
Bloor Street
Presbyterian
Church Toronto

Past and Present
1886 -- 1909

6800.
2-

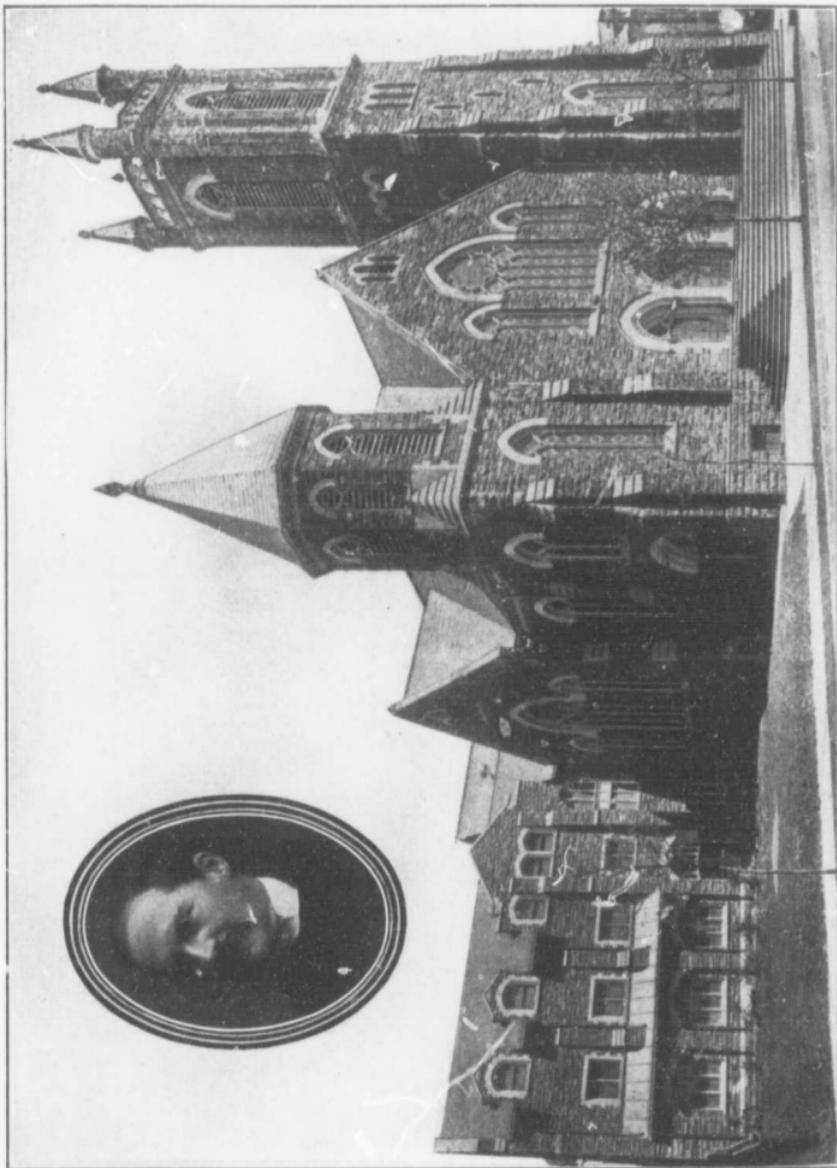
A Short Historical Sketch
of the Bloor Street Presby-
terian Church :: Toronto

=====

PREPARED BY
COMMITTEE
OF SESSION

=====

November, 1909



BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Bloor Street Presbyterian Church

ITS EARLY HISTORY

THE story of Bloor Street Church may well be told if for no other reason than to incite the children to imitate the faith and courage and devotion of their fathers and mothers who founded it. Some of them "rest from their labors and their works do follow them"; others are with us still, rendering what service strength and opportunity permit.

On the evening of January 23rd, 1886, eight men met at 84 St. George Street, the home of Mr. Thomas McCracken, to talk over the feasibility of establishing a Presbyterian centre in what was then the north-western district of the City. Besides Mr. McCracken, there were present Professor MacLaren, Professor Gregg, and Messrs. John Scott, W. J. McMaster, S. Crane, George Smith and R. J. Hunter. Individuals had already privately suggested the commencing of Sabbath School work in the district, but this gathering may be looked upon as the first definite step towards the initiating of the work, which in our day has grown to such dimensions. The population in the neighborhood was increasing and, in view of the estate since known as "the Annex" being broken up into building lots, likely to increase much more; it was decided, therefore, to make application to the Presbytery of Toronto to sanction the commencement of a Sabbath School and Sabbath evening services in the neighborhood of St. George and Huron Streets. After some delay the Presbytery, on April 9th, 1886, sanctioned the former, and on May 20th authorized that Sabbath evening services should be commenced in December of the same year.

No. 11—now No. 39—on Sussex Avenue was rented

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH

and a Sabbath School commenced. There on October 24th, with an attendance of twenty-seven scholars and thirty-five other persons, Mr. David Fotheringham was appointed Superintendent, and the School was fully organized and soon grew in strength and in numbers. On Wednesday, October 27th, the mid-week meeting was inaugurated and for several months was conducted by Professors Gregg and MacLaren. The first regular Sabbath evening service was held on December 5th, 1886, in the house on Sussex Avenue and was conducted by Rev. Dr. MacLaren, who preached from the text, John xiv. 12.

The new cause grew to such dimensions that larger rooms proved necessary, and through the kindness of the authorities the Convocation Hall of Knox College became the meeting place for both Congregation and School. The movement for the erection of a church building was meanwhile being carried forward by the promoters of the enterprise—men and women—with great energy and success. A lot at the north-west corner of Bloor and Huron Streets had been purchased as the site of a church, and surely later events have abundantly justified the choice. This property was afterwards enlarged by the purchase of a lot immediately to the west. Contributions were sufficiently generous to warrant the immediate erection of a Sabbath School building, and on December 6th, 1886, the corner-stone was laid by W. Mortimer Clark, Esq. Various unforeseen difficulties delayed the completion of the building. Not until April 15th, 1888, was it possible to open the building for public worship; on that day appropriate services were conducted by Dr. Parsons and Dr. MacLaren. Of this earlier building Mr. G. E. Field was the architect, Mr. W. J. McMaster was Chairman of the Building Committee, and the student missionary in charge in those days was Mr.

BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A. J. McLeod, B.A., of Knox College, who afterwards became principal of the Industrial School, Regina, and whose early death lost to the Church one of its most promising sons.

On November 16th, 1887, the Congregation was formally organized by the Presbytery of Toronto with an enrolment of sixty-three members. On February 19th, 1888, Messrs. D. Fotheringham, R. J. Hunter, Geo. C. Robb, D. Gourlay and G. Crane, having been duly elected, were installed as elders of the Congregation. In due time a congregational meeting was held for the purpose of calling a minister; Dr. Gregg, who presided at this meeting in the absence of Dr. MacLaren, whom Presbytery had appointed interim Moderator of Session, stated at its close that he had presided at many meetings, but at none had there been shown a finer spirit of earnestness and mutual concession. The call issued unanimously in favor of Rev. W. G. Wallace, M.A., B.D., minister of Georgetown and Limehouse, and on September 4th, 1888, he was inducted into the pastoral charge. It is worthy of note, in these days of short pastorates, that he is, after twenty-one years, still the minister of Bloor Street Church.

It was expected that the School-building would fully serve the Congregation for some years, but it had scarcely been opened, before it was seen that it would be utterly inadequate for the rapidly increasing community. It was a time of anxiety. Should the present building be somewhat enlarged? Or, should the erection of a new Church be undertaken? After earnest consideration the latter course was decided upon, and with fine enthusiasm the Congregation entered upon the work. Mr. W. R. Gregg was chosen architect, a large Building Committee was appointed with Mr. Thomas McCracken as Chairman, and all necessary steps taken for the building of a Church capable of seating 1200 persons.

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Congregation was small, the undertaking large and costly; was it a case of faith or of foolhardiness, of wisdom or of folly? The Church was opened in 1890 with a first mortgage of \$50,000, a second mortgage of \$16,000, and a large floating debt; it looked then as if the Congregation had assumed a burden it would not be able to carry. But eighteen men, who should be held in all honor, assumed large personal liability by becoming bondsmen, the Congregation grew quickly, members and adherents contributed generously and a sinking fund was created, which in a few years broke the back of the enormous debt. God be thanked that in that day of crisis there were men and women of far-sighted vision, of high courage and of splendid faith!

The honor of laying the corner-stone on September 4th, 1889, was accorded to Rev. Dr. MacLaren, whose wise counsel and liberal support had meant so much to the young congregation. The day was rainy, and the company who had gathered to take part in the ceremony, repaired by kind invitation to Trinity Methodist Church, where addresses of congratulation and good-will were given by Revs. A. H. Baldwin, Elmore Harris, W. R. Parker, A. F. McGregor and others.

The contractors made good progress with the work of construction. The roof of the existing building was raised so as to permit of a second story, which became the Sabbath School room, the handsome church, built of Credit Valley stone, with Ohio stone trimming, with its fine tower reaching 120 feet into the blue, gradually took shape, and at last the auditorium, with its grace of outline and its excellent acoustics, was ready for use. The dedicatory services were held on Sabbath, June 8th, 1890. The Minister offered the invocation prayer, and Rev. Dr. Reid the prayer of dedication. The special preacher for the day was Rev.

BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Dr. W. M. Paxton, of Princeton Theological Seminary; his opening sermon was on I. Corinthians i. 18. In the afternoon Rev. Principal Caven of Knox College conducted the services, assisted by Rev. Professor MacLaren. The following Sabbath the services were continued, Rev. Drs. Parsons and Potts being the preachers, and in the afternoon a special Sabbath School gathering was addressed by Lon. S. H. Blake and Mr. J. L. Blaikie. With its better equipment the Congregation entered upon an era of great prosperity, and with a will to work rejoiced to fill its hand full of earnest and loving services for its Lord and Master.

ABOUT THE MINISTER

DR. WALLACE, after receiving his early education in his native town of Galt, at the Grammar School of which the celebrated Dr. Tassie was head master,



THE PASTOR'S VESTRY

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH

attended the University of Toronto, from which he graduated in 1879 in honor classics. He took his M.A. degree the following year. In 1883 he completed his theological course in Knox College, Toronto, winning the degree of B.D. in 1884, and being accorded in 1904, by the same College, *honoris causa*, the degree of D.D. During his University and College course he was from time to time engaged in High School work, first at Galt, then as assistant and afterwards as headmaster at Beamsville; this five years' experience as a teacher has proved of much advantage in his ministerial service. On May 31, 1883, he was, by the Presbytery of Toronto, ordained to the Gospel ministry and inducted into the pastoral charge of Georgetown and Limehouse. The induction into the Bloor Street pastorate took place on September 4th, 1888. In addition to his duties as the minister of a large and leading congregation he has during all these years been privileged to render considerable service in connection with Knox College and on several important Committees of the Church.

ABOUT THE SESSION

THE oversight of the spiritual life and service of such a large body of people, especially in the ebb and flow of modern society, is no small task; it has been of immense advantage to have on the Session of Bloor Street Church so many men of wide experience, of sound judgment, and held in such high repute in the community. The eldership now numbers twenty-four. It is not necessary to give their names for they are known, and known as men wise in counsel and earnest of heart. The mere mention of those who have passed hence to their reward will indicate something of the loss the Session and Congregation have suffered:—Thomas Macfarlane Macintyre (1896), Daniel Gilbert

BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Gordon (1903), William John McMaster (1904), Robert Harvey Warden (1905), George Smellie Spence (1906), John Aitken (1907), William Barclay McMurrich (1908), Malcolm McGregor (1908), William MacLaren (1909), David Fotheringham (1909). The Session has sought to exercise a kindly oversight of the various organizations, to maintain towards them a sympathetic relationship and in every way to stimulate the best things in family and congregational life. Whilst safeguarding, as best it might, everything of principle and of truth, and striving in the spirit of love to cultivate spiritual life, the Session has endeavored to adapt methods to meet the changed conditions of to-day. In this connection may be mentioned the introduction of an individual communion cup service (November 1st, 1908), the appointment of a Praise Committee and the gowning of the Choir.

ABOUT THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

THE Board, at first of nine, but soon increased to twelve members, is charged with the care of a Church property worth \$150,000, and with the administration of an annual income for congregational purposes of well nigh \$20,000. The property is held in trust for the Presbyterian Church in Canada—the present Trustees being Messrs. S. Crane, W. Davidson, G. C. Robb and A. F. Webster, but is under the care of the Managers. From the time of the first Board, which had as Chairman Mr. Thomes McCracken, as Secretary Mr. William Davidson, and as Treasurer Mr. R. J. Hunter, the Board has had in its membership men of large business experience and executive ability, who have cheerfully given of their time and thought to the advancement of the Congregation's interests, and at the same time have sympathetically recognized the wider claims of the Church at large. For the

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH

excellence of the financial reports of the Congregation year by year not a little of the credit is due to the business methods of the Board. The allocation of sittings, ushering and other equally difficult duties have been discharged with a minimum of criticism and a maximum result of satisfaction and harmony.

ABOUT THE MISSIONARY COMMITTEE

IT speaks volumes for the pioneers that from the first and with very heavy financial responsibilities facing it the Congregation made provision for the vigorous prosecution of the great missionary enterprise of the Church. It decided to send, out of congregational funds, the *Missionary Record* into every family, and to meet from the same source the expenses of the Sabbath School, that the School's contributions might all go to missionary objects; it appointed a Missionary Committee, consisting of the members of Session and an equal number of others, and gave to it large powers. As the Session increased in numbers, this Committee proved somewhat unwieldy, and its work is now mainly discharged by a strong Executive. No year has been without its band of earnest and capable men, who have sought to stimulate the congregational givings to the Colleges, benevolences and missions of the Church. It has been a matter of sincere satisfaction that every year in the Congregation's history the missionary contributions have marked an increase over those of the preceding year.

It seems appropriate under this heading to speak of certain special undertakings of the Congregation:—

WYCHWOOD

In 1890 a mission was established in Wychwood under the oversight of the Bloor Street Session. Student missionaries were engaged from year to year,

BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

and several of our workers gave earnest and valued service. In 1897 the cause was transferred to the care of the Session of St. Paul's Church. The total amount contributed to this Mission during these seven years was \$1,223.86.

OUR HONAN MISSIONARY

The feeling in favor of our having a missionary of our own in the foreign field grew so strong that in



REV. JAMES MENZIES, M.D., our Honan Missionary
NATIVE HELPER IN HONAN, supported by Men's Bible Class
WOMEN PATIENTS AT WU AU HOSPITAL, HONAN, CHINA
PAI CHIA CHWANG STATION CLASS, HONAN, CHINA

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH

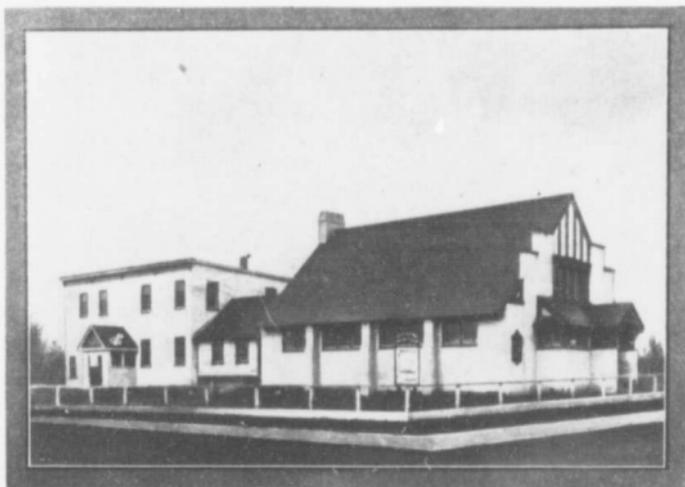
1902 the Congregation requested the Foreign Mission Committee to designate Rev. James Menzies, M.D., as the special missionary of Bloor Street Church. This request, which had been made partly because Mrs. Menzies had been before her appointment to the foreign field a valued worker amongst us, was cheerfully granted. Our missionary, who is a native of Ailsa Craig, Ontario, took his Arts in the University of Toronto, his Medicine in Trinity Medical College, and his Theology in Knox College. Designated to Honan in September, 1895, he served at Chang-te, Chu-wang and Wei-hwei, and now for several years has been stationed at Hwai-ching. He is a man of varied gifts, and in the details of administration and construction of buildings, as well as in his medical and surgical work, has proved himself invaluable in the Honan mission field. In addition to providing for the support of our missionary, who with Mrs. Menzies is rendering such excellent service, friends in the Congregation responded to his appeal in 1905, and a small hospital at Hwai-ching was the result. During their recent furlough Dr. and Mrs. Menzies in many ways strengthened themselves in the confidence and esteem of the Congregation.

REID AVENUE

The work of Church Extension in Toronto has always found generous support in Bloor Street Church, but, in addition to contributing to the General Fund, it decided, in order to provide an outlet for the energy of its young people and for other reasons, to seek some needy districts, where it could nurse into strength and influence a mission of its own. Just outside the City limits such a district was found, into which people, largely of the laboring class, were moving and where they were erecting their modest homes. On April 22nd,

BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1906, the Mission was opened in a tent on Reid Avenue. Mr. David S. Dix, of Knox College, was placed in charge, and with the help of valued workers from the parent Church, soon gathered about him the nucleus of a strong congregation. A lot was purchased on the corner of Gerrard Street and Reid Avenue by Mr. Frank B. Allan, and presented to the Congregation by him for the purposes of the Mission, and in due time a commodious white brick building was erected. Mr. D. Wallace Christy succeeded to the care of the



REID AVENUE (NOW RHODES AVENUE) PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND NEW ANNEX
young cause on the regretted withdrawal of Dr. Dix, and labored so acceptably that on his graduation from Knox College and licensure by the Presbytery of Toronto, he was called to the pastorate, and on September 17th, 1907, was ordained to the Christian ministry and inducted as the first minister of this promising congregation. Under his energetic leadership the work has fulfilled the promise of its earlier days; in the Sabbath School and Men's Club and Mothers' Meeting and indeed in all departments the first en-

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH

thusiasm has not waned, but rather increased. The Church has become in several regards the centre of the growing community, and the numbers have so multiplied, that already more accommodation is required. A large addition to the Church building has just been erected; the material for this has cost some \$1,800 or \$2,000, which is being raised from friends throughout the City, the actual work of the new structure having been undertaken and completed by the men of the Reid Avenue Congregation.

Bloor Street Church initiated this cause and has nursed it until now it may be expected to stand alone and to contribute in turn to some needier cause. The Reid Avenue Sabbath School now numbers 260, and the Communion Roll, 250.

LAYMEN'S MISSIONARY MOVEMENT.

It is questionable whether in these early years of the twentieth century any movement in the religious world is more noteworthy than the missionary uprising among the laymen of the Church with its great and inspiring watchword, "The evangelization of the world within this generation." The movement in Canada was inaugurated at Toronto in a historic gathering in the school-house of St. James Cathedral, at which several of the men of Bloor Street Church were present. As it spread in the city and beyond, these men took in it a forward part as speakers and as counsellors. Messrs. Findley, Kinnear, Macdonald and Paterson have given of time and energy ungrudgingly to this great work which is fraught with such possibilities for the Christian Church. Naturally this Congregation felt the impulse and inspiration of the movement; it aimed in 1908 to raise at least \$12,000 towards missionary purposes, and the Missionary Committee, when all returns were in, reported the grand total of

BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

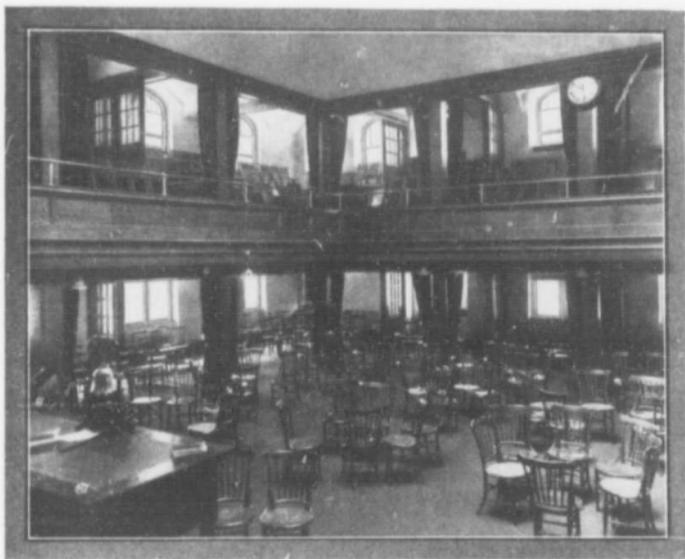
\$12,074.07 as having been contributed within the Congregation to objects that could legitimately be called missionary. But he is greatly in error who thinks this movement a matter of money only; it means a new viewpoint in life and a fresh surrender to Jesus Christ, and will not have served its purpose until it has prompted many of our young men and women to dedicate themselves to His service in the great world-field. There are congregations that excel Bloor Street Church in their gifts of men and women to the ministry and mission-work of the Church; in this regard we have scarcely reached what might have been expected of us. We have, however, not been altogether unmindful of the needs of the work. Not to speak of the large number of students for the distinctive service of Christ in His Church, who have, during their course in Toronto, been members of this Congregation, there are a number who belonged to our families and whose names may well be mentioned here. The names of A. M. McIntyre (Golden City, Col.), T. H. Rogers (E. Toronto), George Logie, (Douglas, Arizona), Ed. G. Robb (Beachburg), J. H. Bruce, (Honan), D. W. S. Urquhart (Listowel), Stuart G. Steele (recently of Depot Harbor) Mrs. Menzies and Mrs. Griffith (Honan) and Miss Mabel Davidson (Teulon Man.), suggest themselves, but this list is probably incomplete. Others are at present in preparation for this distinctive work. Our hope is that with the revived missionary interest many of our boys and girls may by God's Spirit be led to give themselves with full surrender to this special service in the Church of Christ.

ABOUT THE SABBATH SCHOOL

LET me rock the cradles, and I care not who makes the nation's laws" was the saying of a wise man. It was in thought for the children that

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH

this Congregation had its birth, and ever since it has made provision for the supplementing of their home training. Sometimes in the School there has been a dearth of teachers but always there has been an earnest band of officers and teachers, ready to give ungrudgingly of time and service. The Superintendents have been in turn, Messrs. D. Fotheringham, R. J. Hunter, W. Guthrie, J. A. Paterson and T. Findley, and for the past few years Mr. R. J. McIntosh has acted as assistant. It would be invidious to mention other names where so many have been faithful and efficient,



NEW SABBATH SCHOOL ROOM

but all will agree that Miss E. M. Russell, who has for so long and with such eminent success superintended the Primary department, and Mr. Frank Yeigh, who has given himself with such fidelity to the work among young men, are worthy of honorable mention. The departments over which they preside have a reputation

BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

far beyond the bounds of the Congregation; the Primary Union of Toronto has been greatly stimulated by our Primary Superintendent, whilst the Adult Bible Class Movement has received much of its momentum from Mr. Yeigh's earnest service. The School has a fine secretarial and library staff, and the music has shown considerable improvement since the orchestra, under



MEN'S BIBLE CLASS ROOM

Mrs. Ballantyne's leadership, was introduced to lead it. The contributions of the School to missionary objects since its inception amount to nearly \$13,000, and the givings show no sign of diminution. The Communion Roll of the Congregation is replenished year by year by a considerable accession from the School, and there are not lacking evidences of mutual sympathy and co-operation between parents and teachers.

ABOUT WOMEN'S WORK

THIS sketch would be incomplete without reference to the various departments of women's service in the Congregation.

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH

WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

This Association, which exists for the promoting of the friendly spirit among the women of the Congregation and for the assisting of the Board of Managers as occasion may arise, was organized in November, 1888, being an enlargement of the Ladies' Committee of the earlier days, and has maintained throughout a vigorous existence. It has rendered special service in connection with the Pink Envelopes, introduced to help the Building and Furnishing funds, and in overseeing the distribution of the *Missionary Record*. Of recent years its members have made generous contributions of work and money for the relief of need in the City. Under the presidentship of Mrs. (Professor) Ballantyne, the Association is to-day probably fuller of good works than ever.

MACLAREN AUXILIARY (W.F.M.S.)

This Society dates back to January 19th, 1888, which was prior to the formal organization of the Congregation. It has done much to stimulate interest in the great missionary enterprise, and especially in the work among the women and children of heathen lands. It gets its name from the late Rev. Dr. MacLaren, who in some regards may be looked on as the father of the W.F.M.S. of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. During its long history this Auxiliary has had only three Presidents, Mrs. MacLaren, Mrs. McMurrich, and Mrs. Kilpatrick.

YOUNG WOMEN'S AUXILIARY (W.F.M.S.)

With no flourish of trumpets a number of the young ladies of the Church are doing a good work under the presidentship of Miss Riddell, and are by their labors and gifts helping on the good cause. This Auxiliary was formerly the *Young Women's Mission Band*, and was established February 16th, 1898.

BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

McCRACKEN MISSION BAND (W.F.M.S.)

Few organizations of the Congregation have been marked by more continuous success. Mrs. Langstaff, who gave for many years most earnest service, was succeeded as President by Miss Alma Dickson, who is ably supported in this good work among the girls by a band of devoted helpers. It was established in September, 1890, in memory of Mrs. Thomas McCracken.

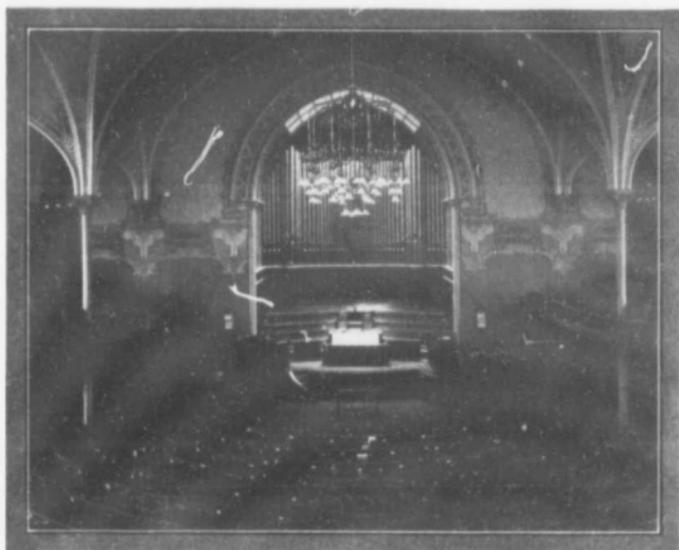
ROBERTSON AUXILIARY (W.H.M.S.)

In 1903 the General Assembly of the Church ratified the proposed constitution for the Women's Home Missionary Society, and on January 14th, 1907, an Auxiliary was formed in Bloor Street Church. The name given to it commemorates the great home missionary superintendent, who was for some years before his death a member of this Congregation. The Society exists for the sake of the hospital and general mission work of the home field. The Auxiliary continues to thrive and to exercise healthful influence under the leadership of its first President, Mrs. John Davidson, assisted by a strong Executive.

ABOUT MEN'S WORK

WITH the exception of the Men's Bible Class, of which mention has been already made, and which is full of vigor and rich in promise, no organization exists at present that is restricted in its membership to men. Occasionally one hears the hope expressed that the Men's Association of three or four years ago will be revived, and the likelihood is that this hope will be realized at an early date. But whether this will come to pass or not, it is our joy meantime to remember that the men of Bloor Street Church are exercising in the business, professional, social and

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH



INTERIOR OF CHURCH SHOWING NEW ORGAN

political life of the community a far-reaching influence for good.

ABOUT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

VARIOUS forms of Young People's organizations have been tried, but with very uncertain results; the Young People's Association, the Society of Christian Endeavor, the Literary Society, the Young People's Guild. The Young People's Union, which exists at present, was organized in the closing months of 1907 specially with the view of binding together all the young people of the various organizations, and of helping them to realize their congregational connection. The Societies which agreed to enter the Union are the Men's Bible Class, the Minister's Bible Class, the Sabbath School Association, the Young Women's Auxiliary and the Tennis Club. The Union hopes to form a rallying centre for all the young people of the Church.

BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ABOUT THE CHOIR

THE Service of Praise in the Church has come to be regarded as of great importance and the care of it full of necessary detail. The Session directs it by means of a Music Committee, which consists of four members of Session and three members of the Board. The Choirmaster at present is Mr. Peter C. Kennedy, and he is supported by a quartette of soloists and a strong band of volunteer singers. To the accompaniment of the new organ and with its changed position, the Choir is able to render better service than ever, and the congregational praise has reached an excellence and a heartiness hitherto unequalled.

ABOUT OUR NEW EQUIPMENT

“**P**RAETEREA censeo Carthaginem delendam esse.” Who does not remember these words running through the 1907 issues of *Our Church Bulletin*? In the iteration and reiteration of them the Superintendent kept the Congregation ever mindful of the necessity of our having a new Sabbath School building if Bloor Street Church was to keep pace with modern conditions and be able to do its best work among the children and young people. His conviction was but the conviction of all who labored with him; indeed many had earnestly longed for the coming of this better equipment. But how could it be done? For an undertaking of this sort would involve a large expenditure. Side by side with this agitation, many, who felt the inadequacy of our old organ and Choir equipment, advocated a new organ and a changed position for the Choir. The Congregation faced the double issue at a meeting on January 15th, 1908, and two weeks later authorized the Board of Management to proceed with the building

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH

of an addition to the Sabbath School and with the purchasing of a new Church organ or the remodelling of the old organ, conditional on a subscription list of at least \$10,000 being obtained. On April 29th, 1908, the subscription of \$10,000 was reported as having been secured, and a Building Committee was appointed consisting of Messrs. M. Langmuir (Chairman), T. Bradshaw, T. Findley, J. A. McLaren, T. Reid, M. Riddell, A. F. Webster, T. H. Wilson and F. Yeigh. Messrs. Wickson & Gregg were appointed architects, and their plans for the new Sunday School building and the installation of a new organ adopted by the Congregation on June 24th, 1908. The work was proceeded with vigorously, and with as little interruption to the work of the Congregation and School as possible. During the Winter some organizations held their meetings in various homes or discontinued their activities altogether, but this was unavoidable with an undertaking so great. The building operations were sufficiently advanced to permit of the opening of the new Sabbath School on March 28th, 1909, and of the new organ on May 8th, 1909; the dedication of each was accompanied with appropriate services. Gradually the finishing touches have been given and now we have an equipment second to none in the City of Toronto. A handsome vestry, a commodious lecture room, suitable rooms for the Choir, a chapel for the Men's Bible Class, an ideal School room with offices adjoining—these, so far as external outfit is concerned, are unsurpassed. The organ, designed by the architects, Wickson & Gregg, built by Cassevant Brothers, Ste. Hyacinthe, Que., according to specifications drawn by Mr. Peter C. Kennedy, is an instrument of the very finest quality and will prove of much help in the worship of the sanctuary. The changed position of the Choir has rendered expedient the removal of the

BLOOR STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

old pulpit desk; a handsome pulpit and reading desk have taken its place. The character of the work in these recent improvements, both outside and inside, is of the first order, the furnishings are of the very best, and everywhere there is an air of comfort, if not indeed of luxury. When the Primary department of the School secures for its work the accommodation adequate to its needs, and when certain desirable alterations within the Church have been made, what may be called the plant of the Bloor Street Presbyterian Church may be said to be complete, if not indeed perfect. These improvements and additions have involved large outlay; but members and adherents of the Congregation may be relied upon to do their part to reduce and ultimately cancel altogether our Church debt.

It is well for us to remember that something more is necessary to the constitution of a Church than stone and mortar, well laid out rooms, decoration and furnishings, and such like. These are only accessories to something higher,—only means to a nobler end. The Church is the meeting place between God and His children, hallowed by sacred memories, and external equipment is useless, save as it tends to promote this fellowship. It is the place of instruction, and outward equipment is intended to enable the teacher to do his work under better conditions. In dedicating these gifts of our hands to God's greater glory, we are to give ourselves to His service, and at the same time to seek the presence in power of the Spirit of God, that He may quicken, control, impel us to nobler endeavor and more complete surrender to our Lord and Master.

Let memory be alert to recall to us those who toiled in days gone by, "into whose labors we are entered"! Let hope be strong, and earnest resolve that by God's grace we shall be worthier of their faith and courage!

CONGREGATIONAL DATES

- Jan. 23, 1886.—Meeting of "the eight" to consider the establishing of a congregation.
- Feb. 5, 1886.—Lot on corner of Bloor and Huron Streets purchased.
- April 9, 1886.—Presbytery of Toronto sanctions the commencing of Sabbath School work.
- May 20, 1886.—Presbytery sanctions Sabbath evening services.
- Oct. 24, 1886.—Sabbath School and mid-week meetings initiated at No. 39 Sussex Avenue.
- Dec. 5, 1886.—First Church service held, 39 Sussex Avenue.
- Dec. 6, 1886.—Corner-stone of new School house, corner Bloor and Huron Streets, duly laid.
- Nov. 16, 1887.—Congregation formally organized by Presbytery.
- Feb. 19, 1888.—First elders inducted into office.
- April 15, 1888.—School-house first used for public worship.
- Sept. 4, 1888.—Rev. W. G. Wallace, M.A., inducted as minister.
- Sept. 4, 1889.—Corner-stone of new Church laid.
- June 8, 1890.—Church dedicated to worship of God.
- 1902.—Rev. James Menzies, M.D., designated as our missionary in the foreign field.
- April 22, 1906.—Work initiated at Reid Avenue.
- Sept 17, 1907.—Rev. D. Wallace Christy inducted into Reid Avenue pastorate.
- Jan. 15 1908.—Congregation endorsed movement for new Sabbath School and Organ.
- Nov. 1, 1908.—Individual Communion Cup introduced.
- Mch 28, 1909.—New School buildings formally opened.
- May 9, 1909.—Dedication of new Organ.