THE GEM
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Latest Pictures, ★★ Celebrated Orchestra
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A delightfully breezy comedy-drama, packed with thrills, humour and heart-warming romance.
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PATHE'S SUPER GAZETTE.
Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Oct. 30, 31 and Nov. 1.
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GRAVESEND.

MILTON'S BELLS.

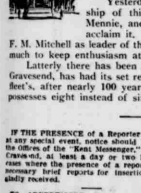


The parish of Milton will be pleased to listen to the music of its church bells again, its range now widened by the completion of the octave. When it is not overdone, the pealing of well-rung bells is pleasant to the ear. As Moore wrote:—

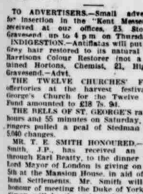
Those evening bells! Those evening bells!
How many a tale their music tells!
Of youth, and home, and that sweet time
When last I heard their soothing chime.

Yesterday's festival with 30 years' rectorship of this romantic little Church by the Rev. G. W. Mennie, and it was a happy thought that the bells should acclaim it. It also commemorated the "majority" of Mr. F. M. Mitchell as leader of the tower. In campanology Mr. Mitchell has done much to keep enthusiasm at concert pitch.

Latterly there has been a revival of church bell interest. St. George's, Gravesend, has had its set re-hung, Northfleet's bells are heard again, South-fleet's, rather nearly 100 years, are no longer silent, and now Milton's tower possesses eight instead of six.



Ornamented by the late Archbishop Lord Davidson, when Bishop of Rochester, the Rev. G. W. Mennie first took charge of St. Paul's Church, Lorrimore Square, South-East London, and worked hard in the slum districts. At that time the whole of South London was in the Diocese of Rochester, for it is the Diocese of Southwark was only created 25 years ago. Mr. Mennie next served four years at Kingston-on-Thames, and then the Diocese of Rochester, and on October 23rd, 1900, he was instituted by Bishop Talbot, and inducted by the late Canon Murray, of Cobham.



REV. G. W. MENNIE.

Milton. Five years later, Bishop Talbot was transferred to Winchester, after completing 25 years at Rochester, and his successor was Dr. Harmer, who recently retired after serving for a similar period.

Mr. Mennie has served under three Bishops, and the coming Dr. Linton Smith will add another.

Mr. Mennie has endeared himself to his parishioners, irrespective of their religious denomination, and for the burgesses of the ancient borough of Gravesend he has been acclaimed their friend and counsellor. It is an unobtrusive way he has worked for the welfare of the whole neighbourhood, especially for the cause of education.

Before he was appointed Rector of Milton, a faculty had been obtained for enlarging the church by adding a chancel and eventually widening the nave, but the more pressing needs of the southern part of the parish and housing problem, as it affected it, stayed the hand. St. Faith's Church, Ferndale Road, was built in 1903 at a cost of about £2,500, raised largely by subscription in response to an appeal launched by Mr. Mennie.

GROWING RESPONSIBILITIES.

Chatting with a "Kent Messenger" representative, Mr. Mennie stated that in the last 30 years the population of the parish had doubled, and he expected that at the next census the inhabitants would number at least 10,000. He pointed out that the King's Farm Estate, which has been rapidly developed in recent years as Milton's share, forms part of Milton parish.

Mr. F. M. Mitchell is hon. secretary of the Kent County Association of Change Ringers. It was his ambition to see £300 raised by public subscription for the restoration of the old bells of Milton, and to acquire two new ones to complete the octave. In appreciation of his keen and devoted interest in the church, and as a compliment to him, the parishioners did their best to get this hope realised during Mr. Mitchell's 25 years as bellringing leader. They were helped by a liberal donation from Gravesend Town Council, and also by the gift of a new bell from Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell.

ANCIENT BELLS.

When the old bells, five weighing 12 cwts., was brought down for re-tuning, that was the only time it had left the tower since it was placed there with four other bell- in 1656. Those five bells still bear their original inscription, giving "the names of the donors. It has been ascertained that John Robson had foundries in London and St. Mary Cray, and the bells were probably cast at the last named place.

Another bell was given by John Smith, a "dissitter," and the fifth by Peter Browne, a waterman. The sixth bell with its names of G. Rich and Co., churchwardens, was added in 1810, and the whole now hung in a new oak frame, which to-day is in wonderful condition.

They are believed to be the first church bells ever hung for change ringing. The ancient bells when first placed foot on English soil at Whitsun they were ringing.

NEW COMPANIONS.

The two new treble bells are inscribed as follows: "Presented by Ernest E. and Mrs. J. E. Knowles, 1930. G. W. Mennie, M.A., 30 years Rector." and "In memory of Alan Gates Sandford, killed at Loos, 1915. F. M. Mitchell, 30 years leader."

With the aid of the new chiming apparatus, which the Misses Gates have given to the church, it is possible to play hymns on the bells. The total weight of the eight bells is approximately 2 tons 17 cwts.

DEDICATION SERVICE.

The service of dedication was attended by the Mayor and Corporation of Gravesend. With the Rural Dean, Canon Hilton, and the Rector were the Revs. C. G. T. Colson (Northfleet) and Campbell Ward (Swanscombe).



MR. JACK MILLS, M.P. COUN. J. WHITE.

The exhibition was opened by Councillor J. White, J.P., Chairman of the Urban Council, who was supported by Mrs. White, Mr. W. J. Bayliss (President of the Traders' Association) and Mrs. Bayliss, Mr. and Mrs. T. Mills, M.P., Councillors A. Webb, G. P. Tatner, W. A. Ward, A. W. Smale, C. Woodley and B. Mitchell, Mr. J. J. Hurley (Clerk to the Urban Council), Mr. T. E. Coffin (Surveyor), Rev. Lempriere Hammond (Vicar of Dartford), Rev. S. Tetley and Mr. J. Hobbs (Clerk to Dartford Rural Council).

Councillor Bayliss said the traders were always seeking to further the best interests of the town, but the public should remember that just as a chain was only as strong as its weakest link, so a town got the shops it deserved.

ECONOMY NECESSARY FOR PROSPERITY.

Councillor White congratulated the Traders' Association on their effort they had made to stimulate trade and commerce in the town. Never in the history of the present generation had such a depression as been passed through, but out the country to push forward on the road to sufficient financial success, and there was never such a time for determined, strenuous and unselfish effort if the country was to regain some measure of the commercial prosperity which it had during the past few years. He believed that to-day people were living up to the limits of their incomes and things which a few years ago were looked upon as luxuries were now considered necessities. It was necessary if they were to achieve the prosperous conditions of the past—the prosperity of every town, county and in local councils all over the country. One thing he was certain of was that with the enterprise and determination to succeed which Dartford Council's Public Works Scheme,