

ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH AND CATHOLICITY IN OTTAWA.



THE growth of the Catholic Church in Ottawa, is so inseparably connected with the growth of the city, that to describe the great strides by which our religious institutions

have advanced to success and prosperity is to depict the speedy manner in which the now stately Ottawa, has changed from the primitive backwoods settlement to the beautiful city it now is.

Sixty years ago, Bytown was a scattered hamlet, consisting of a few roughly hewn log houses. The canal then building, to connect this city with the Great Lakes, had attracted hither a large number of workmen and the usual quota of tradesmen and merchants. Soldiers too were engaged in the construction of the canal and bridges and as time progressed and the work of canalling was finished these sturdy pioneers, attracted by the beauty and availability of the site and the many advantages to be found in this fertile section of the country, at once did what has been so often done in this new country of ours; they determined to make a home for themselves.

Thus was Bytown (so called after Colonel By, of the Sappers' and Miners' corps), settled by a sturdy and courageous lot of men, anxious to devote their strength and energy to the building up of the new city. The water-power and the limitless supply of lumber, attracted hither woodsmen and bushmen, and thus was laid the foundation of that lumber business, which has since made Ottawa famous among the lumber markets of the world.

It is but natural to suppose that in such a motley multitude as first sought homes in Bytown, were to be found men of all nations and religions, and so it proved, Irishmen, Scotchmen, Englishmen, and Frenchmen, worked shoulder to shoulder, in the forest primeval. The new settlers though perhaps lacking in some of the beautiful virtues of religion, too seldom met with in lumber camps, yet always showed the manly, noble virtues of courage and sympathy, lending a helping hand to

the distressed and with a large-hearted sympathy and benevolence, peculiar to their rough and ready class of men, ever giving the right hand of fellowship to all comers. Soon, however, Mother Church, ever the leader in true progress, sought the unploughed religious field of Ottawa, and almost in its opening hamlet days, established permanent missions. Ere long the beautiful chant of the Holy Catholic Church was heard in all its sublimity and simplicity, where before nothing but the roar of the "big kettle" and the woodsman's axe disturbed the stillness of the virgin forest. Mass was first celebrated in Ottawa in 1827, and it is a noteworthy fact that the same year also ushered into this mundane sphere the first of Ottawa's native children.

Bytown was then a portion of the diocese of Kingston and remained so until 1848, when the increasing numbers of the faithful justified the Holy See, in subdividing the old diocese, and from the younger of the branches, has since grown the mighty archdiocese of Ottawa.

Church-building may also be taken as an excellent index of the growth of Catholicity in this section. In the rude beginning, wood so plentiful around here, was exclusively used in building, and the first church was accordingly of that material. The next was of stone, but bare and devoid of ornament. Soon two or three churches less unworthy of their object, were erected, but still displaying that absence of all attempt at architectural display necessarily characteristic of new countries, where utility, stern necessity and not aesthetic taste govern. But now a change shows itself; the opulent Ottawa of the present with its numerous Catholic population, no longer compelled by necessity and want, to rush up cheap and flimsy structures, erects churches of rare taste and beauty. Not the least of these is the edifice of which we present a cut in this number, the beautiful new St. Joseph's Church which is to be opened early in November.

Before entering more deeply, however, into the details of the new Church, I must