

ANCIENT BABYLON—ITS RUINS.—It may be known to many of our readers that the French government has employed a party of gentlemen to explore the site of ancient Babylon. From reports just received from them, it appears that they have ascertained, beyond reasonable doubt, that the ruins beneath a tumulus called the Kasr, are those of the marvellous palace-citadel of Semiramis and Nebuchadnezzar. They are in such a state of confusion and decay, that it is impossible to form from them any idea of the extent or character of the edifice. They appear, however, to extend beyond the bed of the Euphrates, a circumstance accounted for by the change in the course of that river.—In them have been found sarcophagi, of clumsy execution and strange form, and so small, that the bodies of the dead must have been packed up in them, the chin touching the knees, and the arms being pressed on the breast by the legs. These sarcophagi have every appearance of having been used for the lowest class of society; but notwithstanding the place in which they were found, the discoverers are inclined to think that they are of Parthian not Chaldean origin.—There have also been found numerous fragments of enamelled bricks, containing portions of the figures of men and animals, together with cruciform inscriptions, the latter white in colour on a blue ground. According to M. Fresnel, the chief of the expedition, these bricks afford a strong proof that the ruins are those of the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, inasmuch as the ornaments on them appear to be sporting subjects, such as are described by Ctesias and Diodorus. The foundations having been dug down to in certain parts, it has been ascertained that they are formed of bricks about a foot square, united by strong cement.

In a tumulus called Auran, to the mouth of the Kasr, interesting discoveries have also been made.—They appear to be the ruins of the dependencies of the palace situated on the left bank of the Euphrates; and they contain numerous sarcophagi in which were found skeletons clothed in a sort of armor, and wearing crowns of gold on their heads. When touched, the skeletons, with the exception of some parts of the skulls, fell into dust; but the iron, though rusty, and the gold of the crowns, are in a fair state of preservation. Mr. Fresnel thinks that the dead in the sarcophagi were some of the soldiers of Alexander or Selucus. The crowns are simple bands, with three leaves in shape of laurel on one side, and three on the other. The leaves are very neatly executed. Beneath the bands are leaves of gold, which it is supposed covered the eyes. From the quantity of iron found in some of the coffins, it appears that the bodies are entirely enveloped in it, and in one there was no iron, but some ear-rings, a proof that it was occupied by a female. The sarcophagi are about two and three-quarter yards in length, by between half and three-quarters of a yard wide, and are entirely formed of bricks and mortar. In addition to, all this a tomb, containing statues in marble or alabaster of Juno, Venus, and of a reclining figure wearing a Phrygian cap, together with some rings, ear-rings, and other articles of jewelry, have been found, as have also numerous statuettes, vases, phials, articles of pottery, black stones, etc., of Greek, Persian, or Chaldean workmanship.—*Literary Gazette.*

THE LIGHTNING—A FEW HINTS.—It may be well to encourage timid people who are religiously or constitutionally alarmed at lightning, to state the doctrine of chances. As a general thing the lightning does not strike within the space of a square mile more than once a year. If the person is a rod distant, he is seldom if ever killed. Now, there are 70,400 square rods in a square mile, and if the lightning struck rod after rod, it would take 190 years to go over it; but it smites here and there, and that it will smite any special rod there is not more than one chance to a hundred billion.

Again, other things being equal, the chance diminishes as it regards a low object, as the difference between the square of its height and that of a lower; so that with a person six feet, and a tree sixty feet, there is but one chance out of 3364 of the person's being struck. If he will go close to a tree, or in a house with a rod, his danger is proportionally increased.

Again, objects non-conductors when dry become good conductors when wet. A dry silk umbrella, if not tipped with metallic substance, will ward off the lightning; but if wet, not. Get lightning rods for your houses, and see to it that the fastenings be much smaller than the rods, that the rods enter the earth, and fear not the "red artillery."

It were well for persons who are naturally timid to get electrified a number of times. It renders them

less electric, and therefore less in danger. Finally, a death by lightning is the easiest of all deaths. And electric shock enters, we are instantly killed, and life is gone without a pang. "Ah! but the hereafter!" Well, live right here, and it will be all right with you hereafter—if it must be so.

THE VATICAN.—This word is often used, but there are many who do not understand its import. The term refers to a collection of buildings on one of the seven hills of Rome, which cover a space of 1200 feet in length and 1000 in breadth. It is built on the spot once occupied by the garden of the cruel Nero. It owes its origin to the Bishop of Rome, who, in the early part of the sixth century, erected a humble residence on its site. About the year 1150, Pope Eugenius rebuilt it on a magnificent scale. Innocent II, a few years afterwards, gave it up as a lodging to Peter II., King of Arragon. In 1035, Clement V., at the instigation of the King of France, removed the Papal See from Rome to Avignon, when the Vatican remained in a condition of obscurity and neglect for more than seventy years. But soon after the return of the pontifical court to Rome, an event which had been earnestly prayed for by the poor Petrarch, and which finally took place in 1376, the Vatican was put into a state of repair, again enlarged, and it was thenceforward considered as the regular place and residence of the Popes, who one after the other, added fresh buildings in it and gradually enriched it with antiquities, statues, pictures and books, until it became the richest depository in the world.

The Library of the Vatican was commenced fourteen hundred years ago. It contains 40,000 manuscripts among which are some by Pliny, St Thomas, St Charles Borromeo, and many Hebrew, Syriac, Arabian, and Armenian Bibles.

The whole of the immense buildings composing the Vatican are filled with statues, found beneath the ruins of ancient Rome; with paintings by the masters, and with curious medals, and antiquities of almost every description. When it is known that there have been exhumed more than 70,000 statues from the ruined temples and places of Rome, the reader can form some idea of the riches of the Vatican.

The Vatican will ever be held in veneration by the student, the artist, and the scholar. Raffaele and Michael Angelo are enthroned there, and their thrones will be as enduring as the love of beauty and genius in the heart of their worshippers.

Correspondence.

SONGS OF THE CHURCH.

No. 45.

DEPARTURE OF MISSIONARIES.

"And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel unto every creature"—St. Mark xvi. 16.

BESTOW'D by Thy all-bounteous hand,
All we possess, O Lord, is Thine;
And rising up at Thy command,
That all, we gratefully resign.

To preach the Word, and bear the Cross
Through scenes of sorrow and dismay,
And count all present gains but loss,
That cause our feeble steps to stray.

The home in which our childhood sped,
The friends that round our hearts entwined,
The place where lies our cherish'd dead,
All, all to Jesus we resign.

Within the Church our home is found,
In ev'ry hour, in ev'ry land,
And where the Saviour's poor abound,
Our friends are in their lowly land.

Our hostel like the desert Isle,*
Where God's pavilion open'd wide,
Is made the scene in which awhile
We wait for light at eventide.

When having wrought in faith and love,
Our shifting tent is taken down,
We find our resting place above,
And wear the never-fading crown.

When changed in our Easter birth, †
The face of Jesus we behold,
And all we sacrifice of earth
Is recompensed a hundred fold. †

Redeem'd, and by his love constrain'd,
O, may we with the angels vie,
To serve the cause in which He deign'd
To toil, to suffer, and to die.

* Psalm.

† St. Luke xx. 36. ‡ St. Matthew xix. 29.

This sacred song is inscribed to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, in commemoration of her glorious work, and the belief that it

has awakened in the bosom of thousands similar sentiments of devotion.

W. D.

FOR THE CHURCH TIMES.

ORIGINAL.

"Thy will be done."—St. Luke, 11 c. 2d. verse.

O! WHEN my skies are bright and clear,
And scarce a straying cloud appear
To mar the brilliance of that ray
That gilds my path, and guides the way;
When fortune fair doth smile on me,
From pain, and want, and sorrow free;
When radiant beams the morning sun,—
Will may I feel "Thy will be done!"

When loving friends are near to share,
And sympathize in ev'ry care;
When each wild wish, and wayward will
It is their purpose to fulfil;
When not a sorrow or a loss
Calls me to bear the Christian's cross;
With gratitude my heart would say,—
"Thy will be done"—as 'tis this day.

But when upon the unshelter'd soul
The waves of sorrow densely roll,
And sadly, vainly I lament
Past blessings all too illly spent,
And pleasures like the summer fly,
Whose life is to be born and die;
When drear and lonely is my hearth,—
Still may "Thy will be done on Earth."

Lo! in the thickest of the storm,
I see my Saviour's suffering form,
And know that he who died to save
Our souls from an eternal grave,
With wisdom scatters ev'ry thorn,
That 'thwart the path of life is borne;
That when the mortal race is run,
God's will may evermore be done!

The Church Times.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, JULY 16, 1853.

NEW CHURCH.—On Saturday last, the 16th inst. the frame of a new Church, 44 by 24, was raised at Ship Harbour, Co. of Halifax, about 45 miles from this city, in the Mission of the Rev. Mr. Jamieson, making the 5th Church which that laborious Clergyman has been instrumental in building or completing, along the Eastern Shore. This new edifice is found necessary to replace the old one, which is insufficient for the accommodation of the people.

The occasion seems to have been a very happy one. About 200 persons were present, to whom Mr. Jamieson, after prayers and singing the 100th Psalm, delivered an appropriate address, the service concluding with Heber's Missionary hymn.

The building was speedily raised without accident, and those engaged in the work were afterwards refreshed by a substantial repast, prepared on the spot by Mrs. Jamieson. It is gratifying to be able to add that the people have contributed to the full extent of their means, and even beyond their ability. The materials for completing the out- are nearly provided and the work will proceed without delay.

BRUSHING UP.—St. Paul's Church was painted last year, St. Luke's in the south has just gone through the same very much needed process, and now St. George's of the north is about to be subjected inside and out to the painter's brush, not before it was wanted. A resolution which passed at a late Vestry Meeting to defray the expense by subscription, we doubt not will liberally responded to by the parishioners. All this is as it should be, and it is to be hoped that these Sacred Buildings will never again be allowed to assume the dingy hue which they wore for so long a period. The Garrison Chapel must be added to the renovated list.

COLONIAL CHURCH AND SCHOOL SOCIETY.—An examination of the Society's school at the Nine-mile House, took place on Wednesday last in presence of the Rector of Sackville, the Rector of St. George's, Rev. Mr. Dunn (the Society's agent), and several of the Corresponding Committee, besides a large number of ladies and gentlemen from the city and neighbourhood of the school. The examination of the pupils was satisfactory and very creditable to the Teacher (Miss Parker.) The children, about thirty-five in number, were neat in their person, and very respectful and orderly in their behaviour. The school was tastefully ornamented inside with wreaths of flowers, and branches of trees. The grounds around were also decked with spruce trees, temporarily formed into avenues and arches. The proceedings commenced with singing and prayer. At the close of the examination an address from the Inhab-