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A GREAT YEAR OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING IN NEW YORK CITY.

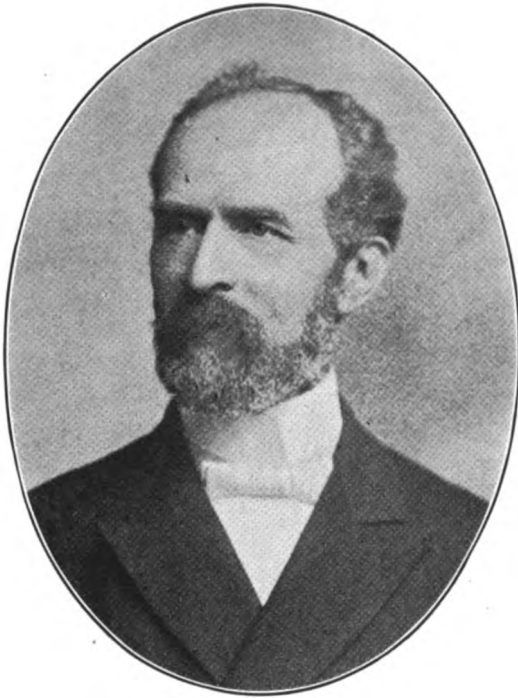
BY WILLIAM T. DEMAREST.*

New York Presbyterians are justly proud of the record in church building which they have made in a twelvemonth ending November 1st, 1906. Two and a half million dollars have been put into new sites and buildings, and seven fine structures, scattered over the city from Madison Square on the south to West Farms on the north, are tangible evidence of Presbyterian progress.

It goes without saying that the most notable of these new edifices, architecturally and artistically, is the Madison Square Church, the pulpit of which Dr. Parkhurst occupied for the first time on the third Sunday in October, 1906. Of the total spent for land and buildings by the seven churches, Dr. Parkhurst's church is responsible for nearly half, for a conservative estimate gives the cost of the new site and the magnificent church as \$1,200,000. I say estimate, because definite figures are unattainable. Few know them and none will tell.

This much is certain. The insurance company that wanted the old church property in order to extend its great office building was willing to do almost anything to secure it. It was in the days when such corporations were not watching expenditures as closely as now. So when Dr. Parkhurst and

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THE REV. JOHN PEACOCK, D. D.

JOHN PEACOCK :

1844-1906

BY HARRY PRINGLE FORD.

John Peacock, son of Robert and Ann (Surgenor) Peacock, was born in Ballymena, County Antrim, Ireland, on the 30th day of December, 1844. His father's paternal ancestors were English. His paternal grandmother belonged to the Steed family, which came to Ireland with the Prince of Orange, in 1688, two years before the battle of the Boyne. His maternal ancestors were Scotch and Scotch-Irish.

He came with his parents to this country in 1846, and made Philadelphia his home from that time until his death. He was a student for a time at the Central High School, but was fitted for college by Henry D. Gregory and his son, Professor Caspar Rene Gregory, of Germany. In 1865 he entered Princeton College as a Sophomore, and was graduated three years later, ranking third in his class. He was graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1871. In 1870 he was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and was ordained the following year by the Presbytery of Philadelphia North. He received and accepted a call from the Presbyterian Church of Holmesburg and served that field from April, 1871, to October, 1895. In June, 1898, he was installed pastor over the Macalester Memorial Presbyterian Church, Torresdale, and remained in that charge until his death.

On the 7th of May, 1874, he was married to Miss Annie J. Craig, and five children were born to them, two of whom survive him—Mary Craig and James Craig Peacock.

During his college days he was the President of Clio Hall, Princeton, and was Secretary of his class at the Seminary. After entering the ministry he filled many positions of importance. He was a member of the Advisory Board of the Presbyterian Home for Aged Couples and Aged Men at Bala; was a Past Grand Worthy Patriarch of the Sons of Temperance, of which order he was a devoted member, being an uncom-

promising foe to the liquor traffic; was an honorary member of the Philadelphia W. C. T. U.; and since 1877, had filled the dual office of Secretary and Treasurer of the United States Hay Fever Association.

From April, 1891, to June, 1896, he was the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Philadelphia North. He resigned this position because of his removal to the Presbytery of Philadelphia.

He was a member of the General Assemblies of 1877, 1890, 1893 and 1894. He was also elected a commissioner to the Assembly of 1904, but was unable to attend because of illness.

In the Assembly of 1893, he was the Secretary of the Judicial Commission which conducted the trial of Professor Charles A. Briggs; and he was also Secretary of the Commission which, in the following year, conducted the trial of Professor Henry Preserved Smith.

In 1898 he united with the Presbyterian Historical Society and became a member of its Executive Council. When the time seemed to have come at which it was practicable to undertake the publication of a periodical, Dr. Peacock was most interested in the project, and agreed to attend to much of the details in the compilation of materials and in putting them through the press, in order that Dr. McCook might see his way clear to assume the general editorship. When Dr. Benson became editor, he continued to serve on the Editorial Committee and gave ready help in reading the proofs. He also undertook the laborious task of preparing the indexes of the first and second volumes of the JOURNAL.

The honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Washington College, Tennessee, in 1892.

Dr. Peacock was for many years a sufferer from hay fever, from which he found temporary relief by spending several weeks annually in the White Mountains. He was seriously ill during much of the last three years of his life. Finally, in May, 1906, he was taken to the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, the hope being that a surgical operation would prove beneficial; it was found, however, that it could not be performed on account of his weakened condition. He died in the

hospital on the 18th of June, 1906, and was buried in South Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia.

Dr. Peacock's bent of mind turned him with continued appreciation toward the early Puritan divines, and they, in turn, influenced his methods both of thought and expression. In theology he was altogether conservative. He accepted for himself the Westminster Standards, and on all occasions was ready to lift up his voice in earnest opposition to any proposal to revise them. The Calvinistic system satisfied his mind and his heart, and he believed that it must be accepted in its integrity. In matters of Scriptural criticism, also, he belonged in the most conservative camp, and an apposite text of Scripture formed his most characteristic utterance.

The same bent of mind in Dr. Peacock which demanded an orderly and consistent system of doctrine, made him a hearty advocate of ecclesiastical law and order. He was a careful student of the governmental Standards of the Church, and he believed in their strict application. For ecclesiastical law he had marked taste, and he had the lawyer's love of a good precedent.

The following appreciation of Dr. Peacock's personality is taken from a sketch of his life by Neville B. Craig, printed in the *Presbyterian* for July 11th, 1906:

"His sunny temperament, his uniform courtesy, his readiness to forgive an injury, his patience in affliction, his deep sympathy for the sorrows of others, and his unselfish efforts to make the little world around him better and happier, made him loved by the people of every church and creed.

"Though physically frail and delicate, Dr Peacock had the courage of a lion in defending the right. His rare intellectual gifts were combined with an unusual warmth of heart, and the marked spirituality of his whole life did not impair his capacity for sympathizing with all the faults and failings of humanity. Few men have been more severely tried in the fiery furnace of affliction than he, yet through all, his uncomplaining fortitude was an inspiration to those about him.

"He never ceased to speak of the goodness of God while

power of speech remained. A former neighbor and member of a different denomination, thus writes of him :

“ ‘Entirely devoid of selfishness, his life’s work was conducted with but one end in view, that of benefiting others and guiding them in the pathway of right. More success came to him in his efforts than comes to most men, and it is gratifying to realize that such success was entirely due to his nobleness of character and the sublime courage with which he sustained his convictions.’ ”