

The New Church.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE.

FOR many years past the project of building a new Anglican Church in Molong has been talked of, and funds have been raised and husbanded with this object in view ; but it was not until very recently that the movement assumed anything like definite shape. The old church had done good service ; but in these days of progress it was regarded as essential that a more modern structure should be erected to replace it, and with this object in view

Rev. Canon Alldis and his Parochial Council worked assiduously in season and out of season, with substantial results. Mr. W. Lamrock, architect, of Orange, was requested to prepare plans and specifications, and a tender was accepted, so that within a few short months Bank-street will be markedly improved in appearance and have an architectural addition to its public buildings. It is interesting to learn that St. John's has had some ten Incumbents since its establishment in 1857, as follow :—Rev. B. H. Mayne, 1857 to 1867 ; Rev. Graham Fox, intermediate from 1860 to 1862 ; Rev. Edward Synge (Chaplain to the Bishop of Sydney) occasionally during 1863 ; Rev. J. Stack, 1867 to 1873 ; Rev. F. B. Boyce (now Canon Boyce) 1873 to 1875 ; Rev. A. W. Gardiner, 1875 to 1877 ; Rev. W. K. Forbes, 1844 to 1855 ; Rev. G. A. Carver, 1885 to 1887 ; Rev. J. Alldis (now Canon) 1887 to date. Rev. Canon Alldis, it will be seen, has occupied his present position for bordering upon 20 years, and may now well-nigh be regarded as part and parcel of St. John's. To him is due credit for the persistency with which he has worked to secure the success achieved on Saturday last, when he said the stone laid of that new building on the erection of which he has so long set his heart.

The ceremony of laying the foundation stone was marred to a great extent on Saturday afternoon in consequence of rain which commenced to fall about an hour before the time fixed for proceedings to begin. Notwithstanding this fact quite a large gathering of all creeds assembled at the time, appointed, and took shelter under the spacious verandah of the Rectory. Portions of the service intended to be performed around the foundation stone had, perforce, to be recited in the church. Printed sheets detailing the order of service were distributed

cited in the church. Printed sheets detailing the order of service were distributed amongst the large assemblage and these Canon Alldis asked them to retain as a memento of the important occasion.

The neighbouring parishes of Cudal, Orange and Canoblas were represented by Revs. B. W. P. Montgomery, J. Lintott-Taylor, and Seaton respectively. Rev. Mr McGee (Presbyterian) was also present. The Bishop of the Diocese wrote regretting his inability to attend in consequence of illness. Rev. F. M. Dalrymple also wrote stating that circumstances prevented his attending such an important ceremony in his old parish. Apologies were also received from Mrs. Hebden, (enclosing (£5), Mr. George Bruce, Mr. W. Lamrock, Rev. B. J. Thomas and Mr. J. S. Parker, the two latter enclosing cheques for £1 1s and £5 respectively.

Canon Alldis had charge of the ceremonial portion. Miss Neilson presided at the organ, and Mr. Ralph Snelling made a very efficient choir conductor. Mr. A. S. Bridekirk, as secretary, flitted here and there, and came as near being ubiquitous as it was possible to be in the performance of his multifarious duties. Mr. Bridekirk is a model church secretary, and St. John's congregation are fortunate in having a man of such ability and energy to assist the clergyman.

The service in the Church was begun by the singing of hymn 391.

Canon Alldis then read the following scroll, which he afterwards placed in a bottle to be deposited in a cavity beneath the stone :—

The foundation stone of St. John's Church, Molong, in the Diocese of Bathurst was laid by Mrs. Jas Lee, of Larras Lake, on the 14th October in the year of Our Lord, 1905, King Edward VII being the reigning monarch of the British Empire; Lord Northcote Governor-General of the Australian Commonwealth; and Sir Harry Rawson State Governor of N.S.W.; the Most Rev. Dr. Davidson present Archbishop of Canterbury; the Most Rev. Dr. Samuarez-Smith Metropolitan of N.S.W., and Archbishop of Sydney, and Primate of Australia and Tasmania; Right Rev. Charles E. Camidge, D.D., Lord Bishop of Bathurst; Rev. Canon John Alldis, B.D., Rector of the Parish of Molong (since June 18, 1897); Hon. F. Jago Smith, M.L.C., Messrs. T. J. Coy, and C. E. Leak, Wardens of St. John's Church; Messrs. H. C. Betts, F. Betts, A. V. Barry, J. G. Donaldson, J. Fletcher, W. M. Hudson, A. E. Packer, Jas. Rubie, and C. Sheppard, members of Parochial Council; A. S. Bridekirk, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the Parish and Building Fund; the Rev. Canon Alldis, Hon. F. Jago Smith, H. C. Betts, aforesaid, with James Haslam, senr., and Michael Carroll, Trustees for the Church land in Molong.

The Church, under whose corner stone this scroll is deposited, is to be built of bricks, on concrete foundation, and tiled roof; the walls 18ft high, 14 inches thick; the Nave 48ft x 24ft, inside; Chancel 20ft x 24ft to centre of Apse; total length, north to south,

34ft to centre of Apse; total length, north to south, 72ft; vestry 12ft x 12ft; porch 8 x 8.

Mr. W. Lamrock, of Orange, is the architect; Mr. J. W. Chalmers, Mayor of East Orange, builder and contractor. Contract time, 16 weeks from date when bricks can be procured. The architecture is true Gothic.

The S. P. C. K. has generously granted £70—seventy pounds—towards building this Church.

It is 26 years since a resolution was passed "to build a new Church or to enlarge the existing one." In June, 1898, the building fund was in credit, £157 9s 10d. This has increased by compound interest, up to June, 1905, to £258 5s 3d. Other funds have been raised more recently.

The first entry of a Church Ordinance in Molong is dated 29th November, 1857.

The present population of the Municipality is statistically recorded at 1253. The last Decennial Census, taken 1st April, 1901, show, by Parliamentary returns, that the members of the Anglican Church in the Municipality of Molong were 839; and in the Electorate of Molong, 4000—other denominations combined, 3500.

With this scroll are deposited two silver coins of the Realm—King Edward 7th's image and superscription—a copy of the "Mitre," the monthly Diocesan Church paper, a copy of the "Molong Express," and a copy of the "Molong Argus"—the latest weekly issues of the two local newspapers.—A. S. BRIDEKIRK, Hon. Secretary, and Treasurer St. John's Church, J. ALLDIS, Rector, Oct. 14, 1905.

The Rev. Canon Alldis remarked that the contents of the bottle that day deposited would give the people of the future an idea of the building erected that day and the history of the parish up to the time the corner stone was laid. Perhaps in 200 years' time the building they were about to erect would have passed away, and the scroll, coins, &c., would serve to indicate to the people of future time what was being done. Looking so far into the future—no doubt great things would come to pass, but it was only given to mortals to know how things would go from day to day—God alone knew how long the life of our planet would be. He intimated that a certain lady had sent along a cheque for £3 3s to be deposited on the stone—the same lady had sent many cheques previously towards the object. It had been decided, owing to the unpropitious nature of the elements, to give the assembly an opportunity of making their offerings in Church, in lieu of depositing same on the stone. The amount collected on Saturday and by previous appeal per Mesdames Churchill and Edmonds and Messrs. Bridekirk and Leak was £108 5s 3d, and the proceeds of the entertainment given by Mr. and Mrs. Sheppard would bring the total to £113 6s 3d.

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Hymn 215 was then sung, after which a procession in the following order filed out of the Church and took their places around the stone to be set in position:—

The Builder (Mr. J. W. Chalmers) and
and Secretary (Mr. A. S. Bridekirk)
Parochial Council
Wardens
Choir
Clergy
Mrs. Lee and family
General public.

On arrival at the site, Canon Alldis presented Mrs. Lee with a beautiful silver trowel, the gift of Mr. H. C. Betts, and which bore the following inscription:—
"Presented by the officers of St. John's, Molong, to Mrs. James Lee, who laid the foundation stone of the Parish Church, 14 Oct., 1905."

Mrs. Lee said: "In the faith of Christ and with prayer for the blessing of God, I lay the foundation stone of this Church, which is to be the Church of St. John. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Returning to the Church, Rev. Lintott Taylor offered up a prayer.

Rev. R. W. P. Montgomery (Cudal) then gave a short address. After a brief reference to the weather, the turn in which would do immense good, the speaker went on to refer to the magnificent structures erected to the glory of the Deity in Britain, Rome and other European centres of civilization in early times. These churches and temples were the expression of man to the Deity, and when one entered these edifices a feeling stole over him that he had come into the presence of God. He sought to compare the buildings erected in the middle ages—when the people were poor—with those of the present day. The building they were about to erect would have walls 14 inches thick, whereas in the middle ages the church walls were 8 feet thick—solid and beautiful structures standing to this day as monuments of the builder's art, and the earnestness of the people in the cause of Christianity. He wondered if people were less religious now than in the middle ages—the spirit and love of God must have been in the people of those times, otherwise such buildings would never have been erected to His glory.

Hymn 394 was then sung.

Rev. Mr. Seaton (Canobles) took for his text "Whatsoever thy hand find to do, do with all thy might." Next Saturday (21st)

text "Whatsoever thy hand find to do, do with all thy might." Next Saturday (21st) they would be celebrating one of the greatest battles in history—the battle of Trafalgar; and the hero of that battle would be remembered for the part he had taken in the spreading of Christianity. Nelson's watchword on that memorable day—"England expects that every man this day will do his duty"—would aptly apply in the present case, and he hoped the people of the church would do their duty that day, and every day, towards glorifying the Saviour who had died for them. He urged the people to contribute whatever they could afford, and if possible have the new church opened free of debt—for there was no greater curse to a parish than to be saddled with a large debt.

Rev. Lintott Taylor (Orange) said he did not feel a stranger amongst them, as by previous visits he had come to regard himself as one of themselves. He regarded a church building as an outward and visible sign of the spiritual faith of people. They had assembled that day to do a good work—a peculiarly good work—for God was in everything that was good. It was also a great work, and served to show what strides the Church had made since the first service held in the Commonwealth over 100 years ago. At that time the people had erected a wattle and dab edifice to hold service in—but although time had fled, it was the same Church, with the same purpose in view, that was about to be erected. He said everyone who helped in the building of a church would be the better for giving—though they might not see the benefit immediately. It was the same with food, which was intended to build up the human frame and create muscle, etc.—the good was reflected afterwards. It was also a permanent work, a good work, and a growing work—one which, once begun, cannot stop. Such work might get a set-back, but being intended for the glorification of God it must eventually triumph.

The Rector of Cudal then offered prayer, and the singing of the Te Deum closed the proceedings.

Refreshments were afterward partaken of