

Vicar's Notes

As a result of the elections at the Annual Meeting on March 17th the composition of the Church Council is now as follows:—

Churchwardens: Mr. L. Melville and Mr. W. F. Wigginton.

Representatives on the Ruri-decanal Conference (all due to retire in 1961): Mrs. M. A. Allport Mrs. G. Johnson, Mrs. L. Mills, Miss R. G. Scott, Mr. H. R. Whiteley.

Parochial Representatives (the year in which their term of office expires is given in brackets after each name): Mrs. M. J. Beckett (1960), Mrs. D. Childs (1960), Mrs. J. C. Pyne (1960), Miss P. M. Stanley (1962), Mrs. C. Stevens (1961), Mrs. E. M. Taylor (1962), Mrs. D. E. Warwick (1960), Mrs. J. M. Whiteley (1961), Dr. K. L. Lapworth (1962), Messrs. R. P. Bishop (1962), S. V. J. Forrow (1960), J. Geer (1961), F. W. Nightingale (1961), L. Rockcliffe (1961), R. Salisbury (1961), C. W. Smith (1962), C. C. Wren (1960).

It seems from this that we are two short of the number constitutionally required. Trying to trace the reason for this, I have been searching through the minutes, and think I have found the answer. We elected one less than we should in 1957, and when our representation on the Ruri-Decanal Conference was reduced from 6 to 5 in 1958, we did not adjust our other numbers accordingly. As our rule here has been—since Church Councils first came into being as legal bodies nearly 40 years ago—that there should be an equal number of gentlemen and ladies elected on the Council apart from ex officio members such as the Vicar and the Churchwardens, it seems we ought to elect two gentlemen to bring our numbers up to proper strength. I am therefore calling a special Parochial meeting in the vestry on Tuesday, April 21st at 8 p.m. to elect representatives to fill these two vacancies for a period of three years. Immediately this is done the Church Council will meet with, I hope, its two new members.

1884 — and 1959.

Before Church Councils officially existed, special parochial or con-

gregational meetings were called to deal with major matters as they arose. The old Vestry Minute Book has full accounts of many of these, often consisting of pasted in cuttings from the local press. One such happened in May 1884, the year of the Parish's 'coming of age', and it is interesting to compare the situation then with that of to-day, when the Parish approaches its centenary. In 1884 the church was faced with a financial crisis, perhaps its first, but certainly not its last! The Hampton Court grant in respect of Crown lands had just been withdrawn—this amounted to £68. A large sum in those days (£275 in present day values?) and its loss put the parish in serious difficulties. The meeting faced the crisis calmly and sensibly. It was resolved to consolidate the collections in church into one general fund, on which church expenses were to be the first charge, the poor the second, and the schools the third; and the meeting pledged itself to endeavour to raise the average Sunday collection from £2-18-8 to over £4. It is interesting to note how clearly our forebears saw that direct giving was the answer. The response was not as immediate as they hoped—it was not until nine years later that the Churchwardens could report that the £4 standard had been achieved. So one lesson we learn from history is the need for patience! We may think we have the right idea, but that is not the same thing as realising it. Another interesting point is that they were fully aware in 1884 of the obligation to give generously to good causes outside the parish, and despite their own stringency they refused to cut down the number of Sundays on which the collection went to such charities below six (more than a tithe of all monies directly given, a standard to which we have not so far been able to return).

I wonder how well people attended meetings in those days. To-day we blame TV and other beguilers for small attendances, but apparently it was not much easier to get people to turn out then than it is now—"between 20 and 30 persons were present, in-

cluding a number of ladies." We should hardly word things like that in 1959, as ladies have now come into their own, and as noted above our Church Council has always given them parity of number as well as of esteem. But much the same kind of attendance is still usual—perhaps even less if the meeting were held on a Quatermass night! And on Sundays, I am sure 1884 could beat us hollow. Some of the figures given about numbers of communicants in those days are staggering.

As I looked through the old records, I thought with thankfulness of the difference which the advent of the Welfare State has made in so many respects. Large scale relief of the poor, the sick and the unemployed no longer has to be a major concern of the church. But other problems scarcely felt in 1884 have grown to large proportions, particularly those connected with the decline of moral standards such as the vast increase in the number of unmarried mothers and of broken or loveless homes, and largely in consequence of these things, the upsurge in juvenile delinquency and in the number of children growing up amongst us with 'personality disorders'. I am just off to a residential conference concerned to discover what more might be done on the parochial level to cope with such matters, and to give the timely help and guidance which are often called for. It is a tremendous task, but just as they in 1884 faced the situation as it was with determination and courage so must we today—and in addition, with all the wisdom, insight, knowledge and pastoral efficiency which we can muster or acquire.

THE TUMELONG MISSION

Miss Hannah Stanton, who was always to the fore in tackling the problems that faced us in this parish, is now facing problems of a different and more daunting nature in South Africa. Miss

Clare Lawrance, the founder of the Tumelong Mission, spoke highly of the work which she is doing there, but it has now become a race against time. Lady Selborne, the township in which the Mission works, has now been designated a 'white area'. This means that at any moment now Africans will be deprived of all their freehold and other rights of tenure there, and deported to a 'black area'. In due course the Mission and its buildings will be left high and dry, miles away from the Flock which they once served; and unable to follow them, because no white person may live, work or own property in a black location. Miss Stanton is now concentrating on training African women as parish workers, and though Tumelong itself now seems to be doomed, through these women something of what it has stood for will be carried on into the future. It was sad to hear Miss Lawrance speak of the increasing bitterness and hatred of the white man which Government policy is causing to develop amongst a once very friendly people—let our prayers constantly be offered for our friends, Miss Stanton and Father Singleton, valiantly ministering in this tragic situation.

THE VIGIL

Easter tide reminds us that there is a power let loose and made available by the Resurrection, through which the difficulties and dangers of the present—and any possible situation may be not only coped with but conquered. How much we need this assurance, how much we need to be equipped with this power! The assurance of its reality may be strengthened in us by a reverent entering into the spirit and challenge of the Play "The Vigil" to be presented in this church at 7.45 p.m. on April 15th and 16th; the grip of its power can come only as we are more faithful and regular in prayer, worship and sacrament.

AROUND THE SPIRE

being notes and news about people, activities & organisations

AN OLD PARISHIONER

One of the best known figures in our parish for many years was

Mrs. Brown of Park Place, whose death we reported in last month's issue. Born in School Road Ave-

nue, she lived in Hampton Hill all her life, apart from three years in London when her husband's police duties took him to the East End. 70 of her 77 years had been spent in the house in which she died, and there she celebrated her golden wedding last November. She came to our church—in which she was baptised, confirmed, and married—when she could. For 20 years she had been an invalid, her disabilities constantly increasing, and when she died she had been facing the ordeal of a possible further amputation. She fought a good fight, and to her husband, who nursed her with such devotion and care, we send our sympathy and respect.

CHOIRMEN

Owing to the influx shortly of new Treble choristers who passed the recent auditions, there will be a limited number of vacancies for Gentlemen (Tenors and Basses) in the choir.

Gentlemen who feel that they may be interested in this should approach the Organist or the Vicar at the earliest possible moment. They should possess, in addition to a voice of pleasant quality and unbounded enthusiasm for choral singing on the traditional lines of the English Church, at least a rudimentary acquaintance with the reading of musical notation—although they should not withhold themselves because they may lack complete facility in the art of sight-singing.

An arrangement is to be introduced whereby Gentlemen Choristers shall not be required to attend a choir practice on a week-day evening. Full practices are provisionally to be held on Sunday mornings at 9.45 a.m.

It is emphasised that vacancies will be very limited until the size of the Treble Choir is built up to full strength, but will increase later.

D.A.

THE YOUNG PEOPLES' FELLOWSHIP

The third Annual Open Meeting of the Fellowship was held at Wayside on Palm Sunday. We were pleased to be able to welcome over sixty of our members, parents and friends. After refreshments had been served, some of the

members gave reports on the achievements of the Fellowship during the year. The Leader, in his address, thanked the many people who had helped us during the year, especially the parents, for their hospitality, and the guest speakers. He said that the Fellowship's special asset over other societies was that it had an aim and all our activities were directed towards the fulfilment of that aim. Finally, he said that the senior members would always be willing to discuss anything concerned with the Y.P.F. with parents. The last part of the meeting followed the pattern of a normal Y.P.F. Sunday evening meeting, the topic being Doubting Thomas.

During this month the Y.P.F. hope to complete the decoration of the Vestry. A party of us will also be spending a week on a cycle tour and our Annual General Meeting is to be held on April 25th.

Sunday Evening Meetings

- April 5—St. John, c. 21
- 12—To be announced
- 19—A Prayer Book Topic
- 26—Vicar's Evening
- Other activities :
- April 5—Communion and Breakfast 8 a.m.
- 18—Table Tennis Evening 7 p.m.
- 19—Laurel Dene Service 5.30 p.m.
- 25—Annual General Meeting 7.30 p.m.

R.E .P.

THE SCOUT GROUP

Our Scout Troop and Cub Pack are very busy boys these days. On visiting them the other evening the Cubs were very busy walking the plank, displaying handycraft work, and various other activities for passing their tests.

It is hoped that Mr. Bayley is now on the way to recovering from his back injury. We all wish him a speedy return to good health.

The Scouts are preparing for a very busy summer. Who knows what ideas 'Guy' may cook up for them?

The Jumble Sale arranged by the Group Committee on March 7th was very successful. A very

big thank you to all who so kindly donated goods for sale, also thank you all you kind friends who came along and worked behind the counters.

Plans for our Garden Fete at Laurel Dene on June 6th are now well under way. We want to make this an even better than last year so please remember the date—June 6th.

One of the high lights of this year's Fete will be a Baby Show. Entrance fee 1/-, all entries to Mrs. Sparling, 118a, Uxbridge Road, so to all proud mothers—Don't miss this opportunity to show your baby off!

Also this year we are running a grand Raffle. Tickets 6d. each. Prizes a spin-drier, record player, electric shaver; these can be seen at Melford Radio. All Scout and Cub parents have tickets for sale, so don't delay, get your tickets now for there are not many left.

Don't forget to watch out for our posters announcing our Bingo Drives.

A. R. COOK.

CORRECTION TO STANDING MATTER

P.4.—Under 'Churchwardens' read "Mr. W. F. Wigginton, 18, Cranmer Road," Delete 'Teddington,' All addresses are in Hampton Hill unless otherwise stated.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

April 15 and 16.—7.45 p.m. Presentation of the Play: "The Vigil," in St. James's Church.

20.—8.0 p.m. Hampton Council of Churches (Methodist Church).

21.—8 p.m. Parochial Meeting to elect two Representatives to the Church Council, followed by Meeting of the Council (Vestry).

24.—Confirmation Classes begin again; girls' class 5.30 p.m. boys' class 7.30 p.m. (Vestry).

25.—St. Mark.
9.0 a.m. Holy Communion.

29.—7.30 p.m. Deanery Meeting: S.P.C.K. and Bible Society (St. Stephen's, East Twickenham).
7.45 p.m. Young Wives' Group: Talk on the "Colour Bar" arranged by W.E.A. (H).

May 1.—SS. Philip and James.
9.0 a.m. Holy Communion.
7.30 p.m. Magazines should be ready (V).

4.—7.30 p.m. Ruri-Decanal Conference. Speaker: The Dean of Westminster (St. Mary's, Twickenham.)

N.B.—(1) Christian Aid Week is from April 27 to May 2.

(2) There will be no Week-Day Services during the ten days April 8-18.

MARRIAGE

Mar. 28.—Eric John Lambert to Jacqueline Patricia Robertson.

BURIALS

Mar. 18.—Margaret and Emily Baker of Bognor Regis (interment of ashes).

„ 28.—Ethel Blanche Carrie Franks, 18, Westbank Road, aged 71 years.

„ 28.—Ivy Grace Draper, 85, Udney Park Road, aged 68 years.

Apr. 2.—Kathleen Mary Thoroughgood, 17, Longford Close, aged 33 years.

FROM BEYOND THE SPIRE

WORLD POPULATION INCREASES —

World population rose by 47 million during 1958. It is predicted that at the present rate of increase the population of the world will double before the year 2000. Communist China was the biggest gainer, adding about 15 million people; India added about 6 million; Russia 3,600,000 and the U.S.A. 2,600,000. About one-third of the present world popu-

lation—nearly 1,000 million—live within the Communist orbit.

—AND FOOD OUTPUT FALLS

For the first time for many years world food production actually decreased in the past season, as compared with the previous year. It is accepted that, if food production does not keep ahead of the population increase, serious shortages, if not actually famines, are unavoidable in many countries.