

took the place of the curfew, and old people tell with relish how they fled homewards at the sound of the "nowster," lest they should be locked out by their stern fathers. Silk weaving was then the staple trade. Every cottage had its loom house, and was the workshop of the whole family, over which the father ruled with unfaltering hand. In these days of huge factories the precious ties of family life are sadly slackened, and our young people are too apt to forget the fifth commandment. May the "nowster" keep it ever fresh in their memories, and dear to their hearts! The name of this bell is familiar to every Middletonian, and yet none can give a satisfactory explanation of its meaning. It was once the nickname of a man who rang the ten o'clock bell, but whether he conferred it upon the bell, or the bell upon him deponent sayeth not. "Now stir" is the popular rendering, and to this day, when the warning tones ring out, those who have been kept late in our meetings begin instinctively to get ready for departure. Mears & Stainbank, the successors of Rudhall, added two bells to our peal in 1890.

T. E. CLEWORTH, M.A.

THE RECTORY, MIDDLETON.

OPEN COUNSEL.

BY THE REV. THOMAS MOORE, M.A.,

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Marriage

may be on publication of banns or by licence.

Banns

must be published on three Sundays preceding the day intended for the solemnisation of the marriage. Banns must be republished if the marriage does not take place within three months after their publication.

Certificate of Publication.

If the parties to the intended marriage live in two different parishes the banns must be published in the churches of both parishes, and the officiating minister of the church in which the marriage is to take place must have produced to him a certificate from the officiating minister of the other parish church that the banns were duly published in it before the marriage can be solemnised.

Licence.

Licence for the solemnisation of a marriage can only be obtained after the making of an affidavit that there is no legal obstacle or impediment to its taking place, and that one of the parties to it has been resident for fifteen days last past in the parish in whose church the marriage is to be solemnised.

Name.

People are baptised and married in their Christian names and not in their surnames.

Churchwarden.

There is no legal foundation whatsoever for the current erroneous opinion that the "parish warden" has more authority and power in Church and parish matters than the "vicar's warden." Both churchwardens are in all things pertaining to their office and duties equal before the law and have equal authority, power and responsibility.

Women Churchwardens.

If in other respects qualified, women may and do fill the office and exercise the duties of a churchwarden.

Anonymous Letters.

If you are wise you will make it a rule in all your future life never to write one and never to read one.

"Clergy Sustentation Fund."

Considering the vast number of members of the Church of England a large proportion of whom are "well to do," and a considerable number of whom are enormously wealthy, there ought to be no difficulty in raising the stipends of the parochial clergy to a figure that would secure for themselves and their families a moderate maintenance. If each member of the Church would on a given day contribute to the fund according to his or her ability, the whole thing would be immediately done.

A Wife's Provocations.

We do not understand your domestic trials, but we think it is in your power to lessen them by not adding, by irritating words of your own, fuel to the fire of outbursts of passion. Remember that calm, silent endurance is, in most cases, a wife's greatest power in subduing her husband's uncontrollable temper.

"She who ne'er answers till her husband cools,
Or, if she rules him never shows she rules,
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humour most when she obeys."

WINTER WHITE.

BY THE REV. THEODORE WOOD, F.E.S.,

Author of "Our Bird Allies," "The Farmer's Friends and Foes," "Life of the Rev. J. G. Wood," etc., etc.

IT is natural to speak of winter as "white," just as it is to describe spring as "green," summer as "ruddy," and autumn as "golden" or "brown." For winter is not winter without its white raiment of rime, or the denser mantle of snow, covering all things with a sheet of dazzling purity. Travellers talk about "winter" in the tropics; but the term is absurd. How can there be winter when the trees are still green, and the flowers still blooming, and the slightest touch of frost is thousands of miles away? True winter must be white. And this whiteness extends, not merely to the snowy robe which covers the face of the earth, but also to the raiment with which Nature, the wise mother, decks the bodies of so many of her creatures when the frost is long and severe.

Within the Arctic Circle most animals are white all the year round. Take, for example, the Polar Bear, whose fur is never darkened by more than a tinge of creamy yellow. "Winter white" is its unchanging garb, for it dwells in regions where even in summer ice scarcely melts, and where explorers speak of twenty degrees of frost as almost unbearably hot! And this whiteness of the polar bear's fur is not, so to speak, accidental; it is designed, and wisely designed, like everything else in Nature, for the colour serves at least two purposes.