



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, STAMFORD, ONT.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, STAMFORD, DIOCESE OF NIAGARA.

THE subject of this brief sketch is a very interesting one.

In 1825 the late R. H. Dee, Esq., came from the old country, and settled in Stamford. There being no church at that time service was held in an old school house, except one Tuesday in the month, when it was held in the Presbyterian meeting-house kindly loaned for that purpose. A church building was begun, all denominations contributing thereto, some giving their time and labor, some material, and those that were able, their money. Sir Peregrine Maitland, than Governor-General of Upper Canada, took great interest in the church, and assisted materially in its erection. Lady Sarah furnished handsome damask cushions, and coverings for the pulpit, reading desk and Communion table. She also gave the carpet for the floor within the communion rail. Mr. Dee gave the land, and at the request of Sir Peregrine the church was built on a spot where he could look out upon it from his window. Although the first Dominion Parliament was held at Old Niagara, or Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Governor-General resided in Toronto, or "muddy little York," as it was then called. That being an unhealthy locality he removed across the lake. Situated on the brow of the mountain, so called, and about eight miles from Niagara, overlooking the great panorama of wheat fields, orchards and gardens, with the vast lake beyond, stood the residence of the Governor-General. The house which he first came to live in was of great interest. We cannot stay at present to give a description of it. Built in 1825 St. John's Church now presents a venerable and ancient appearance. It is of stone, covered with rough-cast,

the walls within being of ordinary white plaster. The pews, twenty-four, are old-fashioned, the doors only having been removed. The pulpit and reading-desk, which have been somewhat altered of late years, are of the old style also, and are of walnut. The former is raised to an high elevation, and the latter is a square box. A gallery, no longer used, occupies the west end. The windows—all stained memorial windows—are exceedingly beautiful and worthier of better walls and furniture. The East, or what would be the chancel-light, there being no chancel proper, is particularly striking and beautiful. The chief subject represented is that of St. John the Evan-

gelist. This window was erected "to the memory of Robert Henry and Elizabeth Dee." The sidelights are all proportionately handsome. On the north wall is to be seen a tablet, erected by his former fellow-students, in memory of the Rev. John Lloyd Thomas, who died in Stamford 27th February, 1849, in the 27th year of his age, and the first of his diaconate. The Holy Communion Service belonging to this church is worthy of special mention. It has been in use almost from the first opening of the church, and is of massive silver. The chalice and paten were presented by Bishop Mountain, who consecrated the church at the same time. The flagon was presented by the late Mrs. Stewart, wife of the present churchwarden. On each vessel there is a suitable engraving to this effect. The font is of freestone and placed, as it should be, near the door. This substantial gift was given by Mrs. Isabella Stewart, mother of Churchwarden Stewart.

St. John's is prettily situated on the east side of the village green. "The place whereon it stands" is indeed "holy ground." Its church-going bell is very sweet and solemn. Many of the graves in the church-yard are now old, and the tombstones moss-grown. They bear the inscription of such names as Dee, Mewburn, Stewart and Irving. The church stands on the old portage road, between Chippawa and Queenston, below the mountain. Its first rector was the Rev. Wm. Leeming, who died June 1st, 1863, aged seventy-seven years, and to whose pious memory a memorial window was placed on the north side, by his parishioners and other friends. During Mr. Leeming's rectorship of Stamford he was besides what may be called a travelling missionary to parts adjacent. He held services at Chippawa, Drummondville, Thorold and Queenston, also at Fort Erie. It is needless, therefore, to add, that