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## HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

### NO. 124. QU'APPELLE AND ITS NEW BISHOP

**T**HE huge civil district of Assiniboia was formed into a diocese through the energy and personal liberality of the Hon. and Rev. Adelbert J. R. Anson, brother of the late, and uncle of the present, Earl of Lichfield. He, while a busy parochial clergyman in England, hearing of the spiritual destitution of the Canadian Northwest, paid a visit to Winnipeg in 1883, and, after conference with Bishop Machray, was commissioned to organize church work in Assiniboia. At that time this immense district promised to be a good field for Church work, and Mr. Anson returned to England resolved to make it the sphere of his future labors. Large sums of money were collected by him in England from societies and from private individuals, and Assiniboia was formed into a missionary diocese, with himself as bishop.

He had succeeded in interesting others in the projected work and set sail from England with a staff of fifteen persons—eight priests, one deacon, and six lay readers. This formed a very promising mission, and active work was at once commenced, with Regina, the capital of the district, as its headquarters. Afterwards, however, Qu'Appelle station was chosen for the "see city," on account of its more central position, and the diocese henceforth was known by that name. Here the centre of what was intended to be a great work was established, a see house built, a farm secured, a theological and agricultural college formed, and a school for boys inaugurated.

But this mission had evidently been plan-

ned from the very beginning upon the supposition that a large influx of population would take place to the new province. Such had been the representations in England, and such, no doubt, had been the hopes of those interested in the scheme of Northwest emigration. It must, therefore, have had a chilling effect upon the Bishop and the clergy when, as years went by, the hopes so strongly entertained were but meagrely realized. Assiniboia did not seem to promise much to the farmer. The long winters,

followed sometimes by a summer frost which destroyed the very grain in the fields, put a serious check upon the rapid advancement of the country. Some of the clergy, discouraged and disappointed, withdrew to other and more promising fields; and Bishop Anson, with all the powerful aid he had from England, began to find it difficult to keep the stations he had opened supplied with men. Yet this did not deter him from causing new ground from time to time to be opened. The farm, however, was not encouraging, nor was the boys' school, the attendance at which was never as large as the Bishop had fondly hoped it would be. For a man who likes to see progress marked on everything he might touch, this must have been discouraging.\*

Still Bishop Anson persevered. In 1892 he was

obliged to state to his synod that the last one of those who had come out with him in 1884 had left the diocese. In eight years the original staff of missionaries had all disappeared. Others, of course, had taken their places, but they themselves had gone. And in that year Bishop Anson himself resigned and returned to England.

\* See "The Bishops of the Church of England in Canada and Newfoundland," by Rev. Canon Mockridge, D.D.



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