

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

Vol. 23.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29th, 1894.

No. 35.

Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Centennial Celebration of St. Andrew's Church

On Saturday the 19th inst., the congregation of St. Andrew's at Niagara celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of the organization of their church. A century has elapsed since a log church was erected; 80 years have gone by since that structure was destroyed on that December night when the retreating invaders left old Newark a mass of smoking ruins, and it is 63 years since the present edifice of weather-beaten brick, with its spire and Doric pillars in somewhat curious union, and its square family pews and lofty pulpit, reminiscent of bygone days, was built. During that century the congregation has undergone many changes, but the descendants of the original founders still muster strong in the present membership, and a personal as well as an historic interest was felt by many of the participants in the ceremony. That ceremony was peculiarly in keeping with the lofty and stately gravity of the noble church to which the congregation belongs.

A notable feature of the event was the presence of Sir Oliver Mowat, who delivered an address abounding in valuable reminiscences of the congregation and its pastors in days long gone by. With him was his brother, Rev. D. J. B. Mowat, professor of Oriental languages in Queen's University and from 1850 to 1857 pastor of St. Andrew's. Others who were present were Hon. J. B. Robinson; Rev. Dr. Gregg, of Knox College; Rev. J. W. Bell, M.A., Newmarket, a former pastor; Rev. Chas. Campbell, for twenty years pastor; Rev. John Young of St. Enoch's Church, Toronto; Rev. J. C. Garrett, rector of St. Mark's, Niagara, Rev. Canon Arnoldi, Niagara; Rev. Dr. Orme of the Methodist Church, Niagara. In addition to these there were present a number of ladies and gentlemen who have a hereditary interest in the church, among whom may be mentioned Mrs. Henry Hamilton of Toronto, a granddaughter of Mr. John Crooks, the Superintendent of the Sunday School in 1826; Mrs. Campbell, granddaughter of Rev. John Burns, one of the first pastors of the church; Mrs. Cleland, daughter of Rev. W. Cleland, a former pastor; Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Currie, St. Catharines; Mr. A. R. Christie, Toronto, a member 60 years ago, and Mr. and Mrs. Forbes, Grimsby. Other Toronto people there were Messrs. Malcolm Gibbs, Herbert Mowat and A. Sampson.

The church was crowded at 4 o'clock, as the inaugural ceremony took place. Rev. Prof. Mowat, Kingston, forty years ago the pastor of the congregation, was the man chosen to unveil the memorial tablet which has been erected to celebrate the anniversary. The tablet is a handsome one of grey granite, with this inscription of "1794-1894; in grateful commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the organization of this congregation, this tablet is erected by the members of St. Andrew's Church, Niagara. The first building being erected in 1794, and erected on this spot, was burned in the war of 1812-14. The congregation met in St. Andrew's school-room, on the north corner of this block, for some years. The present church was built in 1831. The ministers have been:—Rev. John Dun, Rev. John Young, Rev. John Burns, Rev. Thomas Fraser, Rev. Robt. McGill, D.D., Rev. John Cruickshank, D.D., Rev. John B. Mowat, D.D., Rev. Charles Campbell, Rev. William Cleland, Rev. J. W. Bell, M.A., and the present pastor, Rev. N. Smith."

Rev. Nathaniel Smith, the present pastor of the church, occupied the chair, and, after devotional exercises, Rev. J. W. Bell, M.A., praying, Rev. Prof. Mowat, with a few appropriate remarks, drew aside the veil and revealed the tablet.

AN HISTORICAL PAPER.

Rev. Mr. Bell then read an admirable history paper, which had been prepared by Miss Janet Carnochan, an active member of the church, and the most painstaking and accurate of that band of historical writers and investigators who have done so much for the history of the Niagara Peninsula. The paper was a history of the parish during this its first hundred year. Among the interesting facts which Miss Carnochan has discovered was a letter, dated Newark, October 12th,

1792, from Richard Cartwright, probably the grand father of Sir Richard Cartwright, pertaining to the marriage law of Upper Canada and the state of the Church of England. Among a number of other interesting observations, Mr. Cartwright said that "the Scotch Presbyterians, who are pretty numerous here, and to which sect the most respectable part of the inhabitants belong, have built a meeting-house, and raised a subscription for a minister of their own, who is expected shortly among them." This antedates by nearly two years the earliest church records, which do not go back further than June, 1794, the first document being in relation to an agreement for the support of Rev. John Dun, the first pastor. This Mr. Dun was drowned in Lake Ontario in 1803, in the wreck of the barque *Speedy*. A curious fact noted by Miss Carnochan in connection with Rev. John Young, the next pastor, was that in 1791, when pastor of a Presbyterian church in Montreal, he administered the sacrament to his congregation in the church of the Roman Catholic Recollet fathers, which was kindly lent to them while their own was being built. A present of two hogsheds of Spanish wine and a box of candles was all the compensation which the polite and kindly French fathers would accept. The church was destroyed when Niagara was burned by the Americans in 1813, and the congregation subsequently obtained four thousand pounds compensation from the Government, on the ground that officers used the steeple as the post from which they used to reconnoitre. In 1826 a Sunday School was formed with Mr. John Crooks as Superintendent, and this Mr. Crooks was the first person buried in the new burying ground in 1831, St. Mark's burying ground having been used up to that time. In 1829 Rev. Dr. McGill became pastor. By the condition of the law he could not perform the ceremony of marriage, and on the repeal of that almost the first person he married was Hon. Archibald McKellar, who years before had been a pupil at the Niagara Grammar School, taught by Dr. Whitelaw.

The paper concluded with the remark that of the eleven pastors of the church seven have been natives of Scotland, one of Ireland, one of England and two of Canada.

Rev. Prof. Mowat then spoke, recalling the fact that during his ministry a Visiting Committee appointed by the General Assembly gave St. Andrew's the most favorable report of any in the Province. During this pastorate the roof of the building fell in during a storm, and was re-erected in a different and stronger style under the direction of Mr. Kivas Tully, of Toronto. In his days the church had no organ, and the stipend was half what it is at present. In conclusion he spoke in high terms of the work done in the church in later days by Miss Carnochan and Miss Blake, now Mrs. Davidson, of Newmarket.

Rev. Mr. Campbell, pastor from 1858 to 1878, and now a resident of Toronto, spoke in high terms of the mettle of the descendants of the United Empire Loyalists. Rev. J. W. Bell and Rev. John Young also spoke, thus closing the meeting.

The evening meeting was well attended, the church being well filled with an attentive throng. The opening proceedings were brief, Rev. Mr. Smith and Prof. Mowat conducting the devotional exercises, and then Rev. Mr. Smith called upon Sir Oliver Mowat, the man, he said, who had been Premier for the longest continuous term of years known to history in the British Empire.

SIR OLIVER MOWAT.

After a short explanation as to his reasons for reading a paper instead of speaking, this being but the fourth speech he had read in half a century, Sir Oliver spoke as follows:—

I often wish to accept invitations which I receive to public gatherings of various kinds, that I am, notwithstanding, unable to accept. Were I to accept all that I should like to accept, other and more necessary public duties would have to be neglected, and my strength and energy be spent prematurely. There are occasions, however, which are exceptional enough to permit of my accepting, or even to make an acceptance a duty. I considered the great celebration here two years ago of the 100th anniversary of the Province to be of that character. That celebration was followed last year

by the centenary celebration of the founding of the first congregation of the Church of England here; and now Presbyterians, in their turn, celebrate the like anniversary of the first Presbyterian Church in this old, historic town. Being a Presbyterian, as my ancestors were for I know not how many generations, I have considered this occasion to be exceptional enough and interesting enough to bring me to a Niagara gathering once more. It is interesting to know that the Presbyterian residents of Niagara of 100 years ago loved the Presbyterianism of the fatherland as much as we of the present day do. It is interesting to know that they desired to set up in this new place a church in which they and their children should worship God in the same manner as in far off Scotland, that the same teaching should come from the pulpit, that the same psalms and paraphrases and hymns should be sung, and to the same old tunes; that the same forms in all the services should be observed; that the same shorter catechism should be taught to their children; and that, though far away, they should feel themselves still to be members of the church of their fatherland. The population of Upper Canada was then very small, and the Presbyterians in the Province were very few; the population has in the century which has passed become great, and the Presbyterians have become many.

THE PREMIER'S REMINISCENCES.

After referring to his first personal knowledge of Niagara, the fertility of its soil, its wealth of historic associations and the grandeur of its scenery, the Premier continued. But there are reminiscences of persons connected with the congregation which give it to me a special interest. One of its ministers, three-quarters of a century ago or more, the Rev. John Burns, was the father of my friend and first partner in business, Mr. Robert E. Burns. The son was born in Niagara in 1805, and 45 years afterwards he became a Judge of the Court of Queen's Bench. He died on the 12th January, 1863. I know but little of the father. Judge Burns was, I believe, his eldest son, and he was a most estimable man, upright in all his dealings. As a Judge he was painstaking and conscientious—no Judge was ever more so. In every capacity he was esteemed by all who knew him. The Rev. Mr. Burns was for some years master of the grammar school, while he performed clerical duty for the Presbyterian congregation.

Another of the early teachers in Niagara was, like Mr. Burns, a Presbyterian, and him I personally knew in my early boyhood. I mean Dr. John Whitelaw. He was appointed master of the district grammar school in 1830, and held that post until 1851. He was a very able and very learned man. He had previously practised medicine in Kingston, and I knew him as the physician who was employed in my father's family, and also from his having given in Kingston a course of popular lectures on chemistry, which were attended by a considerable number of the educated men and women of the town and by a few boys, of whom I happened to be one. Chemistry was a favorite study with him. I believe he afterwards delivered lectures on chemistry in Niagara.

EARLY MINISTERS.

The earliest minister of the Niagara congregation whom I know personally in any sense was the Rev. Dr. McGill. I saw him first when I was ten years old. That (shall I confess?) is 64 years ago. He became minister of the congregation in 1830, the same year that Dr. Whitelaw became master of the grammar school. Travelling was performed slowly in those days; and I think it was while Dr. McGill was on his way to Niagara that I first heard him preach in Kingston. I recollect my boyish admiration for him, by reason of at once his taking appearance and his interesting sermon. While his discourse, no doubt, contained much more than I understood or appreciated, it was, at the same time, so simple and so clear as to be in great part interesting even to a boy—a boy, at all events who listened with the knowledge that beloved parents expected him to listen, and were not unlikely to catechise him afterwards as to his knowledge of the sermon. Dr. McGill was an able man, and was recognized in his day as one of the best preachers in the province. He was an earnest Christian and a diligent pastor. Nor did he confine himself

to congregational work. I recollect that he started and carried on for some time, a useful and well-conducted religious magazine in the interest of the Canadian church. I recollect that he took an active part in vindicating the equal rights of his church in Upper Canada as one of the established churches of Great Britain. Happily, not only are the two established churches of Great Britain now in all respects equal before the law in Ontario, but the law gives equal rights to all churches as well as to them, and equal rights to the ministers and members of all. The rivalry among them now is, who shall do most for the Master. The memory of Dr. McGill ought not to be forgotten by Canadian Presbyterians, and will not be.

The Rev. Dr. Cruickshank was another eminent minister of the congregation whom I personally knew. It is nearly half a century ago that he was minister here. He succeeded Dr. McGill in 1846, and was minister until 1849, when he returned to Scotland. After having been engaged there for a time at one of the universities as an assistant professor, he was presented to the Pariah of Turiff in Aberdeenshire, which he held from that time to his death on the 12th of June, 1892, at the good old age of 90. He was a cultured man, a good preacher and a good man. My acquaintance with him arose from his having been one of my early teachers in Kingston. He came there from Scotland in 1828 to take charge of a school, which the principal Scottish residents of the town, with some others, wished to establish in consequence of being dissatisfied with the Government Grammar School or its managers. He was but two years in charge when he accepted a call to a congregation in Byton (as Ottawa was then called), preferring ministerial work to scholastic. I recollect that he was accompanied to his destination by Rev. Dr. Machar, Mr. George Mackenzie and my father. Mr. Mackenzie was a Kingston barrister, of great promise. He was taking steps to enter Parliamentary life, when he was carried off by cholera. If he had lived he would probably have had a first place in politics, as he already had in his profession. Sir John A. Macdonald began in legal studies under him. He was a good teacher according to the methods then in use: though Adams' Latin Grammar, somebody's "Select Latin Sentences," Stewart's Geography as then used, and Wallingham's Arithmetic were rather hard fare for boys eight and nine years old.

HISTORY OF THE CENTURY.

The century which elapsed since the congregation was formed has been an eventful one in human history. The progress made in all that concerns a people has been vastly greater than in any previous century known to history. It has been so in regard to every department of human knowledge, and in regard to the application of science and learning to practical uses. It has been so also in regard to education, and its diffusion amongst the whole body of the people. The railways which have been built throughout the world during the century, and steamships which traverse every sea, the telegraph lines over land and ocean, and innumerable mechanical inventions of every kind are among the striking wonders of the century, which distinguish it from all other centuries. One of the valuable results of the progress made is the great increase in the comforts of all classes since the beginning of the century. To all who recognize and appreciate the common brotherhood of all men it is specially grateful to know that the condition generally of what are usually spoken of as the working classes has greatly advanced, through their condition is still far from being what all Christian men, who appreciate the teachings of the Master, must desire it to be, and what there is good ground for hoping and expecting it will become. Politically, also, and in other departments, there has been like progress amongst the nations of the earth.

But while there has been throughout the world exceptional progress in the respects I have referred to, it is fitting on an occasion like the present to remember that, happily, progress has not been less as regards the appliances of philanthropy and charity than as regards other matters, and not less as regards the Christian religion generally, which is the greatest spring of philanthropy and charity. If

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