

The Stirring Story of the Canadian Church.

(Advent Wednesday Evening Lectures by The Rev. F. V. Baker, B.A.,
Rector of All Saints.)

LECTURE II.

(CONCLUDED.)

THE ENGLISH CHURCH IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC. THE SAINTLY BISHOP MOUNTAIN.

The successor of Bishop Stewart was, of course, his friend and coadjutor, who had already been consecrated Bishop of Montreal. Bishop George Mountain kept this title for many years, until in fact, the diocese was divided in 1850, when he assumed the more ancient title of Bishop of Quebec. He was 48 years of age at the time of his succession, and is known as a man of beautiful and saintly life. In devotion he followed the example of the Psalmist, 'seven times a day do I praise Thee,' and even rose at midnight to pray and sing praises to the Lord. Some of the noblest incidents of his life centre round the work of ministering to the victims of cholera and fever in the times of pestilence. In 1832 and 1834 cholera swept over Canada. Archdeacon Mountain as he then was, was the leader of those who tended the sick and dying. In two days, at the worst of the plague, he buried over 75 people each day.

Again in 1837, the ship-fever broke out in Canada. Those were the years of the Irish famine and over 90,000 emigrants arrived at Quebec in one year. The sickness among the starving people was terrible. A quarantine station was established at Grosse Isle and the Bishop took his turn with his clergy in visiting. Most of the clergy sickened, five altogether died of the fever. Over 5000 interments took place on the island during the summer of 1847. But let us turn to some of the more lasting achievements of the Bishop's rule, though none can be more glorious or heroic. In 1839 he had the happiness to see Ontario formed into a separate diocese by the appointment of Archdeacon Strachan as first Bishop of Toronto. The population in that province had been rapidly growing and was getting far beyond the power of one man to oversee. It contained now 73 clergy and at least 150,000 church people. In 1842 a beginning was made in the establishment of Bishop's College at Lennoxville, which has since grown to such noble proportions as a Church University. In the same year, 1842, came the establishment of a 'Church Society,' the beginning of a diocesan fund for the support of the clergy. This institution became increasingly necessary as outside help was withdrawn from the diocese. It was the forerunner in another sense of our diocesan synods which at the time we speak of had not yet come into being.

A WIDER OUTLOOK.

Bishop Mountain was, however, an eager missionary who thought of needs beyond his own neighborhood. For many years missions had existed in a distant part of North America called Rupert's Land, where the Red River of the North flows towards the Hudson's Bay. In 1844 the Bishop determined to visit this far away settlement, and after five weeks laborious travelling by canoe, by way of Fort William and the Lake of the Woods, found himself at

last at the Indian mission on Lake Winnipeg. The voice of a Bishop was heard for the first time in the wilderness of the great North West and 846 received the blessing of Confirmation. In the year 1849 only five years later Bishop Mountain had the joy of seeing the appointment of the first Bishop of Rupert's Land in the person of the Rev. David Anderson, predecessor of the present Archbishop Machray. The year 1850 saw the founding of the See of Montreal to which was appointed Rev. Francis Fulford. From this time the work of Bishop Mountain was limited to the present boundaries of the diocese. Lennoxville was organized on a solid foundation: the Diocesan Synod met for the first time in 1860, and in spite of some opposition was a great success from the first. In 1861 he was present at the first Provincial Synod of Canada, held at Montreal, under the presidency of Bishop Fulford; and in 1862 he took part in the consecration of Bishop Lewis, the present Archbishop of Ontario, still happily living amongst us, the one living personal link with the saintly Bishop Mountain. The Bishop died on the Feast of the Epiphany 1863, at the age of 74.

COMPLETING THE WORK.

We cannot follow out in detail the more recent history of the Church in the Province of Quebec. Bishop Fulford of Montreal, First Metropolitan of Canada, was a grand and noble character, whose worthy memorial is the beautiful Christ Church Cathedral in that city. He was bishop 28 years, dying in 1868 after his return from the First Lambeth Conference. The diocese of Quebec in the meantime had been securely built up, spiritually and financially by Bishop Williams, who was elected by the Synod in 1863, as successor to Bishop Mountain. One who greatly helped the Bishop in his work, was the devoted Rector for 27 years of St. Matthews' Church, Quebec, Chas. Hamilton the present Bishop of Ottawa. Here let us say that in his quiet, solid, unostentatious way Bishop Hamilton has done perhaps as much as any living man for the strengthening and upbuilding of the Canadian Church. As secretary of the Synod of Quebec, as Prolocutor of the Provincial Synod of Canada, as Bishop of Niagara, as Bishop of Ottawa, no one Canadian clergyman can show a wider experience of Church life, a deeper knowledge of her work, or gives promise of greater influence in her future progress.

May God spare him long to help forward the important work that lies still before us!

These are some of the pioneers and founders of the Church in the province of Quebec. Different in many ways in their gifts and powers they seem alike in this, that they have not striven to be merely Lords over God's heritage, but in the highest sense have been ensamples to the flock.

The Rev. R. C. Johnstone, Editor of the WESTERN CHURCHMAN, is prepared to take lecture engagements. Special terms when proceeds are for Church purposes. No spare dates in April.

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