

Opening Services of the S.S. Room, July 27th, 1890.

THE members of our church are all aware of the improvements we have made to our Sunday School room, and considering it an important event in our history, we decided to have special services on this day. We regretted very much the absence of our pastor on this occasion; however we all felt that we had spent a very delightful and profitable day, and one that we shall long remember.

The Rev. Mr. Foreman, of Freeman, preached a most acceptable sermon to us in the morning, from the text "I will guide thee with my counsel, and afterward receive thee to glory."—*Psalms LXXIII*, 24.

In the afternoon the scholars gathered in in the Sunday School Room as usual, then took seats in the church, marching to the music of the orchestra. There was music by choir, orchestra and school, and addresses were given by Mr. J. W. Bickle, Mr. J. H. Stannard, Mr. Jas. Matthews, Mr. W. A. Edwards and Mr. H. S. Williams, all former superintendents of this Sunday School. After the anthem, "Rejoice in the Lord," by the choir, Mr. Thos. Morris, Jr., our present superintendent, introduced Mr. Bickle, and in a few happy remarks said in brief that Col. Land gave us the site of the church; he also read some records of the school in 1860 from some books which had come into his possession. He also mentioned that he gathered from these books that the Rev. Alex. Langford had been connected with the school, because was mentioned as having been at a meeting in connection with it.

Mr. Bickle said in brief:—

"My dear friends,

When Mr. Morris asked me to be present with you to-day I shrank so much from it that, right or wrong, I sent him a note requesting him to excuse me. Some few days after that he called upon me, and I made up my mind, without knowing much about Mr. Morris, although I knew he came from good stock, he had one good qualification for a superintendent—he would not take "no" for an answer, and he offered such reasons, kindly and lovingly, that I felt it to be a duty to be present, and although a serious trial to my own mind yet I feel glad that I am here. You may be sure, dear friends, that my feelings are very strongly wrought up to-day as

I am standing before you. It is no small thing for a man to stand in a place like this and look back back over 55 years since I have connected myself with this Sunday School as a boy and a scholar, and over 51 years since I was made a teacher in this Sunday School. Many and many years ago I gave my heart to God in the place where this church now stands, and I feel that I owe a great deal to this Sabbath School, hence I shrank from being here to-day as I did not know how far I would be able to control myself. Your superintendent has stated that about 1826 the school was organized. I do not know the date, but I know the church was built in 1824 and I am morally certain that wherever there was a Methodist Church there was a Methodist Sabbath School. Some short time ago this book came into the possession of your superintendent with records of 1826. I had, in the course of moving from house to house, mislaid certain books which I had, and I have searched diligently for some time for them, and to-day it just struck my mind, have you tried a certain shelf in a cupboard in your office? and to my gladness I found three books which give you a record of this school from 1833 to the present date, or rather to 1860, and you have it in this book (putting his hand on a record produced by Mr. Morris) to the present date. I find that in 1833 they adopted certain rules and regulations, forming the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Sabbath School, as it was then called.

In October, 1835, changes had taken place with regard to the position of the church in Hamilton. There was no such thing as an M. E. Church, and it was then the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and a new constitution was adopted. I notice Mr. Morris, Sr., was chairman of the meeting that took place which adopted the constitution of 1835. Time passed on and in 1839 I was appointed a teacher of the 4th Testament Class. You know we taught spelling in the Sabbath School in those days. You recollect, dear friends, that unhappily, some years ago, there was a division in the church, and instead of being all Wesleyan Methodists, there were the British Methodists and the Canadian Methodists. I don't know whether this school is the lineal descendant of the first school on this ground; certainly it is a question of genealogy, because this school, organized in 1822 or 1824, moved from this church, it being outside the limits of the City, to what was called the White Church, on John Street, where Gurney's Foundry now is. When the British Methodists built their