

FIFTY YEARS RECORD.

AN INTERESTING POINT IN THE HISTORY ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.

The following interesting historical sketch has been issued in connection with the celebration of the Jubilee of St. Paul's church, Smith's Falls, an extended report of which will be found on another page of this issue.

St. Paul's (formerly Union) church, Smith's Falls, had its origin in the great religious movement in Scotland which issued in the disruption of the National Church in 1843. The effect of that movement was felt in Canada, and eventually led to the formation of a branch of the Free Church in this western land. A considerable number of the early Presbyterian settlers in the townships around Smith's Falls had been connected with several of the secession bodies in their native country, and so when the disruption of the Presbyterian Church took place, they were ready to move in the direction of forming a new connection, and separating themselves from the congregation to which they had attached themselves in Smith's Falls. Accordingly, in September, 1844, there appeared a public notice in the village, signed by five individuals, calling a public meeting of all in favor of separating themselves from the Established Church party, and of seeking connection with some religious body where they could "enjoy gospel ordinances in their purity and under a Scriptural form of Church government." Accordingly a meeting was held, and after prayer for the Divine guidance and mutual counsel, they resolved to seek connection with the Missionary Synod of the United Session Church of Scotland in Canada. In further pursuance of this purpose, they chose a committee of eight (the only living member of which in Smith's Falls is Mr. George Foster) to carry out their resolutions and obtain religious services in connection with the body to which they had attached themselves. In answer to their application the late Dr. Thornton, of Whitby, visited them, and advised them to place themselves under the care of the Presbytery of the United Session Church of Canada East. They did so, and in due time were visited by several members of that Presbytery, and eventually in January 1845, were organized, and had the communion administered to them. Being without a place of worship the Methodist body in Smith's Falls kindly gave the use of their church till they could obtain one of their own. At the time of their organization they elected four elders, namely: Mr. Russell Bartlett, sr., William Ballentyne, sr., John Rutherford, and George Foster.

In the fall of the same year they had the services for a short time of the Rev. William Aitken, lately come from Scotland, and so satisfied were they with his services, that they resolved to call him as their pastor. Accordingly after the usual steps had been taken, in the spring of the following year they addressed to him a unanimous call, which in due time was accepted by him, and on the 14th May, 1846, he was inducted into the pastoral charge of the newly formed congregation, consisting of twenty-nine members of whom only three are on the roll to-day. The first thing after

the settlement of a minister was to erect a church building, which they immediately set about on a site obtained from the late Mr. Simpson, in exchange for one which had been presented to them by the late Mr. Abol Ward, on Church street.

The building was neither very ornate nor expensive, but sufficient for their needs and enough to tax their means to the utmost.

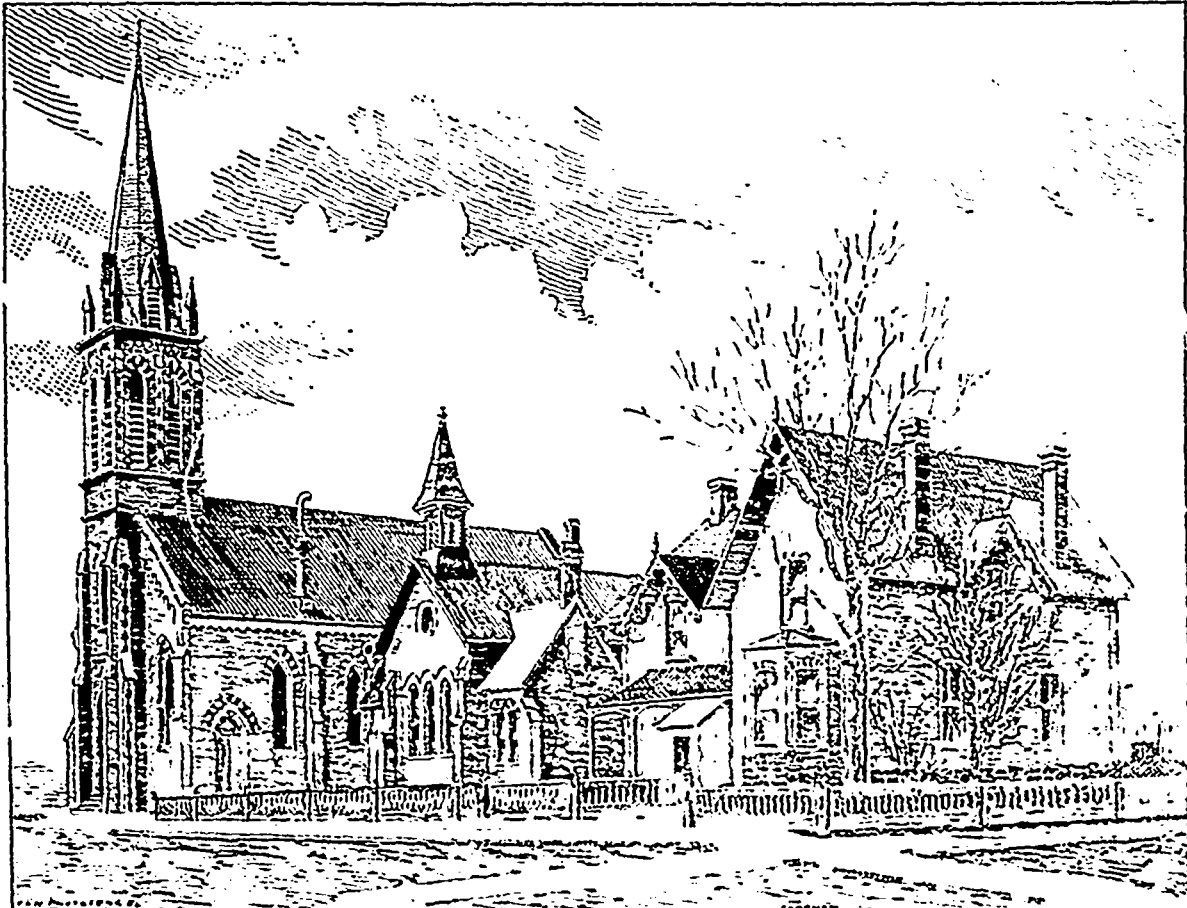
It was opened for public worship on Dec. the 29th., 1846, by religious services in the early part of the day, and by a grand tea-meeting in the evening, attended, it is recorded, by over two hundred people.

They had next to prepare a manse, which after a few years was occupied by their pastor, whose salary at first was only 75 pounds currency, or \$300, no princely sum, but as much as the congregation could afford. It was afterwards raised to \$400.

Under the ministry of Mr. Aitken the congregation continued to prosper, and in 1848 it was found necessary to do something to enlarge their church, or erect a new one. The latter step was at length resolved upon and the present handsome building was the consequence of that resolution.

At first the carrying out of the plan was too much for their means, and they agreed to dispense with the basement, the gallery, and the spire. The present church being in process of building during the years of negotiations for union between the United Presbyterian Church and what was known as the Free Church, and having been opened about the time of the consummation of that Union, it received the name of Union Church in commemoration of that event, in 1868 the Rev. Mr. Aitken, after a pastorate of twenty-two years, resigned his charge and was sent as a missionary to British Columbia, where he labored for a time eventually returning to his native country, where he died in 1892. In the fall of 1868 the Rev. John Crombie, minister of Iverness, P.Q., was invited by the Presbytery of Ottawa to visit certain vacant congregations in their bounds, and the congregation of Smith's Falls in particular. As a result of that visit the congregation gave to him a unanimous call, and in the spring of the following year he was released from his charge, and on the 4th day of March, 1869, was duly inducted into the pastoral charge of Union church. Soon after the new manse was built on lots, the gift of Mr. Wm. Williamson, at that time one of the elders.

A few years afterwards the spire was built and the church otherwise improved. About the same time instrumental music and other changes were introduced. Mr. Crombie continued in the charge for 18 years, at the end of that period he resigned his charge and was by the General Assembly permitted to retire from the active duties of the ministry as a *pastor emeritus*, retaining his membership in the congregation without any official connection with it. During his ministry the congregation steadily increased from 76 when he entered on the pastorate, and numbering 150 when he demitted his charge. In July, 1887, the present pastor was inducted, and under his zealous, and faithful ministrations, the congregation has made still greater progress, as the events of last week abundantly testify.



ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, SMITH'S FALLS