

Death of the Bishop of Toronto.

It is with profound regret that we announce the death of his Lordship, the Bishop of Toronto. The venerable Prelate breathed his last at about three o'clock on Friday morning, the 1st instant—All Saint's Day—after a short illness, at the advanced age of ninety-two, being at the time of his death, the oldest living Bishop of the Church of England, and after a ministry extending over the extraordinary period of sixty-four years, during which he has been identified with the political, educational and religious history of the country. He was unquestionably the most remarkable man in the Dominion, and we are sure our readers, of whatever religious denomination, will feel that, although not a Freemason, he is entitled to a memorial page in the CRAFTSMAN.

Dr. Strachan was born in Aberdeen on the 12th April, 1778, and received his education at the Grammar School of that city. At the age of fifteen he matriculated at King's College, and afterwards received there the degree of A. M. He then removed to St. Andrew's where he was the fellow student of the celebrated Dr. Chalmers. At the age of nineteen, having a mother and two sisters dependent upon him, he applied for and obtained, by public competition, the Parochial School of Kettle. Here he made his first essay in the great field of educational labour, and commenced his career with a deeply rooted love for the cause, and with something of a fore-knowledge of that success which has since crowned his efforts.

His removal to Canada was in the cause of education. Governor Simcoe had determined upon establishing Grammar Schools in every District of the Province, with a University at their head at the seat of government. In order to carry out this project, the Governor gave authority to the Hon. Richard Cartwright and the Hon. Robert Hamilton to procure a gentleman from Scotland to take charge of the University. The offer was first made to Dr. Chalmers, then a student at St. Andrew's, who declined the appointment, but recommended Mr. Strachan, who accepted, and sailed from Greenock towards the end of August, 1799, reaching Canada only on the last day of the year, suffering much during the dreary four months' voyage. Unfortunately, Governor Simcoe had, some time before, left for England, and his successor not being disposed to carry out the arrangement, a terrible disappointment awaited the young scholar. "My reasonable expectations," says he, "were cruelly blighted—a lonely stranger in a foreign land, without any resources, or a single friend." Mr. Cartwright, under the circumstances, recommended him to open a private Grammar School at Kingston, placing his four boys under his tuition; and Mr. Strachan thus commenced in Canada the career which has been so remarkably successful since. Here he formed the acquaintance of the Rev. Dr. Stuart, the Rector of the Parish and the Bishop's Commissary for Upper Canada, under whom he continued his theological studies; and on the 2nd of May, 1803, he was ordained Deacon by the Right Rev. Dr. Mountain, the first Protestant Bishop of Quebec; and on the 3rd of June, 1804, he was admitted by the same Prelate into the holy order of Priests, and was appointed to the Mission of Cornwall. Immediately upon his removal, he commenced the Grammar School at that place, which has so deservedly celebrated a record in the educational history of the country. Among his pupils were some who have since occupied the most honourable and distinguished positions in the Province, among them the late Chief Justice of Upper Canada, Sir John Beverley Robinson, and the late Sir T. B. Macaulay, Chief Justice of the common Pleas.

Mr. Strachan was not forgotten by his old Colleges. In 1807, the University of St. Andrew's conferred on him the degree of LL. D., and in the same year he received the degree of D. D. from the University of Aberdeen. In 1812, he was appointed Rector of York, and removed thither; and, six years afterwards, he received, by Royal Warrant, the appointment of Executive Councillor, and took his seat in the Legislative Council of the Province of Upper Canada. He was an active member of the Executive, his great intellect, and clear and vigorous faculties, giving him a very large influence. In 1825 he was promoted to the Archdeaconry of York, and in 1839 was created Bishop of the Diocese of Toronto, being the first Protestant Bishop in Upper Canada. Meanwhile, 1836, he had resigned his seat in the Executive Council, and in 1840 withdrew altogether from active political life by resigning his place as a member of the Legislative Council. Since that time he has devoted himself unremittingly to the interests of the Church. He established the Church Society about the time of the Union, its object being the propagation of the gospel in the remote settlements of the country, and to the day of his death he took the liveliest interest in the Missionary work of the Church.

To few is it given to pass a life of active toil and earnest labour, such as the late Dr. Strachan passed and retain to the last his faculties in full vigour, and the personal recollections of nearly a century. In his life we have an example of what an indomitable spirit of perseverance and a vigorous intellect can accomplish. The Church of England in Canada to-day mourns the loss of her earliest and truest friend. Her prayers will be, that the bright example which he has left, and the earnest words of admonition and advice which he so often addressed to her, may be the incentives to extended usefulness on her part. Thus, though separated from her, the influence of the good old prelate will be continually felt by her, prompting her to greater efforts for the spread of that Christianity of which in his well-spent life he was so bright an exemplar.