

# Buckerell

## BELLS REOPENED

### AFTER RESTORATION

Buckerell Parish Church was thronged on the occasion of the reopening of the bells after restoration, the congregation including somewhere about 60 ringers from Ottery St. Mary (6), Awliscombe (7), Honiton (6), Plymtree (6), Talaton (1), Sidmouth (1), Colyton (6), Cotleigh (3), Upottery (2), Feniton (8), Broadhembury (4), Payhembury (2), and the local ringers. The bells have been rehung on ball bearings, with new head-stocks and new gudgeons, the clappers have been turned, the bells tuned, and the frame-work put in order. The estimate cost is £106, of which about £60 is in hand. It is interesting to record that Buckerell is the only five-bell tower in Devon where all the ringers hold the certificate of the Devon Guild of Ringers.

A special form of Evensong was held at 3 o'clock, conducted by the Rector (the Rev. E. Ravenscroft). The other clergy present were the Revs. L. B. Stallard (Vicar of Ottery St. Mary), C. E. R. Romily (Vicar of Awliscombe), E. F. Tozer (Curate of Ottery St. Mary and Rector-designate of St. Paul's Church, Exeter). The special preacher was the Rev. E. Ernest Vyvyan Cox (Vicar of Bampton), hon. secretary of the North-East Branch of the Devon Guild of Ringers. An inspiring, and truly congregational, service opened with the singing of the hymn "O God of Jacob," Miss Darke being at the organ. The Psalm "I was glad they said unto me" followed. Then came the Lesson, read by the Vicar of Ottery St. Mary, after which the Magnificat was sung to a well-known setting. The recital of the Apostles' Creed was followed by the ordinary Versicles, the Lords Prayer, and a number of Collects appropriate to the occasion. After these the hymn "Praise my soul, the King of Heaven," was heartily sung by choir and congregation.

In the course of his sermon the Rev. E. E. V. Cox said they in that parish during the last few months had missed the sound of the bells.

Probably the first Sunday when they could not be rung they all remarked upon it as something extra-ordinarily strange. It scarcely seemed to be the right sort of Sunday, because the bells were missing in the best possible way. They in that parish had felt that, or they would never have put their hands to the work of restoration in the way they had done with all their heart and mind. That day it was only meet and right that in the name of ringers in the county, and particularly in that district, he should congratulate them heartily upon what they had done. What they had accomplished might seem to be a purely local matter, but, after all, it was not. It gave encouragement to others who loved bells to do as they had done, and, for aught they knew, their work of restoration might have already put it into the mind of some other parish to do the same, and it might in time to come be the means of bringing back again into a state of perfection and a state in which they ought to be the bells, which were a glorious heritage. The preacher went on to compare call change-ringing with the half-pull ringing, and showed how much more concentration of mind was required in the latter, and so necessarily took much longer time to acquire perfection in scientific ringing. This was what the Devon Guild of Ringers, to which the local band belonged, had set its hand to for the past 49 years. "Expect the best" was the preachers' advice to all the ringers present, "and you will get it."

During the collection on behalf of the bell fund the hymn "Now thank we all our God" was sung, after which the Blessing was pronounced, and the Te Deum sung as a solemn act of thanksgiving.

Immediately after the service the Ottery ringers formally opened the bells, and other bands followed in rotation. Tea was served to the ringers afterwards at the Rectory.