

Vicar's Notes

With this copy of the magazine, or shortly afterwards, you should receive a letter inviting you to join the Christian Giving Scheme which was outlined in last month's issue. Please ponder it well. The small committee charged with getting this scheme to work has been working at top pressure and against time, at a period of the year when printing and other necessary jobs take longer than they ordinarily do. If therefore there is any hold up, and you do not receive full particulars as early as you should, do not blame the tiny band of volunteers who have undertaken this tremendous task.

A FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Beginning now, and aiming at full achievement by 1963, our church's centenary year, we wish to go on commending to the parish by all possible means the ideals and principles of Christian Giving. A great deal of thought has been spent on this for many years in other countries, but the Church of England has been content to rely too much on the gifts of the dead. A student recently back from the United States, who visited a large number of churches whilst he was there, tells us: "In a year I heard a great deal about Christian giving. The two points made most frequently were: 'Giving is an act of worship' and 'I expect my church to use sound business practices.' Some people had visited England, and many of them said: 'You've got it all wrong over there. A church needs restoration, so you have a panic and an appeal. Or money is needed for a special cause, so you have a bazaar or a gift day. But this is not Christian giving. When a church asks for itself, that is more like begging. You've got it wrong over there.'" Many of us are coming to believe that, even if we have not 'got it all wrong' over here, we have at least got it partly wrong, and we want now to begin to put it right.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE PUT RIGHT?

Two things are mentioned again and again by those who have

given long and serious thought to these matters. One is the church's asking for itself and its own needs; the other is the fact that the great majority of church-people do not really give at all, but just make no more than token payments for various kinds of services and benefits received. The first is put right when the church itself becomes primarily a giver and only secondarily a receiver.

This has been called "becoming an adult church," and we want St. James's to attain this stature by the time its hundredth birthday comes round. The second matter is put right only when people realise that giving is a matter of gratitude to God, and a great source of blessing and spiritual power. To give is a good thing in itself, and the individual grows richly in grace through grateful and responsible use of money. When this is seen and understood, a person no longer wants to give just enough to pay for what he gets back in return, but desires to give a definite proportion of his weekly income as an essential part of his worship of God. No one can tell another what proportion this should be: each one must decide for himself after thought and prayer. No persons or families should feel ashamed if, in all good faith, what they can give seems very small; and similarly, no one will feel proud of being able to offer a large amount. Humble gratitude and the understanding that our whole lives are gifts from God which carry with them the responsibility that they be used for His purposes—these should be our motives, and when they are, giving becomes rich in spiritual fruit.

PUTTING THE SCHEME INTO PRACTICE

One immediate change as a result of the new scheme of Christian giving will be that collections will no longer be taken during services except at Christmas and Easter. Gifts, whether promises under the scheme or not, should from January 5th onwards be placed in the box or plate provided before the service begins, and then they will be presented at the altar by representatives of the

congregation as part of our worship. This will save anyone the embarrassment of having to pass by a collecting-bag because his gift has already been made at an earlier service, and will also no longer take our minds off the hymn we are singing and so spoil or even render irreverent our concluding act of worship, as our present method tends to do. The offering will be made during a quiet organ voluntary before the hymn begins. It should also be made clear that the amounts promised by individuals or families under the scheme will be regarded as confidential, as in the present Free Will Offering scheme, which will now be taken over into this new and more comprehensive one.

During processions at Matins and Evensong on Sunday, December 15th, our Dedication Festival, an opportunity will be given to all who wish to present their promises of giving personally at the chancel steps. Envelopes—if the printers can get them ready in time—should be available at the end of December, so that giving under the new scheme will be able to start on the first Sunday in the New Year. We owe a great deal to the steady regular giving of the members of our present F.W.O. scheme, who have been the backbone of our finances for so long. We hope that all will be able to continue their good work in this new scheme when the old one comes to an end on December 31st.

MUSIC IN CHURCH

Our small, but enthusiastic and hard-working choir, has now undoubtedly reached a high standard, and its leading of the music in the services is a joy to hear. We know how much this achievement owes to the great teaching ability of Mr. Bougourd, and it is sad to know that we shall shortly be losing him to another church which, with its much larger choir and wider range of music, will afford more scope for his talents. Sad for us, yes—but we are glad for the fuller opportunity now opening up for him, and very grateful for all that he has accomplished while he has been with us.

It will not be easy for us to find a successor able to carry on from where he will leave off, but we intend to take time over this, if necessary, rather than appoint the first person who comes to hand. We shall be pleased to receive suggestions about this.

A SUCCESSFUL EFFORT

The decoration of the small hall, after having had to be suspended owing to lack of volunteers and the great difficulty of some of the work, has now been completed after an intensive eight-day effort by members of the Nursery School Committee and their husbands. The result is most pleasing. It was not considered necessary in the end to strip off all the coats of old paint—a task which was proving beyond us—but it was all neatly smoothed down with sanding machines. The Church Council, in despair, had decided to place the whole job in the hands of professionals after Christmas, but we have now been spared the heavy expense of this. Our grateful thanks to this stalwart band for their initiative, skill, energy and perseverance, and to the Young Wives' Group for their donation of £5 towards the cost of the paint.

THE CHURCH MUST MEET

I wrote a paragraph under this heading in the June magazine. It has now become possible to put into practice some of the things that were outlined there, and we are planning a series of monthly "Parish Meetings," the first to be held on our church's birthday, Wednesday, December 11th, 8.0 p.m., at Wayside. Notices about this have already been sent to as many people as possible, but there is no need to wait for an invitation before coming. A Parish Meeting, as the name implies, is open to all in the parish who wish to come to hear and talk about things that matter. On December 11th we shall be given information about the ways in which these meetings have developed in other parishes, and various items of importance which concern us at the moment will be discussed.

AROUND THE SPIRE

being notes and news about
people, activities & organisations

THE MOTHERS' UNION

My dear M.U. Members,

Our meeting on December 4th will be addressed by Mrs. Stevens: we are looking forward to having her and hope all members will try to come along.

On December 7th the Bring and Buy Sale will be held at Wayside—this will commence at 2.30 p.m. Do please come and bring your friends and support this effort. There will be useful articles for sale—a cake and home produce stall and of course a good home made tea.

December 9th. Visit to Mary Sumner House, coach leaving Windmill Road at 1.30 p.m.

Christmas Greetings and best wishes to you all.

MILDRED J. BECKETT.

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

The annual collection for the above Society realised £26-18-0.

The Secretary warmly thanks the collectors and those who gave. A letter of thanks together with receipt may be seen in the Church Porch.

C.E.Z.M.S. NOW C.M.S.

Miss H. Gough has gratefully acknowledged the sum of £7-16-1 collected from the members of the Mothers' Union at the annual box opening.

THE YOUNG WIVES' GROUP

The Y.W. Meeting on the last Wednesday in October was the occasion for a Brains Trust. The members of the Panel were Mrs. Butlin, J.P., Mrs. Brandt, Dr. Sayer and Mr. R. H. Nuttall.

The attendance was good as it nearly always is for an evening of this kind, and the invitation was extended to friends and two other Y.W. Groups.

The questions ranged from the ideal feminine attire, and the most essential item of furniture in the home to the responsibility of scientists for their own inventions.

Everyone was most impressed by the panel's skilled and fair

dealing with these varied questions.

The panel all said that they, too, had enjoyed the evening, and they stayed for conversation, tea and biscuits.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 12th November at the Hall. Mrs. Winter (retiring Chairman) thanked the Committee and welcomed Mrs. Ford as Chairman for 1957-1958 (83, Park Road, MOL. 4556), Mrs. Sanders, Entertainments Officer (30, Cranmer Road, MOL 2812), and Mrs. H. Severn, Acacia Road, Hampton, as Catering Officer. Other matters raised at the A.G.M. included our liaison with the M.U., the nature of which Mrs. Brunt (President) asked us to consider before the next A.G.M.

We shall be having our annual Carol singing effort in aid of Church Funds on Friday evening, December 20th. If any members did not give their names for this at the last meeting but would like to join in, will they please tell Mrs. Melville, 106, Park Road, who will notify them about the date of the practice.

The Children's Party will be held on Friday, January 3rd, at 3.0 p.m. in the Hall.

THE SCOUT GROUP

On November 12th members of the Group Committee met the Standing Committee of the Church Council, and there was a full and frank discussion of problems concerning the relationship between the Group and the Church. Difficulties about the Group's use of church premises were gone into, and the payments made for these when available. The feeling was expressed that the Church ought to show more interest in the Group. The meeting was valuable in clearing away various misunderstandings that had arisen, and should result in a strengthening of ties between the Group and the Church.

On November 13th a very successful meeting for parents of the Cubs was held, and I was happy to see so many new parents. The

object of these meetings is for the parents to gain some idea of how the Cubs spend their Wednesday evenings, also provide an opportunity for the parents and Scouters to meet.

During the meeting Beverley McGillivray was presented with the Shield for his general helpfulness and good work last term.

Dates:

"Twelfth Night" Party, Monday, January 6th.

Cubs' Party, Wednesday, January 8th.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP

Programme for December:

Evening Meetings at 8 p.m.

Dec. 1 Jesus: His Resurrection and After.

" 8 I Peter—Study.

" 15 Speaker: Mr. B. W. Oakeley.

" 22 Opening of Problem Box.

" 29 Vicar's Evening.

Other activities include:

Dec. 1 8 a.m. Communion and Breakfast.

" 8 5.30 p.m. Old People's Service, Laurel Dene.

" 22 5.30 p.m. Old People's Service, Laurel Dene.

" 24 Christmas Eve Carol Party.

Jan. 5 8 a.m. Communion and Breakfast.

All young people of the parish are welcome.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

Dec. 11.—Anniversary of Dedication of Church in 1863.

7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.

8.0 p.m. Parish Meeting (W).

Dec. 12.—8.0 p.m. Annual Inspection of Church Lads' Brigade (Rectory School).

Dec. 15.—Dedication Festival and Inauguration of Christian Giving Scheme. (Sunday Services as usual).

Dec. 20.—Young Wives' Group: Carol Singing.

Dec. 21.—St. Thomas. 9.0 a.m. (not 7.15 a.m.) Holy Communion.

Dec. 22.—11.0 a.m. Monthly Family and Parade Service.

Dec. 24—25.—Christmas Day.

Holy Communion 11.45 p.m.

(Midnight Eucharist), 8.0 a.m., 9.0 a.m., 12.15 p.m.

Matins 11.0 a.m.

Dec. 26, 27, 28.—Holy Communion on the Three Festival Days after Christmas at 9.0 a.m. only.

Jan. 1.—The Circumcision.

7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.

Jan. 2.—1.55 p.m. Sunday School Outing to Pantomime.

Jan. 3.—3.0 p.m. Young Wives' Group Children's Christmas Party (Hall).

Jan. 4.—7.30 p.m. Parish Christmas Party (Hall).

Jan. 6.—The Epiphany.

7.15 a.m. Holy Communion.

7.30 p.m. Scout Group Party (Hall).

Jan. 7.—7.30 p.m. Magazines should be ready (V).

8.0 p.m. Prayer Group (W).

Jan. 9.—8.0 a.m. Parish Meeting—"The Church at Home and its Needs." Film Strips. (W).

BAPTISMS

Nov. 24.—Grant John Clifford, 63, Wolsey Road.

" 24.—Mark Guthrie Forbes, 126, Uxbridge Road.

" 24.—Sandra Elizabeth Lee, 6, Wolsey Road.

BURIALS AND CREMATIONS

Oct. 4.—Gertrude Wright, 153, Uxbridge Road, aged 70 years.

" 7.—Arthur William Draper, 79, Burton's Road, aged 77 years (at S.W. Middx. Crematorium).

" 15.—Joseph Walter Jones, 78, High Street, aged 51 years.

" 21.—Katherine Mary Waters, 127, High Street, aged 68 years.

" 26.—Rose Julie Fletcher, 24, Wolsey Road, aged 87 years.

" 28.—Harriet Leaver, 88, St. James's Avenue, aged 85 years (at Kingston Crematorium).

Nov. 2.—Edith Annie Joyce, 41, Holly Road, aged 61 yrs.

" 14.—James Winchester, 41, Wolsey Road, aged 63 years.

" 23.—Gordon William Allen, 11, Rectory Grove, aged 28 yrs. (at S.W. Middx. Crematorium).

" 29.—Ella Florence Day, 4, Cranmer Road, aged 69 years (at Teddington).