

# Vicar's Notes

## SAVING THE CHURCH

Since I wrote last month, the work has continued on the roof-beams, and it has been found that the damage is far more widespread and severe than was first thought. It is now literally a question of **saving** the church—saving it from partial collapse. The architect's report, which is printed on a later page, again emphasises that much of the trouble for which we are now having to pay such a heavy price is due to bad design, poor materials and faulty workmanship at the time of building. This is indeed regrettable, and means that money which could be used far more constructively in providing for extra staff in the parish—an assistant curate and woman-worker would be invaluable—has to be spent on making good defects which are a legacy from the past. But it is no good wasting time bemoaning these sad facts: if we think the church is worth saving, it falls to us to save it, and then later, if we can, to beautify it and put it in good order inside as well as out.

The Renovation Committee, after a long consideration of the serious position, recommend an all-out effort in the period from 14th November to 13th December, starting with the Autumn Fair and ending with services of thanksgiving and a great offering of gifts. Miss Stanton, who has now taken over the secretaryship from Mr. Smith, who has been compelled to resign, is co-ordinating the whole scheme, and she would be glad to receive as many ideas and offers of help as possible. Provisional plans for the month include an "At Home", a film-show, a three-act play by the Drama Group, a fire-work display, a barrel-organ tour of the parish, and a house-to-house collection.

## VOLUNTARY WORK FOR THE CHURCH

We are not expert enough to do the highly-skilled work of saving the fabric of our church ourselves, and our part is therefore largely confined to raising the money needed to enable others to do it for us. But this is not so always. The

Sanctuary Guild are a case in point. The members have certainly raised a considerable sum of money out of which furnishings beyond their skill to make could be bought—and much of this has recently been expended in the purchase of a dust-cover and new fair-linen cloth for the altar, and a beautifully embroidered white stole to replace the one at present in use, which is beyond repair. But in addition to this, some members have been able to get together and do such work as giving the vestry a thorough "spring clean"—a formidable task from which generations of parishioners might well have shrunk!—but now it has been done, and other work besides—such as the removal of dark stains and patches from various bits of stone-work in the church. Other members of the church have put in hours of voluntary labour in keeping the inside of the belfry and tower in good order, in looking after the clock, and in helping to keep the churchyard from becoming a jungle. There is always ample scope for the extension of this excellent principle. Perhaps we may be able to do some of the work of cleaning and improving the interior of the church ourselves. Perhaps even we may be able to build that new hall we need ourselves.....or perhaps I have been carried away by reading of the way in which the people of Clifton, a new housing-estate near Nottingham, are setting to and making their own church-buildings entirely by themselves.

## SPECIAL WORK FOR THE CHURCH

There is also special work for the Church which can often best be done by small groups of communicant-members. A number of people have recently shown that they have a "concern" (as the Quakers say) to do something to strengthen the life of the Church which they feel powerless to do on their own. But working with others who share a similar "concern," and being led by the Spirit, much might be done. I invite those who feel in this way to come to the Vicarage to talk it over after the evening service on All Saints' Day, November 1st.

## CHURCH RENOVATION: ARCHITECT'S PROGRESS REPORT

On September 16th 1953, I visited Hampton Hill Parish Church with my assistant, Mr. Peter Locke, A.R.I.B.A., after hearing from the builder that the feet of the remaining roof-trusses had been exposed.

Starting at the West end of the South Aisle we went up to each of the ten roof-trusses which are now exposed. There remains the two in the West wall and now that we have had to do so much we ought to examine these as well: I have no doubt about finding the condition the same.

All the ends of the timber which have been buried in brickwork are affected with one or more forms of fungal decay.

There are two things which, superficially, are matters of wonder: how anyone could have designed a building so perfectly contrived to invite fungal decay in woodwork and how the infection should have reached and caused growths in every single one of the ten likely spots which we have opened up. Because, as a friend of mine said to me when he was dying, there is always a reason for everything.

Passing from conjecture to facts, the ten valleys between the twelve dormer roofs and gables in the Aisles were very dangerous unless the constructional details were carefully designed and conscientiously carried out, and they were **not** well designed or conscientiously carried out.

It was necessary to get the water from well-designed valleys well and truly away from the walls in each case, remembering that pipes do get blocked up and gullies choked. The Parish will remember how apparently ingeniously any cleaning of pipes and gullies had been guarded against especially by building iron down-pipes into buttresses; and these pipes were in and against the most vulnerable spots, the buttresses outside the walls on which the roof timbers converge.

Even in normally dry walls it is very dangerous to enclose wood-

work or the ends of wooden members in masonry or brickwork. Every available roof member was well and truly embedded deep in these wettest spots.

All the types of fungus growth that eat the sugar, the starch, and destroy timber require moisture: some sorts a higher moisture content; others a lower moisture content.

All these fungal growths which bother us are essentially temperate in their temperature preferences, though the different sorts have different temperature-range tolerances. The temperatures in St. James's Church would never be so high or so low as to do more than cause them temporary discomfort, even under the valley-gutters.

A free flow of air is almost intolerable to many but not all of the species which we meet in buildings. The ends of these Hampton Hill timbers are cosily enclosed in brickwork; without, of course, intimate contact.

The Parish very wisely decided to be absolutely whole-hearted in the sweeping-away of the outrageous pipe and gully systems, and we have installed really efficient ones with as little unsightliness as we could, under difficult circumstances, think how to do.

The rubbishy nonsense of the first two valley-gutters which we examined has been done away with and sound work substituted. After long and earnest discussion with the Churchwarden, Mr. E. H. Western, we have put the remaining valleys in hand.

The first two pieces of wall-plate, buried in the walls have been removed and concrete plates cast to replace them.

The affected ends of the timbers are being cut away and the near parts soaked with fungus poison. Now pieces of wood, well impregnated with poison, are being scarfed in and the feet of them encased in copper. As much ventilation as the construction will allow will be provided for the ends.

It is sad to have to put so much energy into non-visually effective work but if we had looked the

other way the disease, mounting with compound interest, would presently have caused a financially ruinous condition.

B. C. G. SHORE.

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London, W.1.

### AN APPRECIATION

As one of those unfortunate people who look forward to their holidays somewhere near Christmas, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the various Priests who have so ably officiated at our church during the Vicar's absence through illness and while on holiday.

In particular I would refer to the dignity and reference with which the 8.0 a.m. Holy Communion Service has been celebrated week by week during the holiday-period.

D. E. C.

### THE C.E.M.S.

By the time these notes have been published, we shall have been to two important gatherings organised at Federation level viz. the pilgrimage to St. Alban's September 26, where Bishop Heywood was to receive a special memento of his long work for the society, and the meeting for men at Twickenham on October 1, when the special speaker was to be the Lord Bishop of London.

At our next two branch meetings we shall be hearing about Scripture Reading work among the Forces, and also the work done for the Empire Settlement Scheme. It is hoped to have a film show in December for the Pastoral Aid Society, while the Federation Annual Service will be on December 10, at St. Mary's Hampton, at which the former curate will preach.

The problem of finding time to pursue the special C.E.M.S. instruction course while helping with the parish News Team studies will tax the ingenuity of the committee, for many of our enthusiastic members work late, and so continuity is unusually difficult.

The Federation hopes to run its next spring outing to Chaldon in Surrey where there is a famous wall painting of the Judgement. The number of events per year will probably not exceed 4 in order not to interfere too much with branch activities.

F. H. S.

### THE WOLF CUB PACK

The Pack has restarted after the summer recess. We meet from 6 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. on Monday and have a few vacancies for boys over 8 years of age who are interested.

Last term the pack put up an excellent effort at the District Cubs' Sports at Densmead Sports Ground. Also a small party of Cubs went on an exploration to Box Hill under the charge of Kim.

The Cubs made a splendid effort for the "Bob-a-Job" week contributing over £14 to the Scouts' Funds.

Congratulations to Proficiency Badge winners:— J. Martin, D. Best, T. Galler, R. Frampton and R. Royce.

S. R. C.

### A FORMER PARISHIONER DIES IN GUERNSEY

Mrs. Lucas has given us news of the death of Mrs. Pearce, for many years a regular worshipper at St. James's church and an active member of the Mothers' Union.

Mrs. Pearce lived for 15 years in St. James's Road before moving 7 years ago to Guernsey. After leaving Hampton Hill she kept close touch with the church and was always interested in its affairs.

We extend our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Pearce's husband and daughter, in Guernsey, in their great loss, and also to her son and daughter-in-law, still with us in Hampton Hill.

### MARRIAGES

September 12—Kenneth Butcher to Pamela Doreen Lyne.

September 19—Michael John Ward to Joan Nellie Boulden.

### BURIALS

August 12—Herbert James Berridge, 119, Uxbridge Road, aged 79 years.

August 21—Edith Heap, 12, Aldwick Road, Bognor, aged 84 years.

September 7—Mary Ann Smith, 5, Holly Road, aged 90 years.

### SOME DATES TO NOTE

October 7—3.0 p.m. M.U. Quarterly service. Preacher: The Rev. C. Prior, Vicar of White City Estate.

- October 8—7.15 p.m. Harvest Thanksgiving (collection for Renovation fund) Preacher: The Rev. C. M. Lamb, Vicar of South Teddington. 8.30 p.m. Harvest Supper (Tickets 2/6).
- October 11—Continuation of Harvest Festival. 8.0 p.m. News-Team (Vicarage).
- October 13—2.30 M.U. mass meeting at Westminster. 8.0 p.m. C.E.M.S. Speaker: Mr. Pollock—"The Army Scripture Readers." (Vicarage).
- October 15—8.0 p.m. Renovation Committee (Vicarage).
- October 18—St. Luke (Sunday Services as usual).
- October 27—7.30 p.m. R. D. conference at Twickenham.

- October 28—8.0 p.m. Y.W.G.: "Children's religious education" (Hall).
- October 30—7.30 p.m. Magazine distributors (Vicarage).
- November 11—Meeting for all parents and teachers Speaker: Miss Yanovsky: "Helping children to know God" (Hall).
- November 14 to December 13—The Renovation Drive, beginning with the Autumn Fair, Saturday, November 14, 3.0 p.m.

**N.B.:** No service at 7.0 a.m. on Tuesdays, except Saints' Days, until further notice. 10.30 a.m. service only on alternate Thursdays until further notice: October 8th, 22nd, November 5th etc.

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## FROM BEYOND THE SPIRE

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### THOUGHTS ON SEEING THE FILM "SALOME"

Many people during these last weeks will have visited their local cinemas to see Rita Hayworth in the Film "Salome."

St. John the Baptist is a vital figure in the film, and there are some lovely shots of groups of his followers listening to his preaching by the river Jordan. John is played well, by Alan Badel: he has the eyes of the visionary, and his preaching is eloquent, but one feels that he lacks the fire and zeal of the gaunt, haggard prophet, who went through Galilee preaching repentance, and shouting a message of urgency to the people to prepare for the coming of Christ. The real John one feels was a very disconcerting uncomfortable figure. If you see him in "Salome," go home after the film and look up in the Gospels St. Matthew chapter 3 and 11, and St. Luke chapter 3 and compare the two portraits.

Another important fact to bear in mind if you have seen "Salome," is that the film story of the reasons why Salome dances before Herod are completely false. Again, it is essential to go back to the Bible, and compare the two stories. In the film, Rita Hayworth as Salome is represented as dancing before Herod in order to get him to grant her the favour of St. John's release

from prison, whereas the real story in St. Matthew chapter 14, tells us that Salome, instructed by her mother, asked for John the Baptist's head to be brought to her on a charger.

If you have seen "Salome," or are thinking of seeing the film, you must go in a critical frame of mind, and afterwards read very carefully the Bible stories on which the story of "Salome" is based.

H. S.

### INJUSTICE IN AFRICA

Father Raymond Raynes C.R. wants publicity given to the facts behind the South African Government's Scheme for the removal of the African inhabitants of Johannesburg's Western Areas.

Sophiatown, Martindale and New Clare (the Western Areas covered by this Scheme) have been lived in by Africans since 1905. Now European residents in adjacent areas are agitating for the removal of the Africans, and the present Government is determined to compel the City Council to remove some 80,000 Africans from the Western Areas.

Father Raynes points out certain principles involved in this Scheme against which the Church has taken a very firm stand.

This will be summarised in our next issue.