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NEW GREEK CHURCH IN LIVERPOOL.

The Greek merchants and others of that nation resident in Liverpool to the number of about 400, have long been desirous to have a church built for their religious worship, in Prince's Park-road. It was opened last Sunday with a series of services, which began at nine o'clock and continued nearly eight hours. They were devoted to the elaborate ceremonial of Greek ecclesiastical consecration, the chief ministrant being his Grace Alexander Lycurgus, Archbishop of Syra and Tenos, and member of the Holy Greek Synod, a prelate held in high veneration by his co-religionists. He had also been on a visit to the Bishop of Chester and the Bishop of Liverpool, and had received an address from the Liverpool and Birkenhead branches of the English Church Union. The ceremony was attended by the Rev. George Williams, as representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Rev. Dr. Butler, as representative of the Archbishop of York, and the Bishop of Chester. The Mayor of Liverpool, Mr Hubback, the High Sheriff, Mr B. Haywood-Jones; and several of the foreign Consuls, with many of the English Townsfolk, were present in the congregation.

The Greek Merchants and others of that nation resident in Liverpool, to the number of about 400, have got a magnificent new church built for their religious worship in Prince's Park road. It was opened last Sunday with a series of services, which began at nine o'clock and continued nearly eight hours. They were devoted to the elaborate ceremonial of Greek ecclesiastical consecration, the chief ministrant being his Grace Alexander Lycurgus, Archbishop of Syra and Tenos, and member of the Holy Greek Synod, a prelate held in high veneration by his co-religionists.

Since his arrival at Liverpool the Archbishop has been entertained at dinner at the Adelphi Hotel by Mr Gronnacopulo, the Greek Consul - sixty Greek gentlemen being present. He had also been on a visit to Sir Stephen Glynne and Mr Gladstone, at Hawarden Castle and had received an address from the Liverpool and Birkenhead branches of the English Church Union. The ceremony was attended by the Rev. George Williams, as representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Rev. Dr. Butler, as representative of the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Chester. The Mayor of Liverpool, Mr Hubback, the High Sheriff, Mr B. Haywood-Jones; and several of the foreign Consuls, with many of the English Townsfolk, were present in the congregation.

The Greek Archbishop was assisted by numerous other clergy of his Church, including the Archimandrites Stratouli, of Liverpool; Morfino of London; and Moro of Manchester; the priest Gabriel Stratuli, Archdeacon Eugene Depastas and Deacon Parthenios Archilles. The services including the celebration of high mass and the ordination of a priest were scarcely intelligible to strangers ignorant of the Greek language, but the ritual was an imposing spectacle and the gorgeous dresses and fine music had their effect upon all.

The Church, which has already cost £15,000, and will cost £10,000 more, contributed by a number of gentlemen, with Mr. C. M. Papayianni at their head, stands on a site bounded by Prince's Park Road, Berkeley Street and Upper Stanhope Street, with St. Margaret's on the one side and the Welsh Presbyterian chapel on the other. The architect is Mr. H. Sumners, of the firm of Messrs Sumners and Culshaw, Liverpool. The general plan is of the Church of St. Theotocos at Constantinople, built in the fifth century. The style is Byzantine, and the general appearance majestic and commanding. The building is surmounted by four large domes, the central one rising from the intersection of the nave and transept roof, forming a Greek cross.

The materials are brick and white stone, with alternate bands of red and white up to a certain height. The church is divided into three parts - the entrance, the body, where the people sit and stand sanctuary or altar space. The height of the nave vault is 45ft, and to the eye of the central dome 72ft from the floor. The altar, or *agia trapeze*, during certain portions of the service is shut out from the church by the *iconastasis*, which is the chief work of the interior, the design being very rich and elaborate; the materials used are Dantzic oak, old English oak and walnut.

The altar is placed in the centre of the *bema* or sanctuary. It consists of a stone base or step, upon which is a circular moulded shaft with base and cap, similar to the English fonts, upon which rests a large marble slab. The north side of the east wall contains a niche and marble table for the sacred vessels. The south side of the east wall has a niche with marble basin for emptying the water after use for sacred purposes, and has also a fireplace to receive the brazier of charcoal. These portions are

termed respectively the chapel of *prothesis* and the *diaconicon*, both of which are separated curtains. A beautiful silver lamp is suspended over the altar. The throne is of a regal character. It can never be occupied by anyone but the Archbishop. A small throne is placed alongside it for the reigning Sovereign. To the left of the throne are stalls for the deacons. The pulpit is placed against the north wall in the centre of the transept above the stalls, and approached by a staircase of oak the whole of the woodwork being beautifully carved. Behind and above the middle door of the sanctuary (the royal gate) is hung a beautiful curtain of plum-coloured velvet, richly embroidered with festoons of flowers in gold, with a worked centrepiece representing Christ upon the cross, surrounded on each side by cherubs in clouds. This curtain was made in Constantinople, and is used to shut out of view of the sanctuary during certain portions of the service, such as the high liturgy. The decorations of the church also include paintings of Scriptural subjects.

There is more information about the ceremony and other related issues to be found at the following web site

<http://www.btinternet.com/~m.royden/mrlhp/students/greekgent/greekgent.htm>