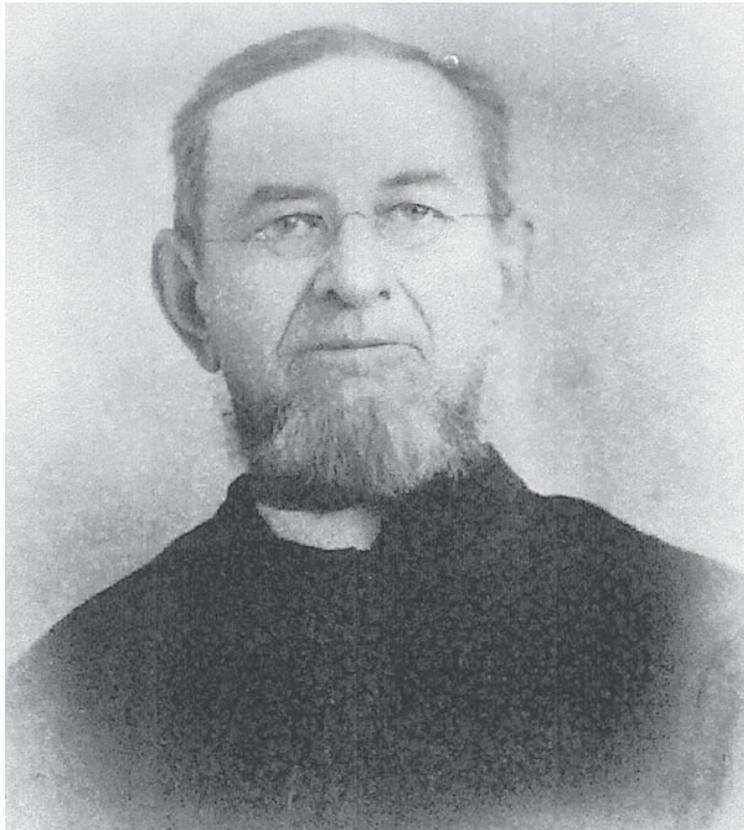


## Bleasdel, Rev. William M.A.,D.C.L.



William Bleasdel, Rector of St. George's church, Trenton, for more than thirty years, and one of the most learned men in this part of Ontario, is a son of James Bleasdel, a cotton manufacturer and merchant at Preston, Lancashire, England, where he was born on the 12th of March, 1817. His mother, whose maiden name was Mary Hodson, was also a native of Lancashire. James Bleasdel was from one of the old Lancashire families, and was a lineal descendant from Sir Thomas Tyldesley, Knight, who was killed at the battle of Wigan Lane, fought August 25, 1651, with the forces of Cromwell, the celebrated James, Earl of Derby, being in command of the Royalist forces, and Sir Thomas, as Major-General, his second in command. He fought under King Charles I, at the battle of Edge Hill; was at the storming of Burton on the Trent, and was Governor of Lichfield, Staffordshire, for the King, during its siege. A monument was erected to his memory in 1679, on the spot where he fell, and where it has stood for two centuries.

The father died when William was thirteen years old, and he had quite a struggle to secure his Collegiate education. He early had a great fondness for study, and managed to push his way along, preparing for college in his native town, graduating B.A., from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1845, and M.A., in 1848. While in the grammar school of his native town, he was Librarian of Dr. Shepherd's Library, a noble foundation of the last century; and before entering college, at the age of nineteen he became a teacher, following that profession nine years, eight of his pupils being ordained Clergymen of the Church of England. While preparing for college, he held also the position of master of a grammar school for a time.

Mr. Bleasdel was ordained deacon in 1845, and priest in 1846, by Rt. Rev. Dr. John Bird

Sumner, Bishop of Chester, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury; was licensed, first, Curate of St. Margaret's Hollinwood, Manchester, then of St. Michael's church, Collyhurst, Manchester, and in August, 1848, came to Canada. He was licensed at Toronto by Bishop Strachan, and received the appointment of first Rector of St. George's church, Trenton; began his labors there August 30th of that year, and still continues; being now the oldest persistently resident Pastor of an English church, in the diocese of Ontario.

He was appointed Examining Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Ontario, in 1862, and senior canon of St. George's cathedral, Kingston, in 1874.

Though steadily engaged in pastoral work here for over three long decades, Canon Bleasdel has found time to devote to scientific and literary, as well as theological subjects, and has written a number of essays, addresses, sermons and historical sketches, which have been published. Among these are (1) "The Indian Tribes of Canada," published in the 3rd volume of the Canadian Journal; (2) "The Great Trent Boulder, its Geological and Botanical Association," published in the transaction of the Botanical Society of Canada; (3) "Papal Supremacy," a sermon, Belleville, 1853; (4) "History of Trenton," in Hastings Directory, 1879-80 3rd edition; (5) "Modern Glacial Action in Canada," (two papers) published in the Quarterly Journal of Geological Society, London, 1870-72; (6) " First or Senior Parishes, Diocese of Ontario," (six . articles) in Church

Journal; (7) "Miracles and the Immutability of Natural Law," a Sermon, before the Synod of the Diocese of Ontario, 1875; and (8) "Recent Glacial Action in Canada, and the Drift Uplands in the Province of Ontario," Quarterly Journal of Geological Science, London, 1875. At the time of writing this sketch; he was engaged in preparing a controversial and historical paper on a Diocesan matter of dispute, entitled, "Mission of Frankford, in Township of Sidney and its endowment," and now published.

As a preacher he is plain, forcible and practical, and aims to do good rather than make a display of learning, though his scholarly attainments will crop out in his sermons.

In 1877, Canon Bleasdel had conferred upon him by the University of Trinity College Toronto, the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law an honor well merited.

During his over thirty long years residence in Trenton, Dr. Bleasdel has steadily declined preferment offered to him elsewhere, and of a more lucrative character, and at the same time he has not sought that which was legitimately within his reach, and intrinsically more valuable in a financial point of view. He loved his Canadian parish and his people, and no such external inducement could induce the thought of going elsewhere. In this interim he has succeeded in securing a fair endowment for it, and in fact for two parishes, as time and the growth of Trenton may require it, and the foundation of the second one is being laid in the incipient erection, in West Trenton, of a School church and Parochial Hall, to be named "Canterbury Hall," He has also charge of an adjoining parish, that of Trinity church, Frankford, township of Sidney, an old mission station of his, in which a good stone church has been recently erected. A small endowment has been secured for it at his instigation, with a view to its being an independent parish. It is eight miles from Trenton.

In January, 1838, Miss Agnes Cowell, a native of Preston, Lancashire, England, was united in marriage to Canon Bleasdel, and they have had eleven children, three of them dying in infancy, and one after arriving at manhood. The other seven are living. The son who died, Charles Edward, was an M.D., and surgeon of the Allan line steamship "Nestorian," dying at 27 years of age. He was a young man of great promise and talent.