

The Church Guardian.

Upholds the Doctrines and Rubrics of the Prayer Book.

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."—Eph. vi. 24.

"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,"—Jude 3.

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FORTY YEARS OF CHURCH WORK.

A TALK WITH THE LORD BISHOP OF FREDERICTON—METROPOLITAN.

(From the *St. John, N. B., Daily Telegraph*.)

A few weeks ago His Lordship the Bishop of Fredericton and Metropolitan of Canada attained the 80th anniversary of his birthday and was the recipient of numerous and heart-felt congratulations from all parts of the Dominion and from across the Atlantic as well. In a few weeks more his Lordship, were he so disposed, might celebrate the conclusion of 40 years of arduous and distinguished service in this Province. It may well be questioned whether any Colonial Bishop has ever accomplished as much in consolidating the churches and extending the mission work in his Diocese within a similar period. And this too in the face of difficulties peculiar to a rough, undeveloped country, similar in many respects to the remotest backwoods of the present day, and which few of this generation in the full enjoyment of modern facilities for travel and communication in every section of the Province can at all appreciate. Retiring in disposition, quiet and unassuming in the discharge of his manifold duties, His Lordship has been looked upon as hermetically secluded from reporters and interviewers. A *Telegraph* reporter who waited on the venerable prelate with the view of conversing with him on the subject of his forty years' work in this Province, found him perfectly willing to discuss this interesting topic. To what the Metropolitan had to say, a brief allusion to the life of his Lordship may be premised. Bishop John Medley is the son of the late George Medley, Esq., gentleman, of Grosvenor Place, London where the subject of this sketch was born, December 19th, 1804. He received his early training in the schools at Bristol, Bewdley, Hammersmith, Chobham, and took his degree at Wadham College, Oxford, in 1826, after a three years' course. His name figured in the class list of honors at that institution. So thorough were his studies in classics that he is entitled to the distinction of being one of the foremost authorities in that branch of learning in the Dominion, though unfortunately for proper conception of the same, his Lordship's literary ventures have been very limited. In 1828 he was ordained deacon, and priest of the Church of England in 1829. He entered upon his first parochial charge as Incumbent of St. John's Church, Truro, Cornwall, in 1831, and became Vicar of St. Thomas', Exeter, in 1838. Prior to 1845 the Episcopal Churches in New Brunswick were within the Diocese of Nova Scotia. In that year the Churchmen of this Province made a representation to the Archbishop of Canterbury of the need of a Bishop and Rev. Mr. Medley was nominated to Lord Stanley, then Colonial Secretary, and came out to New Brunswick. The people established a fund of £3,000, the interest of which was to be applied to his maintenance. In addition thereto the Bishop received his official salary, half of which he surrendered to the present Coadjutor-Bishop upon the latter's appointment. In 1879 he was elected to the honorary position of Metropolitan of Canada by the House of Bishops, on the resignation, because of ill-health, of the previous incumbent, Most Reverend Bishop Oxenden.

"What were the facilities for travel in New Brunswick in 1845?" asked the reporter.

"When I arrived here," replied his Lordship,

"not a mile of the present system of 1,300 miles of railway was in operation. Travelling by land was done by sleighs and wagons over highway roads connecting the chief centres of population. For instance, I used to drive in my wagon 226 miles in one direction from Fredericton, 150 in another, 140 in another, and 120 in another, to reach the more remote stations in the Diocese. One of these was Flatlands, 26 miles beyond Dalhousie. The roads, however, were, for the most part, much better than they are now. In fact, some of them have since been entirely neglected and can only be traversed in the summer season. That which once extended from Chatham to Bathurst is not now in use. To support these roads large sums were annually granted by the House of Assembly, sometimes amounting to £14,000 per annum. Statute labor was also performed on them. The roadmasters were good, responsible men, having charge of sections of road from 40 to 100 miles in length. Between St. John and Fredericton we had steamboat service in the open season and stage service in the winter. Two steamers ran regularly on the route, the 'Fredericton' and the 'New Brunswick.' The first time I came up the river I was very profoundly impressed with its beauty. On that occasion we left Indiantown at 9 a.m. and arrived at Fredericton at 8 p.m. the same day. Remarkable improvements have taken place in the appearance of the farming lands along the river since that date. Stage lines ran between Fredericton and Woodstock, Moncton and Shediac to Chatham, and Chatham to Bathurst and along the eastern coast line. There was also a line from St. John through Nova Scotia. The postal service, of course, was not in anything like its present efficient state."

"What was the condition of the Church when you arrived?"

"There were about thirty C. of E. Missions in the Province, of which twelve were vacant, and the clergy numbered twenty-eight, under the superintendence of the Bishop of Nova Scotia, Dr. John Inglis, who died, I think, in the year 1851. There were not over fifty Episcopal Churches in the Province. Now there are 147 churches or chapels, the clergy number seventy-two, and all the Missions are supplied. We then received a grant of £3,000 from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The amount has since been reduced to £1,600, and the balance has been made up by the liberality of the people. Should that amount be taken away I have no doubt they will show their loyalty to an even greater degree than in the past. It is surprising what transformations have been effected in our Church edifices during the past forty years. Moncton was a village of a few hundred people then, and did not have an Episcopal Church for several years after 1845. The building was burned down after a short time and replaced by a much more handsome and suitable one. The same, of course, applies to churches of other prominent bodies, the Roman Catholic, Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians. The F. C. Baptists were not regularly organized at that time. Unitarians were unknown.

"Sussex has undergone a remarkable change. When I first visited the site of the present flourishing little town there were only two houses to be seen. Now it has Churches of all the Protestant denominations and a Roman Catholic Church just outside its boundaries. Woodstock has grown very much indeed. There were two Episcopal Churches there

then, one two miles below the Creek, the other at the Creek. Both have been rebuilt on a larger scale. In fact there is scarcely a single church in the Province which has not been rebuilt entirely or very much improved since 1845. The present St. Ann's Church, Fredericton, was built in that year, and the Cathedral corner stone was laid. With the exception of St. John's (stone) Church, these were the first churches of brick or stone ever erected in the Province. The R. C. Cathedral at St. John was built shortly afterwards. Bishop Dollard resided at Fredericton then and afterwards went to St. John. It was mainly, however, through the exertions of Bishop Connolly, afterwards Archbishop of Halifax, that that Cathedral was erected. Here in Fredericton I need hardly refer to the fact that the Baptists have recently built a very handsome stone edifice, and that the Presbyterians have another well advanced towards completion. As for the Churches of St. John, of course, they have undergone a complete transformation since the great fire, and it is doubtful if any city in the world, the size of St. John, can equal it in the size and number of its fine Church edifices."

"A great change in public sentiment regarding church architecture has taken place of recent years?"

"A remarkable change indeed, applying not only to architecture but to the entire range of what constitutes a cheerful and comfortable interior as well. Then only wooden buildings of a rough and ordinary character were ever thought of. It never occurred to the people to erect handsome and enduring structures of brick and stone. Of course the country was not so wealthy. St. John has undergone a great revolution, namely in the rapid acquirement of wealth by members of different religious bodies engaged in commercial and professional pursuits."

The wealth of the Province was then almost entirely controlled by Churchmen; now it is pretty well distributed among all the religious bodies. The Church of England in this Province has progressed a great deal in various ways in consequence of the wave of liberal thought which has passed over it throughout the world. The best proof of that is that buildings are now put up which would not have been tolerated for purposes of divine service half a century ago. Very few churches indeed possessed an organ or melodeon in 1845. Now there is scarcely one without one. The same remark applies to private dwellings. Especially notable is the change which has taken place among the country people. Their simplicity of dress has passed away, and now they keep pace with city fashions as far as their means will allow. They used to wear homespun clothes on Sunday and a lady's bonnet of that period is a curiosity nowadays."

"Which generation had the advantage in point of practical piety?"

"That is a difficult question to answer. The Church of to-day is more enterprising and self-reliant. In old times the facilities for daily communication were limited, but people did not think anything of walking five or six miles on the Sabbath to Church. Now, when the railway brings the necessaries for this life to their doors, they want religion brought there as well. There is no doubt that the press, in exposing wickedness and vice, has had a powerful moral effect on the people, but I think the way in which some papers print sermons in one column and monstrous jokes in the