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THE NEW CHAPEL AND SCHOOL,  
SOUTHPORT.

FEW towns have more rapidly risen and spread than Southport. Its position at the mouth of the Ribble, and twenty miles north of Liverpool, has been favourable to its growth. As a watering-place, it is the resort of fashion and invalidism, gaiety and disease walk together. In the "season" crowds of visitors are in its ample streets, its ornate park, and its pier of marvellous length, which stretches out to keep up a connection, not always on the most friendly terms, between sea and land. Lord-street, with its variety of shop and garden, handsome buildings and numerous trees, is one of the finest avenues in Europe—long, broad, with an ease and leisurely air about it seldom seen out of Paris. With the exception of the sandbanks at Birkdale, the neighbourhood is as level as the flats of Lincolnshire, but it is made agreeable by its mild and balmy atmosphere, and its nearness to the ever-moving ocean. The name Southport is more charming than that of its rival, Blackpool; each place, however, has its own attractions to the sickly and the hale.

Only those who have experienced it can understand the trembling anxiety with which persons in enfeebled health and depressed spirits creep from their homes, and wander here and there to find their former strength. They need rest, they need quiet; the hush of the evening, with its subdued light, is to them more precious than rubies. The protractedly afflicted, and others who are happily convalescent, are, in the brightness and warmth of summer, constantly flocking to Southport. It is a most affecting sight, the daily arrival at the railway-station

of the worn-out, attended in many cases by buoyant youth, and the thoughtful tenderness of matured years. To none are the consolations of religion more welcome; its glad tidings come to them with the freshness of a new revelation; a better life comes near them, breathes upon them; another country fills their vision, another hope lifts their souls, they touch an unseen hand, and feel the Divine Presence.

Such persons are a migratory class; they have been disturbed and never again take root in earthly soil, and therefore are not the material with which to edify or build a Church. They come and go like swallows. They gratify and disappoint ministers, now sitting under the Word with marked attention, and then scattered for ever. They are sojourners, not citizens. But their spiritual wants must be met, for they are urgent, soon to cease.

At Southport there are many, an increasing class, who settle there, as far as man can do so in this life. And no small numbers of these have reached the quietude of advanced years. In circumstances, it may not be affluent, yet comfortable, they wait, in the meditative closing scenes of their pilgrimage, for the gates of the city to open, and enter into the "rest" which "remaineth." They are alone, for their families are now the heads of several other families, living in localities of gainful thrift. We were at Southport the March of last year, discharging some of the duties of our Christian calling, and frequently we asked our kind host and hostess, "Where are the children?" We had a painful sense of their absence in the streets and at public worship.

"Our people," to use a well-known and good Methodist expression, have done what they could to maintain and expand the Church. They have overcome great difficulties by steady work and patient waiting. From 1862, the time they detached themselves from the Preston First Circuit, they have, in conjunction with the successive ministers, pressed forward, not with dangerous quickness, but with slow, measured tread. Their cautious and prudent action would have been creditable to a committee that never moves hastily, but resolves "that the further consideration of this case be deferred till the next meeting." In August, 1876, the trustees of the chapel invited four firms of architects to send competitive plans for a new building, with schools attached, to be erected on a most eligible site, which had previously been secured. In response, seven designs were submitted, and after very careful consideration, the plans prepared by Messrs. Maxwell and Tuke were selected. The lithographic view, now before our readers, displays a frontage and an angular aspect indicating large dimensions, with details most pleasing to the eye. We are not sufficiently informed to

know whether the pleasantly-situated, large, yet homely house at the left corner in the view is intended for the minister, but the entire of the ground exhibited has the appearance of one estate, and the possibility of its being so may afford to some of our brethren, in the way of prospect, great satisfaction. It was not an easy matter to get the plans passed by the local authorities, but this and other checks have been removed, and tenders for the erection of the new buildings have been received by the trustees.

The chapel will be in the Franco-Italian style, and consist of stone, with brick backings. The front wall and projecting ends of staircases will be of neatly-tooled Cefn ashlar, and the sides and back walls of pitch-faced Burnley parpoints. The entrance will be composed of three large doorways in the centre of the front, protected from the weather by a colonnade, supported on four neatly-worked columns, with carved and moulded capitals and bases. The vestibule will be 26 ft. by 7 ft. Two pairs of spring-doors on each side will lead into the chapel, which measures on the ground floor 60 ft. by 45 ft. The floor, from entrance doors to communion rail, will slope twelve inches, and the pews will all be of varnished pitch pine, without doors, and fitted up with umbrella-racks, hat-rails, &c. At the end of the chapel, behind the rostrum, will be the minister's vestry, 15 ft. by 10 ft., and a stewards' vestry, 15 ft. by 15 ft. There will be a stone staircase to the gallery at each corner of the building. The gallery will have a curved ornamental cast-iron front, picked out in blue and gold, and will be continuous, the seats at back and front being curved, and all varnished same as those on ground floor.

The school is designed to harmonise with the chapel, and will have a stone front, with brick sides and back. The school-room will be entered by two porches, facing King-street, and will measure 45 ft. by 30 ft. on ground floor, and 22 ft. high, with two class-rooms at front on ground floor, and two above same in gallery, each 13 ft. by 9 ft.; these class-rooms being separated from the large room by movable screens, or they may be added to the main room. The gallery will be entered from the school-room by a flight of stone steps. The ventilation of chapel and school has been fully considered; cold air will be admitted by grids in the window-boards, and the vitiated air drawn out through continuous trunks above the ceilings by Archimedean screw ventilators outside the roof. The method of heating will be by hot air. The chapel will seat 700 adults, and the school about 250. The cost, including purchase of freehold site, will be about £8,000. Is it necessary to state that we have written the above particulars under instruction, omitting and altering as we deemed advisable?