

NEW CHURCH IN BARBADOES.

In the great dearth of information respecting the state of the Church in the West Indies, we have been glad to borrow from the *New-York Churchman*, the following account of the ceremonies at the laying of the corner stone of a church in the above Island, together with portions of the interesting address of the Bishop on the occasion. We hope to be favoured more directly, with some ecclesiastical intelligence from both the West-Indian Dioceses; and we take this opportunity of repeating our invitation to the Brethren in those parts, to furnish it for our columns.

Thursday, 1st of October, 12 o'clock, having been appointed by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese for laying the corner stone of the parish church of Christ Church, a large concourse of the parishioners, and many highly respectable gentlemen and ladies from Bridgetown, assembled in the churchyard to witness the ceremony, under a temporary covering which had been erected for the purpose. His Lordship, accompanied by his chaplain, with the rural dean and several of the neighboring clergy, and the vestry of the parish, preceded by the model of the new church, and the children of the parochial school, proceeded to the spot. On his Lordship's arrival there, he delivered the subjoined address, after which he read some very appropriate verses selected from the Psalms and offered up the usual prayer on the occasion, with the Lord's Prayer. The inscription prepared for the occasion was then read by the Rector of the parish, and placed on the spot made ready to receive the stone. The stone, which was suspended to a triangle, was then very slowly lowered by the churchwarden, the children, during the descent of it, singing the 100th Psalm. His Lordship concluded with an appropriate prayer, and the blessing.

THE INSCRIPTION.

The former church of this parish having been destroyed by the awful hurricane of the 11th August, 1831.

The first stone of this edifice,

(The gift of Robert B. Clarke, sen. Esq. of Eldridge Estate,) was laid by

THE RIGHT REV. WILLIAM HART COLERIDGE, D. D.

Lord Bishop of Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands,

On the 1st day of October, 1835,

and in the twelfth year of his consecration,

In the presence of

Many of the Clergy of the Island, the Vestry of the Parish and a large assemblage of the Parishioners.

The Reverend Christopher Charles Gill, Rector,
Edward Hooper Senhouse, Esq. Churchwarden.

Address of Bishop Coleridge on the above occasion.

My Christian Brethren,—If there be one spectacle more interesting than another to the Christian it must be the assemblage of a large community on one spot for the erection of their common place of public worship. On other occasions men meet for pleasure, for profit, for political or scientific purposes—on this occasion we are assembled to found on earth an edifice, whereby our souls may be raised to heaven. Deep and salutary, and hallowed may be the meditations which the Christian maintains in the privacy of his chamber, when he is 'communing with his own heart and is still'—profitably may he read the Scriptures by himself—ardent and beneficial may be his private and domestic devotion—and such manifestations of our religious principles, though contracted in their sphere, may yet be sufficient, during a temporary deprivation of more public ordinances, to keep alive the flame of piety in our own hearts, or in the narrow circle of our families; but it can do no more: it cannot diffuse its warmth throughout a whole parish—it cannot operate largely in the way of example—it conveys no acknowledgment of the one common Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of mankind. Every man may be as a priest to his own family; but in the community at large there is still wanting the duly ordained minister as the priest of all; there is still wanting the stated offering up of a general liturgy, as declarative of the wants of all sorts and conditions of men; there is still wanting the administration of the sacraments of regenerating and renovating grace; there is still wanting the public reading of holy Scripture as of old, in the Christian synagogue; there is still wanting that sacred contagion, if I may so speak, of devotional feeling, whereby, in the exercise of public worship, faith, and love, and holy reverence are kindled from one soul to another; and every man's individual sacrifice is mingled with the praises and thanksgivings of his brethren; and thus united ascends up, as one collective incense, through the mediation of the Saviour to the throne of the Most High; and draws down on the congregation thus assembled in the Saviour's name, in unseen, but most certain influence, the dew of his promised and more especial blessing. Nor whilst thus enumerating the other important uses of the material temple can I omit that indirect, but powerful effect which it has on the moral and religious feelings of all who may accidentally pass its walls—standing, as it does alone—and detached from every other building—closed and silent during the week, whilst all else is open and full of stir and business—separated from the world—and thus serving as a powerful and legitimate remembrancer, to withdraw the soul, if but for a moment, from the engrossing cares of earth to think on God and that heaven, whither it should be every man's duty, as it is his interest, to be daily tending. The parochial church too is the acknowledged centre of parochial union, thither, on every matter of religious or secular interest, the parishioners flock together as one body, whether to serve the God of all flesh within his sanctuary, or in some detached building, or separated portion of the sacred pile, to transact those other matters which most nearly concern their temporal welfare. The parish church is as a common property—an object of common solicitude—in which all have a right—wherein all have been made or many may become partakers of all the covenanted privileges of the Gospel; wherein their children may be sanctified and themselves blessed.

No religious service in which we engage can ever be negative in its effects: it will either benefit greatly, if duly regarded, or increase our condemnation, if unimproved or forgotten. Religion is no barren speculation; or a mere badge of outward distinction; but that which should mix itself up with the feelings and conduct of every man. In the expressive language of the Saviour it should be every man's 'meat and drink' to do the will of God—a habit with him as natural under God's Spirit; as necessary to his inward peace; and entering as thoroughly into all his thoughts and wishes and pursuits and most ordinary occupations as the very food whereby the body is daily nourished and strengthened, and enabled to discharge its several functions.

May you, day by day, my Brethren, be confirmed more and more in this blessed habit! may your religion be scriptural, that you may be assured of its truth! may it be ardent, that all may be convinced of its sincerity! may it be sober, that you may be preserved from fanaticism! may it be practical, that you may be useful to your fellow-creatures! may it be constant, out of an increasing faith in the Saviour who died for you, that you may be rewarded through his merits, with a crown of everlasting glory hereafter in the heavens. Every thing, humanly speaking, in this country, will depend upon the religion of the inhabitants. The best measures will fail, if there be not a religious principle in the community to which we may appeal. If our people of all classes be not persuaded that there is a sin in selfishness, injustice, and discontentment: if they be not accustomed to look beyond this transitory state of existence to a higher and everlasting condition; and be thus taught to feel less acutely the trials and annoyances of earth, under the conviction that there is something yet in store for the Christian, better than the best which this earth can bestow; in vain will you trust, my Brethren, to the most judicious regulations, which the wit of man can devise, or his authority execute, for the peace and prosperity of the country. *A state of irreligion can never be other than a state of suspicion and insecurity.* May the endeavors now making throughout the country, whether for the re-erection of our places of public worship, or for the promotion of habits of industry, frugality, and sobriety amongst our people, or for the more effective administration of the laws, or for the advancement of any other measure calculated to benefit this land, be ever so connected with religion that they may carry with them the blessing of the ALMIGHTY; then shall we fail in nothing whereunto we thus wisely and religiously set our hands; then shall our undertakings be more assured of a prosperous issue; then shall all classes of our people have confidence in us, and be more inclined to listen unto reason, and respect authority;

then shall man be benefited, and God more abundantly honored. His material temples will be crowded; his ordinances observed; his commands obeyed; his threatenings feared; his promises made the subject of our hopes and prayers; and a living temple raised unto him in every heart, wherein God may be inwardly served day and night incessantly and acceptably in CHRIST JESUS.

ASH WEDNESDAY.

Epistle. Joel ii. 12. Gospel. St. Matt. vi. 16.

Ash Wednesday is the day that introduces us into that season of devotion and humiliation, so solemnly observed in the first and purest ages of the Christian Church.* It derives its name from the custom of penitents, who sat in sackcloth and ashes, and gave public testimony of sorrow for their sins. This was then strictly enjoined for those offences which the law of man could not punish, but which were a scandal to the pure and perfect law of Christ. The practice is now disused, but the Church still takes occasion at this season, when we commemorate the deep humiliation of our blessed Lord in the wilderness, to urge upon us the exercise of a heart-felt repentance, to humble ourselves for our sins, to subdue the flesh and its appetites, to crucify ourselves to the world and its pleasures, to abstract and exalt our affections, and thus, in a spiritual sense, to die and rise again with our Saviour and Lord. The Collect, therefore, and the portions of Scripture appointed to be read with them during Lent, point out, with peculiar force, the fatal consequences of sin, the miserable state of sinners, and the necessity of a hearty faith in God's promises to pardon the sins of the truly penitent.

In the Collect for this day, we appeal to the love of God, as a ground for the exercise of his mercy and forgiveness. He forgiveth us, not for our own sake, but for His, who, 'having loved, his own, loveth them to the end; who died to prove his love, and who made it the condition of his death, that fallen man should be restored to God. We pray, therefore, that the holy spirit would create and make in us, new and contrite hearts, in order, that upon our repentance, we may be fit to receive pardon; and this we shall be, when we give evidence of our sorrow for the past, by earnest endeavours to lead a holy life for the future. But to walk as penitents 'worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called;'—'worthy of the Lord,' 'worthy of our God,' requires the unceasing aid of the Spirit of God. No other power can make us sensible of the wretchedness of sin here, or give us faith to believe—and, by repentance to escape—its punishment hereafter. That this prayer for divine assistance may bear the stamp of sincerity, let us not be wanting to ourselves, nor fail for want of exertion on our part. 'Let us turn unto the Lord our God,' for we know that 'He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil: who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him!' If thus we pray—if thus we act—if we add to our supplications before God honest endeavours before men—if we earnestly strive to be, what we beseech God to make us, holy, just, and good;—if we heartily wish to have new and contrite hearts—if we 'lament our sins, and acknowledge our wretchedness worthily;'—Then, He 'who hateth nothing that he hath made, and doth forgive the sins of all them that are penitent,' will love and forgive us.—Then will he favourably receive our petitions; and for his love and mercy's sake, grant us perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Episcopal Watchman.*

Gutzlaff in China.—At Pco-to, says Rev. Mr. Gutzlaff, in his journal, the people became excessively clamorous for Christian books. At first I had brought my stores on shore; but finding that the great crowds bore me down and robbed me of every leaf, I entered into a boat and sat down, while multitudes of boisterous applicants were on the shore: they now waded, and even swam, in order to get near me, and carried off in triumph the precious gift. Thousands and thousands of books have been thus scattered.

* Lent is from the Saxon, and means "Spring." It contains forty days from Ash Wednesday to Easter, exclusive of Sundays, which are never to be observed as fasts.