

Rebuilding of Bluntisham Meeting House,

AND

PURCHASE MINISTER'S HOUSE.



BLUNTISHAM, EARITH, and COLNE, each a mile distant from the other, form a group of agricultural villages, with a population of about 1400 souls. Nearly a century ago Mr. Coxo Feary, a Bluntisham farmer, hearing the "good news" of the Gospel from the Rev. Henry Venn, Rector of Yelling, felt moved to tell the glad tidings to his neighbours. God greatly blessed his labors, and after a time he became the pastor of a numerous Church and congregation, who were served by him with affectionate solicitude during a pastorate of thirty-five years. To him succeeded the Rev. Samuel Green, for eleven years a faithful minister; the Rev. J. E. Simmons, M.A., whose thirty-eight years' service made him revered by the congregation and the neighbourhood; and now the Rev. F. Goadby, M.A., has just closed a happy and successful pastorate of nearly eight years.

The homely but spacious "House" in which the congregation met for worship became, two years ago, so much in decay, that it was found needful to renew the roof, and repair the building. At the same time assistance very kindly offered by friends induced an attempt also to purchase a Minister's house. It was estimated that the total cost of the two projects would be about £1300, and it appeared likely that this sum would be obtained without difficulty. But on taking off the roof, almost the whole fabric was found to need renewal, and an edifice has been erected, with some associations with the old building, but practically a new chapel. The design has been happily completed, and a lasting house for worship erected, not without beauty, and built almost entirely by workmen connected with the congregation, whose hearts were in their work. The result is that an excellent chapel and manse have been obtained, but a total outlay of about £2300 has been incurred.

The especial importance at the present day of maintaining a vigorous village church, teaching those views of the gospel commonly held by Protestant Nonconformists, has been a strong motive with many in the congregation to induce them to venture on this large expenditure. Agricultural villages are constant sources of emigration, and many hundreds of persons have left this neighbourhood during the past fifty years for the large towns of England and the Colonies, who have been influenced for good by teaching received in Bluntisham Meeting House.

Including a Gift by Deed of Miss Simmons for £200, not at present available, the sum of £1600 has been already received. Assuming the total outlay as £2300, the deficiency is now £700. Toward this amount £250 has been offered by three gentlemen, if the remainder can be obtained and the debt cleared off. The Deacons and friends in the church and congregation know well how unfavourable farming affairs are just now for such an effort; but they are very desirous to secure the considerable sums so kindly offered, and hope the attempt to clear off the debt will be made with success.

Bluntisham, May, 1876.

ANALYSIS OF RECEIPTS.

							£	s.	d.
<i>Subscriptions to House and Building Fund</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1013	11	0
<i>Collections Opening day</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	51	5	1
<i>" Sunday following</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	11	3
<i>Proceeds Bazaar</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	224	0	8
<i>Sunday School Contributions</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	0	10
<i>Dinner and Tea Tickets and profits Concert</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	51	1	0
<i>Collected in small sums by Ladies in congregation</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	10	9
<i>Old Materials sold</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	8	0
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<i>Cash received to present time</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1401	8	7
<i>Miss Simmons, Deed of Gift</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	200	0	0
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							£1601	8	7
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