

Interesting Review of the Church's Progress

FROM A SERMON

Preached by the Late Rev. D. D. Currie.

ON THE 25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF THE PRESENT CHURCH EDIFICE.

During the latter part of the present month the Methodists of Fredericton will celebrate in a fitting manner the semi-centennial of the erection of their present church, and in view of this fact members of that denomination and citizens generally will read with interest the following extracts from a historical sermon preached by the late Rev. D. D. Currie, in the Fredericton Methodist church Dec. 23, 1877, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of the present church.

"This commemoration day—the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of this church—is one of those occasions which sometimes come to us, when a review of the past seems to be desirable.

It is about three score years and ten since the Methodist Society in this town built its first church. The building stood on the north side of King Street, and about one hundred feet below the corner of Westmorland Street. The old sanctuary had a high pulpit with a sounding-board above it, on the summit of which stood a gilded dove, with an olive branch in its mouth. This building was used by our fathers in this community, for the purpose of Christian worship, for about a quarter of a century, at the close of which period a new church had been built, and was ready for occupancy.

The second church was built about the year 1831, on the site whereon the building in which we are now assembled stands. In the years immediately succeeding the removal to the new church, there was a considerable increase in the size of our congregation and in the membership of our Society. In the year 1839, the building was enlarged by the addition of about twenty feet to its length.

The re-opening services were held on the first Sunday in January, 1840. Sampson Busby, who had been the Superintendent of the Circuit when the church was built, preached one of the sermons on the day of re-opening. His text was: "Come thou and all thy house into the ark," (Genesis vii, 1). John B. Strong preached on the same occasion in the afternoon, from the words of Joshua, (xxiv. 15): "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." In the evening Frederick Smallwood preached from the words of Paul, (1 Cor. xv. 25): "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." During the several months following the re-opening of the church many persons were converted and received into the fold. The enlarged church was occupied uninterruptedly until November, 1850. Those years were years of the right hand of the Most High, wherein He gave to His praying people here many displays of His saving power.

The morning of the 11th of Nov., 1850, broke clear and cold. From the northwest a furious wind was blowing. From a flag-staff over a Hall, which then stood in the vicinity of the corner of King and Regent streets, in which a benevolent society was wont in that day to hold its sessions, a flag was waving in the wind. On that flag were the figures "1825." That day was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the formation of the Society whose flag was floating there. Those figures on that flag reminded some of our townspeople of that day of the well-remembered year 1825, when a conflagration of perhaps almost unparalleled magnitude, and of most disastrous consequences, swept over the Miramichi country, and other portions of our Province, and destroyed a considerable part of this fair town wherein it is now your privilege to dwell.

A few minutes after one o'clock on the 11th Nov. 1850, smoke was seen issuing from a small building that stood in the immediate vicinity of our church. Quickly the wild cry of "fire" rang through the streets. The bells pealed out

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their sharp notes of warning, and their loud call for help. The flames burst out speedily where the smoke had first appeared. The fire soon reached the north corner of our loved sanctuary. With wondrous rapidity the flames, fanned by the wild wind, spread over the walls of the building. Few were the moments that passed ere they were leaping over all the roof. A few moments more and the tower and the spire were all ablaze. The bell was ringing out its dying dirge. Meanwhile, quick hands were carrying the furniture of the church and portions of the organ to places of safety. Scarcely had this work been accomplished when the burning spire, after waving to and fro for a time, slowly and gracefully leaned over toward the middle of the building, and then, with its upper portion going downward first, it pierced the roof, and appeared to carry everything before it to the ground.

The fire had already gained the ascendancy in a large portion of the city. The Hall of which we have just spoken, with its flag-staff, and the ominous flag, passed away in the fatal fiery storm. It was not until the sun went down, and the wind went down with the sun, that the progress of the flames was stayed. Many were the sad hearts that night, as we walked through the familiar streets, where the fire had wrought its havoc, and looked over the eighteen acres of blackened ruins, where a few hours before there had been so many places of business, and so many homes where prosperity and comfort abounded. And bitter were our reflections as we sadly and slowly tried to comprehend what was involved in the loss of our holy and commodious sanctuary, wherein, during its history of about twenty years, many souls had been born to God.

The condition to which our cause in this community was reduced by the fire was peculiarly distressing. Many and anxious were the consultations in which our leading members engaged. The erection of the church in which we are now gathered, was undertaken by the congregation, with the following brethren as Trustees, viz:—Thomas Pickard, Robert Chestnut, Joseph Gaynor, James Hale, Lemuel Allan Wilmot, Michael Carter, Samuel Duncan McPherson, John Simpson, and Abraham T. Coburn. Three of the Trustees were appointed the Building Committee, viz:—Judge Wilmot, Mr. Gaynor, and Mr. Hale. All of those brethren have been removed by death except Judge Wilmot, Mr. Colter, and Mr. McPherson.

The necessary purchasing of additional land for the enlargement of the building lot, and other expenses, involved the expenditure of a larger sum of money than the Trustees had in the treasury of the Church as the proceeds of insurance. The purchasing of the additional land had, in fact, not only exhausted their resources, but had involved them in a debt of two hundred dollars before they began again to build. Moreover, many of our people had lost their places of business, or their dwellings, or both, in the calamity that had destroyed the church. How formidable, then, were the difficulties to be encountered; and how arduous the work to which those Trustees committed themselves, when with brave hearts, and trusting in the God of their fathers, they embarked in the enterprise of building, under such circumstances, such a structure as this!

The new church was ready for occupancy, and was opened and dedicated on Sunday, the nineteenth day of December, 1852. Dr. Knight preached in the morning from Ezra, (vi: 14-17). Charles Churchill, at that time the pastor of the church, preached in the evening from the words of Haggai (ii: 9), "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts."

When we seek to remember those years of the right hand of the Most High, it appears, from our standpoint today, that Methodism may be divided into two periods of seventy years each. It was about three score and ten years from the rise of Methodism in England, until the time when our first church was built here. It is about three score and ten years from that time until now. During the latter part of the first period indicated, and when the last century was drawing to its close, Duncan Blair opened his dwelling for Methodist ser-

vices. In that dwelling, the Methodist people of this town were wont, for the most part to hold their services until their first church was built.

Let us call to remembrance some of the results of the evangelistic efforts of our own Church in this vicinity during the last five and twenty years. In 1852, the Circuit and its vicinity was under the superintendence of one Minister, whose only co-laborers in ministerial work, so far as Methodism was concerned, were the three Local Preachers then on the Circuit. That field of labor is now divided into seven Circuits, with nine resident Methodist ministers.

In that part of our province which is drained by the waters of the river Saint John above the Fredericton circuit, we then had one superintendent minister and one assistant minister. We now have, in those parts, eight circuits and nine ministers.

The Sabbath School has, during all these years, been an interesting and invaluable department in our church organization. Its general management has been, for the last quarter of a century, under the direction of its present superintendent. One thousand seven hundred and nineteen scholars have been received into the school during these twenty-five years. Of this number nearly four hundred are now in attendance.

During the first half-century of the existence of Methodism in this town, the adherents of our Church were subjected to invidious political and religious disabilities. The adherents of Baptist and Methodist Churches were denied some of the civil and religious rights that were possessed by others. It is doubtful if any Baptist or Methodist, unless under most extraordinary circumstances, was at any time previous to the year 1834, appointed a Justice of the Peace, or an officer of Militia, or to any other position that was deemed respectable, by the dominant powers of that day.

The Legislature of New Brunswick in 1786 passed an Act setting forth that the Church of England is "by Law established in this Province," and "for preserving the Church of England." By that Act it was provided, that no "dissenter" should "preach any sermon, or lecture," unless he should be first "approved" and "licensed" by the Governor. For every offence, the Act provided that the penalty should be a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds nor less than fifty pounds, and that the preacher should "suffer imprisonment for a space not exceeding six months nor less than three months." William Earley, one of the pioneer Methodist ministers who visited these Provinces in 1792, preached in Sussex, Penobscot and other places. For this offence, one of the Magistrates of King's County issued a warrant for the arrest and imprisonment of the "dissenter," and straightway the officers of the law were upon his track. He was literally hunted like a partridge in the wilderness that then abounded about Sussex Vale. Mr. Earley was arrested in a house that then stood in the immediate vicinity of where the Penobscot railway station house now is. He was taken to Sussex, and there held as a prisoner for a time, and when liberated was commanded to leave the country.

When William Black, sometimes called "the Apostle of Methodism in Eastern British America," first visited Saint John in 1791, the authorities threatened the so-called "dissenter" with imprisonment if he would presume to preach to his coreligionists without the Governor's license.

Previous to the year 1834, no Methodist or Baptist was allowed to solemnize marriage in this Province. Ministers of the Church of England, and some of the Justices of the Peace, were authorized by law to perform the rite of marriage. Ministers of the Kirk of Scotland, Quakers and Roman Catholics might, under peculiar circumstances, have that privilege. A Mr. Innis, a worthy Baptist Minister of that period, yielded to the importunate solicitation of a couple who had been converted under his ministry, and married them. He was made to feel the sting of the obnoxious law. For that deed, the right to perform which should never have been denied him, he was twelve long months kept in prison in one of our common jails.

In the year 1834 an amendment to the Marriage Act was passed, whereby the "Dissenters" were permitted to have the

rite of marriage performed by their own ministers. Samuel D. McPherson, Esq., and Mrs. McPherson, who are present in this congregation this evening, were the first persons married under the new Act in this province, by a so-called "dissenting" minister. They were married by Dr. Enoch Wood, then pastor of our church in this town, on the 3rd of January, 1835. Their marriage marks the beginning of a new era in which we have escaped from the political and religious thralldom of the past, and are made to be partakers of privileges which are not surpassed by those of any other land. These advantages were not won without many a hard-fought conflict on the platform, in the press, at the polls and elsewhere. "Other men labored, and we are entered into their labors." Those days have passed away forever. It is well, however, that we should remember the days of old, and what God hath done for us; and tell of all His doings.

Our review of these years of the right hand of the Most High, is suggestive of particulars of which we may briefly speak on this commemoration day. There are transcendently important results connected with this period which we cannot fully estimate. The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation. The grandest results of our church work are not apparent here. The fruit is gathered in the land that lies beyond the flood.

Do you ask for the results of the expenditure and labor involved in maintaining our educational institutions? Do you visit the halls of your own University? What is apparent there as the results of its existence of half a century or more? There may be twenty, or forty students, or more, or less perhaps, in attendance there. Is that all? No. How many hundreds have gone out therefrom, who know the old University again no more forever, in the sense in which, in other days, they knew it! Those who have gone hence, rather than those who are there today, are they by whom you may judge of the value of the instruction imparted in those scholastic halls.

And in somewhat the same way may we, to some extent, judge of our church organizations. We may learn the value thereof, not so much by those who are now here, as by those who have gone out from us, and whom we shall know again no more forever here. For what do our Church organizations exist? What are the grander purposes they seek to accomplish? Not merely to build sanctuaries, and organize educational establishments, and gather the children into Sabbath Schools, and attract crowds around our pulpits. The Church seeks the conversion of the souls of men, and the building up of believers that they may be partakers of everlasting life. This is its grandest work. Where are the fruits of the Methodism of this town today? Those fruits are here only in a small degree. During these years of the right hand of the Most High there has been evermore, the gathering of the harvest on the other shore.

Some of you remember many of the worthies of our Zion who have gone out from this congregation, and who through faith in the blood of the Lamb, overcame the world and entered into the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Unfaded and still fresh and fragrant in the memory of some of you, as they are in mine, are the names of Joseph Gaynor, and Thomas Pickard, and Robert Chestnut, and Henry Fisher, and James Hogg, and Andrew Richey, and John Simpson, and Alexander McCauland, and Abraham T. Coburn, and James Hale, and John S. Ooy, and Charles S. Lugin, and many others, who have finished their course and crossed the flood.

(To be continued.)

Asthma Can Be Cured.

Thousands of testimonials conclusively prove that asthma can be permanently cured by inhaling Catarrhzone, a vegetable antiseptic that destroys at once the germs causing the disease. Catarrhzone gives immediate relief to the distressing coughs and suffocating sensations, makes breathing easy and regular and insures undisturbed sleep. Catarrhzone cures asthma that doctors are unable even to relieve and can cure you. The Catarrhzone inhaler is made of hard rubber, fits into the vest pocket and can be used at work, in church, in the street, in bed—any place—at any time. Two months' treatment (guaranteed), price \$1.00; trial size, 25c. Druggists, or N. C. Polson & Co., Kingston, Ont.

Try Dr. Hamilton's Mandrake Pills. Lever's Y-Z (Wise Head) Disinfectant Soap Powder is better than other soap powders, as it also acts as a disinfectant.

SWEPT BY FLAMES.

Half the Business Section of Maine Town Destroyed.

Bowdoinham, Me., Dec. 15.—A conflagration accompanied by a northeast gale early yesterday destroyed half of the business section of this village and eight dwellings, causing a total loss of \$29,000 and making families whose aggregate membership was 40 persons, dependent for shelter on fortunate neighbors. The burning of the hotel, the only drug store in town and four buildings containing the town offices, Masonic, Grand Army, Modern Woodmen and Grange halls and several small offices, left only six buildings standing in the business section.

Two women escaped from their burning homes in night clothing and many people were frostbitten while saving their household effects. The total insurance was \$9,000.

The fire, which started shortly after 1 o'clock, originated from a defective chimney in the general store of W. H. Gould, and the work of devastation was only complete when the flames reached the river. The upper end of the village is more thickly settled with residences and was saved by the wind being in an opposite direction.]

Pimples, Blotches and Skin Eruptions

How unsightly, sometimes even disgusting, and certainly very mortifying to the sufferer. They are merely an evidence of impure, poisoned blood, and lowered vitality of the elementary organs, which can be quickly changed by taking Ferrozone after meals. Ferrozone cleanses the blood of all poisons and eruptions, makes it rich in red corpuscles that manifest themselves in a healthy, ruddy complexion. To have a pure, soft skin and good complexion simply use Ferrozone regularly. Price 50c. per box, or six boxes for \$2.50, at druggists, or N. C. Polson & Co., Kingston, Ont.

Try Dr. Hamilton's Mandrake Pills.

TOWN REWARDED.

Cleveland, Ohio, Dec. 15.—The village of Collinwood, a few miles east of this city has voted against permitting the sale of liquor within its boundaries. Because of the result of the election the Lake Shore railroad will spend \$1,000,000 in new shops, additional to extensive buildings already erected there.

Had the village voted for the sale of liquor the railroad officials stated that this extra sum of money would have been withheld.

Valuable Advice to Rheumatics.

Eat meat sparingly, and take very little sugar. Avoid intoxicants, keep away from dampness, drink water abundantly, and always rely on Nerviline as a quick reliever of rheumatic pains. Being five times stronger than ordinary remedies, Nerviline's power over pain is simply beyond belief. It cures also sciatica, lumbago, neuralgia, and all pain, whether internal or external. Large bottles, price 25c.

THE YUKON ELECTION.

Victoria, B. C., Dec. 15.—Further details were received by the Amur of the Yukon election. Hon. J. H. Ross led at all points, his majority reaching about 800. Dawson gave him 211 majority, Klondike Creek 89, upper river points 79, White Horse 71, Caribou 91, Forty-mile 17, and there were several places to hear from. The figures to date were: Ross, 1,850; Clark, 1,100.

Judgment Has Been Delivered

by thousands upon thousands that the only cure for corns and warts that acts without pain in 24 hours is Putnam's Painless Corn and Wart Extractor. Try "Putnam's," it's the best.

Is it true, asked the lady, who was visiting in Kentucky, that everybody drinks wiskey down here? No, ma'am, replied Colonel Calpepper, it is not true, strictly speaking ma'am. We punish our criminals by giving them watah.