NEWBOLD VERDON BAPTIST CHURCH SCHOOLS.

MEMORIAL STONE LAYING.

On Thursday afternoon memorial stones were laid of the new Sunday Schools in connection with the Baptist Church, which is a branch of Barton Fabis Baptist Church. A considerable number of friends were in attendance from the village and surrounding places. The Rev. J. R. Godfrey, the senior pastor, opened the service by announcing the hymn, "All hail the power of Jesu's Name," after which the Rev. J. D. T. Humphreys, the junior pastor, read suitable portions of scripture, and the Rev. G. E. Payne, of Quorn, offered prayer.

The Rev. J. R. Godfrey delivered an address. He said they had hoped to have had with them Sir Charles McLaren, the esteemed member for the Bosworth Parliamentary Division, but the notice they were able to give him of the date of the proceedings was too short to allow of his making arrangements to attend. He had, however, sent his good wishes for the prosperity of the enterprise, and a cheque for £10 to be laid upon the stone, which he (Mr. Godfrey) was commissioned to lay on Sir Charles's behalf. Proceeding, the speaker reminded the audience that the education question was one of the two great questions of the day. We were, he said, losing control of the markets of the world because we allowed other nations to get before us in the education of the children. We could not expect to retain our position unless we had a system of education that was up to date, one that was truly national in spirit and in form. The occasion on which they were met reminded them that secular education, however complete, was not enough, but needed to be crowned by teaching that was religious and spiritual. But that tuition ought not to be given at the expense of the State, or by the schoolmasters appointed by the State, but at the cost of the churches, and by men and women who were themselves religious and spiritual. Nor would they, as Free Churchmen, allow any Government to override the will of the nation in that matter, but would fight, and suffer, if need be, until priestism was overthrown, and the clerical control of public schools was brought to an end. The Sunday school teachers before him had been crippled in their efforts for want of room. They had done well with the small accommodation they had had, but he felt sure that they would do much better with the larger premises now in course of erection. Subsequently the stone was declared to be well and truly laid.

The next stone was to have been laid by Councillor Heward, of Hugglescote, who, however, found himself unable to be present, and had commissioned the Rev. J. D. T. Humphreys to act as his substitute, sending a cheque for five guineas to be laid on the stone.

Mr. Albert Bailey, of Leicester, was the next to perform the pleasant ceremony. He referred to his connection with the Sunday School there in earlier life, his father having been long the superintendent, and to his father's excellent successor in office, and concluded by laying £5 on the stone for himself, and two guineas forwarded by his mother.

Mr. W. C. Kirkman, of Barlestone, followed, saying that he was there to lay a stone, not only because he wished well to their Sunday School, but because his revered father had much to do with the commencement of it some 70 years ago. He wished the friends well, and gave £5 as his contribution.

Mr. T. Statham laid the next stone, giving some particulars of the history of the school and a contribution of £3.

The last to officiate was Mr. Henry Pickering, who spoke a few earnest words in support of the project in hand, and gave a contribution of £4. A collection was then made, and with the Doxology and the Benediction the interesting proceedings closed.

The friends then adjourned to the Primitive Methodist School, where tea was provided.

In the evening a public meeting was held in the Chapel, presided over by the Rev. J. D. T. Humphreys. Mr. E. G. Compton, of Newton Burgoland, offered prayer.

The Chairman, in an earnest address, referred to the work begun and carried on by the Baptist fathers of centuries past. They were noble and self-sacrificing in spirit, and did much with their limited means and opportunities. With their heroic spirit and better methods than they knew of, it would be possible to accomplish greater good. He exhorted that the best possessed should be devoted to the Lord, who would not fail to reward in manifold degree.

Mr. Albert Pickard delivered an encouraging address, in which he congratulated the friends on the effort they were making to enlarge their accommodation for Sunday school purposes. As he went about among the rural Free Churches, he was pleased to observe the great devotion and self-sacrifice manifested in carrying on Christian work. No fear of Nonconformity dying while they so acted. The Sunday school work was of supreme importance. They could not hope to sustain their churches without it. It was the great nursery of the church, for out of it came not only the bulk of their members, but the great majority of their teachers, deacons and ministers. The methods of Sunday school work should be as perfect as could be. There was much improvement needed both in teachers and in teaching. Sunday schools were, speaking generally, much behind the day schools. We neither could nor would, said the speaker, rely upon the State, but upon the truly voluntary service which willing hearts and minds were able to give. The efforts possible to put forth by consecrated men and women would, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, avail much in the regeneration of the race and the lifting up of humanity. Our own national welfare, he said, depended largely now upon the Free Churches. The Established Church, once the boasted bulwark of Protestantism, was no longer so, and if the nation was to be preserved from priestism and all its dire consequences, it must be by the Free Churches doing their very best to spread evangelical truth, and the greatest agency to be employed was that of the Sunday-

The Rev. G. E. Payne referred to the pleas times he had spent in connection with the pl in which they were met and in the old sm schoolroom, now giving place to a larger o If any regretted the demolition of the old bu ing, they might remember that the old sp consecrated by many a prayer and song hallowed experience, remained to them with enlarged area, where those could be continu The stones they had laid were, he thought, their solidity and strength symbols of what th spiritual ancestors were. For in their charac and labours they were foundations on which th themselves were building a spiritual edifice. T Church of England had long boasted of its "v untary schools," though now, by claimi support from the State, it was really giving the right to boast. Nonconformity was vol tary throughout, asking the State for nothing way of support. In working for the right tra ing of the children it should be remembered th childhood's influence upon the life of the Chu was very beneficial. It helped to keep the s of the worker buoyant, inspiring it with ho fulness and ardour. The influence that chi hood could receive and impart in the after yo of maturity was beyond measure.

The Rev. J. J. Hargreaves, of Measham, w the last speaker, and gave a thoughtful a animated speech, contending that what was vested of worth in the children of the nati was the safest and finest investment that cou be made.

On the motion of Mr. Fletcher, of Measha seconded by Mr. W. C. Deacon, of Barton Fab hearty thanks were accorded the speakers, a similar thanks were given the ladies of the co gregation, who had prepared and presided at te

A collection was made, and with the Doxolo and Benediction the meeting was brought to close.

The proceeds of the day amounted to abo £42, which, with £58 in hand previously, brin the building fund up to £100. The cost of t new building will be about £200.