

TENTERDEN TOWER RESTORED.

THANKSGIVING SERVICE.

THE ARCHBISHOP'S SERMON.

A memorable service, which will for ever be imprinted in the annals of Tenterden, took place with solemn impressiveness at the Parish Church on Friday afternoon. The occasion was the service of thanksgiving to commemorate the restoration of the church tower. The day was misty, but fine, and added a softened effect to the work which had just been completed on the tower. The Union Jack fluttered in the breeze from the overhanging staff, and at three o'clock, a peal of bells, which are considered the sweetest in Kent, Surrey or Sussex, rang out with joy and called the people to the service. By that time even, half an hour before the service was due to commence, the church was crowded with parishioners and friends from the district.

For nearly twelve years an Archbishop had not been within the walls of St. Mildred's the last occasion being when Archbishop Temple conducted a service, and it was a fitting occasion for the Archbishop of Canterbury to be present at this restoration. The service opened with the processional hymn, "The Church's one foundation," when His Grace was preceded by the choristers and the following clergy:—The Archdeacon of Maidstone (the Ven. H. M. Spooner), the Rural Dean (Canon Bell, Cranbrook), the Rev. J. A. Babington (vicar of Tenterden), the Rev. E. K. B. Morgan (Biddenden), the Rev. W. Raven (Smallhythe), the Rev. J. H. Burrows (St. Michael's), the Rev. D. H. Creaton (Bethersden), the Rev. B. W. Gilpin (High Halden), and the Rev. A. O. Scutt (Appledore), following whom were the Rev. E. L. A. Hertlet, the Archbishop's chaplain, and the churchwardens (Mr. Edmund H. Hardcastle and Mr. J. S. Winsler). A short evensong, officiated over by the vicar (the Rev. J. A. Babington) was impressively conducted, during which the special Psalm, cxxii, was sung. Archdeacon Spooner read the lesson from St. John ii. from the thirteenth to the twenty-second verses, and the choir then sweetly rendered the Nunc Dimittis, lending a sacred charm to the solemnity of the service. After the reciting of the Apostle's Creed, and prayers, the congregation again rose and heartily sang the hymn, "Jesus, wher'er Thy people meet." The service had now reached that point to which so many had looked forward for the past three and a half years, the dedication of the work to God's use. The Archbishop, in a loud voice, repeated the special dedicatory collects beseeching God of His great goodness to accept the dedication "of the restoration of this tower to His house," and to prosper the undertaking, the congregation reverently responding with a sincere Amen. Immediately after a blessing, the people again raised their voices in praise in the hymn, "O Worship the King."

Towards the close the churchwardens ushered the Archbishop to the pulpit, and at its conclusion His Grace delivered a most eloquent and fitting sermon. He desired, he said, at the outset, to say a few words about the meaning of their gathering that afternoon. On such occasions his thoughts always reverted to the scene in the temple which John described in the tenth chapter of his gospel, when it was the feast of the dedication and it was winter, and Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. They had reference to it in the special prayers in which they joined a few minutes ago. Those special prayers had been drawn up by, perhaps, the greatest master of what they could call the science of prayer and praise, which their English Church had ever known, Bishop Lancelot Andrews, nearly 300 years ago. They found it again and again in connection with their church fabrics, wherein the thought of our Lord Jesus Christ should, and it was just such a thing as they were doing that day. The feast of dedication was the great anniversary kept every winter in Jerusalem in connection with the re-building of the temple, to record what had happened when the temple was restored after its injury and degradation, and in some ways ruined under the heathen King. It was at this, the commemoration of the restoration, that our Lord joined in the thanksgiving, when all the people's minds were turned to the temple and its history, its wonderful traditions, and the associations that clustered round that

sacred place. On that day Jesus spoke to them and gave them a special lesson, and it was then that the Jews, many of them puzzled, perhaps with an element of scoff, asked, "If Thou be Christ, tell us plainly," and they expected an answer so plain that nobody could have any doubt about it. But our Lord, standing in the temple, with its old memories and clustered history of every age and change, showed them it was not by any proof or administration that could not be gainsaid, but "the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear testimony of me," which was indeed a truth for them to give Him and live respondent to it. Take that thought in connection with their service that day, let them look at the past of their Church and their people—not of that place alone, but the whole land of which they were a part—and it bade them think how God had guided people since the English folk first adopted the cause of Jesus Christ and became His followers. He thought when they thought of the two or three centuries its truth had been shown by the outcome of the message, the fruits of the Spirit, the results of the Gospel on people's lives, which was to say the history of their own land. By the works which the living Lord was enabled to show the living Church to-day learned how the message was indeed the word of God, and having once realised its truth can make it the guiding light of their daily life. The Archbishop then made reference to the restoration of the steeple or tower of their church, making it again what it ought to be, a witness in the midst of their county in that message. It had been witnessing it for hundreds of years, and it bore that witness still without anyone being able to say that people cared little compared with those of long ago, because they left the glorious monuments, like Tenterden steeple, to fall in dis-repair. But they had not done so, they had largely completed that work which was made to bear testimony towards the message of God to His people. When they came to the church for the ministry of the Word and His sacraments they learned what His presence meant and that it was a real help to them. They were bound to say that the tower at Tenterden should be, as it ought to be, a glory to the land, on which it stands forth so conspicuously. It might be a kind of accident that the steeple had its place in English literature, in English life, linking in with the thought of England's preachers and with other great men in English history. It might be a kind of accident, he repeated, but it was one of those accidents which meant for them greater responsibilities.

They were thankful of it and proud of it, but it meant that this great tower should be in the fullest sense worthy of its past and present use, worthy of all that they meant it to be, for the generations that were coming. They were doing that work thoroughly, effectively and as well as it could be done. It meant money and sacrifice, and also recognition of a greater responsibility later on. If, however, they came back into history, they would find how buildings such as those, and especially the tower, were linked in with the actions of people who made self sacrifices, who gave to the utmost of their power, at a difficult time, to the cause which they had in their hearts, to the glory of God, as well as to the help of men. They had references how that very tower was subscribed for by the gifts of the people who were hard pressed. It was built at a time when taxation lay with especial heaviness, during the time of Henry the Seventh, who imposed taxes which were unfair and too severe. Sometimes people were saying that history repeated itself, but they were not for that reason going to be less worthy than their ancestors were. In conclusion he urged them to keep their witness worthy of their great cause and to show how much they cared for the witness of their holy faith.

The hymn, "Now thank we all our God," was a fitting conclusion to the service, and after the Benediction the worshippers dispersed. Mr. A. H. Smith officiated at the organ and displayed a sympathetic and tender feeling in his accompaniment.

THE "AT HOME."

The Vicar and Miss Babington immediately after the service held an "at home" in the Town Hall, to meet the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs. Davidson. The hall was most beautifully decorated for the occasion. The walls were completely draped in white, with a delicate shade of mauve, of a soft material, profusely used in hangings, most artistically arranged, with evergreens introduced; and with the many lights subdued with a delicate art shade of an orange red, the scene when the huge company had as-

sembled was indeed a brilliant one. It was just one of those occasions when a larger Town Hall would have been most acceptable. A very large number of invitations had been issued, those who were able to be present numbering about one hundred and fifty. Among those invited were:—Archdeacon Spooner, Canon Bell, Rev. E. K. B. Morgan, Rev. A. Carre, Rev. A. O. Scutt, Rev. B. W. Gilpin, Rev. W. Raven, Rev. J. Jervis, Rev. J. H. Burrows, Rev. D. H. Creaton, the Mayor of Tenterden (Mr. A. R. Boorman) and Miss Boorman, Mr. E. H. Hardcastle, Miss Hardcastle, Mr. J. S. Winsler, Miss K. Winsler, Mr. W. S. Elliott, Miss Elliott, Dr. Skinner, Mr. and Mrs. F. G. J. Ford (Wittersham), Mr. and Mrs. F. Stanbridge, Mr. and Miss Pomfret (Mystole), Mr. and Mrs. V. Pomfret (Canterbury), Mr. and Mrs. S. L. Bucknall, Mrs. Peel, Miss Peel, Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Smith, Miss Privett, Mr. and Mrs. A. Ridley, Mrs. Wilkin, Mrs. and Miss Bradford-Brown, Major and Mrs. H. Nava (Benenden), Mr. C. Tribe, Mr. and Mrs. T. G. Cole, Mr. and Mrs. Tomlin (Cranbrook), Captain and Mrs. J. D. Cameron (Bethersden), Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Wright (High Halden), Mr. and Mrs. F. Allen, Captain and Mrs. Dampier-Palmer, Mr. J. W. Eden and Miss Eden, Mr. and Mrs. F. L. Denny, Mrs. E. Stanger, Mr. S. Jordan, Mr. J. Backshall, Dr. and Mrs. Rundle (Rolvenden), Mrs. French (Hawkhurst), Mrs. Pearson (Beckley), Mr. J. Worral, Mrs. Munn-Mace, Mr. and Mrs. J. Sutton, Mr. and Mrs. Jabez Chacksfield, Mr. H. B. Mace, the Misses Winsler (Ratsberry), Mrs. James and Miss Jordan, Sir Charles and Lady Drury, Mrs. Curteis, Mr. and Mrs. H. Judge, Mr. and Mrs. A. Dixon, Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Varty, Mrs. Sanders, Mr. John Chacksfield, Mrs. and Miss Hoskins, Mr. and Mrs. W. Love, Miss Guy, Commander and Mrs. Carter, Mrs. W. L. C. Turner, Miss Alston, Dr. and Mrs. Dring, Mrs. Milne, Miss R. Milne, Miss Jervis, Mrs. Carre, Mr. and Mrs. H. Burra (Rye), Mrs. Raven, Miss Gilpin, Miss Bell, Mr. R. B. Curteis, Miss Curteis, the Misses Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Stileman, Mr. E. R. Clifton, Mr. and Mrs. F. Edwards, Miss E. Bennett, Miss N. Bennett, Miss Collins, Mr. T. H. O. Collins, Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Snelling, Mrs. Holmes, Mrs. Tress Beale, Miss E. Thomson, Miss M. Thomson, Mr. and Mrs. E. Apps, the Misses Neve (Benenden), Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Atkinson, Mr. H. S. Willson, Mr. S. G. N. Willson, Miss Smales, Mr. C. Varty, Miss Bright, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Latter, the Misses Dunkley, Mr. H. Hillard, Mr. and Mrs. E. Skelding, Dr. and Mrs. Ticehurst, Miss M. Baker, Miss D. Baker, Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Mace, Mr. and Mrs. G. S. Elgood, Mr. and Mrs. E. Howard, Major and Mrs. Johnstone, Dr. and Mrs. Parsons, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Ward and Miss Ward (High Halden), Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Browning, the Misses Parsons, Mrs. and Miss Gladstone, the Misses Prichard (High Halden), Dr. Wilks (Ashford), Mr. and Mrs. Butt-Gow (Rolvenden), the Misses Tweedie (Rolvenden), Mrs. Clarke (High Halden), Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Beale (High Halden), Miss McKay (High Halden), Mrs. Phipps, Miss Phipps (Hawkhurst), Mrs. H. Nava (Rolvenden), Mr. and Mrs. F. Baker (Rolvenden), Colonel and Mrs. Tweedie (Beckley), the Misses Selmes (Newenden), Mrs. Harden and Harold Austen and William Tickner, the two leading boys of St. Mildred's choir. The Archbishop and Mrs. Davidson were fortunately able to spend some considerable time before having to make their return journey to Canterbury, and the host and hostess had an exceedingly busy time in making many presentations to them both. This being the Primate's first visit to Tenterden, many of them were meeting him for the first time. Before leaving the Archbishop expressed to the Vicar of Tenterden how thoroughly he had enjoyed the afternoon in Tenterden. At intervals, two monologues of a very delightful character were given by Mrs. Phipps most artistically. Mr. E. C. Stileman also contributed three songs, including "Come into the Garden, Maud," all three being greatly enjoyed, and Mr. F. Allen's couple of cello solos were very beautifully executed. The "at home" was a particularly enjoyable function, and was a very fitting conclusion to a day that will long be remembered in the history of the Church's work in Tenterden.

20/1/12

The doubts that have been cast on the legend connecting Tenterden Steeple with the Goodwin Sands are increased by the investigations which have been made by a Mr. Taylor, who makes light of the proverb that the Goodwin Sands were caused through the diversion of the funds for the maintenance of the sea wall to the building of Tenterden Church.