

# Our Mission News.

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"And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."—ST. MATTHEW xxiv, 14.

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## HISTORICAL SKETCHES, No. 4.

### THE FIRST BISHOP OF TORONTO.

**T**HE rapid growth of the English episcopate during the last hundred years is perhaps one of the most prominent events of history. In the August number of our periodical we presented a portrait and biographical sketch of the first bishop of Nova Scotia, who was consecrated in August, 1787, and was also the first Colonial bishop. In Canada also, which had come into the possession of the British crown, the need of episcopal supervision was felt, and Dr. Jacob Mountain was appointed first bishop under the title of the Bishop of Quebec, in 1793. For forty-six years this state of things continued, two bishops only being in active work in the whole of British territory in America. It is true it was but a young and sparsely settled country, but its rapid growth kept continually calling for fresh exertions on the part of those who had at heart the interests of the Church of England.

While, in a church point of view, our attention is at first confined to the eastern portions of what is now called the Dominion of Canada, the rapid development of the country elsewhere soon calls us westward to the region for a long time known as Upper Canada. Here we no longer meet with the power of the French, who, remaining in the colder and less attractive portion of the new colony, left the more fruitful upper regions for the Anglo Saxon. Towns began rapidly to spring into existence. Of these, three are mentioned specially in connection with the history of the church. These three are Cornwall, Kingston and York, now Toronto. Kingston was first established under French rule in 1672, under the name of Fort Catarauqui, and was afterwards called Frontenac, from the name of the

Governor in Chief. York dates its foundation from 1792, when it was established by Governor Simcoe and received its name from the then Duke of York, second son of the king.

The early history of the church in Upper Canada is connected closely with that of the resolute and distinguished Scotchman, John Strachan, first bishop of Toronto, who was induced to leave his native land, as a young man, of education, to undertake the training of the youths of Canada—a subject which was causing considerable anxiety to many leading families of the colony, such as the Hamiltons, the Stuarts and the Cartwrights. Mr. Strachan arrived here, as he himself used to say, "on the last day of the last month, of the last year of the last century." His career began here with the present century.

Brought up a Presbyterian, he was induced to see the historic claims of the English Church with such force that he joined that communion, and was ordained to the Diaconate in 1803; by the first bishop of Quebec, and in the following year to the priesthood. His first field of labor was Cornwall, where he started a private school which soon gained a just celebrity. Under his untiring exertions, both here and

afterwards in York, many of the young men in this country, who afterwards rose to high places, both in church and state, were educated and fitted for their future posts of usefulness and honor. In after life he always looked upon these as his boys, and we are told that when a number of them, themselves advanced in life, gave a dinner to their aged bishop, once their master, he said to them humorously, on coming to the table, "Boys, take your places."

While Dr. Strachan was laboring in Cornwall, a son of Rev. Dr. Stuart, of Kingston, was carrying on the work of the ministry in York. In 1812



HON. AND RT. REV. JOHN STRACHAN, D.D., LL.D.

The First Bishop of Toronto.