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## HISTORICAL SKETCHES

NO. 122—THE PARISH OF COBOURG, DIOCESE OF TORONTO

ONE of the most English looking pieces of church property to be found in Canada—church, rectory, and school—is St Peter's, Cobourg. The church, built of stone, has that old-fashioned,

substantial appearance so often seen in England, and the rectory adjoining it—too large for anyone to live in who has not private means—the counterpart of many an old world "vicarage." Alas the shrinkage in incomes, characteristic of the present day, has made many of these noble residences appear uncomfortably large for the unfortunate occupant.

Cobourg is but a small town, quietly standing on the shore of Lake Ontario. It has traces of a once more prosperous past. The abandoned buildings of the Methodist Victoria College, unoccupied and silent, tell of a busy throng removed. But though for many years it was the educational centre of Methodism, it has also been from the first an important stronghold of the Church of England. When it was but a hamlet, surrounded by primeval forests, Church services from time to time were held. This much is known, but exact information as to the earliest services cannot be arrived at, owing to the fact that no regular records were kept, or, if they were, they are not to be found. The church registers have been carefully kept since January, 1819, but before that nothing certain can be ascertained. In Hawkins "Colonial Church, Toronto," the

mission is called Hamilton, from the township of that name, and is mentioned as being in the charge of the Rev William Macaulay. He it was who began the parish register. Among those who were active in Church work in those early days were Captain and Mrs. Boswell, Mrs E. Jones, and Mr. James Bethune, names still well known in Cobourg.

In June, 1827, the Rev Alexander Neil Bethune, "formerly of Grimsby, U.C.," was appointed to "the mission of Cobourg, district of Newcastle, U.C.," by "Charles James Stewart, Lord Bishop of Quebec."

There appears to have been a frame church in the town at this time, for one of Mr Bethune's first acts of improvement was to paint the primitive edifice "inside and out." The adjoining burying ground also was duly "laid out"—laid out for burial. This church was standing in 1820, evidenced by a receipt for a purchased pew, and by the fact that in 1821 it was enlarged.

The church of wood, however, gave place to one of stone in 1854, when the nave of the present building was erected with side galleries and all other accessories that were deemed

ed necessary in those early days, including windows of ample width, and a pulpit of exalted height.

Salaries and wages in those days do not appear to have been very large, for there is an item of "twenty five pounds (£25) a year to be paid to the sexton, he to furnish organ-blower in addition to the usual duties." This was an increase upon his former allowance, the amount of which is not mentioned. Ten pounds was also presented to the organist, Mrs. King-



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