

# St. Peters' Episcopal Church Impresses Betty Boyd With Unity of Its Christian Work

IN the lifetime of any community, there always are public men, pastors, philanthropists, publicists, who, through their personality, become public characters.

Such was the case with Rev. Dr. Edward Fairfax Berkley, rector of St. George's Episcopal Church. He was beloved by all, and when, after 14 year's residence in the community, he was considering a removal to another diocese, his friends arose, refused to accept his decision, and insisted that, like Moses of old, he gather his flock about him and fare forth to the founding of another parish.

So Dr. Berkley rented an unpretentious little hall at the northeast corner of Olive street and Jefferson avenue, provided it with seats, organ and makeshift pulpit, and on Sunday, June 23, 1872, held there, the first service of what is now St. Peter's congregation.

The canonical requirements having been complied with, a parish was organized under the protection of St. Peter, the new congregation having taken over the mission of that name, established some years before at Compton avenue and Olive street, by Rev. Montgomery Schuyler, D. D., rector of Christ Church Cathedral.

Charles Thaw, Samuel H. Richardson, Jerraine F. Jones, Martin Collins, Richard H. Spencer, William P. Young, Charles Clark, W. H. Cheatham, J. C. Edgar, Hugh R. Hildreth, Henry Smith and Edward J. Thomas were the first vestrymen.

The next thing was to find a site for a permanent location, so after some deliberation, the northwest corner of Grand avenue and Olive street, 75 feet front, finally was bought for \$11,250. At the rear of this lot a chapel was built.

## Lot Is Turned Back.

BUT soon after work was commenced there fell upon the country one of those great panics that so often bring to naught the noblest efforts of men, and the new parish went under the financial yoke in the beginning of its career. Burdened by an unbearable debt, it was determined to reduce the indebtedness, so part of the lot was turned back to its original owner for \$6,250.

That made it impossible to carry out the original plans of the vestrymen, and with the rapid growth of the parish it was deemed expedient soon after to seek larger quarters, so the lot where the church now stands, at Spring and Lindell avenues, was obtained. A larger edifice was erected, in which the first service was held on the fourth Sunday of Advent, Christmas Eve of 1893.

Thus came into being St. Peter's Episcopal Church, through whose rough stone portals I passed yesterday morning.

The fame of this splendid church had previously reached me through many channels. I had heard that it was the Trinity of St. Louis, one of the few churches in the city possessing an endowment fund, and on the wall just inside the nave I found a tablet commemorating that fact. Upon it I read: "To the glory of God and in grateful memory of Ezra Hounsfield Linley, 1841-1911; for many years a communicant of the parish and founder of the endowment fund."

St. Peter's boasts of an exquisitely carved pulpit of English oak, that is undoubtedly one of the finest bits of wood carving any of us will be fortunate enough to see. It also is the gift of Mr. Linley.

## Altar Also a Gift.

NOTICED that all the articles used in the service were the gift of devoted parishioners. The altar, whose front is chastely plain save for the "Holy, Holy, Holy," carved on the front of the retable, has on one of its sides an inscription telling that it was presented by Mrs. George A. Hawes in memory of her husband.

The altar cross recalls to memory Mary Alice, Mattie and Clarence Crabbe Collins; the chancel rail, of oak, supported by brass standards representing grape vines, is in memory of Theodore Betts, the gift of his wife.

The chancel chairs bear another simple inscription: "In memoriam William C. Day"; the altar service book calls to memory Mrs. John J. Mitchell, and was presented by J. J. Mitchell Fairbanks. The credence table came from Miss Sue Gordon; the processional cross is in memory of Herbert Thayer Aldrich, presented by Charles Aldrich, and the altar vases, which are of polished brass, the gift of Mrs. A. B. Gregory, are inscribed: "In memory of Rev. John Coleman."

These vases were yesterday crowned with a glory of yellow and white chrysanthemums, sent by Mrs. Hudson E. Bridge. Even the two hymnal tablets were gifts, for they are inscribed: "In memoriam Maude Tennant, 1856-1886," and "In memoriam Louise Tennant Miller, 1893." They were the gifts jointly of Mrs. John H. Tennant and Mrs. George B. Miller.

In a niche to the east of the chancel is the baptistry, erected by Mr. and Mrs. Hudson E. Bridge as a memorial to their two children, Helen and Hudson E., who died in 1893. The font is an exquisite copy of the celebrated Angel Font of Thorvaldsen in the Copenhagen Cathedral.

It represents a kneeling angel holding in its hand a scalloped shell. The wings are folded as if at rest. The head is one of exquisite loveliness, of purity and saintliness, and is surmounted with a delicately carved wreath of flowers. The angel stands upon a pedestal of mottled marble, ornamented at the corners with pillars, with here and there a Greek cross. In front is a brass standard, supporting an oaken rail.

### **Only Memorial Pew in City.**

**I** SAT down to enjoy all these memorials at my leisure; imagine my astonishment on glancing at the name-plate of the pew I was sitting in to see thereon the name "Ezra H. Linley Memorial Pew." This pew is, so far as my researches in St. Louis extend, the only memorial pew in the city, although, I am told, the custom is quite prevalent in the old countries of Europe.

I met an obliging parishioner, who told me that St. Peter's has probably the largest fixed income of any church in the city. Last year the gross income was approximately \$60,000, and it is the proud boast of its rector that "nowhere in the United States is there a vestry composed of better men or finer Christians."

But St. Peter's Church does not spend all of its wealth on itself. She scatters it broadcast, with only the one idea, "Where will it do the most good?" The poor, the sick, the halt, all draw on its bounty, and almost a quarter of that generous income is lavished with open hand upon Epiphany Mission, at Boyle and Gibson avenues.

I was anxious to hear the music, for I was told that the pastor was himself a musician of rare ability, and before his coming to St. Louis had refused the directorate of music in three New York churches. So I reasoned he certainly would have a satisfying choir.

And he did. Mr. Galloway's prelude, Guilman's "Song Without Words," died out slowly, lingeringly, and the

singing began. It was artistic, devotional, satisfying. And right in with the choir boomed the splendid, trained voice of the pastor. What I appreciated most, though, was the reverent, serious manner with which the congregation uttered the responses.

No parrot muttering here, but clear, plainly enunciated answers to the supplication of the young assistant, and, rising loud and distinct above the others, I heard the earnest, resonant voice of the rector pouring out his pleadings before the Throne of Grace. It was inspiring.

### **Sermon of Pastor.**

**R**EV. ZEBARNEY B. THORNE PHILLIPS, rector of St. Peter's preached his sermon from the eighth chapter, eleventh verse of the Gospel of St. John. He said, in part:

"The lesson taught us through this woman is one of the most tender things in the life of Jesus Christ, and one of the most beautiful in Holy Writ. It is a story which appeals alike to the old and the young of all ages—for it teaches the power and the necessity of forgiving sins."

With dramatic power and intensity seldom seen in the pulpit orator, Mr. Phillips pictured Jesus in the midst of the scribes and Pharisees, teaching them of his mission. To direct Christ's attention from themselves they brought in this woman, a creature of the world, to use as a scapegoat, drawing a comparison that people of today have a habit of drawing, calling attention to someone else's sin in order that they themselves may be shielded, and their action drew from the Savior the words: "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone."

Continuing, Mr. Phillips pronounced it "an easy thing to imprint the kiss of forgiveness upon the cheek, but the act should be accompanied by the admonishing advice, 'Go, and henceforth sin no more.'"

"There is only one way to go, the way of Jesus Christ. Follow this, go with him, into the highways and the byways, hating the sin, but loving the sinner."