

**HISTORY OF PRESBYTERIANISM ON
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.
PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGES, SERMONS
BY PIONEER MINISTERS ON P.E.
ISLAND NEARLY A CENTURY AGO**

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History of Presbyterianism on Prince Edward Island. Presbyterian colleges, sermons by pioneer ministers on P.E. Island nearly a century ago by John MacLeod

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JOHN MACLEOD

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REV. JOHN MacLEOD

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Presbyterian Colleges
Sermons by Pioneer Ministers on P. E. Island
Nearly a Century Ago

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INTRODUCTION.

A task of such importance as that of describing the firm rooting and sturdy growth of Presbyterianism in Prince Edward Island falls very appropriately to one for so many years prominent in the religious councils of the community.

Mr. MacLeod's first charge was at Richmond Bay, but his labors for the twelve years succeeding 1859 were in Nova Scotia. He was called from his pastorate at New Glasgow to shepherd the large flock of Zion Church at the insular capital, Charlottetown, where he was inducted on July 19, 1871. For eighteen years his labors in this field, though modestly touched upon by his pen, deserve a generous part in this history. For the same period he was continuously the clerk of Presbytery.

In June, 1889, Mr. MacLeod resigned his pastorate at Zion and crossed the great American continent to Vancouver to take charge of a small band of Presbyterians organized into a preaching station by Puget Sound Presbytery. Soon this station was received into the Canadian Presbytery, organized into a congregation with Mr. MacLeod as pastor and erected a Zion Presbyterian church. Both this and the First Church being in debt, the two pastors, Messrs. Meekle and MacLeod, resigned so that the two churches might unite and pay their obligations. Since then Mr. MacLeod has been laboring as an ordained evangelist within Presbyterial bounds with a vigor and energy scarcely diminished with age.

The preparation of this book has been to him a labor inspired by the true historian's motives and guided by the historian's zeal for accuracy.

O. R. W.

HISTORY OF PRESBYTERIANISM

ON

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Prince Edward Island, originally called the Island of St. John, lies south of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and is separated from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick by the Straits of Northumberland, a channel varying in width from seven to forty miles. The narrowest point is between Cape Traverse, P. E. I., and Cape Tormentine, N. B. Between these two points the ice-boats with mails and passengers cross when winter navigation by other means is impossible. This also is the route of the contemplated tunnel or subway between the island and the mainland. The length of Prince Edward Island is one hundred and fifty miles and its breadth varies from three to fifty miles. It contains an area of two thousand one hundred and forty square miles, or about 1,400,000 acres. The surface of the country is, generally speaking, very level. The central part of the island province is somewhat undulating, forming a succession of ridges which present a most agreeable variety of hill and dale. The scenery,

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though not grand, can scarcely be excelled for picturesqueness and beauty.

The soil is light and sandy, of a reddish color, and is very fertile. It is remarkably free from stone and is everywhere easily cultivated. It is peculiarly adapted for raising grain, roots of all kinds, fruits, etc., but for grazing purposes it is not equal to some of the other provinces.

The French were the first settlers of the island, and not a few of their descendants are at the present day to be found in the settlements of Miscouche, Rustico and Tignish.

In the year 1758, at the capitulation of Louisburg, the colony fell into the hands of the British, who were confirmed in their possession by the treaty of 1763. In the year 1770 Prince Edward Island obtained a government of its own, having until that date constituted a part of the government of Nova Scotia. The whole province is divided into sixty-seven lots or townships of about 20,000 acres each. The British government originally granted nearly all the soil of the island to non-residents, mostly officers of the army and navy who had served in the French war and, on account of service rendered, considered themselves entitled to the grant. These proprietors for many years refused to sell their land, preferring rather to lease it and collect taxes from the tenants. Recently, however, the local government purchased the land from the proprietors, sold it to the farmers on easy terms and furnished them with good freehold titles to their farms. The op-

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pressive landlord system which so long prevailed in this province not only interfered with the prosperity of the country, but kept away the best class of immigrants, who under different conditions would have made their home in the Garden of the Gulf and done much to advance the prosperity of the country.

The early settlers of the province endured great hardships and privations. The length and severity of the winters, the scarcity of provisions, and their complete isolation from the mainland, reduced them to such straits that, it is said, upon one occasion at least, in order to preserve life, human flesh was eaten. In the year 1771 a number of immigrants arrived from Argyleshire and settled at Richmond Bay, and during the following year another lot arrived from the same place and settled in Malpeque, now called Princetown. About the same time a considerable number of Highland Catholics arrived and took up their abode in Tracadio. In 1774 and 1775 an additional number arrived from Perthshire and settled in Cove Head and St. Peters, while others who arrived about the same time from Morayshire settled in Cavendish, and a considerable number from Dumfriesshire settled in Georgetown and surrounding places. After the restoration of peace in 1784, Be-deque received a considerable number of American Loyalists. At this date, however, the number of settlers was few and these were widely scattered.

The late Rev. James McGregor, D. D., of Pictou, Nova Scotia, was the first Presbyterian missionary to visit Prince Edward Island. His first visit was