

**SERMONS IN TIMBER AND
STONE:
HISTORIC LEGENDS OF
THE CITY OF CHESTER**

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Sermons in Timber and Stone: Historic Legends of the City of Chester by George H. Longrigg

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GEORGE H. LONGRIGG

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THE CITY OF CHESTER**

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SERMONS

IN

604-31

TIMBER AND STONE.

HISTORIC LEGENDS OF THE CITY OF
CHESTER.

BY

GEORGE H. LONGRIGG.

'The old timbered house and the crumbling stone wall
Quaint visions and legends of past times recall,
Amusing, instructive and grave.'

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ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1892.

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Moist fund.

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INTRODUCTION.

A CESTRIAN born, and a Cestrian bred,
May be 'strong in the arm, and weak in
the head,'

So many a chronicler writes :

But the weakness of head consists in main part
In speaking of sentiments nearest his heart ;

To talk of his town he delights.

As Cestrian born, and a Cestrian bred,
To maintain this proverb, whatever be said,

I claim as a citizen's rights :

The weakness, the readers, I trust, will condone,
Who study the Sermons in Timber and Stone

My pen hereafter indites.

A Sermon in Timber in no sense need be
As dry as a stick in its tone and degree—

Old timbers get twisted and bent,

Formality, thus forced by age to disarm,
Loses *shape*, and so an additional charm

To Sermons in Timber is lent.

Stones also but mellow and soften with age,
And nature, on surface, imprints a new page

By cov'ring each marking and dent

With mosses, and lichens, and plants of such hue,
Which gladden the eye, while still keeping to view

The form of man's art thereon spent.

That walls can have ears, for so runs the old saw,
Is a truth all soon learn who break from the law,

And knowingly swerve from the right :

'Tis equally true, in as marked a degree,

That walls also can speak, and that fluently—

They tell of the customs and might,

That with centuries past our forefathers share,
In a tongue so complete it can but compare

To language of love, understood ev'rywhere :

 Their statements are *pointed* and trite :

Each wall for the truth of each fact can declare,

 It speaks of things done *in its site*.

The old timbered house and the crumbling stone
 wall

Quaint visions and legends of past times recall,

 Amusing, instructive and grave :

'Mid the throng and the crowd of still busy streets

Each house, as it stands, to the passer repeats

 The doings of timid and brave.

The church, with its statements on tablet and tomb,

Re-echoes its message from deepening gloom

 In the choir, the transept and nave :

Much injured and broken the fabric may be,

Yet records remain, like the rocks by the sea,

 Though beaten by tempest and wave.

When with reverent steps we pace the broad aisle

Of old Cestrian church, and study the pile,

 Some lessons from sculptures we trace

Besides those that spring from the scriptural page :

A history true may our thoughts then engage

 Of the rise of the English race :