

# LONDON.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The city of London, capital of the County of Middlesex, is beautifully situated in the midst of a country unsurpassed for fertility in the Dominion, and at the confluence of the two branches of the river Thames. It was laid out by the Crown in 1826 on a reservation made in 1796 by Governor Simcoe, with the intention of founding a town of that name, and was surveyed by Colonel Talbot, its limits being then bounded on the north by North street, on the east by Wellington street, and on the south and west by the river. In 1827 the future city was represented by a solitary log hut, near the corner of King and Ridout streets, in which a certain Peter McGregor, whose nationality may be readily conjectured, dispensed liquors to any chance patrons. The accommodations were of the most primitive description—a hollow stump outside the door answering the double purpose of a bar and cupboard. This was the first clearance in the woods, but Peter had opposition, for in the fall of the same year Abraham Carroll, from Oxford county, built a frame tavern on Dundas street nearly opposite the centre front of Robinson Hall, this building, when nearly finished, was destroyed by fire, but the persevering proprietor erected another on the same site and next year commenced business. The surrounding townships were well settled and provided customers. In 1828 the Court House and Jail were erected, but the growth of the village was very slow until the year 1832, when the emigration from Great Britain sensibly increased its population. At this period a public market was held on the southeast corner of the Court House Square. Messrs. Goodhue, O'Brien, Lawrason and Jennings had opened stores, and Robinson Hall ornamented the pretty little "Forest Village."

In 1830 the Wesleyans built the first church, and the Episcopalians the next in the same year, a frame chapel where St. Paul's Cathedral now stands, the first building having been destroyed by fire. The Roman Catholics next erected a house of worship in 1834 and others rapidly followed.

In 1835 the population having increased to 1,000 returned Mr. Mahlon Burwell as first representative to Parliament. In 1847 it was incorporated as a town, and the next year Mr. Simeon Morrill was chosen first Mayor, and in 1855 London having a population of 10,000 attained the dignity of a city, and Mr. Murray Anderson was its Mayor, and the late Justice John Wilson its representative in Parliament.