

The Jubilee, or Fiftieth Anniversary of St. Anne's Church, Toronto

THE history of St. Anne's Church, Toronto, during the past fifty years has been in some respects a most unique and remarkable one. The nucleus of its congregation consisted of a number of people, who had been accustomed to gather together for worship in a private chapel, built by the late Col. R. L. Denison at his residence on Dovercourt Road, of which the Rev. John Hilton was appointed Rector.

Upon the partition of the Macdonnell estate, the two sons (Alexander and Angus), carrying out the wish of their father, the late Hon. Alexander Macdonnell, donated a piece of land on Dufferin street to the Church of England in memory of their mother, Ann Smith-Macdonnell, who, while her husband was a devoted Roman Catholic, was herself a faithful and loyal member of the Church of England.

At the same time a second piece of land was donated by the same family on St. Helen's Avenue to the memory of their father. Thus, in memory of their parents, the land for two churches was given, on one piece of which was erected, in 1862, the Church of St. Anne's, where the truths that their mother loved were taught, and, on the other lot the Church of St. Helen's was erected, where the doctrines which their father believed were proclaimed. So in 1862, the Rev. John Hilton being Rector, and Mr. Kivas Tully the Architect, the first edition of St. Anne's was built. Some of the members gave their time and labor, others gave in money and the bricks were donated by Charles Denison, Esq., who is one of the very few members of the original St. Anne's who is still living and a member of the present congregation.

Mr. Hilton was succeeded, on his death in the year 1873, by the Rev. Joseph C. Gibson, who only lived nine months after his appointment, and was followed by the Rev. Dr. Strong, who labored from 1873 until his resignation through illness in 1877. Then the Rev. J. Maclean Ballard was transferred by Bishop Bethune from St. Bartholomew's Church to take charge of St. Anne's.

The parish at this early date was scattered over a large area extending from Davenport Road on the north to the lake shore, and from Trinity College on the east to the Humber river. Mr. Ballard soon found the difficulty of efficiently working so large a district single handed, and as the Rev. E. R. Stimson had started a little Sunday School in Parkdale, this was taken as a new church centre, and in 1877 a small chapel was erected (which is now used as the Infant Class and Choir Room of the present