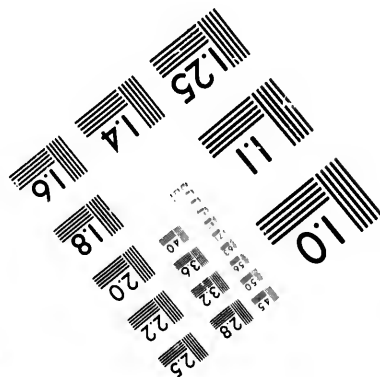
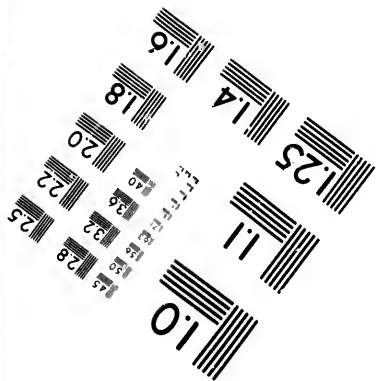
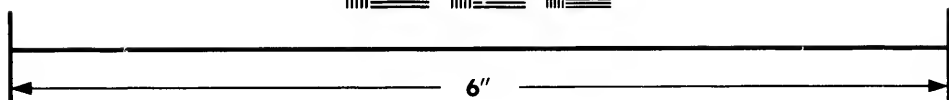
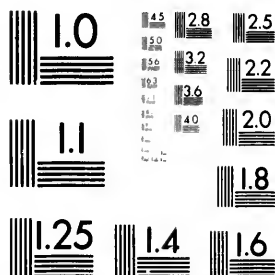


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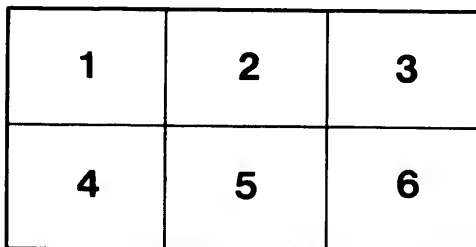
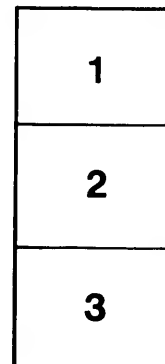
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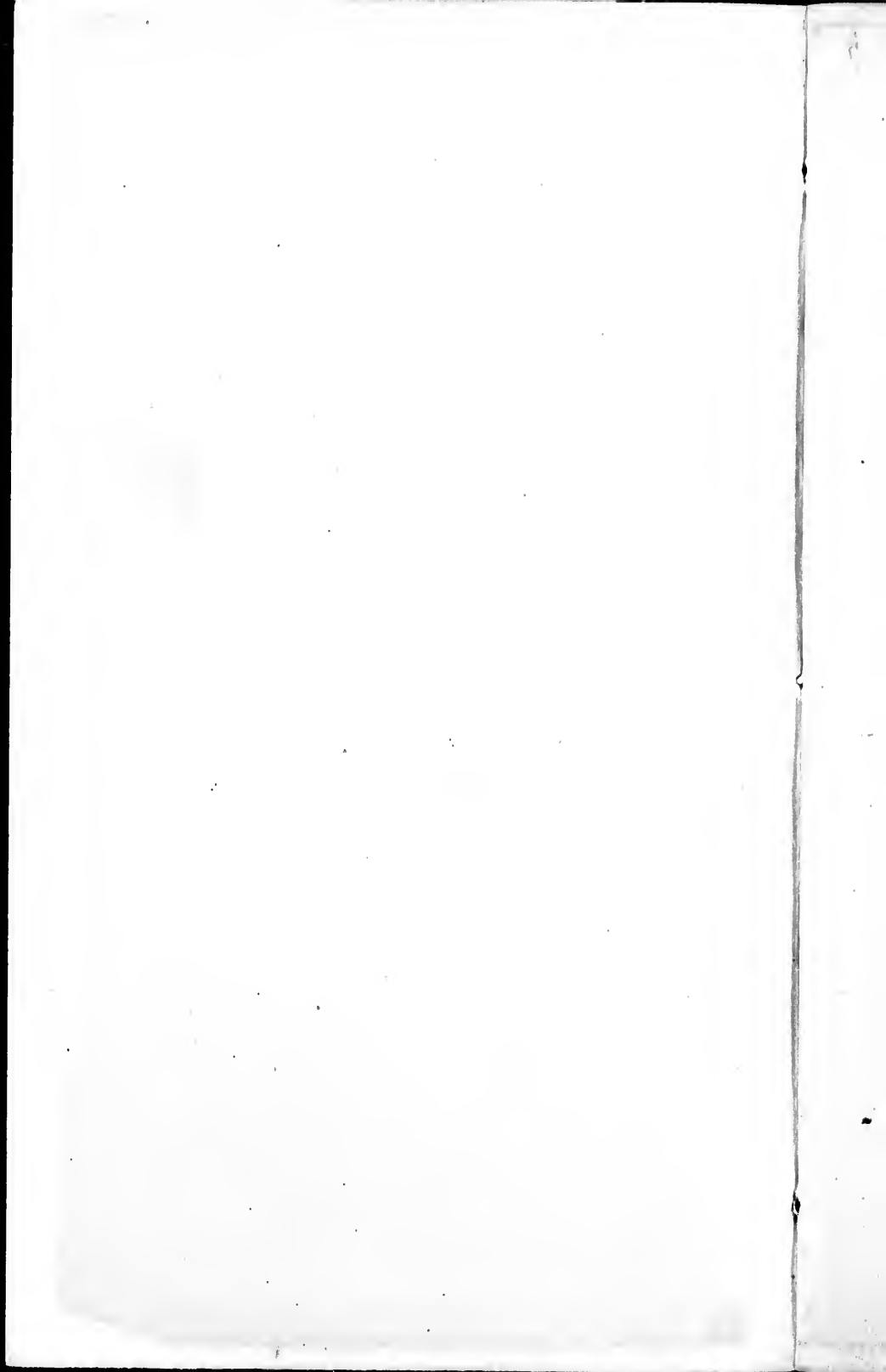


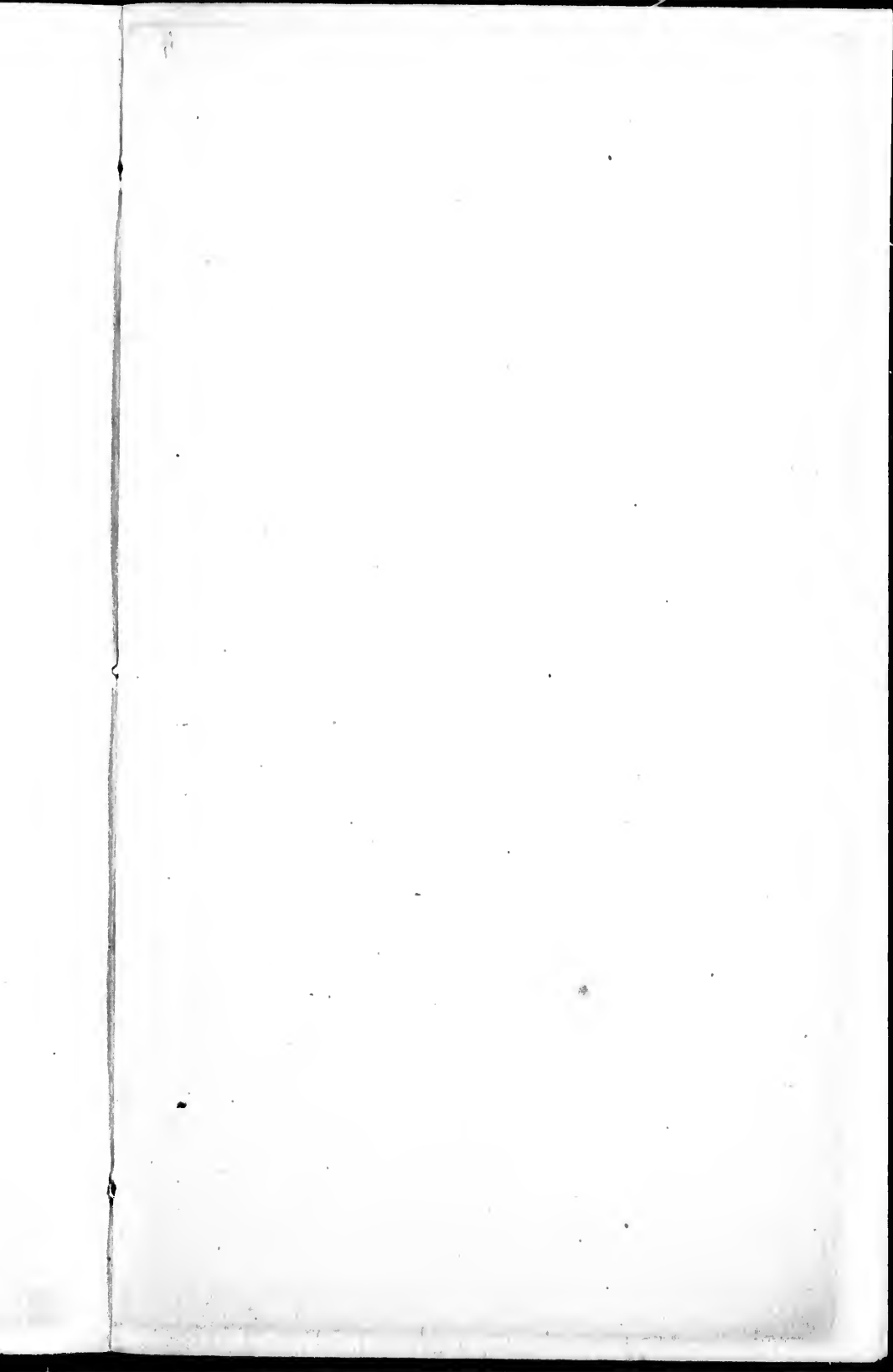
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**JUBILEE HISTORIC SKETCH**  
**OF THE**  
**QUEEN ST. BAPTIST CHURCH,**  
**ST. CATHARINES.**

DELIVERED BY THE PASTOR,

**REV. W. H. PORTER, M.A.,**

SUNDAY, MAY 6TH, 1883.

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*"Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell  
the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bul-  
warks, and consider her palaces; that ye  
may tell it to the generations following."  
—Ps. 46: 12, 16.*

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**1883.**

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"A garden enclosed is my sister my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.—SOLOMON'S SONG 4: 12.

The real essence of a church's history can never be recorded. As well attempt to put into a marble statue the human spirit, or the breath of summer into a painting. "The things of the Spirit" are not reducible to writing. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." What language can express the feelings of a soul under conviction, the remorse of conscience, and the despair it may be, under the discovery of guilt and of the divine anger, which, forming the dark background of a Christian's experience, give vividness and brightness to those hopes and joys which are "unspeakable and full of glory." "The soul sits down and sips her cup alone, for she can never tell her secret joy, nor could another understand her if she did."

With equal difficulty could the renewed soul describe its struggles with the world and self and sin, or its unutterable longings after holiness and God. But if the *experiences* of a Christian church baffle description, how much more do the *spiritual influences* flowing out therefrom, permeating and transforming human character and society, even to the most distant regions and latest generations. Like the silent secret forces of nature in the material world, their effects can never be described or tabulated. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and

hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

The real history of the Queen St. Baptist church begins far back of its organization, in the toils and prayers and spiritual influences of earlier days and distant places. To trace these various streams from their remote and secret sources till they meet and mingle in this gladdening river, would be a delightful task, but equally or even more difficult; or even to follow the subsequent course of the church's individual history. But the attempt would so far exceed our present limit, that we must simply content ourselves with a mere general historic outline, leaving the filling up to the imagination of the young and to the memory of the aged.

Our record, then, begins with what was then named "The Grantham Baptist Church," organized at the Ten-mile Creek school-house, Grantham, May 4th, 1833, having been a branch of the "Clinton Baptist church," Beamsville. The constituent members were twenty-two in number, viz :—

Elder David Currie.	James Soper.
Sarah "	Jane "
Dea. George Havens.	James Freed.
Aaron "	Charlotte "
Richard "	Elizabeth Lambert.
Elizabeth "	Jane Lorroway.
Eleanor "	Margaret Vanderlip.
Lucinda "	Jane Stephens.
Mary "	Elizabeth Ellis.
Lydia "	Mary Emmett.
Hannah "	George Price.

Some of these names—Havens, Lambert and Emmett—are still with us. But instead of the fathers are the children, the constituent members having all but two, I believe, passed, as we fondly hope, from the church militant to the church tri-

umphant. Another name should have been added to the original members, but absence from home on the day of the organization caused it to be omitted. I refer to that of Bro. Daniel Mesler, the oldest member of the church now with us. For several years he was the only Baptist living in St. Catharines, and frequently had meetings in his own house before any Baptist church was established in this city. The next oldest member living with us is our highly-esteemed and venerable sister, so well known as Grandma Phelps of Merriton, whose ripe and mellowed life seems ready to be garnered. Other names appear subsequently that may be mentioned.

In giving this brief sketch of the church's history, it may be in place to notice, first, what distinguished it from other evangelical denominations. And not merely from their own account of themselves, they believed in a more thoroughly *individual* and *scriptural* Christianity. Renouncing as utterly contrary to New Testament principles the idea of hereditary faith, or obedience by proxy, they maintained that individual faith, and that alone, entitled to church membership or to church ordinances. As Dr. G. M. Duncan says, "In opposition to Romanists, and to most Protestant bodies, they believed in a *regenerate church membership*." However some may enter under a false pretence, or a delusion, or however others may dishonor their profession, yet the idea of a New Testament church is, that it consists of "them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints," "believers in Christ," "with the pastors, or bishops, and deacons;" that it is an assembly of baptized believers,

voluntarily associating together for the maintenance of divine worship and ordinances, for mutual edification and comfort, and for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. That a church thus constituted is subject to no human religious authority, bound by no rules but the inspired code, and "calling none Master but Jesus Christ." That such a church is the highest ecclesiastical tribunal, having power not only to adjudicate on its own private members, but to "try them that say they are apostles," and to convict them if they "are not."

That the rite of baptism, being not a means, but a sign of discipleship, should be administered only to avowed disciples of Christ; and being a symbol, not only of cleansing, but of regeneration, of death, burial and resurrection, should be performed according to the meaning of the word, and the practice of the apostles by an immersion of the believer in water, "in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost." That it is to be maintained not only in its divinely appointed *form*, but in its divinely appointed *order*, following faith, and proceeding the Lord's Supper. That such is the teaching of the New Testament as embodied in the commission, "Go preach, disciple, all nations, baptizing them, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," and as understood and expounded by the inspired apostles on the day of pentecost. See Acts 2:41, 42. To such articles of faith, with those held in common with other evangelical denominations, our fathers subscribed in forming this church fifty years ago, and with greater or less unanimity and fidelity their children adhere to them. Not that any special ef-

forts have been made to indoctrinate them as to their distinctive tenets, for in this, we believe that Baptists are possibly more neglectful than other denominations; but the doctrines that distinguish them are so simple, and so easily apprehended, that few fail to understand or to retain them. And thus while creeds, and tests, and catechisms, are scarcely known in the denomination, few, perhaps, understand better their distinctive principles, or are less given to change or diversity of doctrinal sentiment. As Dr. Ypeij, professor of theology at Groningen, says: "The Baptists may be considered the only Christian community that has stood since the days of the apostles, and, as a Christian society, has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages." But what availeth this, if we do not still maintain those doctrines in their purity, and especially, as indifference to doctrine leads invariably to looseness of character and life. Thus we need, as when Jude wrote to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." "Now I praise you brethren that ye remember me in all things and keep the ordinances as they were delivered unto you."

We shall next notice the pastors of the church, of whom it has had thirteen during its fifty year's history; an average of a little less than four years to each pastorate, the longest being ten years, and the shortest six months. The first pastor the church had was Elder David Currie, who combined farming with preaching, and continued pastor for about two years. His labors do not seem to have been very successful. Considerable dissension arose during his ministry, and for several years after, roots



of bitterness springing up, troubled and defiled many.

The second pastor was Elder J. C. Allison. He was sent from the States, and seems to have labored earnestly and successfully in building up the church. He also remained about two years. The next pastor was Elder George Silver, who continued only six months. For a time the church remained without a pastor, having occasional preaching from visiting brethren. The next who became pastor was Elder George Wilson, whose widow is still an active member with us. He was one of the church's spiritual children, and commenced preaching under her direction and watch-care. After laboring as licentiate about two years, he was ordained to the pastorate and continued to fill the position three years with much zeal and success, when he resigned, with the best wishes and prayers of the church, to labor as an evangelist. It was during his ministry that the church was removed from Grantham to St. Catharines, and changed its name with its locality. Elder A. Cleghorn next followed, and continued with the church one year. His labors were marked by much fervency and ability. Some who are with us now were converted under his ministry. The next pastor was Elder Wm. Hewson, who came to the church from Montreal Baptist college. After preaching a few months he was ordained as pastor, and continued with the church four years. "When I came to St. Catharines," he says, "the church only numbered forty-one members, and they were in a very divided state. Our place of worship was a small wooden structure situated on the present site, costing \$300, and

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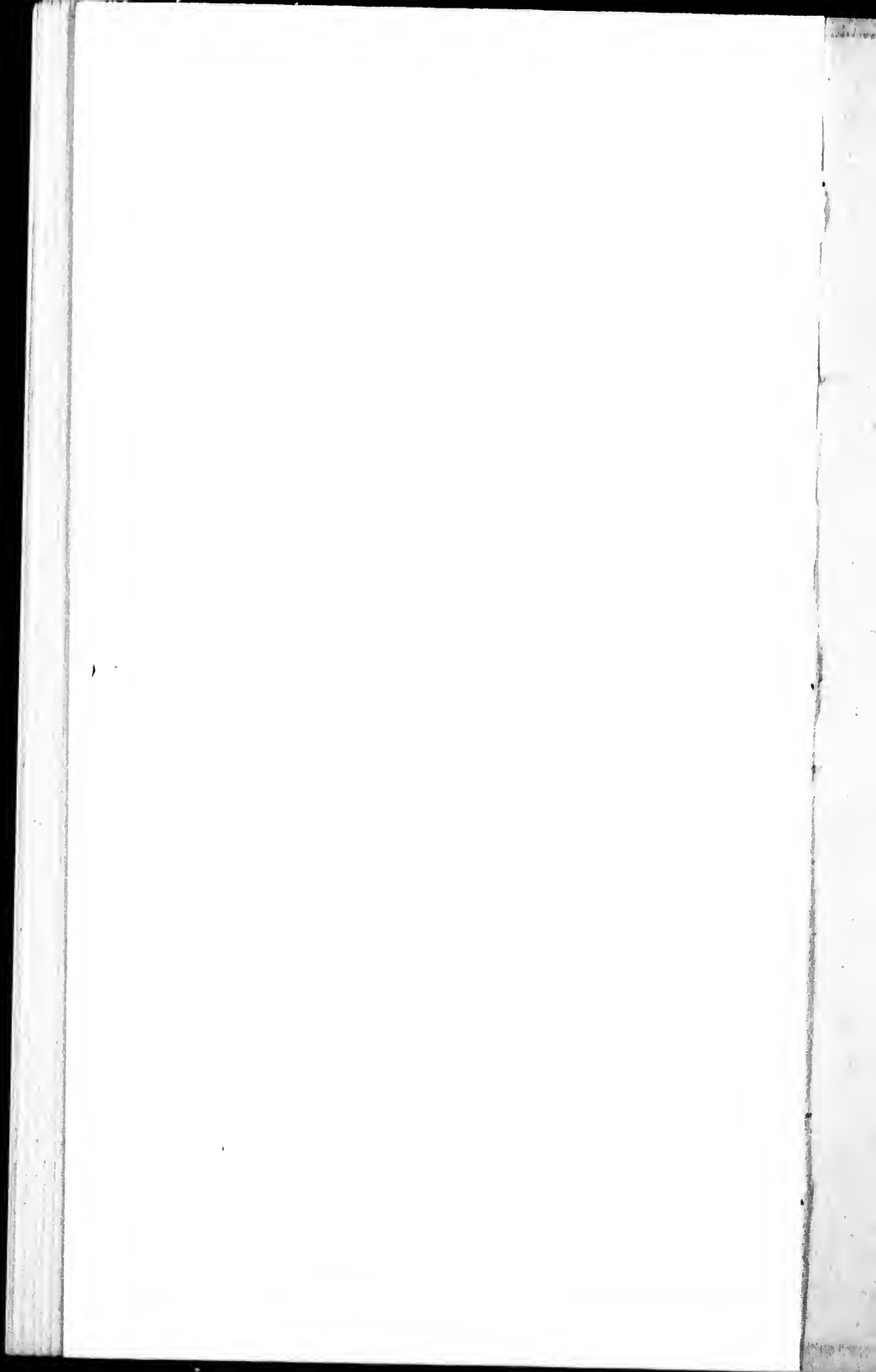
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the church owed \$308. The pastor's salary was \$300 a year, of which the church could only raise \$200, \$100 being paid by the Montreal Baptist Missionary Society. After three years our debts were all paid, and the church raised my whole salary, and commenced forming a sinking fund, for the building of a better house of worship. A goodly number were added to the church during these four years, and a Sunday-school was commenced Jan. 1st, 1846, which continues still. Several questions came up for discussion during this period, which however tended, rather to unite than to divide the church, but not so with the question of secret societies. After various attempts to reconcile our differences concerning these I resigned my pastorate, and after preaching a few months for the First Presbyterian church, I removed to Beamsville."

The next pastor was Elder J. E. Ryerson, a man of more than ordinary ability. His preaching talents drew large congregations, and necessitated the building of a larger place of worship. The edifice then erected was of stone, and forms the main part of our present place of worship. The spiritual building was also considerably increased by the addition of a goodly number who professed to be regenerated. After laboring with the church six years, he resigned his pastorate, having gone South for his health.

The next who succeeded him, was Rev. G. M. W. Carey, a man of talent, and of great kindness and geniality. Perhaps few men have gained a firmer hold on the affections of a people than he did in St. Catharines. The friendships formed were not

confined to those of his own denomination, but he seemed almost in danger of incurring the "Woe when all men speak well of you." His labors began with the church, while he was a student at Rochester University, and after some time he was ordained to the pastorate, and remained with the church ten years, when he was reluctantly given up at the call of the Germain Street Baptist church, St. John, N. B. During his ministry the church enjoyed a good degree of peace and prosperity. Many in relating their experience to the church in applying for baptism, told how the preaching of Mr. Carey had led them to see their lost and ruined condition as sinners, and to rely wholly upon Christ as their only and sufficient Saviour. And yet, as an example of how differently people regard the same preaching, one of the members is reported as saying, that "The pastor did not preach the gospel at all, but something else instead," reminding one of Paul's self-vindication in his letter to the Corinthians, "If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you, for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord." Many years have transpired since he left, but his name is still remembered and mentioned with affection.

The next who filled the pastorate was Rev. Charles Walker, a man of generous and genial disposition, and of considerable genius and ability. Quite a number of additions were made to the church during his ministry, especially in connection with the labors of Russel and Carroll, the evangelists. His pastorate continued about four years.

Next in order was Rev. J. W. Thorne,

whom the church also ordained to the pastorate. He says, "My ministry in St. Catharines was not marked by any unusual incidents or interest. It was an ordinary experience of light and shade, in which, I am happy to say, the light largely predominated. After the lapse of years, the one thing most conspicuous in my memory of St. Catharines, is, that it was notably to me the place of friendships. I found many friends there, 'tender and true,' whose memory is still fragrant with me." His pastorate only lasted a year and a half, and yet I am happy to know, that his memory is still warmly cherished.

The next who filled the pastorate, was Rev. C. Perren, who remained about four years. Bringing to the work a great deal of energy and enthusiasm, he seemed to inspire others with the same spirit. Under his ministry the congregation increased, the church received numerous accessions, the building was enlarged to its present capacity, and the Mission School House was erected. Had our brother remained to see these enterprises through, and the consequent indebtedness removed before leaving, with his most ardent admirers we would exclaim, "The memory of the just is blessed." Still, by many, his memory will be long and justly cherished.

The next, and last pastor, was Rev. J. W. A. Stewart. His labors are so recent and fresh in your memory, as to scarcely need more than a brief reference. Of him we can speak with more personal knowledge than of any of his predecessors. With youth, energy and intellect, he combined some of those sterling and attractive qualities which endear a young minister to the

hearts of an appreciative people. His ministry was too short to realize the full fruitage of his labors. Continuing only four years, and these broken in upon by College studies, one can hardly tell what his ministry would have been, had time permitted him to have matured his plans, and given his best efforts ; but his work was solid and good, and after laboring with increasing usefulness and efficiency, he left to fill a larger and more important sphere, carrying with him the warmest affections and best wishes of a devoted people. Seldom does a pastor have to take the place of one more difficult to follow. "For what can the man do that cometh after the king?"

The record thus far brings us to the present pastorate, the account of which will be deferred to the centennial. Few of us will be present, I presume, to call in question the truthfulness and accuracy of the historian.

Did time permit, we should like to give an account of many of the good men and women who have been the joy and strength of this church during its history. The record would indeed be interesting and profitable. As a brother says, in referring to his ministry here some forty years ago : "Your church, my brother, has had many specimens of Christian men and women, whose memory should be a stimulus to every good word and work among you. I could sketch the characters of many who were noble and true, and whose memory is still sacred and blessed." Some of them were like "Zebulon and Naphtali, a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field." Their influence and labors seem to be interwoven with the

church's history. Two in particular, in looking over the old church records—Deacons Aaron Havens, and James Lambert—remind one of the two of whom Paul speaks, "Gaius mine host, and of the whole church," and "Cephas, who seemed to be a pillar." Wonderful histories might be written of some of these unpaid officers in the church, our noble deacons, who, like the governors in Israel, willingly offered themselves among the people. Some of them "rest from their labors and their works do follow them."

"With us their names shall live

Through long succeeding years,  
Embalmed with all our hearts can give,  
Our praises and our tears."

One thing that impresses us in looking over the church's history, is, that while men change, and leave, and die, Christ lives, and His church continues. The mantles of departed worth fall upon others, who, if they do not seem as worthy of our esteem and reverence, it is because that distance does not obscure their defects, or lend to them its enchantment. Thank God, we have men and women to-day, whose self-sacrificing spirit only needs the occasion to develop it, and whose devotedness to the cause of Christ will never be known or realized till the "revelations of the judgment." Glad, as well as sad surprises, await the disclosures of that occasion. Of course none will include themselves in the awards of merit, as grace so operates, that it causes those most favored with it, to be the least conscious of it. Thus, "Moses wist not that his face shone while he talked with them.

In looking over the church records, one name appears upon the list that demands a passing notice. I refer to that of



Rev. Thos. Bone, missionary colporteur to the seamen, and well and widely known as an indefatigable and successful laborer for Christ. In looking over the earlier history of the church, his name appears, like that of Hugh Miller, or Alexander McKenzie's, as a stone-mason's; but gradually he emerges from this humble though honorable position, to that of being a builder of "living stones" into the spiritual temple, thus verifying the truth of the promises, "to him that hath shall be given," and "him that is faithful in a little, I will make ruler over much."

It has been said that God is more glorified by one eminently devoted Christian, than by many ordinary ones, and to be the spiritual birth place or nursery of such is one of the grandest honors and privileges of a Christian church. Among the "glorious things spoken" of Zion, one of the chief is, "when the Lord writeth up the people it shall be said, that *this* and *that* man was born there, and the highest himself shall establish her." May such "glorious things" be yet more abundantly spoken of thee, oh, St. Catharines Queen St. church. And here let me allude for one moment, to the responsibility of the Church as a spiritual mother. The great want of France, as Napoleon said, was mothers. And if we study the lives of the most eminent we find much of their greatness due to the influence of their mothers. Thus if we regard the Church as a spiritual mother, to whom is entrusted the formation of the Christian character of the future, what question more momentous than what kind of a character is she capable of imparting to, and developing in her children. Mercifully God

withholds many converts from some churches, lest the type of Christianity should be deteriorated. Only think of the influences that are to be perpetuated through the nearly five hundred converts received into this church by baptism, and through the hundreds added by letter and otherwise, and for a longer or shorter period imbibing the church's ideas and spirit. To quote a single, extract from the many loving and generous responses to our "Jubilee Fund" appeal, a brother says, "We always look back to the old church on Queen street as our spiritual home, for here we learned our first lessons of gospel love." Ah, yes brethren: though our faith be firm, and our works abounding; though our forms be faultless, and our creed as sound as the apostles, *love* alone can avert the curse of God's withering displeasure and form the element of a church's vital unity and power. There are worse things with a Christian church than *poverty*. See 2 Cor. 8:1, 2. The church of Smyrna was to be *envied*, with all its "tribulation and poverty," compared with those of Ephesus and Laodicea, in spite of their abounding "labors," and excellencies, and "need of nothing."

Some things are gratifying in reviewing the church's history. Among them, is the general harmony that has prevailed among its members; the uniform kindness and consideration it has shown toward its ministers—and to its ministers wives as well, if the present would testify; and its intelligent interest in denominational enterprises, and its liberal support of them.

Standing as we do to-day, but fifty years removed from the church's organization, one is reminded of the

tears of Xerxes, as he surveyed his mighty army ; and being asked why he wept, he said, "Because, in fifty years from now these numerous hosts of valiant soldiers will be dead." But whatever might be said of them, or their achievements, after they were gone, those whose memory we recall, and whose record we review to-day, live, and will continue to live, in the spiritual influences and religious agencies that survive them. They laid the foundations that we are building upon. "Other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors." They felled the forests, ploughed the soil, and sowed the seed. We reap the harvest.

"They wrestled hard, as we do now,  
With sins, and doubts, and fears,"

but their prayers, and tears, and Christian labors, form for us to-day their most invaluable and imperishable legacy. Their dwellings may have become delapidated or crumbled into ruins, their lands may have passed into the hands of strangers, their graves may be unmarked by any costly monuments, but their labors live, and, in growing beauty and grandeur, rise and extend the results of their endeavors, showing us that "the good that men do lives after them," and that "the memory of the just is blessed." Like the coral insects toiling up unseen beneath the ocean, they laid their lives down with their burdens, to form our fair inheritance, and to show us that we too labor for posterity. And do we ask, "What shall the harvest be?" The answer is, simply what we, by our prayers, and labors, our influence and example, make it. This church to-day, to the careful observer, exhibits certain features of its earlier history. Just so will the church of the next

half-century transmit the characteristics that we stamp upon it.

Brethren, what a stupendous thought! "No man liveth to himself." No age, no church, no individual. And the more emphatically is this so, as humanity's pulse beats quicker, and Time's current hastens.

"We are living, we are dwelling  
In a grand and awful time,  
In an age on ages telling,  
To be living is sublime.

"Let us then be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate,  
Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labor and to wait.



