

ODDS AND ENDS.

The First Protestant Church in Canada.

ALTHOUGH the majority of the military and government officials who took up their residence in Canada after the conquest in 1759 were Protestants, little was done for thirty years in promulgating that faith which it might be expected would be introduced when Canada became a province of Protestant England. Services were held in the garrisons by the chaplains, and clergymen were appointed for a few of the more populous centres, but no churches were erected. In some cases the Protestants held their services in the Roman Catholic churches, which were kindly lent for the purpose, and an old record tells of a gift of some wine and candles by a Presbyterian congregation in Montreal to the Recollet Fathers as an acknowledgment of their kindness in giving the use of their church for Protestant services.

The first Protestant church was built about the year 1786 at Berthier-en-Haut, by Hon. James Cuthbert, seigneur of Berthier and Lanoraie, for the use of his family and a few English-speaking residents of the neighborhood, most of whom were employed by him. The form of worship was that of the Church of Scotland, of which Mr. Cuthbert was an adherent. The clergyman, according to the custom of those days, was tutor to the children of his patron, teaching on week days and preaching on Sunday.

The church was a plain stone building, with tin-covered spire, in the style of architecture then much in vogue. It continued in use till some time in the present century, when it was converted into a mortuary chapel. The old-fashioned pulpit, with its quaint sounding-board and steep stairs, still remains, though the old building is fast going to decay. A tablet on the interior wall reads:—

JAMES CUTHBERT, ESQ.,

Only son of the HON. ROSS CUTHBERT,

Seigneur of Lanoraie and Dautrie,

Died 30th March, 1842.

AGED 42 YEARS.

“Blessed are the merciful,

For they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,

For they shall see God.”

High up on the outside is the following inscription:—

THIS CHAPEL WAS ERECTED BY

THE HON. JAS. CUTHBERT, ESQ.

LORD OF THE MANOR

of Berthier, Lanoraie, Dautrie, New York,
Maskinonge, etc.

And the first built since the conquest of New

FRANCE, 1760.

And in memory of Catharine Cuthbert, his

Spouse, who died March the 7th 1735,

age 40 years, Mother of 3 sons and

7 daughters, 19 years married.

Caroline, one of her daughters, is interred in the West end of this chapel near her mother. She was a good wife, a tender mother, her death was much lamented by her family and acquaintance.

ANNO DOMINI, 1786.

The second oldest Protestant church bell in Canada, cast in the year 1774, hung in the steeple of this church. The oldest is on the English church at St. Andrew's, Que., and was cast in 1759, the year of the conquest.

In Ogden's "Tour Through Upper and Lower Canada," published in 1799, the church at Berthier is referred to, and the fact mentioned that it was the first Protestant place of worship erected in the province.—J. J. BELL.