

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

The Vicar's New Year's letter to his parishioners.

My dear friends,

Once a year I like to drop the role of impersonal editor and speak to you as friend to friend. And first of all, I want to wish you, one and all, every happiness during the year that is now beginning. What it may have in store for us we do not know. For one reason it will be a historic year, owing to the approaching Coronation of our new King and his Queen. But what of sorrow or of trouble it may bring, either to ourselves personally, or to the nation collectively, is known only to God. In the Almanack, which I have sent to each reader as a combined Christmas and New Year greeting, you will find a short prayer "*for the peace of the world.*" I ask you to use this prayer fervently and often in face of the present grave outlook in Europe.

There is too, another prayer in the Almanack which I want you all to use regularly, it is the prayer "*for the Parish,*" for in it we pray that we may "all be of one heart and one mind." We are only a small community in this little parish of ours, but how happy it would be if we were, as we should be, one united family, seeking *together* the glory of God, and the well-being of one another, in love and mutual forbearance. And so I make an appeal to you all. Let us mark this Coronation year by closing up our ranks, by healing all old grievances, and forgetting old misunderstandings and mistakes, even as the tragedy of the throne which recently so shocked and disturbed the country, is now forgotten as a dream that is past. "Forgive and forget" is the wise decision of the country, let it too be that of our *parish*.

As for me, your Vicar, I have now been with you for over thirty-six years, and throughout that long time, I have ever tried to serve you and those who were here before you, in singleness of heart and purpose, though, as I am acutely conscious, with many failures and imperfections. And now that I am an old man, I need your encouragement and friendship even more, in fact I simply cannot go on here without it. Will you give it to me? And if I have offended anyone, however unwittingly, I simply ask you too on your part, to "forgive and forget."

And then, with regard to the church. You have a church here of which any parish might well be proud, "one of the most beautiful in South Lincolnshire," as I have heard it described. Use it more faithfully, and remember that God has a message for you (yes, *you* who read this) within its walls *every* Sunday without exception, and further He offers to you the grace of His Holy Sacrament at its altar *every* Sunday without exception. I ask you to realize and use both these privileges more faithfully than you have in the past. Begin the New Year with high resolve. If you do, then it will indeed, come what may, be a happy one for you.

Believe me, my dear friends,

Your faithful and affectionate old friend,

L. H. COOLEY.

Confirmation.—The Vicar asks for the names of intending candidates without delay.

Children's party.—The school children had a most wonderful breaking-up party on December 22nd, including decorated tea-tables and fancy dresses, for which prizes were given. Our great thanks are due to Miss Bird, her mother and sister, to Miss Weekley and Miss Baker, for providing one of the most splendidly organised parties that we ever remember.

Collections in December.—6th £1/1/7; 12th £1/4/10; 20th £1/2/2; Christmas Day £4/6/1 (for Waifs and Strays); 27th £1/5/11. Total for the month, £9/0/7.

Baptism.—29th November, Joyce Mary, daughter of Leslie and Annie Stimson.

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Lent.—On the 10th of this month falls Ash Wednesday, making the beginning once again of the great and solemn season called Lent. In view of this, the Vicar asks you all to read over once more the letter which he wrote in the January Magazine, and particularly the last paragraph. And then let each parishioner ask himself or herself, "In what special way can I keep Lent? How can I best use it so that it may be a real help to me in my spiritual life? No one can be indifferent to the great recall to religion recently made by the Archbishop of Canterbury, a call addressed not alone to the clergy, but to all who call themselves Christians. In answer to that call let us enter into the season of Lent with new resolve that every one of us will do all that in us lies, by precept as well as by example, to further the Kingdom of God in our midst, and once more to "build Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land."

The Magazine.—Our great thanks to all those who take in the Magazine. Our numbers have gone even higher this year. Specially are we grateful to those who, though no longer parishioners, continue to support us. Here is a paragraph from a letter just received. "I enclose the Magazine money for 1937. We still enjoy reading the parish news after all these years, for we loved St. Andrew's church so much, and shall never forget it." This is from one who left over 15 years ago. Still another subscriber who left here 32 years ago, has told us that she hopes to have it sent to her as long as the Vicar is here to write it!

Our Mission Sunday.—For many years we have set apart the second Sunday in February as a special day of intercession for and support of foreign Missionary work. This year, owing to the unusually early date on which Easter falls, our Mission Sunday will be the first Sunday in Lent, perhaps not altogether a disadvantage. Our offerings on this day will be given to the venerable "Society for the propagation of the Gospel," and the holders of Missionary boxes are asked to bring them in on that Sunday, or during the week following.

Influenza.—Our parish has not escaped the prevailing epidemic, and at the time of writing our school is closed. It is hoped that by the time this is in print all the sufferers, both young and old, may again be well.

The approaching Coronation seems likely to witness the most remarkable demonstration of loyalty and affection towards the Throne which has ever been known throughout the Empire. Already in London miles of triumphal masts and stands are going up, as the Vicar saw when he was there the other day. We here, must take our share in this great tribute to our King and Queen, and the time will soon come for us to consider how best we can celebrate it.

In Memoriam.—It is our sad duty to record two tragic deaths, both of which took place in one week last month, and we wish respectfully to offer our deep sympathy to the bereaved families.

Mrs. Jones was one whom the Vicar has known throughout the whole of her life, for he baptized her over thirty-five years ago, and now has buried her. Until her second marriage she had lived in the village all her life. Fittingly her body was brought to her native place to rest beside her first husband, Cecil Story.

Mrs. Maile, although she had only been here some three years, was very deeply respected by all who knew her. Never very strong however, she was seldom able to get from her distant home to church and village. By her death her children have lost a dearly loved and devoted mother. We laid her to rest beside the grave of the little son who was so tragically killed on Whitsunday 1935, and whose early death was ever to her an abiding sorrow. R.I.P.

Collections in January.—3rd, £1/1/4; 10th, £2/14/2 (Quota); 17th, £1/6/7; 24th, £1/2/8.

Burials.—Jan. 14th, Hilda Emma Jones, aged 35 years; Jan. 16th, Emily Ann Maile, aged 53 years.

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Lent.—This solemn and precious season is drawing to its climax. Are we all really trying to make use of it? A great call has come to us this year through our Archbishop, a call to a real renewal of religion, in this year of our King's Coronation, so that we as a nation may rededicate ourselves with our King to God's service. That is why your Vicar is trying specially this Lent to help you. And he asks for your response. Let us in these remaining weeks of Lent, strive after a still deeper earnestness and devotion, and make an even better use of the special opportunities offered to us.

The Coronation (an introductory note). This momentous event to which we are all now beginning to look forward, is not merely a great day of rejoicing, as was the Jubilee of King George V two years ago. It is infinitely more than that. It is the day of a most solemn and significant *religious* ceremony, when amid scenes of unparalleled splendour, the Church consecrates the King to his high office, and endues him with Power from on High. The actual *crowning* of the sovereign is only a comparatively minor incident in the great drama. Its chief significance lies in the two great Sacramental means of grace which are thus administered to him, the anointing with holy oil, signifying the bestowal upon him of the Holy Spirit, and the giving to him of the Holy Communion, for his spiritual strength and sustenance. The whole service is of course a solemn celebration of the Eucharist when among tens of thousands of worshippers the King and Queen alone receive the Holy Sacrament. We hope next month to comment further on the great ceremony.

Tree Planting.—If any propose to plant trees in commemoration of the Coronation, no time should be lost in getting them in. The Vicar has planted two, one for the King and the other for the Queen, each with its metal plaque to mark it.

Former Coronations.—The Vicar well remembers the Coronations both of King Edward VII, and of King George V, in the years 1902 and 1911 respectively. Trees in the Park still mark these two events. The first, a maple, was planted by Mr. Brackenbury, of Ling's Farm (the then oldest tenant on the Estate) and the second, an oak, was planted by Mrs. Watts of Toft. Are we to have one to mark this Coronation? And if so, where?

The Annual Parish Church Meeting will (D.V.) take place in Easter week, probably Wednesday, March 31st. We invite everyone who is interested in the welfare of the church, and hope for a large attendance. For then we do important things. Among them, we present the church accounts for the past year, when it will be seen that an adverse balance has been wiped out, and turned into a substantial balance in hand. Also the churchwardens are appointed, sidesmen nominated, and a Church Council elected. Please encourage your Vicar by attending this important meeting.

Our Missionary Sunday.—The collections on Feb. 14th were in aid of the Society for the propagation of the Gospel, and amounted to £2/12/0. In addition the missionary boxes yielded the splendid sum of £3/6/8, so that we have been able to send up to the S.P.G. the goodly total of £5/18/8, which we believe is a record. N.B.—We ask for still more who will take a collecting box.

N.B.—Coronation Meeting on Friday, 19th March. Notices are being sent to every house.

Church collections in Feb.—7th, 19/-; 14th, £2/12/0; 21st, £1/0/4; 28th, £1/5/8.

Baptism.—Feb. 21st, Albert Charles, son of Charles Arthur and Eva Ellen Maile.

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Easter.—As we are obliged to go to press before the great Festival, any record of its observance must be deferred until next month. When Easter falls in March, and in consequence Lent is also early, its due observance is always rendered more difficult, even in normal weather conditions, but this year these have surpassed themselves, and the bitter cold and wet have told upon our church attendance. The one happy feature has been the Wednesday Evening Service. It was a joy to your Vicar to see how greatly it was appreciated. The box placed in the church on those evenings became so full that it was necessary to clear it after four weeks, when the contents amounted to £2/4/6. At the end of Lent we shall send the whole sum collected to the Waifs and Strays Society.

The Coronation.—A well attended meeting was held on March 19th, in the Village Hall, in order to decide upon a programme for the Coronation Day. It was agreed that it should be celebrated very much on the same lines as was King George's Jubilee two years ago, that is, first a united Service in church, afterwards tree planting, followed by sports, then a meat tea for all the parishioners, old and young, and finishing up with a Social. We can hope for nothing better than that it may be as happy a day as on the former occasion, and the weather as perfect.

Four Score Years.—We should like most respectfully to offer our hearty good wishes to the Rev. J. T. Halland and Mrs. Halland, both of whom kept their 80th birthday last month. He, as all our readers will know, was Vicar here from 1885 to 1899, and although, but few remain here who remember him, he has always had a warm place in his heart for his old parish. He is still a diligent reader of this magazine, as we frequently have occasion to know, and so when he reads this paragraph, we want him to read into it a very affectionate message of regard from us all here, who live in the parish for which in his time he did so much, and to accept both for himself and for Mrs. Halland, our tribute of esteem and gratitude.

The Archbishop's Recall to Religion.—On every hand one hears how wide is the reponse to this awakening call. It must ever be remembered that it is addressed to us *all*, and that the lay people, no less than the clergy, form the Church. The "*Times*" newspaper in a recent leading article on the subject, urged the laity to become the coadjutors of the clergy, instead of their critics. The movement, it states, must not be merely one conducted by the clergy, and watched by laymen with detached approval. It must be one in which clergy and laity alike are actively concerned. This is wise and necessary advice.

The Late Canon Fry.—By the death of the Rector of Barnack, the Vicar has lost one of his closest friends and most valued counsellors. He it was who gave us our beautiful carved oak lectern, and incidentally our pall covered his coffin, as it rested during the night in Barnack church.

R.I.P.

Canon Ashby too, was an old and intimate friend. As Rector of Market Deeping he was our Rural Dean for some twelve years. By request, the Vicar has written a short tribute to his memory, which will appear in this month's Diocesan Magazine.

Our Wild Birds.—Now that the nesting season has begun, we make an earnest appeal to parents and others to teach the children how wanton and cruel is the habit of robbing or destroying nests. "Your Heavenly Father careth for the birds." So our Lord has taught us. Kindness to all God's dumb creatures should surely be one of the marks of a true Christian.

The Mothers' Union. Our members have most kindly been invited to attend the Festival at Careby, on Tuesday, April 6th (The Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady). The service will be at 3 o'clock, and tea will follow.

Collections in March.—7th £1/1/11 ; 14th 18/4 ; 21st £1/1/0 ; 28th £2/7/10.

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Ascension Day.—Once again, the Sisters and inmates of St. Mary's Home, Ketton, will spend the afternoon and evening of Holy Thursday (May 6th), as the guests of Commander and Mrs. Crichton-Maitland. They will attend the church for Evensong, and we hope that many others will come too, so that we may have a hearty musical Service. The time of the Service will be 6 p.m., and the preacher will be the Rev. Cary Cooper, Rector of West Deeping.

The Choral Society.—The members were richly rewarded for their many weeks of practice, by the magnificent performance of Mendelssohn's "Elijah" at Uppingham on April the 22nd, in which they took part. It was a musical treat never to be forgotten. Next year the Festival will be a competitive one, and we hope that our Society will do even better than in past years. As regards the children's Festival at Stamford on April the 14th, our small School was handicapped through having to compete with others having much larger numbers, though they put up, under Miss Bird's able tuition, a really excellent performance.

Coronation Day.—There will be an early celebration of Holy Communion at 8 a.m., and the great historic ceremony itself will be re-laid in the church. We shall endeavour to secure as loud and clear a production of this as is possible. The Archbishop of Canterbury has strongly urged that all who can should listen to the solemn service of the Kings' Hallowing *in church* rather than in their homes.

Our Parish Celebrations will begin with a brief United Service in church at 2 p.m. Let all endeavour to be present at this. It will last no more than half an hour, copies of the Service will be provided. At its conclusion, a move will be made to the Village Green, for the planting of the tree. Then will come the Sports, and later everyone, young and old, will be entertained to a bountiful tea. In the evening a Whist Drive and Social will bring this great and eventful day to a close. We cannot sufficiently thank all those ladies and gentlemen who for weeks past have been planning for our happiness, and arranging so complete and enjoyable a programme. In particular we are more than grateful to Mr. Miller, for the immense work he has so kindly undertaken as our indefatigable organiser and secretary. We hear that Subscriptions and gifts have been sufficiently numerous and generous so as to enable all to be done "in style" and certainly without stint!

Decorations.—The Coronation Committee propose to carry out schemes of decoration of the School and Village Hall, also of the Village Green, while householders are asked to adorn their own houses as they fancy.

The Hallowing of the King.—Once more, let us remind ourselves that the great Solemnities of May the 12th, are *entirely* of a religious nature. The King goes to Westminster Abbey to be consecrated to his high office, not by the Ministers of the State, but by the Bishops of the Church. It is the Archbishop of Canterbury, and not the Prime Minister, who will anoint him with holy oil, will set the Crown upon his head, and will administer to him the Blessed Sacrament. The robes in which he will be arrayed are similar to the Church Vestments, the alb, the stole, the girdle and the cope. It is not a mere piece of empty pageantry, but a sacred rite of the utmost religious significance, in which Divine Grace is bestowed upon the King to strengthen him to fulfil his high duties.

April Changes.—Lady Day usually brings some changes in our little parish. We have to wish "God speed" to some who leave us for other homes, while we extend a hearty welcome to new-comers. This year we lose some who are very old friends.

Collections in April.—4th £3/1/5; 11th £1/3/1; 18th £1/0/1; 25th £2/0/0.

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The Coronation.—This historic day will long be remembered here. The rain held off long enough to enable the great majority of the parishioners to be present, and how nobly they turned up from the most distant ends of the parish. The attendance at the service at 2 o'clock was as great as on any occasion which the Vicar ever remembers, and that is saying a good deal!

The Message from the King.—It was a happy thought on the part of our energetic secretary, Mr. Miller, to send a greeting of loyalty to their Majesties from the parish, and the King's message "to the inhabitants of Witham-on-the Hill, with Manthorpe, Toft and Lound", conveying his warm thanks and good wishes, was one of the most notable events of the great occasion. It was read in the church by the Vicar at the conclusion of the service, and was listened to with deep gratification, not to say surprise, for the secret had been well kept.

The Coronation Oak.—This was planted by the Vicar at the express request of the Committee. Though he is not quite the oldest parishioner, there can be few with a deeper love for the parish, where he has spent the greater part of his life, and whose welfare he has so deeply at heart. He greatly appreciated the privilege of being chosen to plant the tree, which it is hoped may live and flourish, as a memento through the years to come of May the 12th, 1937.

The Parish Tea.—The entire parish, old and young alike, sat down in relays to a bountiful spread in the school. And then came the rain, but no one's spirits seemed to be damped, and the fun and merriment were kept up till long after midnight. The sports were postponed until Tuesday, May 25th.

Ascension Day.—This great day was this year more than usually well kept. With our visitors from Ketton and our own parishioners, the church at Evensong appeared to be quite full. The Rector of West Deeping gave us an interesting address on the "Coronation of the King of Kings." We are grateful to those who decorated the church so beautifully for the Festival.

The Waifs and Strays Society.—Commander and Mrs. Crichton-Maitland have most kindly arranged a garden party in aid of this Society on Thursday, June 3rd. In addition, the Hall gardens will be open from 5.30 to 8.30, at a charge of 6d. We hope that many will come, and thus help this most deserving Society, which has been so good a friend to us here.

The Rutland Archaeological Society, meets at Witham on Wednesday, June 9th. They will visit the church, and will hear an explanation of its interesting history and architecture. Many parishioners will doubtless like to listen to this descriptive talk. The members of the Society are being entertained to tea at the Hall.

The Death of Mrs. Birch, which took place on Coronation Day, severs another link with the past. She had been in very indifferent health for many months, though as late as Easter Day was able to come to church for her Communion. Just before full consciousness left her, she received the last Sacrament, and passed peacefully away a few days later. We offer our deep sympathy to her family, who have lost a loving and well loved mother. R.I.P.

The Death of Mr. Thomas Pick.—For 24 years Mr. Pick was churchwarden here, and truly loved the church which he served so faithfully. He was born at Elderwood Lodge, was baptized here, and lived here for many years, first at Elderwood and later at the Home Farm. With his passing, one deeply respected and beloved, has gone from us. R.I.P.

Collections in May.—2nd £1/16/10 ; 9th £1/10/4 ; 16th £1/10/10 ; 23rd £1/1/9.

Burials.—May 17th, Mary Jane Birch, aged 77 years. May 18th, Thomas Pick, aged 83 years, (at Essendine.)

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Mr. Thomas Pick.—Owing to pressure of space last month our obituary notice of the late Mr. Pick was all too brief. Here is a tribute to him by the Rev. J. T. Halland, formerly Vicar here. "So dear Tom Pick has gone. R.I.P."

"It is sad to think of his life in recent years, so wearisome to himself and to those about him, and I am thankful that my own vivid remembrance of him is of his vigorous days. He was a "good upright man, earnest and loyal to his Christian convictions." During the many years that he was Churchwarden, he never failed in his attendance at the church, and walked from Elderwood in all weathers, to attend the Sung Eucharist Sunday by Sunday. To the Intercessions at that service during the war years he attributed, so he affirmed, the safe return of his soldier sons.

Another Archæological Society to visit Witham.—On Tuesday, July 6th, the important Lincoln Archæological Society is coming here. It is a strange co-incidence to have two such visits in two consecutive months! They will inspect the church, and the Secretary will speak on its architectural features and history. Afterwards the visitors will take tea in the Village Hall, which will be served by the kindness of the lady members of the Church Council.

Coronation Celebrations.—A detailed statement of accounts in connection with these has very kindly been drawn up by the Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Miller, and is affixed to the notice board in the church porch. The cost in money was £38/3/5, raised chiefly by subscriptions. There were in addition, many gifts in kind, such as prizes, flowers, &c. Also a generous gift of a barrel of beer for the sports was made by Mr. Wallis.

At the final meeting of the Committee on June 1st, a pleasant surprise was sprung on Mr. Miller, when he was asked to accept a tribute from all the members, as a small acknowledgment of his valued services as Treasurer and Secretary of both the Jubilee and Coronation Committees. This took the form of a handsome barometer, with an appropriate inscription.

A Nurse at Witham.—The County Nursing Association has amalgamated the former nursing districts of Edenham and Careby, with one nurse for the area in place of two. This nurse will reside here. We feel considerable sympathy for Careby, Little Bytham and Holywell, who have worked so hard for their Association, and maintained their resident nurse for so long, only to have her taken from them. Still, nowadays, owing to the motor car and telephone, distance does not count as it formerly did, and in case of emergency the nurse can be in Careby in a very few minutes. Still it is a wrench to lose her as a resident, though naturally we shall rejoice to have her in Witham, little perhaps as we deserve this privilege! It is due, not at all to our deserts, but solely to our geographical position!

Electricity.—At long last we in Witham are being supplied with electric light and power. On referring back to our notes we find that it was "promised" to us by October, 1933, that is nearly 4 years ago! However, "seeing is believing," and the poles and mains are being erected under our very eyes as we write. We have in consequence lost no time in wiring the Village Hall as a start. How delightful it will be at whist drives to see our figures clearly! The fine wrought iron lamp brackets will be used for the new lighting.

Church Collections in June.—6th, £1/4/8; 13th, £1/10/9; 20th, £1/8/7; 27th, £1/7/5.

Baptisms.—June 6th, George Michael, son of Harry and Ellen Ransome; 13th, John Philip, son of John William and Rachel Jane Wallis; 20th, Patricia Jane, daughter of John William Ernest and Violet Velma Vout.

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Alexandra Rose Day.—The sale of roses in the parish resulted as follows:—Witham, £2/17/4; Toft with Lound, 9/6; Manthorpe, 5/10; Total £3/12/8. This is £1/4/9 more than last year, a very gratifying result.

The School.—The following is an extract from the Report of the Religious Inspector after his visit in June. "The religious instruction in this school continues in the high standard that I have "noted at previous inspections. The teachers do their work conscientiously, and the children "respond well." The Inspector places our school in the highest division of all, namely, "Excellent." This report is a significant comment on the quality of the teaching given by Miss Bird and Miss Darnes, and we should like to express our deep sense of gratitude to them.

Our Head Teacher.—As is already known to most of us, we shall shortly be losing Miss Bird, who has accepted the Headship of another school on the 1st November. All of us, managers, parents and children alike, will part from her with the very deepest regret. Of this we propose to say more nearer the time. Meanwhile the managers are faced with a very great responsibility in trying to secure a teacher who will carry on the high standard and devotion to duty which Miss Bird has consistently maintained during the three and a half years that she has been with us.

The choir and ringers had an enjoyable day at Skegness on S. Swithin's Day (July 15th). Fortunately they escaped the torrents which are so commonly associated with this good Bishop's name, although we had our full share here.

In Memoriam. Beatrice Mary Brewster.—We wish to offer the deep sympathy of the whole parish to Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Brewster in the sudden and tragic death of their dearly-loved only daughter, whose passing has plunged us all into sorrow, and not the least her school-mates, with whom she was a particular favourite. Two years ago, the Vicar prepared her for her Confirmation, even as he had done in the case of her mother, 29 years ago. He has therefore known her the whole of her life, and will ever remember her with affection as a quiet, thoughtful and eminently loveable child. R.I.P.

The following touching tribute to Mary Brewster has been sent to us by Miss Bird.

No words of mine could ever express the grief and pain which all in the school have suffered by the passing away of a beloved friend. Tragically sudden as her death was, it left us stunned and bewildered, yet with the sure knowledge that she had passed into a deeper and fuller joy. She was loved by us all, for, quiet, unassuming and somewhat shy, she was ready at any time to do whatever she could to assist. She was Captain of her team, and no team could be handled more skilfully and tactfully than hers was handled. Her unflinching good humour, her deep sense of justice and honour, her willingness to perform at least one "good turn" a day, made her what she was, a Guide who was honestly endeavouring to reach those ideals after which we strive.

She will long be remembered, for although she was quiet and humble, her loveable ways have left on us a lasting impression. So we commend into God's gracious keeping the soul of one whom we knew so well, praying too, that Christ will give to her and to her loved ones, "the peace that passeth all understanding."

M.C.B.

Phyllis Maddison.—Since the above was written, there has passed from us another child, whose death has ended a life of great suffering. Though a new-comer here she quickly made friends by her sunny disposition. Her patience in her last illness was quite wonderful. She seemed never to complain, and almost to the last she would greet one with a happy smile. To her father, brothers and sisters we would express our heart-felt sympathy in their great loss. R.I.P.

Collections in July.—4th, £2/10/11; 11th, £1/9/9; 18th, £1/6/0; 25th, £1/8/6.

Burials.—July 22nd, Beatrice Mary Brewster, aged 14 years.

„ 29th, Phyllis Irene Maddison, aged 14 years.

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Mr. and Mrs. Charles Brewster wish to express through the Parish Magazine their deep and heartfelt gratitude for all the sympathy which has been so abundantly shown to them in their great sorrow. The many tributes of affection which have been paid to the memory of their dear daughter have touched them very deeply, and they would like to include in their thanks all who, in one way or another, have so helped them by their sympathy. Those who sent flowers, or were present at the graveside, the ringers for the muffled peal, the choir and school children for their rendering of the hymns, and the guides for their last salute to their departed comrade. Finally they would thank the Vicar for his comforting words, and Miss Bird for her beautiful tribute which was printed in the Magazine last month. To one and all they wish to say—"Thank You."

The Nursing Association.—Now that Nurse Hutton is in residence at Witham it is hoped that many parishioners will become subscribers. The fees are well within the means of every householder, being as low as 4/4 a year. A copy of the rules and table of fees may be obtained on application from the Nurse, pending the formation of a local Committee.

Harvest Thanksgiving Services will be held (D.V.) on the 7th and 10th of October. On the week-night the Rector of West Deeping has very kindly consented to come and address us. We again beg for gifts in kind, groceries, vegetables, eggs, fruit, &c., such as we have asked for in the past; and, which will be sent to the Hospital after the Festival.

Long incumbencies at Witham.—Although the writer has held the Vicarage for the long space of 37 years, he is easily out-distanced in length of tenure by the two Vicars of the Johnson family. The Rev. William Henry Johnson was here from 1835 to 1877, a period of 42 years. Some few there are who remember him, though the inscription on his grave-stone is now almost illegible. He was appointed to the benefice by his cousin, General Johnson, when he was only 24, probably the youngest Vicar that Witham has ever known. It was during his incumbency that the church was restored. However the Rev. Charles Woolsey Johnson before him (the son of one squire and brother of another), held the living for an even longer period, from 1772 to 1828, that is for a period of no less than 56 years! During all this time he was non-resident and seldom visited his parish at all! His curate did the work, and lived in the old Vicarage, a small thatched house on the north side of the church, long since demolished. After his death the present Vicarage was built in 1829 by the Rev. H. J. Cheales, the succeeding Vicar.

This Summer has perhaps been the quietest on record from a sports point of view. For the second season we have had no cricket club, and stranger still, no lawn tennis club, and the Vicarage court has not once been used. This is a very regrettable state of things, for both clubs have flourished in the past for more years than we can remember. And then too there was the bowls club once 'so popular. All these activities contributed so greatly to the social well-being of the parish that their demise is really deplorable. And what of the coming winter months? Can't we get together more in the dark evenings? There will of course be the choral society. May we venture to suggest in addition a ladies' choir for the church, with weekly practices? Also a series of lectures? Now too that the Village Hall is so admirably lighted, we should like to see it in regular use. Also the Reading Room. It only wants somebody to make a move. Who will?

Witham-on-the-Hill, Manthorpe, Toft and Lound.

Harvest Thanksgiving Services.—These, as mentioned last month, will be on Thursday the 7th and Sunday the 10th of this month. The preacher on the Thursday evening is the Rev. Cary Cooper, Rector of West Deeping, and this service will be at 7 p.m. Please bring your gifts as in past years, and let us try and fill both the tables to capacity, as was done last year. These, together with the thank-offerings in money, will go to the hospitals.

The Stamford Infirmary Ladies' Linen League.—The following articles were sent from this parish during the year: 2 knitted jackets, 2 flannelette jackets, 1 child's vest, 6 hot-water bottle covers, 13 Turkish bath towels, 1 pair of sheets, 3 worked tray cloths, 5 pairs of operation stockings, 2 pairs of socks, 4 pillow cases, 3 child's knitted jackets, also 25/- in donations.

The Choral Society.—Our conductor this year is Mr. Crossthwaite, the music master at Stamford school, and we consider ourselves fortunate in securing him. The first practice will be on Tuesday, Oct. 5th, at 7.30, at the Hall. We hope that new members will join, and that we may have a really strong choir this year. The festival at Uppingham will be a competitive one, and rumour has it that the evening concert may be broadcast, a twofold reason for our trying to do better than ever before.

Popular Lectures.—It is hoped to arrange a series of twelve weekly lectures of a popular and interesting nature, entitled: "An Introduction to Science," dealing with such subjects as "the air we breathe," "heat," "light," "sound," "electricity," &c. Each lecture will be illustrated with interesting experiments. These will be held in the village hall, and a small charge of 2d. will be made for each lecture. The first of the series will be on Wednesday, Oct. 20th, at 7 p.m. A large attendance at this opening lecture is particularly asked, when a vote will be taken on whether to continue the course. So please come on this opening evening, and decide whether you are sufficiently interested to justify our going on with the series. The lecturer will be Mr. T. H. Brunyee, B.Sc.

A new Safe for the church will shortly be purchased. In this will be kept the registers and other priceless and irreplaceable records and documents belonging to the church. Such a safe must be absolutely fire-proof and burglar-proof, which is certainly not the case with the old Vestry safe. Besides it is far too small to hold all the documents.

The Bishop's Appeal.—The object of this great appeal of our Bishop for the needs of the Diocese was put before the Church Council at a recent meeting, when it was decided to set apart a Sunday, the 21st of November, as a day of "prayer and offerings" in furtherance of the scheme. The sum asked for is very great, but the very smallest offerings will be welcome. Every Churchman and woman in the Diocese should make it a matter of conscience to help it forward.

The Vicar acknowledges with deep gratitude the many congratulations of his parishioners on his appointment as Canon of Lincoln Cathedral.

Church collections.—(Those for August were inadvertently omitted from last month's Magazine). AUG. 1st, £1/6/9; 8th, £1/11/1; 15th, £1/4/4; 22nd, £1/4/9; 29th, £1/5/10. SEPT. 5th, £1/3/0; 12th, £1/2/9; 19th, £1/10/8; 26th, £1/4/6.

Burial.—25th Sept. Fanny Kilbon, aged 40 years.

Witham-on-the-Hill, Manthorpe, Toft and Lound.

A Personal word from the Vicar.—Dear Friends, I am afraid that I must take up some of our space this month with a few words of a personal kind, as you will expect me to say something of the honour which the Bishop has conferred upon me, in making me a Canon of Lincoln, and appointing me to a Prebendal Stall in our Cathedral. This utterly unlooked-for choice of so obscure a parish priest as myself, and of one who lives in so remote a corner of his Lordship's immense Diocese, has astonished no one more completely than it has myself. There are hundreds of worthy clergy in Lincolnshire, with long records of devoted service, and for the Bishop's choice to have fallen on me fills me with a very real sense of unworthiness. I should prefer therefore to look on it not so much as a personal honour, but as one bestowed upon the *parish*, which has never before in all its long history had for a Vicar a Canon of Lincoln. Naturally people are asking why, and the question is hard to answer. There exists of course, a detailed record at Lincoln, and the Bishop often knows more about a particular priest than even his parishioners do. My own record there dates back to the day of my Ordination by the saintly Bishop King, and any success which may, under God, have attended my ministry in the past, has no doubt been duly noted. Also my long tenure of this benefice may have influenced the Bishop in his decision, who is aware of the reason why, more than once, I refused the offer of a move to another parish. Whatever it was which weighed with him in offering the vacant Canonry to me, he has done so with such extraordinary kindness and indeed insistence, that it has made any thought of refusal an impossibility.

I am extremely grateful to the innumerable friends who have written so kindly, and more particularly to those who from far and near journeyed to Lincoln on S. Luke's day, to witness the solemn and significant ceremony of my Installation. It was a great comfort and joy to have them with me on that memorable occasion. Such friendship has cheered and heartened me more than I can say. Thank you all very much indeed. L. H. COOLEY.

The Offerings in money at our Harvest Thanksgiving Services, amounted to £5/7/0, which were divided equally between the Stamford Infirmary and the Bourne Cottage Hospital. Those in *kind* consisted of about 150 separate packages, and were sent to the latter Hospital. In a letter of thanks, the Matron says, "I beg to thank you most gratefully for the wonderful supply of groceries, etc., which you have so kindly sent us, and desire to thank all who contributed, and to assure them that their gifts are very much appreciated." By the bye, how lovely the decorations were, we seldom remember seeing the church adorned with such taste.

The Bishop's Appeal Fund.—As announced last month, Sunday, Nov. 21st has been fixed as a day of "prayer and offerings" throughout the Diocese. Let us all do what we can to give as generously as possible on this day.

Miss Bird.—By the time that this Magazine is published we shall have said 'Good-bye' to Miss Bird, who for nearly four years has been Head-mistress of our School. We wish her every happiness and blessing in her new work in Gloucestershire. There is much more that we want to say about her and her work here, but this must stand over until next month.

The new Headmistress is Miss Joan Atkinson, who will take up her duties on Dec. 1st.

Church Collections in October.—3rd, £3/11/4; 7th, £2/14/0; 10th, £2/12/0; 17th, £1/4/1; 24th, £1/2/5.

Witham-on-the-Hill, Manthorpe, Toft and Lound.

Christmas Day.—Let us all keep this high and joyous Festival by our attendance at the altar, and there meet our Blessed Saviour on His Birthday morning. There will be celebrations of the Holy Communion at 7 and 8, followed by the Parish Eucharist (our special act of "Praise and Thanksgiving") at 11. After this the parish charities will be dispensed in the church. We shall give our Thank-offerings as in former years to the Waifs and Strays Society.

Our Christmas decorations have always been profuse and beautiful. Please help, all who will, and make them so again. Once again, the crib will be set up, as it will be in thousands of churches throughout the country, from the great cathedrals, such as St. Paul's in London, down to the humblest village shrine. This beautiful and symbolic custom is intended to bring the Christmas message home to us through the *eye*, which is the greatest of all teachers. What we see always leaves a more lasting impression on our mind than what we *hear*.

On the Sunday following Christmas Day (St. Stephen) we hope to have a carol service in the evening.

The Church Lighting.—We have now changed over for our source of electric current to the Mid-Lincolnshire Company's mains, and are no longer beholden to Commander Crichton-Maitland for supplying us as he has most generously done for so long. We should like to take this opportunity of thanking him very gratefully for his kindness in providing the light for the church from his private plant for the last two years. But for his generosity we should have had to put up with our dim and smelly oil lamps until now.

The Poppy Day Fund.—Our parish has this year contributed the splendid sum of £6/12/4. The poppy sellers on Armistice Day were as follows:—In Witham, Mrs. Green and Miss Angela Burges, £3/14/5; in Manthorpe, Miss M. Allen, 8/10; and in Toft with Lound, Miss M. Wallis, 19/10. The balance of £1/9/3 was the result of the previous Sunday's church collection.

The Bishop's Appeal Fund.—On November 21st, the Sunday appointed throughout the Diocese for the support of this fund, there were special services, and the sum of £6/1/3 was collected and sent towards the fund.

Our New Headmistress, Miss Joan Atkinson, commences her duties on the 1st of December. She comes to us as a stranger among strangers. Let us all extend to her a very warm and hearty welcome, and wish her much happiness in her new home.

Miss Bird was not allowed to go last month without very deep and heartfelt regrets, which were expressed by the scholars in tangible form, for they presented her with a handsome gift in the form of a hanging mirror. In thanking the children, she said that she would never forget her happy four years at Witham, and expressed the opinion that no teacher ever could have a more loyal or a more devoted lot of pupils than they had been to her. She appealed to them to show an equal loyalty to her successor. Miss Bird's new address is:—The School House, Huntley, Gloucester.

The Choral Society's Dance has been arranged for Wednesday, December 15th, at the Hall. This is always a specially popular and attractive event.

Confirmation.—Names are now asked for.

The Vicar hopes again to present a Parish Calendar to all the subscribers, to convey his affectionate good wishes for Christmas and the coming year.

Church Collections in November.—7th, £1/9/3 ; 14th, £1 ; 21st, £6/1/3 ; 28th, £1/3/11

Baptism.—Nov. 5th, Anthony James, son of James and Jean Silvester.