

EPSOM IN 1910

Once more the wheel of time has spun round on its axle, and we have again arrived at that period when it is our custom to look back upon the past and see what has taken place in the town during the past year. The progressive character of the Epsom of today is writ large in the growing development of the town and its environments, and unquestionably the position at the present time is one of steady, cautious and economical progress. Epsom is coming to the front as a residential centre, the health-giving properties of the district being well known to all who have at one time or another paid a visit to the district, and a general survey points clearly to the cheering character of the future prospects of the town.

BUILDINGS AND STREETS.

Taking first the work of our local Urban Council, the year under review has not witnessed any very sensational developments in the municipal life of Epsom, although in one or two departments substantial and welcome progress has to be reported. The number of new buildings passed by the Council has been about the average, but towards the end of the year 52 new cottages were passed, and the erection of these should give a great fillip to the local building industry in the very near future. Like most other bodies, the Council has been seriously studying the Housing and Town Planning Act and its bearing upon the many complicated problems confronting local authorities. After attending one of the numerous conferences held on this question one member of the Council offered to prepare a plan of the district showing how it might be developed to the general advantage and at a recent meeting of the Roads Committee it was reported that this plan would shortly be completed. The Roads Department has not laid out any new streets, the sole work done in connection with the highways being

routine work of patching and repairing existing thoroughfares. As usual, a considerable number of roads were treated with tar and other dust preventive materials, and the channels of many roads, especially those having a steep gradient, were similarly treated. It is claimed that this considerably adds to the life of the roads, but it must be borne in mind that the water which used to fall on those roads soaked in, whereas now it is conveyed through the sewers on to the sewage farm, and in time of storm considerably increases the volume dealt with at the outfall.

WATER SUPPLY

The Waterworks shows a very sound financial position, largely due to the agreement between the town and the London County Council Asylums Committee. The new suction gas plant has effected very considerable economies in the cost of pumping; and notwithstanding the fact that the consumption of water in the town grows rapidly the costs during the past few years have very considerably fallen. The policy of this department in connecting up the various dead ends in the district, and thereby preventing stagnation of the water at the end of the system, has further developed during the past year, and now there are very few places where the water can stand in the pipes.

SANITATION

The Sanitary Department, which includes the supervision of the Isolation Hospital in Hook Road, has paid its usual attention to the health of the district, and arrangements are being made for a systematic inspection of the houses in the district as enjoined by recent legislation. The Isolation Hospital has been carried on as in previous years by a resident matron who obtains assistance when the needs of the town unfortunately demand it.

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Council and the Lord of the Manor, from whom the Stew Pond was leased.

THE RECREATION GROUND

On the Recreation Ground continued evidences of increased popularity are shown. For the first time the Urban and Rural Councils met here in their annual cricket match. Quite recently the Recreation Ground Committee presented to the Council their scheme for the final laying out of the ground, and there is a suggestion that a new pavilion, equipped with a both ladies' and gentlemen's dressing rooms, and the usual appointments of such a building, should be erected as a memorial of his late Majesty King Edward VII. The Recreation Ground Committee's scheme also includes a lodge for the superintendent of the ground, whose work during the past year has again called forth the praise of all those who took part in the numerous cricket, hockey, football and tennis matches that were played at this beautiful spot. During the present winter a bowling green and croquet lawn are being laid out, and there can be no doubt that next year this will add still further to the attractions of this part of the Council's activities.

THE STEW POND

The Stew Pond has not been quite so successful as might have been hoped, as a difference of opinion arose between the Council and the Lord of the Manor, from whom the Stew Pond was leased. There is, however, every prospect of this difference being amicably settled. In this connection it may be mentioned that during the year the Council have appointed a committee who are considering the advisability of acquiring the rights off the Lord of the Manor for Epsom Common with a view to making this piece of wild nature more easily accessible at all times of the year to the public.

LIGHTING OF THE TOWN

In the Electricity Department noteworthy progress can be recorded. For the first time since the inception of the undertaking in 1902 a credit balance was reported as a result of the year's working, for the year ending March 31st last. The sum then in hand was £186 as compared with a deficiency of £690 for the previous year. Reductions have been made in most items of expenditure, and very considerable increase was noted in the income from private lighting. Since this very satisfactory report was presented, the undertaking's output has increased, and the number of consumers has grown in a manner eminently satisfactory for an undertaking in its ninth year of working. The public lighting of the town has also received very careful attention from the committee, who have substituted flame arc lamps in the High Street for the old fashioned lights formerly in use. These lamps were very highly eulogised by the Epsom Traders' Association at their annual dinner and the main thoroughfare of Epsom can now claim to be one of the best lighted districts south of London. The completion of this work has now been made and the new system of lighting has been installed throughout the High Street and another in South Street. In the outlying districts the whole of the carbon filament lamps have now been superseded and in their place tantalum lamps are in use. It is regrettable that in some parts of the town the Lighting Department has to report many breakages of the lamps, caused by the wanton throwing of stones, brickbats and other delights of the juvenile portion of the population. It is hoped, however, that this occurrence will become more rare in the future.

AT THE SEWAGE FARM

At the Sewage Farm the Council recently opened the new Sludge Disposal Works by means of which the sludge can be dealt with more quickly than has been the case here before. At a cost of slightly over

£4,000 ejectors have been fixed at various points by which the sludge is transferred direct from concrete beds to the land, where it can be ploughed in almost immediately and thus, a great deal of the offensive smell hitherto common on the farm will be abolished. In connection with this scheme also the Council built a new brick carrier 1400-ft. in length, and this, too, is available for bringing into use the large tract of land which can be employed as required by means of 18 sluices fixed at regular intervals in the side of the carrier. The crops on the farm were good, and were harvested as well as could be expected in an autumn such as was experienced.

PROPOSED NEW ASYLUM

With regard to the future of the town, in November the London County Council Finance Committee presented a report in which they asked for £500,000 for the erection of a new asylum on the Horton estate. This was passed, and the Epsom Urban Council have received a plan showing the line of drainage it is proposed to adopt for this most recent addition to the buildings of the London authority. The asylum will be on the site of Greenman Farm, and it seems probable that it will be built on what is known as the detached villa principle. This, of course, will mean that when the work is started there will be another considerable influx of artisans of various descriptions into the town, and a recurrence of the demand for cottages, which was so acutely felt during the building of the previous asylums. At the same time the development of the residential part of Epsom proceeds steadily, and in the more salubrious parts of the district houses of fair size and rateable value are gradually being erected, the demand being always in excess of the supply.

AMONG THE CHURCHES

Although nothing startling has occurred in the church life of our town during the past

year it need hardly be pointed out that the wants of the place have been fully realised and attended to by the different sects or religious bodies. Taking first the Parish Church, we find that steady work has been accomplished by the Vicar (Rev. W. Bainbridge-Bell) and his co-workers, successful efforts having been made to reduce the outstanding debts on the Building and Organ Funds, a bazaar held in September going a long way to accomplish this object. An Empire Day service was held at the church, whilst at other times a Choir Festival and Foresters' Church Parade took place. The St. John's Mission Church, in connection with the Parish Church, has seen one or two changes, the Rev. F. Metcalfe succeeding the Rev. H.C. Gannell as curate in charge, whilst in July Mr. F.A. Boxshall, lay reader and choirmaster, resigned owing to his removal to Wimbledon. Under the able vicariate of the Rev. Canon Hunter, M.A., with the assistance of the Rev. F. Logie Hutchieson, M.A., the services at Christ Church have been kept fully up to the standard, the musical portion, under the conductorship of Mr. G.E. Good (organist) being very popular with the worshippers. At St. Barnabas' Church the only change of note has been the resignation of the Rev. E. Garth Ireland (Priest in charge), who had accepted the living at East Molesey, and the admittance of the Rev. H.A. Bowles as his successor, the latter ceremony being performed by the Bishop of Guildford in September. Mr. S.G. Neal has done much good work at St. Michael's Church, ably assisted by Mr. A.G. Ebbutt in the musical services. Changes have to be noted at all the Nonconformist places of worship. At the Congregational Church the Rev. Hy. Atkinson left in July for Muswell Hill Congregational Church, London, and towards the latter end of the year was succeeded in the pastorate by the Rev. Thos. Lister, of Middleton, near Manchester. The Rev. J. Rowland Gleave, whose sudden death was reported in last

week's paper, left the Wesleyan Church in June, and was presented with a wallet and notes; he being succeeded by the Rev. J. Wealey Howells, and at the Baptist Church the Rev. C.W. Townsend terminated his ministry the last Sunday in April. The Epsom Men's Brotherhood have held successful meetings, whilst in the summer open air services were conducted at the Recreation Ground, an innovation that proved most popular to residents.

GUARDIANS AND RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Everyone who knows the internal arrangements and the general management of the Epsom Workhouse will agree that the sweeping charges of incompetency, parochialism and self-seeking that have been made to several institutions of the same kind do not apply to the Dorking Road Institution. Mr. B. Braithwaite, J.P., and his colleagues on the Board have accomplished much in the past twelve months, not the least being the adoption of the scheme in February for the new nurses' home and boys' quarters, and the alteration to the kitchen and officers' quarters. Early in the year the Rev. W.B. Tucker, one of the Leatherhead representatives, resigned on his leaving the district and Mr. F. Hue-Williams was elected in his stead. In August the Rev. R.A. Waddilove, of Ashted, was co-opted on the Board, vice Capt. Farmer, deceased; The Master and Matron (Mr. & Mrs. J.T. White) received a well-earned increase of salary in March, and in the same month Mr. White was presented with an address by the Surrey Branch of the National Poor Law Officers' Association for his past services. Mr. & Mrs. Collins resigned their positions as porter and portress at the Workhouse, and were presented with an easy chair and a cheque for £30, subscribed for by the members of the Board and officials; they were succeeded by Mr. & Mrs. Charnley, of Bedford. The annual cricket match between the Guardians and Rural District Council and the Urban Council was played

at Woodcote in June, when, owing to the very inclement weather, it was postponed before a satisfactory result could be arrived at. Later in the year, however, the teams met on the Recreation Ground, when the Guardians and Rural District Council won the match on the first innings. In April, Mr. W.S.J. Brown was elected Chairman of the Rural District Council and Mr. W.G. Loxley Vice-Chairman. The chief item in the Rural Council's work during the year was the settlement the Nonsuch Park footpath dispute.

LOCAL SOCIETIES

The different societies of the town have been fairly prosperous in the year under review. First and foremost we have the Epsom and Ewell Literary and Scientific Society, which holds its meetings at the Public Hall, and here a steadily increased membership is to be reported. Mr. J.T. White has again undertaken the duties of Secretary, so the members know that that part of the work is in safe hands. Last March, under the society's auspices, Sir Ernest Shackleton paid a visit to Epsom, when he delivered his lecture, "Nearest the South Pole." The present session was opened by Mr. W. Pett Ridge on "Cockney Humour," and a very good syllabus has been arranged. St. Barnabas' Society has also done well during the year, some very enjoyable evenings having been spent in discussing up-to-date questions. The St. Barnabas' Musical Society, under the direction of Mr. J.E. Bradley, gave one or two good performances, and a splendid concert was given by the Orpheus Society, whilst the newly formed Epsom Oratorio Society acquitted itself admirably in their first venture at the Parish Church last week. Insp. Hawkes was succeeded Insp. Oxbly as the local R.S.P.C.A. representative, and Sir Thos. Bucknill is again President of the Society. The Epsom Traders' Association shows a satisfactory increase of membership, and other societies and institutions that go to make

up the life of the community are the Epsom Gymnastic Society, Epsom and Ewell Cottage Hospital, Epsom and District Footpaths Preservation Society, Angling Society, Nursing Association and Town Dispensary, all of which get their fair share of patronage from the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood.

GENERAL TOPICS

Several topics of an interesting character have been brought to light in Epsom since our last review appeared in print. Taking them in order we have the inquiry on the Small Holdings question, compulsory powers being asked for to purchase North Looe Farm. The land was eventually bought and arrangements made to let it out in allotments. Early in January, Fredk. Geo. Payne, an Epsom postman, was sentenced to three months imprisonment for being concerned in a betting case. The same month John A. Groom's Watercress and Flower Girls' Mission paid a week's visit to the Public Hall, and Miss O.M. Vardon was married at Christ Church. A much desired improvement in the letter box clearances has been effected in the district, this being greatly appreciated by residents who live far from the head office. At the end of January, too, happened that terrible train disaster at Stoats Nest, whereby Mr. William John Rose, a native of Epsom, lost his life. In February a fearful storm passed over Epsom, but no human lives were lost, the only serious damage being the killing of two horses. Mr. A.C. Williams was married early in March and the same month a fire broke out at the back of Mr. W. Dorset's shop in the High Street, doing considerable damage. The following month two marriages were solemnised in which Epsomians were interested, Miss Phyllis Hunter, daughter of Canon Hunter, being married at Christ Church and Mr. Geo. Furniss, the popular entertainer, at Wimbledon. The Foresters of Epsom celebrated their jubilee with a commemoration dinner, and the usual May

Day Festival was held at the Council Schools. A gloom was cast over the town at the end of May by the death of King Edward VII, and fitting references were made at all the churches and public meetings at the time. Sir Wm. Vincent was appointed Chairman of the Epsom Justices, and early in June the local Boy Scouts were presented with badges at the Christ Church Room. Other interesting occurrences later in the year included the Epsom rose and flower shows; rifle club annual prize meeting; lawn tennis tournament; Horton Asylum fete; marriages of Miss W.M. Atkins of Abelegrove, and Mr. G.H.N. Barrck and Miss H.C. Sherwood; presentation of long service medals to Epsom firemen; and marriage of Mr. Harold Aston. In the political world things are very much of the same as they were this time last year. At the beginning of the year a General Election took place when Mr. W. Keswick, the Unionist member was again returned to Parliament by a majority of over 5,000 over Sir Albert Rollit, who stood in the Liberal interests. At the last election just over Mr. Keswick was returned unopposed. On November 11th Sir Alert was the recipient of a silver-gilt casket and an illuminated album from the Liberals in the constituency as a mark of respect and esteem in which he was held by them, and for the services he had rendered them by contesting the seat.

THE WORLD OF SPORT

In the world of sport Epsom can hold its own with any town of a similar size. First and foremost, we have the spring and summer races, which take place on the famous Downs, and on "Derby" day it is a sight worth seeing. This year's Derby was won by "Lemberg," owned by Mr. Fairie, the highly thought of "Neil Gow," Lord Rosebery's splendid horse, being unable to finish nearer than fourth, a disappointment to many. The Epsom cricket club has had a very successful season, whilst the junior clubs who play on the recreation ground

have most of them a similar tale to tell. In other branches of sport, such as hockey, lawn tennis, croquet, athletics and football, many Epsomians take part, and it is gratifying to note an improvement in the play of the Epsom football team this season. They have hopes of carrying off the Surrey Junior Cup this time, and never have they had a better chance, despite the fact that they are continually drawn to play away from home.

OBITUARY

Death has been very busy at Epsom in the twelve months that have just elapsed, many well known residents having been struck by its icy hand. Hardly had the year begun when Mr. "Roger" Humphry, a popular member of the Liberal club, died in the Cottage Hospital, and another death was that of Mrs. Maria Willis Wood of Parkston, Ashley Road. Later in the month, two well known residents passed away in Mrs. Bainbridge-Bell, wife of the Vicar of Epsom, and Mrs. Daniel, widow of Dr. Wm. Clement Daniel and mother of Dr. E.G. Daniel, whilst Dr. Wm. Warwick Wagstaffe, one of the original members of Epsom College, who was educated there in 1855-9, being head of the school; and Mr. P. Robertson Rodger, of Banstead, a Vice-President of the Epsom Liberal Club, died. In April, Mr. Lionel Detmar, a Sutton architect, was thrown from his horse at the top of Ashley road and killed and the next month, a boy named Herbert Wm. Leverington was run over by a train at Wheeler's-lane crossing and killed whilst bird nesting. Mr. John Hy. Stephens Thompson, of Epsom, died at Hove and the sudden death occurred of Mrs. Alice Strange; whilst an Epsom labourer named Jonah Broughton was found drowned in a clay pit off East street, and an unknown man was found dead on Epsom Common. In June, Capt. Farmer, of Nonsuch Park, Chairman of the Epsom Bench, passed away; Harold J. Peaston the five year old son of Mr. W.J. Peaston, of Station Road, met with a sad death whilst on a visit to

some relatives at Kensington; a Bandon Hill cyclist was run over by a motor car in College Road and killed; and an Epsom gardener, named Edward Thos. Jinks, died as a result of a fall in East Street. The following month Miss M.L. Davies, of Ladbroke Road was found lying on the kitchen floor with her throat cut, and Mrs. Louisa Evans, of the Plough and Harrow Inn, East Street, died suddenly; and in August, Miss Maud Hayton, 18, of College Road, was found dead in bed; the same month the death took place of Sir Constantine Holman, a friend and supporter of Epsom College. Other deaths were those of Wm. Forest, an Epsom guard, and James B. Lock, of Lower Court-road, two old members of the Liberal Club; Mr. Chas. Cotton, a well known builder and Forester in the town; James Oliver, a London author, who was found poisoned on a piece of land on the Alexandra Estate; and the Rev. J. Rowland Gleave, formerly pastor at the Wesleyan Church, who died suddenly at Seacombe, Cheshire, whilst at a class meeting.

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