

# THE CANADIAN CHURCH MAGAZINE

• • ANE MISSION NEWS • •

Published by the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada.

VOL. VI.

TORONTO, APRIL, 1892.

No. 70.

## HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

No. 69.—FIFTY YEARS A BISHOP.

**W**HE senior bishop of the Anglican communion throughout the world is to-day a missionary bishop, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Austin, Bishop of Guiana, South America, and Primate of the West Indies. He was consecrated in 1842, the next in point of time being the Most Rev. John Medley, Metropolitan of Canada, who was consecrated in 1845, and the next the senior Bishop of the United States, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Williams, Bishop of Connecticut, consecrated in 1851. Of the bishops consecrated in the eighteen hundred and forties only two remain, Bishop Austin and Bishop Medley, the former of whom has now reached his jubilee, an occurrence exceedingly rare throughout the whole history of the Christian Church.

It is said by those who have studied this question carefully, that Bishop Austin is only the sixth bishop who has held office so long from the days of the Apostle St. John downwards. If this be true, only one Episcopal Jubilee has been celebrated in every ten generations.\*

William Percy Austin was born at Stone, in Staffordshire, in an inn, where his father and mother were staying when on a journey from Scotland to the west of England. On his father's side he was of one of the oldest and most respected families of the West Indies; and on his mother's,

of gentle Irish blood. Born a traveller, such he has been almost ever since. His sympathies naturally being with the colonies, he looked out upon them early in life as the true and proper field for his work. The missionary spirit was strong within him, at a time when the Anglican Church was beginning that career of zeal for the evangelization of distant lands which has been a marked characteristic of the present age.

South America, especially the northern part of it, seemed to promise a fruitful field for missionary work. British Guiana, through the midst of which flows the River Essequibo, was once the Eldorado of Raleigh and early seekers for gold and fabulous wealth. It has a territory larger than Great Britain and Ireland. Here there is an exuberance of vegetation only to be met with in the tropics. Trees of every variety, flowers and plants of every colour, the graceful foliage of the palm, and the tangled net-work of lianas, all alive with birds of gay plumage and lively song, together with creatures of every description, from the reptiles crawling upon the ground to the numerous kinds



WILLIAM P. AUSTIN, D.D.,  
Bishop of Guiana, and Primate of the West Indies.

of monkeys swinging in the thick, overhanging branches, mark this distant possession of the British Crown.

Roaming through it are numerous tribes of natives, such as the degraded Warows, who delight in places that are low and swampy, the gentle and superior Arawaaks, dwelling further inland than the Warows, the fierce, man-eating Caribs, who dominated over the whole of the West Indian Islands before they were known to Europeans, and from whom the Caribbean Sea

\*See "The Bishop of Guiana's Jubilee," by the Ven. Thomas Farrar, D.D., in *Mission Field* (S.P.G.) for December, 1891.