



# CENTENNIAL VOLUME

OF THE

# First Presbyterian Church

OF PITTSBURGH, PA.

1784 — 1884.

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1884.

## SABBATH AFTERNOON.

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The Sabbath Schools of the Second and Third Presbyterian Churches, omitting their regular services, marched to the First Church and were comfortably seated on the main floor of the church, and the exercises proceeded in presence of a large audience in the gallery. The occasion was throughout of the highest interest.

After devotional exercises, Dr. Wm. Speer was introduced. It was with peculiar gratitude that many heard the voice of this admirable writer, of whom the church is justly proud. He had been Superintendent for years, and had gone from the heart of the church in which he had grown up into the heart of that vast empire—China, accompanied by one of the noblest spirits among the consecrated young women of our history. Returning thence on account of ill health, he had engaged in varied labors for Christ as Missionary to the Chinese on the Pacific coast, as author of one of the best books for China ever written, and as Secretary of the General Assembly's Board of Education. He had again devoted his life to the interests of the Chinese by laboring for them in this country, and sought special qualifications for it by a second journey through China.

It was one of the gratifications of the occasion that he could be with us, and thanks are due that he undertook and completed the preparation of two such valuable papers as those which were contributed to the Sabbath School history and on the Missionary history of our church century. His paper that afternoon is as follows, and is replete with interest :

## DR. SPEER'S SABBATH SCHOOL HISTORY.

Some of you probably have read the story of a man, Luke Short, who died in New England, at a hundred and sixteen years of age. When over a century old, in the prospect of death, he remembered a sermon which he had heard when a youth, in England, from the celebrated preacher, John Flavel. The text was, "if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be *anathema maranatha;*" that is, "let him be accursed when the Lord shall come." The thoughts of Jesus Christ as a loving Saviour, yet as a just Judge, brought him to repentance. Thus this wonderful thing happened, that a man over a hundred years old was converted by a sermon which he heard when a boy. To-day we are to talk about things which have occurred during the hundred years which are past, and to learn lessons which shall be profitable for all our lives to come. One of the blessings of the gospel is that it prolongs life. Each generation of Christians now lives longer than that preceding it. There may be some boy or girl but a few years old among the Sabbath School children that have met here this afternoon, who will join a hundred years from now in celebrating the immeasurably greater blessing which God has promised through the Lord Jesus Christ to bestow upon His church in these crowning days of this dispensation. May the Holy Spirit make all the life of every one of us, whether it be long or short, fruitful in works which the dear Saviour will bless to many on earth, and crown with joy when he shall come as the Judge of all.

The glorious psalm which has been read, the forty-eighth, was intended for grand occasions like the present, when we are met to commemorate God's wonderful goodness to us as a church

and people for a hundred years. God put it into this book; and He has preserved the book for more than two thousand years, that Christians now, as well as those who have lived in all the ages before us, might have thoughts and words suitable and acceptable for just such memorable and happy days in the history of His people as this one. Let us all join, the young and the old, parents and children, teachers and scholars, in proclaiming to His praise, "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness." This city has been in many respects in the past "a city of our God;" and this church has been greatly honored by Him as "a mountain of His holiness." Therefore we should greatly praise Him from our hearts and with our tongues to-day.

The psalm teaches His people for what they should praise God, under such circumstances:

I. It looks back to the past, to what God had given to them in the land where Israel dwelt of old; the beautiful and rich country and its remarkable situation in the world. It was "beautiful for situation;" "the joy of the whole earth." These things were designed to be *pledges of great blessings* to them from Him as the creator of the world and the governor of its nations.

II. The psalm declares, "as we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God:" that is, that those *pledges have been fruitful in the bestowments of the present*. What God had promised in the covenants of the past had all been *beheld and enjoyed* in the history and experiences of His people and in the comforts and enjoyments which His hand had poured out upon them.

III. We are authorized of God to "tell all these things" to our children: that they may love and serve God still better than we, and may depend upon the certain fulfillment of the *promises of far greater future good* which God is to grant to the church and to the world. "Mark well," "consider," all these facts and all this history, "that ye may tell it to the generation following."

The subject assigned to me is "The Sabbath School and Missionary History of the First Church."

Let these divine suggestions indicate the heads of the address to-day, in our review of the first century of the Sabbath School history of the church. Part of what is said in respect to it will be applicable to the other branch of the subject, the Missionary

history, which will be given at another time. We will now consider,

I, 1784. The beginning of the century ; its pledges of blessing to our fathers.

II, 1884. The present ; the bestowments of blessings which the century has brought to ourselves.

III, 1984. The future. The promises of blessing to our children.

1. THE PLEDGES OF BLESSING TO OUR FATHERS. Jerusalem was "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, on the sides" *or margin or borders*, "of the North." I have not time to describe the exceeding interest of the "situation" of Palestine, the very centre of the Old World : and how Jerusalem was set from the beginning to be "a joy of the whole earth ;" and tell all the beautiful stories of her relations to Babylon, the mighty ancient empire of the North, the political and intellectual influence of which, and the commercial intercourse of its people, then extended from the Mediterranean and Red seas to India and China in the far East—what grand pledges of blessing from the beginning these geographical and national relationships were to the Israel of old.

And are the same kind of evidences of God's creating and all controlling power of wisdom and goodness, in America, and in Pennsylvania, and in Pittsburgh, to be disregarded and forgotten by His better beloved and more highly blessed spiritual Israel of to-day? God, in his mercy, forbid. It is not our place now to recount God's blessing to other localities and Christian communities. But I do desire to lead these children and their teachers and parents, and the Christian people here to-day, to mark well and consider the blessings of God's word, which so many utterly slight ; so that they shall remember them, and associate them with these centennial observances as long as they live, and teach them to the generation following.

I say, "beautiful for situation" is Pittsburgh, and the great region of the valley of the Ohio, of which this group of cities and towns is the centre.

How wonderfully our nation, the United States, sits as a queen upon this grand American continent! Her sapphire throne, the shining waters of the Mexican Gulf. Her left arm, thrilling with the nerves and blood, the life and enterprise of the grand

valley of the Ohio, a thousand miles in length. Her open palm, here at Pittsburgh, to receive, as it were, by the extended fingers of these great water and land communications, the tribute of the Atlantic States and of the transatlantic commerce. Her right arm, the mighty Missouri, with its water courses and land highways outstretched to the borders of the Pacific, and ready to distribute there the munificent gifts of blessings which God has sent along with the westward course of the sun since the beginning of our era. "Beautiful for situation" is Pittsburgh. No one knows how beautiful this region is who has not seen much of other parts of the world. Pittsburgh is planted of God just where it is, in order to be "a joy" to the continent. He would have it "a joy to the whole earth." And so may it be.

And God gave to Israel not alone its location but its soil and minerals and productions of every kind. He created for its use "a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without any scarceness; thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass." And no less for His own glory, and for the good of those that were appointed to dwell therein, has God endowed this part of the American continent with a peculiar abundance and variety of sources of wealth and power. He has enriched this region in an extraordinary measure with fertile soils, unbroken to the hill tops, suited to the growth of the most nutritious grains and to afford the most abundant pasture for herds and flocks, and with fountains and streams of water; and with the common minerals, iron and coal and lime, which are the most valuable of all that the earth affords as means of creating diversified and beneficial industries, and in multiplying population and wealth. The coal and iron and lime of Pennsylvania are far better gifts of God than the gold and silver of California and Nevada. These are the minerals which the vast and energetic growth and spread of population in this new world most needed. It is these which have supplied the rails and the wires and the bridges, the engines and the machinery for a multitude of commercial and manufacturing uses and for manifold designs, both great and small, the utensils of peace and the implements of war.



And still further, God gave to the land its people, the chosen race, who took possession of it. He led Israel out of bondage, and avouched them to be his peculiar people, and blessed their land and their store houses. And it was the same God who led to this region those who were to occupy it. He caused the primary and controlling population of this favored part of the New World to be a people fitted for the great and beneficent ends which He would here accomplish through them, by many centuries of national and intellectual and spiritual education and discipline in the islands of Western Europe. Children in school should mark and consider, in studying geography and history, the wonderful way in which during two thousand years God prepared our ancestors for their task in this republic.

The people of this oldest Presbyterian Church are peculiarly called to consider these primary facts with regard to this region and its history, inasmuch as they have the chief original interest in them. Its founders planted in this locality, amidst most perilous and trying circumstances, what, with perhaps one exception, was the first organization and house for the spiritual worship of the living and true God. For nineteen years it was the only one of the Presbyterian order. For nearly half a century from the origin of it, there was only one other church of that order in Pittsburgh and Allegheny. And its history has lent it a peculiar prominence in respect to the Presbyterian interests of the valley of the Ohio.

II. In 1884 we turn to review the century passed, and ask whether GOD HAS BESTOWED THE BLESSINGS upon the generations of their children which the pledges at the beginning of it seemed to indicate? Let us group THE EVIDENCES THAT HE HAS DONE SO under several heads.

1. God has poured forth direct spiritual blessings upon this region in a measure scarcely paralleled elsewhere. Here, more than anywhere else in the land, the power of the great revival of 1800 was felt, and its best fruits enjoyed.

2. The wild condition of the frontier at that time made this a field in which zealous missionary efforts were imperatively required. It was so among the young even more than among the adult people. And thus it arose that Pittsburgh was one of the first places in the world where the modern missionary idea of the Sabbath School was conceived and put in practice. From the

earliest ages of Christianity there had been catechetical and doctrinal instruction of the children of the church and of religious inquiries from the world. But the philanthropist, Robert Raikes, in 1781, seeing the ignorance and viciousness and wretchedness of the poor in Gloucester, England, determined to try and benefit and reform those whom he could by collecting and instructing their children.

The children of the soldiers and mixed classes of poor settlers about Fort Pitt, as they increased in number, afforded a similar field for missionary labors. The Sabbath day was spent by them, in noisy games, amusements about the water, walks upon the neighboring hills, and sometimes in intoxication and fights. In the summer of 1809 Major Ebenezer Denny, who had been a soldier in the Revolutionary war, remembering the prayers and counsels of his pious mother in Carlisle, Matthew B. Lowrie, brother of Walter Lowrie, the first Secretary of our Board of Foreign Missions, and other good men connected with the First and Second Presbyterian Churches, formed what they entitled a "Moral Society," one of the efforts of which was to establish a school where children and young people could be instructed on the Sabbath day. Mr. Lewis F. Allen, of Buffalo, N. Y., a youthful teacher in it, describes the school. It was commenced in the old Court House, in the square on Market street. The room was filled with a rude and ignorant crowd, of all ages up to manhood and womanhood; white and black mingled together. Some of them were disfigured by bloody fights, then of almost daily occurrence. A well grown boy was without a nose; it had been bitten off in a fierce battle. A number of earnest people gladly gave their time, outside of church hours, each Sabbath, to teaching these vicious and neglected young people to spell and read, and recite verses of the Scriptures and the Shorter Catechism. The people of the town generally regarded this humble and self-denying work with contempt and open opposition. The life of Robert Raikes notices this truly missionary effort in Pittsburgh with marked interest, as the first example in America of the same form of missionary Sabbath School which that eminent philanthropist had succeeded in planting in several of the seaport and manufacturing cities of England.

Four years later, in 1813, and two years earlier than the date sometimes given, as a number of facts preserved by the members



of his family show, William Lecky, a member and trustee of the First Presbyterian Church, made an important advance upon the former movement. Pitying the poor children who ran wild upon the Sabbath in the upper part of the town, about the region of the church, he gathered a number of them on that day into his wagon shop, which was opposite to the church on Wood street. He engaged a powerful auxiliary in a young lady, Miss Eliza Irwin, who undertook to teach the children to sing Watt's hymns. Some of the older people were shocked by this occupation of the holy day in such unwonted employments, and arraigned Mr. Lecky before the church Session. But the wiser pastor sustained him, saying, "let him go on with his teaching, something will come of it." And before long the youthful objects of his compassion were permitted to occupy the Session room in the rear of the church building. A portion of them he enticed into his pew to hear the sermon of the good pastor. This little school gave to some of these children instruction which made them exemplary men and women, and led them to become faithful followers of Christ.

Here then we see, at a frontier town on the Ohio, only three-quarters of a century ago, two of the earliest experiments of that grand and powerful and divinely blessed missionary agency, for the salvation of mankind through the youth of each generation, which now has scattered over the American continent ninety thousand schools, which contain a hundred thousand teachers and seven millions of scholars, and by which a hundred and thirty thousand members are added yearly to the church of Christ. Indeed, the Missionary Sabbath School is now one of the most potent of evangelistic means for the revival of the dead or paralyzed Protestantism of some parts of the world, for the conversion of multitudes in Romanist countries and for the teaching of all nations whatsoever the blessed Redeemer and Lord hath commanded. The need of the Scriptures for the Sabbath School was the principal cause of the formation of the first Bible Society; which was in Great Britain, in 1804. Its international lessons have stimulated the study of the Scriptures in all Christian nations, and in foreign missionary fields. The influence of the Sabbath School has revolutionized the music and the lyric poetry of the church, and made music an ally in all aggressive

Christian and humanitarian work. It has powerfully aided in quickening the Christianity of the age.

3. The spiritual influence of its Sabbath School work has been one of the most happy features in the history of the First Church.

Labors for the instruction and conversion of the young, ever brings down a peculiar blessing from Him who so loved children when on the earth. We early trace in our Sabbath School records the evidences of the influence upon teachers and parents. Meetings for prayer were held; many of them at daylight in the morning, that ordinary domestic or business employments might not be interfered with, and that the thirsting spirits of the suppliants might be refreshed for duties of the Sabbath or of secular life. A separate monthly concert of prayer for Sabbath Schools was held by the members of the church for many years. The pastors have testified that the labors of devoted teachers were among the chief means by which the children and young people were brought to feel the claims of Christ upon their hearts and to confess His name before men. These fervent labors prepared the way for revivals of religion.

The simple memorizing of Scripture, though the knowledge of those days had not yet made the study of God's book so delightful in some things as it is now, was a supreme benefit. At the close of the year 1828, the principal school of the church reported that the scholars, averaging an attendance of a hundred and ten, had committed, during the year, sixty thousand verses. This seems, in our questionable way of learning the Scripture lesson, a great quantity. But have not the Chinese boys in our mission schools, of whom there are some who have thoroughly committed the whole seven thousand nine hundred and twenty-nine verses of the New Testament, besides some portions of the Old Testament, done far more thereby to form a solid and strong Christian character, than the boys in America do without this? It is a mistake of our present mode of teaching to instruct the young in "the *word* of God," otherwise than by "*the words* of God." Jesus says he spake "the words" which the Father gave to him. It is "not the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth," that impart spiritual wisdom, and spiritual peace, and spiritual power; the power which is "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds,"

wherever they have been reared in opposition to Him throughout the world.

4. The missionary atmosphere in which the first Sabbath School was born here has animated its subsequent life. Teachers and pecuniary aid were sent forth to plant, in numerous destitute spots of the city and its suburbs, nurseries of the tree of life. At Ferry and Fourth streets; in Virgin alley, and in Exchange alley; down at the Point; on Penn, near Fifth street; in a saw mill on the Allegheny, near Eighth street; towards the Monongahela river, on Second street, between Smithfield and Wood streets; up in Kensington or Soho, and at other places in the lower parts of the city, the children of the families of the vicinity, most often the poor, were gathered into schools on the Lord's Day. Members of the church living at more distant points, as on Prospect Hill and at Minersville to the east, up on the top of Coal Hill to the south, and in Temperanceville below it on the Ohio, where the laborers in the coal pits and glass works could be reached, engaged in this precious though toilsome work, and were joined in it by others who went gladly to their help. In 1817, James Wilson and others collected an African school; for Pittsburgh was always a convenient and comparatively safe refuge for the hunted fugitives from the South. In buildings of all kinds, shops, factories, ward school houses, the good work was carried on. In Allegheny, a German lager beer saloon supplied a room above it, where a school, sometimes called the "Lager Beer School," was taught, which in time was baptized by the more religious name of the "Providence School." A great deal of money was bestowed for these efforts from the general church funds; but more still from individuals who were personally enlisted in them. Thomas Plumer made, in 1835, a bequest of two hundred and fifty dollars for Sabbath Schools, the interest of which the church Session has used with much advantage to several of them. John Wright, a faithful elder, himself built a hall for a school. Several gentlemen, now living, have annually given large sums to others on this and the Allegheny side of the river. There were those who devoted what is far more valuable than money, health and life itself. Thomas B. Beer, son of an elder of the church, a graduate of Jefferson College entering upon studies for the ministry, it was believed at the time, sacrificed health, and in March, 1838, his life, to disease

caused by labors among the poor and suffering families of the children of the Kensington School.

The planting and care of Mission Schools was the principal object in the formation of the Pittsburgh Sabbath School Union, in 1817, sustained by the two Presbyterian churches and the Methodist. This association had under its care, in 1823, when the population of these cities was perhaps not above a tenth of what it is now, the surprising number of twenty-one schools, with two thousand scholars and three hundred and twenty teachers on their rolls. In 1825, the First Presbyterian Church organized an independent association, which, in 1832, sustained twelve schools, having one thousand two hundred and twelve scholars, nineteen superintendents, and a hundred and three teachers. This organization continued its work, though latterly with decreasing interest, for twenty-six years.

It is not difficult to trace the origin of several of the Presbyterian churches of the city and its vicinity to these Mission Schools. And as each new effort prospered, it in turn assisted to furnish workers for more destitute fields. Thus the old church was far from performing the whole of the grand work described. The daughters sometimes excelled the mother in real sacrifices and toils. And to all the other Presbyterian churches full and hearty praise must be rendered for the willing and zealous labors of their members in these missionary enterprises and for the noble fruits which have sprung from them.

5. The influence of these Christian efforts upon the city and its increasing population, through this hundred years, has been very great. No human mind can estimate the effect of a sound religious faith and morality and zeal, upon all the commercial, and political and social, and humane and educational and ecclesiastical spirit and institutions and operations, of a rapidly growing community in the New World. All Pittsburgh, and all the regions where its commercial communications extend, and its sons and daughters emigrate, owes a large debt to this church and the churches which have sprung from it.

The various nationalities of this manufacturing community have shared the benefit. Many cases would illustrate the extent of it. Let us mention three German boys out of our principal school. One of them is now at the head of a bank in the city, a prosperous manufacturer and an able counsellor and intel-

ligent and generous supporter of his own branch of the Christian church and of numerous public enterprises. Another is the earnest and respected superintendent of one of the largest Presbyterian churches in the city of New York. Another is a useful missionary in the empire of Brazil.

The literature of the schools has been a benefit to the public, circulating, as it has done, through a multitude of families, by papers and tracts and the books of libraries, adapted not alone to juvenile readers, but also to young men and women and to maturer minds. Missions and expository lectures have been given at times. During one year two professors of the Theological Seminary in Allegheny, lectured in alternate weeks at the teachers' meetings.

6. The various branches of the general work of the Presbyterian Church in the country have been aided by contributions from the Sabbath Schools. Children have been supported in Missionary Schools in heathen fields, and among the freedmen of the South. The eloquent Christian Brahmin, Sheshadri, belonging to the Scotch Free Church mission in India, received the gifts of some of the children for a time. Mr. Scovel's Bible class carried Daoud Kurban, now an assistant in the Syrian Mission, through four years of his preparatory study at the college in Beyrout. Occasional help has been given to home missionary and Sabbath School claims.

7. The personal relations to our Sabbath Schools of those who have gone forth to foreign and home missionary fields, who have rendered important services to the cause of education in various directions, who have become pastors of churches, or who deserve honor as benefactors by means of their pecuniary contributions to religious and humane and educational objects, would itself be a theme sufficient for a most interesting address or paper. We can but touch upon it briefly.

If we cast our eyes upon the foreign work of the Presbyterian Church, we see at its head Dr. John C. Lowrie, who was superintendent of two of the Mission Schools—that on the hill to the east, called the Arthursville school, and that on Coal Hill, now Mt. Washington. He was licensed in this church, June 6, 1832, and sent as the pioneer of our missions to India, in 1833. Wells Bushnell, one of the two pioneers of the North American Indian work of the Western Foreign Missionary and



Foreign Board, was converted under Dr. Herron's preaching, and he married the daughter of John Hannen, long an elder here and in the Allegheny church : while Joseph Kerr, the other pioneer, married Mary Ann Caldwell, Mr. Hannen's step-daughter. All these were connected in various ways with the schools. James Wilson, long missionary in Lodiana, Allahabad and Agra, was superintendent of the Arthursville school. Albert O. Johnson, one of the missionaries murdered at Cawnpore during the terrible Sepoy Rebellion in 1857, was a member of this church while in the Seminary, and was a sharer in its work. John Cloud, the martyr in Africa, and two or three other early missionaries, probably were teachers. Of those who have labored in China, Dr. A. P. Happer was associated with the First Church ; William Speer was scholar, teacher and superintendent in the home school in 1844, and also a teacher in the Kensington school ; and Cornelia Brackenridge, who became Mrs. Speer, was scholar and teacher in the home school. Annie K. Davis, daughter of an elder, is aiding in the wonderful work now in progress in Japan. John Rea, brought up from childhood in the church, has been our representative in the great mission fields of Washington Territory and California.

Many of the students of the Theological Seminary who have since then been honored in pastoral and educational labors, have been members of the church, or attendants upon its ordinances. Dr. Richard Lea, of Lawrenceville, grew up in the church and its Sabbath School, and was a teacher and superintendent. The Rev. Dr. Alexander B. Brown, President of Jefferson College ; Dr. Aaron Williams, professor in the same institution ; Dr. Thomas H. Robinson, recently elected a professor in the Western Theological Seminary ; Dr. James W. Wightman, late President of the College at Bowling Green, Ky., now in the Steubenville Female Seminary ; Mrs. Samuel J. Beatty, of the Seminary for the Freedmen at Charlotte, North Carolina ; Mrs. Cooper, formerly Miss Skinner, whose husband is laboring in a Western missionary field, and others, have been Sabbath School workers. And we might add a list of honored pastors of churches, and of pastors' wives, names familiar to all—Comingo, McKaig, Robinson, Miller, McKibbin, and others—some now in heaven, some yet on earth, who have been sharers in the toils and recompenses of serving in this part of the vineyard.



It sorely grieves us to mention but these names and scant details in respect to a branch of our subject which is capable of affording so much which would be of deep and abiding interest, and help to illustrate the history of the influence of the church and its Sabbath Schools upon the best and highest interests of religion and of mankind.

And yet this would still be but a partial view of the subject. It would be opening but one of the lines of illustration of which it is capable, were we to notice the lives of some who have been scholars in these Sabbath School classes, whose large-hearted consecration of life and property and pecuniary means for religious and philanthropic and educational and scientific purposes have justly made their names beloved and honored in wide regions, some of them throughout the nation and foreign lands.

8. The equipments for work have gone on co-extensively with that which God opened before the church in behalf of the children under its care. The little germ in the Session room behind the church, in 1813, outgrew its accommodations. In 1826, it was settled comfortably in the quarters on Sixth avenue; which was one of the first buildings in the country, some claim it was the first, specially erected and furnished with reference to Sabbath School uses. The several thousand dollars thus spent was a very large expenditure for the time, in a line of church work whose importance was yet little comprehended. Large improvements were made in 1840, in the same direction.

Of recent years the thoughts of the membership have been directed more and more towards the nature of the influence which this church is to exert for the future upon this city and its population. Its history from the beginning, its relations to the general spiritual interests of the region, the dispersion of many of its families into other sanctuaries in the suburban districts, and the wants of a great number of children and young persons of both sexes, whom the excitements and temptations of the present age are powerfully estranging from the religion of the Bible, the observance of the Sabbath, and the restraints of even common morality, all have manifested the importance of enlarged efficiency in its immediate Sabbath School work. This work has gradually been made more systematic and complete. The Infant School had

been begun in 1830. In 1871, the more advanced of the young people were added to the previous Bible class of the pastor, and three departments were established, the "senior," the "intermediate" and the "infant." But where shall accommodations be found for the expanding work and its still broader aspirations?

It was a joyful day when, on February 11th, 1881, after several years of delays caused by legal difficulties, now finally removed, an assembly of this people joined by friends from other churches dedicated to labors for "the glory of God and the highest good of men," the spacious and complete and beautiful edifice which had been reared at an expense of nearly twenty-seven thousand dollars on the church ground. It was, indeed, as the earnest pastor, by whose faith and prayers and labors chiefly this noble effort had attained success, then declared, a time when "God made them rejoice with great joy, and the wives also and the children rejoiced." Oh, that this church may never forget the spirit and ends of that dedication; and the solemn declaration that this house was now set apart for the performance, by men and women, of those varied acts of spiritual instruction and Christian charity by which they best imitate the earthly life of Jesus Christ. There may many of the poor be taught the gospel, the broken-hearted be healed, the captives in the chains of vice and intemperance be delivered, multitudes of the spiritually blind recover their sight, and of those bruised of Satan be set at liberty. And Oh, that abundant and royal gifts of salvation bestowed here from on high, may prove that the time in which we live and act is the dawn of the promised time which the servants of God have long waited for, "the acceptable year of the Lord."

III. Another date remains upon our programme for this hour—1984.

We have considered the wondrous gifts with which God equipped us a century ago for the work which he committed to our fathers. We have glanced at foundations of good which we have been enabled by His grace to lay here during this first century of the history of this church and of Christianity in this part of the land. What are the *promises and duties of the future*? What shall we say to the children who are with us to-day? What shall we say to those who must carry on the work which will be commemorated when the next occasion like the present,

a swift century from this time, will call together another audience within these walls?

Come, let us cast our eyes forward for a moment over the century to come. Oh, what a century this will be! The crowning century of this dispensation! The harvest time of the world! It has been barren winter, toiling and hoping seed-time, preparation and endurance, until now. But the time of the harvest has come. We see a thousand signs of promise in God's word, and in the condition of the church and of the world, that this coming century will bring much more of blessing to the cause of Christ on earth, and to the race of man universally, than all of the thousands of years of the world's history hitherto. The marriage of the church, the wife of the Lamb, the joyful acknowledgment and honor of her who has long sat in the dust as a captive and slave, draws near. Jesus will be crowned with many crowns the "Lord of all." The Bible is full of promises and prophecies of the glory and joy of this final day of salvation, this triumphant acceptable year of the Lord when all His enemies shall bow before Him and offer gifts at His feet.

Oh, "*tell it to the generation following!*" Tell it earnestly at once to all, wherever you can, that they may come at once to Jesus, and hasten to kiss Him in submission and obedience, lest in this day of conquest and judgment of His enemies He break them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Oh, that none of you may perish from the way. But above all, tell it to the young, "to the generation following." Come, children—even those of you who are but a few years old, some of whom perhaps will live until this last century of this final thousand years of the church militant shall be almost finished—come, children, give your hearts, give your lives, give your all, to the ever-blessed Jesus, to Him as your Saviour and your King. Love Him as you ought, and serve Him as you ought, with all your soul and all your might. He only is worthy to receive all you can bestow upon Him. Let us all begin to use the vast wealth of the gifts of nature which God has bestowed upon this region, and to employ all the immense power and influence of our manufactures and our trade and agencies of good or of evil, for the temporal and spiritual good of our fellow immortal beings and for the honor of God, in a measure far beyond that which our fathers have done in their days of feebleness and conflict. From this day let there be a new era of love,

and devotion, and self-sacrifice, in all ways and in all things, for Christ and His Kingdom.

Oh, that Pittsburgh may become in truth, a "city of our God;" that the church here and in the region about us, may be a "mountain of His holiness." Let each man, and woman, and child, do all he or she can for good all round you, and to help to bring all these cities, this commonwealth and this nation, and to lead all the nations of the world, to learn of Christ, the great Saviour and the great King. Let us send forth from this church, and those surrounding us, men and women and gifts of good of every kind, which shall spread abroad in this and all lands, and make this city, like Jerusalem of old, "a joy of the whole earth."

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After the admirable address and singing came greetings from other schools, first among them that from the Third Presbyterian Church. It was a pleasant feature of the occasion that this greeting was conveyed by the highly esteemed elder of that church, Mr. Daniel Bushnell, who had united with the First Church in the revival of 1827-8, and had been one of those upon whom the hand of Dr. Herron was laid in 1832, when he indicated to some of the most valuable members, that the time had come to form another church, and that they ought to go forth to the work.

The greeting of Mr. Bushnell was brief, but hearty. He referred touchingly to the revival in which he was brought to Christ, and certified to its great influence in the church circles and over the city in general. The great changes for the better in Sabbath School facilities were mentioned. He spoke of the many good men and women who had worshiped then and since in the old First Church. He alluded to the formation of the Third Church, as done in perfect good feeling, and with the design of extending the Redeemer's Kingdom: Closing, he expressed the most earnest wishes for the continued prosperity and usefulness of the First Church.

Rev. Mr. Hill, pastor of the Minersville Church, followed. The Minersville Sabbath School was the seventh one that was organized and supported by the First Church. Although the school is now fifty years old, it is not so large as it might be.

But he was glad that in this day the good old mother and her beautiful children had not forgotten them ; it will encourage them to go on and accomplish still greater things. Fifty years ago they had to dig up the thorns and thistles at Minersville before the good seed could be sown. The first time attention was attracted to the place was in 1826. At that time it was the custom to drink much whiskey at social gatherings. A corn husking took place at Minersville, the neighbors had gathered in, and as a result of the whiskey there was a fight and a murder. When the news was brought to the city an effort was made to establish a mission at Minersville. It proved a failure. Four years later another effort was made, and after a while a lot was found and a church built. On the lot was a black thorn tree, which Mr. John Herron, the donor of the property, stipulated should remain as a memorial of what the community was before it was leavened by the gospel. Although the congregation of the church is not large now, they have a Sabbath School larger in proportion than the church membership. Some people who attend down-town churches, let their children attend the Minersville Sabbath School. There are some Germans who care nothing for religion themselves, who nevertheless desire their children to get religious instruction, and permit their children to attend the Sabbath School.

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Rev. Mr. McKibbin, of the Second Church, was introduced, and said :

“It is a vastly encouraging thing to think of all the difficulties that this church has had to contend with—difficulties compared with which those we have now are only child’s play. It is encouraging to remember these difficulties, because it shows what can be accomplished in spite of them. There is one characteristic thing that ought to be imitated and perpetuated—how many of the old members of the church have been associated with the Sabbath School and assisted in it ! If the older people can’t get interested in the Sabbath School, then there is something the matter with the older people. The Sabbath School is a spiritual power in the church ; it has repaid back to the church every dollar that was spent in its behalf. It is a pleasant thing to stand here and feel that I have something invested in this work. For our school, I

bid you God speed ; and if we can't get ahead of you, and can't keep up with you, we will be close behind you, and if you stop I give you warning that we will pass you."

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Superintendent Laughlin made a few remarks, urging the school to go on with the same power and the same willingness in the future that they have shown in the past.

The singing of a verse of a hymn, and the benediction by the Rev. Dr. Cowan, closed the exercises for the afternoon.