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## HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

### NO. 21.—THE FIRST BISHOP OF QUEBEC.

BY THE EDITOR.

**A**LMOST immediately after the appointment of Rev. Charles Inglis as Bishop for British North America, under the title of the Bishop of Nova Scotia, in 1787, it was seen how utterly impossible it would be for one man to oversee such a vast territory,—the whole of what is now called Canada, together

with Newfoundland; and accordingly, six years afterwards, it was resolved by the authorities in the old country to establish another diocese. The headquarters for this new diocese was to be Quebec, and in 1793, Rev. Jacob Mountain was appointed its bishop. It was at a time when settlers were fast pushing westward into what is now called Ontario, and even further towards the Occident, so that the duty of overseeing the whole territory embraced by the present provinces of Quebec and Ontario, might in itself seem gigantic and almost beyond the power of man. Yet Bishop Mountain undertook that work and was successful in a marked degree in carrying it out. He was born in England in 1751 and educated there. The family is of French extraction, but sought in England that freedom of religion which they could not get at home. Having graduated at Cambridge, he rose to several honorable positions in the Church in England, and through the friendship of Mr. Pitt would probably have risen much higher, but he was called to the more lonely and less luxurious work of a missionary bishop. He was consecrated

first Bishop of Quebec on July 7th, 1793, in England, when he was 42 years old; but it was not till the 1st of November that he was able to reach Quebec. The voyage itself lasted thirteen weeks. Several of his relations, including Dr. Jehoshaphat Mountain, rector of Peldon, in Essex, thirteen in all—thirteen Mountains—accompanied the bishop in his exile; for such, indeed, a residence in Quebec in those days, was. The work must have seemed discouraging from the first, for the Bishop found on his arrival no church in the see city, and but six clergymen in the whole of the Lower Province

(two of whom were at Quebec and two at Montreal), and but three in Upper Canada. That is to say he found but nine clergymen in the whole of the territory now forming Ontario and Quebec. Five of these were missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. We are told that when he arrived at Quebec the Roman Catholic Bishop, whose name was Briant, received him with marked cordiality, giving him the kiss of welcome on each cheek and remarking, "Your presence was much needed, to keep your people in order."\*



RT. REV. JACOB MOUNTAIN, D. D.,  
First Bishop of Quebec.

The scenery in and about Quebec is surpassingly lovely, and in a beautiful spot amidst trees, about three miles from Quebec, called Woodfield, the bishop took up his residence. Here he spent many happy years as his children grew up around him, and their attachment for their home was very great. His son George, who, according to the bishop's journal "began his Latin Grammar on the 28th of March, 1796," and who afterwards became the third Bishop of Quebec, wrote some excellent verses when first

\*See Hawkins' Annals of the Diocese of Quebec; page 22.