

## ADULT EDUCATION.

A NOTICE in the Church Magazine, for November 1871, states: "Burton Court Lending Library will re-open on Sunday the 5th. November next, subscription 6d. for 7 months, to be paid on the 5th inst. to Mr. Glowes. During the time the schoolroom is under repair the books will be given out at Burton Court after afternoon service. The Library now contains 189 volumes, of which 23 volumes are new this season."

In 1883 the Burton Court Lending Library was still at the schoolroom, and it seems to have moved to the Reading Room premises soon after. In 1913, on the order of Col. Glowes, all the books were burned and the Library came to an end.

We understand that a library was started by Mr. Leigh, who was Schoolmaster here from about 1860 till 1872 - but whether this was purely for children is not certain.

It is not known when Night School was started in Eardisland, but the first Parish Magazine available to us, 1871, gives notice of Night School being available every Friday evening, from 6 o'clock. Undoubtedly the School was held in the National School (the present school building). The Church Magazine for October, 1873, states: "During the Winter months there will be a Night School three evenings in a week, from 7 to 8.30 p.m., for young men or any lads over 13 who would like to attend. The evenings will be Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, and the charge for each scholar 2d. weekly... Boys over 13 who have not regularly attended the Day School cannot again be admitted as Day Scholars, but may enter the Night School."

It is interesting to note that this Notice appeared shortly after a new Schoolmaster, in the person of Mr. Wall, came to Eardisland. One wonders if his enthusiastic efforts were fruitless: we have no copy of the magazines for 1873, but those for 1874 have no mention of Night School!

In 1898 we have mention of a course of 3 lectures on Fruit Culture. In 1904, 1905 and 1906 there was Night School on Mondays and Wednesdays, the subjects taught being Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Drawing, and there were also examinations. In 1905, too, we read of one Fred Davies having gained a County Council Agricultural Scholarship; and in 1907 there is a reference to "lessons on Agriculture" at the Evening School.

In 1909 our Evening School was meeting on 3 nights a week, the subjects covered being Writing, Reading, Drawing, Wood-carving, and Singing. In 1911 we find Rural Carpentry and Plain Dressmaking among the subjects.

It is interesting, too, that we had Ambulance Classes - under the County Council - as long ago as 1908 and 1909. An examination was held, and all the nine students passed.

Since the War various types of classes have been held in adult education, both practical and cultural. The classes have been provided by the Local Education Authority (Cane Basketry), Dressmaking, Glove-making, Embroidery, Soft Toys);

by the Workers' Educational Association (Local History, the Theatre in Herefordshire, Poets of the Countryside, the Citizen and the Law, Geography of the West Midlands); and by the Extra-Mural Department of Birmingham University (The American people, Current Affairs). Indeed it would be safe to say that our Winter evening classes have become part of the pattern of our village life, and classes of up to 20 men and women enjoy them very much.

Since 1950 the majority of our classes have been held at the Smithy.