

ADDRESS

OF

RT. REV. H. B. WHIPPLE,

BISHOP OF MINNESOTA.

DELIVERED

AT THE LAYING OF THE

CORNER STONE OF THE BISHOP'S CHURCH,

FARIBAULT, MINNESOTA, JULY 16, 1862.

FARIBAULT:

ALEX. JOHNSTON, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER, STATESMAN OFFICE.

1862.

ADDRESS

BY BEN H. E. WHITFIELD

MINISTERS OF MINNESOTA

MINNEAPOLIS

AT THE UNIVERSITY

FOR THE STUDY OF THE MINNESOTA

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

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MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL

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CORNER STONE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL

ADDRESS.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN! There are times when the heart is too full for utterance, when words seem empty sounds to speak the language of the soul. For two years I have watched and waited for this day's coming. The days and weeks came and went all too slow as my heart looked on for this day, when GOD would permit me to lay a foundation which should never die.

Of all the work which earthly hands may do, I know of none so blessed as the building of a Church of GOD. It is the only house which men build in time which lasts for eternity. Our other abiding places must change. Strangers will sit beside our hearthstones, and other voices fill our homes, when ours are hushed in death. The day will come, even here in this sweet village, when our names will no longer be household words; when the busy crowds who jostle each other in the streets, will forget that we once lived, and worked and dreamed as they. On yonder hillside, in the quiet acre of GOD, we shall sleep unmindful of the busy hum of this work-day world. There the rattle of machinery and the craftsman's hammer will never come, and the silence of that unbroken stillness be as quiet as though the world were all made of graves. Little will they who rest there mind the dreams which men hug to their aching hearts in this fretful, feverish life. They who place our names on the tablet of the grave will feel that it was an empty mockery of life to write out the last of our worldly stores. Whether it were a marble hall or a cottage on the border which we have called our own, it will be ours no more forever. There are some things which even to the dead can never die. There is some work of busy fingers which lasts forever. Of such is that work which our hands have laid to-day. We lay here with songs and prayer, with holy benediction and loving words the Corner Stone of a Bishop's Church. We shall watch it with faith and hope and prayer, and see these shapeless stones clothed upon with life, until they grow to be a thing of beauty, and every passer by shall read in its cross-capped spire that this is a Christian home; a wayside heavenly hostel for pilgrim's feet; a training school of GOD, where men are trained for heaven.

I would interpret for you some of the loving thoughts which so

fondly cluster round this corner stone. I would I had a prophet's gift to lift the veil, that we who are gathered here might look down the stream of time and see the harvest of our seed-sowing ripened for the garner of heaven.

This is the corner stone of a Christian Church. When loving hands have finished it and put on the topstone with rejoicing, it will be God's House. No worldly theme will ever enter it; no Babel's voice of contentious men; no cry of those who strive; no warring sons of Ishmael with their party watch-words, will pollute its walls. We are not here to-day to build a meeting house for a convenient gathering of worldly men. This will not be a sort of religious lecture room, where a Christian orator shall rehearse the shifting opinions of parties and schools. Ours is no such building of contentious men; it is a Church of God; it will be consecrated with prayer, and when once the fire is kindled in its holy place, it will never grow dim, for I trust that here no morning sun will break without incense of daily prayer, and no sun go down with sins unconfessed. Nay, more, I would that, like the Churches of early days, its doors may always be open to burdened hearts—that if any child of sin or sorrow shall feel the burden heavy on his heart, it may be to him a Bethel, none other than the House of God and gate of heaven. It is the misfortune of a day of doubting faith that now-a-days men do not build Churches for daily use. A half hour one day in seven is thought enough for God. It was not so with men of a purer faith. They sought daily grace for daily trial; they knew the worth of daily prayer; they knew what the Church of God was to weary souls, and so its doors were always open, that if any heart should long for silent communion with God, there was one place where the world dared not enter, and the open door of God's own house offered a sacred rest for weary feet and heavy hearts. When that day shall come again, and when men hindered by worldly cares shall silently let their prayers go up with brethren here, the Church will put on garments of beauty, and men fly like doves to her windows.

THE WORSHIP OF THIS CHURCH WILL BE COMMON WORSHIP. The sweet strains of Psalmists which went heavenward three thousand years ago will attune our hearts to praise. The prayers which once rested on fathers' and martyrs' lips will set our hearts aglow with holy love. The same dear lessons of God's Word will be read within its walls, while holy times and holy seasons measure out its years, not by earthly suns, but by CHRIST the Sun of Righteousness. There will be voices here to join in that glorious confession of faith which every day encircles the world. Yes, the lisping voice of childhood and the trembling accents of age shall here swell out into fuller harmonies that glorious confession of faith in a Triune God which once cheered the martyr at the stake, and which

shall be forever the burden of the song of the redeemed in heaven.

THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST WILL HERE BE PREACHED.—If there be any theme on earth which needs an angel's tongue it is the Gospel of God's Dear Son. It is that old sweet story of Christ Incarnate, Christ Crucified, Christ Risen, Christ Ascended, Christ the Mediator, and Christ the Judge. It needs no other subject to soften rugged natures and make hard hearts as gentle as the heart of a Christian child. If there be any sign on earth to show all the world that the Church is the Bride of JESUS CHRIST; if there be anything which will show men that the Church is the Lamb's Bride, and the mother of us all, it is that she never had a lesson for her children's ears save only of a SAVIOUR'S love. From the day the babe became GOD'S child in Baptism, until the tottering step of three score years and ten, the Church has only one lesson, to tell, as she alone does tell, of CHRIST her absent Bridegroom, and with more than a mother's love seek to make her children His by daily ripening them for heaven. If son of hers is recreant to his holy trust, if he shall ever dare to bring here the themes of earth, if his lips shall forget CHRIST'S message, it is only because his deaf ears and coldheart would not hear the Church's voice or repeat her lessons in her children's ears. The great reason why there are so many hearts around us dead is because we overlook the simplicity of the cross. We need more Galilean preaching. There is a power in the heart-breaking story of the love of JESUS CHRIST beyond all the world has ever written. If we could only sit where they sat at JESUS' feet; if we could only have our hearts warm with His love, the Church would see again its harvest of precious souls.

THE SACRAMENTS OF CHRIST WILL HERE BE SET FORTH—not as mere forms for hungry souls to feed upon; not as decent ceremonies for those who love Christian order; not as pleasing symbols to instruct the eye—no, none of these mocking phantoms of dreaming men, whose hearts are too cold for faith; but sacramental mysteries which are the realities of the Kingdom of GOD. They were GOD'S gifts to man when He gave us His Dear Son. They were clothed upon with life when He purchased them with His own precious blood. It bodes no good to faith when Christian men dare speak of gifts from GOD as idle forms. If I could lead you all to day beside that Savior's Cross; if faith could only fix its eye on His pierced side, methinks some sinful heart would see in the water and the blood which flowed from His wounded side a cure for every stain; and you might learn what that man learned whom JESUS loved, the mystery of grace which sealed our pardon there. The faith which sees its sin, which feels its need, which looks to CHRIST alone for safety, will go with gladness where CHRIST has called him and find in Him peace and pardon.

This worship, faith and sacraments of the Church, 'is for all for whom CHRIST died. This Church will be a free Church—no ranks, no titles here; for the poorest man on earth may find here his Saviour's home, to be trained for heaven.

*"Our mother the Church hath never a child
To honor before the rest;
But she singeth the same for mighty kings
And the veriest babe on her breast;
And the Bishop goes down to his narrow bed
As the ploughman's child is laid,
And alike she blesseth the dark-browed serf,
And the chief in his robe arrayed.
Oh the poor man's friend is the Church of CHRIST
From birth to his funeral day;
She makes him the LORD's, in her surpliced arms,
And singeth his burial lay."

Brethren, if there be any wrong which should make men's cheeks blush for shame, it is exclusive privileges in the Church of GOD. It is a wrong to dying souls, a wrong to our Master's Bride, a wrong to our Saviour CHRIST when our pride or folly shuts any poor man from the house of GOD. This Church is not built to be a Christian market house where we sell so much Gospel for so much money. It is a free Church; here the hearing of the Gospel will be forever free, as the invitation is free. If any child of sin shall bethink himself, if GOD shall call him, if the voice of CHRIST shall reach the wanderer, no hindrance of our creation shall shut him from the house of prayer. I trust that the open door and ready welcome of this dear Church will speak, as only such a Church can speak to wanderer's ears, and that many such will come to hear, and stay to pray, and go hence as men went from JESUS, every whit made whole.

Time would fail me to tell of all the thoughts which crowd upon my heart to-day. This is a Bishop's Church, the centre of a Diocese which I pray GOD may be an apostolic See. If my heart does not misjudge me I think I read in all your hearts the dawning of a deeper faith. I see a firmer grasp on holy truth. There are more hearts who thirst for the incense of daily prayer, and which, with deeper longings, are asking in weekly communions: "LORD, evermore give us this bread." The loving mercy of our GOD has given me as fellow helpers in this work as loyal and as earnest men as ever made a Bishop's heart glad. I count myself as rich to-day in the love of clergy and of people who learned their love in loving CHRIST. I would not give the love of such as they for all the state and wealth that ever gathered round a Bishop's See. I count it as a token full of hope that ere we laid the foundation of our Cathedral Church, the work of faith and prayer had knit together of lively stones a fairer temple in the LORD. The day will surely come

*Coxe's Ballads.

when here upon the border, (it may be when I am dead,) there shall be a daughter of an Apostolic Church, with an Apostolic Bishop with his corps of Apostolic Clergy, in an Apostolic Diocese, with heads and hands busy with Apostolic work; and then the world will see the bride of JESUS CHRIST coming up from this wilderness, leaning on her beloved, "fair as the morn, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

Beloved, God hasten to us this time. To-day is a day of joy—joy almost without a cloud—and yet like the joy of the men of God who repaired the temple, our joy is mingled with weeping. One whose heart would have rejoiced to have seen this day died without the sight. For four years she went in and out among you as a help meet of one whose life has been that of a faithful shepherd of CHRIST's flock. Last Eastertide, when the flowers of hope made the Christian grave so beautiful, she went to rest, and sweetly sleeps with her Indian lambs in the acre of God. It was while my heart was sad for my brother's loss, and while alone with my God, I tried to write the warning lesson on my heart, that the thought came to build our Church even in troublesome times. I believe God put that thought there, and so I have watched it, and it grew to be a plan, and our work for God will be blended with thoughts of those of our number who have gone to rest. When I mentioned the thought you gave me a God speed and a welcome, and the Church will grow. I ask that it shall be an offering of love. I want no unwilling gifts wrung by importunity from selfish hearts. I would not so wrong the love of JESUS CHRIST. I could not so pollute His Church, as to build God's House out of grudging and selfish gifts. No. When it is done I trust that every nail, stone, and timber in this House of God shall be some man's offering of love; that from the stone we lay to-day to the cross-capped spire, it will be a gift of loving hearts; and then in every blow of the workman's hammer, in every tracing of the carpenter's skill, in the rich flood of light which comes from its windows, designed, as they have been, by one who drew the plan as an offering of love—all will feel that the skill which fashioned so beautiful a work for God is dearer in His sight, because it was the offering of men who longed to take something they called their own and give unto CHRIST. We shall build the Church by the help of God, for with faith in Him, He will find the way. It may be months, it may be years before our work is ended; but the day will come when this dear Church shall be to us, and our children after us, the House of God and gate of heaven.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE BISHOP'S CHURCH.

any This Church is to be the Bishop's Church of the Diocese of Minnesota. Around it as from a common centre will be gathered the Christian Schools of the Diocese: Andrews Hall for the education of our Indian lambs; Seabury Hall for training heralds of the Cross, and other Schools yet to be planted for the promotion of sound Christian learning. The occasion which led the Bishop to commence this work was the death of Mrs. J. L. Breck, which impressed deeply on his heart the words of his Lord and Master: "Work while the day lasts, for the night cometh in which no man can work." In so far as this bereavement left its lesson on our hearts, the erection of this Church is connected with memories of one who has entered the rest of the people of God; but it is not a Parochial, nor, in ~~its~~ ^{its} strict sense, a memorial Church. The lots on which it is built are held in trust for the Bishop, and his successors in office, and its sittings are to be forever free. If *any* of our friends will aid us in this holy work we will receive their gifts with devout gratitude, and ever pray that they may be for the glory of God and the salvation of Men.



