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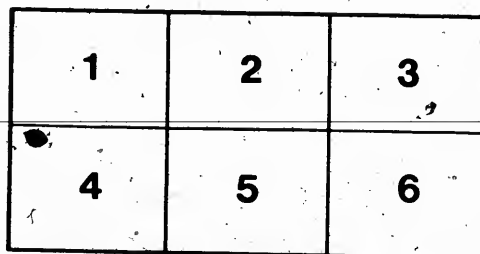
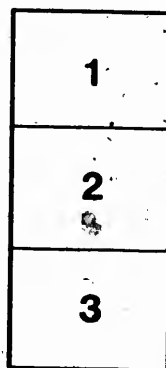
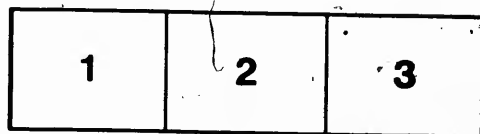
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"Remembering the Days of Old."

A SERMON.

PREACHED AT

THE SILVER JUBILEE

OF THE

Parliament Street Baptist Church

TORONTO

— APRIL 4TH, 1897 —

BY

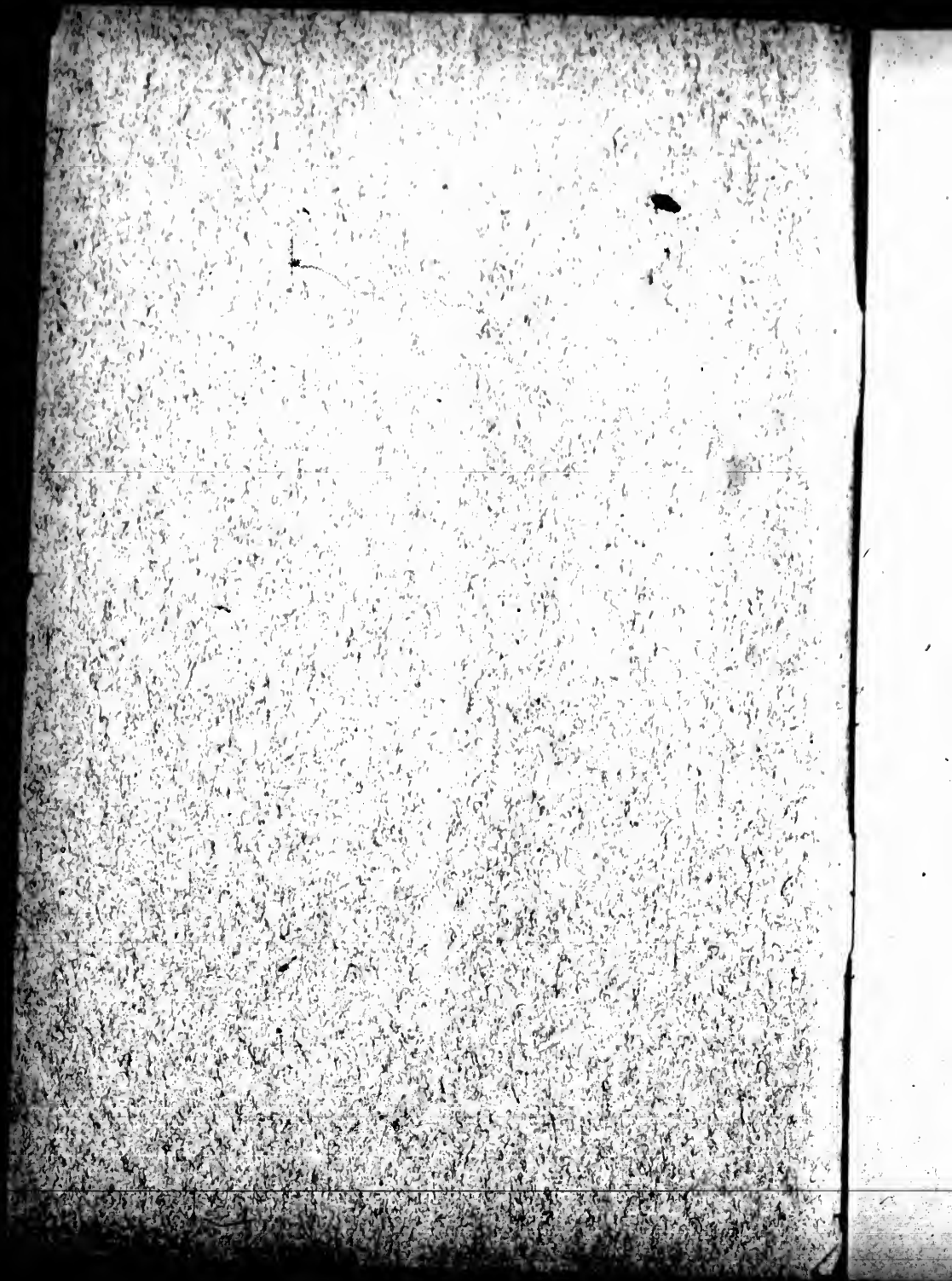
REV. S. A. DYKE

(Its First Pastor)

AND PUBLISHED BY REQUEST

ODDLEY & BURNS, PRINTERS

1897



173/200

The Silver Jubilee

—OF THE—

PARLIAMENT ST. BAPTIST CHURCH, TORONTO.

(April 4th, 1897.)

“ I remember the days of old ;
I meditate on all thy works ;
I muse on the work of thy hands ;
I stretch forth my hands unto thee.”

—Ps. cxliii. 5, 6.

Twenty-five years is now a considerable period in the life of an individual or of a church. It is the major part of a generation ; the fourth part of a century, and seventy-five such periods would bring us to the days of our Lord. That is to say, seventy-five men, each living only twenty-five years, and clasping hands, the one coming into life as the other passed out, would span the centuries between the earthly life of our Lord and the present day.

This church, therefore, has been in existence one seventy-fifth part of the Christian era ; and we do well at this SILVER MILE-STONE in her history to stop and take a backward look, to remember the days of old, to meditate on all God's works, to muse on the work of His hands, to gather inspiration and gladness from the exercise, and to lift up our hands in grateful thanksgiving for the past, and in solemn consecration for the future.

There are four things in this scripture which indicate the duty and the privilege of the hour. 1st. Recollection—the recalling, the re-collecting the things of the past. 2nd. Reflection—the letting the light of reason shine in upon these things, and shine back into our minds and hearts. 3rd. Ruminatation—the pondering over, the drawing out from them all the sweetness and strength which they can afford; and, 4th, as the resultant effect, Resolution to go on in the strength and gladness thus imparted to still greater service. Here then we may find exercise for memory, reason, emotion and will, every part of our complex mental and moral nature.

RECOLLECTION.

“I remember the days of old.”

1. Remembrance is a duty. There is an ethical element in memory which is often overlooked. A bad memory is always a defect, frequently a fault, and sometimes a sin. We remember best that which has received our closest attention; we give our closest attention to that which interests us most, and that interests us most for which we have an inward attraction. And so the things we notice, attend to, and treasure in our memories, reveal in a wonderful way our inner life and character. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he; and that which he learns by heart indicates the heart that is in him. Blessed is he whose memory is a sweet benediction, and who can say with David, “I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate upon thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.”—Ps. lxxiii. 6, 7. And sad, indeed, is it for the one to whom memory is as the blighting blast of the sirocco, or as the gnawing at his heart of an undying worm. As life moves on, our memories become more and more a part of ourselves, the treasured harvests of all our past, the strangely frescoed chambers

in which we dwell, and which strongly influence our thinking, our feeling and our conduct, and thus memory helps to make our hell or heaven even here on earth.

2. There are times when it is our special duty to remember the past, to take a retrospect, to mark the steps by which we have reached the place where we now stand, and thus to draw out from the past all the wisdom and strength, all the cheer and gladness which it can give to us. God frequently charged His ancient people that they remember all the way which He had led them, all the wonders which He had wrought for them, and all the good which He had done to them. Nay, more, they were to write these things in a book, that it might be for the generations following. I shall try at this time to be to you the King's remembrancer, and for you a scribe, for which perhaps I may claim some fitness, seeing that I can say, in the words of Aeneas to Queen Dido in narrating the story of Troy: "All of which I have seen, and in much of which I have had a part." But lest I weary you by detaining you in the porch, let me usher you into the frescoed hall of this church's history, and describe the panorama which, in varied hues, presents itself to memory's eye. In order that we may the more clearly see, and the more securely treasure in our minds these things, let us arrange them in the order of their Origin and their Outcome; and therefore, first to the story of this church's beginning.

ORIGIN.

He who follows the Jordan to its source, will find that it bursts out a gushing fountain at the foothills of the Anti-Lebanon, where the mighty snow-crowned Hermon sits a king. Fed by the melting snows from the mountains, it is a river from the moment it breaks forth from the heart of the eternal hills, of which Jeremiah seems to think, when he says: "Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon when it cometh from a rock of the field?" So was it with this church.

In the Bond Street Church there was a body of intelligent, consecrated young people known as The Young Men's Christian Association of the Bond Street Baptist Church. Anxious to win souls for Christ, and extend his kingdom by establishing Mission Stations which would grow into churches, and supported by the full life of a vigorous church, they sought opportunities for service in the east and west ends of the city.

On the evening of November 4th, 1869, they instructed the Committee on Religious Meetings to make inquiries, with the view of starting a mission prayer-meeting in the east end of the city. As a result of these inquiries, a room over the Berkeley Street Fire Hall was secured, and the first prayer-meeting was held on the evening of December 10th, 1869. Fourteen brethren, sisters and friends were present, and Bro. H. E. Buchan, M.D., who was chairman of the meeting, read the eighth chapter of Acts, making appropriate remarks and appeals from the 4th verse—"They went everywhere preaching the Word." several brethren following in fervent prayer and earnest exhortation. The first Sabbath evening service was held on January 16th, 1870, and continued regularly thereafter.

The Association feeling that the organization of a Sabbath school in connection with the mission would deepen the interest and extend its influence, resolved to start a Sabbath afternoon school in the Hall; and on February 13th, 1870, a school was commenced with twenty-nine scholars and twelve teachers; and with Mr. T. D. Craig (now M. P.), as its Superintendent.

In view of the rapid enlargement of the mission in both its spheres, especially in the Sabbath school department, and in view also of the fact that the Fire Hall was to be pulled down, the Bond Street Church, after negotiations for a site on Duchess Street, near Ontario, and on the corner of Sydenham and Parliament Streets, finally purchased for \$1,000, 77 x 139 feet of the lot on which the church now stands. Additional land to the south was subsequently purchased, making the church lot the size that it is at present.

Until the church should be built, brother John Jones threw open the parlors of his new house, adjoining on the south, for the use of the mission. The last service was held in the old Fire Hall on December 4th, 1870, and the mission moved from the dingy room, reached by a rickety stairway, to its new and cheerful quarters. Here, on December 11th, 1870, sixty-four scholars and sixteen teachers met for the first time, and in the evening there was a public service, with an attendance of about fifty.

At this period, December, 1870, the Young Men's Association handed the mission over to the Bond Street Church, and on the evening of March 8th, 1871, the Church resolved to erect a church edifice at a cost of, as per tender, of \$4,855. On the evening of September 3rd, 1871, Bro. S. A. Dyke, who had returned from Spurgeon's College, England, preached his first sermon as missionary pastor, from Luke xix: 41. On Sabbath afternoon, October 29th, 1871, the church building having been completed, it was opened for service by Rev. Wm. Stewart, B.A., pastor of the Bond Street Church, who preached from Prov. ix: 1, "Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars." It is an interesting fact that Dr. Stewart, who preached the dedicatory sermon then, will preach this afternoon. It is not often given to two men to meet at the silver jubilee of a church, with the origin of which they had a part.

In the evening Bro. S. A. Dyke preached from Psalm lxxv: 1. "Praise waiteth for thee, O God in Zion; and unto thee shall the vow be performed." Thus, in less than two years the consecrated band of workers, supported by the prayers and gifts of the mother church, had seen the work grow until it was established on a sound and permanent basis, in an eligible location, with a good lot and a new and attractive place of worship, which was not long afterwards cleared of all debt by the Bond Street Church, and handed over to the new church after its organization. And as the missionary who had charge of the work was a

child of the Bond Street Church, went from it to the Pastors' College, returned to it as its missionary, and was supported by the church, this church can in the fullest sense be called the child of the Bond Street, now Jarvis Street, Church.

The little one grew and went even faster than some of the more conservative members of the mother church thought advisable. They desired that it should be, in a sense, a feeder to it, and lend strength to its membership. But the workers in the mission clearly saw that the cause would be best advanced by having full Sabbath services, and the ordinance of baptism administered at the mission. This led to some discussion, and to some warmth of feeling, also. In fact, as in a growing hive of bees, the practised ear could detect by the murmur, and the active moving about within the old hive, that a swarm would soon have to come out. And the wisdom which had builded the house, soon saw, that as the enthusiastic workers in the mission must swarm, that they should go out with a blessing rather than a curse, in peace rather than in strife. In looking back through these twenty-five years to that time, the one who now addresses you can say, that in nothing has the good hand of our God been more manifest than in the way in which He held the high mettled, fervent, young workers back from rash words and deeds, and in the grace He gave to the older brethren in the patience, and in the wisdom which saw what Israel ought to do at such a time. Very beautiful was the way in which the mother church sent out the child, saying in words which should live to the end of time.

*"Dear Brethren and Sisters,—*In accordance with your request at the regular church meeting held on the 19th February, 1872, you, whose names are annexed, have been granted this letter of dismissal.

We part with you as a loving mother parts with a beloved child. Giving you our best wishes and our heartfelt prayers, hoping and praying that you may become a

strong and growing church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that your light may shine forth a beacon to show many the way of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

May the Lord also abundantly bless the labors of your beloved pastor, and may your hearts and his be knit together in the bonds of the Gospel.

We the parent church, and spiritual birth place of many of you, also crave your prayers on our behalf, that we may still continue to grow, both spiritually and numerically, and that we may remain steadfast to the end.

By order of the Church,

(Sgd.) EDMUND BURKE, *Clerk.*

Toronto, February 20th, 1872."

And at the same time the sum of \$300 was promised for one year towards the pastor's salary.

By this letter thirty-one members were dismissed to enter into the new organization. One other name, that of the new pastor's wife, was subsequently added by a special letter, and the pastor presented, on his own behalf, one from the Metropolitan Tabernacle Church, London, England, and another from Rev. C. H. Spurgeon and the tutors of the college; thus making up the original thirty-three who formed the constituent membership of the church, as follows:

Wm. Austin.
Mrs. Wm. Austin.
Robert Platts.
Mrs. Robert Platts.
James Ryrie.
Mrs. James Ryrie.
Wm. Wesbroom.
Mrs. Wm. Wesbroom.
John Jones.
Mrs. John Jones.
Wm. Booz.
Mrs. Wm. Booz.

Joseph Slade.
Mrs. Joseph Slade.
Nathanael Fowles.
Mrs. Nathanael Fowles.
Mrs. C. Tarr.
N. Stambury Tarr.
Bessie Ryrie.
James Ryrie, Jr.
Mrs. Trotter.
Mrs. A. Thomas.
Thomas Forster.
John Forster.

F. E. Hunt.
 Mrs. F. E. Hunt.
 Wm. Cullin.
 Mrs. Wm. Cullin.

Caroline Cornell.
 Mrs. J. McBrien.
 H. Grimbleby.
 Mrs. S. A. Dyke.

Rev. S. A. Dyke.

The organization of the church was on this wise: A largely attended prayer meeting was held on Friday evening, Feb. 23rd, 1872, after which it was decided to meet for organization on Thursday evening, the 29th inst., and a committee was appointed consisting of the pastor, Wm. Austin, and Wm. Wesbroom, to prepare Articles of Faith and a Covenant, to be submitted for approval. On the Thursday, as arranged, thirty brethren and sisters (Sisters Trotter, McBrien and Slade being absent) met together at half past seven o'clock. (Bro. T. D. Craig being present by special invitation). Thirty minutes were spent in earnest prayer. The pastor, as chairman, read the letters of dismission for those about to unite together in church fellowship, and the Articles of Faith, which were adopted by a standing vote. He then read the Covenant, which was adopted in like manner, whereupon the chairman declared the church duly constituted, and called upon it to elect its officers; which it proceeded to do forthwith: Wm. Austin, John Jones and James Ryrie being elected deacons, and Wm. Booz, clerk. The Chairman having retired and another one being appointed in his place, the church, by a standing vote, unanimously called Bro. S. A. Dyke to the pastorate. The call was accepted; and the meeting adjourned by singing the Doxology, and with the Benediction. Thus simply and scripturally, was this church organized. Never will the scene in which that little company banded themselves together as a church of Jesus Christ be forgotten. They were gathered in the eastern end of the church, in the centre row of seats, just in front of the gallery. Earnestly, solemnly, gladly, confidently, they entered into the most sacred of earthly compacts. One thing was certain,

there was not a shadow of a doubt as to the wisdom of the course or as to the duty of the hour: a wisdom and a duty which this day abundantly justifies. Of that band of thirty-three, at least ten have passed to the Church triumphant; eleven have removed to other parts of Canada and the United States, and some have been lost sight of; twelve are still in membership with Baptist churches in the city; but only four of these remain in membership with this church to this day, Mr. and Mrs. Fowles; Mrs. John Jones, and Mrs. Trotter.

On Thursday, March 28th, 1872, the church was recognized, and the pastor ordained by a council consisting of delegates from Bond St., Alexander St., Yorkville (now Bloor St. church) and Queen St. (colored), churches, Toronto; and from Ingersoll and Stratford churches. Rev. A. H. Munro was Moderator, and James Pyper, D.D., preached the ordination sermon from Prov. xxx. 6, "Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Thus the young church was formally welcomed into the sisterhood of Canadian Baptist churches. On the following evening the baptistery was used for the first time, when seven persons were baptized, one of whom was our beloved brother, George Jones, and another the sister who is now the wife of Rev. W. G. White. Such was the beginning and establishing of this church.

THE OUTCOME.

God's blessing rested richly upon the church from the beginning. During the first year sixty-two were baptized, twenty-one were received by letter, and sixteen on experience, a total of ninety-nine, and without the loss of a single member, a four fold increase during the first year. Very striking was an incident at the close of the first anniversary meeting in 1873. Deacon Wm. Elliot, a godly, gracious, and wise man came up to the pastor and said, "I have an acknowledgment to make. A year ago I thought that you were wrong in moving on so rapidly, and I opposed you.

Now I wish to say that I was wrong and you were right." From such a man, in such a way, the words, so frankly spoken, have lingered all these years as a benediction. The blessing thus granted in the beginning, has been continued almost continually through this quarter of a century. During these years 802 have been baptized, 426 have been received by letter, and 148 upon experience, a total of 1,376, or an average of over one for every week in the church's history. The sum of \$55,767 has been raised directly for current expenses and benevolent work; besides large sums which have not passed through the church books.

Probably one of the most remarkable features of the work here has been the number who have entered the ministry, or have become missionaries at home and abroad. Rev. Charles A. Cook, a former beloved pastor, writes in view of this anniversary service. "I entered upon my ministry at Parliament St., Feb. 4th, 1883, and closed it March 25th, 1888—five years and two months. In that time I baptized 251 persons. I know of no church any where, that has furnished so many men for the ministry at home and abroad as Parliament St. in the same length of time. To my mind it is one of the highest marks of approval God could put upon its work, and is one of the clearest evidences of the high standard of spiritual life which has been sustained in the church; for churches whose spiritual life is at a low ebb do not, as a rule, furnish men for the ministry. I am deeply stirred as I think of these things. Many thus gathered have become devoted workers, and are being made a great blessing to others. God bless dear old Parliament St., and give her many years of prosperity far exceeding what the past has been." What Bro. Cook has so well said, could be said by nearly every other pastor, both before and since his time.

The following are the names and fields of service of those who have entered the ranks for special work: James Fanstone, Superintendent of Missions, Pernambuco, Brazil;

Thos. J. Murdoch, Algonquin, Ont.; Wm. A. Gunton, Nanaimo, B.C.; S. S. Weaver, Norwood, Ont.; Geo. H. Barrow, died on the field in India, now in glory; Wm. G. White, Missionary to the Indians, Oshweken, Ont.; H. Grimwood, Lewiston, Pa.; Thomas Urry, China; Mrs. Windsor (nee Harriet Hastings), China; Miss L. Hastings, China; Miss H. Hastings, China; Miss N. Waterman, China; Charles Burrell, Westport, Ont.; Geo. Robertson, Jamaica; E. S. Wilson; W. R. Burrell; and in preparation for the work, Joshua Marshall and W. H. Rock, McMaster Hall; Arthur E. Taylor, Granville College, Ohio; Geo. Finch, Bible Training School, Toronto; H. Crickington and Miss McMahan, in training for mission work in China and India respectively. Thus the work of the church and her voice have gone out to the ends of the earth. Not only so, but the success of the mission led to the early establishment of the mission at College St., by the Alexander St. Church and the Toronto Baptist Missionary Union, and next year our brethren at College St. will celebrate their quarter century of service for the Master.

Nor is this all. The forces then set in operation have been working continuously ever since. In January, 1872, there were but four Baptist churches in Toronto, and not one of these west of Yonge St., with a total membership of 608. Last year there were eighteen churches, not including Eglinton, with a membership of 4,772, an increase of nearly eight fold. Then there were four chapels worth about \$40,000. Now there are properties worth about \$400,000, not including our educational institutions. What hath God wrought during these twenty-five years!

I would here reverently and lovingly place a laurel crown upon the sainted brows of the early officers of this church. John Jones, the enthusiastic, the energetic, the tender-hearted, whose hearty hand clasp some of us remember to this day, and whose early death filled us with deepest grief; Wm. Poole, the calm, the wise, the strong, and whose silver locks were a crown of glory; James Ryrie, the

godly, the consistent, the incorruptible; Wm. Cullin, the
 leal, the loyal, the manly; Wm. Booz, the cultured scribe.
 Where could a young pastor find a nobler, rarer band of
 men, each a pillar of strength, and worthy to be placed
 among David's mighties, and all, save Bro. Cullin, now in
 Victoria, B.C., passed away from earthly service to the
 presence of their Lord. Thank God for such deacons, and
 such men. Their names should be held in everlasting
 remembrance.

As to the seven pastors of the church, including the
 one who now ministers to you so acceptably, and whose
 sweet songs so greatly help the message he has to deliver,
 delicacy suggests that not much should be said. They are
 all still alive and remain in service to this day, and the
 eldest of this brotherhood, if we except the Nestor of us
 all, Dr. Stewart, is scarcely more than twice the age of this
 church, so that it is possible that they may all live to see
 her golden jubilee, though it should be said that that is
 extremely improbable. Perhaps not one will be left to tell
 the tale, but that other lips will take up the story here
 begun, other lips will sing the songs of thanksgiving, and
 other ears will listen to the tale the golden mile stone will
 have to tell.

But time admonishes me that I must hasten, though
 what has been said suggests so much more that could be
 said. Memories flock around me as swallows round a
 church steeple. Let me close this history with the names,
 the times of service, and the present fields of labor of your
 seven pastors: S. A. Dyke, Sept. 1st, 1872, to Oct. 1st,
 1876, now at Lansdowne Ave., Toronto; E. M. C.
 Botterill, Jan. 1st, 1877, to Dec. 31st, 1880, Indianapolis,
 Indiana, U.S.; Wm. T. Tapscott, July, 1881 to 1883,
 now in evangelistic work; C. A. Cook, Feb. 1st, 1883, to
 March 25th, 1888, now in Bloomfield, New Jersey, U.S.;
 James Grant, May, 1888, to Oct., 1893, during whose
 pastorate the church was enlarged, now at Ingersoll, Ont.;
 Wm. Stewart, D.D., Dec., 1893, to Oct., 1894, now Princi-

pal Bible Training School, Toronto; James A. Keay, Dec., 1894, whose pastorate, let us hope, will be the most blessed of all, and that his bow may long abide in strength.

REFLECTION.

"I meditate on all Thy works."

Reflection is a higher exercise of the mind than mere recollection. Memory supplies the materials; meditation arranges them, examines and studies them. It is the inner eye which looks beneath the surface and seeks the meanings of things; which looks back to their origin, and forward to their outcome. Memory is the parable, reflection is the explanation. Memory is most active in youth, meditation in maturity. Children remember, men ponder. Without memory the mind is a vacant room; with memory alone it is only a lumber-room; with reflection it is a room furnished and garnished with every useful and beautiful thing.

If, therefore, to "remember the days of old," is a duty; to meditate on all God's works in the midst of those days, and to see His hand in all our history, is a still higher duty. Only thus will the facts which memory supplies have meaning, consistency and counsel for us. Consequently, it is our duty to think on these things, to see, to hear, to understand their meaning. And such a story as I have told, affords abundant food for such an exercise. What then are the lessons which this quarter of a century of life and service for the Master teach us?

They teach us that great things from little things may grow. High as were the hopes and purposes of that little company of fourteen, which met on that December night in 1869, in that dingy room, by way of that trembling stairway,—typical of their trembling hearts,—they did not dream that a work was then begun, which in a quarter of a century would girdle the earth, and that the voice of prayer and praise then raised, would echo on the eastern and

western shores of the Pacific, in South America, in India, and in China, ere the century closed. They planted better than they knew. They builded better than they thought.

They teach us that united effort is better than separated effort. If one can chase a thousand, two can put ten thousand to flight. When men are workers together for God, their work is a thousandfold blessed of Him. But such united effort means division of labor, correlated labor, labor which considers one another, and which for the good of the whole is content to be unseen, unknown, unrecognized, but glorified as in the Lord's sight, for it is unto Him.

They tell us that much can be accomplished with little of this world's goods. Here is a church which never had a wealthy man in its membership; for as soon as men began to prosper, and some have prospered, they moved into more attractive neighborhoods, or into the suburbs. And yet, though the average income has been only about \$2,200 per annum, nevertheless it has more to show, in souls won to Christ, in ministers and missionaries sent forth, and in every other spiritual result, than many a fashionable church with ten times its income.

They teach us that no man can tell how great the harvest may be. A single seed sown in a fruitful soil may in one year become a hundred; in two years ten thousand; in three a million; in four a billion; in five a trillion; in six a quadrillion, and by the tenth year an octillion, a harvest which the granaries of the world could scarce contain. Thought fails to grasp the stupendous possibilities for good or evil of one life consecrated to the service of Christ or of Satan. If "our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," what may not our service for the Master bring us?

They tell us that character, consecration and courage count for more than gold in God's cause. This church was greatly blessed in its early membership, seldom has any band a better record than that little company who united

together to form this church: Its senior deacon, William Austin, entered the ministry in the United States; one, Wm. Wesbroom, has been singularly useful both with voice and pen in junior Sabbath School work; one has been for many years an honored deacon of the 1st Baptist Church, Ottawa; one has been honored with the Presidency of our Home Mission Board, and is now a deacon of the Jarvis St. Church; one was assistant chamberlain of the city; the deacons were all men of superior intelligence and unsullied character; and not one of the thirty-three has made shipwreck of the faith; and those who have died, have passed triumphantly home. What blessed forces, what redeeming grace, must have been behind them, within them, above them!

They tell us that the work of a church may not be known by the size of a church. Some churches become "*chapels of ease*," in which the members become so luxuriously comfortable, and so delightfully content, that they can hear no call to come out, however loud it may be. They are "at ease in Zion," and do not wish to be disturbed, although the curse of Meroz may be hanging over them. But other churches are like express offices. They do so large a business for the Master that they can keep but little stock on hand. They are constantly receiving, yet as constantly sending on. This church has never been very strong; but every other church in the city is its debtor, and distant cities and foreign lands as well. Her light has gone out through all the earth, and her words unto the ends of the world. She has but to lift up her eyes and look across the classic Don to see the turrets of the home were dwells her firstborn, who has already outgrown the mother, and some of whose strongest members followed Christ in baptism within these walls. And she has but to send a line through the heart of the earth to hear the message spoken in strange tongues, by those who first received that message here, and here entered into the kingdom of God. Of her it can truly be said "The sun never sets on her children." If it is more blessed to give than to receive, than is Parliament St. blessed indeed.

But time fails to point out the many lessons, these facts, which I have given, suggest. Perhaps, ere I pass on, one other thing might, and ought to be, said. This church has been too busy about the Master's business to be greatly troubled with people with fads, and who thereby eat out its life. Moths cannot work where things are continually in motion. In Rev. Dr. Fyfe's "Forty Years' Survey from Bond St. Pulpit," in 1875, are these significant words; "This church has been retarded in her progress also, by some who suddenly became too pious any longer to walk with their brethren; who sunk all their interest for the lost and perishing in their overwhelming desire for their own personal edification and comfort. Or to state the case differently: They lost their sympathy for humanity through the professed greatness of their love for Christ." And we may add, active effort for the salvation of men is a great corrective of this self-conscious, subtle, spiritual Phariseeism, and a great help to that humble dependence upon him, and joy in his service, which we all so much need. It clears the air wonderfully of mere speculation, and keeps us in healthy joyous exercise. Moses wist not that his face shone; but others saw it; and he who in heart was willing to be accursed for his brethren's sake, had, all unconsciously, something of the glory of Him who left the mount of transfiguration for the service of the plain, for the agony of Gethsemane and the darkness of Calvary. In all our church relationship we do well to cherish the sentiments of Augustine: "I better whom I may; whom I cannot I suffer. I avoid the chaff lest I become chaff; I keep the floor lest I become nothing." Or with Thomas Adams, the Puritan, "God says to the wicked guest, 'How camest thou in hither,' not to the prepared. His fault cannot dispense with thy duty; nor shall thy duty be charged with his fault." Let us be true to the church of Christ, and know that with all her imperfections and failures, she is dear to Him as the apple of his eye, and is doing in all her weakness His work in the world.

RUMINATION.

"I muse on the work of Thy hands."

If reflection is the province of the intellect, rumination is an exercise of the heart and soul. Reason tells us that through all secondary causes we should trace things up to the Great First Cause. Rumination takes up the work where reflection lays it down. The eye sees, or the ear hears, memory receives and stores, the intellect examines and reports, and then the heart deals with them.

One of the signs of a clean animal is that it ruminates. It must not only divide the hoof, it must also chew the cud. After it has gathered all it can, it quietly rests and grinds it all over again, getting out from it all its treasured sweetness and strength. So to the soul which muses, which ruminates, which delights to dwell upon God's works and ways, there comes a gladness and a power not of earth. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant."

If God has been in very deed within these walls; if this place has been made glorious with His presence; if Christ, the seeking Saviour, has here often times met with the seeking sinner; if there has come to souls in this place light in darkness, joy in sorrow, strength in weakness, life from the dead; if Christ has walked in the midst of His people, if they have touched Him, and He has healed them, oh! what blessings which cannot be numbered nor measured have come to them. "While I was musing," said the psalmist, "the fire burned." And so now he looks over the past, he reflects upon it, he lets its influence flow into his soul, and all aroused he stretches forth his hands to God, and cries, "My soul thirsteth after Thee, as a thirsty land." And he whose heart does not thrill to-day at the contemplation of what God, in Christ, by His Holy Spirit, has done in this place, would be hard-hearted and cold indeed. Eternity alone will show the results of the work which has been here begun; the harvest of the seed here sown. Oh! what will that harvest be?

In view of these things, we may well pass on to our final thought.

RESOLUTION.

"I lift my hands to Thee."

All impressions are intended to result in action. The rose bud which receives the full life of the root, rushing up in vitalizing sap, must burst out into beautiful and fragrant bloom, or else rot at heart and die. So, also, if our hearts do not respond to the inflow of God's great mercy, in thankful praise and faithful service, we shall be like the seed which dies and bears no fruit.

To-day it is our glad privilege to lift our hands in grateful recognition of the blessed past, and to gird ourselves for further and greater service in the future, with souls still thirsting for God, and hearts still anxious for work in His vineyard. Thus shall be fulfilled the prophecy of my first sermon in this place, "Praise waiteth for Thee, O God in Zion, and unto Thee shall the vow be performed." Waiting praise and willing service. If in anticipation, those words could then be used as our watchword, how much more to-day, as we review the multitude of the tender mercies of our God during these twenty-five years? And therefore, with the emphasis which justified, and God's truth verified, we charge you to-day, as you enter upon another quarter of a century, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

CONCLUSION.

I would not close without a word to any who may be out of Christ. Oh! if the Master would to-day but say to some Peter or Andrew, some James or John, or a Matthew at the receipt of custom, "Follow Me," and if he would

forthwith arise and follow Him, how great our joy would be! Have you, dear friend, heard that still small voice in your soul this hour? Has the Master, who is ever present, though unseen, whispered to you, "Wilt thou be made whole?" If so, let your answer be, "Yea, Lord." Know, my brother, that four little words express the whole work of salvation for you. *To* Christ as a sinner. *In* Christ as a believer. *With* Christ in fellowship. *For* Christ in service—the end forever with Him in glory. Will you let *Him* in, who now stands knocking at the door of your heart? Oh! "Admit Him, for the human breast ne'er entertained so kind a guest." And you also will join us in giving thanks unto the Father for the founding of this church.

"For as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name."







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