

Vicar's Notes

The tidal wave of bricks and mortar goes on sweeping over the nurseries and green areas of the parish. A sign-board outside one development area announces that all the 58 semi-detached houses now nearly completed are already sold. Then come the new people, pouring into the parish. How is one to make contact with them, convey to them that the Church is here, and that it cares? How can we make them welcome, give them a sense of belonging, help to foster a feeling of community, based on the love of God? Even though we now have no organised team for visiting, as we did some years ago, individual members of the Church can still pay friendly, neighbourly calls on the new family across the way. We can send out a broadsheet once or twice a year to every home in the parish, telling them of our interest and concern. What I am hoping is that some of the new people, and others too, will make themselves known as willing to let their houses be used as homely meeting places. For today the pattern of living is against big crowds, large meetings, vast rallies, and so on. It is in the home and in small groups that the most worthwhile things seem to happen. So to many, the Church in the church, with its large space meant for the crowd, seems aloof and apart, and people find it hard to get to know one another there. How often do people say that they have attended a certain church for years, and no one has ever spoken to them? So

the Church in the street is also needed; the Church in a house like other houses, where people can make human and christian contact with one another and enter on an experience of fellowship. G. H. Babington, Vicar of a parish in Sheffield, ended an article in "Theology" recently entitled "The Message of the Church to an Affluent Society," with these words: "Surely the ideal of the Church today is to be found in small groups or cells which meet for study, prayer and discussion and in which the laity can really know that they are in the Church. Many different attempts have been made in the last twenty years to establish cells within parishes. What is now needed is an attempt to make the small group the norm for church membership in the same way as John Wesley made the original class meeting the basis and the inspiration of Methodism. These class meetings gave people a new quality of life at a time when the level of material comfort was not very high. Our own affluent society is already showing signs of needing a new quality of life. If there is any real poverty in England to-day, it is the poverty of living, expressed in neurosis, loneliness and the disappointment in life which appears to be so prevalent. If the Church is to be an agent of redemption for the affluent society, it must first show the individual that a new quality of life can be found in the local church, and then turn boldly to face the fact that the whole world must become affluent in the fullest sense of the word."

AROUND THE SPIRE

being notes and news about
people, activities & organisation

THE MOTHERS' UNION

The branch met on Wednesday, October 5th, to hear Mrs. Charles, the Deanery President, speak about the Branch Member in Action. There was a good attendance and everyone appreciated Mrs. Charles words of advice. It was much regretted that Mrs. Rockcliffe and Mrs. Allport could not be present owing to illness and all expressed the hope that they would soon be better.

Members were reminded that the next meeting would be with the other branches of the Deanery in St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham on Novem-

ber 2nd at 3 p.m., when the speaker will be Mrs. A. E. J. Rawlinson.

Other dates to note are: October 26th at 8 p.m. in the Church Hall to see the Fact and Faith Film.

November 15th — Conference at Mary Sumner House, "Girls at School," 2.0-6.0 p.m. Speakers: Miss M. G. Green, B.A., Headmistress of Kidbrooke Comprehensive School, and Miss L. Charlesworth, C.B.E., formerly Headmistress of Sutton High School. Tickets 1/-.

November 16th at 8 p.m. in the Hall to see a film strip on 'Oberammergau.'

THE YOUNG WIVES' GROUP

In September we had our usual 'At Home,' which once again proved very enjoyable. Most of the evening was spent 'nattering' but we did just manage to squeeze in two short games!

It was very good to see so many young wives and their families taking part in the Harvest Festival service on Sunday.

For our next meeting on October 26th in the Hall, we have a Fact and Faith film entitled 'Dust or Destiny?' dealing with the migratory flight of birds and the growth of the embryo within the egg and several other interesting subjects.

This meeting is being shared with the M.U. and all husbands, friends and families are cordially invited. Refreshments free, but there will be a silver collection to help meet the heavy expenses incurred.

On November 2nd we have our A.G.M. in Wayside. Please come, we need your support and ideas.

E.V.S.

STANDING MATTER

ADDITIONS & ALTERATIONS

Magazine Secretary:

Mr. C. W. Smith, 9, Carlisle Road, Hampton. Tel.: Mol. 1956.

Organist and Choirmaster:

Mr. C. G. Welling, A.R.C.O., A.R.C.M., 16, Clive Road, Twickenham. Tel.: Pop. 5958.

Addition to Advertisement:

Messrs. E. & B. Horne, 143, Uxbridge Road, are now on the 'phone: Mol. 2744.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- Oct. 25.—8.0 p.m. Prayer Group (Vestry).
Oct. 26.—8.0 p.m. Fact and Faith Film (sponsored by Young Wives' Group)—"Dust or Destiny?" (H).
Oct. 27.—8.0 p.m. Church Council (Vestry).
Oct. 28.—SS. Simon and Jude, Holy Communion at 7.15 a.m. (N.B.—No service on Wednesday this week).
Oct. 30.—Preliminary meeting of Adult Confirmation Group, after Evensong.
Nov. 1.—All Saints. Holy Communion at 7.15 a.m. (No service on Wednesday).
Nov. 2.—3.0 p.m. Deanery Mothers' Union Meeting. Speaker: Mrs. Rawlinson (St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham).

8.0 p.m. A.G.M. of Young Wives' Group (W).

Nov. 13.—Remembrance Day. Morning Service begins at 10.55 a.m.

Nov. 14.—7.30 p.m. Ruri-Decanal Conference (St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham).

Nov. 15.—8.0 p.m. Prayer Group (Vestry).

Nov. 16.—8.0 p.m. Film-strip and Lecture (sponsored by the Mothers' Union): "Oberammergau." (H).

Copy for the November magazine should be sent to the Vicarage not later than Tuesday, November 8. Publication should be at the end of the following week.

BAPTISMS

- July 2.—Vivien Charlotte Nassim, (of riper years).
" 24.—Susan Jennifer Cruse, 7, Laurel Road.
" 24.—Graham Alan Hide, 26, Park Road.
" 24.—Emma Mai Sowter, 28, Longford Close.
(These were omitted by mistake from the September issue).
Sept. 25.—Robert Samuel Bowers, 39, Rectory Grove.
" 25.—Susan Elizabeth Figg, 4, School Road Avenue.
" 25.—John Daryl Greig, 1, Eastbank Road.
" 25.—Jeanette Anne Guest, 5, Regina Court, Gloucester Road, Teddington.
" 25.—Kathryn Anne Fenton, Joanna Fenton, and Sarah Fenton Lewis, 8, Oxford Road, Teddington.
" 25.—David Brian Newman, 23, Windmill Road.
" 25.—Madeline Elizabeth Scott, 23, St. James's Road.
" 25.—Melenie Jayne Wagstaff, 9, Mays Road, Teddington.

MARRIAGE

- July 16.—Michael Frederick Wentzell to Jennifer Isobel Sibley (omitted by mistake from last issue).

BURIALS AND CREMATIONS

- July 13.—John Richard Guns, 53, Burtons Road, aged 82 years (at Teddington).
" 16.—Thomas Edgar West, 23, Holly Road, aged 74 years (at Teddington).
" 19.—Elizabeth Leighton, 48, St. James's Road, aged 93 yrs. (at S.W. Middx. Crematorium).

- Aug. 4.—Ethel Edna Holm, Paisley Renfrewshire, and 114 Uxbridge Road, aged 75 yrs. (at S.W. Middx. Crematorium).
- „ 5.—Sidney Walter Robinson, 2, Horne Road, Shepperton, and formerly of 19, Myrtle Road, aged 82 yrs.

(The above were omitted by mistake from the September issue).

- Sept. 26.—Elsie Florence Bolt, 44, Fountain Close, Hanworth and formerly of the Gatekeeper's Lodge, Laurel Dene, aged 76 years.

FROM BEYOND THE SPIRE

SOME PERSONALITIES OF BYGONE DAYS

Looking round the commemorative tablets and inscriptions in our parish church of St. James, one is surprised to find that despite the relatively short history of our parish (i.e. since 1863), there are many eminent persons recorded in the church who are now almost forgotten.

There is for example a small brass plate at the base of the font which hundreds of persons who have attended christenings have probably never noticed, and even if they had, the scant information thereon would convey little knowledge of the man who died so tragically after a most remarkable career.

Henry George Ward, the son of Robert Plumer Ward was born on 29 February, 1797, halfway through the reign of George III, and in the year when our government had to face the strong naval mutinies at Spithead and the Nore.

The family connection with the branch that produced the famous field-marshal (who died in 1932, aged 75) and who became the first Viscount Plumer, recalls another extraordinary career, mostly military.

However, the subject of our notes was educated at Harrow, and subsequently entered the diplomatic service, where duty took him in turn to Stockholm, the Hague, Madrid, and finally to Mexico until the year 1827, a most interesting period, for it was not until 1822 that that country had thrown off the Spanish yoke and become independent.

In 1832, H. G. Ward became a Member of Parliament, a position he held for 17 years. During this long period (which saw the death of two sovereigns, the brothers George IV and William IV), his talent did not pass unnoticed, for in 1846 he was

appointed Secretary to the Admiralty. He also founded and edited the "Weekly Chronicle." In the year 1849 Ward was created G.C.M.G. on his appointment as Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, a post occupied for 6 years, and which today needs some explanation as to its existence.

The Ionian Islands are a chain of forty mountainous islands, most of them quite small and uninhabited, which are situate off the west coast of Greece. Their name is rather puzzling at first sight because 'Ionia proper' was the ancient name of the western districts of Asia Minor bounded on the south side by the river Meander (which describes its winding nature), now known by the Turkish name of Menderes. The older district is of course of very great interest to Biblical students because one of the most important cities was Ephesus, and was in fact, a Greek colony which in Roman times became a 'free city' with many Jewish inhabitants. Most of the architectural treasures of the city were however removed by the Roman emperors either to Rome or Constantinople (there are to this day 12 columns of green marble from the Temple of Diana at Ephesus erected by the Emperor Justinian in the Saint Sophia Mosque at Istanbul) and the city's eclipse by the Seljuk (not the Ottoman) Turks who incidentally occupied Jerusalem as early as 637 AD, placed the area in historical oblivion until archaeologists (mainly British) began digging there in our year of dedication, 1863. We know of course that Saint Paul visited the city (which became the metropolis of the 7 churches cited in 'Revelation') twice, and his famous epistle to the Christian community there defines the standing of the Gentile as equal to the Jew in the 'New Covenant.'

The Ionian Islands, however, the largest of which is Corfu, have had a chequered history. First colonised by the Corinthians about 730 B.C., subsequent rulers were those of the Greek overlords i.e. Rome, the Byzantine Empire, the Venetian Republic, the Ottoman Turks and before its final release from foreign control, the French kingdom of Naples which had a short and limited surveillance.

After the fall of Napoleon (his brother had been made King of Naples), Britain was asked to assume responsibility for the Ionian islands in 1815, but although Gladstone sent out a special mission in 1858 in an attempt to allay the friction caused by foreign rule, it was decided to hand the islands over to Greece in the year of our dedication 1863. It should be noted that the independence of Greece was recognised by the Peace of Adrianople in 1829 but its republic was short-lived, and Otto, son of the King of Bavaria, was king for 30 years when he was dismissed in favour of Prince George of Denmark who commenced his reign in 1863. Since our own Queen Anne had married Prince George of Denmark in 1683, it will be seen how we placed our trust in his descendant. In 1943 the Ionian islands suffered their greatest trial when the Germans massacred thousands of Italians and Greeks after the Italian surrender.

To return to Sir Henry and his governorship: it will be realised that he had been given one of the toughest and most difficult assignments in Victorian history and it was in recognition of his sterling qualities as an administrator faced with such a task, that he was made Governor of Ceylon in 1855, where he remained 5 years.

During this period, the terrible mutiny broke out on the mainland of India in 1857, and Sir Henry had to make the courageous but dangerous decision to send all the troops off the island to help the shocking situation which had developed. This action was bitterly criticised at the time, but the very great respect which he engendered in Ceylon resulted in a statue being erected to his memory at Kanoy, the former ancient capital.

In 1860 Sir Henry was appointed Governor of Madras (the title seen on our font) and on 5th July he landed on the mainland to assume his new office. The great scourge

Cholera claimed him however, and on 2nd August, barely two months in office, the Governor died in his 64th year. For those interested, it might be noted that Reginald Heber (2nd Bishop of Calcutta and all India) died in the Presidency of Madras at the town of Trichinopoly in April 1826: he is probably best remembered for his hymn-writing e.g. "From Greenland's icy mountains." The shocking climate claimed the two bishops, James and Turner, who succeeded Heber, the latter dying in August 1831.

Of Ward's domestic life, records are rather scanty, but he was still in the diplomatic service when he married the gracious lady, Emily Elizabeth, who subsequently survived him 22 years, and who was apparently one year in age his junior. All their children were born while Sir Henry was an M.P., and the first daughter born in 1825, married a distinguished soldier Brevet-Lieut. Colonel Butler, who died at Peshawar on 21st May 1868 at the age of 50. There were two daughters of this union, Eva, and Alice, both of whom were to play a most important part in parish and church life.

Eva was asked to marry the newly-widowed second vicar of St. James, the Hon. Henry Bligh, at the early age of 19, and in true Victorian emotionalism and style, this act caused a "grave scandal."

Son of the Earl of Darnley, the Rev. Mr. Bligh was inducted by the celebrated Archdeacon A. J. Hessey, D.C.L., on 31 Oct., 1881, but most tragically his first wife Emma, died on 27 December of the same year at the age of 48, and is commemorated by the South window in the Chancel of St. James.

Alice Butler, on the other hand, was less fortunate than her sister. She appears to have had a tragic love-affair from which her contemporaries have agreed by common consent that she never really recovered. She was entrusted for years with the job of training the choir-boys, and laboured most faithfully for the church until her death in the spring of 1941 at a very great age. Mrs. Butler herself (i.e. daughter of Sir Henry and Lady Ward) lived at Muree Lodge, St. James's Road, where she died in 1913 aged 88 after a long widowhood of 48 years. After her death, Alice moved into Park Road. (To be concluded).

F. H. SARGEANT.