

Vicar's Notes

THE SUMMER FETE

This annual event again takes place on the first Saturday in July, a day which is traditionally fine in this district. We hope that the tradition will be preserved intact this year, but wet or fine, we know that the same spirit of fellowship and corporate responsibility will be there, as always. A number of people are working very hard to make sure that it is also a financial success, and their efforts deserve our enthusiastic support. Mrs. Frances Whitton, well-known in this parish and beyond, one to whom our Drama Group is greatly indebted, and who is now busily engaged in the York House production of "Twelfth Night," has kindly promised to open the Fête.

VACANCIES

There is still plenty of room for names on the Parish Voluntary Service list. Many people are talking about it: this month we hope that those who have not already done so will take the plunge and come in.

Many people need some form of active recreation, and badminton is one way of getting it. But very few applications have so far been received for the proposed new club to start in the autumn, and it may be that this need is already sufficiently catered for by the existing clubs. There are also three vacancies (for two men and one woman) in the present Summer Club.

The Drama Group and the Church of England Men's Society need more men. The News-Team Fellowship has now been reduced to only four members, and must be reinforced by people who are willing to pray, study and visit, if its work is to go on as it should. The Sunday Schools touch only a small portion of the young people in the parish, and are badly in need of people who are willing to undergo training before they

teach. We should like to be able to form a training group in this parish, as it is not easy to get people to go to such excellent courses as that recently provided by the Diocese at Hampton Wick.

And while we are talking about vacancies, let us increase our attack on the vacant seats in church. It is encouraging to see that many of them are now filling up. In the last analysis, the main reason for weakness in fellowship and love and service is the fundamental weakness that affects everything else—weakness in faith and worship and prayer. Until a church is strong here, it cannot be really strong anywhere—not with the strength that matters.

THE NEED FOR KNOWLEDGE

Few of us can go on placidly today, even if we would, keeping our faith to ourselves. We are forced willy-nilly to be "Defenders of the Faith," beset by its enemies or its perverters. Some of these, such as the sinisterly fanatical "Jehovah's Witnesses," are very active in this district, and they sow confusion in the minds of Christians wherever they can. In the face of these constant attacks, we must know where we stand, and be able, as St. Peter says, to give a reason for the hope that is in us. I am always ready to help anyone who is confused or troubled in this way, and to provide groups where these matters can be discussed in fellowship. (The News-Team Fellowship already mentioned is one where this is done). I also recommend the help that the Bible Reading Fellowship Notes can give in helping us to come to a true understanding of the meaning of the Bible, the text of which is often so well-known and so skilfully perverted by our traducers. (Mrs. Brunt can obtain these Notes for you—the cost is 2/- for a year). Then there are excellent books and pamphlets which answer the claims these people make: a very good and most comprehensive one, just produced, is "Christian Deviations," by a Congregational Minister, Horton Davies (S.C.M. Press, 7/6).

AROUND THE SPIRE

being notes and news about
people, activities & organisations

THE DRAMA GROUP

The Drama Group's fifth production, "Shadow of the Eagle," by Ronald Cockram, was presented in the Hall on May 20th and 21st. The Hall was about half-full on the first occasion, and almost completely full on the second. The expenses of the Play were, however, rather high, and despite this encouraging support, when the final balance sheet is drawn up, it is certain to show a considerable financial loss. The expenses would have been higher still if it had not been for the hard and skilful work of those who made most of the dresses and the scenery, and the Play itself could never have been put on without the arduous labours—into the early hours of the morning—of those who prepared the stage and the lighting.

The Play itself has a good and strong theme, but its effectiveness is spoilt by the author's style, which is so diffuse and wordy that it obscured again and again what he is trying to say. In rehearsals some judicious prunings and modifications had been introduced, which helped to make things clearer, but one often felt that the author's presentation of the Christian position in the many discussions that take place was not as strong as it might well have been. Despite these handicaps, the players were able to convey to the audience a sense of the greatness of the issues involved, and the final scene expressed in striking fashion the truth that Christ is not just a figure to be argued about, but One Who still lives and acts.

Mrs. Dorothy Crabb, who gave valuable help to the Group in its first beginnings in 1951, kindly came to its aid again, and was an indefatigable and inspiring producer.

A WAY OF HELPING

Messrs. Thos. Hedley & Co. Ltd. announce a way in which, until August 31st, they are prepared to help good causes. They will pay 1d. for each packet-top of one of their products, or 1/- for each set

of six different ones. Their products are: Tide, Daz, Dreft, Oxydol, Sylvan, Fairy, Mirro. Miss Joan Bassett, 18, Cranmer Road, has kindly offered to receive these tops and send them in on behalf of the Renovation Fund.

PERSONALIA

Our prayers and good wishes go with Fr. Timothy (Tom) Stanton, as he goes to fulfil the difficult task allotted to him by his Community in South Africa. He will be attached to a large parish church in one of the key-areas, where many of the stresses and strains of that unhappy land are keenly felt. His sister, who has made a splendid recovery from her serious operation, has now embarked on what appears to be a most adventurous kind of holiday in Yugo-Slavia and Greece. In October she begins her Theology course at Oxford, and may later join her brother in South Africa.

Mr. John Sumner, to whom our past fêtes owe so much, is appropriately enough, getting married to Miss Beryl Childs on the day of the Fête this year. We shall miss him on this occasion, which has always run so smoothly under his masterly direction, and are also sorry that his new home will be some miles away. We wish them both every happiness.

We also congratulate Mr. David Thompson on celebrating his return to civilian status by becoming engaged to another regular member of our congregation, Miss Joy Cusworth.

As well as the happiness caused by these events, sadness creeps in when we think of the departure from this parish of Mrs. Fraser to Suffolk and Mrs. and Miss Chamberlin to Leicestershire. Mrs. Fraser had been on our Church Council for some time, and was well-known for her hard work for the British Legion. Miss Chamberlin had come on only this year, and was adding this to the valuable service she already did as Secretary of the News-Team since its formation and member of the Mothers' Union Committee. Miss Chamberlin was also a much loved

member of our Drama Group, and we shall long remember her in her different parts. She had never done any acting till she joined the Group, but soon showed that she had a real flair for it.

Mrs. Chamberlin, the oldest regular worshipper in our church, a great and dignified old lady with many friends, will also be greatly missed. Our loss is the gain of the parishes to which they have gone.

Mr. and Mrs. Pope's new house is now at last ready. We are glad that they now have a house of their own, but sorry that it means that Mrs. Pope has to give up her Sunday School work. Two valuable teachers have now left us in the last three months, and the position would have been very serious if Mrs. Mills had not added to the vast amount of work she already does in the parish this extra duty.

Mr. Keir Moilliet, now in Dorset, still keeps in touch, and recently sent two special blackboards he had made himself for the benefit of our Sunday School teachers, a typical example of his quiet thoughtfulness. In a letter he says: "Wherever you fetch up, there is the Church: you drop, unsupported and unexpected, out of the blue, and there are arms ready to receive you, people to support and befriend you, to give you a place right amongst themselves, sharing with you their joys, their loyalties, their problems and work, their whole personalities, and their apprehension of God. And in due course you continue on your way, still yourself, but a slightly different self, the richer by far for all that you have received . . . And the richer too, I think, for what little you may have been able to give . . ." It was not a little that Keir gave to this parish, and his going left a sad gap.

We are sorry to learn that Mr. Knapp, the Vicar of our Mother-Church, St. Mary's, Hampton, is faced with the possibility of a severe operation. We shall pray for him.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- July 3.—3.0 p.m. Summer Fête (Laurel Dene).
 July 5.—8.15 p.m. P.C.C. Commission on "The Wider Church" (Vicarage).
 July 6.—8.0 p.m. News-Team Fellowship (Prayers in Church, followed by Discussion on "The Colour-Bar," in Vestry).
 July 9.—8.0 p.m. Junior Sunday School Teachers (Vicarage).
 July 12.—8.0 p.m. Deanery Service of Thanksgiving for 27th Jubilee of the Diocese, in St. Mary's, Twickenham. Preacher: The Archdeacon of Middlesex.
 July 14.—3.0 p.m. M.U. and Y.W.G. Service. Preacher: The Rev. D. Cox. Tea on Vicarage Lawn after Service (N.B.—Alteration of date from 7th).
 July 25.—St. James. Patronal Festival. Sunday Services as usual.
 July 28.—8.0 p.m. Young Wives' Group — "Flower Decoration" (Hall).
 July 29.—8.15 p.m. Church Council (Vestry).
 July 30.—7.30 p.m. Magazine Distributors (Vicarage).

BAPTISMS

- May 23.—Patrick John Stanbury, 36, Clonmel Road.
 „ 29.—Augustus William White, 189a, Uxbridge Road.
 „ 29.—Jane Nicolla Angus, 20, Queen's Road.
 June 13.—Robert William House, 24, Rectory Grove.
 „ 13.—Richard Paul Hester, 35, Bishop's Grove.
 „ 13.—John Mark Weldon Searle, 45, Park Road.

MARRIAGES

- June 5.—Ernest William Eldridge to Beryl Mollie Boulden.
 „ 19.—Ronald Charles Edwards to June Rose Hughes.

BURIALS

- June 11.—Florence Phoebe Budd, 5a, Lower Teddington Road, aged 55 years (at Teddington).
 „ 18.—Amy Matilda Morhen, 67, Upper Farm Road, West Molesey, aged 82 years.

FROM BEYOND THE SPIRE

THE DIOCESE OF LONDON

2. The Middle Ages (continued)

From the 11th century the life of the diocese was enriched by the growth of the monasteries. When the Normans came the Benedictines were already in the abbeys of Westminster and Barking, which were old Saxon foundations, and new houses of the order sprang up at Colchester and Walden. Early in the 12th century the Augustinians were established in London at St. Bartholomew's and Holy Trinity, Aldgate; and the 13th century saw the coming of the Friars, the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Carmelites. There was often jealousy between the monks and the secular clergy, but there was a much greater tension caused by the increasing demands of the Pope in authority and in money, and we find Bishops of London defending their flock against the extortions of the papal collectors. Bishop Roger Niger (1229-1241) was popularly held to be a saint for many generations, because he withstood Pope and King in their demands on the Church.

As might be expected from its position in the capital city, St. Paul's was the scene of great national services. Kings came to give thanks for victory in battle, and royal marriages took place there. It was the largest church in England, and had a splendour which is hard to visualise now. Within its walls met synods and convocations, and at St. Paul's Cross, which stood on the north-east side of the Close, national proclamations were made, notorious heretics abjured their errors, and the greatest preachers of the day delivered their sermons. John Wyclif, whose influence was to be felt in the diocese for more than a century, stood his trial for heresy in 1376 in the Lady Chapel. The proceedings were broken up by the London mob, who supported Wyclif. Heretics came under the jurisdiction of the bishop, and his prison in the south-west tower of St. Paul's entertained so many of

Wyclif's followers that it became known as "Lollards' Tower". The spread of unorthodox opinions caused Bishop FitzJames (1506-1522) and Dean Colet (1505-1519) to seek the educational improvement of the clergy, but this came a little late. There was already a new and independent spirit amongst laity and lesser clergy alike.

At the beginning of the 16th century the influence of continental movements was making itself felt in England. Translations of the Scriptures began to be smuggled into the country. In face of official opposition, Tyndale's New Testament was being read in London in 1525. Other translations followed, and by 1538 the position had so changed that King Henry VIII issued an injunction for the whole Bible in English to be set up in every church. At the same time the King was attacking the church. The rich monasteries and greater churches were fair game to replenish the royal treasury. So far did the plunder go that the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's were driven to petition for a few necessary things for celebrating Divine Service. The great Abbey of Westminster in 1540 became a Cathedral with a Dean and Chapter, and a new diocese of Westminster was set up, comprising the County of Middlesex. This lasted for ten years, after which Middlesex returned to the Diocese of London. In 1550 also, the diocese was increased by the new Archdeaconry of St. Albans, which consisted of the territories of the dissolved Abbey.

In 1548 service was sung in English at St. Paul's, and a year later the new Prayer Book of 1549 was coming into use, not without protest from some, throughout the diocese. The Reformation had begun its progress, and though under Queen Mary there was a brief return to papal obedience, in which Bishop Ridley (1550-1553) perished for his beliefs, the old order had changed for good. The Middle Ages were over.