

MIRFIELD CHURCH INSTITUTE.

Last night the annual soirée of the Mirfield Church Institute was held in the Town Hall, in that village, and was very well attended. The VICAR of the parish (the Rev. T. Nevin, M.A.) presided, and he was supported on the platform by Mr. W. S. Stanhope, M.P., Mr. W. H. Sales (secretary to the Yorkshire Union of Church Institutes), Mr. B. Wilson, Mr. J. M. Johnson, the local clergy, &c.—After tea, a meeting was opened. The CLERICAL SECRETARY (Mr. Whitehead) read the annual report, which stated that the council were happy to say the institute continued to prosper. There was an increase in the number of members, two village societies were affiliated with the institute, and the library, to which several standard works had been added during the year, was being made good use of. The evening classes held last season were tolerably successful, but those now open bid fair to exceed them. The council said they had still to lament the want of a building suitable to the purposes of the institute, and expressed the hope, now that the debt on the new parish church was all but cleared off, that the friends of the church in the parish would do something for them in the way of providing suitable accommodation.

The CHAIRMAN, having delivered an address on the work of the Church of England, was followed by Mr. H. H. SALES, who dealt with Church Institutes and their special work.

Rev. W. ISAAC, Vicar of Dawsbury, in his speech, touched upon the statements made by the opponents of denominational education. These persons said the system of education carried on by the Church had failed; but he denied this, and said the fault, if any, lay with the machinery of education which the Church had not had the opportunity of carrying out. He commented upon the scheme of the Birmingham Education League, and said if it was carried out it would entirely revolutionise the system of education in this country. He had faith in the Government and the people that they would never legalise their iniquitous scheme, which was to divorce religion entirely from education. (Applause).

Mr. STANHOPE, M.P., congratulated the people of Mirfield on the interest they took in Church work, as shown in the erection of the magnificent new church which formed such a prominent object in the landscape as people travelled by the railway through the town. He was pleased to hear that the debt upon it was nearly extinguished. Something had been said about their opponents. He did not like to look upon any part of the British public as opponents, because they put themselves in opposition to the Church he did not think it was the Church's duty to put herself in opposition to them; but he held that the opposition to the Church was not to be found so much amongst those who professed religion as amongst men of infidel tendencies. It was now being said that the Education Act was on its trial. He put it that it was very much more whether the School Boards were not upon their trial. The Act was intended to supplement what had already been done. If School Boards had neglected their duty, if instead of gathering into the fold the neglected children of our towns and villages, they spent large sums of money in erecting magnificent buildings in which to establish schools to compete with those already existing, then he felt sure the people would say the School Boards were not doing their proper work. In conclusion he congratulated the Church people of Mirfield upon the work that was being done in the parish.

The Rev. J. I. BROOKER, of Thornhill, also addressed the meeting, which was brought to a close by the adoption of the usual votes of thanks.