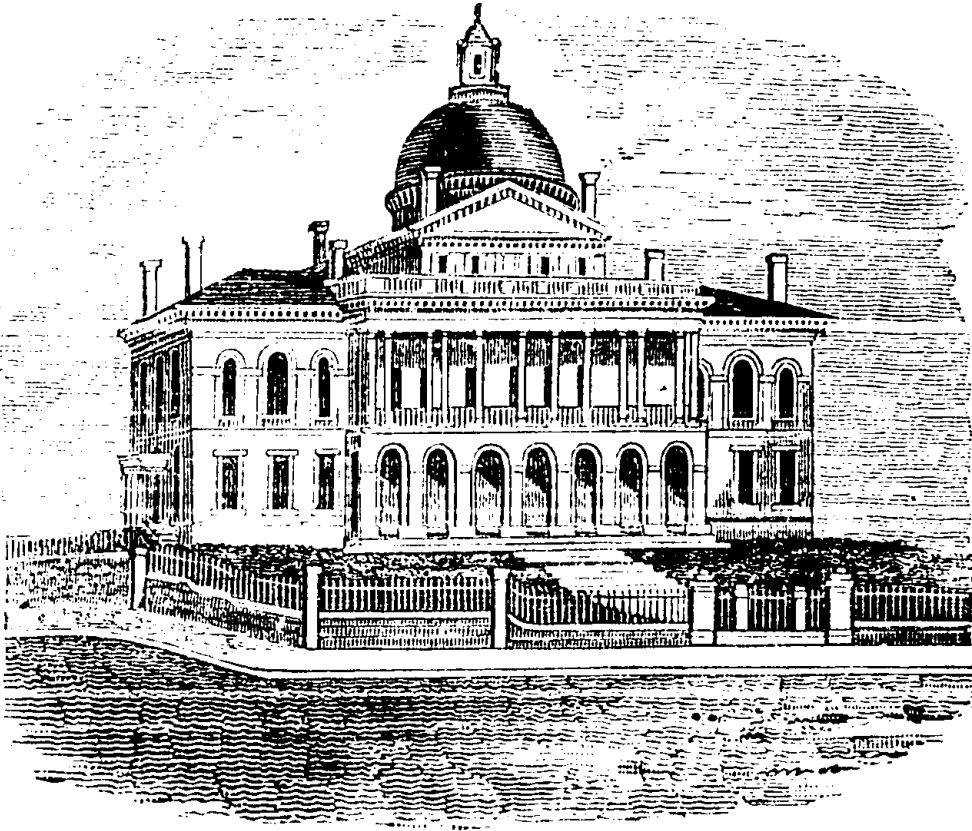


HISTORY OF BOSTON.



BY ROBIN CARVER.

BOSTON :

LILLY, WAIT, COLMAN, AND HOLDEN.

1834.

CHAPTER XX.

Reflections. Bridges and avenues to the city. View from the sea. Approach of a stranger. His reflections. The harbor. Old times. Faneuil Mall Market. Faneuil Hall. May-Fair. Institution for the Blind.

1. I HAVE now told you many stories about Boston. You have followed its progress from a desert solitude, trodden only by the Indian hunter, to a large, populous and commercial city, full of fine dwelling houses, churches and public buildings, and inhabited by a wealthy and refined people. You shall now hear something of Boston as it is.

2. I have already told you that Boston is situated on a peninsula, almost entirely surrounded by water, and connected with the main land only by a narrow avenue called the neck. This was formerly the only way of entering or

leaving the town, except in boats or large vessels. But there are now no less than nine avenues.

3. There are four bridges built over the river Charles, which connect the city with Cambridge and Charlestown. There are two bridges leading to South Boston, where are the forts erected during the revolution, and rebuilt during the last war. A fine dam, called the western avenue, leads from Beacon street to a point in Brookline; and three railroads to different points in the country, will soon be completed. There is also an extensive ferry between the city and Chelsea, with steam-boats for the accommodation of wagons and carriages, as well as foot passengers.

4. Every avenue to the city presents a beautiful view. When approached from the sea, it is exceedingly picturesque and striking. The ship, sailing among a hundred green or rocky islands, and passing between the two forts that command the entrance of the harbor, is borne onwards to the noble city before it.

5. A stranger is first struck by the high parts of the city, where his eye rests upon the conspicuous dome of the State House, and the many spires rising from the various quarters. On nearer approach, he examines with much pleasure and perhaps astonishment, the noble wharves, with their massive blocks of brick and granite ware-houses and stores, and the many ships crowding them with their unladen treasures.

6. On landing, he stops a moment to gaze behind him,

on the magnificent prospect he is about to leave ; that of the spacious harbor, whitened with the sails of so many ships, and dotted with so many little islands. Well, indeed, may he linger and gaze, for seldom may his eye rest on so beautiful a scene !

7. If he know any thing of the history of our country, he remembers that he has reached a part of it rich in patriotic adventures. He thinks of the tea story, and looks round to see if he can find any little stone or monument to mark the spot where this famous event took place. He lifts his eyes to the green hills across the bay, and remembers that Howe gazed upon them with more surprise, when he saw them covered with the ramparts which the soldiers of Washington had raised in a night.

8. His eye again turns to the blue waters of the bay, and he pictures to himself the time when they were covered with the departing ships of the British, sullenly yielding to the fate of war, and abandoning their strong hold to the Yankee general and his farmer-soldiers. Or, he is carried still farther back, to the day when the pestilence had destroyed the original owners of the soil, and solitude and silence hung over the places now so busy with the hum and bustle of crowded life !

9. But I must leave these reflections and take the stranger about the city, to show him the chief buildings, and the general beauties of the place. We will first take him to the new market-house, and Faneuil Hall, as they happen to be nearest the water, and will be more in our way.

10. First examine the Faneuil Hall market. This is probably the most splendid edifice raised for such a purpose, in the world. It is built wholly of fine granite. Its length is five hundred and thirty-five feet, and its width fifty feet. At each end is a noble portico, supported by four columns about twenty feet high, and three and a half feet in diameter. From the centre of the building, rises a spacious dome, springing from four ornamented arches.

11. The corner stone of this immense edifice was laid on the twenty-seventh of April 1825, while Josiah Quincy, son of the revolutionary patriot, was mayor of the city. It was completed in little more than two years, and will remain for many ages, as a monument of the enterprise, skill, and wealth of our citizens at the time.

12. To the west of this building stands Faneuil Hall, which has been called the Cradle of American Liberty, and is very famous throughout the country. It was the place where Josiah Quincy, Jr, James Otis, and Samuel Adams used to address the people during the troubled period which preceded and accompanied the revolution. The original edifice was built nearly a hundred years ago, by Peter Faneuil, Esq., and was presented by him to the town. A picture of the generous donor, forms one of the chief ornaments of the hall.

13. The building has a cupola, from which is a fine view of the harbor. The great hall is 76 feet square, and 28 feet high, with galleries on three sides, supported by plain

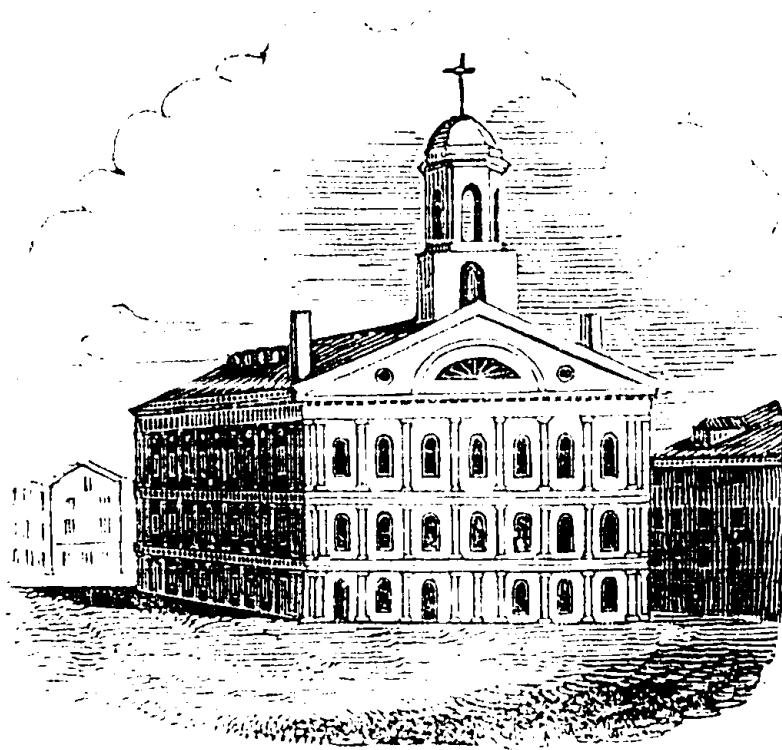
columns. Ranges of ornamented columns support the ceiling, and the walls are decorated by pilasters. A bust of John Adams, the second President of the United States, is placed at one end of the hall, between the picture of Mr Faneuil, and a splendid full length painting of Washington, by the celebrated artist, Stuart.

14. Faneuil Hall is sacred not alone for its patriotic recollections. It is connected with the history of one of our benevolent institutions, in the most interesting manner. All of my readers who live in Boston, remember the May Fair, that was held for the benefit of the Institution for the Blind, in 1833.

15. The ladies of the city decorated the old hall so magnificently, that it looked like a fairy palace. Bowers of evergreen, and roses, hanging curtains, garlands and festoons, gleamed on every side, with a show of richness and beauty, that could with difficulty be surpassed.

16. About the hall, and in its centre, tables were placed, loaded with beautiful trinkets, and fancy articles of many descriptions, wrought by the ladies, who were then exhibiting them for sale. For three days and evenings, the hall was crowded with generous purchasers. Several of the little blind boys, for whose benefit the Fair was held, were present at the tables, and seemed to be very cheerful and happy.

17. A band of music played during the evenings of the second and third days, and added highly to the pleasure of the



Faneuil Hall.

occasion. Every thing went off joyfully, and about thirteen thousand dollars were received, to be applied to the establishment of the Institution for the Blind.

18. It is not a great distance from Faneuil Hall, to the street in which the Institution for the Blind is situated. If you please, we will walk round, and show it to the stranger. It is a spacious brick edifice, presented to the Institution, by Colonel Perkins, an opulent merchant, whose generosity is equal to his wealth. Between thirty and forty blind children are educated here. They are occupied with a variety of employments, and are all industrious, cheerful, and contented.

19. Some learn to play on the pianoforte, and all cultivate a taste for singing. One of the most affecting concerts to which I have ever listened, has been that of a choir of these blind children, pouring forth some glad melody, with as much glee and joyousness, as if they had never known what it was to be unhappy. But music is only their amusement. By means of raised letters, they are taught to read, and there is an ingenious contrivance, by which they can learn to write, and to understand letters that are written to them. They also learn Geography very perfectly, and are thus enabled to acquire a great deal of knowledge, that furnishes them with employment, and subjects of reflection, in years that might otherwise be to them almost a blank.

20. There are many useful lessons that we may derive

from visiting such an Institution as this. We learn to be grateful for the blessings that we enjoy, and to thank the Being who made us, that we have eyes to see the wonders and the beauties of the universe. We learn to estimate as we ought, the power and skill of man, which thus enable him to supply the deficiencies of nature, and almost to give sight to the blind. We learn to have more confidence in the goodness and virtue of men, when we see them drawing something from their own possessions, to relieve the wants, and console the misfortunes of those who have been less blessed than themselves!