

Stocktaking. The turn of the year sees shops engaged in taking stock and banks striking a balance. A church cannot follow suit because the things of the spirit defy measurement. A church cannot tell how it stands with God, for God seeth not as man seeth, and yet when the bells ring out the last minutes of the year that is passing, the parson, if not the church-warden, finds himself attempting a church stocktaking. 1954 looks to have been a year of progress for Askerswell Church. The punch that it put into the fete that raised £230 for the bells is still a joy to contemplate. A cause for equally deep satisfaction is that the young ladies of the choir, having got to the "walking out" stage, have not walked out of church, as the custom of some is, but bring their young men to church with them. The young men say they like coming, and the result is that they who think church is a thing for the middle-aged only, would get an eye-opener if they came to Askerswell. They would get another if they came to Dottery, especially if it was on the first Sunday in the month; for then the young people are always in the majority. It is now two years since many of these were confirmed, but they are as true to their Communion as if the confirmation had been yesterday. Another good point about Dottery is that although some of them have a long walk to church, it takes some bad weather to keep them away. It is no new experience for the vicar to arrive in a tempest, expecting no congregation, and to find everybody there as usual, and when he says "What weather!", to get the reply "Is it?" The bright lights of Loders are its flourishing Sunday School and the generous giving of the whole parish. One would say that more collecting books and boxes circulate in Loders than anywhere else in England, and promoters of good causes have yet to find saturation point. Even the cottages are usually good for a half-crown. In proportion to income, the giving of the parish is probably no more than it should be; it may even be less; but certainly no parish beats Loders at giving.

In Memory. The family of the late Mr. Charlie Marsh, of Askerswell, have presented to the church a handsome pair of brass altar vases. They are inscribed "In memory of Charlie Marsh, 1953". They were dedicated at evensong on the first Sunday in the new year. Mr. Marsh had served as church-warden and in several other capacities.

The Choirs of Loders and Askerswell each gave two nights to carol singing round their respective parishes before Christmas. They were welcomed everywhere, and at some homes they were asked to sing indoors, and served with refreshment. Askerswell had the advantage of being accompanied on an accordion by Mrs. Ronald Fry. Both parties ended up at the big fireplace of Loders Vicarage, where hot potions out of a punch bowl were ladled to them by the vicar, and hot sausages were served by Mrs. Willmott. Askerswell collected for the Church Missionary Society, making £7.0.3., and Loders collected £10.1.3. for the Church of England Children's Society.

Christmas is now a pleasant memory. In each of our parishes the church was well and truly the focus of the festival. Many were the feet that passed in and out of God's house on his Son's birthday. The communicants came near to the 200 mark. Loders was full for the midnight service, and again on Christmas morning, when the Sunday School children sang carols round the tree in the chancel. Dottery and Askerswell were also well attended, and all three churches were tastefully decorated. Sir Edward Le Breton gave the tree at Loders and Sir Victor Crutchley the tree at Askerswell. An increasingly notable feature of the Christmas services at Loders is the return of ex-residents. It was delightful to have with us again the Bishops, the Streatfields, the Hydes, Colonel Scott, old choristers such as Mrs. Quarm (Betty Pool) old ringers like Alfred Gale, big families of Crabbs, Gales and Goldies, and old friends like the Bryants.

"Church Illustrated", is the name, and sixpence is the price, of the new monthly magazine just launched on behalf of the Church of England. It was high time that the C. of E. caught up with the other churches of Christendom in tapping the huge potential of the printed word. If members of the C. of E. support their new magazine, it will grow bigger, brighter and better, and become a power for good. The following have kindly undertaken to be agents: Mrs. Gale for Dottery; Mrs. Gill, of the Old Cottage, for Loders and Mrs. Albert (Marjorie) Gale for Uploders. An agent for Askerswell has yet to be found, but meanwhile copies may be obtained at the post office.

The Corpses of rabbits that we see on the roads, and the hundreds that farmers see in the fields, are constant reminders that myxomatosis is here, and here in strength. Although on balance Brer Rabbit is more of an enemy than a friend, nobody rejoices at the sudden destruction that has come upon this hero of the Beatrix Potter books. He who chases Brer Rabbit with ferrets, nets and guns, finds no satisfaction in being able now to walk up to him and take him as he sits blind, deaf and swollen, nibbling grass. Indeed, he feels only pity, and a hope that Brer Rabbit is not feeling as bad as he looks. It is some consolation that he may not be. Knowledgeable people hold that the rabbits' senses are so paralysed by the disease that he knows very little about it; and the fact that he goes on eating to the end rather supports the theory. This destruction of the rabbit is not an unmixed blessing. The loss of his meat and fur will mean a considerable sum of money, and the Bridport Net people reckon that the loss to them in the sale of rabbit nets may approach £20,000.

Children's Parties. School managers and parents were the guests at the breaking-up parties of Loders and Askerswell schools. After games and a sumptuous tea, Santa Claus arrived with presents. The children thanked their teachers, Miss Bryan and Miss Sellers for giving them such a wonderful afternoon. Askerswell children are due for another party on Saturday January 15th., at 4 p.m. It is being organised by the community club, who will be grateful for gifts in kind, or cash. These may be sent to Miss Webb, at Askers House. The party given annually to the children of Loders by Sir Edward and Lady Le Breton will be at the Court on Saturday, Jan. 8th.

Intuition. Boy, aged four, just back from Loders Sunday School, to his mother: "Jesus Christ is only one higher than the Vicar". Mother: "Oh indeed. Who's been telling you that?". Boy: "Nobody. I just knowed it".

Loders Ringers, held their annual meeting in the tower shortly before Christmas. Mr. Harry Crabb was elected Captain, Mr. Harry Legg, vice-Captain, Mr. George Hyde treasurer and Mr. Frank Good secretary. Mr. Eric Bunnell was appointed tower warden in recognition of the work he had done on the bell-frame.

December was a popular month for weddings. Mr. Ernest Crabb, younger son of the captain of Loders ringers, was married to Miss Jean Alford, the eldest daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Alford of South Eggardon. The bridegroom is also a ringer, and Loders ringers rang him a salute on the bells. Mr. Tiltman accompanied the hymns on the organ. After a reception at the Greyhound, Bridport, the happy couple left for Torquay for their honeymoon. They are making their home for the time being at Uploders. The other wedding was that of Miss Kathy Townsend, of Uploders, and Mr. Goldring, a Weymouth grocer. They had the advantage of a church gaily decorated for Christmas, as the wedding was on Boxing Day. Mr. Tiltman was again at the organ, and the bells were chimed. The reception was held in the Uploders Room.

Mrs. Jesse Hansford. As we go to press we learn with regret of the death of one of the outstanding characters of Loders, Mrs. Jesse Hansford, who would have been 88 had she lived till March. She was born at the Loders Arms to a troubled destiny, but her wry sense of humour and amazing constitution carried her through a long and worthwhile life, culminating in an illness of two years duration. She was a great gardener and flower lover, and for years she did the festal decorations of the nave of Loders Church practically unaided.

Services for January.

Loders. 2nd. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
9th. H.C. 8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2.
16th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
23rd. H.C. 8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2.
30th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2.

Askerswell. 2nd. Evensong 7. 9th. Matins 10
16th. Evensong 7. 23rd. Matins 10.
30th. H.C. 9.30, Evensong 7.

Dottery. 2nd. H.C. 9.30. 9th. Evensong 3.
16th. Evensong 3. 23rd. Evensong 6.30.
30th. Evensong 3.

Loders, Dottery and Askerswell.

Lucky Children. It is to be hoped that our children appreciate all that grown-ups do for them in the way of parties, and that they realise how much more petted they are than their parents were. It is also to be hoped that this appreciation may find expression in their becoming devoted and dutiful children. Grown-ups could not do more to make the children happy than ours do. Askerswell children have had two more parties since Christmas. The first was that organised by the Community Club, who gave them a sumptuous tea, followed by games and a film show operated by Mr. Barker. The second was the Cubs' and Brownies' party given by Miss Edwards (Brown Owl) with the help of Mrs. Barker. Eighteen Cubs and Brownies managed not only to get into Brown Owls' cottage, but to have there a delightfully rampageous afternoon of games and home-made pantomime, culminating in a tea, which a Cub told his mother afterwards was "terrific". The centre of interest at this tea was an iced cake in the form of a maypole, with jelly babies holding on to the ribbons. It had been made and given by Mrs. Adams. An unusual and most diverting feature of the afternoon was that the Shah of Persia and Old Mother Riley happened to call on Brown Owl. By a coincidence which turned out to be entirely happy, they arrived together, and departed intact, but minus the sweets and toys with which, by another coincidence, they happened to be rather flush. Brown Owl's ceiling successfully withstood the three cheers which brought the party to an end. For Loders children there was the party at Loders Court, instituted by Sir Edward and Lady Le Breton more years ago than we care to be reminded of, and firmly rooted in the affections of several generations of Loders schoolchildren. This party made its usual beginning with a conjuring show in the billiard room, but did not proceed as usual to Punch and Judy in view of the effect it was feared Punch's growing addiction to wife-beating might have on the potential husbands in the audience. The children were shewn George and the Dragon instead, and then adjourned to the great dining-room, which, in its party dress, might have been a fairy palace. An odd plate of bread and butter here and there was a sign that rationing had ended, but the guests fell to work at once on the mountains of meringues, and failed to demolish them all. Maurice Matterface, looking none the worse for his recent parting with his appendix, called for cheers for host and hostess, and the guests, on leaving, were presented with oranges, apples and half-crowns by Master Edward Laskey. Outside, a coach was waiting to take the distant ones home.

Outings. Loders Mothers' Union, and the senior and junior members of Loders Choir, have treated themselves to a pantomime. The M.U. went to Bournemouth to see Cinderella on ice. To most of them it was a new and pleasant experience, but some wished they had brought their furs. The senior choir went to the pantomime at Lyme Regis, in transport supplied by Miss Peggy Pitcher and Mr. Tilley. They started early, and dined in Charmouth at the Queen's Arms, which, believe it or not, is unlicensed - as was Miss Pitcher's car when we last saw it. The junior choir were taken by Miss Pitcher and the Vicar to see "Babes in the Wood" at Bournemouth. They took tea afterwards at Fortts.

In Hospital. Mrs. Knight, of Cuckholds Corner, is in the Weymouth and District Hospital, and Mr. Saunders has been moved from Weymouth Portway to Bridport Hospital. By all accounts Mr. Saunders is lucky to be alive. He jumped to avoid a car which skided into him as he was walking on the verge of the main road, and sustained a broken leg. It seems a pity that so often local patients have to go to distant hospitals for the appropriate treatment. Nowadays the sick are whisked off to Dorchester, Weymouth, and even Salisbury, which makes visiting difficult for their friends.

The late Mr. G.F. Gale. Our last number had just gone to the printers when we heard of the sudden death of Mr. Gale, of Bell, and so our sympathy with his daughter, Mrs. Good, is belated. Mrs. Good had to endure not only the shock of finding her father dead in bed, but the disturbing formalities of the Law which it observes when a person in robust health dies unaccountably. However, the findings of the post mortem examination saved her the further ordeal of an inquest. Bell, standing aloof from civilisation under the brow of a lonely hill, is rather romantic. It is said to have once been an inn, deprived of its licence on suspicion of being a poachers' rendezvous. Mr. Gale, wearing a heavy beard, carrying his eighty-four years lightly, and not minding how dark it was when he went by the cemetery, enjoyed living at Bell, and rather relished the awe in

which the village children held him. The aura of a bygone century hung around him, and aesthetically it was entirely fitting that he should live at Bell.

The famous Village Evangelists, who have made a name for themselves all over England, are taking part in the Mission to Bridport in the fortnight before Easter. Two of them will spend a fortnight getting to know the people of Loders, Dottery and Askerswell by house to house visiting. It would not be difficult to get four parishioners to put them up for a week, but they themselves prefer to stay each night in a different house - and they like the cottage every bit as much as the castle.

"Spare the rod, spoil the child". St. Paul, the Bible in general, and the public schools, are firm believers of this doctrine. But it seems that some parents are not, and that some County Education Committees aren't either. Hence, an intriguing situation in Northampton. A teacher there gave 37 naughty children a stroke each, on the hand, with a blackboard pointer. A parent of one of the naughty children summoned the teacher for assault, and she was fined £1 by the local magistrates. She appealed to the Quarter Sessions, and this higher court, holding that it is no crime for a teacher to cane naughty children, quashed the conviction. But it seems that by caning the naughty children the teacher was infringing the regulations of her County Education Committee, and rendered herself liable to disciplinary action. All of which indicates that the County Education Committee and the Law may be at variance. If the Northampton Education Committee's rules are anything like the Dorset Education Committee's, which they probably are, then people of commonsense would support the Law every time. Here are some of the Dorset Committee's regulations on corporal punishment, quoted from the 1954 Handbook:- "(a) Corporal punishment may only be administered by the head teacher and by certificated assistant teachers to whom the head teacher will have specially entrusted such power. (b) Corporal punishment with the cane may only be inflicted, save for a grave offence, after other methods have been tried and have failed. (c) The instrument used must only be a proper cane supplied for the purpose by the committee's school contractor... (f) Corporal punishment must not be inflicted until the name of the offender and the nature of the offence and of the punishment have been entered in the Punishment Book".

It is clear from this that if the Vicar is taking Scripture lesson in Loders School, and he tells Billy Jones to stop talking, and Billy says "Shant", and sticks his tongue out, whereupon the Vicar puts Billy across his knee and warms Billy's seat with his bare hand, then the Vicar is breaking all the rules of the Dorset Education Committee and is rendering himself liable to disciplinary action. What he should do according to the Committee's regulations, is, first, try to reason Billy into an obedient frame of mind; if that fails, to give him a hundred lines; if that fails, to speak to his father; if that fails, to proceed to the last resort, and fetch the head teacher. She will solemnly inform Billy that he is about to be chastised; she will get out the Punishment Book and write in it Billy's name, the nature of his offence and the extent of the punishment she is about to administer, then she will give him a stroke on the hand with the cane supplied by the school contractor.

One wonders whether the Committee who drew up these precious rules have children of their own, or have ever taught in school. It may well be that the rules reflect the morbid fear that some education authorities have of being proceeded against in Court. Now that the Courts are making it clear that they will protect teachers against silly parents, isn't it time that the Education Committees scrapped these silly regulations?

Services in February.

Loders: 6th. H.C. 8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2, Evensong 6.30.
13th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
20th. H.C. 8 & 11.45, Matins 11, Children 2.
Ash Wednesday, Communion & Commination, 10.
27th. H.C. 8, Matins 11, Children 2.
Askerswell: 6th. Matins 10. 13th. Evensong 7. 20th. H.C. 9.30, Evensong 7.
Ash Wednesday, Commination 11. 27th. Matins 10.
Dottery: 6th. H.C. 9.
Other services as announced.