

Christmas in Retrospect. We look back on Christmas, 1951, with feelings of pleasure and thankfulness. Parishes all over the country are saying that the religious observance of Christmas was better this time than for many years. A few comparisons shew how true this was of Loders. In 1931 our Christmas communicants numbered 70, and the collections in Christmas week were £4. 5s. In 1941 the communicants were 57, and the collections £6. In 1951 the communicants were 110, and the collections £20. It was a heartening experience to have the church well filled four times in one week. The congregation at the midnight service was the biggest ever, and at mattins on Christmas Day the church was packed really tight. So many other parishes are repeating a similar upward trend that these may be signs that the thoughts of the nation are returning to God. To those who have eyes to see, two world wars in half a century shew that modern man may have conquered the elements, but cannot conquer the evil in himself. Experience is also proving that the delightful things of man's invention are a bad substitute for God in trying to satisfy the hearts' deep longings.

Christmas Cards on our mantlepieces looked ill at ease this time. They were offering us the usual expanses of snow, and frosted twigs, while we were preferring the spring-like sunshine that the unpredictable English climate was lavishing upon us. The Christmas-card robin seemed positively annoyed not to be the only bird about, for the air was throbbing with bird music. When the flag of St. George mounted the top of his pole on Loders tower, he thought it was Easter, and skipped like the psalmists' ram. Worshipers made an airy morning walk of the long path down to church. They remarked, toughly, that the weather wasn't a bit like Christmas -- and thanked God that it wasn't.

Sons and daughters from far. Much of the joy of Christmas was in having so many exiles from home at church on Christmas morning. Loders boys and girls who have made their way in the world, and are not often seen in their old village, came to church with their families. More than once the Communion rail at the midnight service was filled by one family.

Lucky Children. We say, with excusable conceit, that no parish is kinder to its children than Loders. The teachers and parents of the day school gave their children a breaking-up party which they will not soon forget. Jelly seems to figure large in the child's idea of paradise, and here there were great bowls of it, of colours and consistencies to suit all palates. There was also a Christmas tree, and a Santa Claus to give out its presents. On Christmas morning the children requited the grown-ups by singing four carols from the chancel. Here there was another tree, which the Mothers' Union had hung with sweets, and each child received a packet before leaving the chancel. The children's partying reached its grand finale at what is commonly called "The Court party". This party is aptly named, first because it is held at Loders Court, and second, because the hospitality that the Squire and his Lady have meted out for the past thirty years is right royal. The party was true to form in beginning with a conjuring display. But this time is began a bit late; for the magician was held up by a rally of motor cyclists outside Loders Hut, and only a threat to turn the offenders into caterpillars got him through. After the magic came a sumptuous tea in the dining room. Some seventy children and parents sat down to it, noting with satisfaction that one of the hunting trophies on the wall, a tiger, had not forgotten to put on his top hat in honour of the occasion. One intelligent child asked why the magician needed to join in eating the children's buns when he was so clever at producing his own out of his hat. When crackers had been pulled, Frank Good voiced the thanks of the company to Sir Edward and Lady Le Breton, making feeling reference to the heavy cost of parties like this. The children left the Court and boarded the bus that was to take them home, each the richer by a half-crown.

The Children's Concert and Mission Sale raised the record sum of £28. Children and teachers are to be congratulated on their plays. The very large audience which saw, and appreciated, them will encourage future efforts.

The Ringers held their annual meeting shortly before Christmas and elected Messrs. H. Legg captain, H. Crabb vice-captain and G. Hyde secretary. Mr. E. Paul was appointed tower warden. We wonder if any ringer can equal the achievement of Mr. H. Legg. He has been a ringer for many years, and neither he, nor his brother ringers, know when he has missed a ringing. This speaks as much for his good health, and the care with which he

arranges his engagements, as for his enthusiasm for ringing.

The Choir collected £7.14s. by their carol singing round the village. On their first night they received welcome hospitality at Upton and Matravers, and they ended their second night with refreshment and ghost stories round the big fireplace at the vicarage. Here the village policeman delighted them with a recitation about a highwayman and an innkeeper's black-eyed daughter, which shewed that the Law is not entirely impervious to the nicer promptings of human nature. The Vicar's vampire story put some of the company to sleep. Or was it the mince pies?

Church Mice. These are proverbially poor and thin, but the seven which Mrs. Wensley has lately caught in Dottery Church were fat and well favoured. They feed on chrysanthemums. The Chinese do, too, only they fry their chrysanthemums in batter. Our mice help theirs down with candle. Candles being the price they are, it is fortunate for the Dottery exchequer that Mrs. Wensley is so good a mouser.

A warm church at last. On Sunday, December 23rd. the matins congregation found an important looking document pinned to the door of Loders Church. It was from the Worshipful Cyprian Bourne, Barrister-at-Law, Vicar General of the Diocese of Salisbury and Registrar of the Consistorial Court, proclaiming to all and sundry that the Church Council of Loders intended to put in an electrical heating system, and calling upon any objectors to the scheme to lodge their reasons with the said Worshipful Cyprian Bourne within fourteen days of the publication of the notice. When this notice appeared, the heating system to which it referred had been installed and was already a month old! That is how things work in the venerable Church of England. Neither the Worshipful Cyprian Bourne nor the congregation raised an eyebrow at the apparent discrepancy. Only little minds object to the cart going before the horse. Indeed, the Vicar General's proclamation shewed us the measure of our debt to the Archdeacon of Sherborne, who had had our scheme examined by the Diocesan heating expert, and given us permission to proceed while the ancient machinery of the Consistory Court was yet being cranked up. Without the Archdeacon, the business of putting in the apparatus would be just beginning. And without the generous gift of Lady Le Breton to the heating fund - made fifteen years ago - it would not even be that. It is too soon to pass judgement on the efficiency of the system, but it promises well. Instead of stepping into the atmosphere of a vault, and seeing our breath as we talk, we step into a temperature climate, and feel the warmth from under the pews caressing our feet and legs. Our next business, which is being put in hand at once, is to stop draughts. When the church was cold, we could not be conscious of draughts, but now that it is warm, the slightest current of cold air is noticeable. As to the cost of electric heating? It is too early to say yet, but we are advised that it may add between £30 and £40 a year to our expenses. A few kind parishioners are contemplating a scheme for helping to meet the extra cost. But more of that next time.

Services for January

Loders 6th. HC 8 and 11.45. Matins 11, Children 2.
13th. HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2.0. Evensong 6.30.
20th. HC 8, and 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2.
27th. HC 8, Matins 11, Children 2, Evensong 6.30.

Dottery 6th. HC. 9.30.
13th. Evensong 3.30.
20th. Evensong 6.30.
27th. Evensong 3.30.

LODERS, DOTTERY & ASKERSWELL
PARISH NOTES (FEBRUARY, 1952.)

Canon Daniell, who became Rector of Askerswell in 1941, resigned the benefice on the 31st. January last, because of ill health. He remains Rector of Litton Cheney and Rector of Chilcomb. The Diocesan Pastoral Reorganisation Commission decided some months ago that at the next vacancy the Rectory of Askerswell should be offered to the Vicar of Loders, and that thenseforward the churches of Askerswell, Loders and Dottery should be served by the Vicar of Loders. This decision has not yet been ratified by the Church Commissioners, but their approval is as certain as anything in this world can be. Meanwhile, the Bishop has made the Vicar of Loders responsible for Askerswell, pending his institution and induction as Rector. Two points need noting. First, the new arrangement does not mean that Askerswell and Loders become one parish. Askerswell remains a self contained and independent parish until such time as it may have a resident Rector again, and the proceeds of the sale of the Rectory have been put by to build him a new house. The second point is that the Reorganisation Commission did not wish the incumbent of Loders to bear the burden of three churches. Its own proposal was that when Loders took over Askerswell, Dottery should go to Allington, giving the incumbents concerned two churches each. But Loders and Dottery refused to be parted, Askerswell clamoured to join the pigeon pair, and the Commission gave them their way. So we have only ourselves to blame if some of the services in the three churches are at inconvenient times. The inconvenience may be slight; and there is no reason why we should not be a happy family. From now onwards the time of services will be experimental, until we can see what is best. Please study the list overleaf.

Loaves and Fishes. The question as to what difference Askerswell will make to the stipend of Loders is being keenly debated. To save bloodshed, we give the answer - £125 gross. But as this increase will automatically raise the amount deducted from the Loders stipend by the pensions, dilapidations and income-tax authorities, and swell the petrol bill, the net increase will be much less than £125. Still, it will be welcome.

The sudden death of our good friend and neighbour, the Vicar of Toller, has aggravated the staffing problem of the Archdeacon of Sherborne. This Deanery can rarely have been more short of parsons. Symondsbury, Eype, Broadoak, Toller and Hook are now vacant, and the incumbents of Bridport, St. Andrews, West Bay, Litton Cheney and Chilcomb are seriously ill.

Lent begins on 27th. February. Loders has been used to a Thursday afternoon service in Lent, but that is not likely to be possible this year, because some of the parishes without incumbents may need help. Our policy this Lent should be to make the fullest use of the Sunday services, and to try, with God's help, to make it a time of prayer, self-examination, repentance, and new resolution.

A Revised Opinion. Until they attended the recent missionary exhibition in Bradpole, some of our people were dubious about the merits of overseas missions. And not without reason. Once upon a time they were beguiled to a missionary film at Bradpole on the promise that it would equal the best that the cinema could show. The film turned out to be old and worn, its flickerings made the viewers giddy, and the sound track was a man in a box with a bad cold. But the films shewn at this exhibition were excellent. They had been made for the missionary societies by the film trade. They were good entertainment, and they left the viewers uncomfortably aware of the problems confronting Christianity and the necessity of facing them.

Filial Devotion. The late Mr. Wilfred Elliott, of Yondover, had seven surviving children. Some of them live far from Yondover, and yet throughout his long illness they all took turns at the nightly watch by his bedside. Mr. Elliott's fortitude was remarkable. The continuing pain could not stop his jokes. There was a meery quip on his lips even when he had but little voice. The tiny church at Frome Vauchurch was not nearly big enough to accommodate the mourners when he was buried. The Rector of Maiden Newton and the Vicar of Loders conducted the service.

A change of landlords at a village inn is an important event for the absorbent part of the population, especially when the inn is the only one. The Blue Ball at Dottery has passed from the genial presidency of Mr. Blair to that of Mrs. Beach, whosr special claim on the goodwill of Dottery is that her mother, Mrs. Fleet, once lived there. Mrs. Blair is

recuperating in a bungalow called The Shack, at West Bay.

Four Generations were represented at the christening of Mr. & Mrs. Harry Crabb's first grandchild, in Loders Church. The babe's great grandfather from Powerstock, came over for the service. The neophytes grandfather and uncles being ringers, an attempt was made to ring a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles in honour of the occasion. Forty minutes of first class ringing ensued, but an error in the conducting made the peal unclassifiable.

The limelight at the wedding of Miss Alison Scott and Captain Chater in Loders Church was stolen by her black Alsatian dog, Atom. The local press seemed to have eyes for nothing but his collar, tie and spats. One suspects that the beautiful attire of bride and bridesmaids, and the floral decorations, were lost on the reporters. But a photographer's eye was caught, and justly so, by our veteran Captain Welstead, in tails and topper, being the very outfit that he wore at his own wedding, but now with every button doing its duty. The bridegroom knows the way to a ringer's heart. He put five gallons of ale to the credit of our ringers, at the Loders Arms. Being on the credit side of Mine Host's slate so excited them that they were still ringing at 7.30 on the morning after the wedding. The adventures of the honeymoon began at Donchester, when a threat of fire under the bonnet of the car turned out to be a kippered herring frying incontinently on a hot pipe. They ended with an unfortunate tumble in the snows of Austria, and damage to the bride's ankle. It's an ill wind, however The bride is back in Loders for a few weeks, and we have the benefit of her contralto voice in the choir.

Miss M.J. Read, of Uploders, preferred as quiet a ceremony as possible when she was married, in Loders Church to Mr. C.R. Churchill, of Bradpole. We will not risk her displeasure by developing the theme here.

A Dottery Christening, which brought a large congregation to church, was that of the infant son of Mr. & Mrs. Mudford (nee Margaret Harris). It was the first grandchild of Mr. Harris, of Belshey, and needs must that he be brought to the font of his forebears. Organ, congregation and parson together were no match for his one pair of lungs.

Cloverleaf Farm, Loders, lately the home of Mr. Markby, is now occupied by Mr. & Mrs. Jack Combe, and their two children. They come from Dorchester. Mr. Combe comes of old farming stock. His father and all his brothers are farmers. We hope he will like Loders.

The Collection taken by the ringers for their funds at Christmas amounts to over £20, which suggests that the bells are widely appreciated. One of the tasks confronting Askerswell is the rehanging of its bells. But the cost of such an operation is now very heavy. Powerstock, faced with the same problem, had the shock of its life when it got an estimate from the bell foundry.

Parish Registers

Holy Baptism. 6th. Jan. Richard David John Haines.
Holy Matrominy. 5th. Jan. Robin Kentish Chater & Alison Wyse Scott.
30th. Jan. Cecil Robert Churchill & Margaret Joan Read.

Services for February

Loders. 3rd. H.C. 8, Matins 11, H.C. 11.45, Children 2.
10th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2, Evensong 6.
17th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, H.C. 11.45, Children 2.
24th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2, Evensong 6.
Ash Wednesday, H.C. & Communion 10.

Dottery. 3rd. H.C. 9.30, 10th. Evensong 3.
17th. Evensong 3. 24th. Evensong 3.
Ash Wednesday, Communion 7.30 p.m.

Askerswell

3rd. Evensong 6.30.
10th. H.C. 9.30. Evensong 7.
17th. H.C. 9.30. Evensong 6.30.
24th. H.C. 9.30. Evensong 7.0.
Ash Wednesday, Communion 6.30 p.m.