

1876 IRM (Edgewater) Rockwell - Centennial Discourse. First Pres. Church

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CENTENNIAL DISCOURSE.

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HISTORY OF THE

**F**irst **P**resbyterian **C**hurch,

EDGEWATER, STATEN ISLAND,

By REV. J. E. ROCKWELL, D. D.,

*Joel Rockwell*  
JULY 2, 1876.

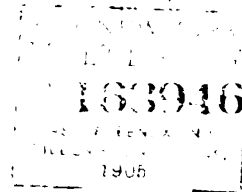
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STATEN ISLAND:

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JULY 04

# CENTENNIAL DISCOURSE.

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TEXT.—PSALM 44: 1. "We have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us what work Thou didst in their days, in the times of old."

History is best studied in the light of God's word and providence, and with the distinct purpose in view of gaining a clearer insight into the principles of God's government; of strengthening our confidence in His gracious help, and of stimulating our gratitude for His favours and blessings.

National history is mainly important in its bearings upon the Church of God, and the attentive student thereof will find that while nations have risen and flourished and decayed, the Church has never been destroyed—has never lost its power—and still lives as in the strength and vigour of immortal youth.

Principles never die. God's truth is immutable, and although human institutions may perish, the living embodiment of the Oracles of God, and the conservator of His word and promises, has never disappeared since Jehovah first gathered His people together and set them apart as distinct and peculiar from all the families of the earth. And he who studies most attentively the history of the world will observe that those nations have flourished most, and have been most secure from change, who have most faithfully conserved His truth, and guarded and honored His Church. The Lord's portion is His people, and He raises up or destroys nations

just as they accept or resist the progress of His kingdom, and the advancement of His Church. Hence, while the merely worldly philosopher recalls and notes the political, financial and social causes which have been concerned in our national history, the christian identifies it with the developments of divine providence on behalf of the Church, and rejoices to recall what wonders God has here wrought for His people, and what work He hath done in the times of old. Hence it is no impertinent introduction of the Church into the history of our nation, which sets apart this day as a time for reviews of the way that God has led us, and a history of the individual churches with which we are severally associated. No one can read the history of America and not see all the way through the hand of God engaged in opening here a way for His people, not only as a refuge from their enemies, but as the theatre for some of the grandest movements of the Church in subduing the world unto Himself. And while in this work all denominations of Christians are having a part, and while in the establishment and maintenance of free and republican institutions all have been concerned, there seems to be a peculiar fitness in the act of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, which requires of all Pastors that they set apart the first Sabbath in July of this centennial year in our national history to the preaching of historical discourses, which shall collect together and embody the facts which more especially concern their own congregation.

The principles of Presbyterianism are republican; its form of government, which we believe to be scriptural and apostolical, and which was simply modelled after the plan of the Synagogue, is a representative government. Where enough of its people are found to support the institutions of religion, they elect elders to have the charge of their spiritual concerns, and a Pastor to break to them the bread of life.

When three or four churches are found adjacent to each other they organize into a Presbytery or Classis, in which there is an equal representative of elders and ministers. And when these Churches and Presbyteries have increased they unite again into Synods and Assemblies, where the Church or peo-



ple is still represented by elders, who have an equal voice with the ministers in all their deliberations.

This principle will be recognized as lying at the foundation of our republican institutions, and as manifesting itself in our civil and political arrangements. The rights of every individual are recognized not only in his privilege as a citizen, but in his responsibilities to government and law. The town has its representative in the County, the County in the State, and the State in the Union. The humblest individual has the right of appeal from the decisions of an inferior court to the judgment of the higher, and so may secure justice by a resort to judicatures which are exempt from the prejudice or ignorance which may have worked injury to him in the first processes of the law. This is the principle which distinguishes Presbyterianism as a government, and it was this element which was largely concerned in the early settlement of our country, in the strife for liberty in the great struggle of the Revolution, and in the ultimate organization of our national republican institutions. This form of government, with the exception of England, is that which the Church of the Reformation adopted in its more important features. The Church of Holland, which was the first reformed church that began its work on this continent, was Presbyterian as much as we. The Churches of Geneva, of Switzerland, of Germany, of Bohemia, of Scotland, of France and of Italy, were fully Presbyterian. This was the type of government which the vast majority of the reformed churches assumed, except where kingly power interfered to keep back this great principle that would inevitably work out freedom and popular institutions. Long before the war of the Revolution, the Presbyterian church was established in America. Some of the congregations under the charge of the General Assembly have already celebrated or passed their second centennial, while the Dutch type of the Presbyterian family, as represented in New York, numbers already two hundred and fifty years in the enjoyment of church ordinance. It would hardly be doing justice to the history of Presbyterianism upon this Island to commence and end with the brief review of what this single church has

done within the simple score of years of its individual existence. Justice to the theme before us requires a brief survey of what we have heard from our fathers of the work which God has done for them in the times of old.

The early settlements of this Island date back to the year 1638, when amid the snows of the winter the first cabins were erected by a small colony which came out from Holland, under the auspices of the Dutch West India Company. The early colonial records of the State present to us only a few outlines of the events which marked those early attempts at settling the Island with colonists. We can but imperfectly picture to ourselves the appearance of this magnificent bay and its surroundings when these families first landed upon our shores; those beautiful hills covered with primeval forests; bold headlands which have now disappeared before the pick and the spade of modern industry and improvement; the waters filled with the light canoes of the Monaton Indians, the first lord of this Island; the woods alive with deer and with wild fowl, and sheltering the wigwam of the savage, soon to disappear forever before the advancing tide of civilization. It was not till the year 1661 that any real progress was made in the settlement of the Island. There was here, as elsewhere, the struggle for a foothold with the Indians, who several times made murderous assaults upon the infant colony. Among the first who came hither from the old world was a small colony of Waldenses, who after the last and dreadful persecution of the Papal church, in which thousands of their people were butchered by the hirelings of Rome, first found a shelter and protection in Holland, and at length embarked for America and established themselves upon this Island. In the year 1656 three hundred of this interesting and wonderful people, by the approbation and help of the states of the Hague, to whose protection they had fled, were sent to the New Netherlands in company with several families of the Dutch. And these persecuted Christians formed a home at Oude Dorpe, near the central part of our own beautiful Island. Soon after the Huguenots, who long before the terrible massacre of St. Bartholomew had been oppressed and persecuted by the Papal authorities

of France, came hither and received from the West India Company grants of land also near the central part of the Island, a few miles south of the Narrows, where a settlement was commenced and a block house built for protection against the savages. This is a most interesting and important fact, that this Island should have thus early in the settlement have furnished a shelter and a home to the persecuted Waldenses of Piedmont and the Huguenots of France, and that thus its earliest church should have been constituted in accordance with the Presbyterian model, since the Waldensian church and the Huguenots were both in their doctrine, order and discipline, Presbyterian. To this little band of christians, Dominie Drisius, of the Dutch Church of New York, made a monthly visit, preaching to them in the French language, and administering to them the sacraments. It would be pleasant to be able accurately to picture to ourselves these early Presbyterians of the French, Italian and Dutch type, as they appeared in these occasional services; the joy with which they welcomed the Dominie as he landed from some quaint looking vessel or boat that had brought him down from the City, and the serious and attentive congregation which gathered to hear him, perhaps in some barn or log house, or perhaps beneath some broad spreading tree. We can at least know that many of his hearers came together with hearts full of gratitude and joy, because they had found here freedom to worship God, and had the assurance of protection from the enemies that had sought their destruction. By the earnest and scholarly investigation of Hon. Henry C. Murphy, while holding the office of United States Minister to Holland, an exceedingly interesting manuscript was brought to light and published under the auspices of the Long Island Historical Society, which enables us to form some clear conception of the social condition of our Island in those early days of its settlement. In the year of 1679 and 1680 Jaspar Dankers and Peter Shuyter left Holland for America to find a home for a sect known as the Labadists, who for a number of years had created an unusual excitement amid the Reformed churches. On their way southward through New Jersey they passed over Staten



Island, and have given a full and entertaining description of three days over its hills and through its forests. Their journal reads thus :—

“Oct. 10 ; Tuesday.—Finding no opportunity of going to Staten Island we asked our old friend Symon, who had come over from Gouanes, what was the best way for us to get there, when he offered us his services to take us over in his skiff, which we accepted.

“11th ; Wednesday.—We embarked early this morning in his boat, and he rowed us to Staten Island, where we arrived about eight o'clock. He left us there and we went on our way. This Island is about thirty-two miles long and four broad. Its sides are very irregular, with projecting points and indented bays, and creeks running deep into the country. The eastern part is high and steep, and has few inhabitants. It is the usual place where ships ready for sea stop to take in water, while the captain and the passengers are engaged in making their arrangements and writing letters previous to their departure. As regards the hilly or middle part of the Island, it is uninhabited, although the soil is better than the land around it ; but in consequence of its being away from the water, and lying so high, no one will live there ; the creeks and rivers being so serviceable to them in enabling them to go to the City, for fishing and catching oysters, and for being near the salt meadows. The woods are used for pasturing horses and cattle, for being an island none of them can get off. Each person has marks upon his own, by which he can find them when he wants them. When the population of the country shall increase, these places will be taken up. Game of all kinds is plenty ; twenty or thirty deer are sometimes seen in a herd. A boy, who came in a house where we were, told us he had shot ten the last winter himself, and more than forty in his life ; and in the same manner other game. We tasted here the best grapes. There are now about a hundred families on the Island, of which the English constitute the least portion, and the Dutch and French divide between them about equally the greater portion. They have neither church nor minister, and live rather

far from each other and inconveniently to meet together. The English are less disposed to religion and inquire little after it, but in case there were a minister they would contribute to his support. The French and Dutch are very desirous and eager for one, for they spoke of it wherever we went, and said in event of not obtaining Dominie Tessemaker they would send or had sent to France for another. The French are good Reformed Churchmen, and some of them are Walloons. The Dutch are also from different quarters. We reached the Island about nine o'clock, directly opposite Gouanes, not far from the watering place. We proceeded southwardly along the shores of the high land on the east end, where it was sometimes stony and rocky and sometimes sandy, supplied with fine constantly flowing springs, from which at times we quenched our thirst. We had now come nearly to the farthest point on the south-east, behind which I had observed several houses when we came in with the ship. We had also made inquiries as to the village through which we would have to pass, and they told us that Oude Dorp would be the first one we would come to ; but my comrade finding the point very rocky and difficult, and believing the village was inland, and as we discovered no path to follow we determined to clamber to the top of the steep bluff through the bushes and thickets, which we accomplished at great difficulty and in a perspiration. We found a little of a road above and below, and nothing but woods through which one could not see. Having wandered an hour or more in the woods, now in a hollow and then over a hill, at one time through a swamp and then across a brook, without finding any road or path, we entirely lost our way. We could see nothing except a little of the sky through the thick branches of the trees above our heads, and we thought it best to break out of the woods entirely and regain the shore. We made our way at last out of the woods and struck the shore a quarter of an hour's distance from where we began to climb up. We were rejoiced as there was a house not far from the place where we came out. We went into it to see if we could find any one who would show us the way a little.

There was no master in it, but an English woman with negroes and servants. We first asked her as to the road, and then for something to drink, and also for some one to show us the road; but she refused the last although we were willing to pay for it. She was a cross woman; she said she had never been in the village, and her folks must work, and we would certainly have to go away as wise as we came. She said however we must follow the shore, as we did. We went now over the rocky point, which we were no sooner over than we saw a pretty little sand creek and not far from there cattle and horses. We also saw the point to which the little path led from the hill above where I was when my comrade called me. We went on to the little creek to sit down and rest and cool ourselves, and then proceeded to the houses which constitutes the Oude Dorp. It was now about ten o'clock; there were seven houses, but only three in which anybody lived. The others were abandoned and their owners had gone to live in better places on the Island. We went into the first house, which was inhabited by English, and there rested ourselves, and eat, and enquired after the road. The woman was cross and her husband not much better. We had to pay her for what we eat, which we had not done before; we paid three guilders in zeewan, though we had only drank water. We proceeded by a tolerably good road to the Nieuwe Dorp, but as the road was in the woods, we got astray again in them. It was dark and we were compelled to break our way out through the woods and thickets. We saw a house at a distance to which we directed ourselves across the bushes. It was the first house of Nieuwe Dorp. We found there an Englishman who could speak Dutch, and who received us very cordially into his house, where we had as good as he and his wife had. She was a Dutch woman from the Manhatans, who was glad to have us in the house.

12th; Thursday.—Although we had not slept well we had to resume our journey with the day. The man where we slept set us on the road. We had now no more villages to go to, but went from one plantation to another, for the most part belonging to the French, who showed us every kindness, be-

cause we conversed with them in French, and spoke of the ways of the Lord according to their condition."

The journal gives the account of one more day's journey through the western part of the Island to the Elizabeth ferry, making constant and grateful notice of the kindness received by the French and the Dutch. His narrative gives a pleasant picture of our Island two hundred years ago, and confirms the statement that its original settlers were distinctly and clearly of the Reformed Faith as it was held in Holland, Piedmont and France, which was pure and simple Presbyterianism. In the year 1680, two years after this journal was written, a church was built by the Huguenots at Fresh Kill, in which services were conducted in French. Of this early church only a few stones in the little graveyard around it are left. Not long after a church was built by the Waldenses from Oude Dorp, not far from what was known as the Black Horse Tavern. Rev. Dr. Brownlee, to whose scholarly and patient research we are largely indebted for the church history of our Island, states in his Anniversary Address, that the first traces of a Reformed church on the north side lead back to the year 1680, and that these three churches thus built by Waldensian, French and Dutch Presbyterians, having no settled pastor, were supplied by the Dutch Ministers of New York and New Jersey. In 1697 the Huguenot church at Fresh Kill obtained as a pastor the Rev. Dr. Bonrepos. In 1717 the French and Waldensian churches united with the Dutch and organized a church and built a house of worship at Richmond, which I am told was standing at the time of the Revolution, probably in a little grave-yard not far from the Court House. After this union was formed an English Presbyterian Church appeared to have been organized at Stony Brook, the first site of the Waldensian congregation, for in 1769 a deed was given to the session of this church, and, Consistory of the Reformed church at Richmond, for some land in Richmond on which a church was to be built. "The deed" (says Dr. Brownlee) "mentions the names of Jacob Rezeau and Samuel Broome as the present Elders of the English Presbyterian Church according to the Westminster Con-

fession of Faith, Catechism and Directory agreeable to the present established Church of Scotland. The deed conveyed a small lot, 65 feet by 55, to these parties, as far as I can understand it, the ground on which the present Reformed Church in Richmond stands. The church then standing at Stony Brook was to be removed and rebuilt on this lot." From these historic statements it is evident that Presbyterianism is no novelty on this Island, but was the earliest type of Church order and organization.

If we were called upon to show our Genealogical Tables we might write them somewhat in this form : A colony of Waldenses, the known and admitted successors of the Apostolic church in Italy, came to Staten Island and organized a church at Stony Creek between the years 1656 and 1680. In the same age the Huguenots, fresh from persecutions for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, came from Rochelle and established a church of the same order at Fresh Kill. Near the same town the Dutch (who had fought out the great principle of Religious Liberty before England practically knew what the word meant) established in connection with these Christians a church on the North Side of the Island. In 1717, or a little later, an English Presbyterian church was organized in the place of the Waldensian church at Stony Brook, and in 1769 built a house of worship in Richmond, whose successor still stands on its old site, and is now the Reformed church at that place. From these united Christian families came the Reformed church at Port Richmond, Brighton, Huguenot and Stapleton ; hence sprang our own. Before leaving this early history of Presbyterianism on Staten Island it is but proper to glance at the relations of our own order to other church organizations. In the year 1704 Rev. Mr. McKenzie came hither as a missionary of the Episcopal Church ; though finding but few of his own faith and order he was kindly welcomed by both the Dutch and the French, and was permitted to hold service in the Huguenot church for seven years, until St. Andrew's was built. In order to bring into the pale of the English Church the Dutch inhabitants, prayer books translated into their language were freely distributed, and so they were gradually intro-



duced to this new form of worship and order. In 1712 the Justices of Richmond County, the High Sheriff, and the Commander in-Chief of Her Majesty's Militia in this County, as well for themselves as in the names of the other inhabitants of the County, members of the Church of England, return thanks to the Society in London for the support of their worthy pastor. "Upon his first induction there were not above four or five in the whole County who knew anything of our excellent liturgy and form of worship, and many of them knew little more of any religion than the common notion of a Deity. And as their ignorance was great so was their practice irregular and barbarous. But now by the blessing of God attending his labours our church increases ; a considerable reformation is wrought and something of the face of Christianity is seen around us."

Dr. Brownlee, with a mild sarcasm, calls this "delicious," and speaks of this intolerant ignorance as "celestial complacency." I may be permitted to add that it is "magnificent brass," without alloy, and stupendous impudence of which only a miserable bigot could be guilty ; which deserves a monument of lead, on which should be engraved "We are the people, wisdom will die with us." With what cool assumption and outrageous bigotry do these men ignore the very existence of the church which for seven years had given them shelter and a home. With what monstrous arrogance do they speak of Christians who for forty years had been enjoying the ordinances of the church of Waldenses, (the true successors of the Apostolic Church in Italy), whose fathers were preaching the Gospel over Europe when England's priests and people were slumbering in the arms of the harlot of Rome ; of the Huguenots, who had waded through seas of blood and persecution for the Gospel of Christ ; and of the Dutch, among whom were these magnificent symbols, the Catechism of Heidelberg, and the Confession of the Synod of Dort, who had wrought out the idea of true religious freedom when England was sending out its brutal Claverhouse to Scotland to murder her confessors of Christ in cold blood, and was trying the dreadful but hopeless ex-

periment of seeking to dragoon Scotch Presbyterianism into Prelacy and Kingcraft.

It is worthy of notice that the Moravian Church, which was established a hundred years after the Waldenses and Huguenots had come hither, owes its ministry and its origin to the Waldenses, who carried the Gospel into Bohemia long before the days of Huss and Wickliff; and in this respect that venerable and truly missionary church, though now having Bishops, though it largely limits their power, had a truly Presbyterian origin and parentage. Among the archives at Bethlehem is the original letter, dated in 1762, desiring that a church might be established at New Dorp, as you will notice not far from the early home of the Waldensian Colony. Among the signers are the names of Richard Conner, Stephen and Cornelius Martino, Tunis Egbert, Jacob, John and Cornelius Vanderbilt, Mary Stillwell and Peter Perine. The history of this Island then as to its early settlers is a history of Waldensian, French, Dutch and English Presbyterians, who had enjoyed the ordinances of the Gospel here two hundred years ago. Many of the names yet familiar to the inhabitants of this county are the representatives of those continental presbyterianism, who here sought and found *Freedom* to worship God.

The brief history of our own church, occupying as it does but a space of twenty years, lies within the memory of most who hear me to day. In the year 1849 a Sabbath School was commenced at Stapleton, by members of the Reformed Church at Tompkinsville. From that time religious services were held in the school room with an evidently growing interest on the part of the people. June 25, 1851; thirty-two Christian disciples were organized into a church by the South Classis of New York, and in Sept. of the same year Rev. A. R. Thompson became its pastor, under whose ministry this house was erected in 1852, enlarged in 1854, and a large and flourishing congregation built up. In the year 1856 the Gore Street Chapel was built as a Mission School. This year also witnessed the beginning of a new church which, though styled the First Presbyterian Church of Staten Island, was really

the successor of three, which had been established in the first fifty years of the settlement of the Island. In the Spring of 1856 a number of members of the Reformed Church of Stapleton, believing that the time had come for the organization of a new church in Clifton, which then gave promise of a rapid increase in population, met for preliminary deliberation and prayer in the house of Mr. J. D. Dix, and after several meetings and earnest and serious consultation agreed to unite in a new church enterprise, the centre of which should be near the dividing line of the towns of Middletown and Southfield. On the 14th of May, 1856, the church was duly organized at the house of George M. Gerard, in Townsend Avenue, by a committee of the Third Presbytery of New York, consisting of Rev. S. D. Burchard, D. D., A. E. Campbell, D. D., Rev. Washington Roosevelt, D. D., and T. McLaughlin, with Elder David Stevens and J. C. Hines. After religious services, conducted by Dr. Burchard and Mr. McLaughlin, twenty-six persons presented letters from other churches, chiefly the Reformed church of Stapleton, and were duly constituted a church of Christ, under the name of the First Presbyterian church of Clifton, S. I. At the same time Messrs. John D. Dix, E. L. Sexton and G. W. Gerard were installed as Elders, and E. A. Ludlow and R. Davidge were made Deacons. In the evening of the same day Mr. Roosevelt preached a stirring sermon from the words—"The people had a mind to the work." On the following Sabbath the first communion was administered by Mr. Roosevelt. Until the Chapel at Clifton was built services were regularly held at the house of Mr. Dix, or some other equally convenient dwelling. On the 3rd of August, 1856, the Chapel in Townsend Avenue was dedicated to the worship of God; the services being conducted by Rev. Wm. Whittaker, of Greenport, L. I.

On the 1st of October, 1856, Rev. Alonzo Brown was duly installed Pastor of the church. But in consequence of ill health his services were interrupted, and his connection with the church was severed on the 30th of November, 1857.

In April, 1858, Rev. Samuel W. Crittenden was installed

Pastor, and continued in this relation until Nov. 29th, 1859, when he was compelled to ask for a dismission in consequence of increasing ill health. January 25th, 1860, a call was presented to Rev. Wm. H. Taylor, for his pastoral services, and he was duly installed on the 22nd of February, 1860, by the Presbytery of New York, to which body the church had now transferred its relations. After a pleasant and successful pastorate, Mr. Taylor resigned his charge April 18, 1864, and was succeeded by Rev. David R. Frazer, who was installed April 1st, 1865, and after a service every way useful and profitable, was at his own request dismissed on the 1st of November, 1867, that he might accept a call tendered him by the church in Hudson, N. Y. Soon after his dismission the Rev. Dr. Skinner, the pastor of the Reformed church in Stapleton, also resigned his charge, and the way seemed to be opening for a reunion of the two churches. After several preliminary meetings held in each separate congregation, it was agreed that the churches unite under the corporate name of the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewater, S. I. That the property at Clifton be sold and the proceeds used for liquidating the debt upon this property; that the officers of each congregation form the session of the united church. In the month of September, 1868, I took the charge of this people; and these eight years of pastoral service have been to me years of happy labour. During the pastorate of Mr Brown, ten were added to the church by letter. Under Mr. Crittenden seven joined by letter, and fourteen by profession of their faith. Under Mr. Taylor twenty-nine were added by letter, and eight by profession. During the pastorate of Mr. Frazer twelve were received, and fourteen by profession.

Up to the time of the reunion, embracing a period of twelve years, there had been a sure and steady growth. The total added to the church being fifty-eight by letter, and thirty-six by profession. At that time there was in actual communion forty-eight only out of the one hundred and twenty-two who had been members of the church. This fact shows the changes and depletion in population, which made necessary

the uniting of the two churches. In June, 1868, at the consummation of the union, thirty-six names were added from the Reformed church. Since then there have been added to the church by letter ninety-six, and seventy-four by profession of faith ; in all, one hundred and seventy.

At the union of the two congregations the Session was composed of the following members : Mr. John D. Dix and Mr. E. C. Bridgeman, of the Clifton church, and Mr. Wm. Shaw and Dr. Thos. C. Moffatt, of the Reformed church, Elders ; and Mr. Francis McDonald and Mr. Howard Parmele, of the Clifton church, and Messrs. Charles H. Morris and William Standerwick, of the Reformed church, Deacons. Since then Mr. Shaw has left us to reside in Ireland, after a useful and honoured service of eighteen years on this Island. And Dr. Moffatt and Mr. Bridgeman have gone to their heavenly rest from lives of loved and honoured work for the Master, leaving behind them a fragrant and precious memory. Mr. Parmele and Mr. Morris have gone West, where they are still labouring to build up the interests of religion in their respective homes. The places of these brothers have been filled by Mr. Wm. Standerwick and H. L. Butler in the Eldership, and Messrs. Alfred Parmele, B. T. Jacobs, H. L. Butler, Jr., and E. C. Bridgeman in the Deaconate. In the beginning of the year 1872 the congregation adopted as its plan of meeting its yearly expenses what is known as the Bellefont or envelope system, which has as its fundamental principle the support of the Gospel by voluntary offerings, and which only needs the hearty co-operation of all to prove an ample success.

In the year 1874, while I was absent in Europe as the representative of our General Assembly to the Church of Scotland, the Chapel in Broad Street, where our Sabbath School had long found a pleasant home, was burned to the ground by the torch of the incendiary. The event appeared to be one that was every way unpropitious ; it seemed largely to interrupt our work as a church, especially among the poor and those who were not in the habit of attending upon the ordinary services of the Sabbath. But the developements of



God's providence have shown us that He who could bring order out of confusion could make even the wrath of man to praise Him. The large and commodious room which will soon be completed, the expences for the erection of which have been provided, by the munificence of a single Christian, in a manner which God only could have arranged, is to us an earnest of His power to bless and to build up, which should give us a strong and abiding trust in Him. It has been already a stimulus to our efforts in gathering in the poor and the neglecters of religion to our church, which God has manifestly approved, and on which His blessing has rested.

And now as I close this history I have but to call your attention to the need which is already apparent of a new and more commodious and durable house of worship for this congregation, or at least a thorough repair and enlargement of this. What a memorable celebration of this grand centennial year would it be to begin and complete such a work. I know that the times are dark, yet it may be remembered that the Tabernacle was built, with all its costliness, while God's people were escaping from the long servitude in Egypt, and were yet unsettled in the wilderness, and that the second Temple was rebuilt in the troublous times which followed the long captivity in Babylon. We may not renounce God's service and work whatever are our surroundings. The faith which plans and executes work for Him, even in times of trial and darkness, will secure His abundant blessing. At least let us labour and pray with unceasing earnestness for His spirit to be shed upon us, and for His grace that is able to build us up, to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.



