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HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

No. 40—DIOCESE OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

“THE year 1889,” says the *Diocesan Magazine*, Newfoundland, “has a somewhat special interest for Churchmen in Newfoundland. It is the 50th year of our existence as a separate and independent diocese, for it was in the year 1839 that the Venerable Aubrey George Spencer was consecrated first Bishop of Newfoundland. In this connection the subjoined notes may be of interest. They are gathered from a brief Historical Sketch, published in 1882, by the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. “This Society had early turned its attention to the claims of this colony upon the Church at home. In 1703 it had adopted as its missionary the Rev. Mr. Jackson, who had previously been with difficulty supported by private subscriptions at St. John’s. In 1705 the Rev. Jacob Rice, in 1729 the Rev. R. Kilpatrick, and in 1766 the Rev. Lawrence Coughlan became the first pioneers of the Church of England in Newfoundland. In 1787 a church was built in Placentia Bay, to which His Majesty King William IV., then in command of the *Pegasus*, a ship of war on the Station, subscribed fifty guineas, and also presented a handsome set of Communion Plate, which is still in use. In the same year the See of Nova Scotia was constituted, and Newfoundland was included in the Letters Patent, but Bishop Charles Inglis was never once able to visit the island. It was not till forty years later that it received its first Episcopal visit, in 1816, from Bishop C. Inglis’ successor, Dr. Stanser, when five clergy and seven schoolmasters, mainly supported by the Society, formed the missionary staff.

Within the original Diocese of Nova Scotia lay also the Bermudas, or Somers Islands, 300 in number, of which only a few are inhabited, with a population of 15,300. On the division of the see, in 1839, they were transferred to Newfoundland; they had, however, been visited by Bishop John Inglis, in 1826. He found a population of above 10,000, one half of whom were slaves. The Bishop found also nine parishes, each provided with a church, and was much struck with the zeal of the clergy and the excellent disposition of the people.

In 1828 Bishop John Inglis, the third Bishop of Nova Scotia, made his first visitation of Newfoundland. In the course of 5,000 miles of travel he consecrated eighteen churches and twenty burial grounds, and confirmed 2,365 candidates.

The two Archdeacons of Newfoundland and Bermuda had been constituted by Bishop Inglis, of Nova Scotia, in 1829, and in 1839 the Ven. Aubrey George Spencer, who had been for many years Archdeacon of Bermuda, was consecrated first Bishop of Newfoundland, which was then severed from the See of Nova Scotia. It was during Bishop Spencer’s episcopate, which continued till his translation to the See of Jamaica, in 1843, that the foundations were laid of that Church organi-



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Fourth Bishop of Newfoundland.

zation upon which his successor, Bishop Feild, built subsequently with so much success. The sub-division of the diocese into Rural Deaneries, the Seminary for Divinity students, out of which grew the Theological College, in St. John’s, and the creation of a fund for the erection of a cathedral in that city, were all legacies left by Bishop Spencer to the Diocese and to his successor in the see.”

The story of the long episcopate of Bishop Feild, extending over 32 years, has been well and faithfully told, in the memoir of his life, by the