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HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

NO. 18—ATHABASCA AND ITS BISHOP.

BY REV. W. A. BURMAN, B. D., GRISWOLD, MANITOBA.

THE present Diocese of Athabasca embraces the southern portion of the original diocese of that name, which was presided over by Bishop Bompas, whose noble work has already been recorded in these pages. This vast diocese embraced the country lying to the north of the 55th parallel of latitude, with the Rocky Mountains as its western boundary. Its eastern limits were not defined. In 1883, Bishop Bompas, finding it impossible to give this immense region the supervision it required, if the work at its numerous stations was to go forward, begged the Church Missionary Society to send a clergyman in priest's orders to inspect and foster the work in the southern portion, with the ultimate view of dividing the diocese. The person chosen for this important duty, the subject of the present sketch, was one in all respects well fitted for the task.

The Right Reverend Richard Young, D. D., is a native of Yorkshire, England, a county which has given many devoted men to the missionary cause. He was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Worcester in 1868, and received a curacy at Halesowen, under the late Archdeacon Hone. In 1869 he was ordained priest at Coventry by the Bishop of Lichfield. Shortly after he accepted the post of organizing secretary for the Church Missionary Society in Yorkshire, where for several years he advocated the cause of the society with indefatigable zeal and marked success. During this period he married a lady eminently qualified for her future duties as a missionary's wife.

In 1875, at the call of the society, Mr. Young proceeded to Rupert's Land to take charge of the

important parish of St. Andrew's, formerly known as "Grand Rapids." This is one of the oldest stations of the Church Missionary Society in the country, and one of the most important. The people are for the most part retired employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, or their descendants, who have settled on either side of the Red River, some fifteen miles north of Winnipeg.

Part of the special work imposed on Mr. Young by the society in his capacity as assistant secretary to the Rupert's Land Mission, was, in conjunction with the bishop and its local finance committee, to inaugurate and carry out a scheme providing for the gradual withdrawal of the society from such of its missions as seemed no longer to need its special attention. There were several such stations—formerly missionary centres, but so changed by time and the influx of settlers that they had no longer any claim upon a society whose special work is the conversion of the heathen. In due course this scheme was set on foot, the society arranged for annually decreasing grants, and the parishes have become wholly or in part self-supporting. We need not dilate upon the labors of Mr. Young in this connection and in the secretariat. Suffice it to say the work



RT. REV. RICHARD YOUNG, D. D.,

First Bishop of the present Diocese of Athabasca.

was most thoroughly done, and while filling several important posts in connection with the ecclesiastical and educational work of the province, his own parish was most conscientiously cared for. His work, in which he was so loyally supported by Mrs. Young, was fruitful in blessing to many of his flock.

When, therefore, the appeal of Bishop Bompas for help reached the Church Missionary Society, it was very natural that Mr. Young, well tried and trusted as he was, should be selected for the work in view. In accordance with the wishes of the committee, he set out in the spring of 1884 for the Peace River country. His route was by the