

## RAYMOND TERRACE.

### CONSECRATION OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH.

Thursday last will be a day long to be remembered by the inhabitants of his district, as seeing the completion of a work long necessitated, and which, from what we could glean, must have been for some time a matter of anxiety to very many there resident, namely the consecration of the new church, which is dedicated to St. John the Evangelist. At an early hour in the morning visitors from far and near kept arriving in large numbers from the surrounding neighborhood. Newcastle, Maitland, (East and West), Morpeth, and the Patterson, contributed their visitors on the occasion, and judging by the happy faces assembled it must have been a time of much interest and rejoicing, and evinced that though the cares of this world have their claims, yet that our friends are far from insensible to higher, holier, and better objects. The Church itself is situated on an elevated site at the rear of the parsonage, on land formerly belonging to Mr. Cafferay, from whom it was purchased for the purpose. It is built from designs of Edmund Blackett, Esq., of Sydney, and is deserving of much admiration, both from the simplicity and beauty of its architecture, which is that of Norman or early English, and from the perfect completeness of its internal arrangements. The extreme length of the edifice is seventy-eight feet from east to west, by a breadth of thirty feet from north to south. The new pulpit, and altar-rails are cedar, and of gothic design. The covering for the communion table is a cloth of purple and gold, embroidered with the sacred monogram, and which we believe was the gift and work of the ladies of the parish. We also noticed an exceedingly handsome silver communion service, which, as is customary, was used on this occasion. A beautiful stone font, exquisitely carved, stands near the western door. At the hour appointed for divine service, the church was thronged with a very large congregation. At eleven o'clock the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, accompanied by the Rev. Alfred Glennie, and the Rev. James Blackwood, acting as chaplains to His Lordship on this occasion, arrived at the western door of the church, and was received by the Rev. John Bloomfield, the Incumbent of the parish, a large number of other clergy, A. Wyndyer, Esq., Acting Chancellor, and W. Keene, Esq., Acting Registrar. Mr. Keene then advanced, and with the usual formalities proceeded to read the petition or prayer for the consecration of the edifice. His Lordship graciously acceding to the request, proceeded along the nave of the church, followed by the

graciously acceding to the request, proceeded along the nave of the church, followed by the Chancellor, Registrar, and Clergy, reciting alternately the verses of the 24th Psalm, commencing, "The earth is the Lord's and all that therein is, the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein." The procession as it advanced to the altar must have struck every observant mind with feelings of reverence and solemnity. The Bishop and his chaplains took their places within the rails, the other clergy and chancellor occupied seats within the chancel, with the exception of the Reverend J. Bloomfield, who took his place in the reading desk. At this moment the scene was one that we shall not easily forget, and was well calculated to impress the most indifferent spectator with admiration for this most beautiful ceremony of the Anglican Church. The Bishop having had the necessary documents presented to him, proceeded with the service as appointed, and which commenced with fervent supplications to the Throne of Grace for all who may hereafter partake of the Sacrament of the Church, or who may participate in its ordinances, and which were earnestly responded to by all present. The Chancellor next read the sentence of consecration, which document his Lordship signed and delivered to the keeping of the Registrar, commanding it with the petition and other instruments to be registered among the muniments of his office, and after another prayer, the Rev. J. Bloomfield, the Incumbent, proceeded with the morning service as appointed. The first lesson was read by the Rev. W. Stack, M.A., of St. Mary's, Balmain, who, although of another diocese, courteously accepted the invitation he had received to take part in the proceedings. The second lesson was read by the Rev. R. Chapman, of St. Mary's, West Maitland. The epistle and gospel was read by the Rev. the Chaplains. At the end of the morning prayer the first, fifth, sixth, and eighth verses of the 84th Psalm, was sung by the choir, and most exquisitely rendered. And here we would take the opportunity of remarking that both the vocal and instrumental portion of the service was very beautiful. Mrs. Street, who presided at the harmonium, did so with skill and effect. After the communion service had been proceeded with as far as the Nicene creed, the Bishop ascended the pulpit, and announcing as his text the fourth and two following verses of St. Paul's fourth chapter to the Ephesians, proceeded to deliver a very eloquent and appropriate sermon, in which he remarked that day must prove an occasion of deep joy and sincere thankful feeling in many hearts, as seeing the completion of a great and good work in which they had for so long and anxiously

in which they had for so long and anxiously been interested. He hoped that House would prove a benefit not only to all then assembled, but to their children and children's children. Some no doubt had given largely, others had given what they could, still all could participate equally together in the blessed privileges of the Christian Dispensation; and the presence there that day of so many ministers and others from a distance shewed that as Christians they rejoiced with those that did rejoice. In some respects, however, members of their own community were at times almost inclined to shew too great an amount of exclusiveness, but this should not be. After alluding to the extending influence of the Christian church, and which should continue to extend in influence, till, according to the word of promise, "The knowledge of our Lord should cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."—and the great beauty of the Christian religion, shewing too the appropriateness of the similitude of Christ's Church to a body, which, though consisting of various members, were, nevertheless, dependent on each other for mutual comfort and assistance. The Right Rev. Prelate concluded by affectionately urging upon all the duty and privilege of a right use of the ceremonies of their church, but not to take delight in the means as if they themselves were the end sought to be obtained, but to worship in spirit and in truth, thus they might grow in grace, and thus become under God's mercy meet partakers of the inheritance of the saints in Light, to which inheritance might they all have abundant eu-

trance administered to them for His name and mercy sake."

At the conclusion of the sermon the Bishop read the remainder of the communion service, during which the collection was made, amounting to £12 15s.

The Sacrament was then administered to a large number of communicants, and the Bishop having pronounced the benediction, the congregation separated a little after two o'clock.

A large number of clergy were present, among whom we noticed the Reverends W. Stack, of Balmain; A. Glennie, Brisbane Water; R. Chapman, St. Mary's, West Maitland; James Blackwood, Singleton; J. R. Thackeray, St. Paul's, West Maitland; A. Sim, of Stroud; Mr. Adams, of Patterson; and Mr. Wright, of East Maitland; and numbers of the resident and neighbouring gentry.

At the conclusion of the Church service, the Reverend the Incumbent of the parish, Mr. Bloomfield, provided at his parsonage an exceedingly elegant and sumptuous collation,

including every delicacy that the most fastidious could desire, and to which a very numerous assemblage did ample justice, and we think we should not be exaggerating in saying that to it all his parishioners had been invited. Never were hosts more courteously or hospitably attentive to the wants of their guests than were Mr. and Mrs. Bloomfield on this occasion, and seldom had guests more reason to be satisfied. And one of the most pleasing features in this part of the day's proceedings was the cordial and kind feeling that seemed to be so thoroughly reciprocated between the minister and his parishioners. Long may such a feeling continue, and may this day's work, that we have endeavoured so imperfectly to commemorate, be but the beginning of a bright and happy future to him and them.

We must not forget to mention, that the church, which is of stone procured from adjacent quarries, was built at a cost of some £1500, the whole of which is defrayed, in the first instance, by the Bishop; but the parish is only to be charged with two-thirds of that amount, namely £1000, his Lordship generously defraying the remainder. While alluding to this act of liberality, we cannot forbear mentioning another of great importance to the whole of this community, and which is, perhaps, not generally known, namely, that his Lordship, with the assistance of his family, have themselves endowed the bishopric of this diocese; so that, however Government may care for this, the future Bishops of Newcastle will always be provided for.

This concludes our report of a day's proceedings that will form a source of pleasant recollection to us for a long time to come, as doubtless it will to all others who either witnessed them, or took part therein.