

The Church in Canada.

Under this heading will be collected and preserved all obtainable data bearing upon the history and growth of the Church in Canada. Contributions are invited from those having in their possession any material that might properly come for publication in this department.

BISHOP MACDONELL.

VII.

In 1836, Bishop Macdonell foresaw the coming storm and considered it the duty of every citizen to exert the utmost efforts to prevent the interests of justice and order from falling into unworthy hands. He issued an address to the freeholders of Stormont and Glengarry, enjoining them, in plain and forcible language, to elect representatives of sound and loyal principles, who would have the real good of their country at heart, and not allow themselves to be misled by the political schemers who were endeavouring to drive the Province into rebellion against the legally constituted authority. But it must not, however, be supposed that because the Bishop was such a strenuous advocate of law and order he acted with slavish party attachment, or that he was unaware of the many abuses which then weighed upon the country, impoverished its resources and checked its progress. On the contrary he acknowledged these evils, but at the same time, he maintained with reason that they were foreign to, and not inherent in, the constitution; that they could be safely and permanently removed by constitutional means alone; and that rebellion, so far from redressing these grievances, would only confirm, and perhaps aggravate them a hundredfold. It may here be mentioned, incidentally, that the Earl of Durham, author of the celebrated "Report" on Canadian affairs, in his progress through the country in 1838, spent a short time in Kingston. Walking down the wharf, on his way to the steam-boat, he noticed the Bishop, who was standing with his back to a warehouse and his hands behind him. Lord Durham was considered a proud man, of frigid and repellent manners, and with a peculiar knack of keeping people at a distance. To everybody's surprise, he took off his hat and shook hands with the Bishop, who very naturally felt highly flattered at such a mark of respect coming from such a source, and given, one may say, in the face of the whole community.

As a personal reminiscence, not connected with the history of the Bishop, the writer may be permitted to refer to some events which occurred about this period. It has been stated that the principal means of communication then known was the ordinary mail service by land and water. Telegraphs were introduced about the year 1847, and the writer has always understood that the first message sent from Montreal to Kingston, was addressed to him by the then well-known firm of Stephens, Young & Co. The message was partly on business and partly as a test to try the working of the system. It was in the writer's possession for many years, and would now be quite a curiosity; but the old warehouse, with all its contents, was destroyed by fire, "and not a rat left." It had a narrow escape from a similar fate in 1839, when John Conter's warehouse was set on fire by sparks from the American steamer *Telegraph*. A south-west gale was blowing at the time, and a powder explosion took place, which scattered the fire far and wide. The steamer *Cataraqui*, belonging to Macpherson & Crane, took fire at her dock and drifted along the front, spreading terror and devastation in her course. She finally brought up at the far end of Cataraqui Bridge, and burned there to the water's edge. The steamer *Albion*, then lying in front of the writer's wharf, hurriedly got up steam, a few movables were put on board, and she put out for Point Frederick. She could scarcely make headway against the fierce gale, but found a safe quarter at the marine railway, on the far side of the burning section. The sight of the conflagration obtained during this memorable trip, will never be forgotten. The whole water front seemed irrevocably doomed, when, suddenly, in less time than has been re-

quired to describe the event, the wind changed from the south-west to "off shore," and the town was saved.

Bishop Macdonell had experienced great difficulty in obtaining properly educated men for the priesthood, which want seriously retarded the moral and religious improvement of the Catholic population. He was fully aware that the evil could only be remedied by the building and endowment of a seminary for the education of his clergy. He obtained an act of incorporation from the Legislature, and obtained the appropriation of a piece of land for the erection of a suitable building. At a meeting convened by the Bishop at his residence on the 10th of October, 1837, it was resolved that the Bishop, accompanied by his nephew, the very Rev. Angus Macdonell, and Dr. Thomas Rolph, of Ancaster, should proceed to England for the purpose of collecting funds for the erection of a Catholic college in Upper Canada. The corner-stone of the college was laid on the 11th of June, 1838, by the Bishop, assisted by Mgr. Gaulan, his co-adjutor, very Rev. A. Macdonell, V.G., and other clergymen. At the request of the Bishop, Dr. Rolph delivered an address, in which, after referring to the munificence and piety of past generations, he went on to show the absolute necessity which existed for an establishment such as was contemplated, which might be the nursery of well-educated, zealous and godly clergymen, it being a matter of no trifling moment or minor consequence to divinity, that the ministers of religion should be reared both from them and among them; it being also the best security for that fondness and attachment to the country and its institutions which it is eminently desirable should be ardently felt and cherished by a parochial clergy.

Such was the commencement of Regiopolis College. Sad to say, the prosperous career so fondly anticipated by the learned orator has not yet dawned upon it. Its present condition we all know; its future, time alone can show.

W. J. MACDONELL.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOLS.

We hear and read a great deal at present about the necessity of religious instruction in the schools. To a reader of the daily papers it would almost seem that the only advocates of religious education are the reverend members of the Ministerial Association of Toronto. It must have been a great surprise to them and to many others to have learned from the highest educational authority in the Province that religious instruction was given *not* in the *Public* schools generally, but *principally* in the *Roman Catholic Separate* schools. It is easy to detect the insincerity of these gentlemen in their appeal for religious instruction. Religious education is with them nothing else than Protestant education, which in its very essence is but a protest against the rights of Catholics to educate their children in the doctrine and practices of the Church. It is evident from the expression of several of the members of this association that they seek not so much religious instruction in the schools as the complete destruction of the Separate schools. Secularization of the schools is preferable in their estimation to the existence of Roman Catholic schools of any kind. Their only sincere cry is, "Away with the Separate schools." To do away with them they would be willing to banish from the schools in which their own children are taught, all religion, the whole Bible, and all knowledge of God. These gentlemen are really zealous, but their zeal is directed to the destruction of the *only* schools in which religious education is given, and not to the establishment of it in the other schools of the Province.

These leaders of the opposition to Separate Schools seek by every means to deprive Catholic youth of instruction in their holy religion, and to bring them under Protestant influence. The Public Schools and the religious instruction given in them, they claim, is non-sectarian, that in them Catholics and Protestants are equal, that there is, therefore, nothing to prevent Catholic children from attending, in fact that they should be obliged to attend. They do not understand that Catholic doctrine in its fullness alone is non-sectarian. To deny any dogma of Catholic faith is to become sectarian. It was thus the