

BOND STREET CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH, TORONTO.

DEDICATION SERVICES.

Our friends of the Bond street Congregational Church dedicated their new church edifice to the worship of God, on Thursday evening last May 1st, under the most promising auspices. The building, which occupies the site of the former church, is of modern Gothic style, constructed of Georgetown stone, with Ohio dressings. The main tower, on the south-west corner of Bond street and Wilton avenue, reaches an altitude of 130 feet; on the north-west corner there is a smaller tower 65 feet high. The whole aspect from without is that of a massive, substantial, enduring structure. Every available inch of ground has been utilized in order to extend to the uttermost the seating capacity of the church. If the exterior of the church is a parable of strength, the interior is a parable of beauty, the universal testimony being that in this great city of churches there is nothing more beautiful than this last contribution to the ecclesiastical architecture of Toronto. In the centre of the roof, which is handsomely groined, is a large dome, with 50 ft. span, finishing up at its crown with an ornamental stained glass dome, which serves the double purpose of affording greater light, as well as for ventilation. There are altogether six entrances to the church, the main ones being through the towers, which have two to each. The auditorium is built on the amphitheatre style, with a slight fall, both in it and the gallery, towards the platform, the whole being tastefully upholstered and carpeted. The pulpit, which is a rich piece of workmanship, stands on a large roomy platform (at the east end of the church), behind which the choir are seated. The gallery is built in the shape of a horse-shoe, and contains six rows of seats. From any position in the gallery an excellent view is obtained of the pulpit, choir, etc. The whole building has a seating capacity of about 1,400, but with the extra draw seats it is expected to accommodate about 2,000. A new school building is expected to be attached next year. The acoustics, heating and ventilation are considered perfect.

The architects (Messrs. McCaw & Lennox) may be justly proud of their work. And this building will go very far towards establishing the fame of these gentlemen as ecclesiastical architects of the very first order.

The organ is considered to be one of the best ever turned out by Messrs. S. R. Warren & Son, of this city. It occupies a position in a groined recess in rear of the pulpit, and the key-board is so arranged that the organist has full command of the choir. The compass of manuals is from CC to G, with 56 notes, and the compass of pedals from CCC to D, with 27 notes. There are nine stops to the great organ, seven to swell organ, three to pedal organ, and four to mechanical registers. The organ will be blown by a water engine.

The dedication of this new edifice was an exceedingly impressive service. The spacious church was filled to its utmost capacity. Brethren from far and near were present to join in prayerful sympathy with our Bond street friends. There were present amongst others, the Revs. Dr. S. Rose; Geo. Webber, of the Bible Christian Church; J. Smith, of the Bay street Presbyterian Church; J. D. King, of Yorkville; S. Dyke; W. Muir, editor of the "Canadian Baptist"; Dr. H. E. Buchan, editor of the "Christian Helper"; J. B. Silcox; W. H. Warriner, B.A.; J. Griffith and G. W. Alexander, of Hamilton; E. D. Silcox, of Stouffville. After singing, and the reading of 2 Chronicles vi., the pastor—the Rev. T. W. Handford—offered the following

PRAYER OF DEDICATION.

O, Thou Eternal One who dwellest in unclouded light, our God, our Father and our Friend. We bow our souls before Thee in this gladly solemn hour, and beseech Thee of Thine infinite grace to listen to our prayer. We come to Thee in the name of Jesus Christ, Thy well-beloved Son, our Saviour, and Master and Lord. For His sake hear our cry. And Thou blessed Spirit, proceeding from the Father, promised Comforter, guide us, aid us, help us now, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one God, whom we worship and adore, reveal to us Thy gracious, sanctifying power, as for the first time we lift our hands in prayer within these

sacred walls. Accept us in the Beloved, and vouchsafe in Thy condescending mercy to accept this House of Prayer, which, with ardent faith and trembling love, we would dedicate to Thee. Thou sittest high enthroned in the Temple not made with hands. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty. But the Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Thee. Thou wilt not disdain the lowliest shrine. Whosoever the contrite in heart are gathered, there Thou art, to make the place about Thy feet all glorious. O God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, God of our Puritan and Pilgrim sires, God of our fathers who looked to Thee, and henceforth walked the world with shining faces. Our God, our Helper and our Hope, praise waiteth for Thee in Zion. The vows of deepening consecration are on our lips. We beseech Thee enter within these walls, Thou and the ark of Thy strength. And by the ample benedictions of Thy grace, seal and sanctify this temple for Thine own. What our hearts have longed for, what our hands have wrought, Thou knowest well. We bow before Thy searching gaze, and pray Thee, the Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock, Thou that dwellest between the Cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up Thy strength and come and save us. Here may Thy presence and Thy power be manifest. Make this place a sanctuary where burdened souls shall find comfort, and weary souls find rest. Above all, we beseech Thee that Thy saving, regenerating power may be made known in the redemption of the souls of men, through Jesus Christ. Let not this place be a sepulchre of buried hopes, but make it the birthplace of multitudes to eternal life. Inspire all the worship that shall be offered here. And from this altar of Thy truth, let Thy truth alone be spoken. Whosoever lips shall speak for Thee within these sacred walls, touch them with a live coal from off Thine altar. Guard them from all error, guide them into all truth. Here may Christ and His cross be evermore the all-engrossing theme. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so may Christ our Saviour, our Redeeming God be exalted within these walls. And may thousands in the coming years find salvation through faith in Him. Mercifully hear us for the church and fellowship gathering here. Help us in all our service for Thee. Give us wisdom. Give us zeal. Give us purity of motive. Baptize us, body, soul, and spirit, in the constraining love of Christ. Help us to consecrate ourselves wholly to Thy praise. We commend each other to Thy love. Bind us together in inseparable bonds. Lead us into all Thy gracious will, and make this day for us the beginning of happy, holy, useful years. We pray for the aged. Thou who bearest Thy children all the days of age, let the light of Thy tender love illumine their peaceful eventide. Remember those who are fighting life's battle in the noon-tide of life. Gird them for their tasks; and, Thou Son of Man, Thou Man of Men, be near to make their manhood true and beautiful and strong. Be good and kind to the young we implore Thee. Brighten the morning of their days with Thy saving favour. Early may they seek Thee. Early may they find Thee to their everlasting joy. We lift our hands to Thee for Thy One Church the wide world over, in this city and in all lands. Grace be on all who love our Lord Jesus Christ. May Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, till earth shall image back the brightness of the heavens. Once more we lift our cry. O God, descend and fill this temple with the glory of Thy presence. Make the glory of this latter house greater than that of the former. Peace be within these walls; prosperity within these palaces. And to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be everlasting praises. Amen.

The prayer ended, Mr. Handford then made the following

DECLARATION.

In behalf of my brethren and friends of the Congregational Church and Congregation henceforth to worship here, I declare this edifice to be now dedicated, by the word of God and by prayer, to the worship of almighty God; to the promulgation of Evangelical Christianity; to the preaching of Salvation through faith in the atonement of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to the celebration of Christian ordinances; and to all such uses as are common to Congregational Churches. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

The dedication sermon was then preached by the Rev. A. J. Bray (pastor of Zion Church, Montreal), from 2 Chronicles vi. 41: "Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into Thy resting place, Thou and the ark of Thy strength; let Thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation; and let Thy saints rejoice in goodness." After a most graphic description of the dedication of the Temple of Zion, and the bringing in of the ark—the Jews' most sacred possession—into its final resting-place, the preacher found in the prayer of the text a petition specially suitable to the circumstances of the hour. The text was the very heart of the whole prayer offered by the King. It was first, a prayer for the conscious presence of God in the Sanctuary; then, a prayer for a saving ministry; and last, a prayer for a rejoicing people. With each of these

points Mr. Bray dealt in his own strong vigorous fashion. Especially memorable were his words when dealing with the second point—the prayer for a saving ministry. He did not care to disguise the fact that the ministry was falling into disrepute, and thought the reason was not far to seek. The ministry to be a ministry of power must be a ministry of life. A ministry, to answer the great purpose of its existence—that is to be a saving ministry—must be comprehensive in character; broad as the ways and walks of men, overlooking no phase of human life, and passing by no sphere of pleasure or of toil. The ministry was intended to save man for this world, and for the world which is to come; it was to move in the world of commerce, ministering to justice; it was to move in the world of politics, ministering to no party, but to the universal good; it was to move in the life of man—in the family, the community, the nation, the world. The discourse, which lasted for an hour, was listened to with growing attention. The church feels itself under no ordinary debt of gratitude to its first preacher, for his strong, kind, helpful words. The Rev. W. H. Heu de Bourck, of Bowmanville, closed the service with prayer and the benediction.

On Lord's day last, the opening services were continued. In the morning, the Rev. W. H. Allworth, of Paris, preached to a large congregation, from 2 Corinthians vi. 16: "For ye are the temple of the Living God." The sermon was a lucid exposition of the doctrine of the sacredness of Christian life. In which believers were urged to contemplate the dignity and grandeur of their calling—to be the temples of the living God. The way in which everything in the temple and about the temple was set apart and counted holy, was a fit pattern for Christian men and women to follow in respect of the entire and whole-hearted consecration of their bodies, souls and spirits and all they had to the service of God. The Rev. Dr. Ryeson closed the service with prayer and the benediction. The Lord's Supper was then celebrated, the pastor gave the right hand of welcome to ten candidates for fellowship, the members of the church rising to bid them welcome. In the afternoon, the Rev. J. B. Silcox, of the Western Congregational Church preached an impressive sermon from Luke xii. 15: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." The preacher began by pointing out that Christ's mission upon earth was to teach men, wherein consisted true greatness. The Son of God become the Son of Man in order that men might through Him be exalted to the position of sons of God. The perfection of the Saviour's character, and the true grandeur and unselfishness of His life, were calculated to draw men unto Him, and to show that true greatness really consists in the possession of Christian qualities, not in the possession of worldly treasures. The words of the text were called forth by the application of a man in the company, who wished that Jesus would command his brother to give over a part of the inheritance. This he wished, not simply to have the ends of justice served, but because he coveted the property. Therein in this man stands as the type of a large class of persons at the present day—persons who are bound up in the acquisition of wealth. Our Lord's rebuke to this man is a rebuke to all of his kind, and he immediately afterwards strengthened it by relating the parable of the rich farmer. True riches are gained by seeking the Kingdom of God in the soul, living in the fear of God, taking Christ as the great exemplar. To be great in His kingdom, to be "rich toward God" should be the aim of all. In the evening the church was filled. The Rev. W. H. Allworth again preached, and selected as his text the words: "O Lord, I beseech Thee, send now prosperity." Ps. cxviii. 25. The preacher spoke substantially as follows:—The words selected were certainly not unsuitable as a prayer after a long season of prosperity. The engagement in the building of a church involves anxiety, and sometimes, perhaps leads us from spiritual things, but when it is over every soul can join in the prayer of David, "O Lord, I beseech Thee, send now prosperity." Prosperity in the nation is desirable, and we may honestly pray for it; and