

TRANSLATION OF A SERMON PREACHED IN MAORI AT PURANGI
ST. PETER'S DAY, 1906, BY THE VEN. ARCHDEACON COLE.

Haggai II. 9: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts."

THE PRESENT.

This is a very happy day to us all, and especially so is it to me. To-day we are opening a House of God, which, I am confident, shall be of greater glory than the former house, which was built in 1850, at Pukemahoe, some two miles distant from this spot, by my venerable predecessor, the good Archdeacon Govett, and called Tukitiarero. Tukitiarero is to be the name of this house, too, to be a witness to all time that the work of God cannot be put back by "the utterly wills and passions of sinful men." And it is to be dedicated to the great Apostle St. Peter, the chief of the Apostolic band, to show that, through the weakness of men is great, for Peter denied his Master, yet God's mercy is greater, for from a humble and tear-stained penitent God made Peter a great saint, and worthy of a martyr's crown! Great, therefore, is our happiness to-day, for God has had compassion on us, His unworthy children, in that He has allowed us to fill in the breaches of the walls of His Zion, and permitted us to see the walls of this new Temple, erected to replace those of the former Temple, wherein again Maori and Pakeha may find rest and peace for their souls. Great honour, therefore, has God been pleased to confer upon us in that He has called us to this noble work, and allowed us to complete this house to His glory and in memory of His compassion and loving kindness, in that He has not forgotten His people; for on the ruins of the former Temple so full of sad memories of the past, neglected, razed to the ground through the self-will and evil passions of men, is now raised this beautiful little house destined to surpass the other in glory; and where Maori and Pakeha may kneel together, as children of one Holy Father, to receive the Bread of Life and the kiss of peace and find rest to their souls. Rejoice greatly, therefore, ye children of one Holy Father. Lift up your voice in one song and sing of the loving kindness of God! Welcome, O ye Maoris! Welcome, O ye Ngatitani! Welcome, O ye Ngatikura! Welcome, O ye Ngatitai! Welcome, O ye Ngatiruru! Welcome, O ye Ngatingarau! Welcome, O ye Ngatirua! Welcome, O ye Pakeha, to the latter house. Welcome to the great feast which God provides for you and for your children and children's children for ever! Come and see how gracious the Lord is; come and find rest, for in this place God will give rest and peace!

THE PAST.

It is difficult to believe that the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former house; for when the former was built at Pukemahoe, it was as a beautiful totara planted in the garden of the Lord. It grew and flourished, and the Maoris came to it and sang their Matins and Evensong in praise of God, as the tui sings his song amidst the trees. Mary were the whares that surrounded it, and happy were the lives of those who lived therein. Every day did they meet at the little Church to give thanks unto God, and praise His Name for

ever and ever. And from far and near did they come on the Sundays to receive the Holy Communion and to hear the Word of God preached. Great was their welcome and great was their joy when the Archdeacon came to administer the Holy Sacraments, whenever was their lay reader and faithful they were to him. It was a time of calm and peace and prosperity. Pukemaioe was a garden of flowers giving forth pleasant smell before the cold wind of winter had blasted its flowers. But, alas! What before was a garden became a wilderness. Through the sad willfulness of men this happened. The flowers were blasted and driven hither and thither by the wind. The war broke out, the bell of the Church became silent, the songs of praise ceased, the carved works on the Sanctuary of God were cut down with axes and hammers. Fire was set upon God's Holy Place and the dwelling-place of His Name was defiled, even unto the ground. The storm burst upon the path, and levelled everything before it. The Maoris scattered, and Pukemaioe became a wilderness. But the lamp of Christianity did not burn itself out. It was kept burning by a few faithful Maoris who remained true to Christ in the midst of all their sufferings and the breaking of their hearts, through the violence of the storm which beat so upon them. God did not forget His inheritance for ever. The lamp was found burning here by the missionaries, and since then it has been trimmed and fed, and now it burns brightly, and the result you see here: the glory of this latter house, which surpasses the former house. And the garden of the Lord will flourish again, and the flowers will grow, and the wilderness shall flourish as a rose, and God will give peace here for ever!

THE FUTURE.

Many there were of the children of Israel in Jerusalem who wept as they remembered the old Temple where they had so often worshipped and adored God. But God said, "consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified". (Hag. I, 8.) So they went up into the mountain full of faith and courage, and brought the wood and built again the House of God, "that was waste", and pulled down and defiled in those evil days that befell them. And the house rose up from the ruins of the old - rose up full of beauty and glory.

But to the old people who remembered the former Temple "in her first glory" this one appeared in their eyes "in comparison of it as nothing". And they wept and were sad. But the Lord of Hosts said, "why do you weep? The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former;" and why? Because the desire of all nations, His own Son, the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, "shall come to it, and fill it with glory." And so it was. The courts of that Temple would be made holy by the sacred feet of Christ. Great was to be the glory of that Temple, the latter house. Jesus Christ came to it, and filled it with His own glory. And so it had greater glory than the former. So it shall be here with this house. Some of you look to the past, to the days of old, with heavy hearts and moistened eyes. But take courage! We are lighting a candle to-day which nothing can put out. Those two candles you see burning on this little altar ere symbolic of what is going to be. Nothing can put them out! They show the glory which is to be! The lamp of Christianity will be tenderly trimmed here, and kept burning, and its bright beams of light will guide many in Taranaki through the dark night of unbelief to the clear day of the Holy Gospel of Christ. God will take pleasure in His House, and be glorified therein, and herein will He give peace. Here shall the Maoris come from

far to sing their songs of praise, and to tell of the loving kindness and mercy of God. Here the Pakeha shall come and kneel with the Maori in the bond of the love of Jesus, and receive His Sacred Body and Blood as He comes to hallow and make sacred and shed His glory in this latter house. Here He will give comfort to their souls. Here will their young men and maidens be married; here will their children be baptised in the waters of life; here will they be confirmed by God the Holy Ghost, and from hence will they go "from strength to strength" until they reach the Holy Hill of Zion; Great, therefore, shall be the glory of this house. Again, welcome, O ye Maoris! Welcome, O ye Pakeha! Welcome to this house. Come, O ye Maoris! from far and near; come to this place; Come and sing that great as the glory of God. Come from the darkness of sin and unbelief to the clear light of the Gospel of Jesus. Come and be cleansed from all evil in the Sacred Blood that flows from the precious fountain the dear Heart of Jesus, opened for us on the Hill of Calvary. Come and find rest and comfort for your souls. Thus shall the glory of this latter house be greater than the former, and thus shall God give peace in this place!

Amen.