

Re. Opening of the Parish Church
and Consecration of Chancel
and South Aisle.

Friday, August, 7, 1891

The following preliminary notice of this event appeared in the Duch Ecclesiastical Gazette of July 31, 1891, and also in the Belfast News Letter, and the Portadown News:-

The works connected with the renovation of Seagoe Church, from the plans of the Architect, Mr. Thomas Drew, R. H. A., have occupied the Contractors, Messrs. Collier Bros., of Portadown, for the past eighteen months, and are now very nearly completed. They embrace almost the entire reconstruction of the Church, (with the exception of the West Wall and the Tower), and the addition of a Chancel and South Aisle. A new roof, also, has been provided for the Nave, and the old Vestry, at the centre of the North Side of the Nave, has been converted into a spacious Porch, with lofty oak doors, and adorned externally with cut-stone clappings and buttresses. The new Vestry forms part of the Chancel buildings. The old windows, with wooden frames, have been replaced by handsome stone traceries, in keeping with those in the new portions, and all designed harmoniously in the Perpendicular Gothic style which distinguishes the whole building.

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The windows have all been filled in, according to the designs of the Architect, with Cathedral-tinted glass, supplied by Messrs. Forest & Co., Liverpool; except the East window of the Aisle in which is inserted stained glass representing our Lord Consoling Mary and Martha (John xi, 23, 32), furnished by Mrs. G. Moore St. Davell, of London, and erected by the Atkinson family in memory of their parents, the late Mr. Woolsey Atkinson and Mrs. Charles Atkinson, of Eden Hill, Portadown. The roofs of the nave, Aisle, and Chancel are very beautiful, and, as the Architect writes, ^{the nave-roofs} of a design not usual in other Churches of the Diocese, - a four-centred arched framing springing from hammer-beams, and all richly moulded and peculiarly massive, and bearing the character of the 15th century English roofs? They are all of pitch pine, left without staining or varnish. In the nave, the ends of the hammer-beams are adorned with carved figures. The new Aisle 38 feet long and 21 feet wide, and giving 200 additional seats - takes the place of the huge gallery which disfigured even the old Norman nave, and has now been removed. The Aisle opens into the nave with three lofty pointed arches. The Chancel similarly opens, but with an arch of loftier proportions; and like arches adorn the north and south sides of the Chancel opening to the organ-chamber and

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and Vestry, and to a lateral Aisle or
Chantry, respectively. Over the Chancel -
Arch, on the Nave side, is the illuminated
Text - "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Al-
most mighty, which was, and is, and is to
come." The Chancel itself, 25 feet long
by 18 feet wide is a memorial of the late
Stewart Blacker, Esq. D. L., of Canwick blades;
and has been built at the sole cost of
his sister, the Baroness von Stieglitz, who has
also defrayed two-thirds of the expense of
the roof of the Nave. She has besides made
most generous provision for the fittings,
and a pavement of the Chancel, inclu-
ding a superb cloth of crimson Utrecht
velvet, with hand-wrought central designs,
from Messrs. Cox, Sons, Buckley & Co., London,
who also supplied the chancel-text. At her
expense likewise, benches of solid oak
have been placed in the Chancel for the choir,
with the Prayer-desk, and Reader's Seat,
both the latter being hand-carved.
The Chancel and all the passages of the
Church have been laid in Peck's first
quality red Staffordshire tiles; and the
floor of the Sanctuary in opposite mosaic
tiling, specially designed by Mr. Drew,
and supplied by Messrs. Craven, Dum-
mell & Co., Jackfield Works, Shropshire. The
Pulpit - the gift of a generous friend -
is of oak, set upon a Bath-stone base. It is
richly carved, and, on the figures on the
hammer-beams

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hammer. Beacus, is from the works of
of Mr. A. P. Sharp, Dublin. The capitals of
the columns have been carved with much
beauty by Messrs. C. W. Harrison and Sons,
Sculptors, Dublin.

All the seats in the Church are open.
Now with the new aisle are of pitch pine, left
unstained and unvarnished. The old
seats in the nave, after very extensive and
careful repairs, have been replaced, and
have been stained and varnished. The Font,
which is supposed to be nearly 300 years old,
has been stripped of the paint with which it
had been coated in modern times, and has
been placed upon a large stone base in the
nave, near the entrance from the new porch.
The walls of the Church have all been finish-
ed in Dunoseo, of a terra-cotta colour, which
harmonises effectively with the White Bath
stone which is freely used in the columns, ar-
ches, jambs of windows, and all interior work.
The traceries of the windows and all the ex-
ternal work are wrought in Down fair
red sandstone, from the Annan quarries.
The lamps in the Chancel, Vestry, and porch,
all of wrought iron and brass, are from the
house of Messrs. J. W. Singer & Sons, Frome; who
have also supplied the brass communion-rail
and standards of wrought iron gilt, after
the design of the architect. The standards
lamps in the nave and aisle have been
furnished by Messrs. Richard Patterson & Co., Belfast.

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The heating of the Church is effected by the system of Mr. John Grundy, Tyldesley Works, near Manchester, who has erected a double furnace in the heating-chamber beneath the Vestry, with suitable vents in the floor of the Chancel, nave, and aisle. The Messrs. Collier Bros. have very faithfully carried out Mr. Drew's plans, and have spared no pains to recede that building in all its parts worthy of their deserved reputation for careful workmanlike. To the genius of the eminent Architect the Church of Ireland is indebted, as in so many other instances, for a House of God remarkable for its beauty and secure adaptation for Divine Worship, in the place of a structure unfitting and wholly devoid of any semblance of architectural grace. It has been arranged to have the Re-Opening Service on Friday afternoon, 7th August next, when the Chancel and aisle will be consecrated by the Lord Bishop of Down and Connor and Down. The sermon on the occasion will be preached by the Very Reverend the Dean of Connor (J. Walter Murray, D.D.).

The weather on Friday, 7th August, was very favourable. Multitudes thronged to the Church as soon as it was opened for service, and eventually it was densely packed with a congregation which occupied not only the seats but every available space in porch, north, &c. At least 750 were present. Many came

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by train, chiefly from Belfast, accord for their convenience conveyances were provided which brought them from the Station to the Church, and afterwards from the Rectory to the Station.

The Venerable and Primate hoped to have been present, but at the last he was, his regret prevented coming by an unavoidable engagement.

At 2.30 the Clergy, a better number of about 54, assembled in the Parochial School-house, and after robing they proceeded thence in order, to meet the Bishop at the Lower door of the Church. Among them present were the following:—

The Lord Bishop of Down (Dr. Wm. Reeves); The Baron von Stieglitz, Sir von Stieglitz, Mr. Reeves, Miss Reeves, and Rev. Canon Blacker, Council-Blacker; W. Christie-Miller Esq. Mr. and Miss Christie-Miller, Kircassock; Very Rev. The Dean of Connor (J. Walter Murray D.D.); Rev. Canon Hare Duke, D.D., and Mrs. Duke, Glenraig; Rev. Mr. J. Welland, D.D., W. Thomas; Belfast; Rev. Richard Dromie D.D., W. Stephens, Belfast; Rev. Precentor Fitzgerald, D.D., Mr. and Miss Fitzgerald, Portadown Glebe; Rev. Lewis Richards D.D., Dungannon Rectory; Rev. M. James, D.D., Tartaraghan Rectory; Rev. Prebendary Hartwick, Ballynure Rectory; Rev. Canon Harding and Mrs. Harding, Gilford Vicarage; Rev. A. Dawson, Dr. W.R. Dawson, The Misses Dawson (3), Miss Wade and Miss Peck, Seagoe Rectory; Rev. J. Knox Barklie and Mrs. Barklie, Moira Rectory; Rev. J.W. Glendon
Mr.

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Mr. Clarendon, Dr. Clarendon, and Mr. Clarendon Senr., Magheralin Rectory; Rev. E. D. Atkinson and Mrs. Atkinson, Donagh-cloney Rectory; Rev. H. W. Lott, Char. Lott Esq., The Upper Lott (3), and Miss Hassard, Alexander Rectory; Rev. J. B. Harper, Mr. and Mrs. Misses Harpur (2) and Miss Linn, Ardmore Rectory; Rev. J. Wm. Harper and Mr. Harpur, Muckamore Rectory; Rev. Henry J. Harper and Mr. Harper, Ardglass; Rev. Geo. Wade, John N. Wade Esq. and Mrs. Wade, Magherally Rectory; Rev. W. C. Barker and Mr. Barker, Kilbroney Vicarage; Rev. W. O'Neill Tindesay, Barons Court Parsonage; Rev. R. A. Roman and Mr. Roman, Hillsborough Rectory; Rev. Wm. Munn, Mr & Miss Munn, Lullyloch Rectory; Rev. O. W. Scott, All Saints, Belfast; Rev. W. W. Cadogan, Tancred Rectory; Rev. W. P. Magee, Mr. Magee and Miss McKinstery, Kilmore; Rev. J. W. Austin, and Mr. Austin, Drumcra Rectory; Rev. F. W. Hagan, Eglantun Vicarage; Rev. J. G. Brinton, Killinchy Rectory; Rev. P. A. Kelly, Scarva Rectory; Rev. Clement Dempsey, Mallobilly Rectory; Rev. Richard Cracken and Mr. Cracken, Portadown; Rev. B. Banks, Lambey Vicarage; Rev. W. Graham Murphy, Newry Glebe, Armagh; Rev. Miss A. S. Austin, Geo. R. Bell, K. C. Bormskill, Mrs. Connell, M. Talbot, T. J. Hackett, W. J. Macaulay (Pres. Ministry), R. Quirk (Curate of Seaford), ^{Chas. Shaw (Miss Mary & John)} Geo. Rees, J. A. Stephenson, Joseph A. Stewart, and B. Finch White; Nos.

Draw

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Drew, Esq. R. H. A. and Mrs. Drew; James Mal-
 colm Esq. D. L. and Mrs. Malcolm, Turgan;
 Mrs. Dawson, Esq. (Timon); Geo. Greer Esq. J. P.
 and Miss Dalton, Turgan; J. Beebley, Atkin-
 son Esq. and Mrs. Atkinson, Portadown;
 W. R. Atkinson, Esq., Mrs. Atkinson, and
 Miss Atkinson, Eden Villa; Mrs. J. P. At-
 kinson, Portadown; Miss Cadogan, Miss Butler,
 Miss Sloane, Miss Ffords, Miss Rankin, and
 Miss Topping, Roughlan; Mrs. Green and the
 Misses Green (2), Du Wildemup, Turgan; Mrs. F. W.
 Gayer, Scapatick House; Miss Johnston Esq. J. P.
 Portadown; Mrs. Johnston Esq. and Miss
 Johnston, Turgan; Miss Dawson, Down-
 Gorman; John Maccom Esq. and Miss Ma-
 com, Magravaty; A. Maccom Esq. and
 Miss Maccom, Dungor; J. R. Maccom Esq.;
 Miss Maccom and Miss King, Rutwilliam
 Park, Belfast; St. John G. Braddell Esq.
 Mrs. and Miss Braddell, Woodbrook;
 Richmond Pepper Esq. and Miss Pepper,
 Ballyworkan; Miss Twigg and the Misses
 Finch White, Warrington; Mrs. D. Gibson Esq. R. H.
 and Mrs. Gibson, Cam House; John
 Collier Esq. J. P. and Miss Collier, Killyco-
 main House; Mrs. Mrs. Paul Esq. J. P.;
 Wentworth Paul, Esq.; John Oates Esq. and
 the Misses Oates, Keshmuncully, Par-
 sonage; James Barris Esq. D. J., Dr. Dougan,
 Dr. Hadden, Dr. Keran; the Misses Carroll
 Glen Cottage, Gilford; the Misses Upchurch
 Fairview, Aghacrossan; Miss M. J. P. O'Connell,
 Miss

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Messrs. Naylor (Warrington); Mr. Alfred Kim-
 Read; Mr. Shillington, Alta Villa; Mr.
 Alfred Shillington; Miss Curth, the
 Misses Montgomery; Mrs. Robinson Esq.
 and the Misses Robinson, Lytle House;
 Mr. William Reid and Mrs. Reid,
 Belfast; Messrs. Jas. Atkinson and
 Geo. Calcutt, Churchwardens; Messrs.
 Joseph Scovray and Gabriel W. Reil,
 Diocesan Synodmen; Messrs James
 Collins, Thomas Gilpin, John Towers,
 Mrs. Montgomery (St. Raphael), Joseph Mun-
 roe, Mrs. McCann, David W. Walker, and
 John Watson, Select Vestry; Messrs. Mrs.
 Montgomery, John Walker, Watson Walker,
 David Leonard (Belfast), Mrs. Finnamon
 (Downcross), Chas. J. Collins, Charles Wil-
 son (Downpatrick), Mrs. A. Wilson, &

The presbytery of the clergy, about 3 o'clock,
 met the Bishop at the West door of the Church.
 He was attended by his Chaplain, the Very Rev.
 the Dean of Connor, by whom the Pastoral
 Staff was borne before the Bishop. At the
 door the Bishop was received by the Rev. Abraham
 Dawson, Rector; Messrs. Jas. Atkinson and
 Geo. Calcutt, Churchwardens and other parishioners.
 Mr. Dawson presented to the Bishop the following
 "Petition for consecration of Chancel and
 South Aisle of Seago Church, August
 7th 1891."

To the Right Reverend Father in God,
William, by Divine permission, Lord
Bishop of Down and Connor and Down.

The 7th day of August, 1891.

The Petition of the Rector, Church-
wardens, and Parishioners, of the Parish
of Seacroft, in your Lordship's Diocese of
Down.

Humbly Sheweth - That the Parish Church
of Seacroft hath been lately enlarged by the ad-
dition of a Chancel and South aisle; the Chan-
cel having been erected as a memorial of the
late Stewart Blacker Esq., Deputy Lieutenant,
of Carrickblackur, by his Sister, the Baroness
Van Streight, and the South aisle, to meet the
requirements and convenience of the Parishioners;
by the subscriptions of the Baroness Van Streight,
the Parishioners, and friends, and by Grants
from the Lord Beresford Fund, and the Society
for Promoting Christian Knowledge London.

That your Petitioners have accepted the
change thereof, whenever the same shall be
consecrated.

That same have been adorned and fur-
nished with all things decent and necessary
for the Worship of God.

May it therefore please your Lordship
by virtue of your Episcopal Office:-

1. To separate the said Chancel and South
aisle from all common and profane uses,
and to dedicate the same to the service of God,
and also the said Chancel as a Memorial aforesaid.

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2. To assign the same to be perpetually a part or ~~portion~~ parcel of the said Church of Seago, for the use of the inhabitants of the said Parish.

Abraham Dawson - Rector

James Atkinson }
George Calvert } Clergymen

Hester Anna Van Stuyck }
James Abner }
James Collins }
J. M. Wilson }
David W. Walker }
Joseph Monroe }
Thomas Gilpin }
Label W. Reid } Parishioners

When Mr. Dawson had read this Petition he handed it to the Bishop, by whom it was handed to Mr. Robert Coburn, Pro-Registrar of Diocesis, for registration.

The Clergy lined the pews up the nave as far the entrance to the chancel, and the Bishop and senior clergy passed between repeating the 14th Psalm.

By permission of the Bishop, Rev. A. Dawson had drawn up and had printed the complete Order of Service to be used on the occasion, including the Psalms, Hymns, and Anthems. Mr. Dawson had also three copies of the Service handsomely bound in Morocco, and presented a copy each to

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to the Bishop, the Baroness von Stieglitz, and
 Mr. Drew.

After the preliminary Prayers of Consecration had been said by the Bishop, then sitting in his chair, the following Act or Sentence of consecration was read by the Pro-Registrar, Mr Robert Coburn, and was subsequently signed by the Bishop and handed over to the Pro-Registrar for registration.

"Deed of consecration of Chancel and South Aisle of Seagrove Church, August 7, 1891.

"In the Name of God, Amen. - Whereas the Parish Church of Seagrove in our Diocese of Down has been lately enlarged by the addition of a Chancel and South Aisle - the Chancel having been erected as a memorial of the late Stewart Blacker, Esq., Deputy Lieutenant, of Carrickblacker, by his sister the Baroness von Stieglitz, and the South Aisle to meet the requirements and convenience of the parishioners, by the subscriptions of the Baroness von Stieglitz, the parishioners and other friends, and by grants from the Lord Beresford Fund, and the Society for Promoting Christian Reciprocity (London); and which Chancel and South Aisle have been adorned and furnished with all things decent and necessary for the worship of God. And whereas the Rector, Churchwardens, and Parishioners of the said Parish

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Parish have requested of us to separate the said Chancel and South Aisle from all common and profane uses, and to consecrate the same:

Now, therefore, We, William, by Divine permission Lord Bishop of Down and Connor and Drogheda, willing to comply with their pious and religious desire, Do for ever separate the said Chancel and South Aisle from all common and profane uses, and do consecrate, devote, and dedicate the same to the worship of God and the celebration of Divine service; and we ordain that, from henceforth forever, public prayer be openly read in the same according to the use of the Church of Ireland, the Word of God sincerely preached, the Sacraments administered, and that all other matters be done and performed which by the laws of God, and the Canons and other ordinances of the Church, can or may be done ~~and performed~~ towards Divine worship to the glory of God and to the edifying of the Church.

And we ordain and constitute the said Chancel and South Aisle for ever hereafter, a part or parcel of the said Church of Leago, to and for the use of the Inhabitants within ~~the~~ said Parish. And we do consecrate the said Chancel and South Aisle to the honour of God and to holy uses; the said Chancel as a Memorial to the late Stewart Blacker, Esquire, Deputy Lieutenant.

And

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And we also dedicate the said Church by the name of "St. Gobhan"; and we pronounce, decree, and declare that the same are consecrated, and that they ought to remain so to future times: Reserving, nevertheless, to ourselves and our Successors, Bishops of Down and Connor and Dromore, the power of visiting the same when we, or they, shall think it our office so to do, in order that we may see that the same be taken care of in its repairs, and ornaments, and that all things be observed therein canonically and orderly: All which we decree and confirm for us and our Successors, Bishops of Down and Connor and Dromore.

In faith and testimony whereof we have signed our name and caused our Episcopal Seal to be hereunto affixed, this seventh day of August, in the year of our Lord, Our Thousand Eight Hundred and ninety-one, and of our Consecration the sixth.

William Down and Connor and Dromore

(Seal)

The Evening Service was then proceeded with, the Prayers being said by the Rev. Abraham Dowdall, Rector, and Rev. Robert Devine, Curate. The First Lesson (2. Chron vi. 1 to 22) was read by Rev. James Handing, Rector of Silford; and the Second Lesson (Hebr. x. 19 to 26) by Rev. James Hare Duke, D.D., Rector of Glenoraig. The proper Psalms (84, 122, 132) were chanted. The Anthem was "O pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Ps. cxxii. 6, 7). The Hymns were 420 and 347; the latter being sung as the Clergy were retiring from the Church. The Very Rev. the Dean of

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of Connor (J. Walton Murray, D.D.) preached a most eloquent sermon from the text, Genesis xxii. 7 - "And he said, Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering?" with which he also connected Ps. cxxvii. 1 - "Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it." (P. B. Ver.). He referred to the joyful occasion in which they were met together in a house built for the praise of God, or restored in such a manner that it worthily expresses the feelings of those who use it for worship, and who desire to worship God in the beauty of holiness. That beauty is in a sense sacramental. It has an outward and visible sign in the stone and wood and skilful device of the Architect; but it is not complete without that inner spiritual grace, which is fully spiritual life, which contemplates a spiritual temple built of living stones, a temple whose walls are salvation and whose gates are praise. - The only answer which could have satisfied the question of Isaac (in the text), was that which Abraham gave - "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for the burnt offering." The provision of God would come in to supply the necessity. This special case may easily be extended so as to afford a general principle applicable to all sorts and conditions of worship.

"All worship demands sacrifice. The idea of sacrifice pervades it from first to last; but it is only when we come to that which is last that the true sacrifice is reached which sanctifies the whole work. - To put this matter in another

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Another way, we may say that in our worship there are certain things which we provide, and above all there is that which God provides. God's provision does not absolve us from ours; it only crowns our work. There are certain sacrifices which as Christian men we can offer, and are bound to offer to God.

"1) Thus we are told in Hebrews xiii, 16, 'To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.' This communication must always have in view the honour and glory of God. Yes, always. Whether its object be the relief of human suffering or wants, or, like the ointment which Mary poured upon the head of Jesus - it has for its object the glory of the house in which we worship Him, and which we desire to be in some sense the expression of our self-denying love.

"2) Again we are exhorted in the same Chapter (ver. 15) to 'offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to His Name.' Now we have something which gives a higher glory to the house which we have builded, even the incense which must fill the house, and ascend from it to the throne of God.

"3) And yet again there is, as St. Paul tells us, another sacrifice, Rom. xii, 1. 'I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.' This is the sacrifice of self - of soul
and

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and body, of word and act, of entire surrender to Him who, having given us all things, says - "My son, give Me thy heart?"

And yet, my brethren, when all this is said and done we have not reached the climax - Still we may take up the words of Isaac and say - "Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" The building is there in all the beauty of its architecture; the song is there with its wealth of harmony; the worshipper is there kneeling upon his knees with bowed head and folded hands, and it may be with unutterable yearnings in his heart; but after all what is to make the place none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven? What, to make incense of praise a sweet smelling savour in the Presence above? What, to translate the unutterable yearnings into articulate words of joy and gladness? Only that offering of which the offering in Mount Moriah was but a humble type; only that Offering offered once, and offered once for all on Calvary; only that Offering proclaimed in the preaching of the Gospel, pleaded in the prayer, pleaded in the hymn, pleaded in the Divine memorial of the Saviour's cross and passion. Then, and only then is the work complete, when it finds its end, its climax, its culminating triumph in the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.

Such thoughts are in full accord with the occasion on which we meet to-day, and
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with the position and progress of the Church of Ireland in her disestablished state. The results of the late Census have indicated a decrease in the number of our Church members—a decrease which has been shared in by the Roman Catholics on the one hand, and by the Presbyterians on the other. And with regard to that fact it may be said, that, whilst any decrease is a matter of regret, it was to be expected; and the wonder is, having regard to the circumstances of our own Church, that it was not in any case larger than it has proved to be.

The ten years, from 1881 to 1891, were years of deep and sad significance for our country, marked by unrest and agitation, by poverty and distress, and by changes almost amounting to social revolution. Now, whilst we do not and cannot deny that all classes in our community have felt the effects of bad seasons, and the commercial depression resulting from the disturbed state of the country, we can truly say that there was one class upon which the social revolution bore more heavily than on the others, and that class was mostly composed of members of our ancient Church. We can speak truly of distress all around, but we must not forget the distress which fell heavily on some whose voices, if they pleaded at all, were lost in the general clamour—distress which pressed all the more heavily because it pressed on those who were not accustomed to bear it.

Not

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Not the least sad chapter in the story of the sorrow of Ireland would be that chapter which, if it were truly written, would tell of families scattered, of houses shut up, of gentle ladies reduced to abject poverty, of congregations thinned by the exodus of accustomed members, and of churches crippled by the failure of subscriptions from those who had the will, but no longer the power, to subscribe. That a decrease should have taken place in our numbers was only to be expected, that it is no larger than it has proved to be, under all the circumstances, is a matter of thankfulness to God. And especially it is a matter of thankfulness that in this United Diocese of Down and Connor and Drogheda, our numbers have been well kept up, and the deficiencies of some districts more than supplemented by the great increase of our Church members in the centres of population. Is it not after all something to say that in the city of Belfast our numbers have gone up by leaps and bounds, and that the 29,000 of thirty years ago has multiplied to the 83,000 of the present year? —

I am led on this day to speak of our doings in the way of Church Restoration, so signally illustrated in this house of God in which we are now assembled. Church restoration is a good thing, because it rests on good principles. It has to do with all those sacrifices of which I have been speaking — sacrifices which, as
Christians

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Christians, we can make, and are bound to make for the honour and glory of God. It has to do with getting rid of the idea that any sort of building will do for a church, and with impressing on us the thought that in this, as in all other things, we are not to offer unto God that which costs us little or nothing, but rather that which is the very best we have to give. Judge in yourselves, my brethren, which of these two things is more congruous with the glory of God, and the ideal of worship - four bare walls and a flat ceiling, unlovely pews, and still more unlovely three-decks hiding in mercy from our view a mean table, which yet we call the Table of the Lord; a building meaning nothing, and therefore teaching nothing; in which it is a weariness to the flesh to kneel or to sit; in which brightness and beauty are conspicuous by their absence; - or a building in which the pointed arch and lofty roof conspire to lift up our thoughts; and the Holy Font, and place of prayer, and Pulpit and Table of the Lord remind us of our entrance into the Church Militant and our progress towards the Church Triumphant?

All over the land we see signs and tokens of church life in church restoration; and in this United Diocese there are now few churches in town or country that have not received some touch of grace from the skilful hand of the architect. - To-day
 Clergy

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Clergy and laity meet within the walls of this church, a building raised upwards of seventy years ago, in an ancient parish; but a building now so transformed, so improved with fitness and beauty, that those who knew it in its former state may well look around them in wonder. Is there not a cause for thankfulness? If you go down to the South of Ireland, you will find many churches with wealthy congregations exhibiting the marks of loving care and liberal expenditure, and would it not be a subject of deep regret if it were the case that in a parish which can boast of more than three thousand church people, the parish church remained in the condition in which it was previous to its restoration? And once more, is there not a cause for thankfulness that God has moved one warm heart and open hand to such noble liberality as to make this restoration possible? I go joyfully with those who say that the small contributions of the great body of the faithful, are being precious, because they show that each one is doing what he can, and because they give all a common interest in the progress of the church. But we are not to lose sight of the fact that great works require great sacrifices, and large contributions are the part of those who have been entrusted by God with the power to make them.

"But now I must bring you back to our text.

Behold

'Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering?' Deep and fear-reaching words, which speak of profession, of work, and of interest in work; and yet which tell us that one thing more is needful. Oh, my friends, these words come home to us as members of a disestablished Church, who have, each in our own departments, to labour for the reconstruction and consolidation of our temporalities. Is it not more than possible that, in the absorbing interest of our lower though necessary work, we may rest content and look no higher; rest content with the wood and the fire, and never go on to the lamb for the burnt-offering? That is a question for us all, and for you, who time after time will come up to this house for worship. Will you rest in the beauty which human skill has created for you, and not reach up to the higher beauty of holiness? Will you offer the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of your lips, giving thanks to God's Name, and forget the words by which this command of Scripture is embodied in? And this is also a question for the Church of Ireland. For what is the reason of her existence? She does not exist for her temporalities; not for her seven millions⁺ useful and even necessary though they be; she exists not for these, but for her mission. She goes forth

⁺ Referring to the seven millions of Capital in the hands of the Representative Church Body.

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with the words of her Master. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." In that path of duty is the promise of success. Dark clouds may gather before her - new trials may await her - but if she goes on in the Spirit of the Lord, she will go on in the strength of the Lord. - God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. (Ps. 46, 5).⁷

The Collection was then made by the following Collectors:-

W. Christie-Miller Esq. appointed by	J. Buckley Atkinson Esq.
Jas. Malcolm Esq. D.D.	Mr. Jas. Atkinson
Geo. Green Esq. J.P.	Mr. Geo. Calvert
Thos. Dawson Esq. (Treas.)	Mr. D. W. Walker
Chas. Johnston Esq. J.P.	Mr. C. W. Reid
W. R. Atkinson Esq.	Mr. Thos. Gilpin

The amount of the Collection was £ 61 - 10 - 0.

The musical portion of the service was admirably rendered by the Choir, under the direction of the Organist, Mr. Thos. Henry Wilson. He had to take great ~~care~~ pains in their training and they responded to his efforts by assiduous attendance at the practices, and by putting forth their utmost energies in the rendering of their several parts. Mr. Wilson was ably assisted by his brother
Mr. Chas.

1891
Re-Opening of Parish Church

Mr. Chas. Wilson (Organist of Downpatrick Cathedral), who presided at the American Organ.

After the service about 150 guests were received at Tea at the Rectory.

The following congratulatory letter was subsequently received from the Bishop of Down:

"Leamway House, Dummurry,

C. Austrim:

August 10, 1891

My dear Mr. Dawson,

The proceedings of last Friday were such as to emphatically [demand] my congratulations on the happy result. It is a day to be long remembered in that region. It was very good of you to furnish me with so elegantly bound a copy of the special service.

God grant you and your people abundant fruits of holiness in the use of your beautified Church.

Yours faithfully,

Wm. Down-Counor

The Re-Opening Services were continued on Sunday, August 9, when the Sermon was preached by Rev. Thos. J. Welland, D.D., Rector of St. Thomas, Belfast; and on Sunday, August 16th, when the Sermon was preached by Rev. Richard R. Kean, D.D., Rector of Christ Church, Belfast. Very large congregations attended on both days.

Re - Opening of Parish Church

There were no special collectors on 9th August,
but on 16th Aug. the following collected at Evening Service:-

Mrs. D. ^{Eggen} Atkinson Esq. assisted by	Mr. Jas. Atkinson
Mr. ^{Wm. Dug. Locke} Chas. Montgomerie	Mr. Geo. Calvert
Mr. W. Poole	Mr. Geo. Gilpin
Mr. Geo. Collier	Mr. D. W. Walker
Dr. Douglas	Mr. Joseph Monroe
Mr. S. McGredy	Mr. Label W. Reid

At Evening Service the following collected

Mrs. D. Atkinson Esq. assisted by	Mr. Jas. Atkinson
Mr. Chas. Montgomerie	Mr. Geo. Calvert
Mr. Geo. Malcolmson	Mr. Jas. Albin
Mr. Geo. Walker jun.	Mr. C. J. Collins
Mr. Hugh Wallace	Mr. D. W. Walker
Mr. Rev. Jas. Urquhart	Mr. Joseph Monroe

The total collection at all the services
amounted to One Hundred and three Pounds
thirteen Shillings and six pence (£103. 13. 6).

The following offerings were also presented

Mr. A. Table Cloth

Mr. Chancel Stairs

(beside the Chancel Bandbox)

2 Patens of Solid Silver

Mr. Pulpit of Carved Oak

(costing £100)

Brass Altar Dish

6 Collecting Plates of Walnut

with Carved Covers

Mr. Barrow Van Straights

From Collection made by

Miss Selina Van Straights

Miss Carleton

Portadown

Rev. A. Dawson

Present & Past

Church-wardens, 1879-91:-

Mr. Jas. Atkinson

Mr. Geo. Calvert

Mr. Geo. Collins

Mr. Geo. Gilpin

Mr. Geo. Lavery

Mr. Joseph Murray

Mr. Label W. Reid

Mr. Wm. Robinson (1876)

Mr. D. W. Walker

Mr. Geo. Walker

Offerings continued:-

1. Glastonbury Chair
1. Brass A. Table Desk
2. Pede Mats
1 Comm^{ts} kneeling seat } Rev. Canon R. S. C.
Bladens
Woodbrooke, Eccleston, Chy
- 1 - Glastonbury Chair } Mrs. Helen Drwin,
Eccleston.

An oak lectern, to seat at the pulpit, has also been generously offered by Miss Carleton who has commissioned Mr. Thos. Drew R. H. A., to furnish design for same.

A stained glass window, designed by Mr. G. Mason McDowell, London, has been inserted by the Atkinson Family, in memory of their parents, Mr Woolsey Atkinson, and Mrs. Charlotte Atkinson (nee Buckley) of Eden Villa, in this parish.

It is also contemplated by the Baroness Von Steglitz to fill in the East Window, with stained glass, in memory of her relatives.