

BENSON.

A Happy New Year is the greeting that we offer to each other as the year begins. May God grant that this wish for happiness may be fulfilled so us in every home for 1913.

The School.—At the closing of the School on Friday, December 20th, the prizes which had been awarded after the summer holidays for attendance and good conduct were distributed to the children by Mrs. Field. William Joseph Chapman received a silver watch in recognition of six years' perfect attendance. Twenty-five children had made perfect attendance—never absent and never late—during the year 1911-12; and nineteen of these received medals or bars, while six preferred to receive books. There are twenty-four whose attendances were 99 per cent, and twelve others reached 98 per cent. Twenty children received prizes for general proficiency, nine of which were given by the Committee of the County Council, and the Head Teacher very kindly gave eleven others. The School is to reopen on Monday, January 6th.

The appeal lately made in the Magazine for some sacred pictures for the walls of the school-rooms, as suggested by the Diocesan Inspector, has been generously answered by Miss Ruck-Keene, who has given us twelve beautiful pictures, including some illustrations of the early part of the Old Testament and several of the Life of our Lord.

In Memoriam.—Mrs. Alderman, a native of Warborough and formerly Infants' Mistress in the School there, but for twenty years a resident in Benson and a staunch Church-woman, passed away after a short illness on Monday, December 16th. Her funeral was attended by several members of the Mothers' Union who desired to show respect to a fellow-member.

Burials.

December 10th, Frederick Arthur Jones, aged 4 years.

December 21st. Sarah Jane Alderman, aged 71.

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Bible Society.—The annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society is to take place at the School on Wednesday evening, February 19th, at 7 o'clock, to be addressed by Mr. Leonard Day, who is one of the staff of the Bible House at Shanghai. His subject is "Broken Barriers"; and the Secretary, Mr. Gaskell, writes that he will have a great deal that is interesting and stirring to tell of China, and that his lecture will be illustrated with some beautiful lantern views.

Lent Services.—Ash Wednesday, February 5th, Holy Communion at 8; Matins, Litany and Communion at 11; Evensong and Address at 7. The alms at Holy Communion on this day and the following Sunday will be given to the Church Penitentiary Association.

On the other Wednesdays and on Fridays Matins and Litany will be at 11; on Fridays Evensong at 7; other days 10 and 5. On Wednesday evenings (except February 19th, when the meeting for the Bible Society will be held) there will be a short special service at 7 o'clock, with sermon. The preachers will be:—

February 5th (Ash Wednesday), the Vicar.

„ 12th, Rev. Cuthbert T. F. Field, Assistant Curate of Fenny Stratford.

„ 26th, Rev. H. W. Fulford, Rector of Crowmarsh.

Discovery of Antiquities.—In the Crowmarsh Battle fields, on the east side of the Wallingford road, while laying drain-pipes, Mr. Chamberlain lately found, together with some human bones, a very fine and well-preserved spear-head of iron, a foot long and an inch in width, and also an iron knife. Experts assign to them an antiquity of not less than 2000 years. The land was a marsh until comparatively recent times, and it is said that little more than a century ago the Mr. Newton of that time shot snipe there. We can therefore imagine that some ancient warrior may have fallen there and have been lost in the swamp. Several relics of antiquity have been found at different times in the field on the west of the road. A bronze weapon of early British times is described by the late Mr. Hedges in his *History of Wallingford* (1. 148). Roman rowels (or spurs) have also been found, and several interesting coins, both of Roman and of later date.

Church Collections.—The amount contributed on Christmas Day to the Society for providing Homes for Waifs and Strays was £2 5s. 4d.; the contribution to the Macedonian Relief Fund on the first Sunday in the year was £1 16s. 4d.

Burials.

December 27th, 1912, Charles Luker (Beggarbush), aged 64 years.

January 20th, 1913, Albert Walter Mundy (Roke), aged 7 months.

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Bible Society.—Our annual meeting for the British and Foreign Bible Society was held in the Schoolroom on Wednesday, February 19th. The Vicar presided and there was a very good attendance. Mr. Leonard Day, an agent of the Society who is now at home on furlough from China, gave a very interesting account of the work which is going on in that land. He illustrated it by a series of excellent lantern pictures; and the first of these, showing a portion of the Great Wall where a breach had been made in it, served as a parable of the subject of his lecture, "Broken Barriers." He told the story of Robert Morrison of Morpeth, the first Missionary who ventured to enter China at the beginning of the last century, and he showed how the barriers which so long shut out Christianity have now been broken down, so that large numbers are openly professing the Faith. There were also some good illustrations of the mechanical processes by which the Book is produced and published in the Chinese language. A vote of thanks to the lecturer was proposed by Mr. Rix.

Bishop of Oxford's Fund.—On the third Sunday after Easter, April 13th, we are to have our annual collections for the Bishop's Fund which supplies help to the principal needs of the diocese, as Church Schools and Church Buildings, support of Assistant Clergy and Ordination Candidates, Increase of Poor Benefices, Clergy Pensions, and various agencies upon which the work of the Church depends.

Baptisms.

February 23rd, Robert George and Rose Georgina, children of George and Rose Booker (Benson).
 March 16th, Mary, daughter of Francis Thomas and Alice Isabella Beckley (Preston Crowmarsh).

Burial.

March 20th, John William Francis Long (Benson), aged 54 years.

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The preacher on Wednesday evening, March 5th, will be the Rev. S. A. Cox, Rector of S. Peters', Wallingford; March 12th, the Rev. F. O. Floyd, Vicar of Chalgrove.

In Holy week we hope to have the usual services; morning at 11, evening (with Address) at 7; also on Maundy Thursday, Holy Communion at 7.45 a.m.; and on Good Friday, Litany at 8 a.m. and Hymns and Addresses on the Seven Words from the Cross from 2 to 4 p.m., in addition to the Services at 11 and 7. There will be collections on Good Friday for the Mission of the English Bishop in Jerusalem.

Charities.—The late Mr. R. A. Newton's Charity was distributed on Saturday, November 9th, in 103 gallons of bread among 130 households, and Smith's Charity on Saturday, January 11th, in 96½ gallons of bread among 130 households. Each of these was charged 3/- for printing notices. Blacknall's Bequest was given as usual on S. Thomas' Day to ten poor widows. Merryweather's Gift provided coats for Frederick Batts, William Billing, John Green, George Howard, Frederick Hutchings, Joseph Moore, Charles Sherwood, and Thomas Wells junior; also cloaks for Mrs.

Henry Green, Mrs. George Smith, Mrs. Spicer and Mrs. Harry Webb (Crowmarsh). The Powells Gift was given in portions of three yards of flannel to 36 persons.

Coal and Clothing Clubs.—Accounts for 1912.

	£	s.	d.
Balance in hand from 1911		16	2
Coal Club deposits	42	12	0
Clothing Club deposits	17	11	0
Subscriptions—35s., 30s., 21s., 2 of 20s., 9 of 10s., 2 of 5s., 1 of 3s., 6 of 2s. 6d.		12	4
Blacknall's Charity (the Vicar)		3	4
Savings Bank Interest		18	5
Allowed by Coal Merchants		1	3
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	£75	8	5

	£	s.	d.
Coal	52	14	0
Clothing	19	12	0
Deposits paid out	2	19	0
Balance carried on		3	5
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	£75	8	5

In Memoriam.—On Sunday afternoon, Feb. 2nd, Mr. William Deane passed away after a very short illness, and it was a shock to our village to hear of the sudden departure of a familiar and respected figure from among us. He had lived most of his life in this parish, having been born at Mays Farm and having lived several years at Turners Court.

On Tuesday, February 4th, Miss Emily Ruck-Keene closed a life of which the latter part had been spent in extreme infirmity but happily without suffering. Previously since coming with her sisters to the Paddock in 1882 she had earned a large debt of gratitude by her zealous activities in all good works for the Church and for the school of which she was for several years a helpful Manager. She was laid to rest on Friday, Feb. 7th, in Swyncombe Churchyard.

Baptisms.

January 26th, Mary Georgina, daughter of Samuel and Mary Elizabeth Winfield.

February 2nd, Henry Arthur Charles, son of Arthur Charles and Sarah Ann Maude Vaughan.

Burials.

January 29th, Arthur Orchard (Roke Marsh), aged 49.

February 6th, William Henry Deane (Benson) aged 73.

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Summary of Churchwardens' accounts for the year ending Easter, 1913.

Receipts.		£	s.	d.
Invested Fund	19	8	
Rents of Land (half year)	25	0	5
Rents of Cottages, &c. (ditto)	8	3	6
Rent Charge on Allotments	4	2	7
Church Collections	13	1	4½
Balance due to Trustees	2	1	10
		£53	9	4½
Payments.		£	s.	d.
Balance due from previous year		3	7
Tithe	15	18	9
Rates	1	12	11½
Repairs of Cottages and Insurance	17	5	10
Church Insurances	2	15	0
Church Repairs	1	14	6
Lights, etc.	5	5	3
Organ Tuner	4	4	0
Churchyard and Church Walk	3	2	0
Miscellaneous Expenses	1	7	6
		£53	9	4½

In consequence of the early date of Easter the second half year's rents on the one hand and the salaries of Church officers on the other hand are not included.

Account of Alms, &c., for year ending Easter, 1913.

Receipts.		£	s.	d.
Balance from last year		1	6½
Sick and Poor, 11 Sundays	10	18	8½
Alms at Private Communion and Gifts for Poor	2	0	0
Choir Fund, 12 Sundays	11	7	4
At Early Communion, for General Fund (26)	2	13	3½
Ditto, Sept. to Dec., for Dioc. Mission Candidates' Association	17	0	
Ditto, Ash Wednesday and 1st Sunday in Lent for Church Penitentiary Association		12	6
Churchwardens' Fund, 15 Sundays	13	1	4½
"Titanic" Relief Fund, April 21	3	18	3
Western Canada, Archbishops' Fund, May 19	2	7	9
Addit. Curates' Society, June 23	1	4	3
Q. Victoria Clergy Fund, July 11	1	18	7
Welsh Church Defence Fund, Aug. 18	2	3	0
National Society, for Church Schools, Sep. 22	2	10	8
Radcliffe Infirmary, Oct. 16	2	18	9
Cottage, Hospital, Oct. 20	2	4	10
Foreign Missions, S.P.G., Nov. 17	1	11	6½
Church Temperance Soc. Dec. 15		17	7

Waifs and Strays Society, Dec. 25	..	2	5	4
Macedonian Relief Fund, Jan. 5	...	1	16	4
Jerusalem Mission, Good Friday	...	1	8	3
S.P.C.K., Easter Day	2	17	8
Waifs and Strays Society, at Children's Services		9	1½
King's Messengers, ditto		5	5
Organ Fund, Nov. 3	2	8	0
Ditto Alms Box	1	14	2
		76	11	2½
Payments.		£	s.	d.
Sick and Poor	14	5	0
Organist, Assistant and Choir	10	18	10
Washing, Repairs and Miscel. Exp...	...	1	9	8½
Harvest Thanksgiving Posters		4	0
Churchwardens' Fund and Special Collections, as above	49	10	4½
Balance carried on		3	3½
		£76	11	2½

The Vicar desires to offer his best thanks to the contributors to the Easter Offerings, which amounted to £23.

The following amounts have been contributed to the Society for providing Homes for Waifs and Strays:—Collections at Children's Services (as above), 9s. 1½d.; School Box, 1s. 3½d.; Children's Lent Savings Boxes, 6s. 1d. Total, 16s. 6d.

The collections for the Bishop of Oxford's Fund on Sunday, April 13th, amounted to £6 1s. 6d.

The collections on the first Sunday after Trinity, May 25th, will be given to the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution.

A Rummage Sale for the Church Organ Fund is arranged to be held in the School on Whitsun Tuesday, May 13th, at 2 o'clock (entrance One Penny). Contributions, whether for the general stalls or for the refreshment stall, will be gratefully received.

At the Easter Vestry, March 25th, Mr. William Brackley Smith and Capt. Oakes were reappointed as Churchwardens and Mr. A. G. Gray, Mr. Percy Lewis and Mr. Percy West as Sidesmen.

Baptism.

March 26th, Philip Charles, son of Frederick Philip and Annie Elizabeth Chamberlain (Crowmarsh Battle).

Marriage.

April 19th, Francis Johnson Rogers and Fanny Elizabeth Harris.

Burials.

April 7th, Hannah Maria Burgis (Nottingham), aged 64 years.

April 13th, Stephen Simmonds (Benson), aged 66 years.

willing helpers, and ready buyers. Donations in money were received to the amount of £3 7s. 6d., and the actual proceeds of the sale were £9 1s. 8d. We hope to be able to give a complete account of the present position of the fund in the magazine of next month.

Discoveries of Roman Coins.—A very interesting little brass coin was found last Autumn in the field south of Crowmarsh Battle Farm and therefore on the line of the road which doubtless passed in ancient times directly southward across this field and across Howbery Park to emerge by Crowmarsh Churchyard, after which we can still trace its line by footpaths and lanes through Newnham and so on. It is a coin of the usurper Marius, one of the "Thirty Tyrants," who reigned for a short time in Gaul in the time of the Emperor Gallienus and was put to death in the year 267. It is inscribed: *Imp. C. M. Aur. Marius Aug.* ("The Emperor Caius Marcus Aurelius Marius Augustus"), and on the reverse is a defaced figure and the words *Victoria Aug.* ("The Victory of Augustus") just traceable. Also a similar coin of Constantine has lately been found in the gravel pit at Goulds in our parish inscribed (with abbreviations) *Constantine Pius Felix Augustus*; and on the reverse are two standards with the words *Gloria Exercitus* ("The Glory of the Army"). This is a coin of Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor of Rome, who reigned from the year 323 to 337; and it appears to have been struck at Colchester. The gravel-pit where it was found has furnished numerous relics of a much earlier period—flint spears, javelins, knives, and axes. It is on the ancient Icknield Way (or "Hackney Way," as it is now sometimes called), leading from the great camp at Caistor near Norwich, in the district of the Iceni, right across the Island to the south west. Here at Goulds this road was crossed by another which was the Roman road from London to Dorchester and onward and which is our present high road. So we can picture the Roman soldiers losing a coin now and then in their marches along these roads some sixteen hundred years ago.

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The School.—Mr. William Saunders, at present Head Teacher in the Crowmarsh School, has been appointed to that post in Benson School, and will commence his duties here very shortly. Mrs. Saunders, being also a certificated teacher, is appointed as assistant in our school.

Organ Fund.—The Rummage Sale in aid of this fund on Whitsun Tuesday passed off very successfully, thanks to a number of generous donors,

Western Canada.—In response to the renewed appeal of the Archbishops there will be collections for the Church in Western Canada on Sunday, June 29th, St. Peter's Day.

Baptism.

May 11th, Raymond Percy, son of John William and Amelia Belcher.

Burial.

May 20th, William Talbot, aged 72.

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Organ Fund.—The proceeds of last year's sale for the surplice and cassock fund, as stated in the magazine of July, 1912, amounted to £18 0s. 10d. Additional sales produced 5s. 8d., donations £1 2s. 6d., and Savings Bank interest 6s. 2d., the total being £19 15s. 2d.; of which £6 13s. 9d. was expended on surplices and cassocks, £3 is reserved for the same purpose, and the balance of £10 1s. 5d. is carried to the Organ Fund.

The last statement of the Organ Fund appeared in July, 1911, when £168 had been repaid to the Charity Commissioners and £36 11s. 7d. remained in hand. The sums since received are £10 1s. 5d. as above; Mr. Archer, 21s.; Mr. Cozens, 20s.; Anon., 10s.; "Buried Cities," 2s. 6d.; Savings

Bank interest, 1911, 14s. 3d.; 1912, 19s. 7d.; Alms Box to Easter 1912, 23s. 5d.; ditto 1913, 34s. 2d.; Church Collection, November 2nd, 48s.; Sale £9 1s. 8d. and donations £3 7s. 6d. as in magazine of last month; Additional Sales 7s. 8d. and donation 5s.; Alms Box, April and May, 5s. 6d.; Total, £69 13s. 3d. Of this sum £60 (completing the nineteenth instalment of £12) has been refunded to the Commissioners.

The Labour Colony.—It is announced that on Monday, July 14th, the Lord Mayor of London will publicly open the important institution which has been founded at Turners Court within the outskirts of our Parish for the training of "unemployable" men. The Colony is conducted by the Incorporated National Union for Christian Social Service, and is worked upon a strongly religious basis but on "undenominational" lines. The occasion is certainly one in which all religious-minded people must feel great interest.

Obituary.—Two more of our older people have passed away. George Polley died on Friday, May 23rd, after brief illness. He was a link with past times, for he drove the last team of oxen that was used for agriculture in our Parish on the farm of the late Mr. Newton at Crowmarsh Battle. The employment was typical of his life—quiet, steady, and hard-working. Mrs. Lewis, whose health had greatly failed of late, passed away very unexpectedly on Sunday, June 22nd. She was a thoroughly earnest and devout communicant, and as long as strength permitted, though she had lost all sense of hearing, she still loved to take her place in our worship. Twelve fellow-members of the Mothers' Union attended her funeral.

Church Collections.—On Sunday May 25th, the Collections for the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution amounted to £1 5s. 5d.

It is proposed to have the annual Collection for the Queen Victoria Clergy Sustentation Fund—the Church memorial of the late Queen's reign—on Sunday, July 20th.

Marriage.

June 8th, Frank Hatto of Kilburn and Emily Elizabeth Wheeler of Benson.

Burials.

May 26th, George Polley (Benson), aged 76.

June 18th, Eleanor Fanny Chappell (Turners Court), aged 68.

June 26th, Elizabeth Lewis (Benson), aged 63.