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## HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

No. 45—REV. E. F. WILSON.

BY THE EDITOR.

**T**HE Rev. Francis Edward Wilson, Commissary to the Bishop of Algoma, was born in London, England. He is, if we mistake not, a grandson of the late Bishop Wilson, of India—at all events he is of the same

family as that celebrated missionary prelate. He came to this country in 1865 intending to be a farmer, but God put it into his heart to be a missionary. He was admitted to the diaconate in England by the Bishop of London in 1867, and immediately afterwards came to Canada to engage in missionary work. He was ordained priest by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Cronyn, first Bishop of Huron, in 1868. His great desire from the first was to do missionary work among the Indians, and accordingly he qualified himself in every way possible for that work. He was appointed to the Indian Reserve near Sarnia in 1868, and here in "a little four hundred dollar, red painted school house," he commenced that work among the Indians, for which he is now justly noted. Sarnia, then but a fishing station, occupied by a few French and Indians, but now a handsome town of between six and seven thousand inhabitants, is situated on the river St. Clair, one mile below Lake Huron, in the northern part of which are numerous islands, inhabited largely by Indians. Some of these Mr. Wilson visited from time to time, and passing the island of St. Joseph entered the St. Marie River,

on the banks of which were also Indian settlements—one especially (at its entrance), called Garden River.

About the year 1831, through the energy of Bishop Stewart (second Bishop of Quebec, with jurisdiction over Upper as well as Lower Canada), a society was formed in Toronto for converting and civilizing the Indians, the Governor-General, Sir John Colborne being its patron. The first missionary of this society was the Rev. Wm.



REV. E. F. WILSON,  
Commissary to the Bishop of Algoma.

McMurray, now Archdeacon of Niagara, stationed at Sault Ste. Marie. We read in 1836 of his having built a chapel-school, and of his having baptized 140 persons, among whom were Shing-wah-cose, and his eldest son Augustin Shingwauk, and when Mr. Wilson was at Garden River in 1871 this Indian (Augustin Shingwauk), remembering his baptism, told him that he was going to Toronto to see the Big Black Coat (Bishop Bethune) to ask him if he could not send Mr. Wilson to be their missionary, and to tell him that he wanted a "Teaching Wigwam" built, so that Indian children might be taught and trained in the ways of white people. On this mission Mr. Wilson accompanied him, and they succeeded in collecting \$300. Then

Mr. Wilson and a brother of Chief Shingwauk went to England and collected \$3,000; but the Church Missionary Society objected to support Mr. Wilson as a teacher only, and wanted him to go as a missionary to the North-West. This seems to us a strange mistake. Could there be a more effective missionary than the man who gathers together heathen children and teaches them the Christian faith, and instructs them in the ways o