

OLD CHURCH FEASTS

ENJOYMENTS IN THE DAYS OF
"MERRIE ENGLAND."

Bazars and Tea Parties of Modern Days Had Their Prototypes Long Ago—Records Show Much Money Raised by Harmless Festivities.

A curious light is thrown on ancient church bazars and charity balls by certain records kept in some of the churches in England. For instance, in the records of Yateley church, which date from 1543, are frequent references to "church ales," the object of which was to get money for church expenses. The feast was organized by the church wardens, "who provided a good spread at so much a head, and credited the profits to the church expenditure." It first appears as the "church ale," then as the "king's ale," then later as "our banquet at Whitsuntide." It was probably held in the church and went on until 1643, the year after the civil war broke out, when, probably, the puritans put an end to such festivities. It was popular, evidently. One enterprising church warden has left on record all the good things which were prepared for the Crondall "church ale" in the year 1587. They had a band, brewed a quantity of ale and made a profit of \$42. As money was then worth nearly ten times as much as now the "church ale" may be said to have brought in about \$400, which was just 100 per cent on the outlay. The band was hired for four days.

Until 1545 the church wardens kept a church cow and let it out at 33 cents a year. A sheep and a lamb (gifts) they let out for 8 cents a year, probably for the wool. Payments for incense and for an enormous Easter candle of wax were regular items. The parliamentary soldiers made earthworks in the churchyard and the puritans later had a small marble font made. The puritan font is still there, though displaced in its turn. On All Saints' day a little tax was levied of a farthing on each chimney. All Saints' was the dedication day of the church. This tax was called "smoke farthings." From 1543 one parishioner seems to have acted as "dog whipper." "To Whelan, for beating dogs out of church, twopence," is the oldest entry, and as late as 1819 a dog whipper was appointed at a salary of \$5.25.

At Yateley they got a new pair of stocks and a new whipping post in 1774 and in 1776 a parish umbrella to hold over the parson at funerals. The parish aided the gamekeeper and farmer by paying head money for sparrows' heads, foxes, hedgehogs, polecats and haws (both the latter chicken killers). Spelling was not very good in the early eighteenth century. Affidavit of legal burials is spelt "after david."

Japs Had to Celebrate.

When the news of the great Japanese naval victory reached Pittsburg a company of acrobats from the island empire were appearing afternoon and evening in a circus. On being assured of the Russian overthrow they promptly went on strike for a day, positively refusing to work. Instead they proceeded to decorate the city a vivid red, carefully refraining from any breach of the law, however. They were allowed full liberty.

Where Four States Meet.

The only place in the world where four states, territories or provinces join, is where the boundary lines of Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona meet. It is the only "four corners" combination of political divisions of the kind on earth, and the United States has marked the place with a stone monument, the names of the four divisions being inscribed on the shaft. The spot is in the heart of a country once densely populated by cliff-dwellers, and access to it is so difficult that few tourists make their way there. Mancos, Colo., is the nearest railroad town, and it is one hundred miles distant. Were it not for the boulders lying about a wagon could be set down with each wheel in a different state.

Blessings for the Weary.

But I think the King of that country comes out from among His tireless host,
And walks in this world of the weary,
as if He loved it the most;
For here in the dusty confusion, with eyes that are heavy and dim,
He meets again the laboring men who are looking and longing for Him.
He conceals the curse of Eden, and brings them a blessing instead;
Blessed are they that labor, for Jesus partakes of their bread.
He puts His hand to their burdens, He enters their homes at night;
Who does his best shall have as guest the Master of life and light.
This is the gospel of labor—ring it, ye bells of the kirk—
The Lord of love came down from above, to live with the men who work.
This is the rose that He planted here in the thorn cursed soil—
Heaven is blest with perfect rest, but the blessing of earth is toil.
—Henry Van Dyke

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