

the benefit of it, by inserting it in the *Gazette* and distributing large numbers over the mission; a few dollars taken from the Parochial Church Society's collection enables me to do this, and at the same time to aid the paper.

If this practice were generally followed the paper could be maintained in a state of great efficiency, and the funds of the several branches of the Church Society would be most materially increased. The people would soon learn to feel an interest in the Church's work, and the labors of the clergymen would be very much facilitated.

I sincerely hope that the *Gazette* will experience a speedy accession of strength, and take a new and a long lease of its valuable life.

I remain yours very truly,

J. ALEXANDER MORRIS.

OPENING OF ST. PETER'S SCHOOL, STEPNEY.

On Saturday a meeting was held on the occasion of the opening of the new school-room connected with St. Peter's Church, Stepney. The building, an unpretending but commodious and appropriate structure, is situate in Essex-street, and surrounded by a dense and poor population, consisting principally of dock labourers and their families. The Rev. Mr. Rowsell, the zealous pastor of St. Peter's, having felt the inadequacy of the existing institutions in the parish to supply its spiritual and educational wants, resolved on the erection of the present building, and on Saturday had the satisfaction of being surrounded on the occasion of its opening by the Bishop of London, Mr. Gladstone, M P, Mr. W. Cotton, Rev. Mr. Maurice, Mr. Charrington, Mr. Gossiot, Rev. Mr. Champneys, Mr. Currie, Revs. F. S. Barry and T. Stevenson, curates, and several of the clergy and laity of the district. Besides the use of the building for the purpose of a school, the Rev. Mr. Rowsell has obtained the consent of the bishop to make it available as a place of worship for short services. There remains due on account of the building a sum of £170, which no doubt will soon be liquidated.

The Bishop of London, who presided at the meeting, said that he had been requested to be present at the opening of this school; and there were some peculiar circumstances connected with it which called for some observation on his part. He was informed by Mr. Rowsell that it was to be used for various purposes—for a school, and also for such social and religious meetings as he hoped would bring him into more intimate connexion with the poorer classes of his parishioners. This might seem a departure from the ordinary principles of the church to which they belonged, but he thought a feeling had grown, and was becoming stronger every day, that they must endeavour to call together for worship, however they could get them, those masses of the population who were springing up around them throughout the kingdom. Every one who had to do with them knew how difficult it was to induce the very poor to frequent the parish church (hear, hear). People were apt at times to consider this difficulty imaginary, and to suppose—what was true enough in itself, though not applicable in the present case—that where there was a will there would be no difficulty. But the upper classes were apt to make too light of the difficulties of the poor. It was true that God could be worshipped in rags as well as in broadcloth; but every one who knew what the feelings of the poor were—and their feelings were as sacred as ours—must be aware that there was a real practical difficulty in this matter of dress—(hear, hear)—in addition to which the poor man when he entered the church did not know where to turn, and was afraid of occupying the seat which belonged to one of the wealthier classes (hear). The difficulty imposed on them the duty of opening up places of worship where such differences disappeared, and where the poor were encouraged to consider themselves upon equality with ourselves. As

far as his opinion went, he considered this expansion of the system of the Church, as a means of meeting a growing and acknowledged want, advisable. This was a feeling of which he need not be in any degree ashamed. He hoped, when everything unfitting for worship was removed, that persons might pray to God in this school-room as fervently as in churches more especially dedicated to His worship, and that by this means the number of His worshippers might be increased. When Mr. Rowsell, therefore, applied to him for permission to use this room as a place of worship, he replied that the plan had his hearty approval, and he believed the law of the land fully sanctioned that course. He was anxious, as far as his authority went, that the plan should be fully and fairly tried (hear, hear). And now, as he had the opportunity of addressing persons whom he would not see for a long time again, it might not be inappropriate, in one coming from a distant part of London to visit them, to say a few words. It was a circumstance inseparable from the state of society in which we lived that the rich and poor diverged more and more from each other (hear, hear). As towns extended and population became dense in one part, the wealthier classes separated themselves more and more from their poorer brethren (hear, hear). It therefore became their duty to guard against this tendency of the age. For the last seven years he lived in a manufacturing town, and there he saw on a small scale what took place in London on a larger scale—viz., the wealthy classes and all who could afford it flying from the smoke and filth of the towns to the healthy and pure air of the country. The very manufacturers themselves, who gathered together these masses of population, retired to their country seats from the disagreeable consequences of the smoke and impure air which their factories created. This feeling seemed natural, but its consequences were deplorable, for we came to this state of things, that we had two nations instead of one—a nation of the rich and a nation of the poor, who were separated not merely in their feelings, their enjoyments, and in the unequal proportion of the good things of this life, but by actually distinct localities. The one lived in great streets and squares, where the other scarcely ever showed themselves (hear). This physical isolation must produce bad moral effects. It was impossible for men who seldom saw each other to have much sympathy with each other; it was impossible for those who lived in the country and in fresh air, and in the midst of good things, to know the grievances the poor suffered in their wretched houses in the pent-up lanes and narrow streets of the metropolis (hear, hear). It was, therefore, of the greatest importance that those to whom God's providence had given these worldly advantages should consider it a part of their duty to mix more than they did with the poor—to see more of their dwellings; to exert themselves more in their behalf; and to make them feel that they were one with themselves (hear, hear). They all knew that they could get on very badly without the labouring population (hear, hear). It was all very well to talk of the advantage of wealth and of the advantage of the respectable middle class; but where would they all be without the brawny arms and manly hearts of the labouring poor? (Cheers) His lordship reminded the clergy that it was their duty to attend to the poor especially, and to tell them that though the *was* a distinction between rich and poor for a few brief years in this life, there was no distinction in the sight of God (cheers).

The Rev. Mr. Rowsell expressed his thanks to those gentlemen, both clergy and laity, who by their presence countenanced a work in which he was personally so interested. He felt deeply indebted to the late bishop, to Mrs. Barlett Cutts, to Mr. Cotton, to Mr. Charles Barry, and to the inhabitants of the parish generally, for the handsome manner in which they responded to his calls for aid, and assisted in the building of the school. In a poor and populous district, where many were kept from attending the church for the reasons stated by the right Rev. pre-

late, the existence of a building like this, where short religious services would be used, would be a great blessing. He intended that it should be used also as a place of social amusement and recreation. The labouring classes did not know what to do with themselves when they came back from their work. Those who thought they ought to remain at home did not know what their homes were. He was satisfied that the social improvement of these classes must precede their moral improvement. It was no use getting up in the pulpit to preach purity, modesty, and holiness of life to persons who were living eight or nine in one room, as was the case in the neighbourhood of the school (hear). He hoped his lordship in the chair, and the right hon. gentleman near him (Mr. Gladstone), would put it to the House of Commons to solve the social problem (hear, hear). Not thirty yards from this school was a man ill from typhus in a room where his wife and daughter had died, and when the case was looked into the very bed was found saturated from the cesspool that came in from behind the premises (hear, hear). Was it not necessary that something should be done to put a stop to such a state of things? He thought the church itself was much to blame in this matter. Was it not a great discouragement to the laity when they saw a large district like Stepney put under sequestration and the income pawned like a watch in a pawn-office? (Hear, hear). The deadness of the church itself was the reason why thousands absented themselves from it. The bishops of the church were much to blame—*nos, nos, consules desumus*. Having spoken of these things elsewhere, he felt it would be cowardice in him if he held his tongue in the presence of persons who had power in the church and state, but who he believed were personally anxious to apply a remedy (hear, hear).

Mr. Gladstone, M P, moved the following resolution:—"That separation of rich and poor, by their several residences at east and west of London, demands the active interchange of love and co-operation to sustain real church membership, and that every work of the Church of England in educating and teaching the poor and crowded population has a claim upon the assistance of the richer members." He said his lordship dwelt on this proposition in a manner which left nothing to be desired. He enunciated with sad and painful truth the doctrine, that we were bound together in one body, even as the body of our Lord, and that in virtue of that sacred relation we were obliged to offices of mutual love. These truths had now become the common places of our knowledge, but when they were first proclaimed to the fallen races of man they were startling discoveries and revelations (hear, hear). These truths had not lost their vitality by repetition, but we had lost the energy, the truth, and the sincerity with which they were received (hear, hear). The words came to the ear, but they passed by like the idle wind. The day would come, however, when society required to be awakened to the fact, that under these truths, which we heard without attention, there lay a meaning which, if not realised and applied to the acts of daily life, we must, and perhaps before long, rue the consequences (hear, hear). It was an unquestionable truth, and a necessary result of the laws by which societies were constructed, that every house which was built for the nobleman, the wealthy landlord, the banker, or the merchant in Belgrave or Eaton squares, did generate a certain amount of population who were cast upon this eastern district, who were removed out of sight, and therefore unhappily out of mind, of the wealthier class. This was a serious and appalling state of things (hear, hear). It was scarcely possible to hope it should receive more than mitigation, but great mitigation it might receive. The Metropolitan Visiting Relief Association, which owed its origin to his Right Rev. friend Bishop Bloomfield, was the first recognition, in a permanent form, of the duty which the west of London owed to the east (hear). That institution could not not be said to contemplate moral or social improvement. It was a duty—and a sacred and