

JOSEPH BUFFINGTON (1877); presumably first used at the opening of the renovated church, Tuesday, October 23, 1877; renovated by Samuel Bohler, summer, 1880

First Presbyterian Church
East Orange Street
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

“The Repairs at the Presbyterian Church, *The Lancaster (Pa.) Intelligencer* 13, no. 213 (Monday, May 14, 1877): 3.

THE REPAIRS AT THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—The contractor for the work of repair on this edifice began operations this morning in the interior, the intention being to lower the choir gallery about two feet, and bring the side galleries out almost flush with it. The work will be pushed forward as rapidly as possible, but it is not likely that service will be held in the building next Sunday, as announced from the pulpit yesterday. The next work done will be the spire, then the front extension, the roof, stained glass windows and frescoing, all of which will be completed by the latter part of August.

[Excerpt from:] “The Presbyterian Church. / Refurnished, Remodeled and to be Reopened. / The Gallery and the Organ,” *LI* 14, no. 42 (Thursday, October 18, 1877): 2.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.
Refurnished, Remodeled and to be Reopened.

We have from time to time noted in detail, and with reference to special features, the improvements that have been in progress for several months in the Presbyterian church edifice, on East Orange street, this city, and which have so far approached completion as to amply justify all the expectations upon which the announcement for the formal re-opening next Sunday has been made. By that time the entire series of internal and external improvements will have been completed, and the long cheerless and bleak worshiping room of this flourishing and intelligent congregation will have been transformed into one of the cheeriest and most beautiful, as it always has been one of the largest, audience rooms in the city.

[...]

THE GALLERY AND ORGAN.

The gallery has been increased in capacity by extending its depth toward the front of the church, and by bringing its sides out flush with the former choir section which projected beyond the main line of the gallery front. Accommodations have also been made, since the original plan of the improvements, for a fine large pipe organ, which, unexpected to the rest of the congregation, is being put into place this week and can be used on Sunday. It is one of the celebrated Buffington manufacture, Philadelphia, and the church luckily gets it on trial on very liberal terms. It is new, of excellent tone and finish, contains 24 stops and 1,800 pipes, and is in every respect a first class instrument. Mr. B. has such confidence in the satisfaction it will give the congregation that he is putting it into the church at the bare actual cost of its transportation and erection; for two years the church has the free use of it, and at the end of that time it will have the privilege of either purchasing it at a price now fixed at about 40 per cent. below its trade price, or have its owner remove it at his own expense. This offer the trustees availed themselves of, and among the many features of the re-opening none will be more grateful than the roll of this grand instrument.

"White to the Harvest. / Rev. J.L. Russell in the Presbyterian Pulpit," *The Lancaster (Pa.) Intelligencer* 14, no. 47 (Wednesday, October 24, 1877): 2.

WHITE TO THE HARVEST.
Rev. J. L. Russell in the Presbyterian Pulpit.

At the Presbyterian church last evening another large congregation assembled, and the interest that has thus far characterized these reopening exercises appears to suffer no abatement, nor is it confined to the Presbyterians alone, other denominations manifesting their sympathy by turning out in large force.

The services last evening opened with a chant by the choir, after which there was congregational singing, and then Rev. J. L. Russell, pastor of the Spring Garden Presbyterian church, of Philadelphia, read from the 4th chapter of John's gospel and Revelations xiv., following which he led in prayer, and after further congregational singing Rev. Russell announced his text from John iv, 35—"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look upon the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

The reverend speaker said that one of two great orders of truth is expressed in the words of the text, namely, as showing the world in the mass as it looked to Christ. The story of the Samaritan woman's meeting with Christ at the well, related in another part of the same chapter from which the text is taken, is the other form, and is possessed of interest as being an instance of an individual soul coming to Christ and being saved; but the words of the text have a different significance. They relate to society and are the evidence of Christ's regarding the world as a great harvest-field; revealing the place and power, Christ's gospel is to hold in the world as the unfailing source of inspiration to which we can return and drink in life and vigor. The fluctuations of human opinion as to the relation Christ's gospel bears to society affect not His own testimony expressed in the text in which the world is regarded as a great God-field in which to reap a mighty harvest of souls—fields of restless, guilty lives, lifting their hearts to Christ's face for succor.

Jesus Christ and His gospel are God's answer to every need of the human heart. Men may be conscious or unconscious of these needs, and yet they exist all the same; and the gospel is to show them these needs; and in proportion to their consciousness is the ripeness of the harvest of the gospel of Christ.

The most clamorous of these our spiritual wants is that of forgiveness of our sins. The world, stricken with its sin and writhing in the travail of material suffering, groans in conscious agony. The poet sings of the glory of human life and the philosopher speculates as to its power, but the great mass of individuals drag wearily along, sinking and fainting under the burdens that are too great to be borne. Our supreme spiritual need consists of a hunger and thirst for something larger and diviner than this human life affords—"that

inherent need of eternity that is in every human breast." Whilst these spiritual wants are common alike to every age, they are not always recognizable. The dark and gloomy side of life is often hidden from observation by the pomp and glory and glitter of the world; and sometimes, even if we would, we cannot discover these wants of a suffering humanity. But though we cannot discern them, the Master sees them all and He would stimulate us with a great love for our fellow beings. Through all His life the strength and intensity of Christ's love for mankind is never abated, and amid the glories of the transfiguration, and with the horrors of the crucifixion thundering around Him, the spectacle of His love for men is perhaps most strongly presented. It was Addison who said that "all the ruins of Babylon were not nearly so great as the ruins of a single soul;" and a greater than Addison has said that a lost world was far less in its effects than a lost soul: "What profiteth it a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The world will never be converted by logical systems nor by theological systems, nor by the tenets, nor articles, nor declarations nor catechisms of "the church;" but you must take the word of God and translate it into the love and passion of the human heart, to win souls to Christ. The Master's picture of the world as the the great field ripe for the harvest—ripe for our largest endeavors—is one which we should not lose sight of. The reaper's robe is not one of sackcloth and ashes, but the garment of peace and gladness. The speaker believed God had given the church and His ministers a great work to do. Let us meet it in the spirit of Christ. "Say not there are yet four months." The golden year of God's church is now. The field is white to the harvest. Pause not to discuss methods while the golden harvest falls to the ground for want of reaping. Denominational discussion of modes of action should give place to going forward to reap human souls. The night cometh wherein no man can work, and there are rival reapers in the field. The angel of death is gathering in the sheaves, and the angel of the everlasting judgment thrasts in his sickle and gathers the vine of the earth and casts it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. "Lift up your eyes, and look upon the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

Rev. Russell's discourse was a masterly effort. He is a vigorous speaker, and his treatment of his subject elicited close attention and evidently produced great effect on his hearers.

A collection was taken up at the conclusion of the sermon, and after the signing of a hymn and the doxology, the congregation was dismissed with the benediction by Rev. Russell.

The announcement for this evening's services will be found in our advertising columns.

THE ORGAN.

The new pipe organ which has been put into the choir on trial proves to be an excellent instrument thus far. In the efficient hands of Prof. Steinhäuser it is discoursing excellent music in the protracted reopening services of the church. Mr. Joseph Buffington, the builder, left it on Tuesday morning and regarded it a complete structure, and has no hesitation in pronouncing it one of the best organs in the state. It being some three years since it was built, all the pipes and bellows are thoroughly tested and well seasoned. Its touch is easy, and the tone is of a rich, superior character. Throughout, the instrument gives perfect satisfaction. The case has been richly ornamented in gold and ultra-marine by Mr. Reingruber, so as to correspond with the fine frescoing he has produced upon the ceiling and walls. The instrument as it now stands is eminently ornamental, and forms a perfect finish both to the frescoing and the furnishing of the church.

We are informed that the organ as it stands is not a charity, even during the two years of trial. The cost of bringing it here and its erection together with its re-

moval, if it does not prove satisfactory in that time, will be equal to a rent each year of what it would be worth to the church.

A dedication of the organ, with a grand organ concert in company with the choir, will soon be given, to be followed by other concerts for the purpose of starting an organ fund to pay for the instrument at the expiration of its probation.

Joseph Buffington; Pennsylvania; Lancaster; First Presbyterian Church; 1877; cont'd., page 3:

"Sling and Stone," *LI* 14, no. 63 (Monday, November 12, 1877): 2.

"SLING AND STONE."—This is the title of a paper which two young gentlemen of the Presbyterian church propose shortly to issue. It will be religious in its tone, and will be devoted to the interests of the churches of Lancaster in general, and those of the Presbyterian church in particular. It will also be the organ of the Social and Literary Union connected with the latter church, and as it will seek an entirely new field, there is every reason for believing that it will serve a purpose and mayhap fill an apparent vacancy in the domain of local journalism. The projectors of *Sling and Stone* are wide-awake and enterprising young fellows, with plenty of push and moreover with a thorough knowledge of the craft. The new organ will make its appearance before Thanksgiving, and its appearance will be awaited with an interest that is more than curiosity. Success to it!

IN 1880, Renovated by Samuel Bohler:

"The Presbyterian Organ," *LI* 16, no. 282 (Thursday, July 29, 1880): 2.

The Presbyterian Organ.
Samuel Bohler, the organ builder of Reading, is rebuilding the large Buffington organ in the Presbyterian church, this city. He is adding five new stops, greatly increasing the power of the bass, putting in new valves, new bellows and revoicing the many reeds and pipes in the complicated instrument. The work will be finished in three or four weeks and the builder and other competent judges think that when it is completed, the instrument will be one of the very finest in Lancaster.

"A Rededication," Memorial Presbyterian Church gifted First Presbyterian Church organ. *Intelligencer Journal*, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Mon, Aug 21, 1893 · Page 1

Among the improvements made were the removal of the front entrance and vestibule. The entrance to the church is now on the south side of the church a short distance from the street. In the space occupied formerly by the vestibule has been placed the organ presented to the church by the First Presbyterian church. The organ has been rebuilt by Kirk Johnson & Co.

[Rebuilt by Kirk Johnson & Co. 1893]

[Rebuilt/replaced/case kept? by John Brown, 1893.]

[Replaced by Austin Organ Co., Op. 411, 1913, 3m]