city lots on Fulton Street) still belong to the congregation. It is described also in *Coll. of the Hug. Soc. of Amer.* p. 411.

desirous to secure the little Estate they now enjoy and transmit it to their Posterity for the pious Ends for which it was originally given . . . as your Petitioners in particular are the Descendants of a People who suffered the greatest Hardships and flew from their native Country to preserve the Purity of the Christian Faith and Worship." They request a "Royal Charter creating them a Body Politic, in Deed and in name by the name and style of the Minister, Elders and Deacons of the Protestant French Church in the City of New York, and that they and their Successors may thereby be enabled to acquire and hold a further Estate and to enjoy such other Powers and Privileges as may be necessary for the orderly Government of their Church and the pious Purposes aforesaid specified."¹⁹

Unhappily, for reasons of ecclesiastical policy, the Church of England being established, and only the Dutch Reformed Church having its existence granted by the Articles of Capitulation of 1664, there was no desire in high places to regularize the legal existence of dissenters in the Province. Petitions from the Lutheran and Presbyterian Church to be incorporated by Royal Charter had been laid aside by Lieutenant Governor de Lancey in 1759. A second petition of the Lutherans drafted in 1763 was refused by the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations. Nothing was done

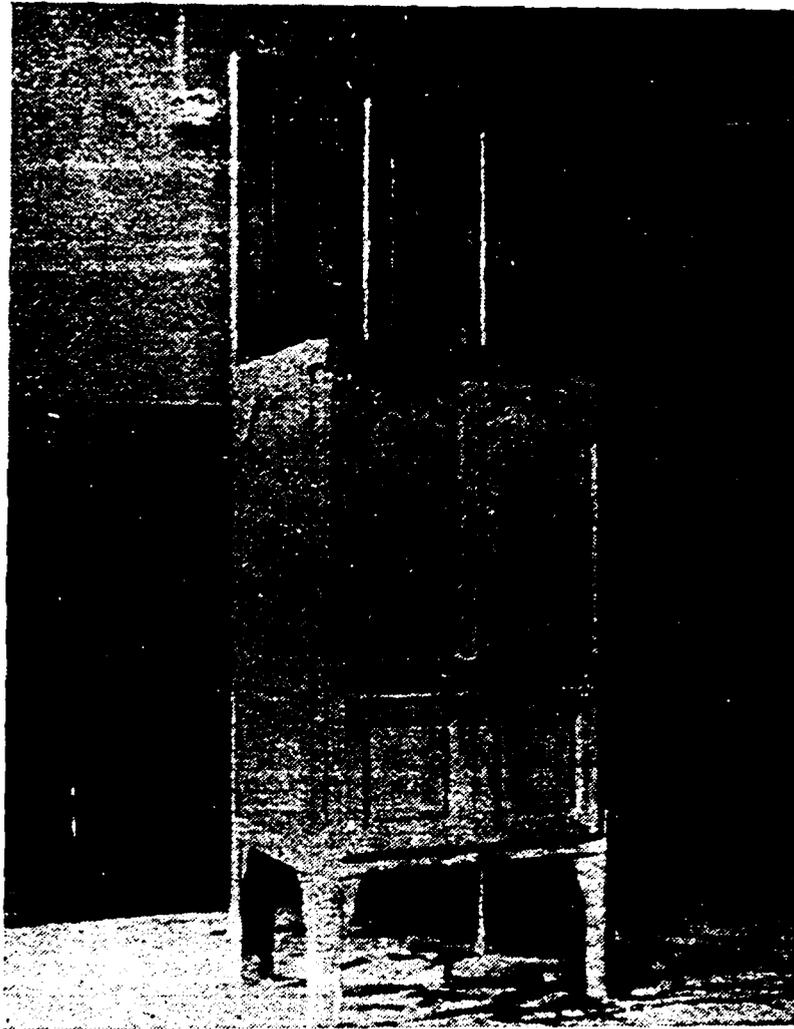
¹⁹ Documentary History of New York. p. 225.

²⁰ N. Y. Coll. MSS. XCI p. 146, Albany; printed in Coll. Hug. Soc. of Am. p. 413-422.

on the French petition in order not to create a precedent, for the Presbyterian petition which was passed successfully through the Lord's Commissioners for Trade was even dismissed by a king's order in Council (August 26, 1767). At that period, the French Church was without a pastor officially called, and its existence was threatened. This is why the congregation has no royal charter, and was incorporated only after the War of Independence, in 1796, under the Act of 1784, and again in 1804, as an Episcopal Church under the Act of 1801.

M. Carle tendered his resignation on Whitmonday, 1763 (May 23rd) giving two reasons for that decision, first his wish to return to Europe and see his relations, second his fear the Church might be unable to support him. The Consistory referred the decision to the heads of families of the Congregation, or grand Consistoire, and asked that he give them sufficient time to write to Holland to call a new minister. These heads of families numbering twenty-nine, assembled on Saturday, May 28th, and accepted M. Carle's decision with regrets; they decided that only his request to see his family had any weight. Since the church had given him no cause for discontent, he was asked not to leave until he had been replaced by another minister. M. Carle agreed to stay until the following spring (1764), a length of time he judged sufficient. The day after being Sunday, twenty-one family heads were at the Church service in the afternoon and approved.

The next day, forty heads of families drew up a petition



A Huguenot field pulpit of the Huguenot region of La Dordogne, belonging to this church.

to the Walloon Consistory of Amsterdam, offering to pay 140 pounds to the new minister. It seems, therefore, that the Congregation manifested at least a will to live, and that it must have numbered between two and three hundred parishioners. M. Carle also signed the petition.

The letter to the Walloon Consistory begs them, if they have no candidate, to transmit to the Venerable Company of pastors of Geneva a similar request which was addressed in care of the Venerable Consistory of the Walloon Church of Amsterdam. This letter says: "A pastor chosen by you, Gentlemen, will be received with distinction and will find himself one of the Governors of our University²¹ an honor attached to the charge of pastor of the French Church of this city, which procures the agreement of being in company with what is most distinguished without any embarrassment."²² The letter then mentions the salary and the New Rochelle supplement, this city being "at a distance of 26 miles." They add that they would prefer an unmarried man if possible. A marginal note says that 140 pounds are 1800 livres, French money. Financial arrangements about the voyage of the minister could be made by M. Jacob Henry Chabanel, merchant at Amsterdam, brother-in-law of M. Jacob Le Roy, member of the church.

²¹ The charter of King's College provides that the Rector of Trinity Church, and the ministers of the Reformed Dutch, Lutheran, French and Presbyterian churches for the time being should be *ex officio* governors (1754).

The letter to Geneva begins by "praising the venerable company that one can rightly consider as a city built on a mountain which is seen from afar," on the basis of what they knew and what M. Carle had told them. "We pray you to note," they add, "that a worthy minister can produce much fruit in a city like this, but for this he must be zealous and possess, besides the qualities of the heart and of the mind, which characterize the ministers of the Holy Gospel, talents of the pulpit which will contribute much to increase our church and to make it flourish. The largest number of its members speak English, and if we have a poor preacher, we shall no doubt lose from among them. On the contrary, a good preacher would certainly draw many who attend other churches and earn the esteem and friendship of everybody and especially the pastors of the various churches." After this rather naive statement, the membership of the University board is mentioned. Then it is said that the minister "will find himself in one of the finest climates of the world, a serene sky, a pure air, cold and heat not being as great as in Geneva. It is so healthy, especially for those born in France, that it is usual to see them reach the ripest old age. We hope that this, together with the sum of 140 lbs. money of this province, may decide a suitable person. The rest of the letter is the same. They give as references the Rev. M. Verne and M. Jean Luc Maystre, merchant to whom M. Carle was writ-

²² Our translation attempts to reproduce the quaintness of the French style used here.

ing himself. Thirty-five heads of families assembled on Sunday, June 5, 1763 to approve this letter.

On Wednesday, June 8, 1763, the elders and the committee assembled and took note of M. Tetard's refusal to preach, as customary, sermons committed to memory. At the same time, M. Chabanel was asked to send over with the minister one hundred and fifty psalters, on good paper, bound in cardboard, printed in large and broad type, according to sample of printing sent along, plus twelve more of that kind bound with the New Testament, also twelve larger size psalters for the old people.

The Walloon Consistory of Amsterdam asked one ordained minister and three probationers, who were not interested, then on September 27, 1763 selected Paul Daniel Menauteau, probationer, and informed the French Church that they were going to call a special classis to ordain him. But at the same time, there came information from M. Chabanel that this unfortunate young man was not in his right mind, "and that he preached to pews and chairs". The Committee decided unanimously to beg the Walloon consistory not to send M. Menauteau, as being unable to edify them (Jan. 2, 1764).

A letter from M. Chabanel declares frankly that talented ministers prefer to stay in Europe, and that the salary offered by New York should be at least doubled to attract someone. From this letter, we learn that M. Menauteau was chosen in spite of the opposition of half the Walloon Consistory. He refused to advance money for his passage, and hoped that,

there being no ships going over in winter he would be unable to cross any way. As for the psalters, he went through all the bookshops but could not find any of the large type of the sample which had been sent.

A few months before he left for Europe (Jan. 8, 1764), M. Carle offered to remain if the New York church would conform to the Church of England. The Consistory and Committee, meeting two days afterwards, after due consideration, unanimously refused to entertain such a motion. "Not because we do not consider the Anglican Church to be of Jesus Christ our Lord, but from due respect for our predecessors, who established and founded our church, which we want to keep and maintain on the same basis as it is established, and which should remain in this city a monument for posterity, to the honor and kindness of the English nation which received French refugees as brethren in their bosom".²³ The letter to M. Carle is signed by Vallade, elder and secretary, L. Pintard, Jacques Desbrosses, Daniel Bonnet, Jacques Buvelot, Daniel Bontecou, Jean Hastier, Jérôme Baudouin, Isaac Garnier, François Blanchard, Daniel Ravo, André Giraud, Francis Bassett. The one important person absent was Peter Vergereau.

We may note here that this argument ceased to be of value after the war of independence. The reason why, so frequently in the period of the Refuge, ministers of this Church sought

²³ *Records of the French Church du St. Esprit, 1771-1775, p. 42. Registre des Résolutions du Consistoire, fo. 84.*

union with a large organization is because protestantism is based on national groups. The lay members of a church see too much the local element of a church, which however must not be neglected. This Consistory was afraid even of union with the Dutch Reformed Church, little realizing that by the right kind of organic union with a larger body, the problem of ministerial succession which had almost wrecked this congregation several times, could have been properly solved. It is not good for a church to be alone.

During the vacancy, M. Tetard who had left the French Church in Charleston, was asked to supply the pulpit. Jean Pierre Tetard was born in Switzerland, in 1721, from Huguenot parents. He graduated from the Academy of Lausanne and received his diploma in divinity in 1752. He came to New York in 1756 where he married Mrs. Dupuy, widow of a French physician, who had some wealth. In 1757, he had preached at the French Church by invitation, M. Carle not being quite in favor of it. In 1763, he bought a large farm at Kingsbridge (now in the Bronx).²⁴

The Committee sent a very polite letter to the Walloon Consistory refusing to accept M. Menauteau. Declaring again that ability in preaching was not necessary here, they declared that no one cared to come from Holland, because of the small salary offered, they had more hope from Geneva "on account of the fact that wealth was not so abundant

²⁴ J. P. Mitchell, *Jean Pierre Tetard*, Columbia University Quarterly 12 (1910) p. 286.

there".²⁵ They offered to reimburse expenses of the special meeting of the Classis, but begged that M. Menauteau be not sent over.

A letter to M. Chabanel informs him of their decision, and thanks him for his interest in them. Concerning the psalters, he is asked to send those in the largest available type. Moreover, if there was "a good lector and precentor, who would be able to hold school in French and who would care to come over here, we pray you, to encourage him, confident as we are that a good schoolmaster would have a good business in this city where there is none of our language. Assure him please that we could see that we would find him good opportunities for his school and that we can give him the position of lector in our church, the one we have now being aged."

The correspondent of the Church in London was Louis Chabanel, a brother of Jacob Henry Chabanel, of Amsterdam. He was duly warned not to permit M. Menauteau who had been hastily ordained by the Walloon Classis in spite of the protest made by the pastor of Haarlem in whose church M. Chabanel was an elder, to leave for New York. To him was also sent a letter for the new pastor telling him "we have protested against the choice they have made, for solid reasons which we have noted, and that good manners do not allow us to give in detail." They protest that they do not want "to receive you as our pastor, and if in spite of all our precautions, you persist in willing to come here, it will be, Sir, at your

²⁵ *Registre des Résolutions* fo. 78.

risk, declaring to you that our church will in no wise receive you.”

Though firm, this letter is polite, and duly lays the blame on the Walloon Consistory which certainly was in the wrong.

Unhappily, M. Menauteau seemed to squeeze through every barrier and, on March 30, 1764, landed in New York. The elders and heads of families met at 3 p.m. that very day, refused to accept M. Menauteau and offered to pay his passage back home on the next boat.²⁶

M. Carle was still in New York, but left about a fortnight after that.

As for M. Menauteau, the Consistory gave him board in the house “of a French lady and took care of this poor object of pity, not that he had any mischievousness to hurt any one. They caused him to take the air of the country at New Rochelle”,²⁷ where there were a number of French people, “while waiting for a chance to send him back to his parents.”²⁸ This unfortunate affair cost the Church more than 300 pounds which was at that time a huge sum.²⁹

Far worse a result than the loss of money was the feeling between this Church and the Walloon Consistory, to whom a long letter was written in triplicate³⁰ and sent on three different ships, April 21, 1764. The letter blames the Walloon

²⁶ *Registre des Résolutions*, fo. 92-93.

²⁷ *Records 1771-75*, fo. 24.

²⁸ *Records*, fo. 24 b.

²⁹ At the house of Jean Guirinneau (or Guironneau).

³⁰ Duplicates were customary in those days.

Consistory for "making this young man unhappy for the rest of his days". They declare that they will complain to the Walloon Synod against the Classis, asking that it repay the expenses incurred by the church in this case, which "might destroy it entirely". They add "We do not believe that, since the foundation of the Gospel, there has been such a case."³¹

During the vacancy M. Jean Pierre Tetard who was living at his country place at Kingsbridge (which he called Pont du Roy) accepted to serve the Church without any right to definite appointment. He began on April 15, when M. Carle went for the last time to New Rochelle (called here La Rochelle) to administer the Lord's Supper,³² after having preached his farewell sermon in New York on April 8, 1764, and having received an excellent written testimony from the elders.³³

As for poor M. Menauteau, he even behaved foolishly in the church, and the Consistory forbade him to attend services; however, he attended on Good Friday and, during the service, had to be put in the Consistory room with one of the Church members to keep him company. On Easter Day, they hid his clothes, so that he could not get up, but he came in the afternoon and caused a scandal.

New York was only a small provincial city, and the misfortune of the French Church was the talk of the town, of

³¹ *Registre*, fos. 98-107.

³² *Registre*, fo 94.

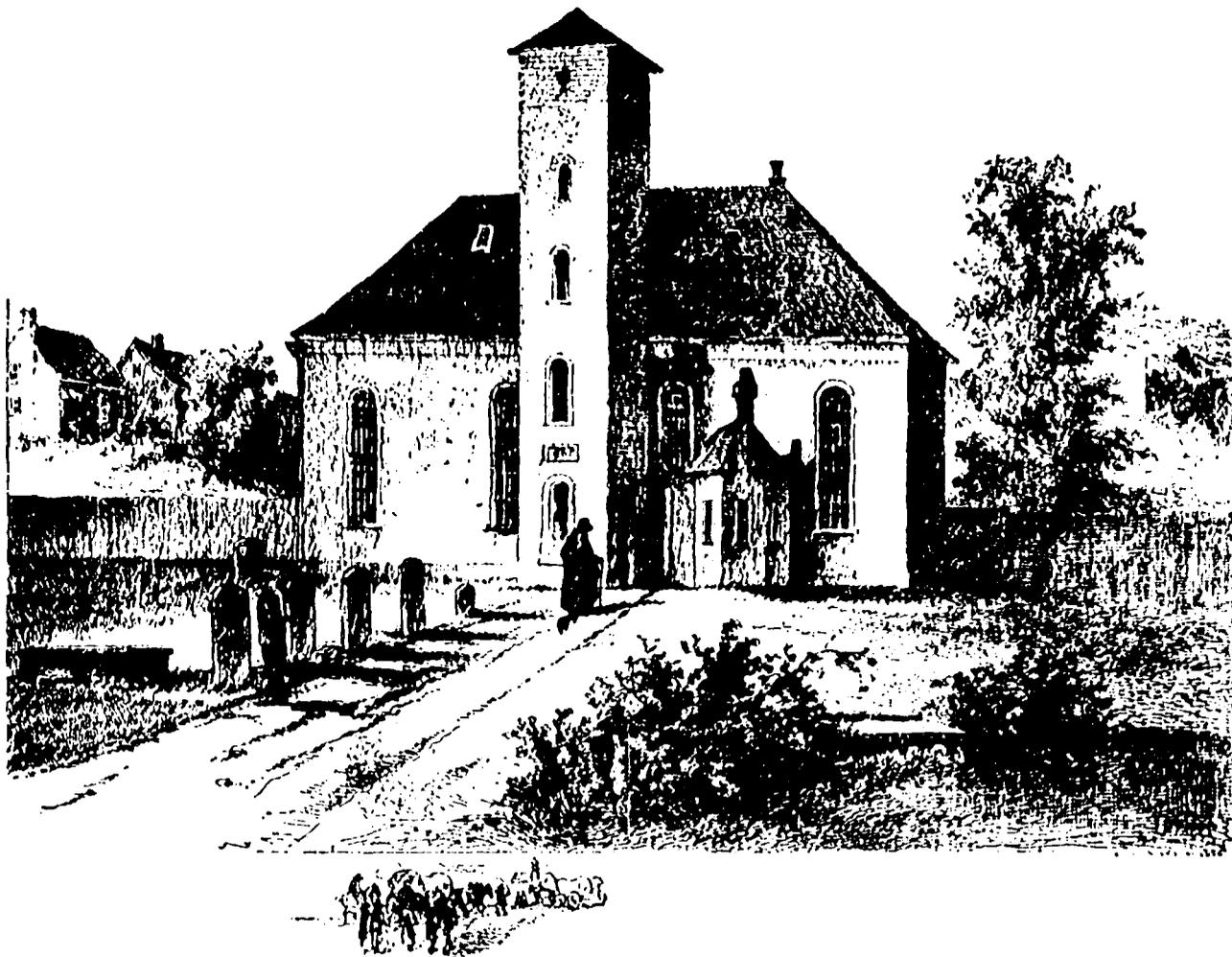
³³ *Registre*, fo 95-96.

“the English, Dutch and other nations which constitute the various churches of this city”.³⁴ The word of sacrilege was even used about it. We must suppose however, that M. Menauteau could not have been as pitiful a case in Holland as he had become, now under the strain of a difficult situation.³⁵ Finally, they managed to ship him back to Amsterdam on the brigantine *Le Quebec*, the passage with provisions being 30 lbs. 12sh. (including food) 1lb. 12sh. for a ship bed and 9sh. for a blanket, which, they trusted, would be repaid by the Walloon Consistory, or M. Menauteau’s father, a surgeon at Amsterdam. The financial arrangements had been made with Thomas Moore, part-owner of the ship. The expenses for boarding the sick man for 2 months had amounted to 4 lbs. 12sh. 2d. Unhappily, the Walloon Consistory did not realize that never had the Church received such a blow financially and spiritually, coming closely as the elders declared several times, to “complete ruin.”

But more ministerial troubles were at hand. M. Jacob Daller, from Lausanne, arrived at the instigation of M. Jacob Henry Chabanel and demanded to be installed as pastor of the church. M. Daller claimed he was sent by the Venerable Company of Pastors and Professors of the City and Republic of Geneva, yet he did not have the proper credentials from Geneva, or from Lausanne where he had begun his studies in 1759, and where he resided. However the Consistory voted

³⁴ *Registre* fo. 110.

³⁵ *Registre*, fo. 112-116.



The second church at a later period.

to call him as minister on condition that he conform to the Discipline of the French Reformed Church of France in which ours is founded and a condition to be made in a future agreement (Jan. 8, 1765), the truth of the matter being that there was in the church a party which would have liked to keep M. Tetard as minister. This group was headed by M. Vallade, who recently resigned as an elder officer of the church, and also Louis Pintard who had been made an elder on December 30, 1764, and Jacques Desbrosses, also an elder. The party opposed to M. Tetard was headed by Daniel Bontecou, Jean Hastier, Jacques Buvelot, François Basset and Pierre Vergereau. Their objections to M. Tetard were first that he lived too much on his farm at Kingsbridge and came to town only on Sundays, yet was paid as much as M. Carle, and secondly that he read his sermons, a practice which they claimed, was against the custom of this church. Here they were mistaken, for we know that M. Rou committed his sermons to memory the first time. When he repeated the sermon on a holiday like Easter he might do so again, however his custom was when he used the same sermon to read it. But probably, M. Rou knew his sermon almost by heart anyway and so his reading was intelligent, while M. Tetard was more indolent and probably read in an uninspiring way. This division was the beginning of another quarrel which weakened the church more than any previous misfortune.

The pro-Tetard party threatened to discipline the pro-Daller party on the ground that they had slandered M. Val-

lade.³⁶ They declared M. Daller deprived of all his rights to be minister of the church on the ground of his association with the party opposed to M. Vallade, "the duty of a true minister of the Gospel being to breathe only peace, concord and charity" and not to pay attention to hearsay and slander. An assembly held eight days before at the house of Daniel Bonnet, an elder, by the Daller party and at which the young minister was present, was declared to be illegal, and those who attended it were forbidden to do so again under penalty of ecclesiastical sanctions, according to the word of God (Jan. 24, 1765).

The conflict which followed is told from the Vallade point of view by the Official Register, which remained in the possession of the Tetard party. The other side is given to us by M. Buvelot.

At the same meeting M. Jacques Desbrosses presented a letter from Messrs. Wm. Smith and J. M. Scott, lawyers, informing the elders that they represented M. Daller, whom they advised, as most lawyers do, to avoid a ruinous law suit, and to submit his claim to arbitration. The meeting declared that M. Daller had now, by his behavior, given a new reason to be rejected as a minister of the church.

On Feb. 2, M. Tetard received a letter from the Bontecou party asking him to let M. Daller preach on the following day. M. Tetard replied at once, after a hurried consultation

³⁶ *Registre*, fo. 141.

with his consistory reduced to two persons, that this request could not be granted.

On February 7th, in the consistory room, an interview took place between them. M. Tetard and M. Vallade, representing the existing consistory, and M. M. Buvelot, Vergereau, the Rev. Jacob Daller, and his lawyers Messrs. Smith and Scott. M. Vallade, who seems to have had a good legal mind, read a memoir and the whole correspondence with M. Chabanel and the ecclesiastical authorities at Amsterdam and Geneva, also the articles of the Church Discipline, which disprove M. Daller's claims on account of his lack of proper certificates. This, the lawyers admitted, but they declared that the Discipline did not provide in this case, and argued that in the present unhappy division of the church, it would be wise to accept M. Daller as minister, provided he obtained from abroad his complete credentials. Indeed, on Sunday Feb. 7, M. Vergereau presented to the Consistory a request to that effect from M. Daller with an approval by three ministers of the Dutch Church and the Presbyterian minister. A meeting of the Bontecou-party was held at Elder Bonnet's house on the following Tuesday to support M. Daller's request; M. Isaac Garnier, lecturer, was present at that meeting. This was however rejected again by the Consistory on the following Saturday. This forced M. Garnier's resignation on March 3rd afterwards. His position as lector and precentor was given to Pierre Durand. Louis Pintard, elder and secretary, tired of these quarrels, resigned on July 6th, then joined the Anglican

Church. The Consistory consisted now of two members, M. Tetard and Jacques Desbrosses, the latter being as obstinate a person as Bontecou. They declared that Daniel Bonnet was no longer an elder, and elected François Blanchard, Etienne Desbrosses and Isaac Noble, as elders and deacons. (July 1765). This action brought matters to a climax on the following Sunday, July 21, when M. Tetard gave notice of this decision. On coming into the church that afternoon to preach a sermon on the Catechism, he noticed that Daniel Bontecou, Jean Hastier, Jaques Buvelot, François Basset were present, and even M. Daniel Bonnet, who had not attended services for six months. M. Tetard very wisely asserted, as he gave notice again of the election, that anyone objecting should do so in writing. As he came down from the pulpit, the five persons loudly protested against the newly appointed elders, and there followed quite a scandalous quarrel between the two factions which almost came to blows in the Church itself. On August 4th, François Blanchard and Isaac Noble were ordained as elders by M. Tetard. Etienne Desbrosses apparently did not accept the nomination.

Pierre Vallade was finally allowed to resign as treasurer on Feb. 17, 1766, in order to retire to his country place at New Rochelle. Into M. Vallade's house had been thrown a letter, signed "Liberty Boys" which threatened him with great harm if he did not remit the funds of the church to the "real elders" Thereupon, the Consistory decided not to elect a treasurer so that harm would befall none. Jacques Desbrosses would

handle the poor fund; the funds of the church which were mostly in promissory notes, were entrusted to Elie Desbrosses, vestryman of Trinity Church, a man respected by the whole community. The letter of the "Liberty Boys" evidently came from the Buvelot party. This affair led to a few rather meaningless affidavits in the *Gazette*.

After a resolution taken on June 27th, 1766, the Daller party took possession of the church building, prevented M. Tetard from going into the pulpit and changed the locks of the doors. The rejected consistory met in M. Tetard's house and proceeded to depose M. Charles Jandin, elder of the church, residing at Staten Island, who had also joined the opposition. This act closes the *Registre*.

In the meantime, M. Tetard had made fruitless legal attempts to gain admittance to the pulpit. No doubt, without his consent, some of his friends posted on the doors of the church a paper containing these biblical quotations: "It is written, my house shall be made a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." Some person even stole the clapper of the bell. Although these acts signified little, they did injure the church's prestige to a certain extent. M. Tetard realized that the majority were against him, yet, as a last step, petitioned the Governor on October 17, 1767. No developments arose from this, and it appears that everyone was tiring of this useless

quarrel, especially since M. Daller had gone back to London on June 22. Old Isaac Garnier took again his post as reader and the Buvelot party took charge of the church, although there still existed some ill feeling between them and the Desbrosses family. A proof of their victory is the entry in the book of a baptism performed by M. Daller on August 1765.

As for M. Tetard, he retired on his farm at Kingsbridge, and seems to have supplied for a time in English at the Dutch Reformed Church of Fordham. He did not as we shall see, give up attempts to return to the French Church.

Unquestionably, the Buvelot party was unfair to M. Tetard. After all, this worthy man could not help it if he did not possess that kind of memory which allows some men to learn a sermon by heart. He claimed, and we have to take his word for it, that the climate of Charleston had impaired his health and his memory. As for the charge of laziness made against him, it is not true. The pastoral records of M. Tetard's New York ministry:

1764	19 baptisms	2 marriages
1766	7 "	4 "
1765	9 "	2 "
1767	3 "	

These figures tell their own story, more especially when we remember that the statistics for 1764 are only for 9 months, M. Carle having celebrated 3 baptisms in the first three months. We note that M. Tetard blessed the marriage of

Jacques Buvelot himself on July 22, 1764 with the widow Bonnet in that lady's own house. That M. Tetard was not remiss in his ministry is proved by his visiting New Rochelle in February, and by the triple baptism he performed in the Bowery which, he notes, is "at four miles distance of there-about or in the neighborhood of the city". The age of these newly baptized was not known, because they were no longer children. The name of the family was Collins. Why people of that name were baptized in our church is unexplained.³⁷ Perhaps they were colored people.

M. Carle and M. Tetard kept very accurately the records of the baptisms they performed at New Rochelle, annex of this Church.³⁸ All these were performed by M. Carle as he visited New Rochelle for the quarterly communion. The Easter communion was administered in March or April, the St-John's quarter usually in October, but sometimes in September or November. The Christmas quarter communion should have been observed in January, but we find in a baptismal record dated January 20th, 1761 that the church was not used for this baptism because the members of the said congregation could not be assembled in the Church on account of farming work.³⁹ However both elders attended.

³⁷ *Coll. of the Huguenot Soc. of America* I. p. 271.

³⁸ *Coll. of the Hug. Soc. of America*. Vol. I. p. 282-294.

The number of baptisms is as follows:

Year	1755	-56	-57	-58	-59	-60	-61	-62	-63	-64
Number	2	3	3	7	3	6	5	4	4	2

³⁹ *Op. cit.* p. 290.

We find that M. Tetard celebrated three baptisms in February, 1758, one in 1762 and two 1764.

There were very few weddings. The only one in 1760, which was performed by M. Carle, was that of André de Bonrepos, who did not know how to spell his name, and Mary Clark, who could not write. The banns of matrimony had been declared in the English Church. M. Carle officiated at another wedding in 1763. When M. Carle visited New Rochelle, he stayed a few days as the trip was a long one (26 miles from New York).

From our pastoral statistics, the size of the French community at our New Rochelle annex must have approximated one hundred and fifty people, the village itself having four hundred or more.

M. Tetard, though retired, continued to be in contact with some Huguenots. In 1769, there is a record of the marriage St. John de Crevecoeur⁴⁰ by M. Tetard at Westchester. We find that later, Tetard baptized de Crevecoeur's three children.

In 1772, M. Tetard opened a French boarding school where he taught "the most useful sciences" as well as French. He also took charge of the services at the Dutch Church in Fordham. In 1775, he joined General Schuyler's army as interpreter and chaplain. He returned to New York at the end of the year, but must have left when the City was captured by the English. In 1781, we find him as interpreter on the

⁴⁰ The author of *Letters of an American farmer*.

staff of the secretary of foreign affairs in Philadelphia under Robert Livingston. In 1784, he became professor of French at Columbia, at a salary of a hundred pounds a year. He died in 1787 and he was buried in Trinity Church Cemetery.

CHAPTER IX

THE RECORDS OF A FAITHFUL ELDER

SEVERAL of our manuscripts are the account books of Jacques Buvelot. They begin in 1748.¹

Each page begins with these words in French. "In the name of God, in New York."

Giving charity was a virtue wisely administered by the Huguenots. They realized that, especially in periods of political crises, the best are often hit most. When conscience orders one to abandon everything because duty to God and to the inner sense of liberty and righteousness comes first, the collectivity must help those who have made the sacrifice. It was normal in the Refuge to help the impoverished. Moreover, we must remember that the exercise of indiscriminate charity is most difficult, disappointing and apparently hopeless and useless; but Refugees, though often very poor had nothing in common with the average specimen who begs. What the Church did then was to help the poor with what was called a pension; those unable to work and worthy had a right to it, as much as today widows have a right to regular

¹ (Cf. J. A. F. Maynard. *Les carnets d'un diacre Le Messager*, Jan. 1928. p. 9-11).

support from the State and the aged have a right to an old age pension.

Jacques Buvelot spent other money as treasurer. On Sept. 14, he pays 2 pounds to M. Rou "by his negress". Thus do we learn that our minister had a negro servant, probably his cook. On October 14, he lists one pound 9 shillings for a cord of wood to be taken to M. Rou's room, and Mrs. Lawrence receives 1 pound 10 shillings for six months rent for that room. M. Rou was then 64 years old, yet in good health. He lived simply. His handwriting had not changed at all, and often he memorized his sermons, this being the custom.

From Jacques Buvelot's book, we learn that he was a coppersmith. We have his laundry records, probably the oldest in New York.² We find that Mr. Tods, minister, ordered a caldron of yellow copper of about 12 or 13 gallons which cost 3 pounds 16 sh., a tea kettle of about 3 or 4 quarts for one pound 3 sh., and a copper basin for one guinea. Mr. Tods had paid in advance. Mrs. Rachel Mead bought also a caldron for 2 pounds 5 sh., and a tea-kettle for 1 pound 6 sh.

A number of baptismal records of 1764, 1765, 1766 and possibly 1767 are missing. We estimate the number of missing baptismal records for these three years at about thirty.

On September 13, 1767, M. Buvelot informs us that M. François Humbert had borrowed a psalter in order to learn the music, as he knew how to sing formerly. He also would like to begin a French school, if he was encouraged. Later in

² *Records 1766-1768, fo. 2.*

1768, M. François Humbert claimed that he had been made a member of the church by a chaplain of some embassy (probably Holland), but had left his papers in Canada, where he had been made a prisoner of war. After due examination, he was admitted by M. Keteltas and the elders. On December 1767, the sum of 4 pounds is lent to François Humbert on his note. However, in February 1768, we observe that M. M. Favriere, François Basset, Frederick Basset and Joseph Fortune had formed a class to learn music from M. Jean Antoine Beau of Geneva, two evenings a week, in the Consistory room. That M. Beau found it difficult to make a living is shown later, so that in February 1768, the winter being hard, he received from the Consistory 3 pounds 5 sh. for an overcoat.

M. Bontecou received the 9 shillings and 5 pence which he had advanced as rum, tea, sugar, and brooms for the persons who cleaned the church. We would like to know more about that. Perhaps it was cold, and some hot grog helped. Apparently the work was voluntary.

Later 4 shillings and 7 pence were reimbursed to M. Bontecou for two quarts of wine for the funeral of Pierre Nicolet, who died on Saturday, December 7th, 1754, and was buried in the cemetery of the church by the elders.³

From the same book we learn that the reader, Isaac Garnier, was paid 3 pounds 1 shillings per quarter. To us it may seem strange that a reader was necessary when there was a perfectly

³ *Coll. of the Hug. Soc. of America*, I. p. 325.

healthy minister to read a liturgical service which was very short.

Church notices, called "Advertisements," were given out by the reader or by the minister after the sermon.⁴

Certain of these notices are of interest. For instance, in view of the coming communion service at the Wednesday service on New Year's day 1772, the Lector read a sermon of preparation to Communion, and after that, a notice that the marreaux (or tokens) to be presented at Communion would be distributed to the members and heads of families on the following Saturday afternoon in the Consistory Room. They were exhorted to prepare themselves by "meditation, reading, penances, a serious examen of themselves, and all the other acts of piety and faith, that can place you in a condition to participate therein in a godly manner and to carry the comforts and graces that God sets forth in it for the true believers."⁵ This stereotyped formula occurs several times in the records.

As the marreaux were given, the members and heads of families paid their quarterly subscription. For instance, D. B(ontecou) pays 10 sh. on April 18, 1772, and receives three marreaux for himself and family.

Communion for the St. John's quarter was administered usually on the first Sunday of July. Communion of the St. Michael's quarter was celebrated the first Sunday in Octo-

⁴ *Records* 1771-75, fo. 36-37.

⁵ *Records* 1771-75, fo. 37.

ber, the other quarterly communions being Easter and Christmas (administered on the first Sunday in January).

Jacques Buvelot was most uncompromising on questions of discipline. It was not the custom in those days to say the funeral service over the grave of the departed. As a matter of fact, even records of burials have been badly kept in this church. Daniel Aymar having lost his child, let Mr. Oglesby of Trinity Church read prayers over the grave. A request that he made to have this minister give a prayer over his wife's tomb in the French cemetery was disliked by Buvelot under the mistaken notion that the Prayer Book contained prayers for the departed.⁶

However, he allowed these prayers to be said, but passed sundry remarks in his note-book. His colleagues blamed him for his laxity.

A pew was made in the church for His Excellency the Governor, the cost having come to twenty-one pounds, although the estimate was given at sixteen.⁷

In 1768, the records show that the church was in urgent need of repairs. M. François Dominick, carpenter, and M. George Dominick, mason, who came over in 1742, inspected the building and decided that it was useless to whitewash the church as the roof leaked a great deal. We learn from this that the roof was made of shingles nailed on planks. A new roof would have cost one hundred and sixty pounds,

⁶ These came in only in the last American revision and in a mild form.

⁷ *Records*. fo. 12 b.

which the church could not afford to spend at that time.⁸ They had to be satisfied with cleaning the windows and the pews. Four men and five women worked at it for a week, the wages being 4 sh. a day for the men and 3 sh. for the women.

In 1767, one pound was paid to M. Christopher Codwise toward the cost of the fire engines "which came recently for the use of the ferry, on Long Island."⁹ The Church owned a frame building with a stable near the ferry (now Fulton St.) which was rented at 22 lbs. a year.

Four widows received a regular old age pension 2 lbs. 10 sh. a quarter in the case of two of them, 1 lb. 10 for the others, this sometimes being supplemented by 10 or 20 sh. This money was partly raised by a collection at the door of the Church. The amount varied from 13 sh. 6d on June 21 to 5 sh. 3d on June 14, 1767, and in the morning and the afternoon from 8 sh. on Whitsunday (June 7) to 4 sh. on May 31. On Whitmonday, the amount was 7 sh. 3d. almost as much as the day before. From this, we see that the Sunday afternoon congregation was not less than in July and August as the figures average about the same. The custom of vacationing was not found among our people at that time. As 4 sh. 3d was collected at a preparation sermon before Holy Communion on Friday afternoon (October 9, 1767),

⁸ *Records* fo. 20.

⁹ *Records* 1766-68. fo. 26.

we are led to think that the attendance at such services equalled that of Sunday afternoon.

In July 1767, 3 sh. 6d was spent for a baptismal record book, which has been lost since. All that is known about these baptisms is from the copy made by Buvelot.

The August Communion, in 1667, cost 8d for the bread and 11 sh. for a gallon of Madeira wine;¹⁰ at the October Communion, only 2 quarts of Madeira wine were provided for at the cost of 7 shillings.

The bread was provided by the bell ringer, Pierre Lagear. He found that it cost only 7d, and so 1 penny was duly entered as receipt on the next page.

On August 31st, the sum of 1 lb. 10 sh. was paid for a "coffin of bilsted" for Pierre Rougeon, whose widow was left poor.

Two carloads of walnut wood were bought for heating the Consistory room. The cost, including cartage, was one pound one sh. Pierre Lagear, the bell ringer, received 3 sh. for sawing it and bringing it in. M. Lagear paid 6d. to have the chimney cleaned. On April 6th, another carload of walnut wood was bought for the room at the cost of 11 sh., including labor to Pierre Lagear.

Captain Morley Harrison having died, "Madame the Widow" received two pounds on October 14, 1767. But when on December 8th M. Buvelot went to see her to give her two more pounds, she refused, declaring that she was

¹⁰ *Records* 1766-68, fo. 27.

ashamed, as a young woman, to be assisted, that she had some furniture to sell and would realize enough from that to tide through the winter and to put something in her shop. Otherwise she would have to receive assistance. Buvelot adds "In that case, I said to her, all you have to do is to warn us."

As we read on, we find additional remarks in the account book.

"Friday 25 Christmas day. Collected this morning at the door of the Church 14 sh. A discourse most edifying (from Mr. Keteltas)".

"Sunday, January 3. Communion day, 18 sh. 6d., another good and edifying discourse."

At Christmas, 2 sh. 6d. were paid to buy a foot warmer and 3 sh. for a copperhead for the use of the minister. At the Christmas Communion, four quarts of Madeira wine were bought from Edward Man at the cost of 13 sh. At Easter 1768, half a gallon of Madeira wine cost 7 sh. 1d.

On February 23, 1772, the Consistory bought from M. Joseph Hallet three tickets of the New Castle Lottery (being numbers 7161, 7162, 7163) for six pounds, hoping to win money for the church repairs. We do not find that any luck followed this investment. On the same page, M. Buvelot enters the number of two tickets he bought for himself.

CHAPTER X

MINISTERIAL SUPPLIES

THE Rev. Abraham Keteltas was asked to supply the pulpit. He belonged to an old Dutch family and was born in New York in 1732.¹ Originally, he had been brought up in the Dutch Reformed Church in this country. Yet, as a child, he had lived for some time in New Rochelle, where he learned to speak French fairly well. As there was a strong opposition to the introduction of English into the services of the Reformed Church, Mr. Keteltas being more proficient with English than with Dutch, studied at Yale College for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, and was received as a member of the New York presbytery. His wife being a daughter of William Smith, who has been referred to several times, was therefore, a grand daughter of our René Het who died in 1754.

From 1757 to 1760, Mr. Keteltas was the minister of the English Presbyterian Church at Elizabeth Town, N. J. "Being reasonably provided with the necessities of life,"² he bought a farm at Jamaica, L. I., where he moved with his

¹ From an account of his life, see F. B. Dexter, *Biographical Sketches of the graduates of Yale College*, New York 1876, p. 289-291. William Allen, *An American Biographical Dictionary*, Boston 1857, p. 492.

family in May 1761. This gave him the chance to serve a poor English congregation at Hempstead that was unable to support a minister.

The congregation developed under his self-sacrificing ministry. So did four closed Dutch churches in Queens County, the four consistories of which called him together as their lawful minister. In Mr. Keteltas' letter to the Amsterdam Classis which had to confirm the call, he says: "I have already suffered many hardships, and disappointments in the ministry, although I am yet young, such I would not have suffered in my other vocation. And because of the uncertain love and treacherous changes of men, and the enmity of the world against Christ and his disciples, I have reason to fear that I will get experience much more of grief and sorrow. With all humility, I believe that if I was not really desirous of willingly taking up the cross of Christ, and bearing it after him, I would not again undertake the important service of the ministry. The difficulty also of preaching the Gospel and performing my duties in a language which I do not very well understand, and which I must yet learn, all these considerations will convince your Revs. of the uprightness of my heart in what I have related to your Revs."³ (June 23, 1762).

His petition was endorsed by four Dutch ministers of the province.

² *Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York*, Vol. VI., 1905, p. 3823.

³ *Op. Cit.* p. 3825.

The Amsterdam Classis answered on March 18, 1763, after due deliberation, that they wanted to hear specifically whether M. Keteltas' belief in the Trinity and the divine nature of Christ was entirely in accordance with the Heidelberg catechism and the Dutch Confession of faith. If so, they would gladly consent to his installation.⁴

There is no more correspondence on the subject. All we know is that Mr. Keteltas was not admitted into the ministry of the Dutch Reformed Church. No doubt, he continued to minister at the English Presbyterian Church of Hempstead, which now gave him a small stipend.

The invitation tendered by the French Consistory to take charge of our services was accepted by him although he knew French still less than Dutch. That he knew French at all is probably due to contacts with a Huguenot group, or even to French ancestry not very remote. Mr. Keteltas divided his time between his farm, his English congregation at Hempstead, and the French Church, preaching in each of them on alternate Sundays.

That he was a real self-sacrificing minister of Christ is absolutely certain, and we are proud to have his name in the list of our past ministers.

Sometime after Mr. Keteltas began to officiate the rumor came that he was not quite orthodox enough, because of his not having been accepted by the Amsterdam Classis. We find

⁴ *Op. Cit.* p. 3857.

an entry in M. Buvelot's books that on September 14th, 1766, Mr. Abraham Keteltas preached an edifying sermon on Mt. 6.33. On September 25, notice was given of a communion service for October 5th. These evil reports about Mr. Keteltas' orthodoxy having come up the communion service was postponed but not the sermon. Two elders were sent as a deputation to his house in Jamaica, to have a conference with him. And on that Sunday, the accused "declared his belief and proved that our Lord Jesus Christ is Eternal God, the Father Eternal God, and the Holy Spirit Eternal God, and one only God in three distinct persons, yet one God throughout all eternity, etc." So that on Dec. 26, Mr. Keteltas administered communion "to the great contentment of devotion of all the communicants, that being the first time since they took possession of the church, which was on Sunday morning, June 29th, 1766."

It is rather amusing to see in these records that M. Buvelot lent to M. Keteltas the twelfth collection of Saurin's sermons and borrowed from him the Koran.⁵ Buvelot notes also that the first and second volumes of Saurin's sermons are lent to M. Jean Parcot of La Nouvelle Rochelle. We suppose that they were used by the Lector. They were kept by M. Parcot from July 25 to November 23, 1767, then three days afterwards, were lent to Daniel Bontecou. Good books did not lie idle in those days.⁶

⁵ He called it "l'Alkorant de Mahomet".

⁶ *Records*. fo. 10.

M. Tetard had not given up the idea of returning to the church and on Dec. 30, 1767 had a lively interview with Buvelot at the house of Elie des Brosses.⁷ Receiving no satisfaction, M. Tetard sued Jacques Desbrosses, Isaac Noble and Mr. Blanchard for his salary.⁸

Mr. Keteltas' ministry falls into sections 1766-1770 and 1771-1776. In the two intermediate years, the Church had another supply, M. Jacques Adam de Martel. This clergyman was from Guernsey, but was probably a descendant from a Huguenot family which had left Normandy. He was in orders of the Church of England.

M. de Martel arrived on Jan. 4, 1770. Mr. Keteltas, with the consent of the elders, allowed him to preach one Sunday when he was away. The new supply was eloquent, and several persons who had left the church returned. M. de Martel sent for his wife and a daughter to Guernsey. Then things did not go so well.

On Sunday morning, March 17, 1770, M. de Martel delivered a strange sermon and some people were certain he was intoxicated. Mme. de Martel arrived on May 25, and matters grew worse. The records call it "irregular conduct". He had quarrelled with F. Basset, Girault and Jean Aymar, but promised to seek reconciliation with them. At the same time, he asked for an increase of salary. The answer was yes, provided

⁷ *Records.* fo. 12 a.

⁸ *Records.* Fo. 14 a.

he behaved better, prepared deeper sermons and followed his text more closely.

M. de Martel was not the pastor of the church but a supply. M. Tetard tried to work himself back into the church through his friend M. Guironeau, attempting to form a party. Mr. Oglesby, minister of Trinity Church testified that he had changed for the best, but M. Buvelot only remarked that with all their heart they wish he had.⁹

M. de Martel's locum tenency ended in a real public scandal, which took place publicly as, M. Buvelot says,¹⁰ on Friday August 23rd. . .for several persons assembled in the street in front of his door, as he seemed carried away by wrath, as a man out of his mind, having first broken his mirror, and pictures etc. On Saturday, he did likewise, for they went to Mme. Faviere, to Mme. Allaire, to Mme. Cazal, to Mme. Basset, the widow, where they caused scandal, his wife beating him up, and he pulling her cap, etc. If he were under the influence of drink, we do not know, but evidently jealousy was very much the cause; these scandals having come to the knowledge of Messrs. Jacques Desbrosses and Frederick Basset, they went that very day, Saturday at noon to M. de Martel to ask him the reason for such a conduct. After some discoursing on the subject he said to them that he had entirely lost his honor and credit, that he could not go into the pulpit, was unworthy of it, and would go away" and so he received 25 pounds toward the cost of his passage, a supple-

⁹ *Records*, fo. 35.

ment coming through the English Church, the total cost of the passage being 30 guineas. He sailed without delay on August 30 by way of London.

Now, the parish was not altogether lost in spite of previous troubles. M. de Martel had performed 9 baptisms and 1 wedding in 1770 and 9 baptisms in 8 months of 1771. The trouble was that all these disgraceful stories gave occasion to some to leave this church for one where wordly prospects might be better. Already, on May 20, 1771 an elder, M. Francois Basset requested his dimit from the French Church to the Dutch, declaring that he could not receive communion at the hands of M. de Martel (we may note here that under the Rev. M. Livingston, the service was held in English). Jacques Buvelot who did not usually hide his thought remarks: "As if he were ashamed. I trust that vanity has no part in it. For magnificence is not very common in the church, the poor being many among its members, and therefore luxury not being much in evidence." He also remarked that "M. Basset had begun to give a very bad example to the flock for some time by coming to church only once a Sunday."¹¹

A meeting of heads of families was called for Sunday, Sept. first 1771. After a service and a printed sermon read by Isaac Garnier, the meeting took place. Once more it was decided to ask Mr. Abraham Keteltas, then living in Jamaica, L. I. to be the supply, pending the installation of a new

¹¹ *Records 1771-1775*, fo. 2.

minister. He promised to come every fortnight for a fee of 6 pieces of 8 for two sermons on that Sunday, and declared his willingness to come on Sept. 15 provided he could warn his congregation on the 8th.

Mr. Keteltas presented in December the idea of having a third service in the church, that being in English. He asked for no fee only a collection at the door. M. Frederick Basset inquired what about the expense for candlesticks and candles. Mr. Keteltas said that the cost of these being deducted, the collection should be his, for he said: "the workman is worthy of his wages." Buvelot who had walked out of the meeting remarks: "it being so what advantage would it be to the church except a burden."

Jacques Buvelot was opposed to anything on that line as a matter of principle. On Dec. 14, 1772, it was suggested by Jacques Desbrosses and Francois Basset that the charity sermon to be preached on December 27 be English in order to have a large collection for the poor. Jacques Buvelot asked for a vote, hoping that some of the other members would oppose it. None did, therefore, he did not vote against the resolution for the sake of peace, but only said: "it is a foothold that the English language will have on the French."¹²

M. Buvelot tells us that Mr. Keteltas read his sermon.¹³ "This, he remarks, surprised several people, because he had not preached from memory, (English) being his native

¹² *Records* 1771-75, fo. 42 and 36.

¹³ "se servant de son cayès" - *Records*. fo. 30 b.

tongue, and he having such a good memory. M.M. the conductors have had their wish, a sermon preached in English in the poor French Church for the first time. I do not see that there is ground for rejoicing that there had been a great improvement in the collection; for when the sermon was preached in French, Dec. 26, 1768, the collection amounted to 22 pounds 9 sh. 4d, and on Dec. 24, 1769, they collected 24 pounds 6 sh. 9 d, and this present Sunday Dec. 27, 1772 the collection . . . was about 26 pounds.

“Remark. The generosity of the Gentlemen of the Anglican Church did not appear in this charity sermon preached in the English language.”

There follows a moving passage in the Record, and it ends as a prayer:

“O poor French Church, thy members hold different opinions about the service, whether it should be in English or in French, that causes trouble, and causes thee to float, in this city, on the angry waves of politics and criticism, upon an ocean of various opinions as to thy future.

“O God, uphold her, and help, and protect thy Church, and rescue her in these great difficulties, and maintain therein the light of thy word, in the French language, and raise up the necessary means to support thy Church, if it pleases thee, for thy glory and for our salvation. And cause to flourish in it peace, concord, charity and all the other christian virtues.”¹⁴

¹⁴ *Records*, fo. 30 b.

On Dec. 27, 1773, Monday after Christmas, another English charity sermon was preached by Mr. Keteltas. A notice was put into the *Gazette* of Dec. 22. The sermon was even printed with this title: The grace of our Lord Jesus-Christ, in becoming poor for men, displayed and enforced in a charity sermon from 2 Cor. VIII, 9 preached in the French Protestant Church in New York, December 27, 1773. New York, 1774.¹⁵

Not without reason does Buvelot use this term "notre pauvre église francoise". Baptismal records indicate a real decrease in the parish

1771	(4 months)	2 baptisms
1772		4 baptisms
1773		7 baptisms
1774		10 baptisms
1775		4 baptisms
1776	(5 months)	2 baptisms

From the average of these figures, the congregation had decreased. M. Buvelot complains of proselytism by Mr. Livingston the English speaking minister of the Dutch Church.¹⁶ Indeed, through Mr Keteltas, and in direct conversation with Buvelot, Mr Livingston tried very hard to effectuate a union of the two congregations. Buvelot "with the respect due to his character" blamed Mr. Livingston for

¹⁵ This sermon has 36 pages. There is but a single copy of it in the New York Historical Society.

¹⁶ Page 21 of his first book (*Records 1771-1775* fo. 12).

proselytizing” in this poor sister church, which is near succumbing, unless God helps her.” Mr. Keteltas declared that the French congregation would give up its building to be turned into a college or academy, and that another church building would be provided for the congregation. “Good God, what do I hear,” writes Buvelot. “I hear that they already dispose of our plundered belongings as if they owned them. . . What can we hope after this, if we go under the protection of the Dutch Church, according to their advice, except that instead of being free, as we are in our church, we would be enslaved . . . Mr. Livingston, the minister, is a young man, I trust that he will think better in the future, when he has more experience, and I am confident that he will take under his protection, and do all the good he can to this poor sister church, as he calls it. . .”¹⁷

The day for discouragement had not yet come for Jacques Buvelot. In a meeting held May 3, 1772, a committee was formed for securing a new minister. It was made up of the consistory Jacques Desbrosses and Jacques Buvelot, elders, Frederick Basset, deacon, and in addition Daniel Bontecou, Jean Pierre Chappelle, Francois Bary, Jean Aymar, Jean Girault, who accepted, and Francois Blanchard who previously had refused to join the committee.

The first meeting of the committee was not held until Tuesday, June 2nd, 1772. Apparently, the feverish haste of today was not common in those days.

¹⁷ p. 22. (fo. 13).

The meeting opened by M. Buvelot's offering a prayer, no doubt of his own composition which he had copied in his book. We here have translated literally from the quaint French his petition:

"Our help being the name of God, who made heaven and earth. Amen.

O our God, we can do nothing of ourselves, but with thee we can do all things.

We are here assembled before thee, to deliberate on the best means of securing a good minister to be pastor of this thy church, which thou seest, through these disgraces, near to succumb, if thou dost not assist it, but rather raise her up. Our sins are the cause of this vouchsafe, O God, to forgive them, for they are great. And vouchsafe to be propitious and favourable to us, in blessing us, we ask it in the name and for the merits of thy dear son, Jesus-Christ, our Lord and Redeemer.

Be pleased, O our God, to preside in the midst of us. Direct all our thoughts and all our resolutions, by the almighty power of thy Holy Spirit so that we may do nothing which may not be very agreeable to thee, and which we may not turn to thy glory and the good of thy church. Amen.

Vouchsafe, O our God, to bless us from heaven, the domicile of thy abode, so that we have no displeasure afterwards, for we have no other view, but to have a pastor according to thy heart who would be zealous for thy glory, and to feed the church of our divine master, Jesus-Christ our Lord, and the

flock that compose it. Grant us these bounties, O our God. So be it. Amen.”¹⁸

The first problem was a financial one. Could a salary of 150 pounds be raised from the money belonging to the church, which, according to the custom of the day was lent on notes and the rental of pews. The retiring collection taken at the door of the church was set aside for the poor according to the custom of the French Reformed Church to this day. But even this sum was not sufficient for the pensions regularly made to the poor, and for special gifts to persons in financial distress.

The money lent on notes amounted to 1734 pounds, bearing annually 121 pounds 7 sh. 6 d interest. But from this there had to be deducted 150 pounds for the poor and 35 pounds for the Fund set apart for the administration of the Lord's supper in New Rochelle by the minister. The interest on these 185 pounds was reckoned at 12 pounds 19 sh., the rate being therefore 7%. There was also a house in Brooklyn which was rented at 16 pounds a year and from a frame building on part of the location of the Chase National Bank, adjoining the church, which because of repairs and taxes brought only ten pounds a year. This dwelling erected by

¹⁸ The Huguenots did not use extempore prayer as often as we imagine. Of course, such prayers were expected from the minister who was a learned man in the Scriptures. But even elders, deacons and lectors used written or printed forms of prayer, and so did the ministers when young. For the French custom Cf. P. de Felice *Les Protestants d'autrefois, Vie intérieure des églises*. 1897, p. 82 ff.

M. Dupont, had become property of the church. The total was 147 pounds 7 sh. and 6 d. Apparently pew rents would go to other expenses, concierge, reader, cleaning, and repairs. There was no organ, and the reader was probably percentor, as well.

In July 1772 there was written to "the Venerable Consistory, pastors, elders and deacons of the French Reformed Church of London the following letter:

"Sirs, and honored brethren,

Relying upon what we know, and what we have heard about your venerable Company, we take the liberty of writing to you in our need, persuaded as we are, Sirs, that we are obliging you by giving you occasions to contribute to the furtherance of the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. We do not hesitate in the circumstances of our Church, being without a settled pastor, to beg to help us in securing a good minister for us, being convinced that a pastor chosen by you will justify the lofty idea we commonly have of your Venerable Consistory, and will be such as we wish. We beg you to note that a worthy pastor can produce much fruit in a city like this, but for that end, one would wish that he be zealous for the glory of God, and that he possess besides the qualities of the heart and of the mind which are characteristic of a minister of the Holy Gospel (of which we have been deprived for several years) the talents of the pulpit which will contribute much to increase our church and to make it flourish. The largest number of its members speak English, and there-

fore also their children. If we have a poor preacher, we shall lose still more.”

The letter goes on as the previous one, mentions naturally the membership on the board of King’s College, “one of the finest climates of the world, a pure air, a serene sky, and favorable to man.”¹⁹

The letter recites the minister’s duties with a few minor changes caused by the discussions aroused by M. Tetard’s method of preaching: “The custom that we had hitherto was to preach ‘de vive-voix’²⁰ a sermon on Sunday morning, one the afternoon on Calvin’s catechism a meditated prayer²¹ on Wednesday, four preparatory sermons on the Fridays before Communion Sunday and the stated sermons on festivals and holidays. They add: “If the pastor that you will be kind enough to send us could preach in English, that would please much several persons who do not understand the French language who would join our church, if one gave them a sermon occasionally, instead of the French sermon.” “However, Sirs, in case you could not find a young French minister who can preach in English, we do not mean that you must not send

¹⁹ We translate literally. Note that the forefathers of the Refugees had come from a mild climate in the South West of France. Tradition must have handed stories of less pleasant weather in the Netherlands and England.

²⁰ We have never heard this French idiom. They meant that the minister should not read his sermons and how right they were. Only exceptional people can read a sermon intelligently.

²¹ Une prière méditée.

us any. On the contrary, if there was a young French man possessed of the qualities that belong to a good pastor, and approved of you, we hope, 'Sirs, that you will not hesitate to send him."

Arrangements were made for the transportation, which was easy, there being ships leaving London for New York "almost every month."²²

The letter was submitted to the heads of the families for their approval. Only sixteen besides the eight members of the committee approved it. Several refused to sign as they wished to have M. Tetard recalled, others because they did not care to be financially engaged.

These figures confirm the fact noted above that little more than half of the congregation of M. Carle's days now belonged to the church.

Every other Sunday, when Mr. Keteltas did not come, services were held regularly twice by the reader. M. Buvelot became greatly concerned about the preparation of the new communicants. In M. Carle's days, catechumens went to his house and were taught by him during six weeks, and if proficient enough were admitted to communion in Consistory, then in the Congregation. M. Tetard gave little attention to the instruction of the youth because he lived in the country. In 1771, M. Buvelot suggested that some member of the church teach the catechism to the candidates on Sunday afternoon, after service in the Consistory room, "as ordered in the

²² *Records* 1771-1775, p. 29-31.

Discipline so that youth be taught "not only in belles-lettres, but also in good morals, and good doctrine for godliness." One elder, M. Desbrosses approved but M. Frederick Basset opposed it, saying that the minister was paid for that, and should do it. In the meanwhile they heard that M. Gedeon Patron, pastor of the French Reformed Church of Threadneedle Street, London, had returned to Geneva, his native place. A new letter was therefore sent to the London Consistory on November 22, 1772. It must have crossed a letter from London signed by D. H. Durand, Moderator and L. de la Chaumette Jr., pastor and secretary. The style of their letter written in excellent French is in striking contrast with our New York home production. Its contents indicate that the position of French minister in New York was not considered as desirable as French New Yorkers were wont to imagine. The London Consistory acknowledged receipt of the New York letter and remarks that "they have met great difficulties in their researches. . . We have no doubt in London and surroundings several men, unconnected with any flock, who are willing to supply at churches occasionally, and who could be considered for a vacancy on their merit, such was the case of Mr. Carle who is one of those who tried their ministry among you within the last few years. But these gentlemen, disposed as they are to accept a sure and stedfast call, and even while waiting for a charge to accept a subordinate position in this country or elsewhere, are frightened by the proposals that we began to make to them as to min-

istering in your church. They are so (frightened) Sirs, and honored brethren, not only because of the multitude of offices, at present, which you may be in a position to decrease, but above all by your expectation concerning the gifts which should be brought and displayed. They fear that, while esteemed in their country and with us and *deemed proper* to save souls, they may be found *unacceptable*²³ among you. They apprehend that, after having risked death, broken their connections, used up their first youth, and spent their talents, they might be one day in danger of being sent away, and compelled to withdraw, and to begin again waiting for an uncertain call, either in this island or elsewhere, without any thing to depend on.

We do not feel qualified, Sirs, and most honored brethren, to reassure them on these various points, after what we know, and we are unable to press anyone, still less to make a choice among several persons. Our Company would feel most mortified to proceed slowly in a matter in which it would like to be encouraged to haste, if it had not understood from some of the expressions you used that you are not entirely devoided that you have some supply in the neighborhood²⁴ and even sometimes assistance until there appears a pastor who has enough courage and confidence in God to undertake to serve a church such as yours. If you still wish, Sirs, to receive a minister through us, be kind enough to note in what parti-

²³ These words underlined in the original.

²⁴ This is an allusion to M. Tetard. Cf. *Records*. p. 43.

culars he could hope to have his work lightened, and allow us to quieten his fears on the ground of your expected indulgence, so that entering with modesty and yet with hope in a career as difficult as that of the evangelical ministry, in a church whose greatness is well known, so that he may one day be listened to and considered, collect together the scattered members, maintain among you Religion, good order and charity.”²⁵

A long answer of the New York Consistory is dated October 17, 1773. It declares first that “we have been given a bad character among you, and we believe that possibly one of these young ministers, to whom the call was presented would perhaps have accepted it, if he had not been forewarned against us, as if we were without faith, without honor and without conscience . . . If there be no rich among us, though poor, we wish to be rich in the faith of the son of God, who gave himself for us. If God allowed our enemies to slander our Church and its members, we must abound in virtues and we may not doubt that this just God, whom we have often offended, yet who is ever merciful will grant us repentance, forgive us our sins, and will be appeased towards us, and will look down upon us in his mercies by his grace in due time.”²⁶

²⁵ *Records*, 1771-75, p. 37-39.

²⁶ While the French of our New York leaders is rather bad, it becomes better, although given to tautology, when we come to religious sentences. No doubt, the minister's French was the only correct speech that was heard.

About the multiplicity of services which had "frightened" the prospective ministers, the letter declares that M. Carle did all this voluntarily "which does him honor. Since then the Wednesday service has been discontinued. On Sunday afternoon, they will be satisfied with a paraphrase of the catechism. As for the holiday services and the days of fasting and thanksgiving set forth by civil authority they have lapsed since M. Carle has gone . . . it is far from our mind to burden in any way the pastor that you will be kind enough to send us. We know that in order to preach well, they need all their time. Far from increasing his labor, on the contrary, we shall make it as easy as he will think it reasonable. We promise to render him obedience and submission, as St. Paul orders to be rendered to a good shepherd, as he who watches over our souls." As for the fear that the minister would be sent away, this was so little in their mind, that they begged M. Carle to remain "in order to avoid the destruction of our church," only that he wanted them to conform to the Church of England. The letter tells the sad story of the ministerial supply they had since M. Carle's departure which "the leaders of the church bore as patiently as charity, peace and prudence could allow it for the peace of the Church," they are confident that "our church is not as difficult as is reported."²⁷

The Committee tells the London Consistory that they regret to be unable to promise more than 150 pounds as the "pension"

²⁷ *Records*, p. 40-47.

of the minister because the unnecessary heavy outlay caused in recent years by their ministerial troubles had needlessly reduced their capital.

We note that the name of François Barry is now written Barré, which of course, is a good French spelling of his name which is probably original (unless it was Baret or Barret).

The Rev. L. de la Chaumette of the French Reformed Church of London wrote to recommend a M. Jean Charles Bernel who had been a Roman Catholic priest in Lorraine and had been well recommended by M. de la Broue, one of the chaplains of the Dutch embassy in Paris, and M. Courtonne, one of the pastors of the Walloon churches of Amsterdam. He was received in the French Reformed Church, but after a time, accepted a curacy in Guernsey²⁸ where he married and had three children, and did excellent work for ten years. M. de la Chaumette declared that it remained open to question whether M. Bernel could be the right man because he was a proselyte and also because the salary offered "quite decent for a single man" might not be sufficient for a man with a family. M. de la Chaumette adds that M. Bernet having been licensed by the Bishop of London, was preaching then at the Chapel Royal and that if the New York Consistory wished he would go himself and hear a sermon to satisfy them as to his preaching ability.²⁹

²⁸ M. de la Chaumette calls here the French Anglican churches in Guernsey "une église confédérée a Cantorbery."

²⁹ *Records* 1771-75, p. 49-51.

This letter of M. de la Chaumette is dated January 6, 1773; the Consistory's answer dated October 17, 1773 was sent on November 4, 1773 by the *Mercury*. The Consistory and the Committee declared "with regret" for the two reasons already hinted by M. de la Chaumette himself, that M. Bernet was not the proper man. They added "we beg you to give him our compliments, and we pray God for the temporal and spiritual prosperity of his person and of his family." The London Consistory took up the matter immediately and wrote in January 9, 1774 a letter which arrived April 12, declaring that they could not recommend any one and that the French Church should look elsewhere. Buvelot writes: "We are, therefore, compelled to turn our looks elsewhere, not knowing in what direction. O God, have mercy upon us, vouchsafe to lead and guide our steps to one of thy faithful servants for thy glory for the good, the prosperity, and the edification of Thy Church. Amen. My God, rebuke our enemies and be propitious and favourable unto us."³⁰

Through the Rev. Ch Fred. Foering of the German Reformed Church of New York, the Consistory heard that there was in Allentown a German³¹ minister, Mr. Abraham Blumer, able to preach in French and who, they said, had lately preached in that language at German-

³⁰ *Records*. p. 54.

³¹ He was a Swiss.

town.³² The Committee wrote to Mr. Blumer to do them the honor of visiting them and preaching two or three sermons "if you can do it conveniently . . . it is true that the journey is considerable, but the weather is also favourable."³³ Expenses would be paid, also the sermons.

Mr. Blumer replied on November 28 in French that his knowledge of the language was not what it used to be and that, through lack of practice, it was now well nigh forgot. The report of his preaching in French at Germantown was not correct, and the French sermons had been given by Mr. Boehme. He advised the Committee to write to Holland for a minister.³⁴

His letter, sent by mail, reached the Consistory on March 6, 1775, more than three months after it was written. The

³² A large proportion of the German Reformed Church of Pennsylvania are really of French Huguenot ancestry. Two other ministers besides M. Blumer were known to be able to speak French, but were not interested. One of them was M. Boehme of Lancaster. No separate French congregation was formed in Pennsylvania. Another was probably John Conrad Bucher who preached in German, English and French, while he was a chaplain of the German regiment of Baron von Arnt. Cf. Aug. Ruedy. *Prominent American of Swiss origin*, Amerikanischer Schweizer Zeitung, Sept. 29, 1937. The very important Huguenot society of Pennsylvania so ably led by Dr. J. B. Stoudt has picked up the threads with remarkable success.

³³ The letter was written July 11, 1774, and was sent through Pastor Weyberg of Philadelphia. It reached Pastor Blumer on November 21.

³⁴ *Records*, fo. 31-32.

Consistory thanked Mr. Blumer very politely, and told him about their unhappy experience with the last minister from Holland.³⁵

As Abraham Keteltas our stated supply, passes out of our history he becomes part of American public life. In 1776, he was elected to the Provincial Congress of New York. The victory of the English in Long Island compelled him to escape to Connecticut. He returned to Jamaica only when peace was declared. While in exile, he preached in the Presbyterian church at Newbury-Port, Mass., a sermon on Ps. 74:22 *God arising and pleading the people's cause, or the American war in favor of liberty against the measures and Arms of Great Britain, shown to be the cause of God.* Newbury-Port, 1777. In this sermon, he shows his Hebrew scholarship and his literary gifts. He died at Jamaica September 30, 1798, at the age of 66, as a greatly honored man, leaving a large family.

The last entry in this book of Buvelot brings us in contact with living history, and with an unseen coming blow to this congregation. We give it in full, as it closes an era after which we are in the dark for many years.

Memorandum: "On Thursday, July 20, having been set forth by the Continental Congress as a Day of humiliation, fasting and prayer throughout the Province. On Sunday, July 16, 1775 was given out in the French Church by the Lector a notice concerning the day of fasting to be observed throughout the whole province of New York on July 20th,

³⁵ *Records*, fos. 32 and 42.

about as follows: All those who make up this assembly receive the notice that Thursday next, there will be in this Church two sermons for the day of fasting, etc., and the things that have come upon us in these days of calamity that we have brought upon us by the lack of respect, and care for what we should have followed, and to obey and perform the commandments of our God, and who ought to have done. Let us rend our hearts and not our garments, confessing our sins with repentance and true humility of heart, and beseech Him to forgive our transgressions which are the cause of our distress, so that He may be propitious and favourable unto us, turning away from us the punishments that threaten us. Let us ask him these mercies, through the infinite mercies of our Lord Jesus Christ, his son. So mote it be.”

And so ends the book of Jacques Buvelot, with the storms of war over the land.

When the storm broke, it fell very hard on the French Church. The English army captured New York, and a third of the city was burnt. We may not be altogether surprised at the following order issued by Major-General Pattison:

To Francis Stephen Esq.,³⁶

Sir,

Major-General Pattison, having allotted the French Church in King Street for the Reception of Ordnance Stores,

³⁶ Storekeeper and keymaster to the ordnance department.

he desires you will immediately order the Sea Horse³⁷ and Lord Townsend Ordnance Transports to be unloaded at the several Stores deposited there, all of which you are to take into your Charge, except such as come under the denomination of Field and Battering Train, which you will deliver to Mr. Commissary Grant.

I am, Sir, etc. S.P.A.³⁸

³⁷ An ordnance transport.

³⁸ *Collections of the New York Historical Society* 1875, p. 379.

CHAPTER XI

THE CHURCH REORGANIZED

THE departure of the English from New York left the Church in a terrible state of disrepair and practically disorganized. It would have entirely perished were it not for the visit of Pastor J. Louis Duby of Geneva, Switzerland, who came here in 1795, and at once began to gather the remaining French Huguenots. The church building was too dilapidated to be used, and so the services were held on Sunday evenings in the German Reformed Church. Interest was aroused. M. Frederic Basset, the only surviving trustee of the Church, called a meeting for reorganizing the Church under the law of the State of New York, passed April 6th, 1784. This meeting was held on January 26th in the German Reformed Church, after proclamation had been made two successive Sundays. The following persons were elected trustees of the Reformed Protestant French Church in the City of New York: François Basset, Jean Aymar,¹ Jean Lagear, Jacques Blanchard, René Jean Van den Broek, and Frederick Basset.² This instrument was duly recorded on February 20,

¹ He probably was the Aymar who was on the committee of seven in 1772. Cf. Benjamin Aymar, *Aymar of New York*, Proceedings Hug. Soc. of America. Vol. II. p. 175. He died in 1796. Op. Cit. p. 179.

² *Collections of the Huguenot Society of America*, Vol. I. p. 429.

1796 on p. 22 of the first Liber of Record of incorporation of Religious Denominations.

On February 15, 1796, the board of trustees met and elected Mr. Frederic Basset as President and Mr. Van den Broek as Secretary.

The Rev. J. L. Duby was invited to be pastor of the congregation. He felt that he could not accept, and ministered to the Congregation only until the beginning of summer. Having been called back to Switzerland, he promised that, should he not return to America, he would ask Professor Levade of Lausanne, Switzerland, to recommend a suitable minister.

While the Congregation did not assemble in the dilapidated church building, and was without a minister until 1795, its account books testify to some kind of corporate existence, money kept in trust being lent in 1786 and 1787. One of these loans was made on June 7, 1806 to the First Baptist Church, the amount being 88 pounds, which was repaid on August 1, 1803 with interest for 4 years, 1 month and 20 days.

In these days, the Huguenot churches of France were being slowly reorganized, under all kinds of disabilities, one being the lack of a school for the ministry. Professor Levade recommended for our church a young pastor named Pierre Antoine Samuel Albert, born at Lausanne, and then only thirty years old. Of him, Professor Levade said: "He has manifested on all occasions a great zeal for the holy vocation which he

professes, a wise attachment for the pure doctrine of the Gospel, great purity of character, and a conduct proper to conciliate him the esteem and attachment of all those who have been called to live with him or near him.”

M. Albert arrived in New York in 1797 and justified all the hopes that had been put in him. He was, said the *Churchman's Magazine*, “an accomplished gentleman, an erudite Scholar, a profound theologian, and a most elegant and exemplary preacher. A stranger in a strange land, of unobtrusive manners, insuperable modesty, he led a very retired life. His merits, however, which could not be concealed, were justly appreciated by his congregation by whom, and by all who had the pleasure of being acquainted with him, he was eminently esteemed and sincerely beloved.”

On the last day of the century, the French Church was used for an extraordinary service. George Washington had died seventeen days before. On December 31, eight New York Lodges of Masons, including l'Union Française No. 14, assembled in the French Church for a funeral service in memory of the Father of this country,³ who had been a true mason. On the altar was the Bible belonging to St. John's Lodge No. 1, near by. On this Bible, George Washington had taken the oath, when inducted as President of the United States at a short distance from our church. We do not know why our church building was chosen, although George Washington

³ For this information, I am indebted to my learned friend, Maurice Franck.

was a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church; it was possibly because of the fact that Lafayette, also a mason, came next to Washington in the heart of every American. Possibly because the oldest Lodge in New York, la Parfaite Union, was a French Lodge. Or else, because Jean Gabriel Tardy and Pierre Jean Van den Broek were important men in masonry.⁴

But the condition of the church was critical. There was war between France and England. It is true that France had lost a few years ago another part of its population, a large part of its nobility opposed to the new order. A number of these aristocratic émigrés, often destitute, came to the United States from the French West Indies. They were not interested in the Huguenot Church. The little flock to which M. Albert gave his best was only part of the descendants of the Refugees who had come a century ago. The wealthier among these had migrated to other and more respectable churches or to the country. There was little appreciation of French literature and none of France as a land to be visited by tourists, when no one admired even the Alps. There were a few like Mr. J. J. Astor who took an interest in the church for the sake of learning the French language. Mr. Astor paid one

⁴ This Lodge is now extinct. L'Union Française Orient de New York founded 1797, now No. 17, is to some extent, its successor. On the foundation of L'Union Française through the Grand Lodge of France Cf. J. Hugo Tatsch. *John James Joseph Gourgas*, Boston 1938, p. 17-18. This Lodge should be considered one of the most important in America. J. G. Tardy was *Venerable* from 1800 to 1802 and again in 1805 and 1807, these being difficult times.

dollar for a psalter on December 28, 1801. That was cost price and the only entry of this kind we find in our books over many years. Mr. Astor would be one of the very few, perhaps the only person who came to church with his own book. More probably he kept it at home to sing the Psalms in French.

The vicissitudes of this church, and the English occupation had not helped matters. To make things worse, Mrs. McLaren, heir and executrix of M. Frederic Basset, late president of the Board of Trustees and treasurer of the church, refused to deliver to the surviving trustees the treasurer's books, the original bonds, and even the sacramental vessels of the church. No doubt, Mrs. McLaren had some personal reason unknown to us which blinded her to the true character of her conduct. At any rate, it was not very good for any one concerned to read, for instance, in the *Mercantile Advertiser*, of July 2, 1802:

“The Rev. Mr. Albert, minister of the French Protestant Church in this city, with much grief and reluctance, is compelled to announce to his congregation by the subscriber, that the holy Communion cannot be administered according to the proclamation of Sunday last. The disappointment is owing to the imperious refusal of widow McLaren to deliver the sacramental vases to the minister who keeps them unjustly in her possession, as likewise all the property belonging to the said congregation, since the death of her father, Frédéric Basset, formerly treasurer to said church.”

The case was taken to court, where it dragged two years, until Mrs. McLaren was finally prevailed to return the church's property.

The financial outlook of the church was deplorable. The income from invested funds had come down to \$512.50, less than the salary offered to the minister.⁵ M. Albert was self-sacrificing enough to have his salary reduced to 500 dollars, but the future of the church remained dark.

The only way to save the congregation was to abandon its state of splendid isolation and to become part of a larger body. The logical step in that case was to become a part of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

There were theoretical reasons for and against. The title of the Church contained both, being rather typical. Our ancestors liked the first half very much indeed. They would never have accepted the second without the first; Protestant meant to them the Huguenot spirit. M. Albert, being a theologian, knew very well that the early church was both episcopal and presbyterian, and that Calvin had rightly considered that the episcopate was quite consistent with the Calvinistic reformation. What the followers of Calvin objected to was "prelacy," and they were absolutely right. M. Albert believed and knew that a truly apostolic episcopate was not to be identified with the feudalistic developments of medieval Europe, any more than the Christian faith should be tied with philosophy of the dark ages. The Protestant Episcopal

⁵ Sept. 30, 1802. *Minutes of the Vestry, Book A.* p. 57.

Church in New York, more especially Trinity Church, had drawn herself the largest number of the descendants of the Huguenots and also many of these families of the Dutch Reformed Church with which they had intermarried a great deal. The Presbyterian Church was felt to be too Scottish, the German Reformed too German, the Dutch Reformed too Dutch, to allow a French Church to feel welcome in an ecclesiastical group, which was really provincial in its outlook. Moreover, there was the great practical argument of the Desbrosses legacy kept in trust by Trinity Church. And so, on September 30, 1802, the trustees decided to adopt the liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and they officially informed M. Albert, who of course knew all about it. They told him: "We have just decided that we shall accept in the future the Anglican liturgy for the service of our church for the clear purpose of making it flourish and prosper. We shall take the necessary measures to realize our project as soon as possible. We think that this new plan will please you and we hope that you will help us with all your power, this change being necessary to your profit."

At the following meeting of the Trustees (Oct. 6, 1802), a letter from M. Albert set forth his acceptance:

"As to your determination concerning the Anglican liturgy, I can see nothing in the way of its adoption by us, since the religion is the same, differing, I believe, only in the ceremonies. It would, nevertheless, be well to know exactly the conditions on which the English would consent to let us have the legacy

bequeathed to us; for if they are onerous or tend to deprive us of our independence, I could not subscribe to them. If, on the contrary, it is only a question of the simple adoption of the liturgy, I unite with you, Gentlemen, in adopting it; and I do so all the more willingly as I am convinced that that is perhaps the only means we have to at last draw our congregation out of that state of nullity where it is at present. As to the latter purpose, I am, likewise, fully disposed to concur with you in the execution of a plan which can only turn out to the advantage of all.”

This title of “the English” given to the Protestant Episcopal church must have been traditional among our people. As for the legacy mentioned, it was that of Elias Desbrosses. By his will made in 1773,⁶ he left “the sum of one thousand pounds lawful money of New York unto the Rector and Inhabitants of the City of New York in communion of the Church of England as by law established in trust to be placed at Interest by the Vestry of said Corporation for the Maintenance of a French Clergyman who shall perform Divine Service in the French language in this City, according to the liturgy of the Church of England as by law established and should it be any considerable time before such establishment is effected, then the interest arising from the said one thousand pounds shall become principal for the same purpose.”

Notice was duly given to the Congregation and on October 24, at the close of the morning service, one trustee ex-

⁶ Recorded in Liber 37 of *Wills* pp. 58, 59.

plained the situation to the church members. Each member of the congregation was then asked his opinion, unanimously they gave their consent to the proposed change.

The next necessary step was the preparation of a new French liturgy, to replace the simple Reformed Church form of service. Happily, there was at hand a translation of the Book of Common Prayer, according to the use of the Church of England. This translation represented a long evolution. The first translation of the Prayer Book into French of which we found evidence is that of François Philippe printed in 1553. He was a Protestant minister, and at the accession of Queen Mary, fled the country and became pastor of the French congregation at Frankfort for a short time. A French translation of the Hampton Court Conference Book of 1603-1604 was printed in 1616. It was the work of Pierre de Laune, who was pastor of the Walloon Church at Norwich from 1601 to 1656. The book was not used by that congregation although it was like the other refugee churches in England, supervised by the bishop of the diocese.⁷ The purpose of the book was to acquaint the French speaking refugees with the worship of the Established Church for the purpose of dissipating their prejudices. When the Anglican liturgy was revised in 1662, Jean Durel prepared a new translation. He was a native of Jersey. In 1794 it was revised by Nicolas Wanostrocht, a Belgian, who had founded an Academy in

⁷ W. Muss Arnolt, *The Book of Common Prayer among the nations of the world*. London 1914, p. 61.

England, and was a good scholar. It is practically the one used by the Anglican churches in the British Empire. The French style of it is fairly good, but it lacks the qualities of style of the liturgies made more recently for the use of the French Reformed Church. When the New York Church decided to conform, M. Albert, with some assistance of Jean Pintard, because M. Albert was not proficient in English, adapted the French edition used in England to the American Prayer Book. It was printed in 1803. In the same year, the Church was consecrated, on Whit Monday (May 30, 1803) by Bishop Benjamin Moore, Rector of Trinity Church. Prayers were read in French by the Rev. Mr. Ireland and a sermon was preached by Mr. Hobart.

On the following day, Bishop Moore conferred deacon's orders in the French Church on M. Albert and Mr. Edmund Barry who was to be his English speaking assistant. The following Sunday, being Trinity Sunday, M. Albert read morning prayer in French and preached. In the afternoon, Mr. Barry preached in English. On Friday, June 24th, priest's orders were conferred on M. Albert at Trinity Church, at a special ordination service. The new ecclesiastical move brought quite an influx of new pewholders into the church which became quite fashionable: "On March 27th, 1804, the pews were sold by Messrs. Griffon and Glass, and the following persons are named as purchasers: John Polens, W. W. Rodman, Peter Kemble, Dr. W. Post, John R. Livingston, C. Low, S. Hugget, Jacob Schieffelin, John Seaman, Griffen & Glass,

Wm. Jepson, R. W. Woodhull, John J. Astor, J. B. Prevoost, Judge Ogleby, S. Richard, Henry Aaron, Frederick de Peyster, Dudley, Dr. Blenor, C. W. Le Brun, Dashé, Dr. Bradhurst, J. Fleming, J. Hawland, Judge Pendleton, Richard Harrison, John Pintard, John B. Coles, J. Jones, Patterson, King, Turcot, Rande, Correja, J. Hatton, Dr. Kemp, Raineteau, James Fairlie, Wm. Wilmording, John G. Tardy, Cawford & Sands, Gulian Verplank, Ezra Sargent, Joseph Sands, W. Lawrence, William Swing, John Sutter, and T. R. Smith.”⁸

On May 1804, a vestry was duly elected with the following members: Wardens: Messrs. Sigismond Hugget and Richard Harrison; Vestrymen: Messrs. John Pintard, Thomas Hamersly, Stephen Richard, John G. Tardy, Dr. John Kemp, Jacob Schieffelin, John B. Prevoost, and Thomas Randall. From a legal document in Minutes of the Vestry 1819-1837, Book B., p. 99, the full legal name of this church was now: The Corporation anciently named “The Minister and Elders of the French Protestant Church in the City of New York,” afterwards styled “The Trustees of the Reformed Protestant French Church in the City of New York,” and now called “The Rector, Churchwardens, and Vestrymen of the French Church du Saint Esprit in the City of New York.” The latter part, which is the one used legally is not grammatically sound; of Saint Esprit would have been more correct.

The rector’s salary remained at \$500. a year; the curate

⁸ A. V. Wittmeyer, *Op. Cit.* p. 72.

received \$250. The sexton was paid \$60 a year, and the precentor \$75.

The Rev. P. A. Albert became ill in June 1806. On Sunday 22, there was no collection (and probably no service). On the 29th, the collection was only \$1.10 and on July 6, \$1.18. No doubt, M. Albert was ill, and the congregation knew it and kept away from church, knowing that there would be no sermon.

M. Albert died on July 12, being only 41 years old, and was buried in the church itself. The vestry assumed the cost of his funeral amounting to \$147.56, and bought his books for the church at the cost of \$45.45 which went to his estate. There was not much of that. Mr. Barry was paid his quarterly salary and received it until March 9th, 1808. No doubt, English service must have been held during these three years, but we have no records of collections. A separate book must have been kept for them.

A study of baptismal records from 1797 to 1808 reveals some interesting facts. First, during M. Albert's ministry, the baptisms are very few (although these were the days of very large families). We have only two records of weddings.⁹

Years	1797	1798	1799	1800	1801	1802
Baptisms	2	0	5	3	2	3
Weddings		1			1	

Although M. Albert was rector from 1803 to 1806, we find

⁹ These two weddings are on the first page of Records of the French Church. du St-Esprit Marriages 1816-1835.

no baptisms entered by him. Baptisms are all entered by the English assistant, the Rev. Edmund D. Barry, until March 1806, but the names are not French. The Convention Journal reports in 1804 three baptisms and 1805, five. These Journals report, in 1804, about 12 as the number of communicants in 1805 about 16. The number of male members (head of families) is 66 for both years. The report for 1805 has 3 funerals which is another sign that the congregation was not large. We notice also in September 1804 a baptism performed by Abraham Beach. From April 1806 to August 1807, the records are kept *in English* by Mr. Barry and the number of baptisms increase rapidly (one or two names being French); then, there is a space of eleven months without baptisms until July 1808 when Mr. Barry baptizes three French children respectively 5, 3, and 1 year who apparently had been kept unbaptized in the hope that a French minister would soon arrive. The statistics of Mr. Barry's baptisms show that an English speaking Church was being built up.

Years1803	1804	1805	1806	1807	1808	
Baptisms	3	2	11	20	24	3

In 1808, the Rev. Edmund D. Barry is named in the Journal of Convention as being principal of the Episcopal Academy in New York and officiating at Grace Church, Jamaica, where he was called (April 1, 1808) for one year. This call was not renewed. Later the Convention Journal indicates that he is principal of an academy in New York and officiating in Jersey City, N. J. He certainly kept on good terms with this

church for we find him performing, as late as 1816, a marriage which is entered in our records, and renting a pew that year. The English speaking people, to whom he had ministered must have transferred their allegiance to other parishes.

However, there was no idea of turning the French Church into an English one. Only conditions abroad were worse than the vestry imagined.

Six days after M. Albert's death, a meeting of the vestry was called on July 18th at the house of Dr. Kemp at the College. It was decided at once to apply again to the Rev. Professor Levade of Lausanne, and to Pastor Cornabe of Morges for a successor, with a salary of 1200 dollars in Spanish piasters, the letter to be accompanied by a draft of 300 dollars for his travelling expenses. The letter to these two ministers is most important, coming from those who had gone through the recent change in ecclesiastical allegiance. What they desire is "a minister as excellent as the late M. Albert." Through M. Mathieu Pattey of Geneva, who was going back home, they sent to Pastor Cornabe a Prayerbook to show that "the articles of faith differ not in any way, as far as spirit is concerned from those of the Reformed Churches of Geneva. The minister chosen will have to be episcopally ordained, but they presume that in a century as enlightened and as liberal as the present, there will arise no difficulties about forms where the truth and essence of Christianity are preserved." As for the qualification of the minister requested, "we wish him to be good mannered and pleasant in his ways, learned in his

profession. He will never be too correct a writer, nor too eloquent a preacher to please as select and polished congregation which, under his care and with the blessing of the Almighty will, no doubt, as we hope, increase in number and respectability, all the more since the French language is cultivated in this city with a great zeal. Briefly, talents above the average are necessary to succeed our lamented friend and pastor, M. Albert.”

They promise a salary of 1,200 dollars, and his passage from Switzerland, through Bordeaux or Nantes. Apparently the fact that there was a war was too unimportant to be mentioned.

At a meeting of the Vestry on August 12, 1807, it was declared that no answer had been received from these Swiss ministers. M. John G. Tardy said that a certain M. Huguenin of Neuchatel, who was then in New York, spoke very highly of his friend Pastor Jean Henry Ebray of the Reformed Oratory¹⁰ at Besançon, France. M. Tardy wrote to him a letter which was approved by the Vestry, where he says that the duties would not be very hard and that the Rector might double his income by teaching French two hours a day.

As there had been no answer from any of these three ministers by 1809, it was decided to ask Bishop Moore or the Bishop of London for a minister preaching perfectly in French at a salary of 1,250 dollars.

¹⁰ This term was used for the churches of a small constituency.

In 1811, the Vestry decided to call the Rev. M. Delprat of the Hague at a salary of 1,500 dollars, plus 500 for his passage.

Finally, in 1813, answers came from Professor Levade and Pastor Cornabe, also a letter from M. Henry Peneveyre,¹¹ minister of the Gospel at Neuchatel. All this was due to M. Huguenin who had gone back to Neuchatel. Professor Levade, Pastor Cornabe and M. Huguenin recommended M. Peneveyre in the highest terms. Therefore he was asked to come with all diligence. Five copies of the letter inviting him were sent on *five* different ships. So there was a war after all. This letter tells M. Peneveyre: "Three years before the death of the late M. Albert, we adopted in our church, for pressing reasons, the Anglican rite; and it will be indispensable that before being installed as Rector that you receive ordination at the hands of our Bishop, and only as a matter of form. The adoption of the Episcopal ritual does not change anything however in the articles of our faith. The difference between our ancient rite and this present one lies only in the form of ceremonies, and our religion as a whole abides intact as formerly in all its primitive purity. We flatter oneself that in this age of light, that reading our prayers one way or the other will have no effect upon the mind of an enlightened minister. Besides, you may be persuaded that had it been

¹¹ Like many families of Neuchatel and of the French speaking part of the Canton of Berne, the Peneveyre family was of Huguenot origin. It probably came from near Pamiers (Ariege). The name was spelled at first Penavaire.

otherwise, the late M. Albert would never have consented to that change and to his reordination." The salary offered was 1,500 dollars a year, plus 500 dollars for his travelling expenses from Neuchatel, "a sum which we believe sufficient."

A fire having destroyed St. George's Church on January 1814, the vestry held a special meeting on the 7th to offer the church building to their use. M. Peneveyre arrived in October 1815 and began to officiate that year on the third Sunday in Advent.

Another fire destroyed a church, the Church of Zion and its congregation was allowed the use of our building on Sunday afternoons. (Dec. 16, 1815).

A church budget in those days was a simple affair. There were none of the present activities, and the collection went into special objects and the poor fund. Then, there were no parish organizations, no Sunday Schools, no church guilds, only one sermon a Sunday, and some catechizing of the young. An organ was purchased for one hundred and twenty-five dollars, and Mr. W. L. Clark was engaged as organist at a salary of one hundred dollars; M. David Delapierre as chanter at the same salary, and A. Gordon, colored man, as sexton at a salary of fifty dollars a year. The position of chanter was given in June 1816 to M. Chevalier at the same salary plus twenty-five cents per psalm transcribed by him. For the first time, the closing of the church for summer began that same year. This closing was at first from the last Sunday in July to the second Sunday in September. In 1810,

it was extended to the third Sunday of that month, and in 1820 to the end of September.

By-laws were made in 1818. They show us a point of view which is no longer our own. The membership of the church was constituted by the pew holders only, who bought their pews at auction. They and their immediate family had a right of burial in the church cemetery "they had individually a right to the ministrations and parochial functions of M. le Recteur, according to proper respect and common custom."

The sexton, in addition to cleaning the church building, had to be present at every service, also at funerals, and to distribute letters sent by the Secretary to the Vestry and to the members of the congregation when the parish meeting took place, as there was no postal delivery in those days. He had also to be a churchman and a man of good morals. And all this for fifty dollars a year. However, he did not blow the organ bellows, this being the work of another man paid fifteen dollars a year.

New York was a small town, and the reopening of the church brought together the congregation in spite of a ten year vacancy. The collection on Sunday, November 24th was \$6.50, and on Easter day, \$10.68.

Pews were again rented by important persons. We find the names of Roosevelt, Schermerhorn, Rankin, Jaques (sic) Smith, Joseph Sands, S. P. Phoenix, Joshua Jones, S. Grosvenor, F. H. Le Favre, Iselin, S. Mackett, W. H. Bunn, Herman

Vos, J. R. L. Lawrence, Dufeu, De Rham, John Fleming, Mrs. Ludlow, Mr. Seaman, J. Schieffelin among pewholders. But pastoral acts give us for baptisms and marriages quite a different set of names in the main. There are quite a few Swiss names among them.

In 1819, Jean Louis Duflon, newly arrived from Switzerland, was engaged as chantre and clerk at the high salary of 150 dollars a year, to be raised to 200 when he would lead the chanting properly. The Vestry was indeed very generous to him, for they gave him 50 dollars for his voyage and paid for the music lessons that he was to take. The clerk had to give a singing lesson once a week to members of the congregation who desired it.

In 1820, it was found that the Desbrosses legacy held in trust by Trinity Church Corporation had now increased to nine thousand dollars by accrued interest. The Corporation offered to give their bond for ten thousand dollars at seven per cent¹² provided this Church raised by a loan one thousand dollars to make up that sum.¹³

One of the great difficulties met by the Rector was the small attendance at vestry meetings. Quite often there was no quorum and no business could be transacted.

Already in 1824, we find that the question of selling the church property to move uptown comes up before the Vestry.

¹² Op. Cit. 15. This bond still exists. but the interest came down to six per cent in 1821.

¹³ Op. Cit. p. 32.

Church statistics under Mr. Peneveyre show the usual pastoral acts of a small parish:

Years	.....1816	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826
Baptisms ..	2	13	5	9	5	10	9	12	3	6	7
Weddings ..	2	5	7	1	4	2	0	4	3	2	0

The Reports, in the Diocesan Convention Journal speak the same language.

Years	.....1816	1817	1818	1819	1820	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825
Communicants	14	15	20	20	18	18	25	22	24	20

We note that, among the children baptized in 1813, six were older children, one being ten years old. This is accounted for by the fact that the Church being without a minister, some parents had waited. Indeed, we find quite a few cases of this kind later and this explains to some extent the variation in the number of these baptisms. The parish apparently grew little, if at all. M. Peneveyre was well paid. He was even honored with a degree of D. D. in 1823. But money should not be considered everything. M. Peneveyre felt with the coming of age, a strong desire to return to his family and to his native country. He, therefore, submitted his resignation in writing on April 8, 1825. He offered to stay six months or even a year more. Before he left, a letter had been received from the Rev. A. Vermeil, pastor-president of the Consistory of the Reformed Church at Bordeaux, recommending M. Antoine François Verren, who had been a fellow-student at the Academy of Geneva during seven years, and had already shown great talent as a preacher, although he was

only 23 to 24 years old. M. Verren was then a minister of the Reformed Church of Marseille, his native place. Dr. Pascalis, the secretary of our church who was a physician, was asked to investigate especially the state of Mr. Verren's health, and if his physical constitution was strong enough for the duties of his ministry and for the voyage he must undertake and the new climate he must adapt himself to.

A silver vase worth 111 dollars engraved with a suitable inscription and the names of the wardens and vestrymen was presented to M. Peneveyre with an address on April 30, 1826, as he pronounced his farewell sermon and declared the church closed until the arrival of the new rector. This is the first time such a gift had been made to a retiring minister of this congregation. The occasion was a memorable one. Bishop Hobart who ordained M. Peneveyre ten years previously and had come for confirmation, was present when Dr. Pascalis presented the vase to the departing Rector. His address and the Rector's answer are given in the July number of the *Christian Journal*.¹⁴ M. Peneveyre sailed Friday, May 5th, on the packet *La Stéphanie*. He made a rather fast crossing, for he wrote on June 20th from Lyon and sent several copies of his farewell sermon which had been printed.

In the meantime, a reply from M. Verren had not been received and M. de Ferney from Geneva, formerly pastor of the French Church of Stockholm who had arrived in New

¹⁴ Vol. X. p. 212.

York recently, was also considered as a candidate. However, M. Verren wrote that he had just accepted a call to the parish of Ferney-Voltaire, France which was a very acceptable place, especially as it was so close to Geneva, but he declared that he was interested in the New York position. He was chosen rather than M. de Ferney¹⁵ because he had been considered first, yet as the latter was rather destitute, the Vestry generously gave him 350 dollars. The salary offered to M. Verren was 1,500 dollars plus 300 dollars for his voyage.

On April 20, 1827, the church was lent to the Rev. Manton Eastburn who was organizing the church of the Ascension¹⁶ until the building was needed for the new Rector.

¹⁵ M. de Ferney appears to have gone then to New Orleans.

¹⁶ This gifted evangelical preacher became bishop of Massachusetts in 1824.

CHAPTER XII

DR. VERREN'S MINISTRY

DR. VERREN ministry begins a long and critical chapter in the history of this church. He has the unique distinction of having officiated in three of our church buildings and of having erected two.

He arrived in New York in August 1827 and was anxious to be ordained without delay, but it was found that a Canon of the 1820 General Convention made a year's residence in the United States obligatory. In order to circumvent this difficulty, the Bishop advised the vestry to send Mr. Verren to Paris where Bishop Liscomb resided, there he could be ordained and return at once. The Vestry voted at once 400 dollars for the return trip and 750 dollars for six months salary (deducting 150 he had already received). Mr. Verren who had experienced a terrible long crossing coming over, showed real courage in accepting this arrangement, which, no doubt, he thought rather inhuman after all he had gone through. Then he reconsidered his decision.

He had been duly warned in the letter of vocation sent to him that the "congregation was for the present not very large but with divine assistance and a distinguished preaching,

we flatter ourselves," said the Wardens and Vestrymen, "that it will become large. It is made up generally of educated people who hold first rank in society." This emphasis on respectability which we already found in the letter sent to Mr. Peneveyre is typical of Church attendance of the times. That is decidedly not a Huguenot trait. It is quite unknown among the French Reformed churches at home, and most emphatically absent in the Reformed Churches of Switzerland where even official circles and the Government are democratic.

The Vestry bought a silk gown for M. Verren. A gown had been bought for every new minister of this church, but silk was used now for the first time.

He was duly ordained in 1828 by Bishop Hobart. The first sermon preached by Antoine Verren was printed. It is entitled: "La tache du ministre, ambassadeur du Christ. Sermon d'entrée prononcé à New York, dans l'Eglise Episcopale Protestante Français du Saint Esprit le 12 Octobre 1828, par Antoine Verren, Recteur de cette Eglise et Professeur de Littérature français au Collège Columbia,¹ New York 1828."

The style is oratorical in the extreme manner of the day, not to say theatrical. The preacher explains of conditions which he thought were new, but that we still have with us. His exhortations have only a temporary effect. "Once out of the sanctuary, the minister of the Lord is lost in the crowd; people do not want him to moralize without end . . ." There was an excellent spirit of collaboration in the church

¹ He held this position until 1844.

and M. Verren's oratorical gifts were greatly appreciated. As many as sixty-eight pews were rented in the lower part of the church and three in the gallery. Mr. Merchausen, the organist, received instruction to write an album of music for the organ, for which he had vainly asked during the preceding rectorship. Indeed, the question of music was a difficult one in a congregation so cut off by distance from the native sources of supply and compelled by ecclesiastical law and custom to use a good deal of music adapted from English composers. It is interesting to note that as many as twenty-two men came to vote at the Easter Monday elections, April 20th, 1829, although these were held as the custom as from noon to one o'clock.

We find then that the church uses for a time a small seal with the name St. Esprit and a radiant sun in the center.

In 1829, M. Verren decided to print a revised edition of the French Prayer Book. It was really the first translation, and was printed in New York in 1831, again at Paris in 1856.

Bishop Hobart died September 12, 1830. A special meeting of the Vestry was held at once, a resolution passed "in testimony of the admiration for his distinguished talents, his real piety, his ardent zeal, and his endless labors for the cause of Christianity." It was decided that they would go into mourning for thirty days and that the church would be draped in black until Christmas. The diocesan reports for 1829 and 1830 give the number of communicants as about thirty-five. This meant then the people who actually com-

municated at Easter, not the communicant roll as it is kept today.

An article in the *New York Mirror*, reprinted in the *Family Magazine* for 1935 (p. 105-107) describes the reason for abandoning Pine Street. The old church was "a small, antique building, with a low square tower, and high conical roof, with its purely French aspect carried the beholder at once in imagination to some time-worn village of Languedoc or La Vendée. This was another of the few antiquities of New York, and it grieved us sorely when the destroying hand of improvement fell also upon its venerable form, and levelled it with the earth upon which it had so long rested, calm, solemn and peaceful amid the surrounding turmoil of thrifty occupation, like an aged rock unmoved in the restless commotion of the circumfluent waters. It is true, however, that in this instance, necessity commanded the work to be performed. The edifice had become so small for the accommodation of those who worshipped in it; and the tall warehouses by which it was gradually surrounded, as the streets in the vicinity, became the centre of an active and widely extended commerce, so completely cast the humble church into the shade, that, even at noonday the light within it was but a short remove from evening dimness. That part of the city too had become almost deserted as a quarter of residence, and by far the larger part of the congregation had their houses at such a distance, in the more modern streets toward the northern extremity of the metropolis, as to make it un-

pleasant, not to say difficult for them to attend service in the old church, when the weather was in any degree unfavourable. They long endured the inconveniences amidst which their public religious duties were performed, with a constancy and patience admirable in themselves, and strikingly indicating the enduring nature of their attachment to the venerable edifice, within whose walls their fathers had bowed the knee in prayer, and listened to the glad tidings of salvation; and at length with a munificence and liberality of spirit not less worthy of admiration, raised among themselves a fund sufficient to procure the ground and enough money to build what all agreed was to be a 'handsome building'."

On February 3, 1831, the church property on Pine Street was sold for \$50,000 (\$20,000 in cash) to Charles F. Moulton. The pulpit, pews, candlesticks, stove, etc., were given for a new church being built at Saugerties, Ulster Co., N. Y. This church bought the organ for one hundred dollars. The old bell was given to Trinity Church, New Rochelle, to which it had been lent before.

A lot occupied by a sugar refinery on Franklin and Church Streets was bought on September 15, 1831. The price was \$22,400.

The cemetery was cleared, and the bones were collected and taken to a vault in the cemetery of St. Mark's in the Bowery where they still are, although the exact location is unknown to us. For this vault, the sum of \$250 was paid.

Pending the erection of the new church, the congregation worshipped in the Consistory room of the Middle (Dutch) Reformed Church at Nassau and Ann Streets kindly lent by the Consistory. Then in a room lent by the Franklin Street Dutch Church which had the advantage of teaching the congregation the new location of their next church. However, for reasons that we fail to understand, communion was not celebrated in that temporary place of worship. The epidemic of the Summer of 1832 is said to have caused interference with the building as we learn from M. Verren's report to the Diocesan Convention in 1832. The said report is given there both in French and English. It mentions 20 baptisms and 2 weddings.

The *Mirror* greatly praises the new church building: "The front, equally remarkable for simplicity, magnitude and elegance, is upon Franklin Street, and the spacious and very handsome dwelling house adjoining it, is the residence of the Reverend M. Verren, the pastor of the congregation. Church Street, on which the side of the new church extends, already contains, we believe, more religious edifices than any other of equal length in the city—six, including the Baptist meeting house in Canal Street, the front of which is exactly opposite the extremity of the street. In the rear of the new French Protestant Church is the Italian opera house, of which we have heard frequent predictions, that it will, at some time or other, be dedicated to the worship of the



The interior of the third church before the fire showing the dome.

Almighty, and thus become more in harmony of character with the structures between which it stands.”²

This opera house greatly displeased M. Verren because the people, who had sold him the land, had promised that no “nuisance” would be allowed in the rear of the church.

With the new church came new staff arrangements. The clerk, M. Lemoine, became sexton at a salary of 75 dollars, and the sexton, Gordon, became organ blower. For the organist and quartet, the budget was 400 dollars a year.

The church was free of debt and so was consecrated by Bishop Benjamin Treadwell Onderdonk on October 9, 1834, at half past ten. The Bishop was attended by Dr. Hawks, rector of St. Thomas and Dr. Milner, rector of St. George’s. Invitations had been sent as customary to all the rectors and vestries of New York, “non parochial ministers and other distinguished persons.”³ As the Bishop sat in his chair, the choir sang an anthem, no doubt composed by M. Verren.

The various documents were read in English and in French. Then the Bishop read the service of consecration in English. After that was rendered, another anthem, also composed by M. Verren. Morning prayer in French followed, at which a lesson was read by “a descendant of our worthy ancestors,” as the minutes say, the Rev. Mr. Bayard, rector of St. Clement’s. The prayers were read by the Rev. R. A. Henderson, minister of the Swedish Churches in Pennsylvania.

² *The Family Magazine* 1835, p. 106, quoting the *New York Mirror*.

³ *Minutes of the Vestry* 1819-1837, Book B. p. 129.

The Bishop read the ante-communion. M. Verren preached the sermon on Gen. 28:17. The Bishop pronounced the benediction. Portions of the French metrical psalter, the only hymn book in use then were sung through the service. The Bible deposited in the pulpit on that occasion was presented by M. Verren himself who must rightly have felt quite elated that day, for there is nothing a clergyman loves as much as building a church. Within the cover of that Bible, he had the following words stamped:

A L'EGLISE DU ST. ESPRIT
SON AFFECTUEUX PASTEUR

A. VERREN

MDCCCXXXIV

This Bible is an infolio Geneva version printed in 1805, and containing the Apocrypha. It was later replaced by a more recent translation and kept in the church library. The present rector gave it a place of honor in the altar of the church according to the beautiful symbolism of the Reformed Church of France which had been allowed to lapse to our loss.

In November 1834, \$250 were set apart for the purchase of a rather cumbrous and artless Communion set and a silver baptismal font. The font is still used as well as part of the Communion set, the flagon and large paten being put away

in the church safe in the name of Huguenot simplicity, as well as artistic sense.

Let us return to the description of this building in the *New York Mirror*: "This edifice is situated in the corner of Franklin and Church Streets. The form is that of a Greek prostyle temple, with a tetrastyle ionic portico, deeply recessed, having two columns in the pronaos, forming a double range. This double range of columns contributes additional stability, while the great depth of the portico serves the better to afford shelter from the north and east, (which is very desirable in the winter season), and was also adopted in consequence of the form of the ground, which is long and narrow; as much room being given to the interior as was desired by the Vestry, or would form a good proportion to the eye, and give a uniform extension to the voice. The breadth of the front is fifty feet; the height, including the steps, is also fifty feet, and the length is one hundred feet. The interior is on the plan of the cross, similar in this respect, to the cathedrals of Europe, having a nave and transept, with a dome over the intersection. Eight richly ornamented Ionic columns, similar to those of the Erectheion, in the Acropolis of Athens, support a semi-circular arched ceiling at the intersection of the nave and transept, as above mentioned; and the whole is panelled and moulded with the Ionic and Lesbian cymatium . . . The exterior of the dome is crowned with a lantern, of the exact size and fashion the monument of Lysicrates, at Athens. The portico is composed from the

best examples of Athenian Ionic. It is original in its proportion, and we believe, the only examples of a dipteral portico (a portico with a double range of columns) in existence, the fine, ancient examples having perished; and the architect informs us (we know not whether extravagantly) that "the art itself has continued prostrate since the time of Alexander; Rome and England failing in classical architecture, and France and Italy being meretricious." We have stated that the interior is similar in plan to the cathedrals of Europe. It is only in that it approaches the form of a cross. The disposition of the columns, the form of the ceiling, and the coup d'oeil of the whole are mainly original; no interior with which we are acquainted presenting the same arrangement, although St. Stephen's, Walbrook, London, the masterpiece of Sir Christopher Wren, furnished the hint. The marble is of the Sing Sing quarry, and is the best specimen yet furnished from thence. We have attended the celebration of divine service in the church and although we can add nothing to the accuracy or minuteness of the description, as such, we are enabled to speak more advisedly of the general aspect and to convey information in relation to some particulars which, perhaps may not be without interest to the reader. The first striking impression created upon entering is that of uncommon chasteness and simplicity; the architectural style is more pure and consistent than in any similar edifice that has fallen within our observation, and the character of classic elegance is perfectly sustained throughout, with the single exception

of the desk and pulpit, which are too much burdened with ornament, and cut up, if we may use the expression, into too small compartments, for the Doric severity of their form. The predominant feature of the edifice is almost an extreme of elegant plainness; the architect has wisely relied, for his effect, exclusively upon beauty of form and harmony of proportion, in every part except these; and we cannot but think it would have been more judicious to make no exception. The eye of the spectator, after taking a comprehensive glance at the whole, is irresistibly attracted upward by the dome which, being surmounted by a lantern, pours down a flood of light, with an effect that is equally noble and happy. The decorations or ornaments of this dome are in exceedingly good taste; its interior concave surface is divided into panels with elegant but simple mouldings, and the beading and scroll-work at the foot of the dome, where it springs from the ceiling, are rich and graceful. The whole ceiling is arched, resting upon massive entablures, supported on either side by rows of fluted columns with ornamented capitals. There are no galleries, and the pillars are so judiciously placed in point of distance from each other, as not to diminish in the slightest degree, the apparent magnitude of the interior. It is sufficiently and comfortably warmed by heated air conveyed through perforations in the floor, from furnaces in the basement story. The house is lighted from both sides, as well as from the dome, by lofty windows of ground glass, and, in this respect, the convenience of the congregation has been

as well considered and secured as in any other elegant edifice in the city."

"For the transmission of sound, the construction of this church appears to be admirable; the voice of the preacher, even in its lowest tones, is heard with perfect distinctness in every part; but we are constrained to add, that an inconvenience results from this very quality, combined with an architectural peculiarity of the building. In order to gain sufficient extent for the grand portico in front, the architect had made the great door to open at once into the body of the church, without any intervening lobby; and as there always will be persons who, from necessity or negligence, come to church long after the commencement of the service, it follows that the congregation is almost constantly disturbed for nearly an hour, by the noise unavoidably made in opening and closing a door of such weight and magnitude; an inconvenience which can only be obviated by a small, light inner door, furnished with baize or padding, to deaden the sound created by its movements.

"We have spoken of the first general effect to the eye, as being chaste and elegant; but we confess that, after a time, it becomes somewhat unpleasant from the prevalence of white; the walls, the pews, the ceiling, and the pillars are of that cold, trying hue — if hue it may be called; and it seemed to us at least, that something less glaring for the eye to rest upon would be a great improvement; for instance, if the pews were lined with a delicate shade of blue or green, or stained

in imitation of maple or mahogany. We are aware that the object has been to secure harmony of effect with the Grecian character of the architecture, but we could be content to sacrifice that propriety for the relief to the eye that would be gained by a slight variety of colour."

The church had an organ, almost magnificent for those days. It is so described in the *Mirror*:

"At the northern extremity, opposite the altar and pulpit, is an organ loft, containing a superb instrument of excellent tone, erected by Mr. Henry Erben, of this city. Its external dimensions are as follows: height, twenty-one feet; width, thirteen feet; and depth, seven. The design of the case, as will be perceived by the engraving which accompanies this notice, is Athenian Ionic, corresponding with the style of the church, and it is constructed of beautiful highly polished mahogany. It contains twenty stops, and one thousand and three pipes; has two key-boards, one for the great or full organ, and the other for the choir and swell, and pedals for the double octaves. Its cost was three thousand dollars.

The architects of the new building were Town and Davis, famous in their day. Their fee was \$500. From their estimate submitted on November 29, 1831, we learn that the marble came from Singing and was to cost \$7,870. There were six pillars 37 feet high and four feet in diameter. The rest of the building and carpentry work was estimated at \$12,750, and the parsonage, an idea which had come up because M. Verren had just married, was to cost \$6,000. In order to

have a little more space, the vestry arranged with the Dutch Church on Franklin Street to buy part of a lot next to it. The French Church bought ten feet frontage on a hundred feet depth for \$2,400.

The French Church was taking to American ways instead of the thrifty Huguenot manner. M. John Pintard did not quite approve at first of some aspects of the new venture. For the first time since its union with the Diocesan Convention, the church was in a difficult financial condition, and remained so all the days of M. Verren's rectorship.

In a strange and sinful wave of iconoclastic respectability the Vestry gave the old Communion service to the Mission of the Holy Evangelists.⁴ They have now been lost. The vestry did not realize that the pewter communion cup of our ancestors would be more valuable to us than a golden chalice set in with pearls and diamonds.

And yet these people were proud of their Huguenot inheritance. On the new Communion set a reproduction of the beautiful seal of the old congregation was engraved the name of the Lord in Hebrew within the radiant rays of sun of righteousness, and the Huguenot anchor of hope, and our Church's old motto: *Qui transtulit sustinet*. Indeed they were violently evangelical. M. John Pintard, the senior warden of this church who did so much for the General Theological Seminary wrote a letter of thanks to the Dutch Reformed Middle Church, in it we find this sentence "that the true

⁴ *Records Minutes of the Vestry 1812-1837* (Book B. p. 137).

orthodox principles and the true faith which distinguish the primitive Reformers from the errors of the Roman Church may be maintained and perpetrated by all professing to be Reformed Churches, in the deep, fervent prayer of your brethren in Christ.”

The situation of the congregation was not without shadows. When we compare the vestries of 1832 and 1836, we find that only one man was left out of ten. This is not a good sign.

The budget was not healthy. It was as follows for 1835:

INCOME	EXPENDITURES
From Rents\$ 957.50	Rector's Salary .....\$1,500.00
Trinity Church Bond 600.00	Organist Choir Clerk 450.00
Pew Rents 1,000.00	Concierge 75.00
—————	Insurance and
\$2,557.50	Incidentals 200.00
	—————
	\$2,225.00

But the surplus was not real for it had become customary to give to the rector a bonus of \$600 a year (reduced to \$500 that year). And certainly, the allowance for insurance and incidentals was too low. Churches burned easily in those days.

Let us turn to statistics of pastoral acts:

Years	1828	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836
Baptisms	1	11	16	9	6	10	9	6	8
Weddings		4	9	5	1	9	14	4	

The marriage records are incomplete for 1835. The rela-



Communion cup still used today, showing the seal and motto of the church.

tively large number of weddings is striking. It is evident that the parish had possibilities, but somehow critical social conditions prevented a normal growth of that Christian family life which is so closely correlated with the health of the Church. Here the Church was paying the price for attempted respectability.

There are now very few of the old Huguenot names. Some names are apparently Swiss. A number are well known names from the Pays de Montbéliard. There the Lutheran Church was, and is, very strong, though not of a strict confessional type. From Montbéliard, from the French speaking cantons of Switzerland, to some extent from Alsace, came the new French Protestant emigration. To them the Anglican service of morning prayer was meaningless. As for the communion service it was used only four times a year, and coming as it did after a long service and sermon, was attended only by the minority. Then too, in these days, the church was needlessly stiff in requirements which was due to misunderstanding of ancient usage. Why for instance compel men like M. Peneveyre and M. Verren to wait a year before ministering to their flocks. Why could they not be given a special license as lay-ministers, as is done today? Why could not a non liturgical service (or some other liturgy) be used in addition to the ordinary Prayer Book services? Had the rubrics and canons of the present Prayer Book existed a hundred years ago or more the history of American Christianity would be a healthier one. On the whole, the French Church of St-Esprit

fared a little worse than others, yet a little better than some.

Bishop Onderdonk was as kindly interested as his predecessor Bishop Hobart. We find that, in 1835, he himself baptized M. Verren's third child.

In 1836, the old organist M. Theodore Merchausen who had been with the church twenty years was retired with a hundred dollar pension (June 17, 1836) which he received until his death in 1843. While looking for a new organist, the vestry found that the music expenses amounting now to \$710 a year were excessive.

Mr. Hammersley was no longer treasurer and had been replaced by John Fleming from 1830 to 1835 who was then succeeded by A. Perret (1835-1836) and Mr. Thomas Irwin in 1836, some of the executors of Mr. Hammersley kept the books, possibly because Mrs. Verren was a daughter of Mr. Hammersley. In these days when Churches had no office facilities, and where the building was heated only for services and not very well, treasurers had the habit of keeping books at home. It happened also frequently that property of the church, even bonds were in the treasurer's name. This situation was the cause of a good deal of wrangling if he resigned under a storm or died, and heirs had a cantankerous disposition. The books were given up by the heirs, only in 1837.

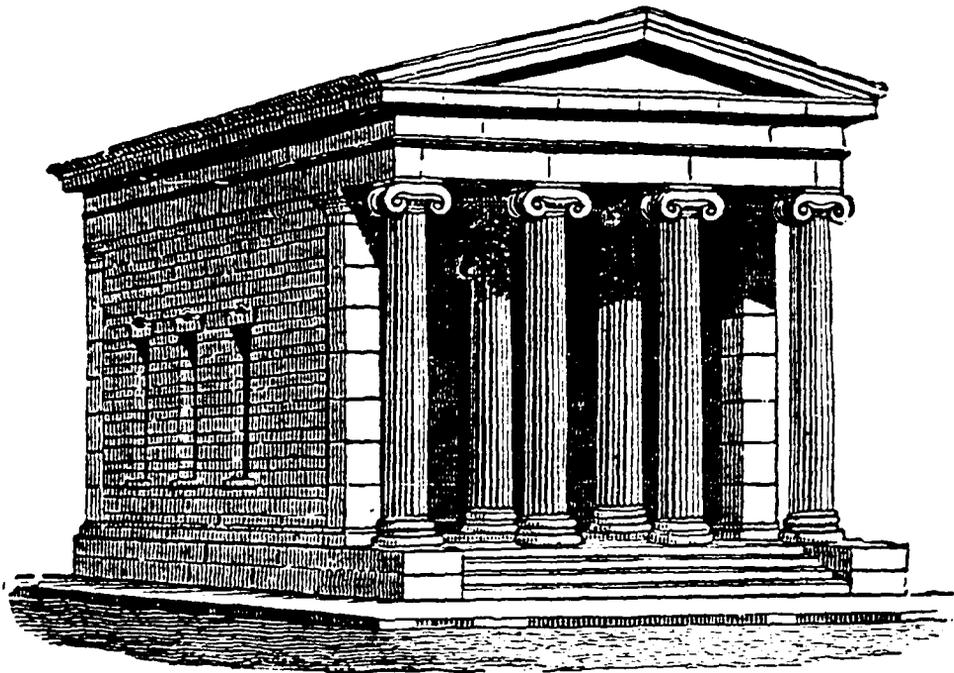
That old servant, the fifty dollar a year sexton, Abraham Gordon, colored, having vanished from the city, the Vestry engaged M. Frederic Pion, recommended by the late Pastor Monod of Paris, at a salary of one hundred dollars a year.

M. Verren's salary was raised to two thousand a year, plus the free use of the parsonage, in 1837, on account of the charges caused by his family and the increase in the cost of living.

The life of the congregation went on quietly centering around its regular services. The Sunday morning service was fairly well attended, except when it rained. The pews brought in about a thousand dollars a year.

In 1837, several members of the Vestry declared that the afternoon service was "useless". It was suppressed and it was proposed that it be replaced by a French school for children held on Sunday afternoon.

The church was almost destroyed by fire on Sept. 23, 1839. M. Verren tells the story as follows: "The persons from whom we had bought the land on which our church was erected, had given their word of honor that no nuisance would be allowed in the rear of the same; but this agreement, not being in writing, they laughed at our simplicity in having trusted to their mere verbal pledge. These men suddenly become rich, with the arrogance natural to "parvenus" and the desire to imitate the nobility and fashion of London and Paris, must have an Opera House, and on this land they built it. Here, every night, they listened to Rossini and Meyerbeer discordantly sung by Italian barbers and lazaroni—they not being able to distinguish between the real artist and the ignorant charlatan. Shortly after it was reported that the wages of the stage workmen had not been paid by these millionaires.



L'ÉGLISE DU SAINT ESPRIT,

Corner of Church and Franklin Streets.

The third church after the fire.

Whether this had anything to do with the subsequent calamity or not, I do not know; but one day, in September 1839, while sitting in my study musing over the future happy prospects of my apparently permanent establishment, and meditating on my forthcoming exhortation, a thick darkness suddenly surrounded me. A coming thunder storm I thought, when the cry: "Fire! Fire! Fire!" was heard from every quarter; and soon the flames from the Opera House now burning communicated with the dome of our church, and ere the evening, of all this magnificence, there remained but four charred walls; within their enclosure, that dome, the roof, altar, pulpit, organ, pews and all, were but a heap of smoking ruins. Oh! my tears under this calamity!"⁵

This fire was most destructive. The pews, the pulpit, the altar, the Communion table, the organ, the shades, the roof and the dome, everything was burnt, leaving but the bare four walls.

On April, 1838, the church is in financial difficulties, being unable to pay the contractor's bills for the extensive church repairs made necessary by the fire. Five hundred dollars had to be borrowed to pay one of these bills. In 1839, the difficulties continue. The church needs fifteen hundred dollars so badly that a lot belonging to the church on Greenwich Street was leased for 42 years on a lease which continues to this day on terms that are not favorable to the church. The lessee paid a bonus of \$1,500 however which came in

⁵ A. Verren. *The Huguenots in this country*, New York, 1862, p. 11.

at the right time to pay bills. The Vestry thought they were doing wisely and saved expenses in reducing the insurance on the church to 25,000 dollars instead of 30,000. They had no sooner done this than a new fire broke out in a theatre next to the church building. The rapid jangle of the alarm bell on the old jail aroused the volunteer firemen. Their engines were big pumps worked by twenty men, ten at each of two long bars. There were few hydrants, and if the fire was of any importance, as was then the case, water had to be lifted from the East River. It was every alderman's duty to be on hand with the long staff which was the symbol of his office. They were supposed to maintain order and cooperation between the various companies of volunteer firemen which did have regular fights in the streets.⁶ Volunteer firemen were opposed to any innovation even to the use of horses to draw the engines, and still more to the use of steam engines drawn by horses.

While the church was being rebuilt, the Congregation went back to the Dutch of Nassau Street. The church building is soon insured again at \$10,000, then the following year, at \$20,000, all repairs having been done. The new church was reopened in June 1840.

Two thousand dollars were deemed sufficient to purchase an organ. Everything was in proportion. The organist was paid 150 dollars a year. There were three paid singers, a soprano, a tenor and a bass, each one paid one hundred dol-

⁶ A. F. Harlow, *Old Bowery Days*, New York 1931, p. 202-204.

lars a year, although the tenor, M. Anselmo Berti, expected a yearly bonus of 50 dollars. On May 29, 1841, there was a new fire at the National Theater, but the damage to the church was this time only about 750 dollars which was paid by the insurance.

Mr. Verren was having some troubles of his own. The French community of a city like New York has always included bad as well as good people. Emigrants coming to America with the hope of finding gold in the streets found that in this country people who would have succeeded on the other side did better here but also discovered that misfits of European civilization remained misfits wherever they went. There has always been a good deal of rancour among the disappointed, and the inadapted. Mr. Verren being considered one of those who had reached a fairly good position, came in for a good deal of envy, even among a couple of derelicts who were on the relief roll of the church. Stories went round about his making pastoral calls on women who happened to be alone in their apartment. These slanders culminated in a libel.⁷ Mr. Verren was not the kind of man who took such things lying down. He took the authors of the libel⁸ to court. They were condemned to damages and prison, but the dam-

⁷ Peter Barthelemy, *Rev. Anthony Verren, pastor of the French Episcopal Church of the Saint-Esprit at New York, judged by his works*. New York, 1840. This pamphlet is written in English and French.

⁸ Peter Barthelemy and Louis de Bullion, Cf. fo. 32. page 32 of *Error Book*.

ages did not cover his legal expenses and slander always leaves a mark. It always returns in innuendoes, especially with certain kind of church people.

Another legal suit took place, this time against the church. The French Benevolent Society, incorporated in 1819, which now does in New York wonderful work of charity allowed itself to be persuaded by persons unfriendly to this congregation that it could claim four lots of real estate in Fulton Street, Brooklyn, given to this church in a legacy written in the Dutch language by Louis Lacombe, a Huguenot member of our Church who died at Surinam in 1742 of which the Board of the French Benevolent Society received an incorrect translation. The Legislature of Albany decided naturally in favor of the Church.⁹ (May 17, 1743)

A very strong argument for the dismissal of the suit of the French Benevolent Society was that during the War of Independence records of any transaction involving that Brooklyn property were destroyed. That the Church owns it is certain, that it came from the Lacombe legacy is only a tradition. As a matter of fact, the Legislature Committee Charles Patrick Daly (who became afterwards chief justice) showed that Lacombe himself, being a Huguenot and a foreigner did not have title except as a direct grant from the crown.¹⁰ So this property has been undisturbed possession of this church,

⁹ *Registre C.* (1838), p. 43-44, 46-52.

¹⁰ Now for nearly two centuries.

under color of title for nearly a century and no court of law would disturb it.¹¹

The decision was accepted as fair by all. Relationship between the French Benevolent Society and the Church are most cordial so that during the depression, a good deal of work has been done in common, the present rector acting on the basis that charity draws no religious line, or else it is not charity.

For seven years, there was a rival French Episcopal congregation, whose minister was Mr. Williamson. This *Eglise du Saint-Sauveur*, as it was called, was on Nassau Street and Park Row from 1842 to 1846, and at 68 Duane Street, from 1846 to 1849, when it ceased to exist, and Mr. Williamson went to New Orleans to take charge of a French church there, which also died out. The *Eglise du Saint-Sauveur* was always unimportant. Mr. Williamson turned to English work for which he was more qualified.

The departure of Dr. John Granger, treasurer from the city, gone to St. Louis, disclosed the fact that he had charged a commission of 5% on receipts as his remuneration. It was always understood that the treasurer was unpaid, unless he had to engage some one to collect rents. This should have been shown again that the manner in which the church business was conducted was obsolete. All business transactions of a corporation should be by check, and no money need ever be handled by the treasurer. This is best for all concerned. The present rector has gone so far on that line that for nearly

¹¹ *Op. Cit.* p. 51.



The Rev. Antoine Verren, D.D., third rector.

ten years he does not give charity in the name of the Church without a receipt from the person receiving this charity, however small the amount may be.

We find a growing conviction that the location on Franklin Street was not the right one. New York was growing by leaps and bounds, and the French quarter was moving uptown on the West side. In 1852, several offers to buy the Church property are made to the Vestry. We are pleased however to notice that their aim was to demolish the Church and rebuild it as it was. In this they showed a good deal of taste. On Jan. 27, 1853, the Vestry expressed its willingness to sell at 85,000 dollars; part of the old church property of Pine Street which still belonged to the church, was sold for \$14,000 in 1856.

The Vestry raised the salary of the rector to 2,500 dollars, hoping that soon they would be able to give him 500 dollars more as the cost of living was doubled in the 30 years he had been in New York. They offered to give him 400 dollars for a trip to France; where he might stay until spring or even for a whole year with full salary. The Vestry petitioned Bishop Potter to secure for Mr. Verren a degree of doctor of divinity from Columbia. Mr. Durell, postulant for the ministry, would officiate in the meantime as layreader, or Mr. Spencer, who was Mr. Loutrel's son-in-law.

In 1858, the sexton, Mr. J. J. Calame was raised to 125 dollars a year. The vestry not only advertised the church property for sale in the *Journal of Commerce*, the *Evening*

Post, and the *Courrier and Inquirer*, but even accepted (May 1859) the offer of Mr. F. M. Allès to paint a sign announcing that the Church was for sale or to let. As Mr. Allès was a contractor, his zeal was not unselfish. The price asked for the property had in the meantime been raised to \$100,000. Finally, it was decided to sell at auction but not for less than 95,000 dollars (Oct. 28, 1859). A serious fire, caused by the furnace, took place in the Church on Sunday Dec. 11, 1859. The insurance companies made the necessary repairs. In July 1860, a piece of land occupied by a brewery at 30-32 West 22nd Street was bought for \$20,00 and a house with 25 foot frontage next to it for \$18,250 from Mr. Mark Levy. They were willing to pay as much as \$19,000, but Mr. Levy did not know that. This was financed by a loan of \$40,000 on the Franklin Street Church property. Financially, this transaction was far better handled than the previous one at the beginning of Mr. Verren's ministry.

Unhappily, the suggestion of a gothic style for the new church was adopted. In the meantime, the parsonage was rented and \$1,200 rent allowance voted to the rector who was now (1860) Dr. Verren.

Plans were adopted, and the laying of the corner stone was decided, although the property on Franklin Street was still unsold. The laying of the cornerstone took place on June 26, 1862. Dr. Tyng, the eloquent rector of St-George's, conducted the ceremony and delivered a short address. After a historical discourse by Dr. Verren, Dr. Tyng pronounced the benediction

in French. Dr. Verren's address has some value as he tells us that the remains of the Huguenots buried in Pine Street were transferred to St. Mark's Cemetery "where they rest and their names inscribed on marble slabs".¹²

The church building cost \$47,744.68 (including \$2,500 for the organ, \$1,050 for architect's fees) plus \$20,800.52 for the land and \$20,500 for the parsonage. With the financing and sundry expenses, the total cost was \$96,948.35.

In 1863, it is decided that the Rector can invite the visiting preachers for an evening English service.

The old church being still unsold, the problem of paying for the new one just finished was a difficult one. Mr. Verren himself lent to the Church \$7,000 (April 1863). Moreover, there was a mortgage of 25,000 dollars on the new building. The Civil War had caused a slump in real estate and the best offer on the Franklin Street property was only \$72,000. The treasurer was alarmed. The Rector lent \$3,000 more to the Church. Happily the old church was finally sold for \$85,000 by two members of the Committee (M. M. Lanchatin, Guille) without consulting the Rector and the third member of the Committee, M. M. Guille and Allès were thus able to have their own bills paid without delay.

But the financial situation was not yet easy. The pews were not well rented and so the choir was reduced to two singers, tenor and soprano at \$150 each for the year.

One of those church family quarrels which do more than anything else to destroy the power of the church's message

¹² A. Verren. *The Huguenots in this country*, p. 23.

must have taken place, and this church had plenty of that during Mr. Verren's time. At the election for the Vestry in 1865 we find that 29 voters sign the registers. The vestry is almost entirely new, only two former members continuing. M. Lanchantin refused to give up the treasurer's book and records and declared that he would continue to act as such. M. Guille speaking for himself and M. Allès, refused to give up the lead box which was in the corner of the Franklin Street Church, with the list of pew holders.

In 1866, at the election, the quarrel came to a head. As many as 103 men voted, and that took from noon to 2 p.m. The Lanchantin-Gueutal opposition ticket gathered 20 votes. The Lacoste-Burnier official ticket had 83. Twenty-six men signed the minutes. The Lanchantin group gave up the fight, but the congregation had suffered another spiritual blow. The controversy found its way into the *Messenger Franco-Americain* and the *Courrier des Etas-Unis* where a libelous attack against Mr. Verren was printed.

Dr. Verren just missed another chance of building a new church. What the minutes call Dr. Hawk's vestry, and the committee of Dr. Hawk's congregation¹³ were interested, but found that the price of \$160,000 asked was uninteresting.

The rector and his friends took no chance on a counter attack of the defeated Guernsey party. And so on April 22, we find that 45 men voted unanimously the 1866 ticket, twenty voters signing the register. Now for the first time, all funds are administered by checks drawn by the treasurer

¹³ *Book C.* p. 216. (It meant, St. Clement's Church).

on a bank chosen by him out of three named by the Vestry. St-Stephen's Church had been allowed to use the church in the morning and in the evening, the French service being only in the afternoon, for a time, but there was dissatisfaction. Rent paid by St-Stephen's was however a consideration, and had helped to reduce the deficit by the second building enterprise. As the Spanish church of Santiago offered to lease the church for services (1869), it was arranged that the French services would be at 10 and in the afternoon, and the Spanish services at 11:30 a.m. and in the evening. Mr. Riley was the rector of the Spanish Church at that time.

Going through our account books from 1865 to 1868, we learn that the church had two services a Sunday, and was closed from the middle of July to the middle of September. The collections were not high; on July 7th, they amounted to 97 cents for two services. It probably rained that day; as a rule the offerings amounted from three to seven dollars a Sunday. A special collection for what was called Canonical Societies, namely home and foreign missions, brought \$13.99 on a Sunday. The Vestry being somewhat ashamed added \$15. to it.

There was grass in front of the church on June 15, 1865. Someone is paid 15 cents to cut it. On December 6th, one dollar worth of manure for that grass. On April 10, grass seed costs \$0.50; in May, more manure 50 cents. An advertisement in the *Courrier des Etats-Unis* cost \$0.70, one in the Herald \$1.20. One in the Times and one in the Express together \$1.00.

There are quite a few expenses that we would not have today. The bishop comes for Confirmation and four dollars is paid for his carriage. The elections for the Vestry cost three dollars for tickets. Then, we notice an item for treating the police officers, this however is added to stamps for Vestry meetings, altogether \$3.70. Apparently, tickets were given to people entitled to vote, and a couple of policemen were present at the election. These were days of intense feelings.

The church had a bell. On March 1866, the man who rang it is paid three dollars for three months. The organ was blown by a man no doubt, because on October 10, 1867, two dollars are paid for "water pitcher and glasses" for the organ. Six months later, another pitcher and more glasses had to be bought. Other things were equally expensive. A poker for the furnace cost one dollar and a half. For washing a surplice, the price was one dollar.

We may be excused if we look back longingly to old times, and may regret the exceedingly complex financial machinery of Church organization of today, and the heavy overhead expenses that a local church must now assume as a first charge. But the Church Pension Fund arrangements provide a reasonable way of retiring from the ministry; on this point at least, there has been a great improvement. The only defect is that a certain retirement age should be made compulsory. Quite a few New York parishes have been done to death or almost by aged incumbents. So when Mr. Verren died on March 17, 1874, he left the church in a critical condition, after a ministry covering almost half a century.



The fourth church on 22nd Street.

CHAPTER XIII

FIVE DIFFICULT YEARS (1874-1879)

THE problem of finding a successor to the Rector of this church was again with the Vestry. The congregation was not as reduced in numbers as has been said. At the parish meeting held for elections of the Vestry on Easter Monday, April 6, sixteen men signed the book, although the meeting was held on a week day between noon and one o'clock. The voting was very close, the majority for the list being 2. While the rector was living and present, elections had become a tamer affair, and the official list passed as a matter of course, except once.

The Rev. Joaquin de Palma, Spanish minister of the Santiago Church was asked to take charge of the French service during the vacancy.

M. Thomas Verren, son of the late rector, who was Churchwarden and secretary wrote to the Deans of the Protestant Theological Faculties at Geneva, Montauban, and Paris (this one being the Strasbourg Faculty partly migrated to Paris and not yet organized). The letter to Geneva asked for "a young minister, who had made good studies at the University, a talented young man, with good dispositions for the pulpit, and especially full of zeal, piety, charity, and firmness in the

ways of the Lord, a young man attached to the true doctrine which St-Paul recommends to his disciples Titus and Timothy. We want him to be young, first because in this country the Church is free,¹ each minister makes his career by making or remaking his parish or congregation, and our new minister will need the zeal, energy, the enthusiasm of youth. Then, as our church is episcopal (anglican) our minister must adopt the liturgy and take the orders of the Episcopal Church, and we deem that at the close of one's studies, one adopts more easily its discipline and customs, than later. On this point, we suppose² that you know the articles of Faith of the Anglican Church. We find that these articles of Faith (which were written as well as the Liturgy by disciples of Calvin) differ very little of the fundamental principles of the French Reformation. Moreover it is only in youth that one can familiarize oneself perfectly with the language, the manners and customs of a country. Here we hold the old Doctrine of the Huguenots, as well as the language of our fathers, but the minister of our Church could not easily perform his task without acquiring perfectly the English language, and knowing intimately the manners and habits of the land."

"Our beloved Rector, who has been 47 years minister of this Church and who was what we call here an orthodox huguenot, and who attended the Academy of Geneva from

¹ In France and Switzerland, the Churches were established, salaries being paid by the State.

² This to a Dean of a Theological Faculty!

1820 to 1825, a pupil of M. Chenevieres, and then his friend until he died, had often promised us to bring from Geneva a theological candidate that he himself would have formed, but alas! Man proposes and God disposes. Circumstances did not allow it. Upon his recommendation, we take the liberty of communicating with you, and to ask you to recommend one or more candidates having the requested qualifications.”

The letter to the Dean of Montauban Faculty is similar except for this sentence: We find that these articles of Faith (which were written by disciples of Calvin) differ little from the fundamental principles of the Reformed Church of France, our beloved late Rector who had been 47 years minister of this Church, who had studied at Geneva, and had preached in Calvin’s pulpit used to say that, except for the form, an orthodox *Huguenot* could easily endorse each of the Articles of the Anglican Church. All the more so that in our days—here at least—the fundamental dogmas of protestantism are scarcely contested, and that our Church, while uninterested or impartial in controverted questions, has remained faithful to the old faith of the Huguenots.”

This letter of M. Thomas Verren might be the subject of a commentary. This element of faithfulness to the past has ever been found in the governing body of this congregation. Without it, the continuity which the Refuge Church claims would be an absurd claim.

The financial situation of the Church was frankly bad. There was a debt of \$4,000 back salary owing the late rector;

on one property the Church had as an investment, no rent or taxes had been paid and the Vestry had to foreclose. So the parsonage was rented at \$3,000 a year.

Dean Sardinoux of Montauban wrote that all their students had positions, but gave the name of a former student, Josias Roy of Sabrevois, Canada, who was asked to come and preach. There was no answer from Geneva, and so, another letter was written to Pastor Coulin of Genthoud near Geneva about two possible candidates who were in Geneva. In order to expedite matters, M. J. J. Burnier, member of the Vestry who was going to Europe, was to visit Basle, Geneva, Montauban and other places, little realizing, no doubt, that this was vacation time. One hundred dollars were voted for his traveling expenses.³ He also was to bring back one hundred psalters at 50 cents a piece. He could also draw 150 dollars for the travelling expenses of a candidate if he found a suitable one. It was decided that the salary offered would be \$1,500 to \$2,000, or even \$2,400 if he was a "distinguished subject". He would be engaged for a year. It was also decided that "the church will accept only an orthodox candidate". No doubt some in the church knew about the "liberal" party and its controversies of 1872, now happily forgotten in a reorganized French Reformed Church.

No candidate from Europe was finally available, but six names of ministers (M. Roy is not in that list) were submitted to the Vestry in a special meeting held on August 12, 1874.

³ He actually spent 104.

One was a Swiss, four at least of the others French Canadians. On September 24, 1874, the Rev. Leon Pons from Troy in the Episcopal Diocese of Albany was elected officiating minister for the period of one year,⁴ at a salary of \$2,400 plus \$1,200 for rent, payable at the end of the quarter. Fifty only of the hundred psalters brought by Mr. Burnier were put in the pews with 50 Prayer Books newly bought, from the estate of Mr. Verren, so that the expected congregation was evidently not large. The problem of the Sunday School is ever with us, and M. Pons was authorized to try for it an afternoon hour. The organist, M. Baillard, who was paid \$300, asked for a raise, which was rejected. A new black gown was bought for M. Pons at the cost of 40 dollars. The choir cost \$300 a year. The sexton was paid 300 and the organ blower 60.

At the election meeting on March 29, 1875, 18 voters signed the tally. On May 12, M. Leon Pons was elected rector. The organist received his raise, the rector himself paying for it. On December 5, 1870, the Rector was authorized by the Vestry to begin an evening service as well. Mr. Verren had been a rector with a will of his own. Now the Vestry was dealing with a less obvious personality.

M. Pons resigned as rector on April 29, 1879, and became then a professor of French. He retained his connection with the Episcopal Church until his death, but without charge.

⁴ Mr. E. P. Megnin tells me that he had a Canadian accent.

His name still appears in Whittaker's Churchman Almanac until 1902 where his residence is given in New York City.

Again M. J. de Palma was asked to supply at a salary of \$100 a month for himself, plus \$100 towards the amortization of the debt of his congregation to the French Church. This arrangement lasted from May to June. In the autumn, the Rev. A. Emile Tortat of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, appears as officiating minister in the Journal of the New York Diocesan Convention for 1879.⁵ This report, made by M. Burnier, clerk of the Vestry, declares that the church has 59 families, 200 individuals, 35 communicants. Never had it been at such a low ebb. However, the number of pastoral acts was high: 11 baptisms, 9 marriages, 9 funerals. M. Tortat was not transferred to the Diocese as his appointment was temporary. He returned to Pennsylvania where his name appears years later on the clergy list with a degree of doctor of medicine.

Happily, there was this time an excellent candidate for the position of rector, Mr. A. V. Wittmeyer who was recommended by Dr. F. Siegmund, rector of Grace Church, G. S. Baker, superintendent of St. Luke's hospital, Dr. Oliver of the General Theological Seminary. This time the vestry was making no mistake. Mr. J. J. Roy of Montreal declared that he was not interested. On November 1, 1879, Mr. Wittmeyer was appointed officiating minister, and the church was saved.

⁵ P. 122.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CHURCH REVIVIFIED (1879-1925)

ALFRÉD VICTOR WITTMAYER, born in Alsace in 1846 was brought very young to this country by his parents. He was a Lutheran. After a short enlistment in the Union forces at the close of the War between the States, he entered Union Theological Seminary, then located at 9 University Place. In order to support himself, during his three year course, he taught as well in a school for girls, owned by the Dames Chadeayne. He bought also, for the sum of fifty dollars, the small Seminary bookshop owned by a student and ran it so well that, at the close of his studies, he had a capital of five to six thousand dollars. He received his degree of bachelor of divinity in June 1870, and decided to go to France in order to pursue his studies, especially in Semitic languages. A position of professor of Hebrew in a Lutheran seminary had been promised to him by influential friends who appreciated his value. He arrived in Paris just in time to see the disasters overwhelming his native country; he took part in the bloodless revolution of the Quatre Septembre 1870 and, like everyone, saw without sorrow the political end of Napoléon le petit, as Mr. Wittmeyer calls him, after Victor Hugo had hailed with joy the proclamation of the Third

Republic, which, he says, existe encore et qui continuera d'exister!

He went through the siege of Paris, eating the wretched bread, horseflesh which was a delicacy, cats and rats, the latter at thirty sous a piece, which was a day's wages for a national guardsman. He helped to take care of the wounded, and to extinguish fires caused by the bombardment.

Came the day of peace, heartbreaking to all Frenchmen, but especially to the Alsacians, when part of France was torn apart and a wound left open in its side, and then, the Commune, and more sufferings and destructions. At the end, a Communard leader forced Mr. Wittmeyer to hand over to him his American passport, so that he could escape from Paris. That man took refuge in Rome, and earned his living there by selling sausages.

As better days came, Mr. Wittmeyer bought a half interest in a school of foreign languages in Paris called Association de Professeurs. On January 8, 1876, he made a short trip to America and he married Miss Ann L. Smith, whom he had met when teaching at Les Dames Chadeayne's school, in his seminary days. Besides his work at the School for Languages, he attended lectures given by Ernest Renan to a small group of students. The student and the teacher were poles apart. He says of his professor: M. Renan enseignait beaucoup moins bien qu'il n'écrivait . . . il préparait mal ses leçons ou il n'était pas l'hébraisant qu'il était censé d'être!¹

Mr. Wittmeyer had a deep philosophy which he well ex-

pressed as saying that we live in a world where after all everything is supernatural.²

He was consciously and clearly religious, while Renan had substituted mist for mystery. In a small class, discussions are part of the teaching process. And so, says Mr. Wittmeyer of his teacher: En argumentant, il se montrait souvent très habile, désarmant son antagoniste en lui disant, en souriant, qu'au fond, il y avait peu de différence dans leurs vues respectives.³

Although Mr. Wittmeyer was a Lutheran, he seems to have preferred the religious services of the Independents. The French preachers he preferred were M. de Pressense and M. Lichtenberger of the Rue Taitbout Chapel and E. Bersier. He taught a Bible class at the American church, then Rue de Berri, and sometimes supplied for the minister, Mr. Hitchcock.

Having disposed of his interest in the School for Languages, he sailed for the Near East, visited Egypt and Syria, where he studied Arabic with a native teacher for a year, but did not visit Palestine, hoping that a new occasion to go back to the Near East would present itself. Upon his return to America, he found that his contacts with the Lutheran Church had ceased to become personal and that, in spite of his excellent preparation, no Lutheran chair of Hebrew was now in sight.

¹ *Mémoires de la famille Wittmeyer*, p. 85.

² *Mémoires* p. 85.

³ *Mémoires* p. 85.

It was perhaps just as well, because he felt some misgivings about some points of Lutheran theology.

And so he was led into a closer knowledge of the Protestant Episcopal Church; he did chaplaincy work at St. Luke's and wrote in the *Church Journal* and the *Churchman*.

The French Church of Saint Esprit was going through a crisis. Bishop Potter, gravely concerned over the plight of the parish was very happy to ordain Mr. Wittmeyer as deacon on June 8, 1879, so that he could become minister in charge, as he did in November 1, 1879.

There was a beautiful church building at 30-32 West 22nd Street, a rectory, and happily a French quarter all around the Church. But the congregation existed only as little more than a name.

At the opening service held by the young pastor, came 19 persons, five of which were his personal friends. The Sunday school had only one pupil, an American lady fifty years old, fond of the French language. The few parishioners formed cliques. There were plenty of financial troubles, too.

Five months afterwards, Mr. Wittmeyer, having become a priest, was elected rector of the Church he had already saved. The attendance at services had increased. The Sunday school had been reorganized. The minister's wife assisted him in his calling.

The work showed signs of life. A small French parochial school was organized under M. Lanoir as well as evening classes for adults. Mr. Wittmeyer who has expressed his faith

in the efficiency of prayer, organized what he called a ré-union de prières, on Wednesday evening. The attendance at Sunday morning services reached sixty to eighty on ordinary Sundays, twice as many on great festivals. The Sunday school had eighty pupils. An able director was found in Dr. F. Gardner, who became also lay-reader.

Mr. Wittmeyer tried to launch a second Sunday service. He tried the evening and the afternoon, and in the end, gave it up. He organized a house for French working girls which he named Home Huguenot. He began for the young men the Cercle Coligny, and later a Christian Endeavor Society and a cercle de gymnastique. He even tried to found a home for the aged, but there was not enough of a demand for it.

Mr. Wittmeyer is really the founder of the Huguenot Society of America which began in 1883. He was its secretary for fifteen years. Under his direction was done the best literary work of that Society, namely the first volume of its Records, with a history of this Congregation. The Records themselves were copied by Mr. Lanoir for the modest sum of fifty dollars, but Mr. Wittmeyer read them carefully. He quotes on p. 155 of his *Mémoires*, a letter where the president, M. Frederick J. de Peyster says: *The Society is your child.*

When he was secretary, the Society organized a series of meetings and services in remembrance of the second centenary of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

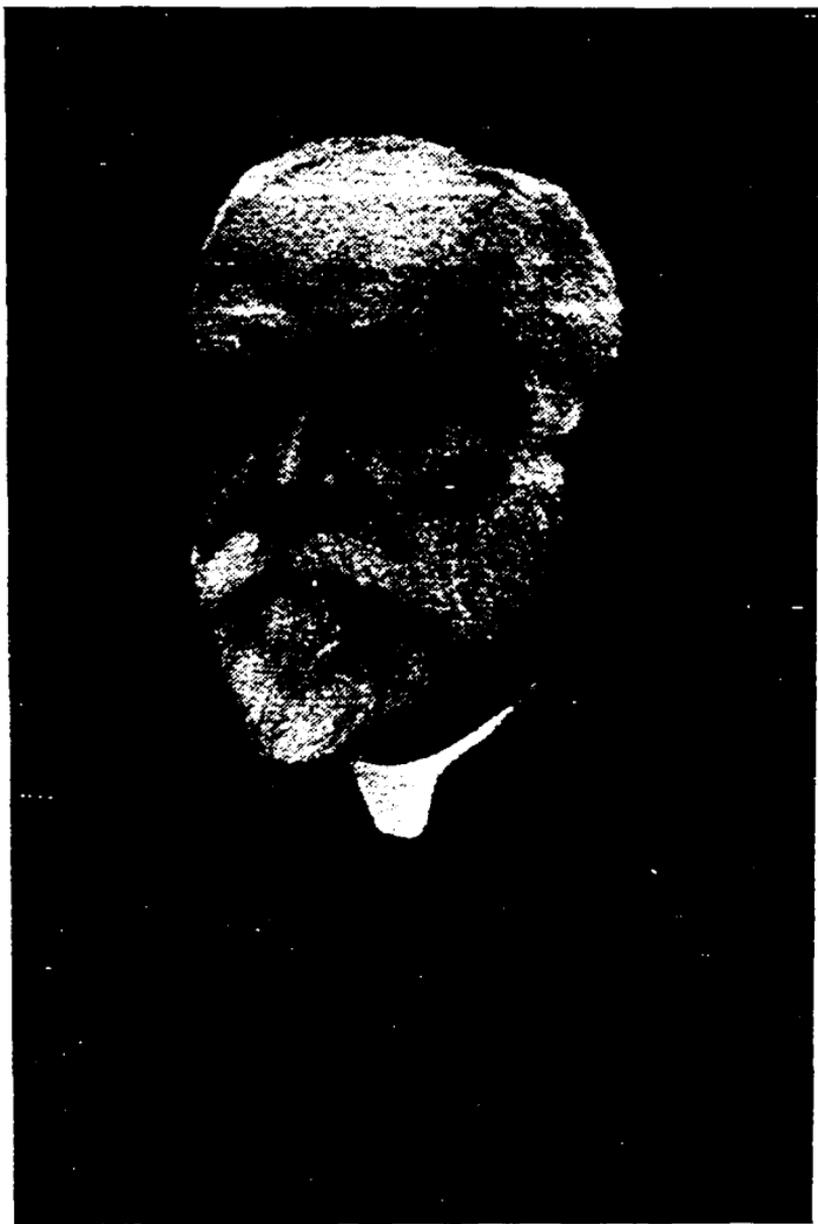
In 1893, Mr. Wittmeyer contributed a section on the

Huguenots in America in the second volume of Perry's History of the Episcopal Church, Boston 1885, p. 407-436.

The new translation of the Prayer Book, published in 1846 by the New York Bible and Prayer Book Society, was decidedly not an improvement. It was the work of the Rev. Charles H. Williamson who was in charge of a struggling rival congregation in New York called *Eglise du Saint Sauveur*. No doubt, Mr. Williamson was an earnest, evangelical minister, but his knowledge of French and of the French mind was limited. Mr. Verren tells us in his private diary that he asked Mr. Williamson to preach once at the French Church and that was enough. Perhaps, he was unduly severe. As the Church of Saint Sauveur dwindled more and more, Mr. Williamson moved to Louisiana and was put in charge of a French Church at New Orleans which was not a great success. He finally went into regular English missionary work which he should have done from the very first. Unhappily, his Prayer Book remained.

No wonder that Mr. Miel, when he founded a French Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, felt the necessity of printing a translation of his own, rather than using Williamson's. Mr. Miel's translation of part of the Prayer Book is the best we have ever seen, but it is incomplete.

The American Prayer Book, having been revised in 1892, Mr. Wittmeyer prepared a new edition where unhappily he did not sufficiently revise the former translation. What is Mr. Wittmeyer's own work is far better than what he pre-



The Rev. Victor Alfred Wittmeyer, fifth rector.

served from his predecessors. His translation was published in 1897. A reprint made in 1913 added the Ordinal. One great improvement made by Mr. Wittmeyer was that he used Segond's translation of the Bible instead of Osterwald. More questionable was the printing of the psalms in semi-poetical form, according to Hebrew parallelism.

This edition is now exhausted and may not be reprinted because a new American text was issued in 1928.

In 1900, the land on which the church stood was sold. New land was bought at 45 East 27th Street where a new church was opened. There among new activities, the rector began a work among the hoboes, to whom the gallery of the church was reserved. These men coming from all kinds of social surroundings, did not usually understand French. After the service, they were treated to a meal and to a special address where we are quite sure the rector did not hide his good advices. This service was the despair of the church's caretaker. After a time, the helpers who cooked the meal became tired of it, and a dime was handed out to the hoboes. Their number diminished and the gallery was finally closed.

There the rector had several curates or paid assistants. The first was the Rev. Oliver Shaw Newell (1896-1900), now rector of the historic old church of St. John's, Yonkers, who as a younger man had attended the famous Ecole Alsacienne in Paris and had therefore a good knowledge of the French language. Mr. Newell graduated from the General Theological Seminary and was ordained in 1896.

The next assistant was Mr. Gustave Baechler, a Swiss, now the devoted minister of a small French congregation at Woodhaven, and of an English speaking congregation in the neighborhood. Mr. Baechler was, like the rector, a graduate of Union Theological Seminary.

The third assistant was the Rev. Ernest de Beaumont (1906-1907). He came to New York (1889) from the Diocese of Fond-du-Lac where his name appears for the first time in the Diocesan Journal of 1888, but without a charge. He was formerly a Roman Catholic priest. It is evident that as such, he could have only a temporary appointment in a Huguenot congregation. The consensus of opinion is that while former Roman Catholics are welcome here as laymen, any one who has received a Romanist theological education, would with some difficulty have the spirit of this church.

The fourth was Mr. Charpiat who had been a Roman Catholic monk, worked for this congregation as a lay-reader, and returned to the Roman Catholic Church when his wife died, and it became evident that no permanent position could be found for him in this church.

The fifth was the Rev. Leon P. Vauthier, born at Beaucourt (Doubs), a graduate of Yale Divinity School and Union Theological Seminary. He was ordained in 1915. He is now rector at New Market. Md. He was succeeded by a young Swiss minister, son of Pastor Frank Thomas of Geneva, who did not quite understand conditions here, and left to go to Belgium in a missionary church.

The last assistants were M. Barthelemy Tron, minister of the Waldensian congregation, on part time, and finally Mr. Lavergne, a Presbyterian minister who returned to that branch of the Christian Church, a few months after Mr. Wittmeyer's resignation as rector.

During the World War, the church became a patriotic Center. Addresses were given in it by S. Lauzanne of the French journal *Le Matin* and by Mme Guérin.⁴ Fifty men of the church volunteered or were drafted, and ten young women joined the army as nurses. Mr. Wittmeyer, who did not seek honors, did not receive any recognition from the French Government.

Mr. Wittmeyer's mind was forceful and clear; he had a remarkable sense for business, as he showed in the financial administration of the church. The great work of Mr. Wittmeyer was to be, however, the establishment of the church on a secure financial basis. He founded the plan of selling the location of the church on 22nd Street for \$200,000. A cheaper location was secured for \$55,000 at 45-47 East 27th Street; there, a new church was built for \$80,000. A \$30,000 mortgage was put on the church. The money thus left at the disposal of the Vestry was used for the purchase of real estate in Manhattan. By severe economy, the church rode over the crisis in real estate in values at the beginning of the twentieth century. When Mr. Wittmeyer felt that the time to resign as a rector had decidedly come, the crisis was over. No one

⁴ Now one of our parishioners.

knew that a worse one was to come. He had increased the endowment of the church by \$200,000 in real estate (pre-depression values).

Mr. Wittmeyer was an excellent preacher. Had he been the rector of an English speaking congregation, he would have become one of the leading men of the diocese. Bishop Potter and Bishop Greer considered him highly. And yet no Church College ever thought of bestowing upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. However, public fame gave to him the title of Doctor which he richly deserved. The only distinction bestowed upon him was that of honorary fellow of the Huguenot Society of London.

The rector had, like all men, his share of disappointments. It is hard to be in daily contact with miseries and the miserable. Mr. Wittmeyer learned from experience all the tricks played upon clergymen. For instance, he tells us, in his *Mémoires*, that one day a couple came to be married. After the ceremony, the groom grandiloquently made out to the rector a check for one hundred dollars and told him: Would you mind keeping ten dollars for you, and cashing the check? Mr. Wittmeyer remarked: No doubt, this couple had been often married before! We do not think so. We do not happen to know any clergyman who had enough money to cash such a check.

Efforts to find employment for hoboos on the rector's own farm were not always well rewarded by gratefulness or even work for salary received. The Vestry have always been the

Rector's best friends, but their attendance at services had ever been disappointing. He complains about it in his *Mémoires* (p. 138).

Indeed, these *Mémoires* show a remarkable understanding of the difficulties of his task. One of them is the apathy on religious subjects among the French people. Mr. Wittmeyer expressed it in a short sentence: *Sans doute la France est Renanienne.*⁵

In his last years, Mr. Wittmeyer realized that time had come to seek retirement. But it was hard to leave a few old friends, a work to which he had given all, for which he had abandoned the joys of research in Semitic languages. It was hard, because somehow, contacts with curates and assistants had not been always happy, and a man who has given almost half a century's care to an organization, is afraid lest it may not pass into qualified hands.

Another difficulty was the lack of suitable successors. The world had killed off many who now would be leaders in France. When Mr. Wittmeyer sailed to France in 1925 to try and find an assistant, he was told bluntly by important pastors that all good men were wanted there, and that, of course, he would not care for the other kind.

It must be said here that Mr. Wittmeyer had not kept up the necessary contacts with the European churches, their central boards and their institutions such as the Faculties

⁵ *Mémoires*, p. 120, The Rector's Library contained most of Renan's books.



The fifth church on 27th Street.

of theology. Strange to say, when the Huguenot Walloon tercentenary was celebrated, he, the man who had done more than anyone else to revive Huguenot memories in this country, was not made a member of the Committee.

A good deal of protesting activity had to be gone through by his successor before the only Huguenot Church left in America came to be recognized as it should.

The Rector's memoirs show the high value he set on honesty and straightforwardness. His love went to the loyal such as Pierre Lanoir, Eugene P. Megnin, Ulysse P. Darrigrand and their families. He did not like to be opposed. He appreciated honesty and industry, and the sterling qualities so often found among Alsatians.

After the year 1906, decline sets in. The Church records witness to it, although M. Wittmeyer was certainly in the fullness of his powers:

Year	Families	Baptized people	Baptisms	Marriages	Burials	Communi- cants	Sunday- Scholars
1901	165	428	12	14	12	182	
1902	159	415	9	15	16	194	
1903	155	410	9	10	14	177	
1904	161	416	10	8	16	184	
1905	165	418	4	13	19	173	
1906	167	415	8	16	25	194	102
1907	152	370	20	18	12	173	85
1908	150	370	20	18	12	173	85

THE CHURCH REVIVIFIED

Year	Families	Baptized people	Baptisms	Marriages	Burials	Communi- cants	Sunday- Scholars
1909	155	355	16	15	19	148	65
1910	145	360	14	5	20	149	70
1911	142	350	11	8	17	131	75
1912	132	325	12	11	21	131	70
1913	133	340	14	11	18	129	70
1914	125	310	13	11	19	126	75
1915	120	300	12	11	15	126*	80
1916	117	285	17	6	11	111*	75
1917	122	315	10	9	18	125	65
1919		300	3	6	12	105	52
1920		243	9	8	6	82	49

*Adjusted figures. The reports give 226 and 211.

What was the cause of that decline? The changes in the character of New York. Early in the Century, the French quarter begins to disintegrate. In the West side, it was due to the coming of the fur business, in the East side, to the coming of the silk industry. The homes where our people lived were wrecked to leave room for loft buildings. The French and the Swiss moved to Queens, to Brooklyn, and Jersey. The decrease is gradual as our figures show, although parish statistics are known to be slow when it comes to showing a decrease, as the pastor of a flock hates to mark off his sheep. Indeed, the sheep protest that, although they are now far away,

they will never forget the old church. This is more or less the story of all Manhattan parishes, until new ways to arouse interest are found. When prohibition came, the blow was hard on the French. Many of them were in the restaurant business, where a French meal without wine is nonsense. The French do not succeed in making things cheap, and they hate to do it. The cut rate luncheon is no place for them, and even selling the unhealthy concoctions which other races called wine during prohibition times, did not interest them, unless they had lost a sense of morality.

Blows fell on other industries of the French speaking population, watchmaking, for instance. French workingmen are not interested in the kind of automatic work demanded by modern machinery. To become a robot has ever been to them a kind of suicide. They like—or shall we say, they liked—to be proud of their work, and to look upon it as an achievement. The present industrial ways give them no happiness. This is largely why they ceased coming here. Of course, France is now mechanically organized (they say over there “americanized”) but after all, a Frenchman, if poor, is less unhappy in France than in America, and so our church misses the emigration which made it so strong in the days of M. Peiret, and the first part of M. Rou, and again in the nineteenth century. The quota regulations stopped French emigration officially and changing economic conditions concurred with them.

On Feb. 26, 1925, the Rector resigned on account of advanced age, and Professor John A. Maynard was elected as

his successor, the Rev. A. V. Wittmeyer being appointed Rector emeritus, the first in the history of this church, to which he had consecrated his life.

He left to his successors many problems.

M. Wittmeyer died on Nov. 12, 1926, and was buried from the church he had built. The Bishop of the Diocese, the Rector and the Rev. O. S. Newell officiated at the funeral.

The Huguenot Society of America passed the following Resolution in Committee on November 17th, 1926:

“Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God to take from us the soul of our brother, Alfred V. Wittmeyer:

Resolved that the Huguenot Society of America has been deprived of one of its distinguished members, of its founder, and a student of the history of the Huguenots and Walloons in the Province of New York.

His books, *Eglise Francoise a la Nouvelle Yorke*, and other publications, have become standard and valuable sources of information for history students.

It was not only as a presbyter of the Church Militant that our brother shone in the eyes of men, it was not only as a soldier of the Cross, but also as a citizen of France and of the United States, in whose behalf he bore, at various times, the arms of patriotic righteousness.

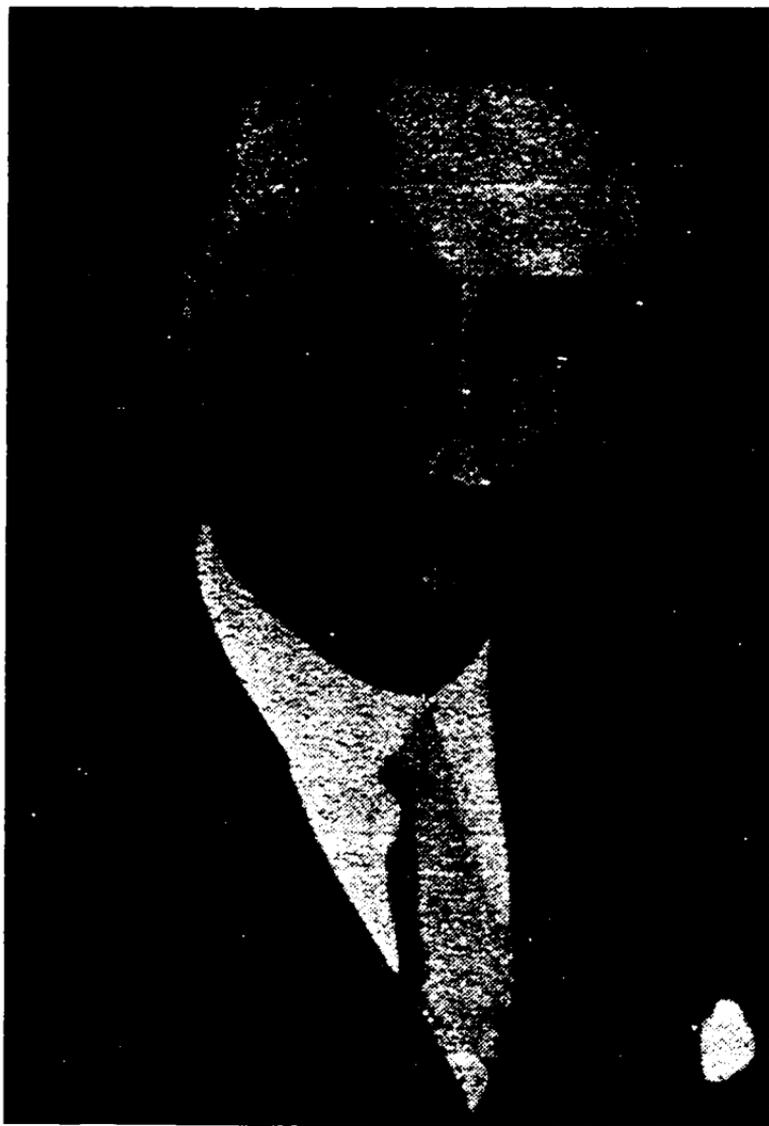
For many years, he was the devoted pastor of *Eglise du Saint-Esprit* in the City of New York, and in such capacity he acquired the respect and consideration of his parishioners and fellow citizens.

Resolved, that this memorial be enacted upon the records of the Society and that a copy of the same be transmitted to the Rector of Eglise du Saint-Espirit to be entered upon its parish register.

Committee

William Jay Schieffelin, President,
Cortland S. Van Rensselaer, Vice-President
Dr. William Prall, Vice-President
Margaret A. Jackson, Secretary

A tablet erected to him in the church building now occupied by the congregation witnesses in a few words to the life of one who lived first and foremost for this congregation, and had at least for a time the joy of seeing it as important as it ever was except in the period between 1688 and 1724.



The Rev. John Albert F. Maynard, Ph.D., sixth rector.

CHAPTER XV

ON THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW FUTURE.¹

DR. JOHN A. F. MAYNARD, Rector of the church since 1925, was born at Bergerac (Dordogne) France, on February 7, 1884. His parents moved to Paris when he was ten years old. He attended public school, and then the College Chaptal. He received the degree of bachelier es Sciences and then attended the Institut Colonial Agronomique and was graduated in 1903. He was then a member of the Methodist Church, 16 Rue Demours, Paris to definite Christian work and volunteered to serve as a teacher in the School at Porto-Novo, Dahomey. His two year contract being ended, he returned to France in 1905 and was admitted in the same year to the Maison d'Etudes for the training of the French Methodist Ministry at Neuilly. He attended that school for three years, taking additional work at the Sorbonne and at the Ecole des Langues Orientales vivantes, studying Hebrew and classical Arabic. For two years, he worked also for the MacAll Mission. In 1907, he received the degree of Bachelier en Philosophie. In 1908, he was sent to Le Havre, Seine-Inférieure, in charge of a church. At the same time,

¹ This sketch is made of extracts from the *Year Book and Parish Directory of the French Church du St. Esprit*, 1932, p. 47-51.

he was registered at the Faculty of Theology of Paris where he became Bachelier en Theologie in 1909, his thesis, published in Paris, being on *Les tendances apocalyptiques chez le prophète Ezekiel*.

At that time, it was felt that the British and Foreign Bible Society should undertake missionary work in the vast region in the hinterland of West Africa, where Islam was making rapid progress. Mr. Maynard seemed qualified for this task. He was approached on the subject, signed a contract and in 1909, went to Algiers and Morocco to learn the methods of the Society and to familiarize himself with colloquial Arabic. Early in 1910, he landed in Senegal and began a work which during four years, took him over more than ten African countries. In the course of these four years, he became acquainted with several African languages. He was the first Protestant missionary to visit Djenne and Timbuktu, and indeed, the first white man to visit some parts of Africa. In 1912, Mr. Maynard was received in the Church of England and was ordained deacon by Bishop Walmsley of Sierra Leone. At the end of 1912, coming from the North, he arrived unexpectedly at Sokoto, a district closed to mission work, and although well received by the British officials, was courteously expelled on orders from London. Mr. Maynard had formed a great plan to use Hausaland as the basis of a missionary work in Africa. Ill and discouraged, he returned to England, and being found unfit by medical advice, asked to be relieved at the end of his contract. He decided to come to Chicago, already a famous center for Semitic studies, in order to prepare himself for an-

other opportunity in Africa. Dr. Harper of the University of Chicago took interest in him and urged him to pay less attention to Arabic, but to specialize in Assyro-Babylonian languages and literatures.

While remaining a fellow at the University of Chicago, from 1914 to 1915, he resided at the Western Theological Seminary, lecturing in Hebrew, as assistant to his lifelong friend, S. A. B. Mercer. It was Dr. Mercer who preached the sermon at Mr. Maynard's ordination to the priesthood by Bishop Anderson in 1914.

At the outbreak of the World War, Mr. Maynard who had been three times rejected by the Conseil de Revision, presented himself at the Consulate in Chicago, and was again found unfit for military service. When America entered the War, he was rejected when he tried to enter the American army. He was still suffering from the effects of the West African climate.

In 1915, he came to New York as a fellow of the General Theological Seminary, a position which he held three years, being tutor in Hebrew, and at the same time, assistant minister, with the Church of the Transfiguration, then Christ Church, New Brighton, S. I., and the Church of the Holy Trinity in the Parish of Saint James. At the end of his fellowship, he continued at Holy Trinity where he spent four happy years in a large American parish with many activities. In 1919, Professor Luckenbill, having formed the project of a complete Akkadian Dictionary sponsored by John D.

Rockefeller, Jr., asked Dr. Maynard to be Secretary of this project. Dr. Maynard spent two years at this task in Chicago. At the beginning of his second year, his friend Dr Mercer, having been called to be Dean of the Divinity School at Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio, Dr. Maynard succeeded him and did at the same time the work of Secretary of the Akkadian Dictionary and of Associate Professor of Old Testament in the Western Theological Seminary. The Seminary itself closed temporarily, just as Dr. Maynard was asked to come to Bryn Mawr College to hold the chair of Professor of History of Religions and of Semitic Languages and Literature, made famous by his friend, G. A. Barton.

Three years of teaching at Bryn Mawr were years of active scientific and literary production. Dr. Maynard worked several months a year on the Akkadian Dictionary. He wrote several books and contributed a large number of articles to scientific magazines. He was the associate editor of the Society of Oriental Research, and of the Anglican Theological Review. He was the editor of the Oriental Research Series. He is a contributor to *La Bible du Centenaire*.

In 1925, Mr. A. V. Wittmeyer asked Dr. Maynard to preach at the Church. The task of rector soon offered to him was a difficult one. While he finished the third year of his contract at Bryn Mawr, Dr. Maynard took charge of the Church on week-ends. Part of his work was the financial arrangements of a lease of the Church property at the north-west corner of 27th Street and Fourth Avenue, which had been

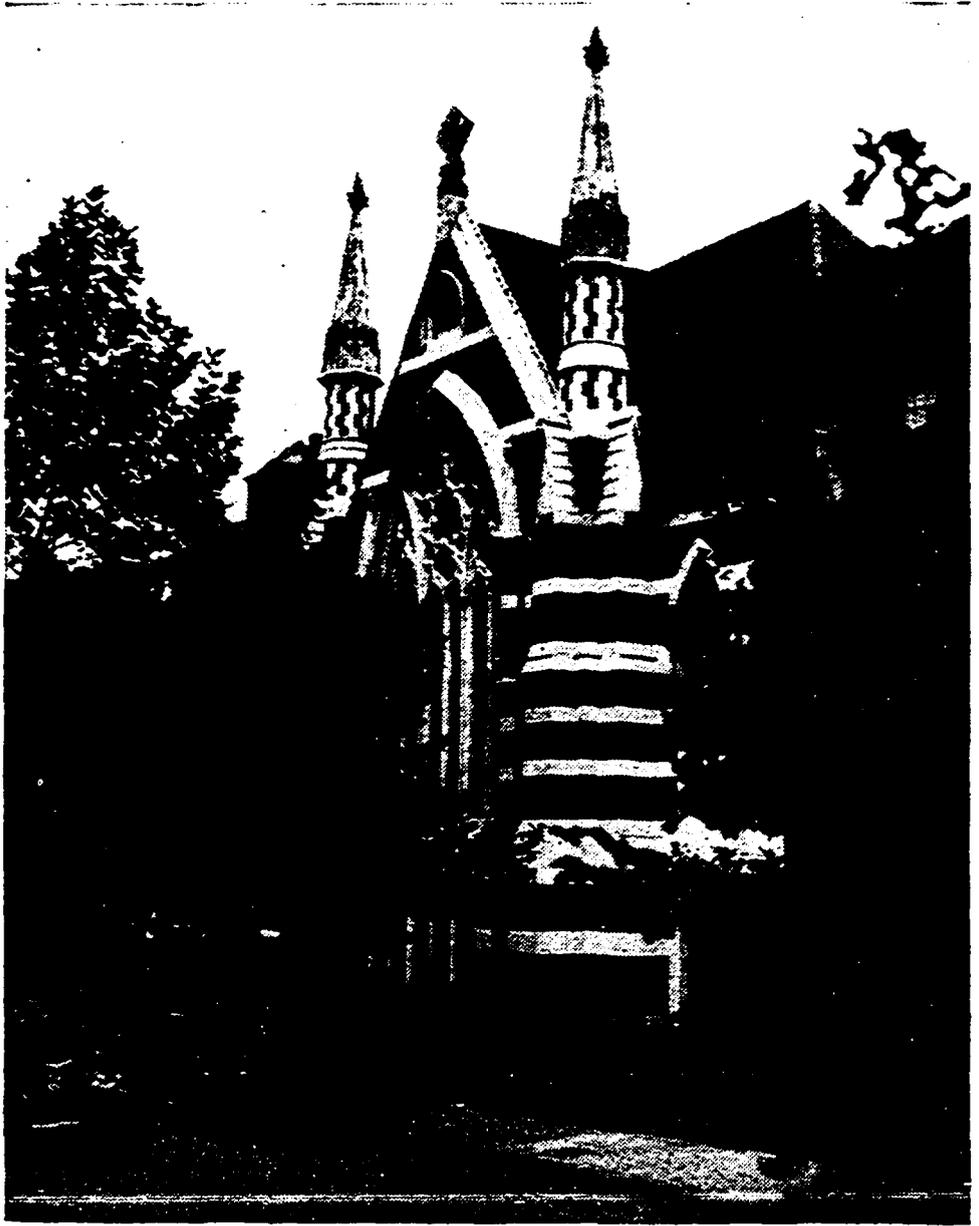
initiated by the Rev. A. V. Wittmeyer. The removal of the church was a necessary one. The congregation had fallen off to a handful. It was generally supposed that the church was wealthy. As a matter of fact, it would have become totally bankrupt if it had remained in its location, because its real estate holdings were unprofitable and there was a debt of \$100,000 on the church itself, and other debts.

A most profitable lease was finally signed on January, 1926. The congregation moved to the Auditorium of the French Institute and there was at once a noticeable increase of the attendance. But already in 1927, the signs of the coming depression began to be felt by such an acute observer as Mr. John E. Ludin, senior warden of the church. The building of the new church had to be postponed from month to month.

The rector undertook then to organize sentiment among the descendants of the Huguenots. Many of the descendants of the Old Huguenot Church du Saint-Esprit are leaders in American society. Real interest was aroused among them and plans for a building worthy of the past of their church were made and seemed possible.

Then came the great disappointment of October 1929!

The only policy was now the French policy of thrift. It has been followed by the rector and the Vestry. Instead of the ambitious plans made in 1929, more modest developments took place. A parish house and temporary oratory was found at 114 East 76th Street and opened in September, 1931. It



The present church building, 229 East 61st Street.

was used for three years. The present place of worship was occupied in 1934. Since then, the congregation has increased in spite of the departure of many new members.

The congregation has usually availed itself of the assistance of French candidates for the ministry holding fellowships at Union Theological Seminary. These young men are usually outstanding. Dr. Pierre Jaccard, now professor of New Testament at Neuchatel, Dr. Philippe Menoud, now professor of New Testament at Lausanne, Jean Bourguet, now pastor at Algiers, Alfred Wohlfahrt, now vicar at Metz, Samuel Terrien, temporarily professor at Wooster College, Ohio, Henri Sabatier, now vicar at Oran, Algeria and at present G. Bordreuil of Strasbourg. Dr. J. Brun, while professor at Hunter College, ably assisted here for several years, and is now professor at Swarthmore College, and minister of the French Church at Philadelphia. Now Mr. E. Beljean is our zealous evangelist.

When Dr. Maynard arrived, a long established custom was that the church closed for about ten weeks in summer. Several years ago, we gave up this custom and we firmly hope that it will never be reestablished. A church still exists where two or three meet together in the name of God.

The last years have seen real progress. The attendance at Sunday services has grown. Work among the young people has been reorganized, although changing conditions necessitated changes of name and even of policy. First called Club Huguenot, then club Franco-Suisse, and now La Lyre under

the able direction of Madame Labhardt, this group maintains its existence joyfully. There is much encouragement in the Saturday School of French. A Société des Dames was organized. The vestry are the Rector's best friends, and help solve the problems of the Church with great understanding, so that Vestry meetings are most pleasant to all.

The Huguenot Publication Society, a non-profit organization of the church published in 1932 a French translation of the service of the 1928 Revised Common Prayer Book. It was the work of the rector and printed in France for the sake of economy. Distressing misprints crept in.

Were it not for the fact that there is today a very large French speaking diocese of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Haiti with 18,289 baptized persons, and that thousands of copies of the French Prayer Book are required there, the Huguenot Publication Society would long ago have undertaken to publish the new French Prayer Book, translated from the original sources by the rector.

We have excellent music in the church and specialize in rendering ancient Huguenot melodies and characteristically French and Swiss musical compositions.

Our main difficulty is due to the fact that the French speaking population is spread all over the city and outside. We have more than 600 parishioners. We reach more people through *Le Messager Evangélique* which is published six times a year (900 copies). The influence of this church is far great-

er than its membership would seem to indicate. It holds the place it deserves in the Federation of Huguenot Societies, Mr. Harrison Deyo being its registrar and Dr. Maynard a member of the Committee. Through the press, the sermons of the rector are often quoted, testifying to the truth of the Bible and the value of common honesty. Frequently we have at our services descendants of the Huguenot whose knowledge of our language is scanty but who like to attend once in their life in a church which they rightly look upon as a sanctuary where the light of remembrance burns mystically. They like to visit our Huguenot Museum. For their use, we hope to have very soon a descriptive catalogue of this modest enterprise, begun in faith a few years ago.

Several French and neighborhood organizations avail themselves of our building; more especially, we mention: l'Harmonie and the Cercle Henry IV, a fencing club. Our building is the headquarters of the Federation of Huguenot Societies in America and of the Society of the Descendants of the New Paltz Patentees. The important place this church holds again as a living as well as an historical force was shown quite recently (April 24, 1938) when a service sponsored by the Huguenot Society of America, on the occasion of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the first church on Marketfield Street, filled the present church building so that hundreds were turned away. The presence, on this occasion, of the French Ambassador Count René Doynel de

Saint-Quentin, was at least a demonstration of the fact that, instead of remembering over much the date of 1685, we should underline others: 1598 (the Edict of Nantes), 1787 (the Edict of Toleration) and 1789, when Liberty came out of the House of Bondage.

CHAPTER XVI

A VISION OF TOMORROW

THREE centuries and more, this is a long past in any country, especially here.

It was, as we say, an uneven past, often indeed, uneventful.

What of tomorrow?

To me it spells testimony, as a duty, as a privilege, as a joy, as an opportunity.

Somehow, I cannot bring myself to think of a church as it is too often done in America only as a building. A church is more than that, it is a flame, "un flambeau", as M. Buvelot, the faithful elder, said.

Of course, we need a building of our own. It has been an unpleasant feeling for many years to be without one. We shall never express ourselves unless we can fashion, from within, the shell we are in.

We want to serve our race. We have been for centuries above a narrow nationalism, but we know that blood is thicker than water, and soul relationship stronger than blood itself. We are a racial group in the Spirit. We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, the Huguenots of France, of Belgium, of the Netherlands, of Switzerland, of the Rhine, of the West Indies, of the Waldensian valleys. As we meditate upon

our history, we see ourselves as a vine with many roots reaching all over these countries in love, more especially perhaps, Amsterdam, Geneva, Lausanne, and of course, La Rochelle, and all these lowlands of Saintonge from which came most of our people at our time of glory, and the Pays de Montbéliard from which came the last generations.

But, if the vine has roots across the Ocean, it is resting and growing on American soil. There it scattered many fruits, thousands upon thousands of the descendants of this congregation.

We have a tenacious memory, as behooves the descendants of French tillers of the ground, we want to say very loud that we are grateful to two great sisters, between whom we are very small indeed, the first is the Collegiate Church of New York which fostered us for many years as a nursling, the second is Trinity Church, once our younger sister, but now a mighty princess, and one who was very good to us, a real godmother.

But the past is not all. If *noblesse oblige*, it obligates to fealty. And we want to serve, not only our spiritual race, in the world of our fellowmen and neighbors. We must remain, if there is any justice in the world and in human society, primarily a French language organization, but we should be enabled to serve also our immediate neighborhood.

The Temple must remain a sanctuary of remembrance on its altar, the Open Bible, with its clear and pure message coming from God, and explained only in truth by His Holy

Spirit. The Bible is our Holy Grail, radiant with the love of God spoken.

We believe in divine services and in service to Man, but always through the Word of an infinite God, whose power is absolutely unlimited. Thus the Word quickens the bread of eternal life, the wine of intoxicating love, the water of purifying mercy.

We believe in the religion of Jesus Christ, which draws the unchurched to a Gospel of wonderfulness. We believe in an ever-spreading Holy Spirit, force, light, love, life. And we hope that this Church may thus be more and more a place where people shall come to take God into their hearts.

From God we received much in the past. We may not limit Him today nor plan boundaries to His grace.

The day must come when we must serve our neighborhood more. In the meantime, we shall trust in Him who brought here the pilgrims of our past, and with them we shall repeat the motto of our congregation: *Qui transtulit sustinet*. May He who transplanted us give sustenance in the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER XVII

OUR ANCESTRY

The Succession of Ministers of the French Church du Saint Esprit.

I

DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

1628-1692

French services were held by the ministers of the Dutch Church, the first on record being Jonas Michel (Michaelius) in 1628. The last minister on that line was Pierre Daillé, who was in charge of the French congregation in the Dutch Church from 1682 to 1692.

II

FRENCH REFORMED CHURCH

1688-1803

(The names of the pastors are in capitals)

1. PIERRE PEIRET1688-1704
PIERRE DAILLE (*extra muros*)1692-1696
2. JACQUES LABORIE1704-1706
David de Bonrepos1706-1710

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3.	LOUIS ROU	1710-1750
	Jean Joseph Bruneau de Moulinars	1718-1726
4.	JEAN CARLE	1754-1764
	Jean Pierre Tetard	1764-1766
	Abraham Keteltas	1766-1770
	Jacques Adam de Martel	1770-1771
	Abraham Keteltas	1771-1776
	J. Louis Duby	1795-1796
5.	PIERRE ANTOINE SAMUEL ALBERT	1797-1803

III

The ministry of the Parish of St. Esprit since its Union with
the Diocese of New York in 1803:

1.	PIERRE ANTOINE SAMUEL ALBERT	1803-1806
	Edmund D. Barry	1803-1808
2.	HENRI PENEVEYRE, D. D.	1815-1825
3.	ANTOINE FRANCOIS VERREN, D. D.	1828-1874
4.	LEON PONS	1874-1879
5.	ALFRED V. WITTMAYER	1879-1925
	Oliver Shaw Newell	1896-1901
	Ernest de Beaumont	1906-1907
	Léon P. Vauthier	1916
6.	JOHN ALBERT F. MAYNARD, Ph.D., Th.D., D.D.	1925-
	(Marcel Brun, Th.D.)	1929-1934)

IV

This church unites several cultural, historical and ecclesiastical trends. The following tables describe them:

I. THE FRENCH LINEAGE

This list of ministers illustrates the racial French feature of the Church through its ministry.

Michel (Michaelius)	1628
(Cipierre) (Zyperus)	1659
Daillé, P.	1683
Vanderbosch, L. (Dubois)	1687
de Bonrepos, D.	1687
Peiret, P.	1688
Laborie, J.	1699
Rou, L.	1710
de Moulinars, J. J. B.	1718
Carle, J.	1754
Tetard, J. P.	1764
Verren, A. F.	1828 ¹
Wittmeyer, A. V.	1879
Maynard, J. A. F.	1925

¹ No assistant ministers entered here after this date.

II. THE DUTCH LINEAGE

(Cf. E. T. Corwin, *A Manual of the Reformed Church in America*, third edition, p. 657, and *Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York*, Vol. VI., p. 4405-4406. This list

illustrates vital ecclesiastical contacts with the Dutch Reformed Church).

Michaelius, J.	1628
Bogardus, E.	1633
Megapolensis, J.	1642
Drisius, S.	1652
Carpentier, Casp.	1657
Zyperus, M.	1659
<i>End of West India Company Rule</i>	
Daillé, P.	1683
Bondet, J.	1686
Vanderbosch, L.	1687
de Bonrepos, D.	1687
Peiret, P.	1688
Laborie, J.	1699
Rou, L.	1710
Moulinars, J. J.	1718
Mayor, J. L.	1752
Carle, J.	1754
Keteltas, A.	1771

III. THE SWISS LINEAGE

This list illustrates educational contacts with Switzerland, and mostly with Geneva.

Laborie, J.	1704
Carle, J.	1754

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Tetard, J. P.	1764
Daller, J.	1765
Duby, J. L.	1795
Albert, P. A. S.	1797
Péneveyre, H.	1816
Verren, A. F.	1828

IV. THE ANGLICAN (OR PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL) LINEAGE

(The dates are those of ordination, except for J. Laborie and J. A. de Martel, when they refer to their connection with the congregation, and in the case of Mr. Pons with his reception from another communion).

Daillé, P.	1682
(Laborie, J.)	(1704)
de Martel, J. A.	(1770)
Albert, P. A. S.	1803
Péneveyre, H.	1816
Verren, A. F.	1828
Pons, L.	(1874)
Wittmeyer, A. V.	1879
Maynard, J. A. F.	1912

APPENDIX

In addition to the documents already published by the Huguenot Society of America, there are many that should be published.

The following is a translation of a Funeral Tariff, issued in October 1731:

As the regulation made long ago in consistory concerning the fees to be paid to the Church for each funeral, like the custom of the Dutch has been expressed only orally, it has been thought proper, in order to determine and confirm things to set it in writing in the following manner, namely that the church will be paid:

For each person buried in the church itself, ¹	
the sum of	3 pounds
For an adult, in the cemetery	6 sh.
For a child	3 sh.
For the great sheet	6 sh.
For the little sheet	3 sh.
For the bell each time, not less than 6 shillings,	
half of it going to the church	3 sh.
For each person buried in Mr. Pintard's vault	3 sh.

¹ Certain persons were buried in the aisle in the Dutch Churches. M. Rou and M. Albert were so interred. The custom had been condemned by the National Synod of Castres (1626). (P. de Felice *Les Protestants d'autrefois. Vie intérieure des églises* 1897, p. 269).

APPENDIX

Note that concerning what is paid for the bell, there is nothing set and regular, the English pay sometimes as much as 18 shillings, sometimes only 12, and the French sometimes three, but whatever it be, half goes to the church.²

² The other half went to the sexton or bell ringer.

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