

HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

NO. II.—THE DIOCESE OF ONTARIO.

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(Continued.)

THE completion of the Endowment Fund of the proposed Eastern Diocese, early in 1861, prepared the way for the final steps necessary in the establishment of a new See, viz., the election and consecration of a Bishop. Eleven years before there had arrived on the scene one destined to take a prominent part in Canadian Church affairs.

John Travers Lewis, son of the Rev. John Lewis, M.A., was born in 1825, at Garry cloyne Castle, County Cork. Having received his primary education at Cork, he entered Trinity College, Dublin, from which he graduated in 1847, after a very distinguished career, in which he carried off the highest honors, being senior moderator in Ethics and Logic, gold medallist in Mathematics, and obtaining honors in Classics. He received his Divinity Testamer in 1848, and was ordained Deacon by the Bishop of Chester, acting for the Archbishop of Armagh, Dr John George Beresford. In the following year he was admitted to the priesthood by Archbishop Knox, (then Bishop of Down) also acting for Archbishop Beresford. After a curacy of two years at Newton Butler, in the Diocese of Clogher (which See was then held by the Archbishop of Armagh), he came to Canada in 1850, and was appointed to the laborious mission of West Hawkesbury, taking the place, and to a considerable extent succeeding to the duties of the travelling missionary of the Ottawa District. In the following year he married Anne Henrietta Margaret, daughter of the Hon. Henry Sherwood, some time Attorney-General for Upper Canada. In 1854 he was promoted to the Rectory of Brockville, in succession to the Rev. Edward Denroche. A year later he received the degree of LL. D. from his University, and soon after he proceeded to the degrees of B.D. and D.D. A man of Dr. Lewis' pre-eminent ability could not long remain in obscurity, and he very soon came to occupy the foremost rank among his brethren. The proposed division of the diocese early met with his powerful advocacy, and he spared neither voice nor pen in actively promoting what he saw to be fraught with such momentous consequences to the Church of God in this rapidly developing country. All eyes were soon directed towards him as the one best fitted by his learning, culture and commanding abilities to become the Bishop of the new diocese. The Venerable Archdeacon of York, Dr. A. N. Bethune, would naturally have been preferred by the elder clergy; but his advanced age and his residence outside of the proposed diocese placed him at a disadvantage. A special session of that section of the Synod of the Diocese of Toronto, which represented the territory to be included in

the new diocese, was summoned at Kingston, on June 12th, 1861. Fifty-three clerical and one hundred and eleven lay members answered to their names, the aged Bishop of Toronto, then in his 84th year, presiding. The resulting election was practically unanimous in favor of Dr. Lewis, and he became the Bishop-elect of the Diocese of Ontario.

The same year was signalized by the first meeting of the Provincial Synod of Canada, 'which important event' took place at Montreal on September 10th. Dr. Lewis, being not yet consecrated, could not take his seat as a member of the Upper House. Hence for that session he acted as secretary of the House of Bishops. Owing to the delay in the issuing of the Royal Letters Patent his consecration was put off to the following year; but at length, all formalities being completed, exactly a quarter of a century ago at this time of writing, on March 25th, 1862, by the hands of Dr. Fulford, Bishop of Montreal and Metropolitan of Canada, assisted by the Bishops of Toronto, Quebec, Huron, and Michigan, Dr. Lewis was raised to the Episcopate, being the first Anglican Bishop ever consecrated in Canada. The Synod of the Diocese was summoned at the earliest possible moment, and met on April 9th. The Bishop's address was mainly occupied with the necessity for immediate action as regarded the missionary work of the diocese, and strongly advocated the incorporation of the Synod itself as preferable to the formation of an irresponsible Church Society. "The vast missionary work before us," said the bishop, "cannot be done unless the whole Church works as a unit. It is too solemn in its greatness to be thrown by us on the precarious charity of isolated parishes, or allowed to be dependent on the popularity or unpopularity of a society. The Church expects every parish to do its duty. We need, then, an organization which must command the moral support of every *bona fide* church member."

The noble ideal of duty thus presented to the inauguration of the Synod by its youthful president could hardly fail to arouse enthusiasm. Measures were immediately taken for the incorporation of the Synod, a thoroughly representative Board of Missions was formed, and a scheme of deputations arranged for the purpose of making known throughout the diocese the pressing needs of the Church, and as far as possible securing the active sympathy of every loyal church member in aid of her missionary work.

The arrears of work to be overtaken were indeed enormous. The total population of the diocese, as shewn by the census of 1861, was 373,635, of whom over one-fifth, viz., 81,388, returned themselves as members of the Church of England. The machinery which the new bishop found provided to his hand for carrying on the work of the diocese was comprised within forty-six parishes and missions. Of these six were within the Cathedral City, or in its immediate vicinity, viz., the parishes of St. George's, St. James', St. Paul's, Barriefield, Portsmouth, and Wolfe Island. Eleven formed a