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HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

No. 108 — ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, WINNIPEG.



HE parish of St. George's, Winnipeg, covers the west central part of Winnipeg, which grew so rapidly during 1881-2 that in 1883 the opening of new work became a necessity. In September of that year, therefore, arrangements were completed by which Holy Trinity, Christ Church, and, we believe, St. James' parishes each contributed certain districts to the proposed new parish. Canon O'Meara undertook the work of organization, in addition to his college duties; and John Ward and James Taylor were appointed first churchwardens. During the winter, services were held in a small public school building, near the site of the present central school. By the fall of 1884 the work had progressed so well that a church was built on the corner of Wilham avenue and Lydia street. It was opened on Advent Sunday, 1884, by the Most Reverend the Metropolitan of Rupert's Land, assisted by Dean Grisdale, Archdeacon Pinkham (now Bishop of Saskatchewan), Canon O'Meara, and Canon Matheson.

The building was a plain frame structure, and as time passed on, and the work of the parish developed, various additions were tacked on without any regard to symmetry or beauty, so that at last it required some stretch of fancy to imagine it was ever intended for a church. Yet, despite its homely exterior, it became from the very first a centre of conscientious, active, self-denying work, until to many who have enjoyed in it sweet communion with God or happy work for Him, its ugliness has been transfigured as though by His very presence, and the recollection of many hours of privilege. For a great blessing seemed to follow the work, and God drew around it a congregation whose fidelity and zeal testified to their appreciation of the efforts of their pastor.

In 1886 the new parish had grown so much that Canon O'Meara found it impossible to keep up the duties of incumbent, which he had so cheerfully assumed, and faithfully carried out. Accordingly, on October 3rd, the Rev. J. J. Roy, B.A., of Montreal, was inducted as incumbent by Dean Grisdale as commissary for the Bishop, who was then in England.

The chronicler may, perhaps, be pardoned if he digresses for a moment to point out to churchmen how deep is the debt of the Church in Rupert's Land to the unique cathedral system, planned and organized by the Archbishop of Rupert's Land.

The Cathedral Chapter, consisting of the Dean and Canons, has, from the very first, been an active missionary force, not limiting its energies to cathedral services—parochial work in St. John's and an active share in the educational work of the college and province—but looking upon every new district and pastorless flock as its own special charge until the want could be supplied. St. George's is only one of many parishes which owe their origin to the vigilance and self-denial of the Dean and Chapter of St. John's.

St. George's was extremely fortunate in its new pastor. A man of indomitable perseverance, untiring energy, and marked ability as a preacher and organizer, Mr. Roy has amply justified his selection.

The parish has made rapid strides, not only in the number of worshippers, but as a power for good in both city and diocese. About two hundred families are connected with the congregation, which numbers one hundred and fifty or more communicants. The Sunday school has about three hundred and fifty scholars on the roll, with twenty-nine teachers and seven officers. Other organizations are Young People's Christian Endeavor, Ladies' Aid, and, with the recently increased facilities, a branch of the Church of England Temperance Society; a Boys' Brigade, adult Bible classes, etc., are in contemplation. Three or four years ago the church



REV. J. J. ROY, B.A.,
Rector St. George's Church, Winnipeg.