

## Vicar's Notes

It was a great comfort to me to know how people rallied round to keep things going as usual during the 18 days of my compulsory leave of absence. I am especially grateful to those who conducted the Services—Mr. Ellis, an elderly priest just back from Canada, Mr. Griffiths, staying temporarily in our Parish after his return from Australia, and our own Reader, Mr. Thomas—and to the Churchwardens for the way in which they discharged the extra responsibilities that suddenly descended on them. Despite my absence—or perhaps because of it!—the Easter Offering was again larger than in previous years, and I am very thankful. Such kindness and generosity is a great help at a time when inflation continues apace, and one's income remains stationary.

As soon as I was about again, the doctor ordered me away, and I spent six happy days with an old friend of mine (he has been 'locum' here twice) who is now a country vicar in my former Diocese of Southwell. It was good to see such a large area of really unspoilt countryside, with rich farmland and prosperous farms

still free from the ugly industrialisation which has spoilt so much of once rural Nottinghamshire. Mr. Spencer left his mining parish of 7,000 last year to take charge of four small villages, each with its ancient church, and with a Church school of 70 children from 5 to 15 taught by only two devoted teachers—and yet they still send a high proportion of their pupils to grammar schools! The total population of the whole fourfold community is only 600, but though numbers are small, the proportion of those who attend church regularly on a Sunday is one in four. If we could do as well here, a similar proportion would mean that nearly 2,000 people—adults and children—would enter our doors every Sunday. Perhaps we will get there in time—why should the country beat the town?

My illness, and the strong insistence of my doctor, have forced me to consider seriously the revision of my time-table and the securing of adequate rest and recreation. I haven't yet fully planned out how this should be achieved, but for the sake of the work itself I shall have to cut down in certain directions and concentrate my energies more in others.

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## AROUND THE SPIRE

being notes and news about  
people, activities & organisations

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### MOTHERS' UNION

The Mothers' Union has a very full programme for May. The first week sees us going to St. Paul's, welcoming Mrs. Crabb to our Branch meeting and having a Jumble Sale!

On May 8th at 7.30 p.m. in St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham, is the Annual Joint Meeting & Party for all the Branches and Groups in the Deanery. For the past two or three years we have not supported this with more than four or five members. This year the speaker for the first part will be Mrs. Lambert, our new Diocesan President, and it will be a good opportunity for us all to meet her and hear her views. After refreshments, the second part of the evening will be given over to dancing and games. If you can't manage the whole evening, please

try to be there for the first part.

Then on the following week on Wednesday, May 16th, at 8.0 p.m. promptly, we shall have our last joint meeting. It will be held in the Hall because we have been fortunate in being able to book the film "No Place for Jennifer," of which we have heard such good reports. There will be plenty of room and we hope members of Branch and Group will both bring friends to see this. Melford Radio are in charge of the showing.

### THE YOUNG WIVES' GROUP

Brief notes on some of the activities of the past few months are given here.

On 29th January, Miss H. G. Hotchin, M.A., gave a fascinating talk on the Kneller School for Girls of which she is Headmistress. She brought impressive examples of paintings and illustrations done

in the art classes. These are a special feature of the school. She left many mothers feeling that they did not mind so much after all if their daughters failed to gain a place in a grammar school if they could go to the Kneller School or some school like it.

A bus load of Young Wives journeyed to the Ideal Homes' Exhibition on 12th March and spent about two hours there in the evening.

On March 7th there was a joint meeting of Mothers' Union and Young Wives at which Mrs. Brunt described the aims of the Mothers' Union.

On the 29th February a speaker from the Institute of Good House-keeping gave a lecture on Design and Colour in the Home. This suffered from not being fully developed because it had been considerably cut in length. However the Speaker was kept busy with private questions and supplied the needs of a number of members.

During Holy Week the Young Wives' Group meeting on Wednesday, 28th March, was occupied first with a Clothing Exchange, and then with a quiet Discussion on "The Church and Divorce." The Chairman opened the discussion by reading the relevant passages from the Gospel of St. Mark and the purposes of marriage from the shorter Prayer Book. Several speakers then upheld the orthodox view of the indissolubility of marriage. There were some constructive comments on a child's attitude towards a step-parent. Finally a forthright speaker pointed out that the Church is divided in its views on Divorce — even the Mothers' Union — and that consideration by the Church of individual cases for remarriage could be regarded as in accordance with the spirit of Christian charity as well as a close interpretation of the Gospel passages. This was received with muffled but general applause and the Chairman summed on these lines.

Another Joint Meeting of the Mothers' Union and Young Wives' Group took place on 12th April. The usual form of Mothers' Union Service was used and there was a discussion on how to deal with untruthfulness in children.

On April 25th Miss Beatrix

Tudor-Hart gave a preliminary lecture on "The Child's Place in the Home." She spoke out of her long experience as a guide and teacher of young children, and members found her remarks most stimulating and illuminating, so much so that the meeting had to be almost compulsorily closed at 10.50 p.m., while questions were still in full spate. Her lecture covered a wide field, but her central stress was on the family as a true community within a community, in which both children and parents have essential rights that must not be over-ridden. In the Autumn, if enough members are interested, and enrol, there will be a further series of six lectures on this subject apart from the monthly meetings.

### THE SCOUT GROUP

On Saturday, 14th April, the Cubs and Scouts put on "Our Show" in St. James's Hall before a very large audience.

It is difficult to mention every item, but the very colourful costumes in the Pirate Sketch by the Cubs were most attractive.

The "Sleeping Beauty" Pantomime by the Scouts was extremely amusing and it was hard to believe these "dainty" fairies could really be boys.

Another item which pleased was the more serious "Our Flag," when Ken teaching a small Cub the combination of "The Union Jack" was helped by the realistic processions of St. Patrick, St. Andrew and St. George slowly appearing on the platform.

"The Fisherman's Dream," a little sketch performed by the Scouts when one emerged as a wonderful mermaid with long fair tresses was really a riot — and mention must be made of "The Studio," a one act play performed by the Cubs when everyone from Mary the maid to Lord and Lady Hampton seemed absolutely made for their parts.

The highlight of the evening as far as the Cubs themselves were concerned was when well painted and feathered they were able to gather round the camp fire with Kim and chant Indian war songs and blood-curdling war cries.

At the end of the evening Mrs. Wren on behalf of the Scouts, and Mrs. Childs on behalf of the Cubs,

were each presented with a lovely bouquet of Spring flowers.

The Cubs' and Scouts Annual Re-Union Party was held on Wednesday, April 25th, when a very important event took place in the history of the Cub Pack.

Mrs. Bassett, an old friend of the Pack, was invited to come along and present to Michael Royle the winning Cub, a very handsome Shield which she has so kindly given us.

This is to be held for a term by the boy with the best Cub spirit, which means, as so aptly put by Mrs. Bassett in her talk to the boys, being a good Cub, a good Christian and a good Citizen.

The evening then carried on with games, some of which the parents were invited to join in.

To mark the 40th Anniversary of Cubbing, a Week with special events each day is being held, beginning on June 16th. On June 20th there will be an all-day "At Home" at Wayside, and a Special Service at 3.45 p.m. on June 24th at which Father Paul Singleton, C.R., will preach.

Fuller details in next month's magazine.

### THE TOWER

Strong wire-mesh has now been put up on all openings, as part of the Renovation Programme, at a cost of £38. This is a great improvement, and will make it possible for the interior to be kept clean with much less labour than in the past, and visitors will be spared the annoyance of having pigeons and other birds fluttering around them as they ascend. The Tower will be open regularly again to visitors on Saturday afternoons from May 5th onwards, and on Thursday evenings beginning on May 17th.

### SOME DATES TO NOTE

May 5.—2.30 p.m. Jumble Sale organised by M.U. (Hall).

May 7.—7.30 p.m. R.D. Conference.

May 8.—8 p.m. Prayer-Group (W).

May 9.—8.0 p.m. Renovation Committee (W).

May 10.—Ascension Day.

7.15 and 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion.

8.0 p.m. Evening Service.

May 14.—8.0 p.m. Men's Meeting (W).

May 16.—8.0 p.m. Film, sponsored by M.U. and Y.W.G.: "No Place for Jennifer" (Hall).

May 20.—Whitsunday.

Holy Communion 8.0, 9.0 a.m., and 12.15 p.m. (N.B.—Not 7.0 a.m.).

Children's Service 2.30 p.m.

Other Services as usual.

May 27.—Trinity Sunday. Collections at all Services for the Training of Ordination Candidates.

May 30.—7.45 p.m. Young Wives' Group (W).

June 1.—7.30 p.m. Magazines ready—Distributors' Meeting (V).

### BAPTISMS

April 8.—Roger David Severn, 4, Ormond Drive.

„ 8.—Paul Alan Tarrant, 41, Cross Street.

„ 22.—Judith Audrey Gale, 51, Connaught Road.

„ 29.—Shelley Teresa Whittle, 183, High Street.

„ 29.—Jacqueline and Geoffrey Elmes, 4, School Road Avenue.

„ 29.—Alec Peter White, 12, Queen's Road.

### MARRIAGES

April 7.—Alec Hugh West to Valerie Kathleen Rickett.

„ 28.—Treve Jory to Anne Winifred Breden.

### BURIALS

April 6.—Ernest Sidney Barnes, 73, High Street, aged 66 years.

„ 12.—Lucy May Hulford, 96, St. James's Avenue, aged 79 years.

„ 17.—Alfred Ladbrook, 157, Church Road, Teddington, aged 80 years.

„ 19.—Alice Eaton, 34, St. James's Road, aged 89 years.

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## FROM BEYOND THE SPIRE

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[The following Pastoral Letter from our new Bishop was read in church both in the morning and

evening on Sunday, April 15th. It is quite certain that the faith of many people and many homes is

anything but firm, and, as the Bishop says, we must do something about it. But what? I hope the Bishop's Letter will set us thinking.—Ed.]

## OPERATION FIRM FAITH

My Dear People,

There is no part of the Church's work which stands out more plainly than what is called the care and nurture of the young. The Church takes the infant into its arms at Baptism, it teaches him his first lessons in the Christian faith, it prepares and presents him for Confirmation and brings him to the altar where he takes his place at the Lord's Table. It sounds excellent in theory, but nothing causes us more anxiety and disappointment in practice. To-day very large numbers of the children born in this country are not brought to be baptized: of those who are christened in Church far too many never come to a Sunday School or join in Christian worship: of those who do attend Sunday School a very large number sever all connection with the Church as soon as they leave School: again a proportion of those who are confirmed pass into the ranks of lapsed communicants.

We all know these facts and we all shake our heads sadly over them, but that does not accomplish much. The Church must do something about it, and that does not mean that the Archbishop of Canterbury must do something nor the Bishop of London nor the Vicar. It means each and every one of us. The campaign which has been given the title 'Operation Firm Faith' must have the support of every Churchman and Churchwoman. The purpose is far more than to collect a few more children into Sunday Schools. We want to establish the family, father, mother, older children and the little ones, as part of the Family of the Church. I know all about the practical difficulties, getting them dressed, cooking the meals, minding the garden, but we must put first things first, and God must come first.

I do then most earnestly commend to every one of you this venture inaugurated by the Church of England Children's Council.

Read about it, pray about it, work for it in whatever way you can. We look out upon a distracted world and we sometimes wonder what sort of a world it will be that our children and grandchildren will inherit. The answer depends a great deal on ourselves. If we can help to bring up the young people of to-day in the fear and nurture of the Lord, the world in which they live will enjoy the blessings of Peace—not the peace of idleness and luxury, but the Peace which comes only from our Saviour the Prince of Peace.

HENRY LONDIN:

## NEWS FROM CHURCH OF ENGLAND ZENANA MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Items of missionary interest this quarter include the following:—

### Church of South India

The Christian Home Week, as celebrated in the Church of South India, has much which might commend it to our parishes at home. One of our missionaries describes it:—

"The Christian Home Festival usually takes the form of a special service in Church, and a special cleaning-up of the houses, followed by prayer in each home. It is a week of exhibitions, demonstrations, talks and filmstrips. Several rooms exhibit good and bad homes, diet, and cooking, health, hygiene and handicrafts. There are, also, competitions for handicrafts, making a useful article out of something useless, gardens, homes and Bible memory.

"Each day a particular aspect of Christian family life is emphasised, e.g. Christian marriage, Christian parenthood, health, food and cooking, and family worship. Last year the Pastor's family gave a demonstration in Church, when even the five and eight-year-old boys took their part in Bible reading and leading in prayer. At the end of the evening service on Sunday each family lights a lamp on the chancel steps and carries it home to symbolise the Light of Christ burning in the home."

*(To be continued)*