

Loders, Dottery and Askerswell.

A Legend of the Middle Ages tells how the domestic chaplain in a castle having tried in vain to persuade the household to pause in its Christmas revels while he held a service, was determined that there should be a Christmas service in that castle. So he went down to the stables and held a service for the domestic animals telling them the story of Christ's birth. It speaks well for our parishioners that they were not so taken up with the Christmas feasting, that they left Jesus Christ out of it. On the contrary, congregations tended to be larger than ever, and 161 people made their Communion (Loders 107, Dottery 28, Askerswell 26). The midnight service, at Loders, made a new record in attendance, and the Christmas morning service drew another full congregation, who heard a delightful selection of carols by the Sunday School children. Parishioners who have to leave us and live in other parishes can never seem to rid themselves of the feeling that Loders Church is their spiritual home, and we do not wish them to. It filled our cup of joy to have with us the Scotts, the Streatfields, the Hydes, the Bishops, and relatives of the late Eli Lenthall.

Dottery people flocked to church, although the bell did not summon them. When the bell fails to sound, they presume that Mrs. Gale and it have fallen out again, and on this occasion they were not surprised to find Mrs. Gale entangled in yards of rope. Her locks were saying things about the bell that tongue dare not utter in church. The bell seemed to be excusing itself by replying "She was shaking me, so I let go the rope". Several car loads of Dottery people joined the mother church of Loders for the carol service, and round the vicarage fire afterwards Mrs. Gale yielded to a universal demand that she should sing her Christmas serenade to Mr. Barnes of Belshay, who, from the depths of the biggest armchair, made a sign that he was not unwilling to hear it.

Askerswell carol service had to cope with many obstacles this year. which made the triumphant performance of the Christmas anthem the more creditable. Fresh back from London, with the marks of a heavy cold upon her, Miss Wilkinson was something of a heroine to those who had so greatly enjoyed her singing.

The sum collected from their house to house carol singing by Loders Choir was £8. 10s. 6d. This is the choir's annual offering to the C. of E. children's society.

The Schoolchildren of Loders and Askerswell have bright memories of their Christmas breaking up parties. At Loders the parents and school managers watched the children's games round a giant tree, and afterwards joined the children in a sumptuous sit down tea. Father Christmas then put in an appearance, and distributed presents, explaining that the lack of snow had made travel difficult for his reindeer and sleigh. The party must have meant much hard work for the teacher, Miss Bryan. The same was obviously true of Miss Robinson, at Askerswell. There the children had the party to themselves, and did a play. That they were able to consume such a large tea after issues of ice-cream and sweets is a mystery to which only children know the answer. On the evening of breaking-up day, the children sang carols unaccompanied at a service in church, and made the gratifying sum of just under £3 for the bell fund.

The Party that Sir Edward and Lady Le Breton give to the children of Loders will be on Saturday, January 16th.

Loders Ringers held their annual meeting shortly before Christmas. There is no change in officers, except that Mr. Cecil Read is now Tower Warden. Mr. Harry Crabb is captain, Mr. Harry Legg vice- captain and Mr. George Hyde secretary.

In a small community like Askerswell it is specially true that when one member suffers, all the members suffer. A shadow was cast over Christmas by the worsening condition, in Dorchester County Hospital, of Mr. George Miller, of Spyway, and hearts ached over his wife and five small children. Then old Mr. and Mrs. Farwell were parted probably for the first Christmas in their long married life. Mrs. Farwell is very ill, and was removed to Damere Hospital, in Dorchester. Her husband has gone to live with a daughter in Dorchester, to be within reach of his wife. So it seems that the cottage on the corner of the Square will

know the old couple no more. They had been part of Askerswell for eighty years. New Year's Day brought a shock in the sudden death of Mr. Leslie Norman, of Nine Bottles, at the age of 45, husband and father in a family of staunch supporters of Askerswell Church. Mr. Norman had been in poor health for the past two years, but there had been no thought of his decease. Twenty minutes before his death, he was feeling better than for many a day, and had fancied poached eggs for tea. The Bible is always emphasising the transitory nature of our stay on earth, and the fact that we have here no abiding city, but we do not heed it until shocks like these drive the point home.

A Nativity Play will be given by a party of Methodists from Bridport in Loders Hut on Tuesday January 5th., at 7.45 p.m. Small charges will be made for admission, and these will go to the repair of the Uploders Chapel.

The sale of Christmas presents made by the children and friends of Loders Sunday School realised the gratifying sum of £23. 15s. 6d. This goes to the work of the Church overseas. Loders has reason to be grateful to its children for discharging the duty - which properly belongs to the whole parish - of supporting missionary work. After all, it was not to children and kind ladies only, but to every Christian that Jesus said "Go and make disciples of all nations".

Miss Ursula Armitage, who has come to live in the intriguing little cottage in Uploders called The Haven, is no stranger to this district. She was lately on the staff of The Grove school, and lived at Bothenhampton, and was a frequent worshipper in Loders church. She now teaches in Dartmouth. On January 11th. she proposes to change the name of her cottage to "Knights' Pightle". As this is not a self-evident name like her friend Mrs. Lenthall's "Upton Peep", we offer the following explanation:- Jan. 11th. is the hundredth anniversary of the cottage being bequeathed to his daughter by Robert Knight, Blacksmith of Uploders.

A handsome piece of blue brocade from the Coronation furnishings of Westminster Abbey has been acquired for Loders Church by Sir Edward Le Breton. At his order Northover and Gilbert have framed it, and it now makes a seemly backing to the credence table in the chancel. A piece of brocade from the Coronation of King George VI, also presented by Sir Edward, makes an effective reredos to the Ladye Chapel altar.

The Spell of mild weather just ended has produced a spate of stories of prodigious happenings in field, farm and forest. Mr. Gillard had a pear tree in blossom at West Bay, Miss Marsh picked primroses in the hedge at Askerswell, a blackbird laid an egg somewhere beyond Eggardon, and Loders churchyard had to be mown - all in December. A puzzling feature of these unseasonal events is the moral drawn from them by the locals, whose verdict, one and all, is "Mark my words if we don't suffer for this". It is understandable that Julius Caesar would draw gloomy conclusions when the owls came out by day, and the king of the jungle night blinked in the sunlight of the Capitol, but why should the appearance of sweet Spring in the depth of Winter be a sign of ill? When winter comes at mid-summer, as it often does, why don't people say then, "Mark my words, we shall suffer for this?" (We write boldly, and preen ourselves as debunkers of superstition, yet we cannot eliminate from the bottom of our own heart a suspicion that we may live to break off our candle flame at night because it is frozen and cannot be blown out, and to hear the locals say "Now what did I tell 'ee".)

History was made in Loders when a trial of brains between our Young Farmers and a panel of experts was broadcast from the Hut. It was the first broadcast from Loders, and was specially valuable to the audience as shewing how these things are done. The clergyman in charge of the broadcast inadvertently told the audience that the experts had just come from the Crown. One of them, Ralph Wightman, allayed any fears for a religious broadcast that this announcement might have caused by drinking copious draughts of water throughout the programme.

Services for January

Loders. 10th. H.C.8, Matins 11, Children 2.
 17th. H.C.8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2.
 24th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2, Evensong 6.30.
 31st. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
Askerswell 10th. Matins 10. 17th. Evensong 7. 24th. Matins 10.
 31st. H.C. 9.30, Evensong 7.
Dottery 10th. Evensong 3, 17th, Evensong 3. 24th. Evensong 3.
 31st. Evensong 6.

"The Court Party", which is the local name for the annual children's party given by Sir Edward and Lady Le Breton, was a fitting finale to the round of Christmas feasting in Loders, and followed the pattern which has endeared itself to three or four generations of Loders children. A motor coach collected the children, and decanted them into the billiard room, where they found Punch and Judy ready to amuse them, and a magician from Crewkerne waiting to take over when Punch got tired. The children were trying hard to expose the knavery of the magician, and young Eddie Edrich was just getting into the way of being sorcerer's apprentice, when Lady Le Breton appeared, and swept them all into the Palace of Sweetmeats (which at ordinary times is the dining room). There, such provision had been made that full and blown small boys turned from meringues remaining uneaten, to a riot of cracker pulling. Master Edward Laskey (Sir Edward's grandson) made a distribution of half-crowns and oranges, on the strict condition that he got his own first, and one of the little girls voiced the thanks of the company to the kind host and hostess in a speech admirably compressed. Sir Edward holds that nothing is worth saying if it cannot be said in ten minutes. This speech pleased him hugely. It took five seconds.

A First Glimpse of England. Mr. and Mrs. Hilton, of Gribb Farm, Uploders, have had a Christmas they will remember. Their son Ernest, his wife and son (the Hilton's only grandchild) paid their first visit to England from the U.S.A. Mr. and Mrs. Hilton senior migrated to the U.S.A. when Ernest was two years old, and were there for twenty-five years before they learned that there is no place like home, and came back. By this time Ernest was growing up, and doing well on the railroad. He elected to stay in America, and this first visit to England did not quite succeed in weaning him from the land of his adoption. The three things in England that fascinated him most were the small fields with their hedges, the great age of churches like Loders, and the Guards in Whitehall. As for Master Hilton, he thought Loders Sunday School, which he attended during his brief stay, was better than anything in America.

The Young People of Askerswell kept up their Christmas partying well into January, and Miss Edwards' cottage was the venue for most of it. There she entertained first the Brownies and Cubs, then the Guides and the boys whose company the Guides are able to bear. The Brownies' party was honoured by a visit from the District Commissioner Lady Crutchley. The choir spent an enjoyable evening at Loders Vicarage. In a general knowledge quiz, the older members left the junior members standing, a point which may be useful to those who contend that the only result of the huge sum spent on education is that the children know less and less about more and more.

"Knights' Pightle". Reading in last month's Notes that this is the name given by Miss Armitage to her cottage in Uploders, some people are asking what "Pightle" means. Miss Armitage's brother-in-law, who teaches classics at Dartmouth college, says it is a Saxon word, meaning "a small plot".

Churches in Winter. An advertisement by a manufacturer of church heating apparatus confesses that churches are the most difficult of all buildings to make warm. Their cubic capacity is large, they are high, and the walls and floors are usually of stone. The wretched people whose job it is to make the inside of a church tolerable enough for Sunday worship have had the job made more difficult this winter by the sudden changes in temperature. Spells of hot clammy weather and blasts of icy east wind have been jumbled up together, and the interior of churches cannot attune themselves to such erratic behaviour. When the temperature outside leaps from 40 degrees to 55, a church cannot as quickly emit its cold air, and the full resources of the heating apparatus are needed to raise the interior temperature from 40, to say, 53. But the stoker in this instance gets no thanks, but kicks, for the congregation leave an exterior temperature of 55 and enter a church 2 degrees colder, and shudder. On the other hand, when the outside temperature is 35, and the temperature inside the church is 45, the congregation pass from the cold into 10 degrees more of warmth, and beam on the stoker, though in fact the church is 7 degrees colder than on the mild clammy day when they scowled at him. In the old days, of course, there were no stokers for the congregation to scowl at because there was no heating.

nor, incidentally, any lighting. Reasonable people are aware that, at present fuel costs, the price of raising the temperature of a church to that of a home is absolutely prohibitive, so they wrap up warmer when they go to church, and ignore the slight discomfort. The thermometer Christian, who will only do his duty to God provided the temperature is congenial is a modern phenomenon which the twentieth century has little reason to be proud of.

The Uploders Chapel. A member of the Chapel makes the following comments on its January activities:- A successful carol service was held in early January, when a congregation numbering 27 enjoyed an evening of hearty singing. Members of the Bridport Methodist Chapel performed their nativity play in Lodgers Hut before an appreciative audience, who admired the reverent spirit of the actors. The proceeds were for the repair of the Uploders Chapel. Where, asks our correspondent, were the members of the Uploders Chapel on this particular evening? The local supporters of this effort for the Chapel were nearly all members of Lodgers Church.

Our Schools. To the regret of the scholars of Askerswell, Miss Robinson is ill again, and off duty. We wish her a speedy recovery. Her place is being taken by Mr. Wake, who has often done supply duty in this district. Mr. Wake tells us that with the present shortage of teachers, and with so many of them falling sick, the County is at its wits' end for supplies. At Lodgers Miss Bryan is fortunate in having the help of a student teacher for three weeks. Lodgers School has risen to 28 children, whose ages range from 5 to 11, and we are hoping against hope that the County may be able to produce a second teacher, so that infants and juniors may be divided into two classes. No teacher can be expected to teach at the same time tots of five who know nothing, and children of eleven who are preparing for the passing-out examination. While on the subject of Lodgers Schools, we would like to rouse the interest of a kindly man who is handy with cement, and ready to do the school a good turn. Miss Bryan is arranging to have some wire netting fitted to the school wall, to prevent balls used in physical training from going into adjoining gardens, but before this can be done the wall needs pointing. Money can be found for the materials, but that is about all. In a couple of Saturday afternoons a Good Samaritan could save the school a builder's account of double figures.

Drip, Drip. Heavy rain, coming after a long dry period, brought a reminder that the builders have not yet begun to re-roof Askerswell tower. Builders are as impervious to reminders as the tower roof is pervious to rain. Water was streaming from the tower into the church, and making puddles round the font. Even when the new roof is on, the wood-worm will be continuing his deadly work on the bellframe, and the longer the work on the bells is postponed, the more it will eventually cost,

Services for February

Lodgers. 7th. H.C. 8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2.
14th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
21st. H.C. 8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2.
28th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2, Evensong 6.30.

Askerswell. 7th. Evensong 7.
14th. Matins 10.
21st. H.C. 9.30, Evensong 7.
28th. Matins 10.

Dottery. 7th. H.C. 9.30.
14th. Evensong 6.30.
21st. Evensong 3.
28th. Evensong 3.