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THE NEW ENGLAND MAGAZINE.

NEW SERIES.

JUNE, 1893.

VOL. VIII. No. 4.

THE BOSTON TEA PARTY.¹

By Francis E. Abbot.



O perpetuate the memory of the men, who, in the military, naval, and civil service of the Colonies and of the Continental Congress, by their acts or counsel achieved the independence of the country, and to further the proper celebration of the anniversaries of the birthday of Washington and of prominent events connected with the War of the Revolution; to collect and secure for preservation the rolls, records, and other documents relating to that period; to inspire the members of the Society with the patriotic spirit of their forefathers; and to promote the feeling of friendship among them,—”

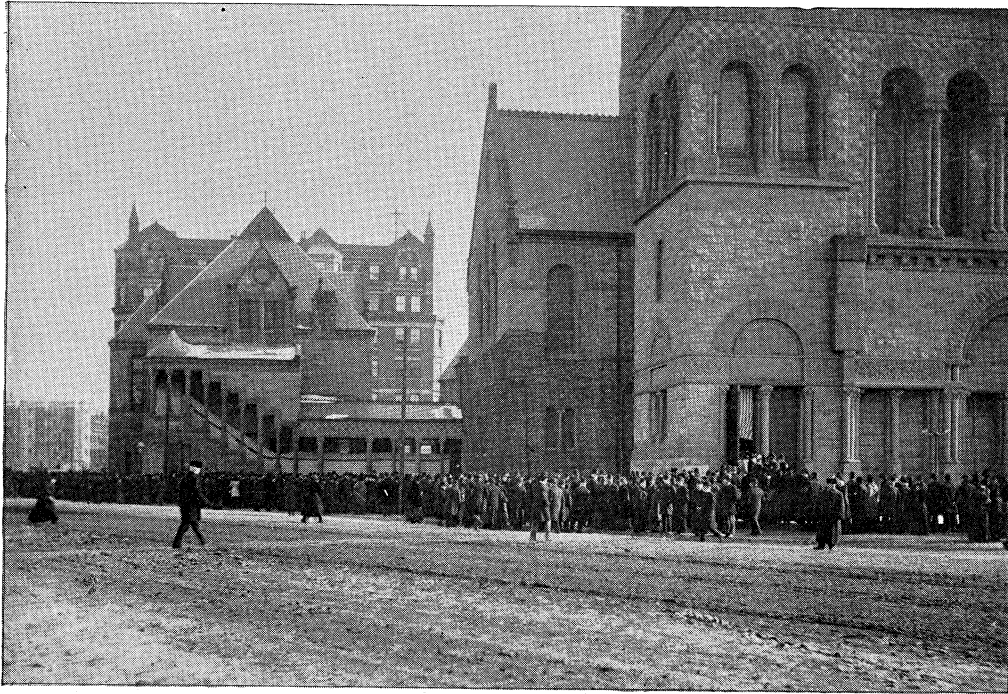
such are the objects for which the Society of the Sons of the Revolution, as declared in their Constitution, has been instituted.

It is in fulfilment of these objects that we are now assembled in this ancient and venerable house of worship, dear to some of us by the most sacred memories of childhood, dear to all of us as one of the few surviving monuments of revolutionary Boston,—so dear, we trust, to the greater Boston of to-day that no sacrilegious hand shall ever, for any purpose whatsoever, be laid upon these inviolable walls. Here, in this most fitting place, we have come together to honor the memory of one whom to remember at all is to be touched with the spirit of worship. In the darkest days of our terrible civil war, there was not a patriotic heart

¹ Oration before the Massachusetts Society of Sons of the Revolution, in King's Chapel, Boston, February 22, 1893.

in all the land that did not recognize in Abraham Lincoln a gift of God in the hour of need; and no less, in the still darker days of “the times that tried men's souls,” our forefathers recognized, with a faith that puts ours to shame, a gift of God in George Washington. This reverent recognition, in the course of human events, of an omnipresent guiding Wisdom above the wisdom of man, is warranted not only by the ancient traditions and teachings of the church, but also by the most advanced modern development of science and philosophy; for Evolution is a meaningless word, if it mean not the triumph of a Divine Purpose in the constant victory of good over evil by natural means—the irresistible and unswerving march of all events, in the history of nature and of man alike, to the fulfilment of a sleepless Divine Aim. Not, therefore, without a special fitness is it, that we have met together within these walls, to hold our first annual service of gratitude for the transcendent gift of a Washington in the birth-struggle of our national independence.

There is a special fitness, moreover, and no incongruity at all, in the fact that the theme selected and assigned to me by you for this occasion is not the personal or even public career of Washington himself, but rather the “Boston Tea Party,”—in at least one important as-



"The desolate throng without the portal of solemn Trinity."

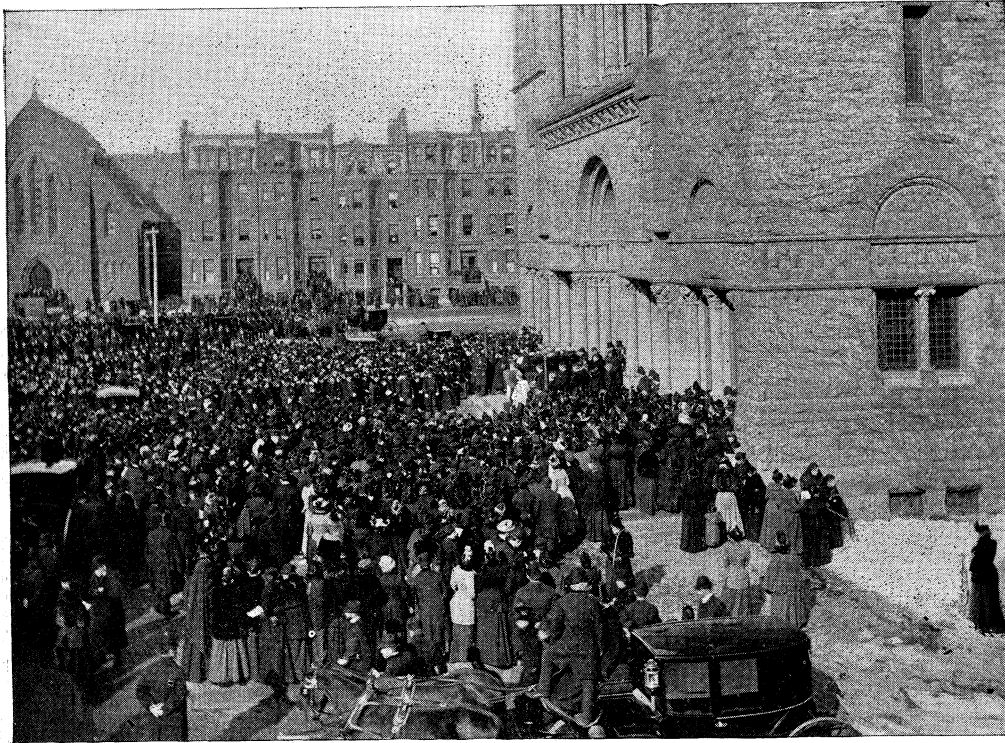
THE FUNERAL OF PHILLIPS BROOKS.

[January 26, 1893.]

By Katharine Lee Bates.

I.

WHITE lies the winter on the weary land,
Winter of many a loss and many a grief;
Yet must this burial day be counted chief
Of sorrows and most sore to understand;
For God hath laid the lightning of His hand
On His own signal tower, for all too brief
A date outsoaring mists of unbelief
To drink the living blue, a beacon grand.
But whilst the desolate throng without the portal
Of solemn Trinity in silence waits,
As listening for the beat of passing wing,
To view that clay which harbored an immortal,
Down the bleak air a tender breath of spring
Steals like a waft from Heaven's glad-opening gates.



"Thousands wait beneath an ampler Temple-Arch."

II.

Within the beauteous walls again too strait
 For the wistful flocks who mourn their shepherd gone, —
 Since here all creeds one shining garment don,
 One seamless robe, — our heavy spirits wait
 On the old Hebraic anthem passionate
 And fall of hallowed words that bear upon
 Their cadences strange consolation won
 From centuries of faith reverberate.
 But oh, the empty pulpit eloquent
 Of death, the sable pulpit over all !
 Yet even here is soul with flesh at strife ;
 For wise and tender was the hand that lent
 A glowing wreath to that funeral pall, —
 Against the gloom the exultant flush of life.



"Thy sons, hushed Harvard, gather nigh."

III.

"For all the saints who from their labors rest : " —
White gleam the lilies on the lifted bier,
As reverently the youthful bearers rear
Their sad, beloved burden, pacing west,
Whilst all that host, as from a single breast,
One voice of praise outringing sweet and clear,
Peals the triumphal chant he loved to hear :
"Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest."
Ah, turn and watch the pageantry of woe
Out through the darkened door. The glory-hymn
Wavers a space, but swells again, for lo !
The dismal pomp of death, the mourners slow
And shrouded casket on the vision dim,
That gleam of Easter lilies dazzles so.



"By his open grave amid the snows."

IV.

The train wends outward, where new thousands wait
 Beneath an ampler temple-arch of sky,
 To speed with murmurous prayer and pæan high
 The royal progress of that sombre state ;
 On through the ways where gazers gratulate,
 And where thy sons, hushed Harvard, gather nigh,
 To glean a blessing from the passing by ;
 And so to Auburn's unrestoring gate.
 Is this thy victory, Death? Not thine, not thine,
 Howe'er to grief we grant her natural throes.
 One prophesied of life ; we asked a sign,
 So little mortals know for what they pray,
 And by his open grave amid the snows
 A chastened nation keeps her Easter day.