

NEWTON MEARNS CHURCH SUPPLEMENT

DECEMBER 1939

At the outbreak of the war the organisations of the Church came to a standstill, and accordingly it was considered unnecessary to print the Supplement that is inserted in *Life and Work*. It was deemed advisable, however, in view of the opening of the New Church and the arrangements which must be conveyed to the congregation to issue one at this time. It has now been definitely settled that the Service of Dedication will be held on Saturday, 16th December, at 2.30 p.m. We have been privileged to secure the services of the Very Rev. James Black, D.D., Minister of St. George's West Church, Edinburgh. It is a gracious gesture on his part to come to us on this memorable occasion in the history of our congregation. A former Moderator of the General Assembly, he is at present Minister of the leading Church in Edinburgh, and as a preacher his fame is known far and wide. Others who will take part in the Service will be Rev. Duncan Blair, B.D., Moderator of the Presbytery of Glasgow, and Rev. Archibald Dawson, M.A., Convener of the Home Mission Extension Committee of the Presbytery.

In order that you may be familiar with the form of the Service, the congregation are asked to be in their places within the Church by two minutes before the time it is due to begin. At that point the doors of the Church will be closed. Meanwhile the members of the Presbytery will have assembled in the Hall and will now proceed in due order into the Church and take their places. The Choir will also enter and take their places. Dr. Black and the officiating Ministers shall proceed from the Vestry to the main door of the Church at the front, and, knocking at it, will say, "Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord." The door will then be opened from within by Mr James Pollock, the Session-Clerk, the representative of the Congregation, who will deliver the keys of the Church to Dr Black, saying, "In token that this building has been erected for the Church of Scotland, I deliver to you the keys thereof, and pray you now to dedicate it to the worship of Almighty God." Passing within the inner door of the Church, Dr. Black will pause and say, "Peace be to this House, and all who worship therein." As soon as Dr. Black appears in view of the congregation, and before he says this, the congregation will stand. Unannounced the organist will play the tune of the 100th Psalm, which the congregation will sing, while Dr. Black and the officiating Ministers proceed to the places allotted to them. He will lay the keys of the Church on the Communion Table. The Service will then proceed as arranged, the prayers of dedication being offered by Dr. Black, who will also deliver the sermon.

The Service on Sunday 17th December will be conducted by the Rev. W. Mackintosh Mackay, D.D., at 11.30 a.m., and this will be the only Service that day. On Sunday 24th December the celebration of the bi-centenary of the congregation will be observed, and the preacher will be Rev. A. Boyd Scott, M.C., D.D. It had been hoped that the opening of the new Church would be possible in this our bi-centenary year, and we are glad that we have managed to effect it. It is also a great joy to us that Dr. Boyd Scott, a former member of the Church, has recovered his health to enable him to fulfil this long standing engagement.

The Allocation of Seats.—Since the members of the Church filled up and returned the form that was sent to them the Seat-Letting Committee have been busily engaged in their arduous and difficult task of meeting

the wishes of the congregation. Had it been possible to build a Church with nothing but back seats, their task might have been simpler! They have been meeting on an average of two nights per week for the past month, and they are now nearly at the end of the allocation. They have endeavoured as far as possible to comply with the wishes of the members, but they will realise that this may not have always been possible. A note stating the number of the pew allocated to you will be sent in the near future, and before the Church is opened, and you will on receipt of it be asked to contribute, where possible, the sum of 2s. per sitting to defray the cost of the covering or runner for the seat. We feel sure that you will readily acquiesce in this request. To the Seat-Letting Committee, Messrs James Pollock, Stewart Telfer, William Fyfe, James Meiklejohn, J. Taylor Anderson, we would express our gratitude for this service they are rendering us.

"Old Days and Ways in Newton Mearns."—Universal appreciation has greeted the book that has been written by Dr. A. Boyd Scott in connection with the bi-centenary of the congregation. The demand for it has exceeded the expectations of the publishers and of the Committee, and the first edition of 500 copies is now almost exhausted. The local shops were sold out within the first week, and only a few copies in the book-sellers in town are at present available. The Congregational Board have accordingly agreed to print a second edition of a further 500 copies, and these will be on sale in a few days. It is a book which we feel will be in demand for many years to come, and a worthy celebration of this memorable occasion in the life of the congregation. The love of many for their Church will have been immeasurably increased as they read its noble history. We owe a great debt to Dr. Boyd Scott for the labour, voluntarily given, which he has expended on the book. We would not forget also the beautiful etchings of Sir D. Y. Cameron that enrich it. To him also we would express our thanks. A copy of the book has been sent to former ministers of the Church.

Gifts to the New Church.—We have received many generous gifts from members and past members of the congregation. Mrs Templeton of Crookfur and her family have gifted the carpets for the Church and also that in the vestry. They have put us further in our debt to them by this further expression of their generosity. The pulpit has been presented by Mr George James Pratt, formerly of Hazeldean, in memory of his wife. We appreciate greatly this kindness from one who is no longer a member with us. The Communion Table has been given by the Misses Mather of Kirkhill. Their family has for many years been closely connected with the congregation, and the beautiful new Table that adorns the chancel will recall to many their love for the Church. At the back of the Church there has been erected a stained-glass window depicting the healing of the Centurion's Servant. It is the gift of Mrs Anderson, the mother of Mr James A. Anderson of Balmae, Whitecraigs, in memory of her son who was killed in the Great War, 1914–1918. The Hammond organ has been presented by Mr James Nicholson of Towerwood, in memory of his wife. The earliest gift that we received, we look forward to listening to it. The ornate rose window that surmounts the chancel has been put in by the Misses Osborne of Broomlea, in memory of their father and mother. The offering-plates

at the doors of the Church have been subscribed by the "bun" pennies which the children of the congregation have so faithfully and joyfully gathered. You will be sure to make a remark about them to the children, for their hearts have been in this work. There have been other gifts by some who wish to remain anonymous, and to all we would extend our grateful thanks for their great kindness to us.

The Organisations of the Church.—These have started again, and many of them are functioning as in normal times. The Y.P.U. is holding its meetings on Sunday evening at 7 P.M., and the attendances are greater than we have ever had. We would appeal to all young people of 16 years and over to come and enjoy the papers and discussions. The need for clarifying our thinking in these difficult days is paramount. Unless our young people see the vision of Jesus Christ in the days of their youth they will reap a harvest of tears. The G.A. are also holding their happy Monday night meetings, and the Woman's Guild, despite local groups of workers for the Red Cross, are busily engaged in working for the schemes of the Church and also for the Red Cross. They are gathering in the Upper Room on Wednesdays at 2.30 P.M. We have now had the Large Hall darkened, or to use the familiar word, "blacked-out," and this may now make possible the meetings of further organisations of the Church.

The Death of Mr Arthur Gilmour.—The following letter was sent to Mrs Gilmour by the Session-Clerk, conveying the sorrow and sympathy of the congregation:

"The Kirk-Session and the Congregational Board wish to convey to you and to your family their deep sorrow and sympathy in the great loss you have sustained through the passing of Mr Arthur Gilmour. They mourn an office-bearer both as ruling elder and member of the Congregational Board, greatly respected and esteemed, remembering with gratitude the long

number of years in which he performed so faithfully the many duties associated with the congregation. He loved the House of God and served it with the utmost devotion. They recall the uprightness of his daily life. He was a man of firm principle, with a strong faith in God which manifested itself in Christian well doing. They recall, further, the weight and foresight of his counsel in their deliberations, and, while mourning the loss of a fellow labourer and friend, they would humbly own the Hand of Providence and thank God for the privilege of having known and served with him. They pray that the comfort and peace of God may abide with you all, and send the assurance that they sorrow with you in a loss they feel they share."

The Resignation of Mr John C. Cormack, M.A.—It was with deep sympathy that the congregation learnt that, on medical advice, Mr Cormack had been compelled to resign from the post of organist of the Church. The duties of the week had made it essential that the week-end be for him a time of rest and recuperation. The relinquishing of this task was, we know, to him a severe wrench, for he loved the organ and leading the praise of the Sanctuary. To lay down one's task, and that in the prime of life, is an ordeal than which there are few more poignant, and we sympathise greatly with him in what has thus been laid upon him. We remember with gratitude the many services he has rendered to us, and trust that other ways will reveal themselves to him in which he may serve the congregation that he loves.

The Beginners' Class.—We would thank Mr and Mrs Dugald Hay for the valuable service they have rendered the congregation in "housing" the young children during the hour of Morning Worship. We were without a place in which to hold this class, when they agreed to give us their drawing-room for the purpose. For fifteen months they have helped us in this way, and we would now say "thank you" to them for what they have done.