

JOHN STRACHAN, D.D., BISHOP OF TORONTO.

IT is not given to many men to review their finished work. To most, death comes as the destroyer of expanding energies, the interrupter of undeveloped plans. For the most part, the plow is left in the unturned furrow; and the crop that, in the fallen plowman's vision, was nodding to the scythe, is unharvested for ever. But there has lately passed from among men, one who was in this as in some other respects an exception to the ordinary lot. It was his lot—or it may be privilege—to play out his own part of the drama of life, and then, retiring among the spectators, behold other men assume their stations and carry on their parts. It was his lot—it may be privilege—to witness the development of many of the elements of our national life; the germs of many of which he had himself introduced, and which great part of his life was expended in combatting or encouraging. It was his fortune—it may be privilege—to witness the success, and in some cases the overthrow, of his projects; and they were neither few nor unimportant—so that when the end came he was ready, as a warrior whose warfare is ended, and whose harness is hanging battered and dented and now unused. The history of John Strachan, first Bishop of Toronto, would be almost a history of the old Province of Upper Canada. He was the contemporary of our fathers' fathers; and he was a power in the days of their children. There is no one who has filled so large a space in Upper Canadian History; and it seems not inappropriate that his death should have occurred in that year when the country was entering upon a new form of political life. It has severed one of the last links which connect our present with our remote past.

John Strachan was born in 1778. His birth place was the city of Aberdeen, North Britain. His father was a man of humble station; but that excellent desire for knowledge which is characteristic of the Scottish people, bore its fruit in obtaining for young Strachan a college education. In 1796 he proceeded to a master's degree in the University of King's College, Aberdeen; and shortly after removed to St. Andrew's. It would seem that, before this, his father had died. At any rate, in conversation a few years ago, the Bishop related to me as a matter for encouragement to others, that during the summers and vacations he was obliged to earn his own and his mother's support; and during the college sessions had to give up a great portion of the time that ought properly to have been spent in college work, to the less agreeable but more profitable drudgery of private tuition, to enable him to pay his college fees. While at St. Andrew's he formed an acquaintance, which deepened into life-long friendship, with Thomas Chalmers and others, afterwards eminent men.