

KNOX CHURCH JUBILEE.

The Social Re-Union a Great Success—Large Number of Old Members and Friends Forogather—Historical Sketch by Mr. William Galbraith—Addresses by Several Clergymen.

The success which attended the semi-centennial celebration of Knox church, Toronto, was only what was expected. Indeed, the occasion was one which could not fail in interest, the position which Knox church occupies being in many respects unique. A perusal of the historical sketch prepared and read by Mr. William Galbraith will show the place which the congregation holds in the history of Presbyterianism in Upper Canada.

The committee in charge of the arrangements was composed of the following gentlemen: Messrs. Wm. Galbraith (chairman), S. H. Laughlin (secretary), Wm. Sutherland, W. Mortimer Clark, John Duncan, J. W. Craig, A. Harris, C. W. Thompson, and the pastor, Rev. Dr. Parsons.

As noticed last week, the celebration was begun by special services on Sabbath the 7th inst., when Rev. Dr. Fletcher, of Hamilton, and Rev. Wm. S. Ball, preached. It was continued on Thursday evening when a social re-union was held, and on Sabbath last when interesting services were conducted in the church by the pastor, Rev. Dr. Parsons, and by Rev. Prof. MacLaren, D.D., of Knox College, and a special Sabbath school service in the afternoon, conducted by former superintendents, and by Rev. Alex. Gilray, first missionary in Duchess street.

The social re-union on Thursday evening was a most pleasant function. From 6.30 to 8 tea was served in the spacious lecture hall of the church, which was beautifully decorated with bunting, flowers and plants. Several hundreds of people attended. The ladies who presided at the tables were Mrs. H. M. Parsons, Mrs. W. Mortimer Clark, Mrs. McGaw, Mrs. John Burns, Mrs. R. Scott, Mrs. Summerville, Mrs. Wilkie, Mrs. McGregor, Mrs. Livingstone, Mrs. W. Duthie, Mrs. Knowles, Mrs. Moerschfelder, Mrs. D. Mackay, Mrs. Wm. Galbraith, Mrs. Winnett, Miss Craig, Mrs. John Wanless, Mrs. John Duncan, Mrs. Armstrong, and Miss Niven.

Mr. Hugh Miller, J.P., has in his possession, and exhibited it at the tea meeting, one of the tickets to the farewell gathering held on the occasion of the departure from Toronto of the late Rev. Andrew King. The following is a copy of the words printed on the ticket:—"Farewell party to the Rev. Andrew King, M.A., by the Free Presbyterian congregation of Toronto, at the City Hall, on Friday evening, 28th March, 1845, at seven o'clock."

PUBLIC MEETING IN THE CHURCH.

After tea a great public meeting was held in the church, beginning at eight o'clock. The chair was taken by Mr. Wm. Galbraith, and on the platform with him were Rev. Dr. Parsons, pastor of the church; Mr. Wm. Mortimer Clark, Rev. Robert Wallace, Rev. Prof. W. Gregg, Rev. Dr. Robertson, Rev. Wm. Burns, Mr. J. L. Blaikie, Rev. R. P. McKay, Rev. Dr. McLaren, Messrs. J. K. Macdonald, Hugh Miller, J.P., and others.

Among the many old members of the church present were noticed the following, many of whom are now in fellowship with other churches, owing to having moved up town:—Rev. Dr. Alex. Mackay, who joined in 1832; Rev. W. S. Ball, who joined in 1845; Miss Jane McArpin, 1859; Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, 1871; Mrs. Elliott, who joined in the first year of Dr. Burns' ministry; Mrs. D. Cowan, 1867; Mrs. John Harvie, 1853; Mr. George S. Spence, 1860; Mr. John Ferguson, 1852; Mr. Alex. Edgar, 1861; Mrs. Alex. Edgar, 1857; Rev. Thomas Lenwick, 1850; Mr. and Mrs. D. B. Cockburn, 1877; Mrs. John Shaw, 1854; Mrs. M. Shaw, 1857; Mr. J. Campbell, 1869; Mr. W. J. Stubbs, 1850; Mr. R. Nanser, 1874; Mr. David Gallit, 1865; Mr. John McFarlane, 1875; Mr. James Brown, 1860; Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Gibbs, 1860; Mr. W. B. McMurrich, 1862; Mrs. W. B. McMurrich, 1866; Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Dignam, 1880; Mr. and Mrs. James Mitchell, 1874; Mrs. McCaffrey, 1849; Mr. George McMurrich, 1864; Mrs. George McMurrich, 1868; Mr. James Fleming, 1869. Others present were:—Mr. John Stalker and Miss Stalker, Mrs. J. Campbell and Miss Elith C. Campbell, Mrs. R. Westlake, Mrs. A. Cameron, Mr. and Mrs. D. Rose, Mr. John Wanless, jr., Mr. A. McKnight, Mrs. Cameron, Mr. and Mrs. John Inrie, Mrs. James Webster (Allandale), Mrs. Crowther, Mr. Henry Swan, Mr. and Mrs. W. Lawrence, Mr. J. K. Harris, Mr. James Macdonald, Mrs. Bell, Mr. J. R. Wanless, Mr. D. Urquhart, Mrs. T. C. Thomson, Miss A. Simpson, Mrs. Howe, Mrs. George McDonald, Miss Maggie Campbell, Miss Mary H. Stalker, Miss C. Inglis, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ashley, Mr. J. Scott, jr., and Mrs. Sellers.

The proceedings began by the singing of that hymn so dear to all Scotch hearts, commencing with these words.

"O God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thy people still are led.

Rev. Dr. Parsons then read a portion of Scripture, and led in prayer.

THE SPEECHES.

The Chairman, in his opening address, referred to some of the things for which the congregation had such great cause to rejoice and be thankful. This was the jubilee of their church, and the fifteenth anniversary of the induction of their beloved pastor, Rev. Dr. Parsons. When Dr. Parsons first came among them he had not been long in the Presbyterian fold, but all could now testify to the fact that he was now a true blue Presbyterian. Through no fault of his own Dr. Parsons was not a Scotchman, but no doubt he now wished he was one. It was cause for great

thankfulness to see present so many of the old members who had for years been associated with them in Church work. For this they rejoiced and gave thanks, and they also were deeply thankful for the preservation of their church on the night of the recent fire.

Mr. W. Mortimer Clark then took the chair and Mr. Galbraith proceeded to read an historical sketch of the congregation. (It will be found in full on the next page.)

After Mr. Galbraith's paper was finished Mr. Mortimer Clark delivered a brief speech, speaking of the hallowed memories awakened by the gathering. He trusted that the congregation would be inspired to renewed efforts in the work of the Master.

Rev. Dr. Parsons then announced that Rev. Dr. Reid was to have read a paper on the reminiscences of the church, but was unable to be present on account of illness, and read a letter from that gentleman expressing regret. He also read a letter from Rev. A. H. Baldwin, of All Saints' Church, who always manifested the greatest interest in Knox Church, but who was unable to be present.

Rev. Dr. Wallace gave a very interesting sketch of the life and labors of the late Rev. Dr. Burns. He spoke of him as a profound scholar, a man of deep religious feeling, most generous in all his ways, and filled with a burning zeal for the cause of Christ. He gave several incidents in the life of the late divine to show the characteristics of the first minister of Knox church.

Rev. Dr. Gregg, in a short address, referred to the great success of the Presbyterian body in Ontario since the formation of the first church in Toronto in 1820. At that time the population of the province was not more than 130,000, and of Toronto, 1,500. One Episcopal, one Methodist, and one Presbyterian church were all the places of worship in the Toronto of 1820. At that time in all of Ontario not more than seven Presbyterian ministers were engaged in work, and the Presbyterians barely numbered 85,000. When the late Rev. John Harris was ordained in Toronto it was almost impossible to get more than two other Presbyterian ministers to the place. These were the late Rev. Mr. Smart, of Brockville, and the late Rev. Mr. Jenkins, of Markham. When in 1845 the late Rev. Dr. Burns, of Paisley, Scotland, came to Toronto as the Free Church minister of Knox church, the population of the city had grown to 20,000, and that of the province to 700,000. The Presbyterians at that period numbered 136,000. The Free Church had 33 churches in Canada; the Established Church 54 churches; and the United Presbyterians 22 churches. None of these churches had a choir or organ, and no hymns were used in the services. The railway had not penetrated to Ontario, and the Presbyterian Churches of Canada had not then begun any mission work. It was not till 1851 that mission work in the West and North-west was undertaken, the first minister to go out in the work being the late Rev. Dr. Black. In numerical strength the Church of England stood first, the Methodists second, and the third place was occupied by the Presbyterians. To-day the Methodists were first, the Presbyterians second, and the Episcopalians third.

Rev. Dr. Robertson, whom the chairman described as the real bishop of the North-West, gave a characteristic address, dealing with the early mission work of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, showing how the Church prospered as she was zealous in mission work.

Rev. William Burns congratulated the congregation on the blessed record of the Church, and trusted the future might be even more successful.

Rev. R. P. MacKay, Messrs. J. L. Blaikie and Jas. Brown also spoke, the latter dealing with the work of the Session, and its influence on the Christian life of the Church.

Rev. Dr. Parsons on rising to speak was heartily welcomed, the large audience showing their esteem for him by prolonged applause. He spoke briefly and with great feeling of the many evidences of kindness and good-will shown towards him by the congregation, as a whole, and by the members individually. He rejoiced at the mutual good feeling and continued harmony existing in the Church, and for which they desired at all times to render thanks to the Divine Head of the Church.

After singing a hymn, Rev. Professor McLaren pronounced the benediction.

A copy of the *Banner* dated September 24th, 1847, now in the possession of Mr. John Duncan, 576 Ontario street, contains an interesting account of the laying of the corner-stone from which we take the following:—"Knox Church, in the City of Toronto, Canada West. This foundation stone was laid on 21st September 1847, in the eleventh year of the reign of Queen Victoria. The Right Hon. James, Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, Governor General of British North America, etc. etc. May Almighty God prosper the undertaking!

Office Bearers:—Rev. Robt. Burns, D.D., minister; James Harris, John Ross, Precentors; John McMurrich, Treasurer; John Shaw, Secretary. Besides these were inserted the names of the Elders and Trustees. Architect, William Thomas.

Dr. Burns in the course of his address to the assemblage said: "To the members of Knox church congregation the present meeting must be deeply interesting. You represent one of the oldest Christian societies in the city and province; and the union with another body three years ago formed a new era in your position and prospects. You discovered in the sentiments of the Free Church of Scotland views congenial with your own; and two bodies came together on common ground. Providence has smiled on your union and the conflagration which consumed your more humble edifice, seems to have cemented you together more strongly than before. We are about to lay the foundation corner-stone of a building which has attached to it the name of our renowned Reformer."