

The Church.

45678

SUNDAY SCHOOL FESTE.
On Thursday last, being the day appointed for the public examination of the several Sunday Schools in connection with the Church of England in this Parish, the examinations were conducted at an early hour, amid troops of cheerful faces, to the Sunday School room in the basement of Christ's Church. This spacious apartment was filled to overflowing, and we conjectured that there could be little less than three hundred children present. The arrangement of the forms for the children, and the seats for the spectators, was judicious and convenient, and the proceedings throughout were conducted with great propriety and decorum. They commenced with a general anthems uniting in singing the "Morning Hymn," after which prayers were said, and then the examination of the several classes—from the smallest children who could not read a word, to the highest proficients in the School. The answer was highly satisfactory, and in a few particular instances deserving of extraordinary commendation. The subjects were elementary questions on Scripture History, the Church of England, and a portion of the Gospel of St. Luke.

Before distributing the prizes, an abundant supply of tokens glistening before long eyes, Mr. Geddes addressed the children—*"Good morning!"—* pressing the happiness he felt in witnessing the scene before him, and concluding his address upon the abundant success which, under the blessing of God, had been permitted to them.

He bore a warm testimony to the value of Sunday School instructions—signal proofs of which he had witnessed in seasons of death and family afflictions (for many little children they knew were carried off by death every year), and the prayers and hymns they had learned in the Sunday School were at such times a source of the greatest comfort and delight. He referred to the deceased Mr. W. G. Campbell, whose name was dear to their pastor—the first congregation scarcely numbering 30 or 40 souls—a striking contrast to what was then exhibited in the assembly of nearly 300 of the lambs of God's flock.

Well might he exclaim with Jacob of old: "With my staff I passed over this Jordan and now I am become two bands!"—for at present there were in active and successful operation no less than four Sunday Schools in connection with our venerable Church—one in Christ's Church, another in the Tabernacle, and two others, for the children around the Pines, and two others, in the Southern and Western extremities of the City, at the residence of private individuals, to whom he felt greatly indebted for their indefatigable and zealous exertions.

To all the superintendents and teachers he begged to say, that his warmest acknowledgements—they were his fellow-labourers and had rendered good and faithful service to the sacred and interesting cause in which they were associated; and the interest and pleasure with which they instilled into the minds of children the precious truths of God's holy word, which are able to make them wise unto salvation, and into their hearts the love of that Saviour who died for them on the cross, and who further testified his tender affection by that winning invitation—"Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." His own feelings were the more interested in the scene before him, because a large number of the children had been baptized by himself over them with a father's affection and love. He heart's desire and prayer to God for them was, that they might be saved—he exhorted them, therefore, to persevere in the right path, and concluded with expressing a fervent hope that at the last great examination day, when parents and children, teachers and pupils should all undergo the scrutiny of the Most High—they might all be included in the grand procession "Come ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world," and then appropriate the words: "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

After the Address, about 150 prizes were distributed, with a few words of commendation to the most deserving, and the whole assemblage were then invited to partake of some refreshments prepared for them, on the lawn in front of the Rector's residence—where, a Committee of Ladies (teaching in the Sunday School) had been busy in their preparations. Extended tables had been spread under the shade, and these were abundantly supplied with various dishes, and other refreshments.

The Queen of the Ocean Yacht with the crew to come to her assistance. Her owner, Mr. Thomas Littlefield, with whom were Sir Thomas, Mr. M. A. Hobin, Mr. Park, and Mr. Aufreiter, offered the boat to be lowered, and proceeded with anxiety and zeal, aided by the gentlemen named and the crew of his craft, to get up all within their reach. I may just here observe the last thing I did was to throw over a topgallant yard, made fast with a rope to keep it along side.

The carpenter and one or two of the men assisted me to do this, and I then told those who could hear me to jump overboard and cling to the spar.

In a few minutes the mizen mast went overboard—a few minutes more and the main mast shared the same fate.

There yet remained the fore-mast. As the fire was making its way to the fore part of the vessel, the passengers and crew, of course crowded still further forward, and the jib-boom, which was hanging by a single cable, could—over a yard long—be seen clinging in clusters to the mizzen mast, and when it was cut, fell overboard, snapping the cables of the jib-boom, which, with its load of human beings, dropped amidst the most heart-rending screams, both of those on board, and those who were falling into the water.

Some of the poor creatures were enabled again to reach the vessel, others floated away on spars, but many met with a watery grave.

I crowded I gave orders to get the ship's boats afloat. Two were got overboard, and while in the act of getting the other ready, and cutting away the lashings, the fire reached them, and they were soon engulfed in the flames. On seeing this the passengers became more unmanageable than ever. It was a awful moment. The shrieks of terror and alarm baffle all description.

Maddened by despair, and in the vain hope of being rescued they knew not how, numbers again jumped overboard. Seeing their end nigh, and the awful sacrifice of life which was going on, despite of every effort which I made, I directed that those who left might cling by their tiller until I could get them to a safe port.

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