

**THE GLORY OF THE LATTER HOUSE: A
DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT THE
DEDICATION OF THE
MEETING-HOUSE OF THE SECOND
CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN
WORCESTER, MARCH 26, 1851**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649303083

The Glory of the Latter House: A Discourse Delivered at the Dedication of the Meeting-house of the second congregational society in worcester, March 26, 1851 by Alonzo Hill

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ALONZO HILL

**THE GLORY OF THE LATTER HOUSE: A
DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT THE
DEDICATION OF THE
MEETING-HOUSE OF THE SECOND
CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN
WORCESTER, MARCH 26, 1851**

Pam 178 Blue

*From Dr. J. A. Green
Sept. 1893*

106224

The Glory of the Latter House :

A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT

THE DEDICATION OF THE MEETING-HOUSE

OF THE

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY IN WORCESTER,

MARCH 26, 1851.

BY ALONZO HILL,

MINISTER OF SAID SOCIETY.

WORCESTER:

ANDREW HUTCHINSON.

1851.

53/8

DISCOURSE.

HAGGAI, II. 9.

THE GLORY OF THIS LATTER HOUSE SHALL BE GREATER THAN OF THE FORMER,
SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS; AND IN THIS PLACE WILL I GIVE PEACE, SAITH
THE LORD OF HOSTS.

WITH the heart's gratitude do we offer unfeigned thanks to God for this auspicious day. Under what different circumstances did we last meet on this spot, and have we now come together! Then it was a summer night, and we were called from our homes by the alarum-bell and the startling cry of fire. The heavens were lighted up; hills, woods, and fields shone around; and we saw the church which had so long sheltered our fathers and ourselves enveloped in flames; we saw porch and tower and dome under which we had so often come, and pew and pulpit in which we had so long worshipped, all prostrated in a single hour, and reduced to a naked, smouldering ruin. We come this spring morning to take possession of, and to dedicate to religious purposes, this fairer structure, which we have been permitted to

build. To-day, for the first time, we obey the majestic tones of the bell which is henceforth to call us and our children to worship. We enter doors which, with the returning sabbaths, shall be thrown invitingly open; and take possession of pews, and gather around the pulpit, henceforth to be our religious home. We enter these courts, now echoing for the first time with the voice of prayer, to be hallowed by our religious associations, to be consecrated by our religious affections, with feelings like those of the exile, who, weary months away from his home, his wanderings now all ended, returns to his native soil, and reposes once more amid familiar and well-loved objects. May the glory of this latter house be greater than of the former! May it be to us none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven!*

The language of the text which I have quoted is prophetic, and is descriptive of the temple about to be built in Jerusalem. "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts;" and therefore this temple shall be built with more of costliness and magnificence than the former. If this is the meaning of the prophet, applied to our own work, it is expressive of a fact. The glory of this house is greater than of the former. We have endeavored to render it more worthy of the service to which it is henceforth to be dedicated. In the first place, we have erected it upon

* Note A.

a spot already consecrated. In the earlier Christian times, in the selection of a site for a Christian church, men were influenced, not by considerations of convenience or beauty of situation, but by sacred associations. They chose spots where the great facts of Christian history had taken place ; where the Saviour had been born, or where his parting footsteps had fallen ; where the blood of saints had been spilled, or where their bones, enshrined in precious wood and metals and stones, were deposited. Over sacred relics and memorable spots Christian temples were reared, so that the savor of sanctity might ascend, and fill the house ; and, through the influence of hallowed memories, the devotions of passing generations might be quickened, and the affections be raised more directly to heaven. So, my brethren, we have reared our church over a spot, not for the first time to be set apart from secular uses, but already consecrated and endeared by many tender and enkindling associations. Here, over these ashes, beneath these witnessing heavens, and in the midst of these familiar scenes, we have many times united, the living and the dead, in the touching services of religion. On soft summer days we have already sung our hymns and offered our prayers together. We have brought our children here for baptism ; and here our sainted ones, on their way to the field of the graves, have paused ; and we have paused and communed with them, until things present

seemed to vanish, and things invisible and spiritual were the only realities. And here, on this very spot, before most of us were born, sixty years ago, one of the memorable transactions to be recorded in our country annals took place. Here the first pulpit Bible* ever published on this western continent was printed and published to the world,—a fact that should invest this spot with more interest than if an apostle had stood and preached here.

But this is not all. We have sought also to bring to the service of religion the costliness, the grace, and ornament of architectural skill. There is a voice in architecture as well as in music and poetry; and the same reasons should urge us to build our churches with taste, with beautiful and majestic proportions, as now move us to select for the services of the choir the well-constructed hymn, and have it sung in strains of effective music. Suppose that, each morning before the cares of the day should begin, this whole community should come together to listen to one of the soul-stirring hymns that shook the old cathedrals centuries ago, or one of the sermons of the great Christian orators that men came from afar to hear, would not all go forth better prepared for life's great responsibilities and duties? Even such a hymn, such a sermon, repeated with each morning's light and through the hours of the day, is the majestic and beautiful church.

* Note B.

There is an eloquence in the graceful spire, — a winning persuasiveness in the classic pillared portico, — a sublimity in the arched, lofty ceiling, that lifts the thought upwards like the pillars and the arch of heaven. Travellers tell us of the effects produced by the solemn old churches which stand in lonely grandeur in the midst of European cities. Feelings of indescribable awe come over them as they pass them; and, when they go from the noisy, dusty street into their dim silence, they feel that they should put off their shoes from off their feet, for the ground on which they stand is holy.

I said there is a language in architecture. It is more than art or poetry. The beautiful and majestic church is symbolical; it is significant of great religious ideas. It speaks of man and his destinies, of the ends and aims of life. Standing in the midst of a city like this, it is its visible consecration to God and Christ, and spiritual growth and perfection. In the earlier times, Christian edifices were built in the form of ships; for it was said, our life is a tempestuous sea, over which darkness broods and the winds rage, and religion is the ark that will bear us onward to the haven of our rest. They were built again in the shape of the cross; for it was said, this symbol of the Christian's faith and hope should never pass from the sight or memory of men. They should see it from the market-place, and the corners of the streets:

it should tower above their habitations, their places of business, their places of recreation and repose, and hallow them all. It should stand out upon the sky, and impart healing and strength amid the fiery temptations and dread conflicts of life. Like that southern constellation which bears its name, seen of those who sail in southern seas, it should be an object of reverent regard when the night comes down, wear a look of friendliness in their lonely watches, and kindle their hope when the storms beat and the waves rise up around them. What would our cities be, if there were no sanctuary of repose in the midst of them, no spires of churches pointing to heaven? What would they be, if there were not in the midst of, above, and beyond this daily life the recognition of a greater than human authority, a sense of devotion and duty deeper than the grave, higher than the visible heavens? Who would dare to live in a place where religion had no temples, where no such authority was acknowledged, and no such sense of devotion and duty felt? If such a place there were, we should hurry through it as if it were a city of the plague. A voice would come to our ears like that which echoed through the vacant streets of Jerusalem on the eve of her destruction, when the tokens of the Divine Presence had already ceased in her temple, — "Arise, depart; for this is not your rest."

I said, then, taken literally, the prophecy of the

MOU