A Visit to Bedford

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of publishing them. I was advised, however, to send the manuscript to Sir John Stainer, editor of Novello's Primer series, with the result that it was issued in 1889, and since then about fifteen thousand copies of the book have been sold.'

Dr. Harding has been greatly in request as a lecturer on musical subjects; indeed, he has always more invitations to lecture than he can accept. His engagements have included University Extension Lectures. He is now preparing one to read before the Froebel Society on 'The training of children's voices.' 'This is a subject which interests me exceedingly,' he observes. 'With 800 boys at the Grammar School and 600 girls at the High School passing through my hands, I see much which goes to prove that voice-training in Secondary Preparatory Schools is practically non-existent. I examine the voices of all those who enter the two schools I have named, and I find that children who obtain scholarships from the Elementary Schools of the town are generally better trained than those who come from the so-called Preparatory Schools.' From the years 1901 to 1903 he was one of the examiners for musical degrees in the Victoria University, Manchester.

The personality of a man: what a wonderful asset or otherwise that may be in the career of a practical musician. How many clever men—born too clever, perhaps—fail for the lack of those social attributes which smooth and hasten the journey along life's pathway towards the goal of success. Geniality, gentlemanlike-bearing, the respect of one's fellow men, and honesty of purpose—who can estimate the sum of them? And when these attributes which go so far to make personality are combined with good health, skilled musicianship, indomitable perseverance, 'and patient continuance in well-doing,' the award which awaits a man thus equipped for the battle of life is assured. Dr. Harding is one thus gifted in heart and mind. The esteem in which he and Mrs. Harding are held in Bedford was exemplified by the handsome presentation recently made to them—by the Mayor of Bedford, on behalf of the subscribers—on the occasion of their silver wedding, an event which was reported in the May issue of this journal; and it should be recalled that only four years ago, after the first performance of his cantata 'Mucius Scævola' by the Bedford Musical Society, he was presented by the members with a solid silver tea-service and an album as a token of regard. It was a well-merited testimony to his worth when, after the lamented death of Dr. F. J. Sawyer in April last, he was unanimously elected Honorary Secretary of the Royal College of Organists. Keenly alert to make the Royal College of Organists—of which he has been a Fellow for more than thirty years—increasingly useful, and to augment the value of the diplomas that are granted, Dr. Harding has been kind enough to furnish replies to the following questions:

'Considering its importance in the equipment of a church organist, do you think more attention

should be paid in the examinations to the matter of the accompanying of church services?'

'This is the very subject which has been occupying the attention of the Council for some time, and at the next examination, to be held in January, 1909, for the first time, the Associate candidates will be obliged to accompany, on the organ, *the singing of a choir* in canticles, psalms, &c. This is a step in the right direction.'

'Do you think choir training should be a compulsory subject at the examinations?'

'In regard to this subject a complete and exhaustive choir training examination is provided by the Royal College of Organists, but at present it is only open to Fellows. Whether it would be wise or desirable to allow Associates to sit for this examination is a matter for consideration.'

There can be no doubt that Dr. Harding will use his influence in making the examinations of the Royal College of Organists eminently practical, and that under his wise and genial administration of the office which he holds, the prestige of the Institution will be fully maintained and its usefulness increasingly developed.

A VISIT TO BEDFORD.

Bedford is one of those clean, compact, and pleasant towns which owe not a little of their attractiveness to a beautiful river. The delightful water-way of the Ouse, with the handsome promenade embankment on its north side, is, however, by no means the only feature of interest in the place. Antiquity, famous men, several fine parish churches, splendid and exceptional educational advantages, and a flourishing musical society are some of the things which combine to give distinction to the town, and make a visit to Bedford an enjoyable experience.

In regard to antiquity, it may suffice to hark back to A.D. 571, when a battle was fought between Cuthwulf, brother of Ceauline, King of the West Saxons, and the British army, at Bedicanford, or Bedican-fortha, the protected ford, the Saxon name of the place. During the reign of Ethelred, in 1010, Bedford was one of the places sacked and burned by the Danes as they traversed the valley of the Ouse. In Domesday, Bedford was never apportioned into hides (*hidata*), with the exception of one hide worth 100 shillings with which St. Paul's Church was endowed. Its old castle—said to have been built by Edward the Elder, son of King Alfred, but now demolished—is frequently mentioned in history. As early as the year 1166 Bedford received its first charter; this document, still preserved, has been followed by twelve other charters, the last bearing date 1666.

The two most distinguished men associated with the town are John Bunyan and John Howard. Although the author of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' was born (in 1628) at Elstow, a village to the south of Bedford, he passed the greater part of his life in the town as a preacher and writer of

religious books. He wrote his *magnum opus*, 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' during his imprisonment in a jail, formerly situated on old Bedford bridge, that has long ceased to exist, though misinformed or imaginative guides point out to American tourists the existing county jail—built in 1801, and 113 years after Bunyan's death—as the place of his incarceration! A colossal bronze statue of Bunyan, by Sir Edgar Boehm and erected at the cost of the Duke of Bedford in 1874, occupies a prominent place in the town. John Howard (1726?–1790), well-known as 'The Philanthropist,' has added lustre to the town by reason of his intimate association with it. In 1758 he settled at Cardington, a village three miles from Bedford which still bears traces of the benevolence and philanthropy of the Howards. It was not, however, till he was fifty years old that John Howard began his indefatigable and successful visitation of prisons in Great Britain and all over the Continent, with results that revolutionized the condition of prisons in almost all civilized countries, and justly earned for him the title of 'Philanthropist.' In the Market Square, between the High Street and St. Paul's Church, is a bronze statue to John Howard, which was unveiled by the Duke of Bedford in 1894.

The good people of Bedford have reason to bless the name of one of its townsmen, Sir William Harpur. Why? Because of the charitable and educational institutions endowed by him. Born, at Bedford, of poor parents, in or about the year 1496, he was sent to London to be apprenticed to a tailor. He ultimately amassed a considerable fortune, and became Lord Mayor of London in 1561. Five years earlier—in 1556, when he was elected Sheriff of London—he conveyed to the 'mayor, bailiffs, burgesses, and commonalty of Bedford' thirteen acres and one rood of meadow land in the parish of Holborn. This land was then valued at £40 a year; it now realises an annual income of about £14,000! The objects of Sir William Harpur's gift were the establishment of a 'ffree and perpetuall schole ffor the erudycion and instruccion of chyldren and youthe . . . ffor the maryage of pore maydes of the sayd towne, and for porre chylders ther to be nurryashed and enformed': the residue of the income was to be distributed 'in almes to the poore of the sayd towne for the tyme beinge.' By Act of Parliament and the Education Commission the proceeds of

this now munificent gift are thus appropriated: four-elevenths to the Grammar School and the High School for Girls; four-elevenths to the Boys' and Girls' Modern School; two-elevenths to the Elementary Schools; and one-eleventh to eleemosynary purposes, including the almshouses in Dame Alice Street. Dame Margaret, Sir William's second wife, is buried in St. Paul's Church, and it is therefore more than probable that Sir William was himself interred there also.

No wonder that people are attracted to Bedford—it is only an hour's railway journey from London—if only for its great educational advantages! The present buildings are worthy of the objects of Lord Mayor Harpur's gift. The Grammar School, a fine block of buildings erected in 1889, has accommodation for 1,000 boys (the present roll is 800), while a handsome chapel has just been erected in the spacious grounds, which cover twenty

acres, as a further addition to the equipment of this excellent and flourishing school. Among distinguished 'old boys' were the late Colonel Fred Burnaby, of 'A Ride to Khiva' fame, and Lord Brampton, better known as Mr. Justice Hawkins. At the High School for Girls (opened in 1882) there are 600 pupils. Both these splendidly equipped educational establishments contain an organ, and the musical part of the curriculum at both schools is in the good hands and under the wise direction of Dr. H. A. Harding.

Book-lovers will be interested to learn that a library has existed at Bedford for more than

THE ARMS OF BEDFORD.

two centuries—'The foundation whereof was laid in the year 1700 by the contributions of the Gentry and Clergy.' An early catalogue—probably the first that was printed—is dated 1706, of which a copy is in the British Museum. The library now forms part of the Bedford Literary and Scientific Institute and General Library. The most important treasure formerly preserved there was a perfect copy of 'The Royal (or Royall) Book, or a Book for a Kyng,' printed by Caxton, at Westminster, circa 1487. On March 20, 1902, by order of the Council of the Bedford Library, this precious tome was sold by Messrs. Sotheby, when it realised the record price, for a Caxton, of £2,225, the purchaser being Mr. Quaritch. It is probably the largest and finest copy existing of the 'Royal Book,' and is (or was when sold) bound in Caxton's oaken boards, the leather stamped in diagonal compartments of dragons and roses (the back missing),

evidently in the state in which it originally left the famous printer's workshop. Bound inside the covers of the 'Royal Book,' one at each end to strengthen the binding, were two copies of an Indulgence granted by Pope Sixtus IV. to all who would assist in opposing the Turks at the Siege of Rhodes, printed by Caxton in 1481. These copies of the Indulgence—consisting of a single leaf of vellum, 6 × 8 inches, and comprising twenty-four lines of type—were separated from the volume and

to the visitor having those tastes. So it is at Bedford, the churches of St. Peter, St. Mary, and St. John, and the parish church of St. Paul presenting many interesting features. Of the last-named imposing edifice a photograph is given on p. 571. The earliest ecclesiastical reference to the town seems to be found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle under date A.D. 971, where it is said that when Oskytel, Archbishop of York, died at Thayne, Thurkytel, his kinsman and abbot of

THE BUNYAN STATUE AND ST. PETER'S CHURCH, BEDFORD.

(*Photograph by Messrs. Blake & Edgar, Bedford.*)

sold at the same time as the 'Royal Book,' the prices obtained being £265 and £145 respectively. The Library still retains the copy of Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs' (edition of 1641) which bears the autograph of John Bunyan, written in the year 1662 while he was a prisoner in Bedford jail.

From a musical, no less than an antiquarian and architectural point of view, the parish churches of an old English town invariably prove attractive

Bedford, carried his body thither and buried it. Reference to the church in Domesday has already been made. Up to the year 1528, St. Paul's was in some measure used as a collegiate church, under and served by chaplains appointed by the prior and convent of the B.V.M. and St. Paul, Newenham, founded by Simon de Beauchamp, who was buried before the high altar just 700 years ago. The building itself probably stands

on the site of the collegiate church which existed in Saxon times. It was rebuilt in the reign of King John, but was pulled down in 1216 by Falkes de Breauté, a military adventurer of that time, in order to provide materials for rebuilding the castle! Ten years later, however, Henry III. gave some of the materials from the castle which he had dismantled for the rebuilding of the church. In the 15th century a clerestory was added, a finely-carved oak roof put throughout the building, the north transept removed, and other alterations made. In the reign of Henry VIII. the church became for a time the cathedral of a suffragan bishop.

During the first half of the 19th century the church was terribly disfigured in that both the chancel and lady chapel were separated from the main building by a wooden screen, and used as receptacles for lumber! The pulpit and altar were placed on the south side of the heavy-galleried building, so terribly debased had the taste for church architecture become. In 1866-67 the central tower and spire were rebuilt, the chancel and lady chapel opened out, and other needed improvements made. The building now consists of a chancel with a south aisle (the lady chapel), and a nave with north and south aisles, the total length being 147 feet. Much has been done in the way of alterations and improvements during the incumbency of Canon Lambert Woodard, the present vicar, a son of the well-known educational philanthropist, Canon Nathaniel Woodard, who founded the schools bearing his name, at Lancing and elsewhere. The renovating hand of the late G. F. Bodley, R.A., can be seen in the elaborate rood-screen which has replaced the old screen, now located at the entrance to the chancel aisle. It was in St. Paul's Church, Bedford, that John Wesley, in the year 1758, preached his celebrated sermon called 'The Great Assize,' taking for his text the appropriate words, 'We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.' The 15th-century carved pulpit of white stone from which he delivered that discourse is still to be seen in the chancel aisle. In his 'Journals,' under date of March 10, 1758, Wesley writes: 'The congregation at St. Paul's was very large and attentive. The Judge, immediately after sermon, sent me an invitation to dine with him, but, having no time, I was obliged to send my excuse, and set out between one and two.' The tower contains an excellent peal of ten bells. From the middle of the 18th century the psalm tune 'Bedford,' composed by Weale, has been played on the bells: for the greater part of that time it could be heard hourly, now its strains alternate with other tunes, which are played every three hours.

Mention of the tune 'Bedford' naturally leads to the musical associations of the church which gave it birth. Hitherto very little information has been forthcoming about its composer, William Weale. It has been assumed that he was appointed organist in 1715, the year in which Gerárd Smith erected an organ in the church.

This, together with the dates of his degree of Bachelor of Music at Cambridge, and of his death, are all that is known concerning him. But during the recent visit of the present writer to Bedford he was able to search the Corporation records of that period, with results that furnished the following information, which it is believed has not hitherto been made known.

The first refers to the erection of an organ in the Parish Church of St. Paul and the appointment of an organist thereto 'at the cost and charges' of the Corporation. The following is the Minute:

6th March, 1713.

It is agreed unanimously that if there be subscrips sufficient to purchase & set up an organ in St Pauls Church between this & Michas day next that then an organist shall be yearly provided & paid at the costs & charges of the said Corporation & to allow such a yearly sallary as the Mayore & Councell shall think fitt payable quarterly.

A year later, 'At a Comon Councell held in the Guildhall Chamber there by on the first day of March A.D. 1714' (that is, 1715, allowing for the old reckoning), a long Minute relating to the salary and duties of the organist reads thus:

WHEREAS there are subscriptons made by severall noblemen of the County of Bedford & also divers of the Gents of both Town & County & others for & towards the purchasing & fixing setting up and erecting of a good tuneable Organ in the Parish Church of St Paul in the sd. Town in the most convenient place there Wch. Subscriptons doe amount to Two hundred & thirty pounds & upwards wch. is intended to be set up erected & finished on or before Michas day 1715 & is to continue soo long as the Religeon & liturgy of the Church of England by law established shall endure to & for the use of the said Parish

Whereof Wee the Mayor Bayliffs Burgesses & Comaltie in Comon Councell assembled Doe hereby agree enact grant and accordingly order & allow Twenty pounds per ann to be paid halfe yearly out of the rents & revenews of the said Town in our disposal wch dos not arise from the guift of Sir W Harper deceased or any other guift expressly given to charitable use wch wee declare shall not be. but that twenty pounds per ann shall be paid as aforesaid to an organist well skilled & qualified to performe & play thereon to be named & appointed by the sd Corporaton & their Successors for ever under their seale & therefore Wee the said Major Bayliffs Burgesses and Comaltie in Comon Councell assembled Doe hereby authorize and impower the Mayor for the time being to set the Towne seale to an instrument for that purpose to be drawne up. And it is provided that in case the sd Corporation in Comon Councell should neglect omit or refuse to appoint authorize or depute a sufficient person qualified to be organist thereof in one Month after the same are finished or the place vacant that then & in such case the Minister of the sd Parish of St Paul for the time being shal notate authorize and depute a fitt and sufficient person to supply officiate tune and play upon the same at the sd. Corporaton charges aforesaid weekly upon Sundays Prayer days & Holy days as in other places. and that the Mayor for the time being is hereby impowered & authorized to issue out his ordr to the chamberlains upon the sd. Organist performing his duty herein duly to pay him for the some within fourteen daies after every half year at furthest wch shall be the Chamberlains sufficient Warrant

for paying the same to be allowed yearly upon their accounts and if the said organist shall wilfully neglect or omit his duty by himselfe or some fitt person and not performe the same It shall and may be lawfull for the sd. Mayor Bayliffs Burgesses & Comaltie upon admonition made to him from the sd Corporation or the Major & Aldren for the time being & at their pleasure for the sd Corporation to appoint & depute an other fitt person in his room or in default as aforesd. for the Vicar of St Pauls parish for the time being soe to doe *quoties toties etc.*

of Bedford? The question cannot be definitely answered, but it seems probable. For the purposes of this article Mr. C. Elton Halliley, treasurer of the Bedford Musical Society, has kindly searched the registers of the church to discover, if possible, fresh information concerning the Weale family. Although the registers are greatly damaged by damp, Mr. Halliley has been able to decipher the following entries.

ST. PAUL'S PARISH CHURCH, BEDFORD.

(Photograph by Messrs. Blake & Edgar, Bedford.)

Weale's appointment to the organistship is recorded in a Corporation Minute of April 1, 1715 :

It is ordered &c that Wm Weale jun Esq is made choyce of to be Organist to the Organs of St Pauls parish to play thereon he qualifying himselfe soe as to be fitt & capable of performing & playing upon the same instrument duly then he is to have the sallary agreed upon by the sd Corporation to the sd Organist.

Here, then, we have conclusive information as to the date of Weale's appointment. Was he a native

29 August, 1718.	Bury'd Elizabeth ye wife of Mr. William Weale.
2 Dec., 1719.	Bury'd Robert, Weale's organ blower.
25 Nov., 1722.	Baptised William ye son of Mr. William Weale and Mary his wife.
24 March, 1724.	Baptised George ye son of George Weale, apothecary, and Anne his wife.
4 Sept., 1727.	Bury'd Mr. William Weale organist. (He was interred in the churchyard.)
1 Nov., 1728.	Bury'd John ye son of Mary Weale widow.

The above entries suggest the question whether the Elizabeth Weale who died in August, 1718,

ST. PAUL'S PARISH CHURCH, BEDFORD, OF WHICH WILLIAM WEALE WAS ORGANIST.

(Photograph by Messrs. Blake & Edgar, Bedford.)

was the organist's mother or wife? (It will be remembered that the Corporation appointment of April 1, 1715, quoted on p. 571, gives William Weale, *junr.*, Esq.) If Elizabeth Weale was his wife, he must have married again before 1722. Was George Weale, the apothecary, a brother of William? If so, it seems to suggest, by inference, that the Weales were Bedford folk. There the matter must rest for the present; in the meantime the reader who is interested in the tune 'Bedford' will find its history, together with a facsimile of its earliest known appearance, in *THE MUSICAL TIMES* of March, 1908, p. 165.

With regard to the 'good, tuneable organ' above referred to, in St. Paul's Church—probably the first erected there—a Corporation Minute of September 9, 1715, furnishes proof that the instrument was not quite ready at that date. It reads:

It is agreed & by the Mayor Bayliffs Burgesses & Comalties accordingly enacted that the time for finishing the organs which are in a forwardness & begun shall be enlarged untill St Thomas next & that the twenty pounds per annm a salary to the organist shall be secured by a deed of grant which Mr Mayor is empowered to pass under the Town Seale.

The following is the specification of the organ, taken from the manuscript book of organ specifications made by the late Dr. E. J. Hopkins,

and now in the possession of the present writer. It was built by Gerard Smith, a nephew of the celebrated 'Father' Smith:

GREAT ORGAN (9 stops).

Pipes.

Pipes.

Open diapason ...	52	Fifteenth ...	52
Stopped diapason ...	52	Sexquialtera, III. ranks	156
Principal ...	52	Cornet, to c ¹ , V. ranks	135
Twelfth ...	52	Trumpet ...	52

CHOIR ORGAN (4 stops).

Stopped diapason ...	52	Flute ...	52
Principal ...	52	Fifteenth ...	52

SWELL ORGAN (4 stops).

Open diapason ...	27	Hautboy ...	27
Stopped diapason ...	27	Fifteenth ...	27

Compass: Great and choir organs GG, short octaves, to d³ in alt. = 52 notes.

Swell organ: Middle c¹ to d³ in alt. = 27 notes.

Total number of pipes = 971.

The Tierce and Sexquialtera are too large measure, and in consequence spoil the chorus. All the rest, particularly the Choir organ, is very fine, but $\frac{3}{4}$ of a note too sharp.

The immediate successor of William Weale in the organistship of St. Paul's Parish Church, Bedford, was probably John Barlow, whose conduct does not seem to have been above reproach. He received notice to quit that office, in a Corporation Minute dated March 18, 1734:

It is agreed and ordered that John Barlow the present Organist of St. Pauls Bedford shall receive his Quarter Salary due at Lady Day next and that the said John Barlow

for his notorious misbehaviour and abuse of the Organ shall be immediately discharged from executing the sd office for the future and the said John Barlow is discharged accordingly. The Salary aforesd not to be paid till such pipes belonging to the Organ, that are or may be in the sd Barlows custody shall be returned.

There is nothing to show whether Mr. Barlow returned the said organ pipes. In the Bedford Library is an engraving of the church as it stood in 1732, with this inscription :

A south west prospect with ichnographie of Saint Pauls Church and the Town Arms of Bedford drawn, engraved, and printed by John Barlow, organist of the same. 1732.

It is dedicated to John Carteret, Earl Granville, the eminent orator, diplomatist, and politician in the reigns of the early Georges. Mr. John Barlow evidently combined the occupations of engraver and printer with that of organist. There is a well-grounded tradition in the town that more than a century ago a young musician named Henry Rowley Bishop applied for the organistship of St. Paul's Church. His application was not entertained, however, with the result that he did not make his 'Home, sweet home' at Bedford!

In or about 1832—a very low-water period of ecclesiastical iconoclasm—Gerard Smith's organ was turned out of St. Paul's and sold to the Moravian Church, Bedford—where it still remains, but in an enlarged form—for the sum of £50, an amount at which its handsome carved-oak case alone might have been valued, and a mean-looking instrument by Flight & Robson took its place. The present organ, consisting of three manuals and forty-five sounding stops, was erected by

Messrs. Norman & Beard in 1901. Dr. H. A. Harding is the present organist and choirmaster of the church. (See p. 565.)

If only as a study in contrasts—comparing the past with the present—reference to the old-time musical doings in a provincial town is not without interest. So it is with Bedford. Seventy-two years ago a concert given there obtained a somewhat extended notice in the *Musical World* of July 22, 1836, from which the following is extracted :

BEDFORD.—On the 15th inst. an evening Concert was given in this town at the new Subscription Rooms, by Mr. R. Nunn, which was very well attended by several of the first families in the county. The singers were, Miss Wagstaffe, a Miss Button (pupil of Mr. Nunn) and Mr. Parry Junr. [John Parry]. A select band . . . was most ably led by Mr. Wagstaff of the English Opera House. They performed with great precision Beethoven's Symphony in C, and Mozart's Symphony No. 1, both of which were much relished by the audience. . . .

The concert finished with that mirth-inspiring morceau 'Vadasi via di qua,' which convulsed the audience with laughter, particularly as it was loudly chorussed by the band. This had a most singular effect [no wonder !]; and the encore was the most enthusiastic ever heard within the walls of a concert-room. The company departed soon after eleven, highly gratified with the great treat Mr. Nunn (who presided at the pianoforte) had provided for them.

Eight months later—March 24, 1837—the same journal again recorded another music-making in the town, by reprinting a notice culled from the *Beacon*, evidently a local journal. It reads :

BEDFORD HARMONIC SOCIETY.—On Wednesday evening, the first of an intended series of amateur concerts was given in the New Rooms, before an unusually brilliant auditory, to

THE EMBANKMENT, BEDFORD, WITH THE STONE BRIDGE IN THE DISTANCE.

(Photograph by Messrs. Blake & Edgar, Bedford.)

the number, we should suppose, of about four hundred persons. The performances commenced with the overture to *Artaxerxes*, and although the difficulty to be encountered was considerable, such was the degree of proficiency our amateurs had attained to, that the piece was rapturously encored . . . The beautiful (Occasional) Overture of Handel, commencing the Second Part, was also encored. Of Mr. Nunn's 'Lord, remember David,' no less can be said than that the whole assembly were at once awed and elevated, and the liveliest emotions succeeded its conclusion . . . The greatest credit is due to Mr. Nunn for his exertions in establishing this infant society; and industry in the performers, with the fostering care of its patrons, will combine to make it, in all respects, worthy of the town of Bedford.

After that we may turn to the music-makings of the present day, first making mention of a Choral Society started a few years ago in connection with the parish of St. Martin's, which is doing good work and is flourishing under the able conductorship of Mr. Percy Aston, organist of St. Martin's Church.

The Bedford Musical Society is a vigorous and artistic organization. In regard to its history and achievements, Mr. C. Elton Halliley, its indefatigable honorary treasurer, says: 'The Society, founded in 1867, was for thirty-three years conducted by Mr. P. H. Diemer, but now the active duties of conductor are discharged by Dr. Harding. Each season our object is to perform, if possible, one old and one modern work. Three concerts are given every year, and it may safely be said that the Society is a success both from an artistic and a financial point of view. Practically all the seats in the Concert Hall are subscribed for, and we always receive many more applications for admittance both to the choir and orchestra than we can accommodate. The President of the Bedford Musical Society is W. H. Allen, Esq., J.P., a member of the Worshipful Company of Musicians and late High Sheriff of Bedfordshire. The honorary secretary is Dr. G. H. Goldsmith. The three-manual organ, by Messrs. W. Hill & Sons, now standing in the Corn Exchange, where the concerts are given, was presented by the Musical Society to the Corporation about eight years ago.'

This, then, is a flourishing provincial musical society, with a balance in hand! It has 185 voices in the chorus, and about sixty local members in the orchestra. In recent years there have been performed *Messiah*, *Elijah*, *Hymn of Praise*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Song of Destiny* (Brahms), *Golden Legend* (Sullivan), *Dream of Jubal* (Mackenzie), *Pied Piper and Blest pair of Sirens* (Parry), *The Revenge*, *Last Post*, and *Songs of the Sea* (Stanford), *Banner of St. George and King Olaf* (Elgar), *John Gilpin* (Cowen), *Hiawatha* (Parts 1 and 2) and *Blind Girl of Castél-Cuillé* (Coleridge-Taylor), and *The Forging of the Anchor* (Bridge). To these should be added Dr. Harding's own cantata *Mucius Scævola*. The horn scholar at the Royal College of Music, Mr. Ernest A. Button—who has just finished his course at Kensington and taken the Associateship diploma of the College—

was fostered by the Bedford Society. He was allowed to attend the practices when, as a youth, he played second horn for three or four years before he obtained his scholarship. 'Is there any music at Bedford?' asked a distinguished professor of the Royal College of Music, when Mr. Button competed for the scholarship four years ago. The answer to this question may be found in the foregoing brief sketch of the town's interests, and in the biographical sketch of Dr. H. A. Harding, its chief musician, which appears in another column.

The thanks of the writer are due to the following for their kind help in the preparation of this article: Mr. Arthur Ransom, author of 'Bedford and Bedford Schools,' a useful illustrated guide to the town; Mr. C. Elton Halliley, honorary treasurer of the Bedford Musical Society; and Mr. H. Smith, of the Town Clerk's Office.

DOTTED CROCHET.

EPIPHANY SERVICES IN THE CHURCH OF SAN ANDREA DELLA VALLE, ROME.

BY C. F. ABDY WILLIAMS.

The Church of San Andrea della Valle, famous for its frescoes by Domenichino, for its two important Papal monuments, and for its Epiphany Services, is of enormous proportions, and well lends itself to imposing ceremonies. It is said by some authorities that the church occupies the site of the gardens of Pompey: that in the space now enclosed by its north transept stood the statue of Pompey before which Julius Cæsar fell in B.C. 44, pierced with twenty-three wounds: and that a statue discovered in this locality in the year 1553, is the identical statue of Pompey which was bathed with Cæsar's blood.

The church has been for some time under repair, and was re-opened with great pomp on the Epiphany this year. Its famous 'Presepio,' representing the 'Adoration of the Magi' with figures larger than life, placed above the High Altar, and lighted by electricity, formed a very striking feature as one entered the church. The Epiphany Services last for a week: they commence at 5.30 each morning, and at 6.30 a sermon is preached in Italian. After this, various functions succeed one another without intermission until seven in the evening. So large is the church that it is not unusual to see a fresh congregation assembling in the nave to hear a sermon, before the crowds that have attended the previous Mass at the High Altar have begun to disperse.

There is only one organ, contrary to the usual custom in Rome, where the churches have generally two or more. It is placed in a choir gallery at a great height above the western doors. This instrument, though small, is of excellent quality, and its position enables it to be heard with the best effect. Moreover, the harsh and