

PRESENTATION TO THE REV.
THOMAS EDMONDES, OF COWBRIDGE.

On Friday last a numerously-attended meeting was held at the Town-hall, Cowbridge, the occasion being the presentation of a handsome silver vine-pattern ewergone and plateau to match to the Rev. T. Edmondson, on his resignation of the vicariate of the parishes of Llanblethian, Cowbridge, and St Donatts. The centre-piece, which was the production of the Gold and Silversmiths Company, London, bore the following inscription: "To the Rev. Thomas Edmondson, M.A., on his resignation after being forty-eight years vicar of Llanblethian, Cowbridge, and Welsh St Donatts, with the best wishes of his former parishioners." On the reverse sides it bore the date September 28th, 1883, and the recipient's family coat of arms. It was accompanied by a richly-illuminated address in a massive carved oak and gilt frame, surmounted also by the coat of arms. This was the work of Waterlow Bros., of London. Both articles were displayed in front of the chair.

The presentation took place at twelve o'clock, at which time the Vicar, accompanied by his wife and the following members of his family, arrived, when they were warmly received: The Ven Archdeacon of St. Davids and Mrs Edmondson; the Rev. F. W. Edmondson, M.A., R.D., and Mrs Edmondson (Fitzhamon Court, Bridgend), Mrs Haines, Miss Louisa Edmondson, and Mr Wm. Williams (the Armoury). Amongst the company present were the following:—Rev. J. H. B. Powell and Mrs Powell; Rev. Lewis Morgan (St Hilary); Mr Arthur Trehanre, Llanblethian; Mrs Edward Davies, Miss Bradley, Mr John Thomas (Eastfield House) and Mrs Thomas, Mrs Lloyd and Miss Lloyd (Llanblethian), Mr John George and the Misses George, Mrs Bird, Mr and Mrs H. S. James, Mrs Miles, Mr Edward John and Miss John; the Misses Thomas (Hill House), Miss Llewellyn, Mr Philip Griffiths, Mrs Griffiths, and the Misses Griffiths, Mr David Thomas and Mrs Thomas, Mr David Tilley and Mrs Tilley, Mr Thomas Thomas (Bear Hotel), Mrs Rogers, Mr S. D. Evans, Rev. M. P. Williams and Mrs Williams (Grammar School), Miss Pritchard, Mr and Mrs John Stockwood, the Misses Stockwood, Mrs Payne, Mr J. Stockwood, jun., and Mrs Stockwood, the Misses Nicholl (Llanblethian); the Misses Davies (Glendare House), Mr G. D. Burdett and Mrs Burdett (London and Provincial Bank), Mr Wm T. Gwyn, Miss Herman, Mr G. E. Tutton (master of the Board Schools), Mr W. D. Alexander, Mr Edwin Usher, Mr Ebeneser Davies (East Village), Miss Rosch (Llanblethian) the Misses Smith, Miss Carrington, &c.

Mr Thomas, Hill House, Llanblethian, who was in the chair, was supported on the platform by the committee, viz.:—The Rev. M. P. Williams, Mr J. S. Gibbon, Mr Titus Lewis, F.S.A., Messrs W. V. Huntley, John Stockwood, Edward John, John Llewellyn, G. W. Nicholl, M. Bird, Thomas Payne, and John Stockwood, jun., hon. sec.

The Rev. M. P. Williams, who was first called upon to address the meeting, said it was with great pleasure he acceded to the wish expressed by the committee to say a few introductory words. The duties of a parish priest were such as necessarily brought him into contact with his parishioners at the most solemn occasions of their lives. There was no such association; but their clergymen had mixed with golden threads the web of memory. If that were true of every parish priest how much more so was it of him whom they had met there that day to honour. The present occasion reminded him of a most touching passage in Holy Writ where Samuel and last of the judges comes before the assembled congregation of Israel. He thought that the words then used might be adopted now by their vicar—"I am old and grey-headed, and my sons are with you, and behold I have lived among you from my childhood unto this day"—(cheers)—and as the whole of the congregation of Israel then testified their full appreciation of the manner in which Samuel had done his work, so they had met that day, to assure their vicar, by the outward emblem which was now before them, that he carried with him unto his rest their good wishes, affection, and respect, and when the day came for the Lord of the Harvest to call his labourer home, may the approving voice of his Master be heard saying, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Mr Titus Lewis, in quoting the words "Some men are born great, some have greatness thrust upon them, and some achieve greatness," said he thought their friend the Vicar had had this greatness in a threefold sense. He (the speaker) had been mixed up with many testimonials before that day; some of which far exceeded in intrinsic value the one they now saw before them; but, speaking as one who had taken an active part in getting this one up, he had never witnessed such spontaneity as had been met with in this instance. It was an offering from the hearts of his (the vicar's) parishioners.

Mr N. Bird said that being one of the very few tradesmen who had lived in the town for more than half a century, he wished to testify to the readiness with which the Vicar had always responded to appeals made to him for help. Whenever anything was started having for its object the good of their fellow townsmen, and when the influence and support of the Vicar would add to its effectiveness, they had had but to ask and the help was freely and heartily given. It was extremely gratifying to find that after so long, so active, and so energetic a life, all this had been recognised, as was shown by the testimonial which was now about to be presented to him (cheers).

Mr John Stockwood, sen., said he did not expect to be asked to speak on that occasion, but he gave him great pleasure—no, he would not say that! He did not consider that a pleasant meeting, for it meant the severance of a tie that had existed for half a century. This could not but cause some melancholy thoughts, but he most sincerely hoped, that although Mr Edmondson would cease to be their vicar he might be spared for many years yet, to enjoy the leisure to which he was so well entitled. As one of the oldest, if not the oldest parishioner present, he wished to say everything he could in appreciation of their vicar. He also bore testimony to the readiness with which Mr Edmondson had always attended meetings called for the good of the town (cheers), he had, always been found ready to do everything he possibly could for the purpose of advancing anything for the good or the pleasure of the townspeople. He was never absent from vestries until recently, and in the "popular reading" meetings

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Mr J. S. Gibbon said he did not think there could be one dissenting voice amongst them in paying their tribute of respect to their late vicar on his retirement from office. Much however as they might regret his loss to them in his ministerial capacity, they might congratulate themselves that they would still have him amongst them as their kind personal friend and good adviser (cheers).

The Chairman in presenting Mr Edmondson with the testimonial, remarked that whilst they were very sorry to lose him as vicar, yet they were happy to think he would be living amongst them, and he hoped that God would spare his life and that of his wife for many years to come. The vicar had been no flatterer, but something of far greater value than flattery had been given them, and that was the good example of always speaking out his mind and saying that which was true at the proper time (cheers). Their prayer was that he and his partner in life might be blest with good health. He then made the presentation and read the address, which was as follows:—

To the Reverend Thomas Edmondson, M.A.
"Rev and dear Sir,—We, the undersigned parishioners of Llanblethian, Cowbridge, and Welsh Saint Donatts, and others interested, beg your acceptance of a token of our affectionate esteem and respect on your resignation of the office of Vicar of this benefice, which you have held for forty-eight years, and we offer you, on your retirement in the evening of an honoured and useful life, our hearty good wishes that you may long enjoy the rest you have earned so well.

Though the reminiscences of few of us reach to the earlier years of your ministry, we all keenly feel how closely you have been associated with the welfare of our families and ourselves, whether as our pastor and spiritual guide or as a friend, prompt in kindly advice and sympathy; and we are glad to think that you are still to reside among the people you have served so long and faithfully.

We gladly embrace this opportunity of expressing our deep and grateful sense of the share taken in the good work of your long pastorate amongst us by M. Edmondson and your family; and we heartily congratulate you and her on the many gratifying proofs that your children are maintaining the honour of your name, and emulating the usefulness of your life."

[Here follow the list of subscribers, which was read by Mr J. Stockwood, jun., hon. sec.]

The Rev. T. Edmondson, who, on rising, was received with loud cheers in responding, said it was his duty and he also added his pleasure, although a very trying one, to thank all present for their attendance that day in order to do him honour. It had been said by one who spoke as never man spoke that "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." He was most deeply gratified at what had called them together that day but was afraid the mouth to speak his gratitude would be but a stammering one. Being so many friends around him all partaking of the kind and affectionate feelings which had brought them together, he could only say it touched him most deeply. Especially was this so by the allusion made to the members of his own family and in the way in which they had been made partakers of the honour done him that day. He did not think that the fact of his resignation required any explanation. After a pastorate of forty-eight years a man's faculties must to a certain degree become dulled and his capacity and activity fail him. The one marvel was that he had not been compelled to retire earlier; but he held on as he was attached to the place. From the time of his institution to the living to the present time it was forty-eight years, but he had served a year as curate before that, so that in one year more he would have celebrated the jubilee of his pastorate over that parish (cheers). He did not think however that any jubilee could surpass the proceedings of that day (cheers). He had been very pleased to find in the list of subscribers the names of persons of all classes—rich and poor, church-people and those who belonged to other Christian societies. To these last he felt he was particularly indebted, because he felt he had no claim upon them. It had always however been his endeavour to live on kindly terms with his parishioners whether they belonged to the Church of England or not, for he believed people had a right to follow the dictates of their own conscience. After speaking of the progress made in educational and other work in the parish during his tenure of office, he concluded by paying a graceful tribute to those with whom he had been associated in parochial work.

Three cheers for the late vicar and his family, brought the proceedings to a close.