

A SERMON:

PREACHED IN THE QUEEN SQUARE METHODIST CHURCH, ST. JOHN, N.B., ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH, SUNDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 5, 1879. BY REV. DUNCAN D. CURRIE.

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts."—Haggai 2:9.

The word glory is used in the Scriptures with some diversity of meaning. It was sometimes used by the orientals in the sense of distinguishing excellence, and in this sense it, apparently, is used in our text. Above the ark, between the two golden figures of the cherubim with outstretched wings, was the glory—the symbol of the divine presence. The presence of God constituted the distinguishing excellence of the place. There was a peculiar excellence about the Ark of God, and hence it was sometimes called "the glory of Israel." The beautiful robes of the priests were called "garments of glory." The vessels of the sanctuary, that were used in the service of the Lord's house, were called "vessels of glory." The prophet Haggai may be understood as saying in our text that: "The distinguishing excellence of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former."

1. Our text may be regarded as a prediction wherein there is instituted a comparison between the temple built by Solomon, and the later temple built by Zerubbabel.

The old temple of Solomon had its peculiar glory. It was magnificent in its proportions. It is said that it covered a square of six hundred feet, and that it had several thousands of columns and pilasters. It appears to have been perfect in its proportions, and faultless in all its details. It is a difficult thing even at this day to build a perfect house. It is doubtful if any man ever yet built a house with which, after the work was completed, he was entirely satisfied. But here was a building obviously designed by the Great Architect, and built according to a heaven-conceived plan, that in all its multitudinous details was probably as perfect a structure as it is possible for the hand of man to build.

One of the remarkable peculiarities of King Solomon's temple was that there was not heard upon the building, during its erection, the sound of hammer or axe, or any tool of iron. How impressive is this fact. The stones of which the house was built were all prepared and made ready in the quarries, and the timber used in its construction was thoroughly prepared in the forests whence it was taken, "so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building" (1 Kings 6:7). Two hundred thousand men during seven years were engaged in its erection. How remarkable that during all those years it never rained, as we are told, except at night, and on the Sabbath day. About this memorable temple, even considered as a work of art, there is a kind of glory whose fascination, during the intermediate nearly three thousand years, has faded not away.

The chief glory of this former house was in the fact that God condescended to dwell in it. Herein was a new display of the divine goodness—the God of heaven condescending to dwell in a building which was the work of men's hands. This was the greatest glory—that God condescended to make this house His dwelling place: where He manifested Himself to men; where He heard their prayers; where He blessed their souls; and whence he sent away, with rich blessings upon them, the weary hearts that came to him in penitence and faith.

The second temple had its peculiar glory. It was built by Zerubbabel, a Governor of Judea, about five hundred years before the beginning of the Christian era. It was repaired by Herod just before the time of the coming of Christ. Although this latter house was, in several particulars, a less splendid structure than the former, there was, nevertheless, a style and beauty about it that made it worthy of the admiration of all beholders.

There was a greater glory about this latter house than about the former, because within its walls the incarnate God, the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, appeared. He was the Jehovah of whom inspired men had written. He was the seed of the woman; the Son of Mary; Jesus of Nazareth; the King of glory. In this latter temple the Messiah proclaimed Himself; announced the new covenant—the covenant of peace; and published salvation. His presence there, with the attendant circumstances, and for his beneficent purposes, gave to the latter house a glory that exceeded that of the former.

2. We may recognize in our text a reference to the two dispensations, and an intimation that the glory of the latter should exceed that of the former.

The original admits of a rendering of this passage somewhat different from that given in our text, namely: "Greater shall be the

* Published by request. Rev. Charles Stewart, D.D., Professor of Theology, etc., preached in this church in the morning of the same day, from Rev. 3: 8: "Behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." And Rev. Ezekiel McKean, President of the Conference, preached in the afternoon, from 1 Thes. 2: 4: "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our heart." The Rev. John Prince, ex-President of the Conference, offered the opening prayer of the evening service. Lesson Haggai 2: 1-9. Hymns 730, 736, 579.

later glory of this house than the former." Putting both renderings of this passage together, we have a fuller exhibition of the truth. The two renderings are not contradictory; and each presents the same truth in a different light.

We may speak of the church of the old dispensation, and of the church of the new, as two developments of the same church. And so we may speak of the temple of Solomon, and of the temple of Zerubbabel, as two developments of the one house of the Lord. And hence we may say: "Greater shall be the latter glory of this house than the former, saith the Lord of Hosts."

The old dispensation had its glory. There was a glory in its services, in its symbols, in its ritual. There was an excellence about the old tabernacle and temple services that the people did well to appreciate. The psalmist once said: "In his temple doth every one speak of his glory." It was the tabernacle of which he thus spoke, for the temple proper had not yet been built. Oftentimes the tabernacle was spoken of as God's temple. The glory was seen both in the tabernacle and in the temple, and every one who went there with a worshipping and a praying heart showed forth the glory of God.

The glory of the former dispensation, however, was circumscribed. It was confined to one people. And even the highly favoured Hebrew people were not, apparently, with but few exceptions, able to recognize the Messiah when he came. He waited long, for the fulness of the time, when the world would be sufficiently ripe to receive him, and his teachings. And when the fulness of the time had come, and he had appeared among men, it seemed as if, even in Palestine, there was scarcely room for that tree which he has planted, and whose branches are to grow and are to fill the whole earth.

In the latter dispensation there was to be a greater glory. The new order of things was not to be confined to one people. It was to overthrow institutions, and to permeate the thought of the world, and to revolutionize the kingdoms of the earth.

Haggai said that when Christ would come he would "shake all nations." Under the law Sinai, and the Sinaitic region, only were shaken. But all nations were to tremble under the influences that were to accompany the era of greater glory. Several of the prominent nations of the earth were shaken before the coming of the Lord, and that his way might be prepared. Mark the testimony of history. Just before Haggai's time the magnificent ancient Assyrian and the Babylonian empires had fallen, and the Medo Persian empire had risen upon their ruins. After this the Persian empire, having become the victim of gross vices, was shaken and overthrown. Then came the Grecian empire in its stead. Then the Grecian empire was shaken, and sundered into four parts. These in turn were shaken, and destroyed by the Romans. Thus not less than three magnificent empires were successively shaken, and scattered, between the era when the prophet spoke these words, and the coming of the Lord, a period of about only six hundred years. And just before the Messiah came a universal peace prevailed, and the great political convulsions that for six centuries had shaken the nations, were overruled by the Providence of God to prepare the world for the coming of Christ.

Those shakings that preceded the advent of the Lord were suggestive of what would subsequently come to pass. He will shake all nations, said the Hebrew seer. Mark the results. Sometimes, perhaps, you wonder that so little has been accomplished in these eighteen hundred years. Greater is the marvel that so much has been done. See what has been done in Europe. Look over all the continents. How many millions have bowed the knee to Jesus. In every conversion to God there has been the surrender of a rebel. In every triumph of the cross there has been a conquest that has shaken the conscience, and changed the heart, of an alien from the commonwealth. What our God in the elder time was amongst a small nationality, our Jesus now is amongst many peoples. In many lands to-day no deed of conveyance, no instrument of mortgage, no memorandum of agreement, no promissory note, no document of any pretensions, is of any value, if it fails to recognize on its face, the current year of the Christian era. In these developments of the growing kingdom we recognize the glory of the latter dispensation.

3. Our text suggests another outlook. We may apply these words to ourselves as individuals. There is a sense in which we speak of ourselves as a house. "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." There is a striking contrast between the glory of God's people, while dwelling in this clay tabernacle, and the glory that is to be revealed hereafter. Greater shall be the latter glory of Christ's saved people, than the former.

What are we? What is man? How wondrously are we made. How great the distinguishing excellence of man, when contrasted with the other creatures to which God hath given existence. The value of the individual transcends all human computation. The Scriptures of unvarying truth assert the incomparable value of the human soul. Though each of you is but an atom the preciousness of every one outweighs the value of a world. The giant mountains upon which the rainbows rest, and that are the thrones of the thunder, and around which the lightnings play, and from which the tumbling cataracts come, are composed of atoms. The great mass of humanity is made up of individuals.

About each one, though insignificant he may appear in his own estimation, there is so great a preciousness that Jesus, the Lord of life and glory, hath redeemed him by his own most precious blood. How glorious a thing it is that provision has been made for the salvation of every man, and that each one may be saved, even here, and be an heir of God, through faith in the crucified One.

There is, however, a still grander glory for God's people. There is another realm than this, where there is no night, no temptation, no sin, no sorrow, and no death. The apostle speaks of us here as dwelling in a "vile body." There are in every one of us the springs of incipient decay and dissolution. But the eternal house in the heavens for the saved of the Lord is constructed after another plan, and will be faultless forever. The glory of the latter house will transcend, beyond all present conception, the glory of the former.

Christ came to build up spiritual manhood. The three and thirty miracles that he wrought indicated his power. The strange predictions that he uttered, suggested his omniscience. But these were not his grandest works. The chief glory of christianity is not in miracle, or prophecy, or ordinance, or in social influence, but in its power to change men's hearts, to spiritualize the race, and to save men into heaven.

What did it avail for Solomon and his contemporaries, and for prophet, and priest, and people of succeeding generations, if they were permitted to go round about the temple, and tell the towers thereof, and mark its grandeur, and enter within its courts, and worship in its corridors, if they failed to secure the salvation of the soul? What had it availed for the earlier attendants of the old Germain Street Church, if their hearts were not renewed by penitent and believing application to the blood that cleanseth from all sin? The outward and the material, after all, how beautiful and attractive soever they may be, dwindle into comparative insignificance, when we think of the soul and its eternal interests. Do you, with believing and loyal hearts, recognize the fact that there is a door open in the kingdom of heaven for all believers; and that greater, in that kingdom, shall be the latter glory of Christ's saved people, than that which they here possess while dwelling in the earthly house of this dissolving tabernacle?

4. We stand to-day, so far as this church and congregation are concerned, upon the threshold of a new epoch. It is well that we should look back and see under what circumstances your fathers laid the foundations of the old Germain Street structure, of which this Queen Square Church, which we have this day dedicated to God, is the worthy successor. Ninety and six years ago, on the eighteenth day of May, 1783, a few thousands of loyalists, from several of the adjoining States, entered your harbor to find a home, where they might still render loving allegiance to the sovereignty of the fatherland, and enjoy the protection and the privileges which it accords to all its subjects. All of those men had suffered more or less, and some of them had had their fortunes sadly shattered, in the vicissitudes of the seven year's war.

Many were the difficulties which here, in the untrodden wilderness where this city now stands, they had to encounter. Rugged were the shores. Rocky were the hillsides. Plain were the houses that the wealthier built. Humble were the dwellings of the poor. But they grappled with their work. Streets were laid out. Lots were surveyed. On went the work. A town began to show itself. Eight years passed away, after the landing of the loyalists, before a Methodist preacher visited the growing town. The first Methodist minister who here called sinners to repentance was Abraham John Bishop. In the year 1791 he set up his banners in this city, in the name of our God. In 1792 a building, on the West side of Germain Street, between Duke and Queen Streets, was purchased, by the few adherents of Methodism then living here. In 1807 the foundations of the old Germain Street Church were laid. In 1808, on Christmas day, it was dedicated. In that building, in 1809, the first Sabbath School in the city was organized. From that time until now the Germain Street Church has had an uninterrupted pastorate of three score years and ten.

The old church was not remarkable for any architectural excellences. But it was a dwelling place of the Most High, where He made the place of his feet glorious. Souls were converted there. God's people were built up there in the most holy faith. It was the loved sanctuary of a praying people, and was precious in their sight. Its history, up to the time of the opening of the Centenary Church in 1839, if written, would tell of earnest work done for God, and of blessed results.

The seventy years of its existence, from 1807 to 1877, may be divided into two equal periods of five and thirty years. During the closing years of the first of those periods, Dr. Enoch Wood was connected with the Old Church. He was stationed in St. John ten years from 1836 to 1846. He was at that time the foremost man of Methodism in this city. In 1838 the Methodism of St. John became two bands by the organizing of Portland into a separate circuit. In 1839 she became three bands by the opening of the Centenary Church. In 1842 she became four bands by the erection of Carleton into a separate circuit. The leading men identified with the work of the old church during the first half of its existence were Stephen Humbert, Alexander McLeod, John Ferguson, Hanford Magee, George

Whittaker, William Venning, Gilbert T. Ray, John Owens, George A. Lockhart, and Geo. Taylor, all of whom have passed away; and John B. Gaynor, and David Collins who yet remain unto this day. Of the more prominent worthy men, of the later period of the existence of the old church who have gone hence, honorable mention was made in the opening service of to-day.

The old church was an honored landmark in our Israel, was an important centre amongst us, and was, in a sense, the mother of us all. At the time of the great burning of the 20th of June, 1877, when the old house was consumed in the devouring flames, it was, and had for many years been, our oldest sanctuary in all this land. It had served its generation well. It has passed away forever.

On this dedication day it well becomes us to ask; what shall be the future of this new and beautiful structure? Shall the glory of this latter house be greater than that of the former? The later decades should exceed the preceding ones. Coming generations should transcend in glory all their predecessors.

Architecturally this latter house exceeds in glory the former one in a great degree. You who, through weary months of fears and of hopes; of anxieties and of triumphs; have been battling against formidable difficulties, not knowing what the issue would be, and yet trusting in God who sustained you, we congratulate upon being permitted to see this auspicious day.

What more do you need that this enterprise may prove eminently successful? You need the co-operation of others around you, who recognize somewhat the results of your efforts, but who comprehend only to a small extent, perhaps, the heaviness of the burden you have borne. There are probably many in this assembly who should immediately come up to the help of the Lord by giving him their hearts, and by assuming a share of the burden of sustaining God's cause in this church. The silver is the Lord's, the gold is his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, and all souls are his. He calls for the sacrifice of yourselves. Let there be now an intelligent recognition of the claims of the King of kings upon you, and an immediate surrender of the heart. And thus in the beginning of the endeavours of this people may it be apparent that the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former.

Upon you rest weighty responsibilities to-day. Our text is not for you, the record of an accomplished work—it is, rather, the voice of the prophet speaking of the generation that now is, and of others that are yet to be. The glory of this latter house—this Queen Square Church—shall be greater than that of the former sanctuary. The fulfilment of this prediction depends largely upon you. Undismayed by gathering clouds; undaunted by coming difficulties; give yourselves, we beseech you, to the grand work to which you are called. Let this church be glorious in the grandest sense of the term. What constitutes the glory of a church? Not stone walls, nor columns fair; not pinnacles, nor towers grand, nor spire; not gorgeous ritual, nor robed nor mitred priest; not waiting crowds to catch the tinsel of smooth rolling rhetoric; not organ peals, nor well-rendered music of the choir. But faith, and love, and earnest piety; devotion pure, and warmth of inward life: these constitute the glory of a church. It is not the homage of the eye, nor of the lip, nor of the ear, nor of the bended knee, that is most pleasing in the sight of God. He waits, rather, to receive from the weak, from the weary, from the wounded, and from the wandering, the sacrifices of a broken spirit and of a contrite heart. Let these be the offerings that here, continually, you shall bring to God; and then it will be manifest as the years roll by, and as one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh, that the glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former.

OBITUARY.

MR. JAMES RICHARDSON.

Died in the Lord, at his late residence in Hamilton, Bermuda, on the 18th of August, 1879, Mr. James Richardson, in the 77th year of his age. Bro. Richardson was a native of Scotland, and son of James and Margaret Mabon Richardson, of Morebattle, Roxboroughshire. He was born in Morebattle Parish, on the 22nd of Dec., 1802. His parents trained him according to the Presbyterian pattern of his day; and of him it might be said in truth, "Thy servant feared the Lord from his youth." On the 8th of Dec., 1824, he was united in marriage to Mary Moffatt, a worthy, devoted young woman, who was to him an *helpmeet* indeed for nearly half a century. In 1827 he and his wife arrived in Bermuda, and about two years subsequent they united with the Wesleyan Methodist Church. From that time until he was prostrate by disease a period of *about forty years*, he was a consistent, active and useful member of the Methodist Church at Hamilton. The church soon perceived his worth and honored him with the most responsible trusts in her gift. He was a class leader, trustee and circuit steward, filling the positions with acceptance to the church and a credit to himself. Bro. Richardson was not only a Methodist by profession, but also by conviction. He was strongly attached to all the interests of the church of his choice, and labored to have its discipline observed to the letter. It has been said that Presbyterians with a New Testament conversion make the *best Methodists*; and his life would go far to strengthen that conviction in the mind of the careful observer. God having made the class-meeting a blessing to his own soul, he became its warm earnest

advocate and successful leader. As a leader he was courteous, consistent and sympathetic, winning the confidence and esteem of all who met with him. He was not a class driver, pointing out the way and saying go, but never going himself; but he was emphatically a leader, saying by a holy life and sweet spirit come, follow me as I follow Christ. He was seldom if ever absent from the means of grace, and at the official meetings of the church, the minister could always rely upon seeing him, unless Providence interposed. He was quiet and unobtrusive in his movements and especially neat in his person and dress. He invariably wore the old-fashioned white neck handkerchief which a few years since was the distinguishing badge of the ministerial office in the Provinces. I can never forget the first time I saw Bro. Richardson. It was nearly twenty years ago in Zion's Methodist church, Hamilton. Having just arrived in the colony, I entered the pulpit for the first time on Wednesday evening, and saw before me a gentleman dressed as I had been accustomed to see only ministers attired. So I put him down at once as belonging to the ministerial fraternity. I saw he was attentive and devout, and concluded that he was the Presbyterian clergyman of the town. This thought, that I was a young man, was preaching to an experienced minister of another church, did not have a tendency to cool the hot Bermudian atmosphere of a July night in the least. At the close of the service, I was surprised and delighted to be introduced to the brother who had unintentionally increased my pulpit bath, as a Methodist class-leader. There that evening began a friendship which ended only with his death, and during all the intervening years there was never even a misunderstanding between us.

About ten years since Bro. Richardson was suddenly prostrate by paralysis; and from that time until his death he was an invalid and a sufferer. Having done God's will he was now called to suffer his will. The Master's work which he loved so well, and in which he had been so long engaged he had to leave to others. His speech was affected and it was with difficulty that friends could understand his utterances. But in his affliction he found the Lord to be his sun and shield; and he insisted upon being taken to the public service on "the Lord's day, where he could hear God's word and worship with his people. Indeed he persisted in visiting the house of God as long as he could sit in the pew during public worship. He had many trials during his earthly pilgrimage demonstrating the truth of the inspired utterance, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Death had again and again entered his domestic circle and borne away loved ones. So that though he had been blessed with ten children only three survived his demise. Still the heaviest bereavement of his life came during his own protracted affliction when he appeared least able to bear it. On the 6th of September, 1872, the wife of his youth and the mother of his children suddenly died. Mrs. Richardson was a healthy, strong woman, who might be expected to live for years, while he appeared to stand on the crumbling edge of the grave might be expected to die any day. Yet arbitrary death took the strong wife and left the feeble, suffering husband to struggle on in lonely widowhood for seven long years. Though the bereavement almost overwhelmed him in his physical weakness, amidst flowing tears and sinking nature his faith cried, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." When seven years subsequent his end came, he was ready; and not only with a willing but with a glad heart he welcomed the messenger sent to call him to take his place in the house not made with hands.

Affectionate and considerate as a husband and father; consistent and useful as a member of Christ's church; and loyal and patriotic as a citizen; lived and died our now sainted brother James Richardson, late of Hamilton, Bermuda.

WILLIAM RYAN, St. George's, Bermuda, Oct. 11, 1879.

WILLIAM ARNOLD LISWELL.

It is not often we record the death of one whose life reached the period of the subject of this notice. William A. Liswell was born in Halifax, N. S., Sept. 24, 1778, and died at Belmont, Nants. Co., N. S., Sept. 24th, 1879, just one hundred and one years of age. A vigorous constitution, not broken by needless exposure or impaired by injurious habits of any kind may in some measure account for his lengthened years. The deceased early gave evidence of concern for the welfare of his soul. These religious impressions at length deepened into profound conviction of the need of salvation and earnest resolve to seek it. In the year 1838 under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Crosscombe, during a revival of great power in the Methodist Church of Oakland, Newport, father Liswell was enabled to accept Christ as his personal Saviour. Soon after he connected himself with that branch of the Christian church through the services of which he had been so greatly benefited. As a citizen father Liswell enjoyed the unqualified respect and esteem of the community in which he resided. His judgment in matters of local interest was sought, and his decision in all such cases regarded as just and equitable. As the head of a house his example is worthy of imitation. In the continuous and orderly observance of family worship; in the loving yet firm discipline by which strength of parental affection was exhibited in the strong hand of parental control; in the importance attached to the religious instruction of his children he closely followed the example of one, the divine commendation of whose faithfulness was "For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him." As a Christian father Liswell manifested his attachment to Christ by a punctual attendance upon the means of grace and devout attention to the preaching of the truth. A shower of rain did not keep him at the fireside when duty