

Let us pass in brief review some of the alterations and improvements of intervening years. The history of the past, so far as externals are concerned, is one of continual change. And first, as regards the structure of our churches, the style of ecclesiastical architecture has been constantly varying. Again in nothing has there been a greater change than in the interior arrangements of the churches. Seventy years ago in large churches with galleries there was a recessed chancel with an imposing altar, in front of which was a large structure consisting of the pulpit, reading desk, and Clerk's desk.

In St. Paul's Chapel, in New York, may still be seen the immense pulpit out in the nave, overshadowed by its heavy sounding board. The clerk's desk however, has long since disappeared, and the present reading desk easily accessible, and open on all sides, is all that remains of that cumbrous enclosure, with great brass hinges and handles, in which the officiating clergyman used formerly to be shut up. In those days they had enormous cushions, as well upon the altar, as upon the pulpit, and reading desk, heavy with bullion and heavy with huge tassels, inviting the minister to luxurious repose. What a wonderful sight it was: It seemed to say that a sermon is the highest, the most exalted, and the best of all Gospel privileges; that prayers and services are good in their way, but of secondary importance, but sacraments hardly worth considering. After several intermediate changes we come some twenty years ago—to deep chancels with stalls on either side facing each other for the clergy, and for the surpliced choirs, foreseen long before their actual appearance.

Until the deep chancels were introduced, the clergyman in reading the service was always required to face the people. They took it as an affront if he looked anywhere but towards them. They seemed to consider if he turned towards the Lord's Table that he did so through disrespect for them. At length this idle notion was given up; the great reading desk was removed, the clergyman took his proper place in the chancel, and said the prayers at the faldstool as now.

Again, not long ago, the cross was all but unknown among us as a symbol of our faith, and an ornament of our holy places. It was left to the Romanists, by our permission they enjoyed a monopoly of it, as is still the case with other useful and excellent things. I can remember the day when a cross on an Episcopal Church was hardly to be seen. The first that I ever saw was on the Church of the Ascension in this city. I beheld it, and wondered, and rejoiced secretly, as not quite sure whether it was right or wrong. Next as to the manner of performing divine service. There was a time when no music was tolerated except the singing of a psalm, or hymn in metre. Chanting was unknown, and when first introduced was denounced as a Popish custom. A few learned and judicious men fought the battle for the privilege to sing the *Gloria Patri, Venite, &c.*

The Rev. Dr. Smith published, in 1814, a volume of 300 pages to prove that it is lawful to chant, and that people should be allowed to sing something else than metrical psalms and hymns.

He dedicated his work to the Rt. Rev. the Bishops, and the Rev. the clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. Dr. Smith began by stating that "from numerous and creditable testimonies it appears that the usage of chanting the psalms and hymns of public worship attained in the times of the Apostles, and continued to be common to all Christian nations until about 260 years since, when it was, in several parts of Europe, more or less interrupted by the struggles of the Reformation."

He then goes on to show that the Psalmody of the Jewish Church, itself divinely inspired, was continued in cathedral establishments throughout the Christian world.