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## HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

No. 86.—TRINITY CHURCH, ST. JOHN, N.B.

**T**HE Province of New Brunswick," says G. Mercer Adam, in his "Canada from Sea to Sea," "has Fredericton for its capital and St. John for its chief city.

Crossing the Bay of Fundy from Digby, Nova Scotia, a distance of forty-three miles, the traveller comes to St. John, the Liverpool of Canada, in its present form a modern city, its chief portion having been rebuilt since the summer of 1877, when fire swept over it, burning some two hundred acres of its business area and causing a loss of some twenty-five millions of dollars. The site of the city was known to De Monts and Champlain, who visited it in 1604, though it was not occupied till thirty years later. Its harbor figures largely in naval history, being the scene of many sharp engagements between English and French warships, and between the latter and the armed vessels of the spirited colonists of New England.

"The forts ashore have also a tale to tell of military daring in the vicissitudes of the times, in the long conflict of the two nations for supremacy in the New World.

"After the Revolutionary war, to St. John came a British fleet bringing five thousand United Empire Loyalists, who had voluntarily exiled themselves to live under the old British flag, since when the city has steadily advanced to its present prosperous position."

One of the first cares of the Loyalists, on arriving at the city of St. John, was to erect an edifice for divine worship. Till such time as this could be accomplished, a congregation of faithful people assembled in a dwelling-house purchased for the purpose, and worshipped God according to the rites and ceremonies of their forefathers. The first clergyman who officiated in this building was the Rev. John Beardsley, of Stratford, Connecticut. He was succeeded in 1785 by the Rev. Samuel Cooke, who, on his removal in 1786, was succeeded by the Rev.

Geo. Bissett, from Newport, Rhode Island, who was the first rector of the parish of St. John. He immediately set about building a church, with the result that a substantial and suitable building for the times was erected on a commanding site, comprising four lots, and measuring 400 feet in length and 100 feet in width. The corner stone was laid by the Right Rev. Charles Inglis, the first colonial bishop, on the 20th of August, 1788. The first service, however, does not seem to have been held in it till Christmas, 1791. Men appear to have built more slowly in those days than they do now; or, it may be, they avoided the

plan too much now in vogue of building speedily and then setting to work to pull down slowly an enormous debt. On the north wall of this church, which for many years was known as "Old Trinity," hung the Royal Arms which once held position in the Council Chamber of the old Town House in Boston.

The first rector, the Rev. George Bissett, does



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