

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

A letter from the Vicar.—My dear Friends and Parishioners. I like to begin the New Year with a *personal* greeting, rather than just the bare chronicle of events which usually occupies this space in the Magazine. Let me begin with a short review of the year that is gone, so far as our own little parish is concerned. It has been a somewhat eventful one for us. For one thing we were honoured during last year with a visit from two Diocesan Bishops. First, our own Bishop of Lincoln came in April to administer Confirmation, and then in Sept., the Bishop of Peterborough was with us to officiate at the marriage of Miss Crichton-Maitland. It has also been a memorable year through being the year of the King's Silver Jubilee. We shall not soon forget that wonderful Monday, May 6th, and how we all united in a great family gathering of the whole parish. The spirit of happy harmony and good-will which prevailed on that occasion was a matter of sheer delight, and I for one, shall ever look back on it with thankfulness and joy. After that, there was our garden fete in June, to obtain funds for the renovation of the Village Hall, which was widely patronised, and much enjoyed. The next red-letter day for us as a parish was the wedding in September, *the wedding!* the like of which Witham had never seen before. The tremendous interest which this aroused was a remarkable tribute to the esteem and affection with which the happy bride, "Miss Jean," was regarded by one and all. These are the occasions which stand out as days of special happiness and importance, and which alone would mark 1935 as no ordinary year for us. Further we must not omit to mention two important works carried out during the year. One of course is the installation of electric light in the church. This costly scheme for which we have so long waited and worked, is now an accomplished fact, and what is more, is paid for! With the exception of a small grant from the Church Estate Trustees, the great bulk of the cost has been raised or given voluntarily. The other matter worthy of record in the chronicle of the year is the renovation of the Village Hall. This too has given universal satisfaction. The year has also brought its sorrows to some of us. There was the tragic death in June of that dear lad who was so universally popular with all, Harold Albert Maile, then in the following month, William Ward was taken from us "full of days and honour," and lastly, on St. Thomas' Day, Mr. Charles Bradshaw passed to his rest, at the age of 82. It was my privilege to take the funeral service of my old friend in Bourne church on Christmas Eve. Mr. Bradshaw was first appointed churchwarden here in 1891, and was re-elected for 27 years in succession, until he left Toft to go and reside in Bourne. I had ever a deep regard for him, and we worked together as Vicar and Warden for many years in the completest harmony. R.I.P.

In conclusion, dear people, may I ask you for every support and encouragement that you can give me, through this coming year, so that *together* we may advance God's Kingdom in this our parish, and set forth His Glory. Wishing you a very happy and prosperous New Year.

I am, your affectionate friend and Pastor,

L. H. COOLEY.

The annual dance, arranged by the Choral Society, will be held on Jan. 17th. This is always very popular event, and we hope that it will be as successful as in past years.

Reports of Christmas and other news must stand over until next month.

Marriages.—26th Dec., Arthur Raymond Fisher and Phyllis Sandall.

28th " Charles Arthur Maile and Eva Ellen Pell.

Burial.—24th Dec., Charles Bradshaw, aged 82 years (at Bourne).

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King George V.—Never before in all probability has there been a monarch more trusted and beloved than the King, whose death the nation mourns today. What his wise rulership has done for the British Empire and people is simply incalculable, and his name will go down in history as one of the greatest Kings who ever sat upon the throne of England. The suddenness of it all, for us, added to the tragedy, though for him surely it was best. On Christmas Day we listened to his familiar voice as he spoke to us in our homes, and less than four weeks later he was taken from us. At the time of his Silver Jubilee last year he had the joy of knowing what his people really thought of him, and it is good to think that before he died he had the full consciousness that he had entirely won their hearts, and had more than earned their gratitude and their devotion.

Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon him.

Children's Christmas Party.—Through the kindness of the members of the Mothers' Union, the whole of the children within the parish received invitations to a tea and treat on New Year's Day. The treat which was held in the Village Hall was—needless to say—largely patronised and a supremely delightful evening was spent. During the course of the evening, the bent and aged figure of Father Christmas suddenly appeared upon the scene, carrying a heavily weighted sack upon his back, his arrival being greeted with shouts of joy. Inside the sack there were gifts and toys for one and all, which were distributed by Mrs. Crichton-Maitland and Mrs. Stubbley. Towards the close sweets and oranges were handed round, and each child further received a very noisy "squeaker" so that the effect of 60 or 70 of these instruments all going together can be better imagined than described! Altogether it was a real jolly party, and we extend our grateful thanks to the Mothers' Union members for their kindness in organising it.

The children attending our school had another party all to themselves on the Thursday before Christmas, to mark the end of term. This took the form of a fancy dress affair, and was organised by Miss Bird and Miss Darnes, assisted by Mrs. Bird and Miss Doris Bird.

Christmas Day was well observed, and the church was very beautiful in its festal garb. The offerings were given to the Waifs' and Strays' Society.

The Quota.—Sunday, Jan. 5th, was the first of our four Sundays when special offerings towards the Parish Apportionment were made. The amount given was £3/7/3. The second Quota Sunday will be April 5th (Palm Sunday). The Lincoln Diocesan Board specially asks for quarterly instalments of the payment, we are thus falling in with their request.

Sunday, Feb. 9th is our annual Sunday for the support of Foreign Missionary work. Missionary boxes should be brought in on that day or during the week following.

The Choral Society is busy this winter with rehearsals for the Uppingham Festival in March. As this is competitive this year, it is essential that the members make a point of attending every practice. The attendance so far has been very good. The Society was greatly helped recently by Sir Walford Davies, who most kindly conducted two practices. Some of our singers are also members of the Stamford Choral Society, and had the pleasure of singing in the "Messiah," at Leicester, under the conductorship of Dr. Malcolm Sargent, on Dec. 12th. They hope also to take part in the "Elijah" on March 26th.

The Vicar-designate of Bourne.—The Rev. C. W. E. Horne, at present Vicar of Castle Hedingham, Essex, is to be inducted into the Living of Bourne, on Shrove Tuesday. He will receive a warm and hearty welcome from all Church people both in and around Bourne. Our hope is that under his able and zealous leadership, Bourne may become a real spiritual centre and a Church rallying point for the villages around it.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND

Our grateful thanks to the 75 subscribers who take this Magazine month by month. For so small a parish as ours, this is an excellent circulation. It entitles us to print some 43 lines of local notes, if the available space allotted to each parish is in proportion to the number of copies supplied. This arrangement is of course elastic, but it serves as a rough guide when, as occasionally happens, some news has to be curtailed.

Lent.—The moving words which our Bishop has addressed to us in his remarkable Pastoral Letter should act as an incentive to us all to keep the Season of Lent with renewed care and devotion, and to make use of all the opportunities which it offers to us of prayer and communion. Will every one who reads these words determine to make this Lent a time for a *fresh start*? Will they make rule, each for themselves, as to what they will do during Lent to draw nearer to God, and serve Him more faithfully? And let this rule include a weekly communion, as well as some attendance at church during the week, in the early morning, or at the mid-week special service. Let it also include some measure of self-denial, some mark of the Cross. Your Vicar is deeply anxious to help you, and his earnest prayer is that you will co-operate with him in calling down the Divine Blessing upon our beloved church and parish, upon our homes, and upon ourselves.

S.P.G.—The sum of £5/4/3 was sent last month to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. This is some 12/- more than last year, but we ought to be able to do better still, if more of us would have a Missionary box. Will you ask the Vicar for one? This year's boxes contained £2/5/9, and the balance £2/18/6, was given at the collection in church on Sunday, Feb. 9th.

Appreciations.—From time to time the Vicar receives letters from those who have left the parish, and who still have happy recollections of Witham. These are usually about the church, and of their great affection for it. Here are one or two recent examples. "How I do miss the dear old church and its services, no other church can ever be quite the same to me." And this from a Christmas letter. "I shall think of you at the early service in the dark on Christmas Day in the beautiful old church, and shall be with you in spirit." These were from old boys, and this is from an old girl. "I have often thought of all that you used to do for us young people, and wondered if we really did appreciate it as we ought. As one grows older these sort of things come to mind." It is impossible for your Vicar to say how much letters like these cheer and encourage him.

Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday in Lent, March 22nd. For centuries Mid-Lent Sunday has been kept as a day of family re-union, when young people would return to the old home with greetings of love for Mother, and go with her to worship in the Mother church of the parish.

Children's Musical Festival.—Once again our school children are going to Oakham to take part in the competition for schools, in connection with the Rutland Musical Festival, on March 26th and 27th. We remember their triumphant success two years ago, when they secured first prize, and we hope that they may again be as successful. Miss Bird wishes us to state that if there are any who would like to go with them on the 27th they will be heartily welcome.

The Guides—On Jan. 27th, the chief local Commissioner, Mrs. W. Downs, of Grantham, came over to enrol the members of our new Company. Several parents and friends were present to witness the ceremony. The Company in their new uniforms attended the late King's Memorial Service on the following day.

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Easter Day.—On this greatest of all Festivals, “. . . every Parishioner *shall* communicate.” So run “the Standing Orders” of the Church in our Prayer Book. But surely we shall regard our Easter communion as a joy and privilege, rather than as an obligation. And let us remember further, that obedience ever brings a special blessing, even though we may not always clearly understand the necessity.

There will be celebrations of the Holy Communion at 7 and 8, with the customary Easter Eucharist at 11.

Good Friday.—This year the 11 o'clock service (Mattins and Sermon) will be conducted by the Vicar of Edenham. Your Vicar has observed the request made to him by the Church Council to take all the week-day addresses during Lent himself. He has however ventured to make this one exception, and hopes that his people will show their appreciation to our one and only visiting priest, by coming on Good Friday morning. The other services during Holy Week will be as in past years, and due notice of times will be given.

The Easter Vestry and annual Church Meeting will be held on the Wednesday after Easter, April 15th, at 7 p.m., in the Village Hall.

The Vicar's 36th Easter.—On Palm Sunday your Vicar will have completed 36 years of his ministry as Incumbent of this Parish. It can have been given to few to witness such changes as he has seen here in the course of a single ministry.

The Parish Quota.—The offerings on Palm Sunday will be devoted to the second instalment of our Parish Quota. Please give liberally on this day, or if unable to be present, send your contribution. We need nearly £3 on each of these quarterly Sundays if we are not to fall behind in our obligations.

The Mothers' Union.—Lady-day is kept the world over as the annual festival of this great Union. The members of our branch were kindly invited to join on this day with that of Bourne, and have gladly accepted. (We are writing before the event). They made the fourth Sunday in Lent the day of their corporate communion, and as this was Mothering Sunday, it was singularly appropriate.

Charles Edward Newham.—Through Mr. Newham's death on March 2nd, a versatile and familiar character has passed from our midst, and one more of the few remaining links with the long past has been severed. We shall miss him greatly, with his cheery smile and his kindly greeting. It is difficult to think of Witham without “Charlie” Newham, as he seemed to be known by all. This very fact testified to the manner of man that he was. To be generally called by an endearing diminutive is a sure token of a man's (or for that part a woman's) worth and character. It is the privilege of the few. His name will long be remembered. Happily we have his photograph in an early choir group in the vestry, taken about 50 years ago, while his name is perpetuated on a peal board in the steeple, as one who took part in a famous peal on Jan. 17th, 1890. R.I.P.

The choir.—Now that we have so many new recruits, we hope to arrange for the taking of another choir group, to add to our vestry series. These photographs have a real historic value.

Summer plans.—It is proposed to have a jumble sale and perhaps a whist drive at the Hall some time in June, for the funds of the Choral Society. Also a garden fete at the Vicarage, for Church purposes, and for starting a Coronation celebration fund—July the 18th is the date suggested for this.

The Rutland Musical Festival, to be held at Uppingham on Thursday, April 23rd, is this year competitive. Our Choral Society is competing in three classes. After the thorough and painstaking manner in which Mr. Shield has trained us through the winter, we are entering with high hopes of achieving some measure of success.

Burial.—March 5th, Charles Edward Newham, aged 78 years.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

Easter.—The great Festival was well kept, indeed the communicants were more numerous than we ever remember. It was a joy to see the church so full also for the Choral Eucharist, it reminded one of old days, when this service (then held every Sunday morning) used to be so wonderfully attended. Good Friday too was marked by a large congregation at 11. As for the decorations, they were once again, as always in our church, beautiful and striking.

The Easter offerings were, as is customary, given to the Vicar. He treasures this gift more than he can say, and regards each coin, however small, as a particular token of kindness and goodwill to himself. And what a number they were! It is easy to abstain from giving if one disapproves, but there could have been few, if any, who did this.

School Report.—The Religious Inspector sent his Report last month. In it the school is classed as "Excellent," which is the highest grade of all. He writes that "it is a most pleasant duty to inspect this school," and comments on the "brisk and accurate answering" of the children. The Catechism, he adds, is better known than in most of the schools he has visited, and that he is particularly pleased with the way in which their religious knowledge is related to the life and worship of the Church.

Miss Darnes.—Everyone will be distressed to hear that our esteemed Infant mistress is not well enough to be in school, and we all hope for Miss Darnes' speedy recovery to health. Meanwhile a temporary teacher is taking her place.

New school furniture.—We have at last been supplied with new desks and tables for the Infants' class-room, which will add greatly to the comfort of the little scholars. The old desks are now to be sold. Anyone who may wish to purchase one or more of these should apply to the Vicar without delay.

The bells.—We are having the bell-frame repaired and strengthened. Messrs. Kettle Bros., of Swayfield, who are doing the work for us, report most favourably on the general condition of the woodwork as a whole, and when certain weak parts are replaced, it will be as firm and sound as ever.

Collections in church.—At the recent annual Church meeting, the financial statement revealed that the offerings made in church during last year amounted to £81/17/8, which averaged out at considerably over £1/10/0 per Sunday. In spite of this there was a small deficit, a thing quite unusual with us, but we hope soon to wipe this out.

Electricity.—The Mid.-Lincs. electric supply Co. have now informed us definitely that they are bringing their current through the village in September. This will be good news to those of us who have waited so long for a domestic supply.

The Mothers' Union.—Our branch are looking forward to going to Lincoln for the Triennial Festival on Friday, May 15th, when there will be a great service in the Cathedral for all the branches in the Archdeaconry of Lincoln.

Ascension Day.—Let us not forget fittingly to keep this great and important Festival. Holy Thursday falls this year on May 21st.

The Uppingham Choral Festival.—It is always embarrassing to receive flattering congratulations which subsequently prove to be undeserved! We returned from Uppingham in high glee on being assured that we had tied with Preston for the Challenge Medallion. Alas! it was later discovered that an error had been made in adding up the marks, at so "that"—as they say—"is that"! I have therefore to ask the printers to cancel all the nice things that I had written about our success, and publish this statement instead. In justice to ourselves, it was here that the mistake was first discovered, and thereupon Mrs. Maitland at once informed the Committee by telephone. So all we can say now is, "better luck, Witham, next time"! L.H.C.

Baptism.—19th April, Violet Anne, daughter of Arthur Hilton and Freda Fanny Metheringham.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

A Jumble Sale will be held at the Hall on Saturday, June 20th, to be followed by a whist drive. These are in aid of the funds of the Choral Society, and it is hoped that they will be widely patronized. The jumble Sale will begin at 6.30, and the whist at 7.30. Tickets 1/-. Refreshments obtainable.

The Choral Society.—Although—as we chronicled last month—we did not obtain the challenge medallion, at Uppingham, we were the winners of two certificates, which is a most gratifying result. The members were most hospitably entertained to supper by Commander and Mrs. Maitland, at the Hall, on May 12th. After supper, Mr. Lenox, of Stamford, thrilled the company with a most baffling and wonderful series of conjuring tricks, followed up by an amusing turn as a ventriloquist. Later on, after a number of games, the party broke up about midnight.

Ascension Day.—Never before have we been without a special evening service on this great Festival. The Vicar was obliged to cancel it so that he might take a service for the Sisters and inmates of the Ketton home, at Barnack church. It was not found possible this year to invite them here, so they were most kindly entertained at Barnack instead, the only stipulation was that your Vicar must give the address. There was therefore no help for it but to drop our own service.

Miss Darnes is—we are glad to say—making a good, if slow, recovery, though we fear that it will be some considerable time before she is able to take up her duties in the school again. Our children have meanwhile shown their high regard for her by sending her quantities of flowers, and gifts of grapes, for which they themselves have subscribed. She has been deeply touched by this kind thoughtfulness. Miss Read, from Grantham, is acting as temporary Infant mistress, during Miss Darnes' enforced absence.

The Mothers' Union.—The great triennial Festival in Lincoln cathedral on May 15th, was attended by nearly all the members of our branch. It was a unique and wonderful service. For one thing, the huge array of banners carried in the procession through the packed congregation was a sight ever to be remembered. By-the-bye, it is really time that we had our old banner restored. It was given to the church by the late Squire Johnson about 35 years ago, and even before that, had done many years of service in a London church.

The pall.—Our church possesses an old funeral pall, which was formerly the property of the Witham Benefit club. It is of black silk velvet, and the Vicar is having it restored and beautified. It has been used on countless occasions in the past, and will doubtless continue so to be used. To cover the coffin with a pall was once a universal custom, prompted doubtless by a feeling of reverence and decency, and every church possessed one. A well-known hand-book of Church customs comments as follows:—"The coffin should never be carried through the streets or into the church uncovered." The book attributes the gradual disuse of the pall to the desire of undertakers that their "hideous polished wood and brass fittings" should be duly displayed!

Special notice.—The Vicar expects to be away from the Parish on two Sundays, namely: the 28th of June and the 5th of July. For these Sundays, his old friend Canon Wilgress, has most kindly promised to come over from Stamford and take two services on each Sunday. These will be, Holy Communion at 8, and Mattins (with sermon) at 11. The usual Evensong will be cancelled. He specially asks all the worshippers to endeavour to attend these, and those who usually come in the evening to substitute morning attendance instead on these two days.

N.B.—July 5th is "Quota Sunday."

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

A Summer Fete will be held in the grounds of the Vicarage on Saturday, July 18th. This social event is one to which we all look forward in the village, and if only for this reason alone, we like to have this pleasant annual gathering. The "Black Diamonds" band will be in attendance. The proceeds will go towards the Choir, the Sunday School and the Guides.

The choir excursion will be towards the end of July, probably the 27th. We hope that a large party will accompany us.

The "Bede House."—This is the familiar name of an ancient charity which a great number of our old people have enjoyed, and some still enjoy, owing to the kindness of Captain Johnson, of Ketton. The proper title of this charity is "the Hospital of St. John and St. Anne," and its ancient chapel still exists in Oakham. Captain Johnson, who is Patron of this Foundation, possesses the right to nominate a certain number of pensioners, and in many cases he has most kindly consented to include old people in this parish, on the Vicar's personal application. Recently, after the death of Mr. Charles Newham, your Vicar ventured to ask for it for yet another parishioner. He has however been informed by Captain Johnson, that owing to insufficient funds, the number of pensions is being reduced, and that in consequence of new regulations, all future pensioners must be resident in Rutland. We make these facts known so as to obviate any disappointment. As it has been thought by some people that this Charity is connected with Witham, we wish clearly to state that it is solely a private and personal one, given at Captain Johnson's own discretion to any whom he may choose, but owing to his being an old friend of the Vicar he has been kind enough to continue to give it to Witham residents whose names have from time to time been submitted to him. Had your Vicar not remained here, none of the present pensioners would have received it, nor indeed a great many others, who have since gone to their rest.

Carlby church.—As a neighbouring parish we offer our most hearty congratulations to our Carlby friends on the truly magnificent grant which the Pilgrim Trust has made to their church restoration Fund. After the strenuous efforts made during the last few years by the Rector and his helpers, and their plucky fight to raise the necessary money, it is a windfall as richly deserved as it was unexpected. We shall now at last see this once desolate Shrine completely restored "to the beauty of holiness." *Laus Deo!*

A Witham veteran.—The Vicar recently paid a visit to Mr. Samuel Baldwin in his cosy little cottage at Thurlby, and found him hale and hearty, though he is now 92 years of age, having been born in the year 1844! Mr. Baldwin, who has lived entirely alone since the death of his wife ten years ago, does all his own house-work and cooking. His boyhood was spent at Witham, in the house now occupied by Mrs. Gedge. At 17, he went as gardener to the Vicarage, where he worked under three Vicars in succession: Mr. Johnson, Mr. Leeson and Mr. Danby. In 1883 he took the glebe farm at Obthorpe, which he farmed for 24 years. Since then he has made his home at Thurlby. At Witham, he was a keen and expert bell-ringer, and among those whom he taught to ring was "young Charlie Newham!" Ever a staunch and devoted Churchman, his great regret is his inability now to get to church, owing to distance. An invitation to come instead to a neighbouring chapel was met by a polite but firm refusal. He had always been faithful to the Church, he said, and would remain so until his death.

Cricket.—July 1st, v. Greatford, home; 8th, ditto, away.

The net proceeds of the Jumble Sale and Whist Drive on June 20th, came to £11/10/0.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

Alexandra Rose Day collection.—The sale of roses in the parish this year amounted to £2/7/11. Witham and Manthorpe gave £1/19/2, and Toft 8/9. Last year, the sum collected was £3/5/5, 15/6 higher. Mrs. Silvester (or as she then was, Miss Jean Maitland), was then in charge. Possibly the drop in receipts may be attributed in some degree to the loss of her persuasive charm!

The garden fete.—We were fortunate in having a fine day for this, and the strong wind was really an advantage, as it dried the lawns for us, but even then they were hardly in a condition for dancing, so that this part of the programme had to be abandoned. On the whole however, we can congratulate ourselves, for after paying all expenses, there was a net result of £18/10/0 (including takings and subscriptions). We cannot sufficiently thank all the many friends who worked so hard to make it a success. If we were to mention all the helpers by name, the list would be a long one, too long for our space. And then too, there were those who most generously gave the many prizes. We thank them all. With regard to the proceeds, they are to be devoted to the annual outings of choir, bell-ringers and Sunday scholars. We hope to bank any money in excess of what we shall spend this summer, for the same object next year. For next year we shall be celebrating the King's coronation, and it might not be possible to organise a fete in addition to this.

The Vicar's holiday.—For the two Sundays, June 28th and July 4th, Canon Wilgress, Warden of Brown's Hospital, Stamford, most kindly came to take the services, and we hear that he received a hearty welcome from our worshippers. Judging from the collections, the congregations must have been good. It is good both for priest and people to have an occasional change. On the first Sunday, the Vicar had an opportunity of listening to someone else's sermons (a very unusual experience!), and on the second, he took full duty (four services with three sermons) in an Essex parish, where he found large and hearty congregations.

The school will close for the summer holidays from July 30th to August 31st. This is the period fixed by the Kesteven Education Committee for all the schools in the area. We greatly hope, when the school re-opens, that we shall have the pleasure of seeing Miss Darnes back again at her post after her long and trying illness.

Trip to Skegness.—This is fixed for Tuesday, July 28th. The party will consist of about 70, choristers, guides, Sunday school children and friends. The great advantages of this popular resort over any others, are its comparative nearness, its unrivalled choice of attractions and amusements, and (what is a real consideration this disastrous summer) its abundance of shelter in case of rain.

Miss Lawrance, whose father, the late Mr. Justice Lawrance, once resided at the Hall, spent a few days at Witham last month as the guest of the Vicar. There are however very few left now who remember her. Her mother, Lady Lawrance, is still living, and has attained the great age of 96.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, in laying the foundation stone of the new Cathedral at Guildford last month used the following words: "May I express the hope that from the very first, the centre of worship here will be the highest Act of Thanksgiving, the Holy Eucharist, wherein, age after age, the Memorial of the Lord's Atoning Sacrifice is perpetually offered."

Our sympathies go out to our old friend Mr. James Haddon, of Toft, in the deaths, within a fortnight of each other, of his brother and sister-in-law.

Baptism.—12th July, Keith Pierrepont, son of Eldred George Pierrepont and Lilian Johnson.

Marriage (at Swayfield). 9th July, James Ronald Holmes and Doris May Robinson.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

The Diocesan leaflet.—Our readers will find in the pages of this month's Magazine the first number of the "Diocesan leaflet," which is designed to give us news of the Diocese, and we hope a message from the Bishop, month by month. Many dioceses have magazines of their own, made attractive with pictures and articles, and these are localised in the parishes. Perhaps in time to come our diocese of Lincoln may issue one, but meanwhile we shall have to be content with this short leaflet. It will be distributed free of charge to all our readers. We must not judge it by this first number, for it will doubtless increase in attractiveness and interest as time goes on. It will at least keep us in touch with the affairs and doings of the Diocese, and tell us of what is happening in the Church beyond the confines of the Parish.

The Parish Magazine is so established an institution that it is difficult to think how we should get on without it. We believe that there are some clergy who occasionally find themselves at a loss to write their monthly notes, but surely the priest who loves his people and his church will always have something to say to them month by month, to sustain their interest in the work and life of the parish in which they live, and the church in which they worship. For 36 years your Vicar has written these Parish notes, and has endeavoured in the restricted space at his disposal to make them both informative and interesting.

Harvest Thanksgiving services will (D.V.) be held on Thursday, 24th Sept., and on the following Sunday. The Vicar of Bourne, the Rev. C. W. E. Horne, has been kind enough to promise to come and talk to us on the Thursday evening. Our Thank-offerings will be given, as in former years, to the Hospitals at Bourne and Stamford. Once again we ask for gifts in kind, groceries and provisions, as well as eggs, vegetables and fruit. Tables for these offerings will be provided in the church, let us endeavour to fill them. Everything thus given will subsequently be taken to the Hospital.

The King George Memorial fund.—We understand that it is the intention of the Bishops to appoint some Sunday in the near future when contributions to this fund may be made in all churches, thus affording an opportunity for those who have not yet subscribed, to give their contribution towards this great National Memorial to a Sovereign universally beloved. Many will welcome such an opportunity.

Lawn Tennis.—During most of this wet and disastrous summer there has been but little chance for play on the Vicarage lawn, owing to its sodden condition. The disappointment is quite as much with the Vicar as with the players. It is always a pleasure to him to see them making use of his garden, which for a great many years has been the scene of the Village lawn tennis club. We believe that it was first started over 25 years ago! We well remember a certain former parishioner of past days, who gave as her reason for regular attendance at church, that the Vicar was good enough to let her use his court, and so she showed her appreciation of his kindness by coming to church! An odd motive perhaps, though one not wholly unworthy of imitation!

At the church, two very necessary improvements are shortly to be put in hand. The first is the renovation and repair of the furnace and heating chamber, which is almost worn out, and the other is the cleaning of the walls and the white-washing of the ceiling in nave and aisles. This will probably be a dirty job, and it may be necessary to suspend the services, at least for a week. It is hoped to complete it between the 7th and 12th of this month.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

The church cleaning.—Only those who happened to go into the church during the actual operations last month can realise fully the work that has just been done. First of all, there was the whitening of the plaster ceilings, then the scouring and sweeping of the walls, screen and roofs, the chancel included, so that not a cob-web now remains. Everything moveable was removed, and finally there was the washing of the seats, and the scrubbing of the entire floor surface. The work was completed between the Sundays, but only just! Never before, in your Vicar's time, has so drastic and thorough a cleaning been attempted. Now more than ever shall we hope to deserve the kind criticisms of our numerous visitors, who as a rule comment so favourably on the *cleanness* of our church. A neighbour remarked not long ago that he always took his guests to see Witham church, as being not only one of the most beautiful that he knew, but also one of the *cleanest*! After all, we are told that cleanliness is next to godliness. A church should show evidence of both these virtues.

The plaster ceiling was, as we mentioned not long ago in these notes, put up in 1818, when the whole nave was re-roofed. Owing to its great height it has in all probability never been white-washed since! At all events the Vicar can find no record of this having been done. We feel that we must add a word of praise to those who did it, Messrs. Kettle Bros., of Swayfield. Their dexterity in reaching every part of this lofty ceiling, without the aid of elaborate scaffolding, was a masterpiece of skill, not to say nerve!

The King George National Memorial.—In response to the Bishop's request for collections to be made in every church on Sept. 13th, in aid of this Fund, special offerings were asked for, and no less than £3/5/0 was given at the three services.

The Choral Society.—Once again the weekly practices at the Hall are commencing, and the first is to be on Tuesday, Oct. 6th. The chief work on which we shall concentrate is Mendelssohn's "Elijah," which has been selected for the Uppingham Festival in the Spring. Quite a number of our singers are already acquainted with this great work, so that we start with this advantage. Our conductor this year is to be Miss Joan Blackstone, of Stamford, who has most kindly promised to come and train us. We shall gladly welcome new members, and hope that many more will join. These weekly meetings make a delightful break in the monotony of the winter, and are a source of very real enjoyment to those who come, not to mention the thrill of the great concert at the end. The modest fee of one shilling is the only expense incurred.

Thanksgiving for the Harvest.—These notes are being written immediately after the service on Thursday, Sept 24th, when the Vicar of Bourne was kind enough to come out and preach to us. The attendance was excellent, and the beauty of the decorations most striking. The electric light was an additional help in showing them up to the best advantage. Already the gift tables are well loaded, and many scores of packages and offerings have been brought.

Electricity.—After waiting so long for a supply of current to the village, and after the most explicit promise that it was to be here in September, it is a little tantalizing to see the cables by-passing us to Little Bytham. So once again we must wait in patience, and put no further trust in promises of the "pie-crust" order! As to the church, we were wise indeed when we accepted Commander Maitland's generous offer last year of a supply from his private plant.

Baptisms.—Aug. 30th, Margaret Jean, daughter of Raymond and May Muxlow.

Sept. 28th, Joan Xauen and Georgina Barbara, daughters of Sydney Herbert and Norah Annie Quick.

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

1. **From the Secretary of the Butterfield Hospital.**—"The Committee wish to express their real gratitude to your parishioners for the very handsome gift in produce sent to the hospital this harvest season. I have great pleasure in writing to thank you for these and the collection already acknowledged." (signed) N. W. Price, Hon. Sec.

2. **From the Secretary of the Diocesan Board of Finance.**—"Thank you very much indeed for your cheque to complete Witham-on-the-Hill's apportionment for the current year, with the substantial addition. I assure you that we appreciate very much your generous support. If all the Parishes in the Diocese followed your excellent example what a splendid thing it would be!" (signed) A. G. Croll, organising Sec.

These two letters speak for themselves. The collections at the Harvest Thanksgiving services amounted to £4/18/0, which was divided between the two Hospitals (Stamford and Bourne), while the groceries, to the value of many pounds, were sent to the Butterfield Hospital. With reference to the second letter, we have this year sent nearly £2 more than our allotted quota to Lincoln. It would indeed be well if other parishes, as the Secretary says, followed our example!

Armistice Day (Nov. 11th). We hope to observe this as in previous years, by meeting in church for the keeping of the Two minutes' Silence. The usual "Poppy Day" collection will be made throughout the parish. Please give as liberally as you can for your poppy.

The Mothers' Union.—It has been decided to hold monthly meetings during the winter, some of which will be of the nature of social gatherings. Our branch is a small one and we do ask for more support. It is splendid that in face of much difficulty it has decided to carry on. That is the right spirit.

A very warm and hearty welcome is awaiting Mrs. Silvester, when she and her husband return from India about the middle of this month. In particular the members of the Choral Society, which owes its existence entirely to her, will rejoice to see her among them once again. Meanwhile we are going on famously under the able tuition of Miss Joan Blackstone, to whom we must all express our gratitude for her kindness in coming out week by week to conduct us.

Our good wishes go out to Mr. and Mrs. Markham in their new home at Weston. We shall sadly miss him from among the tenors in the Choral Society, also Mrs. Markham from the M.U., and the children from church and school.

Mrs. Burges.—All of us here are rejoiced to know of the good recovery that Mrs. Burges is making after her recent illness, and unite in wishing her a speedy and complete restoration to health.

A question sometimes asked of the clergy.—"Why do you have the service of Holy Communion so often?"

The answer is:—In obedience to Jesus Christ, who instituted it as "*a perpetual Memory of His Death, until His coming again*" (see the Consecration Prayer). Also in the Catechism, we are told that it was ordained as "*a continual Remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ.*" Now the word "*continual*" is explained in the dictionary as meaning "*unceasing*" or "*uninterrupted*." And so it has ever been regarded as the one chief and indispensable Act of Christian worship, to be celebrated with constant and unceasing regularity, *at the very least* on every Sunday and Holy Day, as the Prayer Book expressly provides, further stating that it is either to be "*sung or said,*" according to circumstances.

Sunday collections.—(We propose to publish these month by month in future). 4th Oct., £3/3/7 (Quota Sunday) · 11th Oct., £1/1/4 · 18th Oct., £1/3/10 · 25th Oct., £1/11/10 · Total for month £7/0/7

WITHAM-ON-THE-HILL, MANTHORPE, TOFT AND LOUND.

On Christmas Day there will be celebrations of the Holy Communion at 7. 8. and 11 a.m., the latter service being sung. At its conclusion the usual Charities will be dispensed in church, according to the ancient custom, by the Vicar and Churchwardens. The offerings will be given to the "Waifs and Strays" Society.

Christmas on a Friday.—The Book of Common Prayer orders (see "Tables and Rules") that all Fridays in the year, with the exception of Christmas Day, are "days of abstinence." Many years ago when we inserted this statement in the Magazine, the Editor of a well-known London Daily Newspaper happened to spot it, and deeming it good "copy," made great fun of the idea that there might be any, who, unaware of this ecclesiastical permission, were heroically denying themselves the pleasures of roast beef and turkey at their Christmas dinner, because it was Friday! Quite possibly he was under the impression that the Vicar had invented the rule, like the King of Hearts in the trial scene in "Alice in Wonderland"!! We might add that the new Prayer Book still includes the rule, though extends the permission to "the Epiphany, and the Fridays within the Octaves of Christmas, Easter and the Ascension."

The Poppy Day Fund.—This year we sent in from this Parish the satisfactory sum of £6/19/3. This was made up as follows:—Sale of Poppies £4/19/1, church collection on Armistice Sunday £2/0/2. Last year we sent £6/9/2, so that we have increased our contributions by 10/-.

The Heating of the church.—The restored heating apparatus is giving good results, and the church is now warm and comfortable. Ours however is a very costly system, as reference to the fuel bills will prove. We have compiled the following particulars from the church accounts. Taking the last six years, the average cost for fuel has been just £16/3/4, a year. This means that out of our collections each Sunday (Summer and Winter included) a sum of a little over 6/- has to be set aside for fuel! In other words to warm the church for a Sunday costs not much less than 12/- We hope that those members of the congregation who appreciate a warm church will bear this in mind when they contribute Sunday by Sunday to the collection. On the other hand, our hot-air heating system dispenses with all unsightly pipes, radiators or stoves, which disfigure so many churches. Visitors have often asked whether we warm the church at all, owing to the total absence of all external signs, even of a chimney!

Christmas Social events.—A party for the children will be held probably on Tuesday, Dec. 22nd, the day when the school breaks up. The Choral Society are also arranging to have their annual Dance, the date of which is not fixed at the time of writing.

The Ringers.—We should like to express our great thanks to the ringers for their regular and unceasing ringing on Sundays. They never fail us, and the bells are invariably raised and rung up every Sunday morning and evening. We are deeply grateful to them for this labour of love.

The Magazine.—May we appeal to *all* who take the Magazine to continue their support next year? We want if possible to *increase* our splendid circulation of 75 copies. Every additional subscriber is a great help and encouragement.

Collections in November.—1st, £1/2/9; 8th, £2/0/5; 15th, £1/14/10. 22nd, £1/2/2.