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The Story of the Years ---1896-1921.

Gower Street Methodist Church--
Address Delivered by Mr. John
Leamon, Recording Steward.

(TUESDAY EVENING, October 18.)

PRELUDE.

As most of you are aware the present church is the third to be erected on this site. The first a small wooden structure, erected in 1818, stood for forty years, and was replaced in 1854 by the brick church, the memory of which the older folks still cherish. This church was destroyed in the great fire of 1892 during the third year of Rev. Dr. Cowperthwaite's first term as Pastor. With undaunted courage and strong faith, the trustees of that day began their preparations to rebuild, and on July 28, 1894 the corner stone of the present beautiful and spacious church was laid by the General Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Cowperthwaite. In the interval the tabernacle was built on the Parade ground, and there the Gower Street congregation worshipped for four years, during the last year of Dr. Cowperthwaite's term and Dr. Morton's full term of three years. The Architect of the new Gower Street Church was Mr. Elijah Hoole of London, England, a son of a distinguished Wesleyan Minister of the old country. The builder was Mr. S. M. Brookfield of Halifax. The members of the building committee were Mr. J. E. P. Peters, Hon. R. K. Bishop and Mr. A. P. Shirran; the late Hon. J. B. Ayre acted as an honorary member of the committee and took a keen interest in the planning and construction of the building. He also planned and ordered the organ for the new church. The church is supposed to seat 1200 persons with reserve accommodation for 400 more.

THE OPENING DAY.

On the opening day, October 17, 1898, 1700 persons were said to be present, many standing during the services. The ladies of the congregation had beautifully and artistically decorated the church. The pulpit and windows were one mass of flowers, and by their fragrance and beauty greatly delighted the vast congregation. On Sunday morning Rev. Dr. Curtis, the first Pastor of the new church, was assisted by Rev. Wm. Swann, who was ex-president of the Conference, Revs. Geo. Paine of Cochrane Street, Rev. J. T. Newman of George Street, Rev. Dr. Dove, Rev. Dr. Milligan and Rev. M. Fenwick. The Rev. Dr. Potts of Toronto, who was then General Secretary of the Conference, preached a sermon, which is still remembered for its eloquence and power. The text was taken from Psalm 48, verse 12-14, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces that ye may tell it to the generation following, for this God is our God, for ever and for ever. He will be our guide even unto death." His theme he declared to be a walk about Zion. In a most graphic manner he portrayed Zion and referred to her bulwarks of Divine Truth, Divine Grace and Divine Providence, and her palaces of gracious manifestations, royal banqueting and high and holy fellowship. Behind all was God, and he would be our God for ever and ever. The enjoyment of all these blessings was for a purpose, to tell it out, to all, to everybody, and especially to those who were coming after. The preacher closed this most stirring discourse with prayer after which Miss Twillingate Stirling sang, "Hear ye oh Israel," and held the audience spell-bound with her superb voice. (At one time it was hoped that we might have the pleasure of hearing Miss Stirling, who is now at Twillingate this occasion, but as this was not possible, we expect to hear her in this church at a later date.) The collection followed and the sum of \$755.00 was laid on the plate. Psalm 122 was read alternately by Rev. W. Swann and the congregation.

THE PRESENTATION.

Then followed the presentation of the keys of the church by the Trustees, Messrs. J. E. P. Peters, A. P. Shirran, R. K. Bishop, Capt. McLean, S. R. March, W. W. Watson and A. M. Peters, who stood and through Mr. J. E. P. Peters said: "We present this building to be dedicated as a church, for the worship and service of Almighty God." The declaration of acceptance by ex-president Swann followed. Rev. Dr. Milligan offered the closing prayer and the Pastor, Dr. Curtis, pronounced benediction. An interesting fact which must not be overlooked is that at the first service in the new church the ordinance of baptism was performed when Rev. Dr. Potts baptised the infant daughter of Rev. T. B. and Mrs. Darby.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS MASS MEETING.

In the afternoon a mass meeting of the schools from all the Methodist Sunday Schools of the city was held; 1600 children were said to be present. Hon. J. E. Robinson was chairman, and Mrs. E. R. March presided at the organ. Addresses were

delivered by Revs. Dr. Potts, J. T. Newman, Geo. Paine and L. Curtis. Altogether it was a memorable occasion for the children.

THE EVENING SERVICE.

At the evening service every seat both regular and reserve was filled by ten minutes past six o'clock. The service commenced with an anthem by the choir. The following ministers took part in the exercises: Rev. T. B. Darby of Musgrave Town; Rev. T. W. Atkinson, of Pouch Cove; Rev. Anthony Hill of Topsail, and ex-president Swann. Again the eloquent Dr. Potts was the preacher. His text was Isaiah 52 chapter, verses 7, 9, and 10. His subject was the Christian Ministry. Miss Twillingate Stirling again entranced the vast audience by her rendition of "Magnificat." The benediction by Rev. E. Matthews of Green's Harbor brought the public services of this memorable day in the history of St. John's Methodism to a close. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered at the close.

THE Q.O.B.

It will be of interest if I give the personnel of the members of the Quarterly Official Board of the new Church: Rev. L. Curtis, Superintendent; Mr. J. E. P. Peters, Recording Steward; Mr. W. W. Watson, S. S. Superintendent; Mr. A. Scott, President of Epworth League; Messrs. A. F. Shirran, R. K. Bishop, J. W. Nichols, Thos. Butt, H. Gallop, Jon. Butler, A. Barnes, E. Beeson. The local preachers were Alex. Scott, J. J. Sparks, John Newell, James Christian and A. Harrison; Exhorters, Jos. Butler, A. Soper, H. Gallop, and Wm. Taylor. It was understood that the local preachers should preach to Gower Street congregation at least once in six months. To-day we have one local preacher, Mr. A. Soper, and one Exhorter, Mr. W. Soper.

THE FINANCIAL COST.

The total cost of the church and organ was \$80,000. It could not be built to-day for twice that sum. The first marriage solemnised in the church was that of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lewis, to whom a Bible was presented.

THE PASTORS.

The following are the names of the ministers who have had charge of the circuit during the past twenty-five years: Rev. Dr. Curtis, 1896-1899; Rev. H. P. Cowperthwaite, (2nd term), 1899-1902; Rev. J. L. Dawson, B.A., 1902-1906; Rev. W. T. D. Dunn, 1906-1910; Rev. H. P. Cowperthwaite (with Rev. J. V. Westlake assistant), 1910-1911; Rev. Dr. Rogers, 1911-1913; Rev. Dr. Cowperthwaite, Rev. Dr. Fenwick, supply 1913-1914; Rev. D. B. Henderson, B.A., 1914-1917; Rev. E. W. Forbes, M.A., B.D., 1918. In 1898 General Conference extended the time limit for a minister on circuit from three to four years.

S.S. AND CHOIR.

The Sunday School Superintendents from 1896 to present date were, W. W. Watson, A. M. Peters, Joseph Peters, G. W. Gushue, Albert Soper and W. H. Peters.

The organists of the church since 1896 were Peter LeSueur, H. MacFarren, F. J. King, Miss Diamond, Roy Kendall, T. P. Beresford and Miss Tait.

FINANCE.

A comparison of finances may be of interest. The receipts from Sunday collections in 1897 were by envelopes, \$799.00, loose, \$968.33, total \$1757.33. 1920 envelopes \$581.35, loose, \$1143.82, total \$6455.17. Our receipts from pew rents in 1897 were \$1273.40; in 1920 our receipts from pew rents were \$1477.82. It is worth noting that the trustees have not advanced pew rents from what they were at the opening of the church although the expenses of the upkeep have increased from three to five hundred per cent. The total vote for connexional funds, 1897 was \$620.00, in 1920 it was \$1569.00. The Thanksgiving Collection in 1898 was \$1200.00; in 1920, \$1266.00.

OUT OF DEBT.

It was in 1907 that a determined effort was made to reduce the debt on the church. A joint meeting of the Official Boards was held, followed by a meeting on October 1st of pew holders, seat holders and others interested. A most enthusiastic meeting was held. Mr. J. E. P. Peters gave a most exhaustive review of the church's financial history from the old wooden building to the present beautiful structure, with its three branches in other parts of the city. This review was given by Mr. Peters entirely from memory, and no record is available. Hon. R. K. Bishop gave a very full report on the financial situation showing the debt at the time to be \$19,000. Other speakers were the late Mr. Campbell Macpherson and Dr. J. A. Robinson. As a result of this meeting pledges were given to the amount of \$6000.00 in round figures. It was not

until 1910, our twentieth anniversary year, that a special canvass prior to Thanksgiving Sunday resulted in an offering that completely wiped out the existing debt; a matter of about \$6,000.00. We have now a church free from debt, but we are about to remedy that, by plunging into it again to the tune of about \$4,000, made necessary by the installation of a new heating plant and extensive repairs to the spire. The offerings of Sunday, with what is yet to come in, will go towards this expenditure.

SPECIAL CONNEXIONAL FUNDS.

In 1899 the Twentieth Century Thanksgiving Fund was brought before our people and when the fund was closed in 1901 it amounted to \$5,374.11. In 1919 the National Campaign in connection with the inter-church forward movement was launched with its two fold objectives, spiritual and financial. The programme was carried out in so far as it could be adapted to local conditions: committees were formed and a thorough canvass of Gower Street congregation was made. The result while not fully meeting the objectives was gratifying and the fruit is to be seen in our church to-day. The Financial Campaign, organized and carried out under the leadership of Mr. A. Soper was particularly successful. It raised our circuit receipts by the increased number of regular envelope subscribers, from \$3,523.92 to \$6,455.17.

Our missionary contribution was increased from \$3,623.00 in 1919 to \$2,922.00 in 1920.

THE SPIRITUAL SIDE.

We will now turn to the more spiritual side of the church work. In 1897 the membership was given as 362, in 1920 the membership was given as 470. In 1897 the Sunday School had 330 scholars, 35 teachers, and a Sunday School at the Tabernacle with Mr. A. Soper as Superintendent, had 440 scholars and a staff of teachers. In 1920 the Gower Street School has 956 scholars, 50 teachers. The Epworth League in 1897 had 67 active and 14 associate members. To-day we have no Epworth League but we have the Adult Men's Bible Class with a membership of about 60, and a Girl's Club with 90 members. These practically include all the activities of the Epworth League.

MINISTERS NOW ORDAINED.

During the years under review Gower St. Quarterly Official Board recommended as suitable candidates for the ministry: Chas. K. Hudson, Samuel Soper, W. B. Bugden and W. F. Wonnell. We will all agree that no mistake was made in recommending these young men. In 1896 on the recommendation of the presbytery the Board introduced the holding of Conventions of Christian Workers in all departments of the church, which have frequently been held since to the great advantage of all who attend.

CROSSLAND AND HUNTER.

The coming of Evangelists Crossland and Hunter in the winter of 1899 is a matter of too great importance to overlook in our survey of the years. During the campaign which followed over 1500 persons of different ages and stations in life and representing all the Evangelical Churches of the city, gave in their names as determined by God's Grace to lead a new

life. It was a great revival and the fruit thereof is with us to this day.

DEACONESSES.

It was in 1901 that through the generosity of the late Mr. Campbell Macpherson deaconesses were introduced into the work of this church. The first deaconess was Sister Jean whose splendid work among the poor and the sick and suffering is still remembered and won for her the esteem and love of all our people. In 1904 two deaconesses were engaged, Miss Main as visiting deaconess and Miss Large as nursing deaconess. In 1908 Miss Main was succeeded by Miss Foster and Miss Large by Miss Wonnell. 1914, Miss Main, second term; 1914, Miss Bates; 1918, Miss Elliott, who was forced to resign through illness. Miss Elliott was the last deaconess employed by our Board owing to the inability of the Board of management to send another. The Board has been fortunate in securing the services of Rev. T. W. Atkinson who, while not able to perform all the duties of a deaconess, has most efficiently and acceptably carried on the work of visitation. (To be continued.)

Missionary Societies Hold United Meeting.

As part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations, a united meeting of the Women's Missionary Societies of the City Methodist churches was held last night in the Lecture Room of Gower St. Church, under the auspices of the G. S. Society. Mrs. Storey presided. A particularly pleasing feature was the presence of Mrs. Levi Curtis, an indefatigable missionary worker of former years, who through illness has been in retirement for some time. Mrs. Curtis's work in the W.M.S. of Gower Street has not been forgotten, and her reappearance on the platform last night was hailed with genuine pleasure. In the course of her address she referred to the work accomplished by the late Mrs. J. E. P. Peters and Miss March, intimating that to their earnest efforts was due the formation of the Gower Street branch of the W.M.S. To Miss March, who survives, a presentation was made. The interesting programme, including an address by the Rev. Carl Garland, was thoroughly enjoyed by all present.

Careless Driving.

Some speed artist, who drives a motor brougham, dashed up George Street last evening at 10 p.m. when people were going home, turned into Walgrave Street and around the corner to New Gower Street, without slackening speed or sounding his horn. His tall light was so dim that the number of the car could not be ascertained, but the machine and the driver were recognized.

Grand Dance Carnival, Prince's Rink, Wednesday, October 26th, at 8.30. Beautiful prizes for the best costumes. Only 7 days left to get your costume. C. C. C. Full Band in attendance with all the latest dance and concert hits. General admission 20c. Masqueraders 20c. Numbered Reserved Seats 30c., at the Royal Stationery Store.---Oct.26.11

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in Tweed, Cheviot, Nap, Melton and All-Wool materials now on display. Our New Fall and Winter Suitings due to arrive by next steamer from England. Indigo Blue Serge always in stock.

CHAS. J. ELLIS, 302 Water St.

CASINO TO-NIGHT-YOUR POPULAR FAVORITE GLADYS KLARK and a Company of Superior Excellence, present ing the Latest New York Successes.

OFFERING TO-NIGHT

"POLLYANNA"

(THE GLAD PLAY) From the famous story by Eleanor H. Porter, read by millions.

Special Scenery, Elaborate Costumes and Electrical Effects.

The C. L. B. ORCHESTRA (under Capt. Morris) will render selections between the Acts.

MATINEE TO-DAY-"That Girl Patsy."
Prices: 25c., 35c., 50c., 75c. and \$1.00. Matinee Prices, 20c., 30c.

FRIDAY-"The Unkissed Bride."

"Gilt Edge" BUTTER Sept. Cheese, etc.

TO-MORROW.
Ex "Manoa" from Montreal:
"GILT EDGE" CANADIAN CREAMERY
BUTTER--28 lb. boxes.
"GILT EDGE" CANADIAN CREAMERY
BUTTER--56 lb. boxes.
CHARLOTTETOWN TWIN CHEESE--September make.

THURSDAY.
Ex "Rosaling" from New York:
100 SIDES TRIMMED SOLE LEATHER--
Average 13 to 14 lbs. (This shipment of
Leather selling at pre-war prices.)

F. McNamara,
QUEEN STREET.
PHONE 393.

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Our Boys' Overcoats

Now ready for your inspection.

Men's Blue Serge
Pants, \$10.50
(Cuff Bottom)

W. H. JACKMAN,
39 Water Street, West

AUTOMOBILE TIRES--End of season sale: 32 x 4, straight side, \$28; 33 x 4, clincher, \$36. These are being offered at less than landed cost to clear. E. D. SPURRELL, 365 Water Street.

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