**Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association
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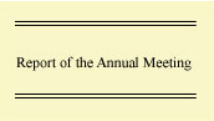

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G. J. MOUNTAIN: FRONTIER BISHOP

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Bishop Mountain's career as a bishop (1836-1863) occurred during a period of great expansion of the Church of England in Canada. To a great extent this expansion was a result of Mountain's efforts. He was a great missionary bishop: his story is full of journeys by sea and by land amid conditions of great difficulty and privation. In a very real sense he carried the cross into many remote fastnesses of North America. Most celebrated of his missionary journeys were his visitations to Red River in 1844 and to the Magdalen Islands in 1850; but he took other lengthy journeys, many of them in the region south of the St. Lawrence and in the valley of the Ottawa.

Mountain was born on July 27, 1789, in Norwich, England. He was the son of Jacob Mountain, the first Anglican Bishop of Quebec and was consequently one of the twelve relatives who accompanied the first Bishop when he took up residence at Quebec, in 1793.[1] He was educated at home in Quebec, and subsequently in England, first with a private tutor, and afterwards at Trinity College, Cambridge. He returned to Quebec and was ordained by his father in 1812. After Serving as chaplain to his father, he became the rector of Federicton, New Brunswick in 1814. In 1816, as the result of a rearrangement of personnel in the Diocese of Quebec, Mountain returned to his father's see. In 1821, he was appointed rector of the parish of Quebec and Archdeacon of Quebec.

Bishop Jacob Mountain died in 1825 and was succeeded by Bishop Charles James Stewart. For eleven years, Stewart and Archdeacon Mountain worked harmoniously together and Mountain made extensive journeys through the diocese. Stewart's health began to deteriorate in 1836 and the Archdeacon was accordingly consecrated as his coadjutor, under the title of Bishop of Montreal.

After Stewart's death in 1837, Mountain continued as Bishop of Montreal, although in effect Bishop of Quebec. The Diocese of Toronto, comprising Upper Canada, was carved out of the Diocese of Quebec in 1839, and in 1850 Quebec was divided into two dioceses. Bishop Francis Fulford became Bishop of Montreal and Mountain became Bishop of Quebec, a position which he occupied until his death.

Mountain's portrait, in Bishop Williams Hall, at Bishop's University, shows Mountain to have been a man of aristocratic and rather

[1] Thomas R. Millman, *Jacob Mountain, First Lord Bishop of Quebec* (Toronto, 1947) p. 18.

delicate countenance. The appearance of delicacy was belied by his vigorous attention to duty during his long career. He was a man of great courage. During the cholera epidemic of 1832 and the typhus epidemic of 1847, he ministered to the sick and dying immigrants in the most selfless manner. Bishop Mountain's perseverance showed itself in his determined efforts to visit every part of his diocese at frequent intervals despite the most rigorous conditions. Mountain was described by an old Irishman to whom he was kind in 1847 as "a tall man in black, straight as a hickory." "Bedad," said the Irishman, "they shpoiled a fine cavalry man when they made a preacher ov him."[2]

That there was a gentle side to the Bishop's character was indicated by his correspondence with his son-in-law, Jasper Nicolls, the Principal of Bishop's University, and with his daughter, Harriet who married Jasper in 1847. The Bishop's letters to Jasper and Harriet show him to have been a gentle, kindly man.

Occasionally there were elements of humour in the Bishop's letters to Jasper. In 1854 when a man named Greenwood was being considered for the staff at Bishop's, Jasper had indulged in a whole series of puns to which the Bishop replied,

> I was amused by your ingenious and facetious extractions from the name of *Greenwood:* I know not what more you might have made of it, if you had had to write, as I had last week to the Bishop of Montreal, about him and *Forest* / Rev. Charles Forest / in the same letter. It once happened to me to receive by the same mail, a letter from *Dr. Smallwood* / Dr. Charles Smallwood, the meteorologist / of St. Martin — and another from Dr. Grosbois of Chambly, which I took to be politically ominous, showing how small we Britons were becoming in Canada and how big the French Canadians.[3]

The happiness of the Bishop's home was always a source of great strength to him. Letters from his wife, the former Mary Hume Thomson, and from his children in Quebec, Kate and Armine, give one a picture of cheerful Victorian well-being. Fortunately for posterity, these letters were preserved in the *Nicolls Papers* which are still in the possession of Bishop's University.

In politics Mountain was a Tory of the old school. He represented the benevolent aristocracy which had evolved out of English feudalism. He believed in an ordered society in which each had his appointed position and his responsibilities. He once warned his daughter, Harriet, against allowing her maid to read novels since it might have the result "of her becoming unnerved for the station appointed for her in the providence of God."[4] He shared all the dislikes of Canadian Toryism. He objected to "rough Yankee ways" and was contemptuous of a

[2] Robert Sellar, *Gleaner Tales* (Huntingdon, Quebec, 1895), p. 360.
[3] *Nicolls Papers,* Bishop G. J. Mountain to Jasper Nicolls, August 7, 1854.
[4] *Ibid.,* G. J. Mountain to Harriet Nicolls, May 3, 1851.

church in the Eastern Townships which "according to the Yankee fashion" had not been appropriated to any particular denomination. Although he liked the French-Canadian habitants and admired the discipline and order of the Roman Catholic Church, Mountain shared the dislike of the Tories for the Roman Catholic Church and suspected it of aggressive activities against the position of the Church of England.[5] He disliked the policy of Lord Elgin, the Governor-General of Canada (1847-1854) because he regarded him as too democratically liberal. Although admitting a personal liking for Elgin, he wrote in 1854, "his political principles and acts I abominate."[6]

To Mountain, as to most of his friends and colleagues, England was still home. Yankee ways must be shunned and English habits cultivated. He once admonished Harriet, in her capacity as wife of the Principal of Bishop's College,

> It is high time, in my simple judgment, that you should break through the rough Yankee ways which *necessity* may have *imposed* some years ago — I think it would do a great deal of good, in different ways, that you should have everything about you— without aiming at ostentatious style, — as *thoroughly nice & English* as circumstances will permit.[7]

Bishop Mountain took a great interest in education and always adhered to the principle that students, at whatever level, should continue to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He was the first principal and honorary Professor of Divinity of McGill University, a position which he held from 1823 to 1835. He never acted in his capacity as Professor of Divinity because McGill had a good many problems in organizing and only the medical faculty functioned during his tenure of office. Mountain eventually became disgusted when McGill was secularized, and about 1839, he decided to establish a college under Anglican auspices. He was supported in this idea by the shrewd and vigorous rector of Lennoxville and Sherbrooke, the Rev. Lucius Doolittle, who rallied his parishioners to press for the establishment of the college in the Eastern Townships. By offering forty acres of land and three thousand pounds, they succeeded; and Bishop's College, with ten students and an active faculty of two, opened its doors at Lennoxville, in September, 1845. Much of the work of organization and nearly all the early financing was the result of Mountain's efforts. His connections with people of wealth and influence in England, were of great importance in securing financial support for the college. During the early history of the College Mountain was a tower of strength in the formation of college policy. He and Jasper Nicolls, the first principal, worked closely together and Mountain always gave firm but moderate advice in regard to such problems as staff appointments, the main-

[5] *Ibid.*, G. J. Mountain to Harriet Nicolls, April 13, 1848.
[6] *Ibid.*, G. J. Mountain to Harriet Nicolls, December 21, 1854.
[7] *Ibid.*, G. J. Mountain to Harriet Nicolls, May 31, 1858.

tenance of discipline and the granting of honorary degrees. The issuance of the royal charter to the University of Bishop's College in 1853, was largely the result of his statesmanship and that of Jasper Nicolls.

Bishop Mountain's views on Churchmanship and doctrine were of significance because he held them during a time of vigorous controversy in the Anglo-Saxon Christian world. The Wesleyan revival had run its course first in Britain and the United States and later in Canada. The Church of England was still attempting to resist the inroads of Methodism on both sides of the Atlantic, and not least in Canada. While the Methodists had left the Church of England, the Evangelical Party, whose views were regarded as similar, remained within it. The adherents of Henry Venn, Charles Simeon, William Wilberforce and Lord Shaftesbury continued to expound their views with telling effect. They preached the gospel that man is a sinner saved by grace through faith. In churchmanship they gloried in the name of Protestant. At the other extreme in churchmanship, came the Tractarians (Newman, Keble, Pusey et al) who insisted upon the Catholic character of the Church of England. They too believed that man is a sinner saved by grace, but they laid less emphasis than the Evangelicals on the role of faith and more emphasis on the place of the corporate church and the sacraments in the process of salvation. Meanwhile, a third element, the Liberals, began to be heard. Thomas Arnold, Charles Kingsley and others adopted a more rational attitude to the church and the Bible, and doubted the enthusiasm of both the other elements.

Mountain was not a complete adherent of any of the abovementioned schools of thought. Mountain disliked the Methodists partly because he regarded their views as "the mere contagion of feelings and opinions" but even more because they had seceded from the church and were one of "the endless and still multiplying forms of schism."[8] Quite characteristically Mountain described a Methodist missionary who had been chiefly responsible for the conversion of the Mississauga Indians as "a person of the name of Jones." In the same letter he referred to an Anglican clergyman as *Mr.* M.[9] Mountain had considerable respect for the Roman Catholic Church. This was partly a result of the fact that he liked the docility and politeness of the French-Canadian habitants and attributed it to the order and discipline which was maintained by the Roman Catholic Church. Of the Roman Catholics, he wrote that although "decidedly corrupt and superstitious

[8] Armine W. Mountain, *A Memoir of George Jehoshaphat Mountain* (Montreal, 1866), p. 168-9; G. J. Mountain, *Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Quebec,* July 1, 1862 (Quebec, 1862), pp. 18-19.

[9] Armine Mountain, *Memoir,* pp. 123-4.

in doctrine and worship — with respect to discipline in the Church for the preservation of purity and order they are better off than we are."[10]

With regard to the various schools of thought in the Church of England Mountain also had distinct reservations. He thoroughly disliked the Liberals who were, he said, "busy in suggesting, more than suggesting busy in recommending — the rejection piece by piece, of all which constitutes the value of the Bible."[11]

While Mountain appreciated the good qualities of the Evangelicals he always regarded them as 'a party' and what was worse a party consisting of "persons who have low and loose views of the church."[12] He regarded the Evangelicals as smacking of dissent and referred to them in 1849 as "men whose endeavours are bent to break down the forces of authority and order, and to assimilate the Church by strained and unwarrantable expedients, to uncertain unequivocal characteristics of dissent."[13]

Doubting the loyalty of the Evangelicals to the Church of England, Mountain failed to appreciate the essential soundness of their doctrinal position, but he recognized their devotion and tried to be fair to particular Evangelicals. He once made strong representations to have a young Evangelical named Ellis admitted to Bishop's College after the college authorities had rejected him. Mountain wrote to Jasper Nicolls, the principal of Bishop's,

> I have clergymen in the Diocese perhaps not differing much from him / Ellis / in their views who have done more for the Church than any others within my jurisdiction, their love of their Master being genuine, and *that,* after all, is the grand secret of success in the Christian Ministry.[14]

Mountain had a high regard for Isaac Hellmuth, a leading Evangelical, when Hellmuth was on the staff at Bishop's College. Mountain described Hellmuth who was a convert from Judaism, as "an *Israelite* indeed in whom is no guile" and was impressed by the fact that Hellmuth had declined the offer of a charge in the United States at a much higher stipend than he was to receive at Bishop's College.[15]

Mountain's attitude toward the Anglican Tractarians was sympathetic but critical. He regarded the Tractarians, at least during the early stage of the movement as a healthy counter to the

[10] *Ibid.,* 154-5.
[11] G. J. Mountain, *Charge,* 1862, p. 5.
[12] Armine Mountain, *Memoir,* p. 206; G. J. Mountain, *Letter addressed to the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Quebec — together with some Considerations previously prepared to be addressed to the same parties,* (Quebec, 1858), p. 65.
[13] G. J. Mountain, *Reply to an address of Anglican Evangelicals,* March 17, 1849.
[14] *Nicolls Papers,* G. J. Mountain to Jasper Nicolls, April 21, 1846.
[15] *Ibid.,* G. J. Mountain to Jasper Nicolls, October 16, 1845; May 5, 1846. Hellmuth was later Bishop of Huron.

Evangelicals. In April 1842, he said that they had "rendered admirable service to the Church" and had "corrected many loose and low notions which widely prevailed." He regretted the fact that so many of the Tractarians had entered the Roman Catholic Church because, as he said, it enabled the Evangelicals to "represent all maintenance of ancient order and discipline — as tending towards popery."[16]

By 1846, Mountain was more critical of the Tractarians. On March 19, 1846, he wrote,[17]

> I am tolerably stiff, I believe, against low-church laxity in matters of order and half-dissenting doctrine, — but I do think that the Romeward leanings of the party in the opposite extreme have assumed a most alarming aspect and are working out results such as we have seen in the cases of Newman, Ward, Faber and others — better so, indeed, than if producing such cases as that of Pusey who under the colours of the Church of England is, I cannot avoid thinking, *deliberately*, doing the more effectively the work of the Papistical cause.

Mountain's opinion of Pusey was probably prompted by the Bishop's dislike of ritualism in any extreme form. As an old-fashioned high Churchman, Mountain was opposed to practices which are now quite widely taken for granted in the Church of England. For instance, he wrote disapprovingly in 1849, "There are men — (although we are in no danger of seeing any of them here) who would even be for bowing to the altar and lighting wax tapers as a matter of devotion in the daytime."[18]

In general Mountain's attitude to the Tractarians was a combination of sympathy and misgivings. This was well indicated by a letter which the Bishop wrote to Mrs. Mountain about Jasper Nicolls, the first principal of Bishop's University. Nicolls, having been an undergraduate at Oriel in Newman's time was to some extent influenced by the Tractarians. When Jasper asked for the Bishop's permission to propose marriage to his daughter Harriet, the Bishop gave his blessing to the union and wrote, "he may have some *leanings* in Religion upon particular points, acquired at Oxford, which are not in *perfect* accordance with my own views upon these points" but added that he was "a sound believer — and uncompromising Churchman."[19]

An analysis of Mountain's ideas on Christian doctrine indicates much with which the Evangelicals would have fervently agreed. Mountain laid great emphasis upon the sinfulness of man. He told his clergy, "We have to deal with men, in the execution of our message, not as righteous, but as sinners whom we are to call to repentance."[20]

[16] Armine Mountain, *Memoir,* p. 250.
[17] *Nicolls Papers,* G. J. Mountain to Jasper Nicolls, March 19, 1846.
[18] G. J. Mountain, *Reply to an address of Anglican Evangelicals,* March 17, 1849.
[19] *Nicolls Papers,* G. J. Mountain to Mrs. Mountain, January 22, 1847.
[20] G. J. Mountain, *Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Quebec, 1848* (Quebec, 1848) p. 20.

He wrote in his Journal that men must found their recourse to the means of grace "upon a distinct recognition of their natural helplessness and sinfulness."[21] Like the Evangelicals, Mountain insisted that sinners must achieve salvation by the acceptance of Christ as Savious. They must realize that they have been 'bought with a price'. Mountain regarded the clergy as simply the instruments of applying "the remedies of the physician who alone has power to heal and to save, — the remedy of his blood to wash them clean from the leprosy of their guilt."[22] Like the Evangelicals Mountain denied that the clergy superseded "the *direct* recourse of the Sinner to Christ who died for him."[23] Mountain fully realized the implications of the new birth. One significant passage, although beginning with a denial that conversion is always sudden, could very well have been written by Wesley or Simeon:—

> There are thousands who never experienced certain precise symptoms, — perhaps never heard of them, — who have been truly born again, and perfectly understand from the history of their own hearts the significancy of the expression. They have discerned their lost estate, repented of their sins, believed to the saving of the soul, received the seed of the Word into 'an honest and good heart' and — they go on their way rejoicing, — their hope of heaven more bright, their application of the saving power of the Cross more homefelt and consoling, and their attachment to the world and the things of sense proportionably more faint.[24]

While Mountain agreed with the Evangelicals upon the necessity of salvation, he was closer to the Tractarians in insisting upon the unique function of the Church in making possible the achievement of salvation. Mountain envisaged the Church not as any body of believers who might agree "upon this or that arrangement" but as "an Order of men" constituted to preach the word and administer its religious ordinances. It was a body whose bishops were "invested with authority to transmit this commission from age to age."[25] The Church was apostolic not only in doctrine but in authority.

Like the Tractarians, Mountain laid great stress upon the externals of worship as provided for in the Church of England. He wrote,

> It is the *genius* of the Church of England — to clothe the exterior of her worship — with a certain grave, orderly and significant solemnity; and, where it can be reached, to stamp upon it certain grandeur of effect.[26]

Elsewhere Mountain referred to

> the solicitous provision made for reverential and solemn and touching effect in the worship of God, in the points of Architecture, Church-music, the whole conduct of our liturgical performances, the whole spirit of our regulations established *for the work of the service in the house of the Lord.*[27]

[21] Armine Mountain, *Memoir,* p. 199.
[22] *Ibid.* p. 199; G. J. Mountain, *Charge,* 1848, p. 20.
[23] G. J. Mountain, *Letter addressed to the Clergy and Laity,* 1858, p. 71.
[24] Armine Mountain, *Memoir,* p. 170.
[25] G. J. Mountain, *Letter addressed to the Clergy and Laity,* 1858, p. 35.
[26] *Ibid.,* p. 36.
[27] G. J. Mountain, *Charge,* 1848, p. 32.

Mountain was what is often described as 'a sound churchman.' It was quite characteristic that while admitting that baptized Christians must be reminded of their need of salvation he nevertheless insisted that they were not heathen who had never heard the Gospels. He pointed out,

> We do not address them — as if they had never been made partakers of the privileges of the covenant, but we must address them as if they had not *improved* their privileges.[28]

In all his thinking on doctrine and Church practice Mountain was professedly following a middle course. He wrote in 1842,

> I trust, however, that there is a large body of our clergy who are neither Tractarians nor low Churchmen, and who are equally prepared to make their stand against the insinuating advances of popery, and the disorganizing proceedings of schismatics and their abettors.[29]

As a bishop Mountain was concerned with practical problems, particularly with the recruiting and most effective disposition of his clergy in a frontier community. Jasper Nicolls suggested the use of travelling missionaries, like the Methodist Circuit riders. The bishop thought that there were some difficulties which the proposed system would not remedy and wrote to Jasper,[30]

> Your *theory* about travelling missionaries is admirable. But we must use the instruments which God is pleased to place at our disposal. If we have clergymen who are inefficient, — e.g. Mr. S....., we have them on our hands in the Diocese — and *wherever* they are, not gathering, they scatter Not that I may impute it to Mr. S. that he does *no good at all,* but the charge cannot thrive nor be kept up in his hands. We must wait in such cases for the opportunity to open itself under a higher guidance and must pray for its advance.
>
> If the travelling Missionaries will travel into matrimony, I cannot help it. And if we must have travelling missionaries who are to carry a missionary wife, volunteering for a pillion behind her husband through swamp and corderoy etc. I am afraid that we should have to wait a long time. There are, no doubt, women actually engaged in a devoted self-denying and self-sacrificing way, as helpers in the Gospel, in climes distant from their home; but a *system* which *assumes* the use of such recruits, is more, I believe, than we can venture to calculate upon introducing with success.

One commitment the Bishop was resolved not to take on. Living in a predominantly French and Roman Catholic country, he felt that no effort should be made to proselytize French Roman-Catholics. He never departed from the policy which he stated in 1837,

> At present I do not think that we can gather it to be the will of Providence that any effectual impression should be made upon the Roman Catholic population of Lower Canada, and all the resources which we can command are inadequate for the spiritual instruction of our own people.[31]

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[29] Armine Mountain, *Memoir,* p. 250.
[30] *Nicolls Papers,* G. J. Mountain to Jasper Nicolls, October 21, 1858.
[31] Armine Mountain, *Memoir,* p. 206.

Mountain felt that French-speaking Anglicans should be given the benefit of services in their own tongue. In accordance with this policy he ordained the Rev. D. Gavin, a Swiss, for service in a small French-speaking group at Sabrevois. He reported to his daughter, Harriet, on October 21, 1848, "You will have heard — how on Sunday last, I and four picked Frenchmen among my clergy performed an ordination at Christieville."[32] The Sabrevois mission was supported by the widow of the *grand seigneur,* William Plenderleaf Christie. The Sabrevois mission was a single experiment and was not typical of Mountain's general policy. He explained to Harriet.

> I have never made efforts for sending missionaries expressly to proselytize among the Canadians, for which we have not resources at command, not being able to supply our own people, and which I am disposed to view, in any case, as a questionable experiment, but here is a little body of French Protestants with their Protestant pastor ready made to our hand, wishing to be incorporated in our church and it was a happy task to receive them.[33]

In 1857, when the college chapel at Bishop's University was being opened Jasper Nicolls raised the issue of having some services in French. This provided the occasion for a further elaboration of Mountain's policy toward French Canada. He wrote to Nicolls on September 11, 1857,

> About the French service, you know we tried that experiment here / in Quebec city / long ago and kept it up for some years without gaining one Canadian convert. A merely aggressive organization on the part of the Church of England with the view of proselytism, I think an exceedingly questionable undertaking, and certainly we ought, if we were to form it, to be prepared for an organization by the Romish Church, with its enormous resources, expressly and avowedly to proselytize among ourselves. What we did before was to afford a service for the Jersey people, (of whom we have none here now requiring service in French) with a hope that it might please God to make the effort instrumental for conveying evangelical truth to the minds of the French population. In the case of Gavin and his congregation / at Sabrevois /, we had a body of people and a minister already prepared and desiring admission to our communion. If any case like this, can be made out in Quebec, there will be a call upon us to meet it, but we ought (as it appears to me) to have something tangible to go upon, first.[34]

Mountain played a prominent part in the organization of synods in the Church of England in North America. He played host to an important conference of British North American Bishops at Quebec from September 24th to October 1st, 1851. Bishops Fulford of Montreal, Strachan of Toronto, Medley of Fredericton, and Feild of Newfoundland were present. They passed a significant series of resolutions urging that synod government, diocesan and provincial be organized

[32] *Nicolls Papers,* G. J. Mountain to Harriet Nicolls, October 21, and 27, 1848. For an account of the Sabrevois mission see John Cooper, *The Blessed Communion,* (Montreal, 1960), Chapter V.

[33] *Nicolls Papers,* G. J. Mountain to Harriet Nicolls, October 21, 1848.

[34] *Ibid.,* Bishop Mountain to Jasper Nicolls, September 11, 1857.

in the colonies. In 1853, Mountain was in England to give advice on the needs of the Colonial Church in regard to self-government. After failure of a bill in the British parliament to provide for self-government in the Church beyond the seas, the Canadian Church decided to proceed by action of the Canadian legislature. As a result the legislature of the Province of Canada on May 28, 1857 passed "An Act to enable members of the United Church of England and Ireland in Canada to meet in synod." / 19-20 Vict. cap. 121 /

During the next two years Mountain was engaged in the organization of the Diocesan synod. In the process he became involved in a controversy with the Evangelicals in the diocese. The Evangelicals were anxious to secure an organization of the synod which would increase their influence in the diocese. Since Evangelicalism was stronger among the laity than among the clergy they attempted to give the laity great influence in the synod. In 1858 they organized the Church of England Lay Association and published an *Address to the Laity of the Diocese of Quebec*. Their objectives, as proclaimed in the pamphlet, were to increase lay control over the synod by excluding from the Constitution the Bishop's right of veto, the right of the clergy to vote as an order distinct from the laity, and the regulation that all lay delegates should be communicants.

Between September 1858, and the meeting of the synod in July, 1859, the Bishop was extremely concerned about the activities of the Lay Association. He wrote repeatedly to Jasper Nicolls on the subject and published a long circular letter to the celrgy and laity explaining the course which he had taken.[35]

The Bishop's fears in the end were not fulfilled. When the Quebec synod met in July, 1859, the opposition proved less formidable than the Bishop had anticipated. Discussions were long and according to Armine Mountain "not always agreeable" but in the end the Bishop's views prevailed. The two points for which he was chiefly anxious in the Constitution of the synod, recognition of the three distinct orders and the communicant qualifications for lay delegates were carried by overwhelming majorities. The synod was a personal triumph for the Bishop.[36]

Mountain played a prominent role in the organization of the first Provincial Synod of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada which was held at Montreal in September, 1861.[37] It was owing, in part, to his magnanimity that Francis Fulford, rather than himself, became the

[35] *A Letter addressed to the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Quebec*, 1858. It is also published in part in Armine Mountain, *Memoir*, pp. 353-368.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 369-370.

[37] The ecclesiastical Province of Canada was coterminous with the political province of Canada and in 1861 included the dioceses of Quebec, Montreal, Ontario, Toronto and Huron.

first Metropolitan of ecclesiastical province. Since the British authorities had decided to appoint the senior bishop in the province as Metropolitan, the office would certainly have been offered to Mountain. Mountain, however, wrote privately to the Archbishop of Canterbury to decline in advance the honour and recommended, at the same time, the appointment of Fulford.[38]

Most notable in Mountain's career were his episcopal visitations which took him on many journeys, short and long, throughout his diocese. In these journeys Mountain had recourse to many forms of transportation: steamers, sailing vessels and canoes on the waterways, and various types of vehicles and even ploughhorses by land. His privations included storms by sea and land; almost impassible conditions underfoot; mud, rock, mountainous formations and snow; and frequently the most primitive of living conditions. Through it all, Mountain remained calm and cheerful in the performance of duty. Everywhere he went he preached, baptized, and confirmed, often in areas which had seldom seen a celrgyman, and sometimes, as in the Magdalen Islands, in country where an Anglican clergyman had never been seen prior to the Bishop's visit in 1850. Sometimes Mountain's appearance at the conclusion of a journey bore testimony to his difficulties. He returned from his first visit to Gaspé, in 1824, lame from a strain which he had encountered on the march

> and tattered, a long staff made out of an old canoe-paddle in my hand, the scratches of my skin seen through the holes of my trowsers and stockings, without a neck-cloth, my clothes soiled by the march, my shoes tied with twine, and many trowsers confined at the ancle, to prevent their catching in the branches, with pins and strips of cedarbark.

"To this equipment," continued Mountain,

> was afterwards added, at the instance of my friend Francois (one of the Indians), who had the promise of inheriting my trowsers, (as Jean Baptiste had already done my discarded waistcoat), and who by no means contemned the expected prize, a coloured handkerchief round one knee to prevent the enlargement of a very serious solution of continuity, to which pins had repeatedly been applied with little effect.[39]

Mountain's journey up the Ottawa Valley, in May of 1843, indicates some of the difficulties with which he had to contend. He started on a small river steamer which broke down. After this incident, he proceeded successively by horse and canoe. Having arrived at the village of Clarendon, Mountain made arrangements for a service in a nearby church. His narrative proceeded:

> the first matter to be arranged was to get information circulated along the lake shore, up and down, appointing a time for the people to meet me at the church in the afternoon, since I was a day after my original appoint-

[38] Armine Mountain, *Memoir,* pp. 396-398.
[39] Armine Mountain, *Memoir,* pp. 75-76.

> ment, and to procure the means of conveyance for proceeding to the church myself, which was six miles farther in the interior. Messengers were soon found for the first object. The other was not quite so easy of accomplishment. No part of the neighborhood afforded a single vehicle of any kind upon wheels; the people using ox-sleds for drawing any articles requiring to be moved from place to place, even in summer. Men and boys were despatched in different directions, to seek for horses to ride. The first which was brought was taken from the plough, and it was no small sacrifice for his owner to make, although I believe that it was cheerfully done, for the season was precious for his labour. He had on the head-stall of a cart-harness, with its winkers and a halter underneath. The bridle-rein was a piece of rope. The saddle was in a condition just to hold together, and no more. I mounted him at once, feeling it important to push on to the church, — Mr. H. — / a local farmer / accompanied me upon a mare, far gone in foal, whom he was doubtful about taking; but he had only the choice between this animal or none.
>
> Our way to the church was by a narrow wood-road, between high ragged pines; there were many bad places, and there was much corduroy; but the chief difficulty arose from the necessity of going round the prostrate giants of the forest, thrown down by the storm of Monday and Tuesday, and lying directly across the road, probably in not less than twenty places in the course of six miles. — In these places we had nothing for it but to fight through the younger growth and the bushes, making a circuit and so regaining the road.[40]

Eventually they reached the church and the bishop held his service. He confirmed fifty-one people.

Journeys and difficulties were the authentic note of Mountain's career. The journeys were continued until almost the end of his life. As late as the spring of 1862, when ill and weak, he visited the missions on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, including the Magdalen Islands. Well might he have said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Mountain left the church in Canada expanded and transformed. Bishop Jacob Mountain had begun the work in 1793 with nine clergy in the whole of his diocese. At the time of the death of Bishop Stewart in 1837, the number had been raised to eighty-five. In the twenty-six years of Bishop G. J. Mountain's episcopate, his original diocese was divided into five sees with nearly four hundred clergy. The Church of England, after a slow start in Canada, had become, to a considerable extent, a frontier church. Many of its clergy had followed the settlers into the bush, much like the Methodists. Many of Mountain's travels were in the remote parts of his diocese and wherever he went, he visited Anglican clergy. Not all of the circuit riders were Methodists. In 1843, the Bishop described the work of a "travelling missionary, the Rev. R. G. Plees,

> At St. Remi, which is his home, (so far as he has one) he officiates upon one Sunday and one week-day in the month. Both these are evening

[40] *Ibid.*, pp. 233-238.

> services, to which he returns after labouring elsewhere. He has four other Sunday stations in his mission; eleven regular stations for appointed services in all. He officiates twenty-three or twenty-four times every month, and his monthly circuit is one of two hundred and thirty-five miles, besides all extra calls.[41]

The expansion and transformation of the Church had proceeded apace during Mountain's episcopate. To a considerable extent the process was the result of his leadership, moderate churchmanship and faith.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 230.