

November **BLETSGE.** *1896.*
DEDICATION OF NEW BURIAL GROUND.

It was truly a Martinmas Summer day when a large congregation, which well represented the parish, met together at 3 o'clock on Thursday, the 12th inst., in the beautiful Parish Church of Bletsg. The occasion was the Dedication of the Burial Ground. The land is the gift of Lord St. John, of Bletsg.; who, in the exercise of the right secured to every such donor, has reserved a portion of the new ground for himself and his family. This gift enabled the Easter Vestry to undertake what was agreed to be a necessary work; the Rector and the Churchwardens were appointed a Committee to carry it out; and it was this completed work which prompted the pious service and interesting ceremony of Thursday. The service consisted of Evensong with proper Psalms and Lessons as far as the Third Collect, the hymn "Veni, Creator Spiritus" (A. & M., 157), and a sermon from the Rev. G. F. W. Mumbv, Rector of Turvey, and Rural Dean; a sermon most suitably conceived, level and welcome to the understanding hearts and minds of all his hearers. The Clergy, the Choir, and the Churchwardens then preceded the congregation to the new ground, which by a gentle slope is hardly, if at all, separated from the old churchyard. Here at once Lord St. John read the Deed Poll whereby the land is conveyed "to the persons in whom the old churchyard is vested"; having first congratulated the parish on the happy execution of so desirable a work,—a work which his lordship has throughout heartily promoted, as was further evinced by the presence this day of Lady St. John, the Hon. Henry St. John, and the Hon. Miss St. John. A procession, headed by the Clergy and Choir, was then made round the new ground, saying the Psalms 49 and 115; after which a prayer of dedication was read by the Rector of the parish, a concluding collect and a benediction: and then all present joined in singing Bishop Ken's evening hymn (A. & M., 53). Among many others present were Rev. J. Steel (Rector of Odell), Rev. E. M. Beasley (Vicar of Melchbourne), Rev. H. B. Wilkinson (Vicar of Sharnbrook), Mr. W. Hipwell and Mr. H. Campion (Churchwardens), Mr. W. Feazey, Mr. J. T. Green, Mr. Farrer, &c., &c. We understand that the Bishop of the Diocese, having received from the Rural Dean an official report that the ground is in fit order, will issue his license to the incumbent of Bletsg. to minister therein.

Newspaper article: dedication of new burial ground Nov 1896.

EB35



New burial ground from chancel roof facing south-east, 1980s.

Note the higher level of the main churchyard in the foreground (David Baker)