

of that name—Cotton Mather, I believe. The name Saint Matthew's seems to have been a corruption of the word Mather, and to have been insensibly introduced,—the Scotch prefixing "Saint" to Matthew, according to the fashion which has prevailed from time immemorial in the old country.

The church was enlarged within the memory of not a few living members of the congregation. The porch was an addition, as was also the steeple. Our dear old bell, which to us had such a silvery sound, and which had so sudden and remarkable a fate, was the gift of Mr. Fillis.

The congregation obtained the site of the old building by an order in council, but the church was not incorporated till the year 1817. St. Matthew's stood for about one hundred years without any law. No one could sue or be sued for any use made of it, or for any act committed to its prejudice. Yet never was property held more securely by a congregation or considered more safe. It is true that at one time—a period to which I have alluded, when the parties contended—each man would do that which was right in his own eyes, and the party getting possession of the key would lock the door against the other party. However, as I have observed, the difference was accommodated, and it does not seem to have occurred to any of that or of the next generation that there was any necessity to have the church brought within the operation and under governance of law.

Trusting to the indulgence, and believing I would have the sympathy of my audience, I have offered these notices of the past. I now turn to speak of the present, and of the hopes of the future.

The foundation of our new church is now laid. We trust that, through the good hand of God upon us, the superstructure, according to the beautiful plan adopted, will arise with all convenient speed, and the work be prosecuted with skill and success till the whole be completed.

The proceeding we have just now witnessed, and the work before us, are fitted to convey to our minds spiritual instruction. The stone laid in our presence by the moderator of the congregation is, I doubt not, well laid, firm and true.

Now, there has been laid in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone.

Christ, the foundation of the Church, the spiritual building, is designated *a stone*, denoting firmness, strength and durability, for he is able to bear the heaviest pressure—immovable, immutable. He is the stone cut out without hands, for by the interposition of Jehovah he was laid in secret from the beginning; at first hid from the generality, and seen but obscurely, under types and figures, for a lengthened period, in one small spot of this sinful world; at length, however, in the fulness of time, was clearly manifested to men,—for a season indeed, only within the most circumscribed bounds, but soon over many lands, his glory increasing from age to age, and ever shall increase, till it shall have filled the whole earth.

Christ, the spiritual foundation, is designated *a tried stone*, for he is approved of by God—chosen of God—as altogether fit for the foundation of the spiritual temple. His sacrifice for sin was found to be sufficient; his ransom was accepted. He has been found worthy of trust to all who have come to him—to all who receive and rest on him for salvation. One and all of his people, in every age, have attested that he has never failed them.

Christ is designated the *precious corner-stone*—the corner-stone—for he unites and supports the whole building. Jesus

Christ is the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. He is the support of his people, and in him they all meet, and have fellowship one with another. He brought the Jews and Gentiles together, making of both one. He unites and binds to himself, by his spirit, believers of all nations, and throughout all times, whether Greek or barbarian, whether bond or free. He unites them all to himself, that they may be all one in him, through eternal ages.

He is precious—precious in his person, in his work, in his fulness, in his gifts and graces—precious in the sight of his Father—precious to all them that believe.

The foundation is one stone. The precious corner-stone of the spiritual temple is broad and extensive—the sole foundation of the Church, supporting the whole building, and uniting all its various parts.

Let us see, then, my Christian friends, that as a congregation, whilst we are rearing a material edifice, we are also being built up a spiritual house. Let us see that we are built on the sure foundation which God has laid in Zion.

As a professing Church, I say confidently, we are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.

The Church of Scotland, whose standards we hold, and with whom we are in connection, though she may not be faultless, has ever been allowed to be one of the fairest daughters of the Reformation. We have the unadulterated word, which we profess to take for our only rule of faith and manners. We have sound doctrine and the pure ordinances of the Gospel, and a ministry possessing the warrant of the Divine Word to preach these doctrines and to dispense these ordinances. Our Church holds and adheres to the faith once delivered to the saints. She observes those methods of worship which are prescribed in the Scripture by him who is the sole King and Head of his Church. She has adopted these, and carefully abstained from introducing any other. Her forms are few and simple; they well become the worship of the humble Jesus, and the nature of that kingdom which is not of this world; they well become the house and worship of him who, being a spirit, must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

But it is not enough that we belong, by profession, to a pure and scriptural Church. Profession is one thing,—practice is another. Let us see that the spiritual edifice, which we profess to be, is not in appearance only, but in reality. Let us see that we are living stones built up a spiritual house—that we are resting wholly on the living foundation, united to the precious corner-stone by faith, and to one another by brotherly love, through the spirit; and that we are adorned with the beauty of holiness, being filled with grace, and all glorious within.

And now, my beloved brethren, I conclude with a prayer for our church's peace and prosperity.

May the church of St. Matthew's be indeed a temple of Jehovah, ever enjoying visible manifestations of the divine presence and favour. May her sons be all pillars like James and John and Cephas, and may her daughters be all as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.

[After prayer, and an address by the Rev. Thomas Jardine, co-ordinate minister, and an address by the Hon. William Young, the Doxology was sung, and the service concluded with the Benediction.]