

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL.

DEDICATION OF WINDOWS.

The unveiling and dedication of seven baptistry windows took place at the 11 o'clock service at Christ Church Cathedral yesterday, the ceremony being performed by the Bishop of Newcastle, the Right Rev. Dr. Stanton. The choir, with the Bishop, moved from the vestry to the baptistry singing in processional hymn No. 538. At the baptistry the Dean (Bishop Stretch) read the lesson, Isaiah 54 and Revelation 21. The anthem, "Blest are the Departed," from Spohr's "Last Judgment," was rendered by the choir. The Bishop then said: "Dearly beloved in the Lord, it hath pleased certain of the Church, some still of the Church Militant here on earth, others now members of the Church Expectant, others past members of the Sunday-school, to provide these seven windows in memory of departed servants of God. As these memorial gifts are presented to beautify the place of this sanctuary, as well as to be a token of affectionate remembrance, let us join in dedicating these memorials to the service of Almighty God, and let us pray that they may serve to keep fresh the memory of those who though absent in body are still one with us in the unity of the body of Christ." The dedication was then made in the following terms:—"Forasmuch as these windows which I now unveil have been provided, as shown by their inscriptions, in memory of Arthur Edward Solwyn, first Dean of this Cathedral; Thomas Albert Clack, a former superintendent of the Sunday-school; Jesse Ireland, a former teacher of the Boys' Bible Class, and Thomas Buxton and Mary his wife, I dedicate them to the service of God, with true appreciation of the tender and sacred feelings which have moved the donors to erect them. I commend these examples of faith and hope and love to all throughout the diocese, with prayer that the light of life may continually shine upon the Cathedral and city." The choir then passed to the chancel singing a processional hymn.

The window in memory of Dean Solwyn is given by the Sunday-school. In memory of Mr. Thomas Albert Clack there are two windows, one given by Mrs. Emily Frances Clack and the other given by the Sunday-school. In memory of Mr. Jesse Ireland there are three windows, two given by the family and one by the Sunday-school. The window in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Buxton is provided by a legacy left by Mrs. Jane Ludlow, the daughter of Thomas Buxton. All the windows are exquisite works of art.

Bishop Stanton preached from the words, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of our fathers, who hath put such a thing as this into the heart, to beautify the house of the Lord" (Ezra, 7: 27). In the donation and dedication of the baptistry windows, they were made increasingly conspicuous, that their Cathedral was allye to its true work. It had begun already to centre within itself gifts as golden links, many cherished memories. The diocese had waited long for such a centre. The golden links of sacred memories lay separated and scattered, waiting to be gathered and grouped into a chain of connected history of the church's activity. This Cathedral collection of memorials was more than a sacred museum of past times. Their faith in "The Communion of Saints and Life Everlasting,"

which realised things unseen, reached forth to these memorials, and saw in them something that pointed to the Home beyond, where those lovingly remembered here, were now present with the Lord. These windows were more than things of beauty. They were sacramental. They were not like statues in an art gallery. Their place in the sanctuary turned them into living things. They spoke to them of the rest that remaineth, and the joys of the departed. They, as worshippers, were helped by these material things. Egyptians embalmed their dead, but we embodied thoughts of our dear ones in beautiful memorials, for God was not the god of the dead, but of the living, for they all lived, to Him. It was a happy decision of his brother Bishops who had charge of the Cathedral, that the baptistry should first claim completion, that its windows, its filling, its font, should speak of the beauty of holiness, to all who entered through the western doors. Christian life began at baptism. It showed the Father's love for them while they were little children. They began life well, however badly they might continue it. The richness of the baptistry was an outward and visible sign of inward spiritual beauty. The figures and the names were full of inspiration for young life. They held up a high ideal for life from its beginning. It was good for a life to start from a baptistry so beautiful. The beauty of the baptistry added significance to those words of hope and prayer—that the child may lead the rest of its life according to so good a beginning. The enrichment of art, whether in music, or sculpture, or painting, had been a feature of the Church at its best times. Sometimes it had been checked, as in the Puritan period; but that was exceptional, and when passed, the inclination reasserted itself. When God "cleanses our hearts by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit," it penetrates every faculty, of our complex nature, enlivening and enlightening them all. So their imaginative, aesthetic faculties were thus quickened. As Goethe said, "The good, the beautiful, the true" were touched. True art was full of sentiment and teaching. Not mere form and colour. There must be some thought, some truth behind it, to be really art. It was the personal subjective sense of moral beauty that had lifted art from the Greek level of physical symmetry into the highest conceptions of purity and sublimity. Productions of art thus reflected minds and tastes of the age. The baptistry window had, as their inscriptions indicated, a direct Sunday School reference. The late Dean Solwyn was there in their association, and along with him his Sunday School superintendent for many years. The others were scholars or supporters of the Sunday School. Therefore, the Apostles pictured above, and those names inscribed below, had a connection beyond that of donors of gifts. The Apostles had lived in different times. The activity of to-day was different entirely to the days of the Apostles. Those whose names were commemorated had had the same desire to do the Lord's work, and to live consecrated lives. It was nice to have a good retrospect, to be able to look back, and be conscious of having done something practical for the service of the Lord.

Following the sermon a choral communion service was held. The choir, under the leadership of Mr. Edward King, the organist, sang most impressively a service set to Morbecke.

Services will be held in the Cathedral to-day at 11 a.m. and 7.30 p.m. (choral evensong), and to-morrow at 9 a.m. there will be morning prayer; 10 a.m., communion; 11 a.m., opening of Synod; 7 p.m., evensong; and 7.30, evening sermon of Synod.