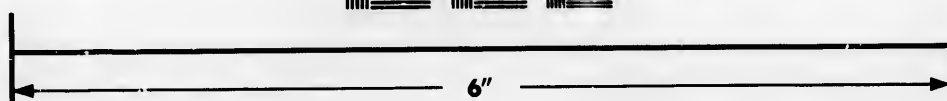
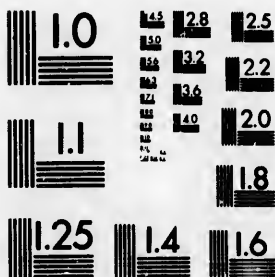


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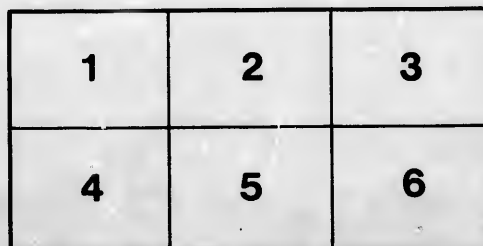
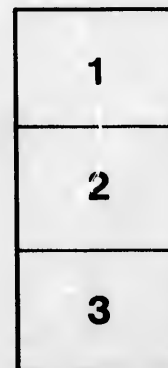
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P.A.M.
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CANADIANA



A MEMENTO.



THE OLD FRAME CHURCH
 AND THE
 FRIENDS OF YORE.

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH,
ST. CATHARINES.

1824.



1890.



Rev. J. Towell



A MEMENTO.



THE OLD FRAME CHURCH
 AND THE
 FRIENDS OF YORE.

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH,
ST. CATHARINES.

St Paul St.

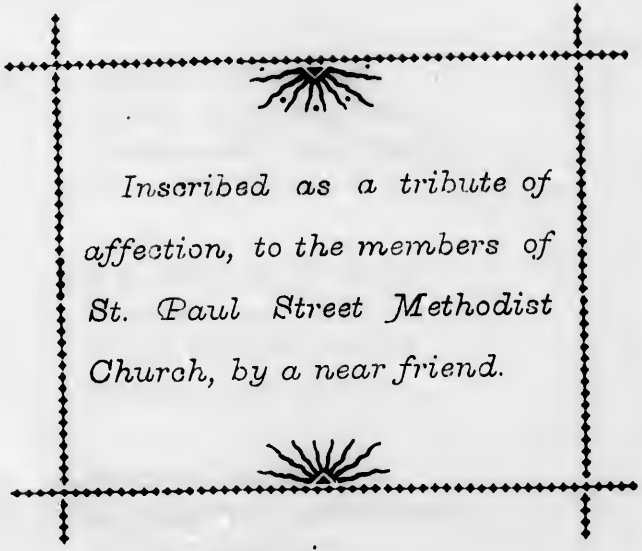
1824.

1890.



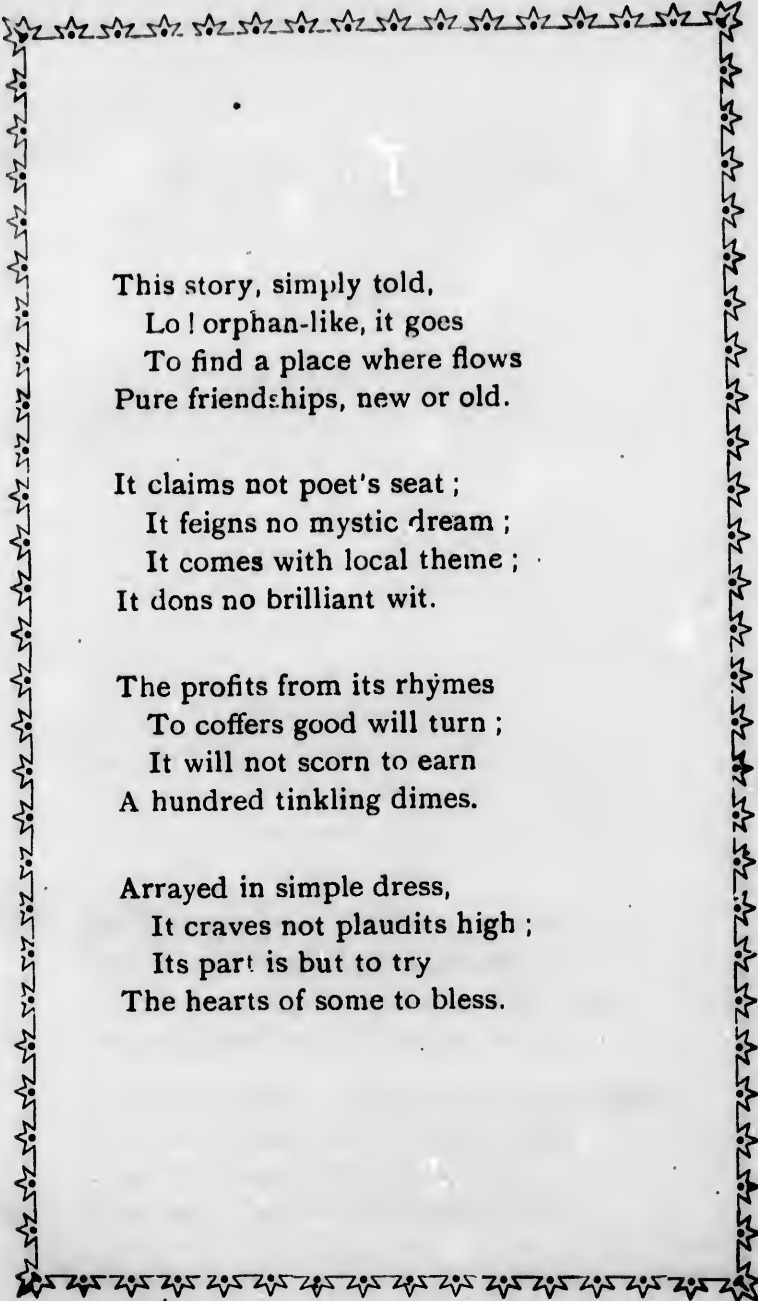
With Compliments - to
my esteemed Sister
in Christ - Mrs Dr Cooney,
from
J. Lovell

7.



Inscribed as a tribute of affection, to the members of St. Paul Street Methodist Church, by a near friend.



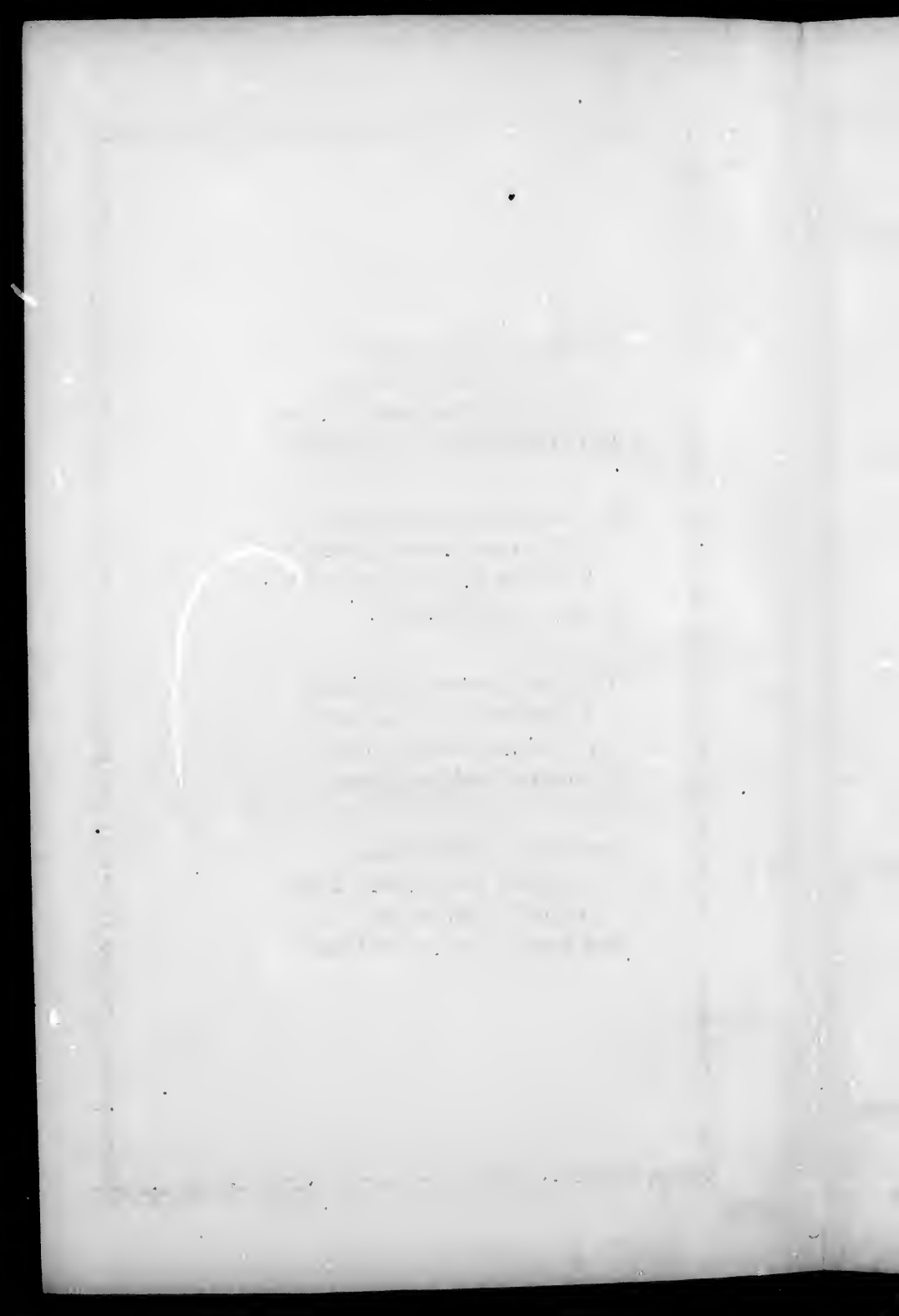


This story, simply told,
Lo! orphan-like, it goes
To find a place where flows
Pure friendships, new or old.

It claims not poet's seat ;
It feigns no mystic dream ;
It comes with local theme ;
It dons no brilliant wit.

The profits from its rhymes
To coffers good will turn ;
It will not scorn to earn
A hundred tinkling dimes.

Arrayed in simple dress,
It craves not plaudits high ;
Its part is but to try
The hearts of some to bless.



**THE OLD FRAME CHURCH
AND THE FRIENDS OF YORE.**



Some time ago my feet were found
Standing on sacred, solemn ground ;
'Twas where stood once the time-worn
frame—

The dear old church of honored name.

Timbers of every rank and kind,
Lay littered 'round, swept by the wind ;
Old sleepers, sills and worn-out floors,
And rafters, posts and hingeless doors.

And near at hand an old man stood—
His gaze revealed a thoughtful mood—
To him I spoke, and begged him trace
Some facts related to this place.

For I would know the links once cast
That bound him to the olden past ;
His looks betrayed remembrance clear
Of deeds and days we ought revere.

At this he said: "While here my thought
Has taken wings, and I have sought
Effects to hide ; but you will see
Mine eyes e'erflow with sympathy.

" The long-gone past, its smiles and tears,
Comes back to me ; the early years
Are fresh e'en yet—'tis but a day
Since youth was mine, with song and play.

" To this old church oft then I strayed,
In simple homespun dress arrayed,
I went, but not to hear the Word—
My heart was like some swift-winged bird,

" Pray, chide me not. May motives less
Than those akin to holiness
Not guide young feet ? Is it a wrong
If love-dreams haunt when we are young ?

" Those whispers sweet ! I hear them still :
' Come through the wold, come past the
mill ;
The pathway take through clover fields,
And meet me when the Day King gilds

" ' The western sky with golden hue.
Yes, come ; and then we shall renew
Our pledges to each other given,
And enter church to learn of heaven.'

" I found in her a true helpmeet ;
She led me to the Saviour's feet ;
She taught me read the Book that tells
Of life that springs from living wells.

" That angel-form has passed away ;
And I am old. Around me play
Grandchildren now ; yet more and more
I dream of her gone on before.

" How time has flown ! Some five decades
Have added been (the rich green blades
Of fifty years have come and gone)
Since first I claimed her as my own.

" What joy we had in worship then !
The choir was led, you doubtless ken,
By Senior Gilleland, who yet
Can sing the hymns to notes well set.

" Were you not here the other night ?
To me it was a touching sight
To see the old man on the stand
With remnant of his singing band.

" And sang, with trembliug voice and frame,
' All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name !'
My heart leaped up—forgive these tears ;
Again I lived the long-gone years.

" Bright faces, forms and friends of yore
I saw and knew, and heard them pour
Loud songs of praise, till my whole soul
Was moved almost beyond control.

" The rich-toned voice I seemed to hear
Of Henry Burgoyne, full and clear ;
And quivering thro' the ambient air
Came Richard Collier's words of prayer.

" The tend'rest memories awoke
Of Brothers Brownlee, Gardiner, Cook ;
And not the least among the blest
Was Lyman Parsons, long at rest.

" And then the Heralds of the Cross !
A company great—we felt the loss,
As, one by one, they left this field,
For other spheres new joys to yield.

" My mind recalls some of their names—
McCullough, Warner, Douse and Ames,
Taylor, Carroll, Howard, Brock,
Ryerson, Bevitt, Price and Clarke,

" Messmore, Cooney and James Musgrove,
R. W. Ferrier, crowned in love ;
Belton, Barber, Evans and Young,
Cladius Byrne, with silvery tongue ;

Rattray, Creighton and Sam'l Rose,
And others who sleep in sweet repose ;
We loved them then, and love them still ;
They taught us do the Father's will.

" In talents, gifts and pulpit fame ;
In manners, looks and christen'd name,
As varied they as gleaming stars,
Or as the flowers that Nature wears.

" Yet what of manner, voice or form !
'Tis truth men need in calm or storm—
A gift of heaven, a potent ray,
Dissolving darkness into day.

" Those men revered the sacred page ;
They told of bard, and saint, and sage,
Who, sailing, saw, o'er life's deep sea,
Bright shores of immortality.

" They told of gates that stood ajar,
Through which there swept the chariot car,
On which the King Celestial rode—
The lowly, lofty Son of God.

" They told of purpled streams that flowed ;
Of bright orbs that through storm-clouds
glowed ;
Of uplands, where the ancient seers
Now breathe the holier atmospheres.

" They told of waters crystal-clear ;
Of pastures green afar and near ;
Of pathways up through mountains high,
To thrones eternal in the sky.

" Your looks, my friend, reveal mistrust ;
You think this story surely must
Be rosy-hued—that paler shades
Would better suit the past decades.

" These spectacles, you seem to say,
Prismatic are. The olden day
Looks gorgeous ; all its mists and dews
Seem tinged with mellow rainbow hues.

" It may seem thus ; but living still
Are friends far down life's shadow'd hill.
To them give heed ; they'll tell you more
Than I, of ancient sacred lore."

This chance I seized, not that a shade
Of doubt I knew. I rather laid
My heart wide open to believe
It true ; and so I pray'd him give

The names of them who lived those years
(Ladies elect and aged seers)
Who still survive. I longed to know
The heroes of the long ago.

The list of names the old man gave,
Then turned, as if he meant to leave ;
I thanked him much, but begged him wait,
Some thoughts of future to relate.

" Old age," said he, " joys in old ties.
The past is golden in our eyes ;
Yet hear, and know, the present seems
Replete with more than splendid dreams.

" On pinions swift fair Progress flies
From her pavilion in the skies ;
Her mission pure, to teach all friends
The highway on to noblest ends.

" Her looks, great ardent hopes express ;
Her eye, aflame with earnestness ;
Her spirit, a resistless force ;
Her path, an ever onward course.

" Her touch makes oaks from acorns grow ;
Her breath lets loose the mountain snow ;
Her smile subdues the cruel sleet ;
Her hand waves back old winter's fleet ;

" Her word turns brass to finest gold ;
Her cities thrive where grew the wold ;
Her steamers ply where crept the sails
O'er waters swept by angry gales.

" She loves all Christian lands the most ;
Her arts in pagan worlds are lost ;
She walks with Freedom hand-in-hand ;
And truth is her great magic wand.

" Her laws are crystallized in domes,
In churches and benevolent homes.
The mart, the shop, the needed school,
Imbreathe the spirit of her rule.

" Divine in form, this angel fair
Has come on wings of mountain air
To bless ' St. Paul's ' with ardent hope,
Of growth majestic as the oak.

" An era new has reached its dawn.
To build is wise ; then misty morn
To cloudless noon shall grow apace,
And 'trains of glory ' fill the place.

" ' But times are dull,' the people cry.
To this the prophet gives reply :
Has not the Lord a promise given,
The doors to ope of yonder heaven,

· And blessings pour like floods of rain,
Till room be wanting to contain,
The rich supply ? Remember this :
The silver and the gold are His.

" But one condition we must prize,
Into the storehouse bring the tithes ;
Bring all the tithes, and breathe such pray-
ers.

As shall ascend God's altar stairs.

" Then God will bless the church ; and more,
 He'll bless the factory, field and store,
 The school and home, the tree and vine—
 Heaven's light on all shall brightly shine.

" My friend," the old man said, " good-bye !
 The chilled air tells me night is nigh."

" Farewell !" I said ; " my heart beats warm
 To meet again when comes the morn."

" Farewell !" he once again replied ;
 ' If not at morn, beyond the tide,
 Let's strive to meet. My sight is dim—
 My sun sets soon ; its upper rim

" Is scarcely seen. To-morrow I
 May be beyond the vaulted sky.
 The end draws near ; my work is o'er ;
 My hopes reach ont to you, bright shore."

I watched those white locks pass the gate ;
 Then sat me down to meditate :
 Our days at best are but a span—
 A hand-breadth here for mortal man.

And yet life built of worthy deeds
 Deep meaning has. Men sow good seeds
 To-day ; to-morrow's yield shall be
 Ripe sheaves of immortality.

Though Time's strong hand works changes
great ;

Though shadows deep our steps await,
Let Valor lead, and Truth illumine,
And Hope her tireless pinions plume.

Nor let Faith droop ; for One all-wise
Dominion wields in earth and skies ;
And men should see in all that's wrought
The wisdom of Eternal thought.

J. J.



