

The Editor of the Magazine is in no way responsible for the following statement but gladly prints it in full at the request of the Committee.

### SHIPLAKE MEMORIAL HALL AND INSTITUTE.

Some two months have passed since the generous offer of Mr. and Mrs. Mardon, of Haileywood (to give sufficient land and to erect a Hall costing some £3,500 in the parish at their own expense, subject to the condition that an adequate endowment fund be raised towards its maintenance by August, 1925) was announced at a Public Meeting presided over by Lord Phillimore, when a resolution was passed unanimously accepting their offer.

The site offered, a most central one, is facing School Road halfway between the Schools and the Henley Road, with some five acres of land adjoining which would probably be developed later as recreation and sports fields.

A Committee of five, with power to add to their number, was formed, but, owing to the General Election and other things, nothing further was done until Saturday, November 29th, when the Committee met to consider the position.

Sir Frederick Eley was then appointed Chairman, H. J. Young Deputy Chairman, W. C. Laurence Honorary Treasurer, and F. Simpson Honorary Secretary.

The original idea of the donors was that this building should be used only for public meetings, social entertainment and the like but the Committee felt that it was desirable to widen the scope of such purpose so as to include a social club or Village Institute.

Mr. and Mrs. Mardon were then approached and immediately appreciated the desirability of having such an institution in the Parish. Not only did they consent to the recommendations of the Committee but they also offered the very substantial sum of £500 towards defraying the extra cost involved in enlarging the plan of the proposed building, over and above that originally offered.

As was pointed out in a leaflet which had been sent to each parishioner, there are already two War Memorials in the Parish. These are memorials purely and simply to the dead, without material benefit to the living. They are the outward and visible signs of sorrow, of homage to, and grateful remembrance of those who gave their lives for their King and Country in the War.

Then there is a third, to the genesis of which Shiplake largely subscribed, namely The Henley Cottage Hospital which is doing a great work in alleviating suffering. This is expressive of the intense sympathy that all feel in the sufferings that the wounded endured on the battle fields.

There are those then who think that of Memorials, as such, an elegant sufficiency already exists - but what of

those who went through the fire and survived? It is partly to their honour and as a token of gratitude and thanksgiving at their happy return that this hall is to be dedicated. Many will ask "Is such a hall necessary and desirable?"

The answer is this, "That the present Parish Hall, undoubtedly the property of the Church, being originally erected for the purpose of accommodating functions directly connected with Church work, is inadequate and unsuitable for the uses that it is now put to, which uses crowd out and defeat the original object for which it was intended, with the consequence that many meetings have to be housed in the Vicarage which is not only an encroachment on the home privacy of an already overworked Vicar, but is a direct tax upon him especially by way of wear and tear, domestic service, entertainments, etc."

At the same time there is a growing demand (and as the parish increases so will the demand become larger) for accommodation for social gatherings of all kinds, lectures, concerts, dances and so on and by embodying the institute idea into the scheme, the proposed hall should prove a great acquisition to everyone. Moreover, under the "Carnegie Trust" it may be possible to obtain a grant to establish a lending library also.

Another question that may arise: "Is the expenditure of this capital sum and the raising of the endowment fund (some £1,500) justified under the present circumstances?"

The answer to the first part of this question entirely concerns the donors, but it will materially assist unemployment in the district, especially if local labour, so far as is possible, is employed - again, as regards the endowment fund by rising to the occasion and subscribing the necessary amount, the parishioners will acquire a valuable asset to the Parish at about one quarter of the intrinsic value and, thus, as temporary trustees of the welfare of the parish they will be lacking in their duty to posterity if they do not clinch an offer which is never likely to be repeated. The following donations have already been promised:- Lord Phillimore £50, Sir Frederick Eley £100, Mr. Nicholson £50, Mrs. W. C. Laurence £50, Mr. W. C. Laurence £50, Mr. Stobart £50, and two others of £25 each.

The total amount required for the endowment and for including the Institute is some £2,500. The feeling in the minds of the donors however, is that all in the parish should participate, from those who can only afford to give say 10/- or 20/- upwards, in order that each and every one may take a co-operative interest in making the scheme a thorough success by doing *something* to realise that grand ideal, "A Better England."

Donations may be sent to F. Simpson, The "Gables," Shiplake, Hon. Secretary, or W. C. Laurence, The Knoll, Shiplake, Hon. Treasurer.