

Vicar's Notes

ON WRITING THE MAGAZINE

This magazine should have appeared a week ago, but there was not a great deal of copy in hand when I sat down to devote Monday morning to attempt to fill up the space that remained. But it was one of those mornings which add unpredictable variety to a parson's life—caller after caller, 'phone call after 'phone call—and the magazine had to be deferred to a spare moment later in the week that never seemed to come. I am now trying to get down to it again, and hope that this time I shall be successful. But please don't stop calling on me, whether you think I might be doing the magazine or not—the getting out of the magazine in time is not the only important thing in life!

As well as finding time to write portions of the magazine which he has not been able to persuade others to write, the vicar is usually expected also to produce his own letter or notes. To many parish priests this is the bane of their life. Some years ago, a vicar who had produced a number of well-known books and articles was offered a canonry at a cathedral. He confessed that the thought that was uppermost in his mind when he accepted was one of relief that never again would he have to compose any kind of monthly letter in a parish magazine!

If a brilliant writer could feel like this, perhaps we others are not too much to be blamed if we sometimes find the task a daunting one.

Of course, a great deal of help is offered us. I read some notes a few days ago issued by the proprietors of one of the insets which are available for magazines. Don't labour the obvious we told. "Such phrases as 'Lent is now upon us', or 'Harvest Festival will this year fall in the autumn,' should be carefully avoided."

Yes—it is not only a question of finding time, difficult enough though that is; there is then the problem, What shall I write about? and further, How can I write it in such a way that people want to read what I say?

But did I not hear on the 'phone this morning that a parish not far

from here had closed down its magazine, and appeared not a bit the worse for it? Yes indeed—but perish the thought that we might follow this example!

But sometimes spare a thought for the parish priest as he prepares to face his monthly task—and, if you can, send him notes or articles that will both help him out and also brighten up the magazine!

NO SHORTAGE OF TOPICS

This month there is no shortage of topics I might write about, if there were space and time. As it is I can deal only with a few, and briefly.

I have spoken before of some of the problems we face. Well, we go on grappling with them, and trying to straighten them out. Our Church Council committees have been working very hard on some pressing matters, and may have to continue some time before they are finally settled.

One problem we want to consult as many people in the parish as possible about as soon as we can. The hall is so booked up that we cannot yet give a definite date—but we are hoping to arrange an evening towards the end of this month or at the beginning of November, when the vicar, churchwardens and members of the church council can be 'at home' to the parish. We want it to be a real parish 'conversazione' on a grand scale, and in the course of it we want to tell you of one major problem that confronts us, and ask your advice and help. This evening will be widely advertised when the date and other details have been finally settled, so keep your eye on likely spots for posters, and do your very best to come.

The new Sunday School on the Rectory Estate has made a most promising start, with nearly 40 children on the books. We are trying to encourage the older boys and girls to come down to our main Sunday Schools, where we have now finally decided to carry out an experimental reorganization. All departments are now going to meet at 2.30 p.m. in the afternoon: the infants in the hall, the juniors in the church, the seniors in the club-room. This, for the time being, should solve the accommodation problem, which has for long been

a difficulty, and meant that all departments could not meet at the same time. The change from morning to afternoon also sets more people free to help in the work of teaching—and this should help to solve the grave problem of understaffing from which our Schools have suffered for some years. One teacher for instance, has had to take all the boys from 7 years old and upwards—an impossible task, which she has done remarkably well. But we have been unable to make any proper provision for the older boys and girls, with the result that, instead of a steady stream coming from the Sunday Schools into the full life of the Church, there has been only a tiny trickle. This year for example, we have hardly any Confirmation candidates, and none direct from the Sunday School—and it will be three years before another Confirmation service is held in our own parish church. As the reorganization scheme gets under way, and we are able to find more helpers and leaders, we hope to be able to arrange bible classes and study circles for the boys and girls who are too old for the ordinary Sunday School, and later perhaps a communicants guild or a Youth Fellowship. We should like in time to be able to have a youth organization affiliated to the world-wide Anglican Young Peoples' Association.

The Baptism after the second lesson during the evening service on Sunday, September 21st, aroused much interest, and it was good to see the exceptionally large congregation to welcome the new member into its midst. Many

said how impressive the service was. It was certainly a step in the right direction. Here was Baptism administered as our Prayer Book intended—in the way it was always administered in the Early Church—“when the most number of people come together.” Here was a Baptism which we all know was not in any sense a “being done” but a “being begun”—the beginning of the little boy’s life as a son of God by adoption and as a member of the Christian family, with all the growth and development that this involves. Here was a Baptism which made us feel the dignity and importance of our own membership in Christ and His Church—we *were* the local church in action, a cell of the Body of Christ, accepting a new member into our love and care, as we all said together the words “We receive this child into the congregation of Christ’s flock, and do sign him with the sign of the Cross.” I hope that more and more, as time goes on, this will become the norm of Baptism—Public Baptism, as our Prayer Book emphatically and rightly insists on calling it.

A final note—it appears that the only paper-salvage which now has any market-value is old newspapers only (not even magazines.) It would help if people would kindly bring bundles when they come to church and leave them in the porch. Arrangements could be made to collect larger quantities from time to time. The sale of paper does not now realise very much, but it is a case of every little helps.

FROM BEYOND THE SPIRE

DEANERY MISSIONARY MEETING

About 130 persons attended a special meeting held at St. Mary’s Hall, Twickenham, on 18th Sept., at 8 p.m., when Mr. D. L. Muir, Agent-General for Queensland, took the chair, and the invited speaker was the native Bishop of Kurunagula, Ceylon, the Rt. Rev. H. J. L. De Mel.

Mr. Muir spoke of the way in which the S.P.C.K. had nurtured and helped the Church in Australia, and

quoted the example of the present Bishop of Rockhampton who, but for the ready assistance of S.P.C.K., might not have been ordained last year. The S.P.C.K. had provided chaplains for 25 out of 26 ships taking emigrants to Australia.

The Lord Bishop stressed the need for worship first, and good conduct second, whereas most people, quite wrongly, favoured the reverse. He told the meeting of the living spirit

of a new-born people, which being literate, needed good things to read, were in the process of forming their own prayer book (needed in 100 languages in India), and had gone all out to provide for their new Diocese. He appealed for earnest prayer for all Asia and especially for Christians in China. Answering questions, the Bishop stated that there were 22,000 Buddhist monks in Ceylon while there were 80 schools in his diocese over which the Anglican Church had a tremendous influence.

F.H.S.

THE NEWS-TEAM RALLY

We have had a News-Team established in this parish for several months now, and therefore it was with great interest that representatives from this church went over to the News Team Rally in Whitton, on September 20th, to mix with members of other News Teams, and to hear what these teams have been doing in their parishes.

The church of St. Philip's, Whitton, offered us hospitality, and the Vicar, Father Wade, welcomed everyone at the beginning of the afternoon session. Sister Simpson gave a short account of the work which News Teams are doing all over the Diocese. Our new Sunday School was mentioned, but as we have not yet had the opportunity of holding any home meetings, we felt new and inexperienced. Sister Simpson then called on four representatives of teams to talk about various aspects of News Team

work; of how a News Team is introduced into a parish; of the actual News Team Fellowship Meeting with the emphasis on prayer being the basis of all News Team action; of home meetings in parishioner's houses, to which interested neighbours are invited, and of going out to speak at News Team guest nights, to start up other branches. These short talks were followed by questions.

Captain Collier, from the Church Army Training College, then gave a short address on the need for evangelism today.

Tea followed, a very good one, in the Vicarage garden, and we obediently mixed with each other as much as we could.

After tea we re-assembled in the hall, and split up into discussion groups, each group being faced with a formidable question: for example:—"Why is there so much apathy and indifference today? What is our part?" These were discussed for 10 minutes, and then the leader of each group repeated the conclusions to which the group had come. This was extremely interesting, and it was a pity that there was no time at this point for general discussion.

At 5.45 p.m. everyone went into the lovely church of St. Philip, beautifully decorated for its Harvest Festival—and Evensong was said; this was followed by an address by the Rev. Stuart Martin of Hampton Wick.

We felt that it had been a day of great value.

H.S.

AROUND THE SPIRE

being notes and news about
people, activities & organisations

PERSONALIA

Lawrence Weedon is starting at the Borough Road Teachers' Training College this term. We wish him all possible luck, and a very happy training. Everyone will miss him from the Hampton Hill Public Library, where he has been working for the past months. The Drama Group will miss him; he has been a most competent Treasurer, and we hope that he will join us as often as he can, and help behind the scenes. As he will still be living in Hampton Hill we hope that we shall continue to have him as one

of the servers at the Holy Communion.

Women's Guild, Mothers' Union and Young Wives Group

Some of us had the pleasure of visiting St. Mary's, M.U. in September and of seeing a film of the work of the Church of England Children's Society. This was a good film by any standard and made us feel more than ever the value of the great work this society is doing for our country's future citizens. We are hoping to show this film and another in our own parish next May. Meanwhile we want

to support the Sale of Work for the Society which is being held at the Elleray Hall, Teddington, on October 15th. It is to be opened by the Countess of Ypres at 3.0 p.m. and programmes at 6d. can be obtained from the Vicarage.

So that we are all free to attend this occasion we have postponed our flower arrangement competition until next season.

THE DRAMA GROUP

We wish to draw everybody's attention to our dance which we are holding on Friday, October 31st, from 7.45-11.45 p.m. This is in aid of funds to enable us to put on an evening of One-Act Plays on November 28th. The programme will consist mainly of Olde Tyme Dances, but some modern dances will also be provided. Refreshments will be available. Our M.C. is Mr. A. E. Nightingale, Tickets, price 2/6d., are obtainable from Committee members. Mrs. Childs, Flat 3, Fairlight, Uxbridge Road, Mrs. Orton, 30, St. James's Road, Mr. Rockliffe, 40, Gloucester Road, Teddington; Miss Stanton, 63, Park Road, Mr. Tarrant, 31, Anlaby Road, Teddington.

After our most successful theatre-outing to "Much Ado About Nothing", the Group is organising another theatre party to the "Globe Review" on Thursday evening, November 6th. Tickets are 8/6d., inclusive of Fare, obtainable from our Secretary, Mr. Tarrant.

H.S.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

Oct. 5th.—Continuation of Harvest Festival.

Oct. 6th.—7.30 p.m. R. D. Conference.

Oct. 8th.—8.0 p.m. S. S. Teachers' Meeting (Vicarage).

Oct. 11th.—3.0 p.m. Jumble Sale arranged by Mothers' Union.

Oct. 12th.—Sunday Schools change time of opening to 2.30 p.m.

Oct. 14th.—8.0 p.m. C.E.M.S.

Oct. 15th.—Church of England Children's Society, Sale of Work, St. Peter's Hall, Elleray Road, Teddington. (Admission by Programme 6d.)

Oct. 16th.—3.0 p.m. Young Wives' Rally, Royal Festival Hall.

8.0 p.m. Social Committee and Bazaar helpers.

Oct. 18th.—St. Luke; Holy Communion, 7.0 a.m.

7.45 p.m. Old-Time Dance (In aid of Church Funds).

Oct. 21st.—7.30 p.m. Finance Committee.

8.15 p.m. Church Council.

Oct. 22nd.—3.0 p.m. Young Wives' Group: Tea in Hall.

Oct. 24th.—8.0 p.m. Scout Group Beetle Drive (Club Room).

Oct. 28th.—St. Simon and St. Jude; Holy Communion 7.0 a.m.

Oct. 31st.—7.15 p.m. Magazine Distributors.

7.45 p.m. Drama Group Dance.

Nov. 1st.—All Saints' Day: Holy Communion 7.0 p.m.

Nov. 15th.—Autumn Bazaar.

N.B. Please look out for announcements giving date and details of the Parish 'At Home' and Conversazione. (Stop-Press: Most likely date, Monday, November 3rd.)

BAPTISMS

Aug. 31st.—Linda Rosemary Rowatt, 35, Burton's Road.

Sept. 14th.—Sarah Harriet Carswell, 14, Park Road.

Sept. 21st.—Roger Binet Brown, 38, St. James's Avenue.

Sept. 28th.—Kenneth John Reed, 42, Connaught Road.

MARRIAGES

Sept. 6th.—Gordon Albert Clark to Eileen Mary Rump.

Sept. 6th.—Harry Arthur Robert Hamblin to Maureen Doris Rogers.

Sept. 20th.—Alan John Elmes to Pamela Eunice Daphne Parkin.

Sept. 20th.—Derek Walter Pike to Julia Lillian Doris Alleyway.

24th.—Godfrey Edward Armstrong Wilson to Maryrose Miller.

BURIALS

Sept. 10th.—Albert Maunder, 18, Cross Deep Gardens (formerly of Queen's Road), aged 88 years.

Sept. 24th.—Eleanor Marion Tomson, Ingoldsby, Marlborough Road, aged 71 years (followed by Cremation at Mortlake.)