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HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

NO. 15—SASKATCHEWAN AND ITS FIRST BISHOP.

By THE REV. CANON RICHARDSON, M. A., Rector Memorial Church, London, Ont.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking at the annual May meeting of the Church Missionary Society in 1874, said: "I have to-day been very forcibly reminded of the wonderful growing extent of the

Church of England. This morning I officiated at the consecration of a Bishop for Victoria, for Central Africa, and one for a new diocese in British North America, the name of which I never attempt to pronounce in public."

The new bishop was John McLean, and his recently formed diocese was called "Saskatchewan" from the large and important river which traverses it throughout, an Indian word signifying "flowing river."

Since then Bishop McLean and his diocese have become easy household names with probably all our readers.

There is perhaps no land of nineteenth century history which has gained such a wide reputation and possesses such an interesting and voluminous record as that commonly known as the Great North West. Until but few years ago it was what Captain Butler fitly described it, the "great lone land," untilled, uninhabited, unknown by the white man. True, since 1670, the Hudson's Bay Company have held a charter of the whole vast region, and had trading posts dotted over it in every direction; but there was little or no attempt made at civilizing the red man, no effort to send the Gospel to

him, no encouragement given to immigration, till long after the beginning of the present century. To-day it is indeed a land of promise, the happy home of ever increasing settlers from Europe and Eastern Canada, and the fondly nourished mission field of the great English Missionary Societies, as well as our own Canadian Church.

Among the many noble spirits who have devoted their life and all to this new country, no man ever felt a deeper and more abiding concern in all that pertained to its true welfare; no man contributed more,

as far as in him lay, full of faith in its yet undeveloped future, to its material and spiritual prosperity; no man watched with keener interest the prospects for Christ and his Church than did the subject of this sketch. After a ministry of some eighteen years spent chiefly in connection with St. Paul's Church, London, Ont., Mr. McLean, in 1866, removed to Winnipeg, at that time a little village with about 300 residents. It was a day of small things with the diocese of Rupert's Land, but to labor with a life-long friend and fellow student of Aberdeen University and chiefly his ardent love for purely missionary work led



RT. REV. JOHN MCLEAN, D. D.,
First Bishop of Saskatchewan

him to cast in his lot with Bishop Machray. He saw that Winnipeg, which has now a population of about 22,000, was destined to become a city of importance, and he determined at once to begin to make provision for the religious welfare of the people who he knew would before long dwell there. He was appointed rector of St. John's Cathedral, warden and divinity professor of St. John's College, one of the fruits of his toil, and Archdeacon of Assiniboia (now Manitoba.) For eight years he was the bishop's right hand man, and labored with