

BUCKERELL PUMP.

Fusilade of Questions from Parish Meeting.

RATEPAYERS STRIKE.

At the last meeting of the Honiton Rural Council the Clerk (Mr. E. W. Hellier) read a letter from Sir James Monteath, Chairman of Buckerell Parish Meeting, in reference to the demand notes issued for the payment of a special rate to meet the cost of repairing the well pump at the north gate of the church. The letter stated that at a special Parish Meeting it was unanimously resolved that, unless and until official information on the following points had been furnished to and considered by the district auditor, and he had intimated he could take no action in the matter, ratepayers present would with-hold payment of the claim and would advise others to do likewise :-

When the work was proposed what was the approximate amount the Sanitary Inspector reported it would probably cost?

Was he authorised to commence the work without further consideration, or was he merely instructed to have an estimate prepared?

Was such an estimate ever presented to the Council for sanction, or was the Council ever informed that its instruction to have an estimate prepared was not carried out or what the actual cost would be until the bill was sent for payment?

As, apparently, the work merely consisted of having the well cleaned out, as had often been done before, of fixing concrete rings in the upper part of the well, and, possibly some repairs to the pump, surface-slab and woodwork, was there any difficulty in having a proper estimate prepared? (It seemed obvious that the preparation of an estimate by an expert or the securing of competitive tenders would have been an exceedingly simple matter).

Was the charge for the work approximately treble what the Council was led to expect? If so, were any steps taken, with expert advice, to ascertain whether the charge was reasonable?

As water reaching the edge of the well must obviously and necessarily trickle down behind the concrete rings to the water below – often after heavy rain such trickling could be distinctly heard – and as the water drawn was then quite muddy as ever it was before, could it be shown that the work done was of any use whatever for the purpose for which it was proposed – the prevention of contamination from the graveyard?

When was the loan actually contracted and the bill paid?

Were arrears of interest, which fell due between that and the present time, to be met from the special rate now demanded and hereafter to be demanded?

Since the work was completed the occupancy of the two largest houses in the parish, of several farms, and of many cottages having changed hands, were the new occupants to be held liable for those arrears due in respect of those occupancies?

The Clerk said he would forward the letter to the district auditor.

DEVON & EXETER GAZETTE – 23 JUNE 1921