

HALIFAX—ECCLESIASTICAL.

The Diocese of Nova Scotia has been called to lament the decease of a Missionary who, while his age and length of services placed him, with the exception of two venerable clergy, the Rev. Elias Schövil, and the Rev. Oliver Arnold, of New Brunswick, at the head of the list of the Missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, employed in the diocese, was second to none in the zeal and piety and ability and firmness with which he served the sacred cause in which he was embarked.

The Rev. John Millidge, L. L. D., who was the warm supporter of all the Church's institutions and charities, the faithful pastor of an admiring flock, and the generous friend of all by whom he was surrounded, has, after thirty-seven years of meritorious ministerial labor, been called to his reward. He died, as of such a man it might with certainty have been foretold that he would have died, in the immediate discharge of the duties of his calling.

While, on Advent Sunday, this excellent theologian and enlightened churchman was giving their full force to the awakening services of this solemn season, in the Church of Clement's, which, although at some distance from the town of Annapolis, was within his pastoral charge, he was suddenly taken ill. During the period that his brother clergy were exhorting their hearers from those topics, which at this season are invariably urged from the episcopal pulpit, their lamented brother was affording, upon his return homewards, a melancholy lecture upon the same topics to those among whom his ministrations were thus suddenly interrupted. Upon his way home his disorder assumed the appearance of a paralytic affection, which deprived him of the use of one side. While he was under the influence of this attack, an old complaint, in the region of the heart, which had often before given him those previous intimations of mortality, which such persons as he consider to be merciful warnings, and do not allow to pass them unimproved,—returned; and, in eight days, during which, though unable to articulate, he gave every mute sign of composure and of pious resignation which could impart comfort to his sorrowing family circle, and confidence to the people of his cure, he breathed his last.

An extensive charge, who intimately knew and heartily loved this faithful pastor, had thus a melancholy opportunity afforded them of observing the soothing influence, in death, of those principles to the propagation of which he had unremittingly devoted a life of more than common activity. Such losses must be long and deeply felt! It is doubted not, however, but that these breaches which the Lord of the vineyard is making in the Colonial Church, He will repair. It augurs well for the Church that a nephew of the late lamented rector of Annapolis, in the formation of whose principles this sound divine is known to have taken a most lively interest, is already in holy orders, and that a son also is now engaged in his collegiate course preparing for the same ministry.—Our colonial Bishops are, every year, more frequently called on to exercise that portion of their episcopal office which consists in the laying on of hands for the due transmission of the ministerial commission:—On the second Sunday, indeed, after the Church of this Diocese had been called to deplore the loss of Dr. Millidge, the Bishop of Nova Scotia admitted Mr. Stephenson, the mathematical lecturer of King's College, Windsor, into the holy order of Deacons, at the parish church of Dartmouth.

SCHOOL FOR BLACKS.

The interest which the Inhabitants of Halifax have taken in the colored population of that town, has led them lately to take a census of the colored residents.—It was then ascertained that there were, among the coloured poor, within the town of Halifax, 116 heads of families, and 293 children who were under the age of 16.

Two meetings of the colored people, at which the Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia presided, had been holden. At these it was resolved that, after these poor people had made collections, according to their ability, among themselves, for the building of a Sun-

day and daily school, for the instruction of their uneducated children and adults, a subscription should be immediately commenced among the more wealthy white-inhabitants of the town, for the purpose of aiding them in their laudable attempt, and of affording some permanent support to a teacher.

To this excellent object, as to every object of charity, it is known that the worthy Governor and Lady Sarah Maitland are particularly well disposed, and it is confidently expected that a flourishing institution for the education of the negro poor will shortly be the result of the present zeal which has been called up in their favor.

A school which, (with three others in Nova Scotia,) had, for several years, been supported in the town by the liberality of a benevolent Society in England,—“The Associates of the late Revd. Dr. Bray,”—had been unavoidably closed, for the period of two years, since the decease of Mrs. Cormick, its last excellent mistress. This had arisen from the want of a building for a School-room and the insufficiency of the Associate's Salary, without considerable additions, to the support of the necessary charge of the rent of a proper room. The complaints which the respectable coloured poor were constantly making under their privation of the advantages of religious education for their children, has excited the existing interest in their favor. It is only reasonable, moreover, that it should have this effect, for, besides the claim which the circumstance of a number of our fellow creatures entreating for the benefits of Christian education must be allowed to have upon our best sympathies, the present anxiety of the Negroes for the accomplishment of this object manifests that experience of the small institution, which has so long existed among them, has taught them the blessing of education, and that they know, also, how duly to prize it for themselves and for their children.

CHRISTMAS*. (December 25.)

Christmas Day, the 25th of December, is the day devoted to the celebration of the birth of our blessed Saviour, who left the glory of his Father, and for us men, and our salvation, took upon him our nature.

Christmas day should be kept holy as Sunday. And we should not banish our seriousness so soon, as to partake of amusements in the evening. Luke ii. 6—21.

This feast of our Saviour's nativity seems to have had its beginning in the first, or, at least, in very early times of Christianity.

The words, “at this time,” in the Collect for Christmas day, need not be so rigidly interpreted, as if the precise time were fixed by the Church, and made a term of her communion. They are capable of being understood in a due latitude, and do necessarily imply no more than that we commemorate, at that time, the blessing of our Saviour's birth and incarnation. In which sense it may well be said, that he was at this time born. And surely those who differ about the precise time of his birth, may, notwithstanding, join at once in the observance of a holy festival, set apart in remembrance of it.

In the determination of the precise and real day, antiquity itself hath been divided as well as modern times; but about the year 500, the twenty-fifth of December became the general observation of the Church on this occasion.

To celebrate no day, because the exact day cannot be ascertained, is the likeliest way to bring the great mystery of our Saviour's incarnation first into contempt, and then into oblivion.—*Sword's Almanack.*

* The practice of embellishing and ornamenting churches at this great Festival is explained by Dr. Stukely. He observes, that the ancients expected our Saviour was to be born at the winter solstice, and that the great Advent was to happen when evergreens flourish. “The glory of Lebanon, (the cedar) shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box tree together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary.” Isa. lx. 13. Many passages to the same purport occur in the Old Testament.