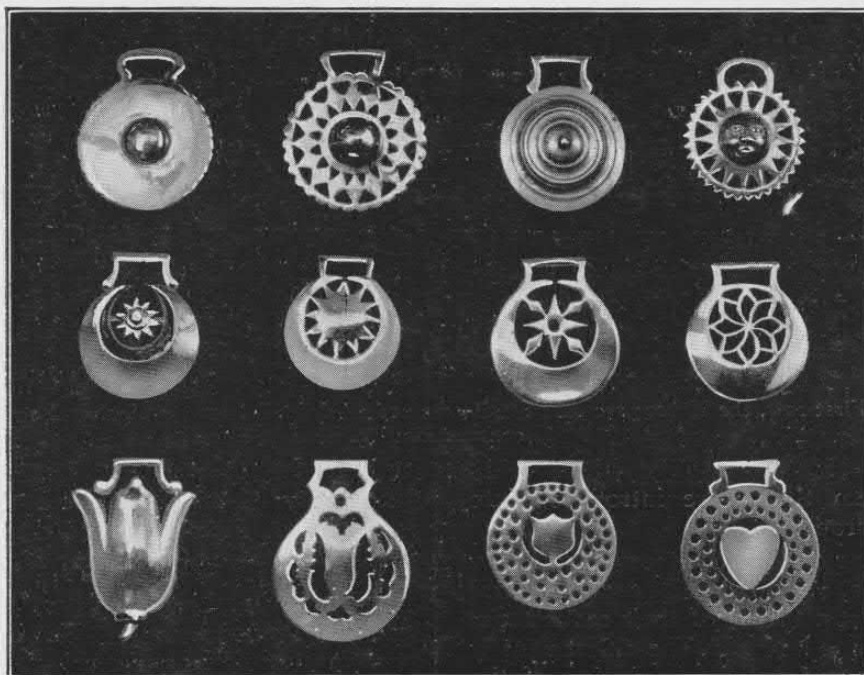


ALL SAINTS', HARTLEY,
Parish Magazine.

(Published Quarterly.)

EDITED BY J. WELLS THATCHER.



HORSE-BRASSES.

First row, Solar; second row, Lunar; third row, the Lotus, and derivatives.

THE RECTOR'S LETTER.

THE LORE OF THE HORSE BRASS.

MY DEAR PARISHIONERS,

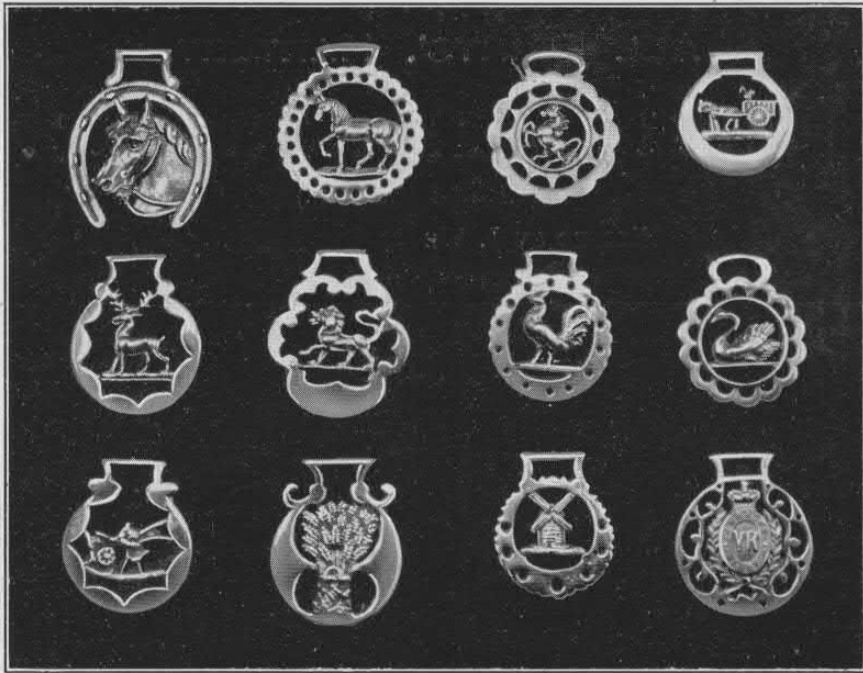
You will recognise in the picture above some of those little amulets of brass with which draught horses used to be decked on such occasions as May-day parades and ploughing matches, and often, too, on ordinary working days.

An age of motor transport has largely ousted the horse, and so these little metal discs are now but rarely seen. But as objects of more than passing interest, it may be worth while to say a few words about them. Their origin is bound up

with the folk-lore and religious faith of man in days gone by, and their history reaches back to a very considerable antiquity.

Just when they came to be used in the West we do not know—there is no authoritative literature on the subject; but during the Middle Ages in Europe they were employed as charms or amulets to protect the beast of burden from the power of the evil eye and the machinations of witches and evil spirits.

They seem to have been in use in much earlier times among the Moors and Arabs and the Gypsies, and it is probable that



First row, the Horse; second row, Beasts and Birds; third row, agricultural and commemorative.

through them they were introduced into Southern Europe.

It was later on that they found their way further north, and eventually came into this country. But all trace of their earliest use here appears to be lost. The oldest usually met with date from the beginning of the last century.

The commonest forms of these horse-brasses which we see to-day are those of the sun, moon, star, and sacred lotus-lily of the East. These were apparently among the first in use, and with many variations and derivatives have persisted to the present time.

By the 19th century the idea of the charm was almost lost in that of decoration and commemoration. And so, besides the many variations of the ancient symbols of mystic significance, we find designs associated with trades and other occupations, notable events, celebrated persons, and other pursuits and interests.

The plough, windmill and sheaf of corn represent agriculture. Ships and anchors

the dockyard horse. There is the barrel of the brewer, the elephant of the circus, and the royal crown of the Army draught horse.

The horse himself is represented in many different ways. He is standing, walking, prancing and rearing. He is looking through a horse-shoe, and we have the Saxon horse copied from the chalk of the Kentish downs.

There are many beasts and birds, some of which are heraldic, taken from the crests and arms of landowners on whose estates the horses who wore them were employed.

Among these are the lion, stag, dog, fox and unicorn, the pelican, swan, cock and eagle. The cat and the owl perhaps belong to a different category.

The evolution, or rather debasement, of some of the designs is worthy of note. Thus, the lotus, by endless copying, has been modified into a succession of various objects. From the original conventional

form it has passed into a simple shield' or a fleur-de-lis, and from these, as transitional forms conclusively show, into the bull's head, the heart, and then into club, spade and diamond.

The seed of the lotus has become an acorn, and the open petals of the flower have passed into a Maltese cross.

This last has sometimes been mistaken for the Christian symbol, but, curious as it may seem, among all the hundreds of devices, there does not appear to be a single Christian emblem.

To many the matter of most importance in connection with these brasses will be found in the great antiquity of the symbols which some of them bear, and especially the solar and lunar emblems.

The sun is found in a great variety of forms. A plain disc with a raised centre, a centre with con-centric circles, or, it may be, with few or many rays. Sometimes there is a face in the centre.

But the most frequent of all, and perhaps of the greatest interest, are the lunar pieces. The crescent moon appears in many different forms and combinations: alone, with a star, or with some kind of stellar device. These latter will often present a very artistic design.

In earlier ages magic and demonology laid stress on the crescent as a broken circle. This special characteristic was believed to baffle the manoeuvres of evil spirits. There is little doubt that the form of the crescent moon suggested the magical potency of the horse-shoe.

It is interesting, by the way, to note that in modern lunar designs this idea is sometimes completely lost, and the crescent appears as a completed circle.

The crescent is a symbol of extreme antiquity, and its employment as an amulet, or expression of religious faith, is found in ages far anterior to its use in medieval times as a charm or talisman. It had for long been the symbol of Byzantium when adopted by the Turks as the national standard on the fall of Constantinople, and it can, of course, be traced to the worship of Diana, and to Artemis in her Grecian form.

That carries our symbol back for more than 2,000 years.

But the lunar deity of Greece and Rome was a later conception of the goddess Astarte or Ashtoreth of the Phœnicians.

We have an instance in this earlier age of the religious use of the lunar symbol as a protective amulet. It is found in the Old Testament. In Judges viii, 21, we read: "And Gideon took the ornaments from off the camels' necks." In the margin is the explanation: "Ornaments like the moon."

Zeba and Salmuna were worshippers of Ashtoreth, and they hung her symbol on their camels' necks.

The poet Milton speaks of "*Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns.*"

The worship of the moon and the use of moon amulets have been traced to the Sumerian Age. Symbols of the faith have been unearthed on the site of Kamarina, the "moon city," of Ur, and of Nineveh. Here have been found represented on the sculptured neck of a king, hanging discs of designs practically identical with those of horse-brasses of to-day.

But the gods and goddesses of Assyria and Egypt were local conceptions of the deities of a common and earlier stock. There is ample evidence of this, and so the history of the solar and lunar amulets is carried to an age at least 5,000 years before the Christian era.

But this is not all. Evidences of the same faith, and of its symbolical expression, have been found in the artistry of the Cromagnon race. And so we can trace its beginning far into pre-historic times.

Queen Victoria Jubilee amulets or others commemorating 19th Century events have an interest of their own. The bird and beast, the windmill and plough have something to say about the life of our forefathers in the last generation, but they lack the lure and fascination of the discs bearing symbols which carry us back in thought for so many thousands of years into the past life of man on the earth.

GERARD W. BANCKS.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

I have not been very well lately, and cannot do the things I used to do. For one thing, I do not call upon my friends. It is not because I do not love them as much as ever, but I simply do not want to pay calls upon anybody!

* * *

It is more than a year, I am sure, since I called upon my dear Rector. Yet no two men could possibly understand one another better than we do or get on better together than we do. As I write this, the picture of his learned home, his books, and his studies comes before me. It is a pleasant picture, and it is fragrant with happy memories.

* * *

My dear friend, Miss Green, tells me that the only thing of moment discussed at our Parochial Church Council meeting was the electric light for the Church. We must have this improvement. Now, I'll make a sporting offer: if twenty members of our parish will promise twenty guineas between them, I'll add another five. I don't know where I shall find the money, but I'll risk it.

* * *

Mr. Gomer Davies' notes on the Debating Society delighted me; they are so full of "pep." This is an Americanism, and I ought not to use it, but the fact is that all my old ideas about a fine literary style are changing, and I am becoming blasé in my old age!

* * *

I have asked Mr. Chisholm to write something for us every quarter. He travels so far, he sees so much, he is observant and sympathetic, so we await expectantly for a chatty article about his travels.

THE LATE MRS. WELLS THATCHER.

Mrs. Ethel Wells Thatcher, wife of Mr. John Wells Thatcher, cur Churchwarden and Diocesan Lay Reader, died at Buckland Common, Tring, Herts, on February 1st last. She was buried at Hartley on February 6th.

Mrs. Wells Thatcher was in the enjoyment of her usual good physical health till the stroke of paralysis which occurred a few days before her death.

A woman of singular charm of character, she was much beloved by those who knew her. A characteristic of her life was her great love of animals and birds, who always seemed to reciprocate her affection.

There are many at home and abroad who will grieve at the loss of one whose kindness of heart endeared her to many beyond the circle of her own personal friends and relations.

C.G.W.B.

Feb. 1st, 1933.

(To the Editor of the Parish Magazine.)

SIR,—As several Hartley residents knew the late A. R. Homan, who died early last year in the village, it may be of interest to mention that some West African butterflies and moths he had are now, after being cleaned and re-arranged, in Rochester Museum, and are well worth looking at by any lover of nature-colours, the large moths being especially magnificent. As they are in a lock-up cabinet upstairs, any visitor who wants to see them must apply to one or other attendant if the writer is absent from the Museum at the time.

FREDERICK D. WELCH,

M.R.O.S., F.Z.S.,

(In charge of Entomology at Rochester Museum).

BAPTISM.

Jan. 1.—[REDACTED] of Clive Alexander and Dora Winifred Prime.

BURIAL.

Feb. 6.—Ethel Wells Thatcher, aged 72.

Church Information.

The Lord Bishop—THE RIGHT REV. MARTIN LINTON SMITH, D.D., D.S.O. *Archdeacons*—THE VEN. WALTER M. BROWNE, M.A., Archdeacon of Rochester; THE VEN. LEONARD SAVILL, M.A., Archdeacon of Tonbridge. *Dean of the Cathedral*—THE VERY REV. FRANCIS UNDERHILL, D.D. *Rector*—REV. CHARLES GERARD WINSTANLEY BANCKS, M.A., appointed 1902. *Churchwardens*—Mr. F. W. Tate and Mr. J. Wells Thatcher.

CHURCH SERVICES.

Matins, 11 a.m. Evensong, 6.30 p.m.

Holy Communion, 8 a.m., on the 2nd Sunday in each month; at 12 noon on other Sundays.

Parochial Church Council (elected under the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure, 1921)—Council for 1931-32: The Rector (who is Chairman by virtue of his office), Mrs. Eric Green, Mrs. F. W. Tate, Miss Sale, Miss Green (Hon. Secretary), Miss Rodwell, Mrs. Alexander, Mr. F. W. Tate, Mr. W. H. Chisholm, Mrs. Balchin, Mrs. Keen, Mr. Eric Green (Hon. Treasurer), Mr. B. Alexander, Mrs. Chisholm, Mr. and Mrs. Ball, Mr. Marrington, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Day, Mr. and Mrs. Percy Harris, Mr. and Mrs. L. Harris, Mr. and Mrs. Groom, with the Churchwardens by virtue of their offices. *Representatives on the Ruri-Decanal Conference*—Mrs. Balchin and Mrs. Keen. *Representatives at the Annual Diocesan Conference*—Miss Green and Mrs. F. Tate. *Committees*—Standing Committee:

The Chairman and the Churchwardens. Finance Committee: The Churchwardens, the Treasurer and Miss Green. *Sidesmen*—Mr. A. Blackwell, Mr. J. Green, Mr. B. Alexander, Mr. R. Adams, Mr. L. Harris, Mr. Albert Cox, Mr. Eric S. Green, and Mr. William Ball. *Organist and Choirmaster*—Mr. W. H. Chisholm. *Members of the Choir*—Mrs. Balchin, Mrs. Chisholm, Miss Gladys Parkin, Miss E. Green, Mrs. Keen, Miss Chisholm, Miss V. W. Emmott, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Tate, Mr. F. F. Tate, Mr. G. G. Marrington, Alice Carter, Betty Glover, Basil Keen, Ida Keen, Stella Keen, Dennis Moore, Sidney Moore. *Diocesan Lay Reader (Retired)*—Mr. J. Wells Thatcher.

Sunday School at the Church Parochial School—Superintendent: Miss Vera W. Emmott. Time: 3 to 3.45 p.m. *Church Parochial School*—Miss Fiddis, Headmistress; Miss Emmott, Assistant Teacher. *School Managers*—The Rector, Mr. J. Green, Mrs. Balchin, Miss Rodwell, Miss Harry and Mrs. Reilly.

Bell Ringer and Organ Blower—Mr. A. Rogers. *Churchyard Keeper*—Mr. A. Rogers. *Church Cleaner*—Mrs. Hoadley. *Sexton and Grave Digger*—Mr. J. Crouch.

WORK OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL.

"It shall be the primary duty of the Council of every parish to co-operate with the Incumbent in the initiation, conduct and development of Church work both within the parish and outside."—(Section 2 of the Measure.)

April.	May.	June.
2nd—5th Sunday in Lent	1st—S.S. Philip and James, Apostles	4th—Whit Sunday
9th—6th Sunday in Lent	7th—3rd Sunday after Easter	5th—Monday in Whitsun week
14th—Good Friday	14th—4th Sunday after Easter	6th—Tuesday in Whitsun week
15th—Easter Eve	21st—5th Sunday after Easter	11th—Trinity Sunday
16th—Easter Day	22nd—Rogation Day	13th—St. Barnabas Ap.
17th—Monday in Easter week	23rd—Rogation Day	18th—1st Sunday after Trinity
18th—Tuesday in Easter week	24th—Rogation Day	24th—Nativity of St. John the Baptist
23rd—1st Sunday after Easter	25th—Ascension Day	25th—2nd Sunday after Trinity
25th—St. Mark Evan.	28th—Sunday after Ascension Day	29th—St. Peter Ap. & M.
30th—2nd Sunday after Easter		

Altar Flowers.

January—Mrs. P. Harris.
February—Mrs. Groom.
March—Miss Bonsall.
April—Mrs. Hemming.
May—
June—Miss Green.
July—Mrs. Elliott.
August—Mrs. Andrus.
September—Mrs. Chisholm.
October—Miss Robertson.
November—Mrs. Ralph Day.
December—Mrs. Eric Green.

HARTLEY CONGREGATIONAL
 CHURCH NOTES.

A conditional message of hope for the New Year, 1933, was given on Sunday, January 1st, by Mr. H. E. Andrews, of Sittingbourne.

1932 had been a year of depression and disappointment to many. The darkness often deepened before dawn. In the dark days of Herod the Christ-child was born. In national history the darkened periods often ushered in a Christ-child. Darkest Africa called forth Livingstone and Moffatt; Darkest Europe heralded Martin Luther; Darkest America produced Abraham Lincoln; and William Booth responded to Darkest England.

Maybe no great leader is necessary in these times. Hope for the world will come when the spirit of the Christ-child is born in the hearts of ordinary people. Wise men should offer now allegiance to the Divine Love. The myrrh of life, to bitterness, sorrow, failure, and He will save you. The Frankincense of life: its peace, brightness, joy, and He will establish them. The God of life: its real values, and He will redeem them.

Our social activities this quarter have been varied.

On November 28th 50 guests attended a Sunday School Soiree. Very encouraging to see so many mothers, and several fathers, present on this occasion. We must work together to teach the children spiritual things.

H. T. PARRETT

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Devonshire Butter

FRESH TWICE WEEKLY.

New Laid Eggs.

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of

ALL LOCAL NEWS

read

"The Gravesend and
 Dartford Reporter."

On December 31st we much enjoyed an evening of table and round games and amusing competitions, exceedingly well arranged by Mr. and Mrs. W. Gable.

On January 9th, 1933, 60 guests were present at the usual New Year's Party. Mr. F. E. Pinkess, of Bromley, kept everyone moving with a long list of new games. We all like him. The old games which required some mental exertion seem to have been replaced by games which require swift bodily movement and quick sense perception. We hope to play again "R-r-r-ats and R-r-r-abbits," the "Paper Bag Race" and "Unravelling the Parcel," etc. In the latter game hesitation was shown in making a speech, a condition for retaining the prize. A session with the Hartley Debating Society would help our young people. We shall remember the strange things which came out of the Magic Fish Pond.

On February 11th, 1933, for the eighth time our gifted friends from Emmanuel Church, Dulwich, with Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Vincent, provided a delightful entertainment. Good music is silver, and right laughter is golden in these bad times. Two-and-a-half hours of "sweet sounds," interspaced with patches of homely humour, passed a memorable evening. The Church Building Fund has benefited from the eight concerts to the amount of £30. It was suggested this amount represented a piano for our coming church. A splendid gift from our musical friends!

On December 3rd, 1932, a social and financial triumph was achieved, when £120 for the Church Building Fund was raised by a Sale of Work. Our ladies, led by Mrs. K. Gable, worked hard for this signal success. Distinguished visitors were Mrs. and Rev. Arthur Haig, from Chatham; Mrs. and Rev. Ernest Barson, with many genial friends, from Penge Congregational Church.

Mrs. Barson made the happiest of happy speeches, wherein was enclosed a prize packet of a cheque for £50 from Mrs. A. McCallum, of Beckenham. Being unable to come, Mrs. McCallum sent this surprising

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cheque. Mrs. Arthur Haig declared the Sale open. We are indeed fortunate in keeping the friendly interest of well-wishers from Penge and Chatham. Cordial thanks to the Rev. G. W. Bancks, M.A., Mr. W. H. Chisholm and friends from "All Saints" for their support. With grants promised, the result of this sale should enable a speedy realization of our building plans.

Our good wishes go with Miss Violet Hodson to her new home at Romford. The School will miss Violet badly, and so shall we all.

The 6th Anniversary of the Church was marked on Sunday, December 11th, 1932, by a welcome visit from the Rev. Herbert Kenward, Commissioner for Church Extension in Kent, Surrey, Middlesex. Speaking from Rev. 21, 17: "According to the measure of a man, that is of the angel," he said there were two methods of measurement. A violet might be one inch high, but that did not compass its beauty and fragrance. A man's true measure was not 6 feet of muscle and acquisitiveness, but grasp of mind, greatness of heart, likeness to God. Our Church might be 40 ft. x 25 ft., with 30 members, and six years old, but its true stature was the spirit and influence of the angel in each member.

S. H. ELLERBY,
Hon. Sec., H.C.C.

THE HARTLEY CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL.

The Church Sunday School, we are glad to see, maintains its steady attendance, the usual number present being about twenty. Two of our older girls, Stella and Ida Keen, were recently confirmed by the Bishop at Longfield Church.

The Superintendent will always be pleased to add new names to the Sunday School roll, and the offer of the services of an additional teacher would be appreciated.

HARTLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE.

Meetings are held on the 1st Thursdays in each month, at 3 p.m.

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HARTLEY.

HARTLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE.

"To do all the good we can in every way we can."

In January of this year a committee of nineteen was elected, with Mrs. F. W. Tate as President; Mrs. Balchin, Vice-President, Miss Robertson, Secretary, and Mrs. Gwen. Davis, Treasurer.

An excellent account of the years' work was read and adopted, as was also the statement of accounts, showing a very satisfactory balance to the credit of the Institute.

A birthday tea in February (the twelfth) was much appreciated, and in March Miss Lewin Harris gave a delightful talk on the origin of country dancing, many of the members demonstrating simple dances under Miss Harris' tuition. This proved so popular that a weekly class will be held in the Institute Hall.

A large number of garments are being made by the members for the patients in Livingstone Hospital.

A varied programme of lectures and demonstrations has been arranged for 1933, and a hearty welcome is extended to all women who have not yet joined the Institute. Meetings are held on the 1st Thursday in each month, at 3 p.m.

ALL SAINTS' PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL.

After careful consideration of ways and means, the Council meeting recently decided to proceed with the proposal to instal electric light in the Church. Various types of lighting were discussed, and it was agreed to make a further effort to reduce the cost.

Mr. Eric Green, Treasurer, reported that some donations, amounting to about £5, had already been received in response to the appeal in the Magazine. The balance in hand at the end of 1932 on the Church General Account was about £22, but the Council considered that it was inadvisable to draw upon this balance for the lighting scheme.

Ultimately it was agreed to organise a house-to-house collection, with the double

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LIGHT IN THE PARISH CHURCH.

To light the Parish Church with electricity would cost about £25.

The Church Parochial Council consider that the change over from oil lamps is desirable for safety, efficiency and economy.

Will you help?

Subscriptions will be received by the Treasurer, Mr. Eric Green, Glebe Cottage; the Hon. Secretary, Miss Green, Brickend, or one of the Churchwardens.

purpose of securing sufficient money to meet the cost of the electric installation, and calling attention to the Free Will Offering Scheme, the income from which has shown a serious reduction of late.

ALL SAINTS, CAROL SERVICE.

Our annual carol service was held on Sunday evening, January 1st, and despite a dark and cheerless night, a good congregation assembled and joined in hearty singing of the time-honoured songs. To these were added the rendering by the Choir of two short carols: "Heavenly Gifts," by Alec Rowley, and "The ending of the year," by Roy Chisholm.

THE HARTLEY PLAYERS.

Although the Hartley Players were unfortunate enough to have hit upon the time of a 'flue epidemic for their third New Year Cabaret Show, and so with two-thirds of one cast laid low had a gap to fill in at the last moment, they nevertheless provided a very enjoyable evening's entertainment.

The hall was prettily decorated and set about with tables, and the long intervals provided opportunity for moving about and conversation, as well as for excellent refreshments, for which Mrs. Leese had made all the arrangements.

The first play, "The Blue Penguin," offered some very tense moments and unexpected incidents. It was a pity that the very realistic crying of the baby "off" should have caused titters among the audience, for through no fault of the actors, it marred the denouement—the announcement of the baby's death.

The howling wind and sounds of the storm, ably managed by Mr. Snelling Collyer, helped to give the key and account for Mary's hysterical mood of foreboding, which was admirably rendered by Margaret Eades, who showed very considerable dramatic power in handling an emotional part. Her husband, Gasper, had the more difficult rôle of maintaining reserve and

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control over feeling and being conscientious and almost over-righteous without being a prig.

There was not much space in so short a play for the development of this personality. Eric Green caught it at times, and was especially good in his calm but encouraging treatment of the overwrought Mary. His ne'er do-well brother, David, was made a snarling, dangerous, revengeful reprobate by Andrew Kerr, who looked a thoroughly ugly customer, but did convey the possibility of reform in his sullen gratitude to Jasper, after he had saved his life.

Old Jacob, the servant of the inn, was only with difficulty identified with the person of debonnaire part last played by Alan Tiptaft. He made a convincing old countryman, and his make-up was good, except that his hands and arms remained very young as part of the same anatomy as the hoary head and wrinkled face.

The title of the second play was only made known at the end of it, when Ernest Harry announced that he and Noel Leese had collaborated in writing it after getting nowhere with the play they set out to produce. The title was "Honi Soit," and the sting lay in its tail, when, after the husband has convinced his wife that she had not seen him with a strange woman going to Ascot, but his chauffeur taking a stolen ride with his wife, he gives the chauffeur a tip for playing a part so well.

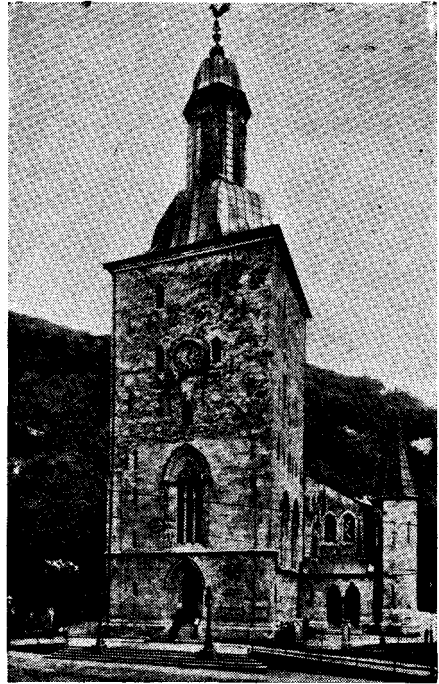
The pace at the end rather marred its pointedness, for the chauffeur (John Reynell) made one or two rather bungling attacks on the door, and the producing of the money was rather slow in comparison with the rushing descent of the curtain, that barely gave the audience time to grasp the significance of the final sentence. It was otherwise most enjoyable.

The wife (Winifred Day) managed to convey depression very well by her immobility at the beginning. Noel Leese, as the irrepressible brother, was very diverting, and the chauffeur was perfect in his courteous immobility. The character of the husband was a little difficult to assess, especially as it had straightway to be reconstructed immediately after the curtain

fell. Ernest Harry, however, gave nothing away beforehand.

Refreshments followed the second play, and then several people stepped nobly in the gap. Ernest Harry and Winifred Day recited, and some amusing brief, and in one case, wordless sketches were given by Margaret Eades, Alan Tiptaft, Andrew Kerr, Noel Leese.

Then with great rapidity the hall was cleared, and the evening ended with dancing.



BERGEN PARISH CHURCH, NORWAY.

The Editor is indebted to Mr. W. H. Chisholm for the picture of this Church which appeared in the *Illinois Central Magazine*, with the following note:—

“ ‘Here is a picture of the Domkirken, at Bergen, Norway, writes W. H. Chisholm, European traffic manager of the Illinois Central System, stationed in London. The foundations of this church are said to be in the neighbourhood of a thousand years old, although you will see from the date on

the tower that the upper structure goes back only to 1707. Note the black mark near the window, which I have circled in ink. It is an old cannon ball which our local representative told me was fired by a British warship in the early days of the Nineteenth Century.' ”

Mr. Chisholm adds a further note for the information of our readers:—

The particular point of interest is not the age of the Church, as on the tower at any rate appears the date of 1707. This is not old as churches go, but there is an interesting memento embedded in the tower in the shape of a British cannon ball, which I have circled with ink, as you will see, close to the window. This was fired by the British Fleet which went into the fjord up to Bergen in pursuit of the Dutch Fleet, which had taken refuge there. This was early in the 19th century, when your readers will know we were disputing with the Dutch for the control of the seas, and it seems we were not so particular about neutrality laws in those days.

Anyhow, the Norwegians resented this visit, and chased us out before any serious damage was done either to the Dutch fleet or to the town. This is a bit of history not in the history books, but I am assured by my Bergen friends that it is authentic none the less.

HARTLEY LITERARY AND DEBATING SOCIETY.

The Editor, in asking, as he has done, for “ a nice spicy little paragraph ” about the Debating Society, is evidently seeking for copy which will widen the circulation of the Parish Magazine, but we are not that kind of society anyway (sniff), and, moreover, we shall be glad when he has finished with our sub-heading: “ LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!” which he has turned to his own personal use for now over a year (two sniffs). The membership of the Debating Society is only slightly less than that for 1931-32 session, but the attendance at the meetings has declined considerably—why, is somewhat of a mystery.

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MODERATE CHARGES.

Of the three talks in this session's programme, no one could possibly have more happily described the charm, satire and humour of W. S. Gilbert than Mr. Ernest Harry did on November 25th; Mr. W. H. Chisholm's "Rambling remarks on some European Countries," besides its general interest, provided food for thought and for laughter too. There was not a dull moment in the whole of his talk, which was illustrated with some splendid lantern slides, some of which Mr. Chisholm had had specially made for the occasion. Mr. B. W. Wheeler's talk on "A West-country Coal Mine" has the "Ghost Train" looking like a nursery rhyme: one minute shuddering at the horrors of a miner's life, the next laughing at the quips and jests of these hardy toilers, and again cheering the heroisms that are but daily incidents in the life of a coalfield. The loud and sustained applause was indeed well merited.

Is it because a prophet is not without honour save in his own country that the hall was not packed on each of these three nights?

On January 20th, Mr. F. C. Robertson opened a discussion on "Unemployment: Is there a cure?" and if the answer is not

somewhere in Mr. Robertson's opening paper, a powerful stream but bubbling with mirth, or in the discussion that followed, then the answer is "No."

On February 3rd, Mr. E. S. Green maintained "That machinery is essential to human progress," and anyone who had the temerity to dispute it on that night will hesitate before he again voices his opinions on the subject—if still held—in Mr. Green's hearing.

Mr. A. Witt, on February 17th, told the members of the Society all that he thought it good for them to know about "The Modern Press," after which the members of the Society told Mr. Witt exactly how a modern newspaper ought to be run. The mystery of the marked improvement in newspapers which dates from the 18th February last, is now cleared up, and the next Birthday Honours List will be awaited with much interest in Hartley.

No coupons are given away with each meeting, but anyone who is dissatisfied can have their money returned in full on application to the Hon. Sec., Gomer B. Davies, "Treveor."

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THE GHOST TRAIN.

Most experienced producers, we suspect, would say that this is not a play suitable for amateurs. It is, as most people know, a "thriller" turning unexpectedly into a "crook play," which has its diverting moments but depending for its effect on the skill of the players in extracting the right note of expectancy from not always rewarding material. The actors have to keep still and maintain the interest at the same time, which is always the most difficult thing for amateurs to do. Mr. Ernest Harry is therefore to be congratulated on his effective production of the play in the Hartley Constitutional Hall on March 9th, 10th and 11th. His cast succeeded excellently in overcoming the handicap of a small stage, which made effective grouping difficult, especially since for the greater part of the time there were at least six people on the stage at once. The success of the play was greatly helped by the skilful use of stage effects by Mr. E. Snelling-Colyer (with the assistance of Mr. Douglas Ross). These must have called for careful timing and much ingenuity.

Mr. Alan Tiptaft, as the old Cornish station-master, took full advantage of his opportunities in the first act. Since so much of the play depended on his narrative, it was lucky that this part should be so

stoutly played in an accent suitably modified to Kentish ears. The beleaguered party in the station waiting-room made good listeners with the exception of Mr. Noel Leese, whose amusing fooling in the "silly ass" part provided light relief, making a clever contrast with his emergence as a commanding C.I.D. man in the climax of the third act. Mrs. Lulu Green, as Miss Bourne, a spinster lady of unblemished reputation, took to the brandy flask with enthusiasm, and suitably played a part which would have been spoiled by over-playing. Mr. Andrew Kerr and Miss Maureen Boston made effective foils to each other as Mr. and Mrs. Winthrop, a manufacturer and his wife, who pleasantly contrive to disagree. Mr. Frank Gable and Miss Vera Harley made a charming honeymoon couple, suitably overawed by the occasion, though perhaps Miss Harley was the little more self-possessed of the two. The chief honours go to Miss Margaret Eades for her characterisation of the mystery woman, Julia Price. Miss Eades commanded the stage. She knows, as few amateurs do, how to make a really good stage entrance, and she made the most of the chances which this excellent part gave her to display her gifts. Smaller parts were capably filled by Mr. Cyril Boston, Mr. John Reynell and Mr. Douglas Ross.

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W. WISE, *Secretary.*

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