

Vicar's Notes

As I write, the prospects on both the electrical and weather fronts are still grim. Power-cuts, voltage-reductions, ice and snow, earth as hard as iron—but we carry on. Our heating system, when not interfered with on the electrical side, manages to maintain a temperature that is tolerable, though far from adequate, and we haven't yet had to hold services in churches registering two degrees of frost, as is the case with a friend of mine who is a vicar in the Nottinghamshire countryside. The organ, affected by the cold, behaves more irritatingly than ever, and when the voltage goes down cannot produce a chirp, so the piano is now much in evidence. The music at Christmas and Epiphany, with the support of augmented choirs, reached a very high standard, and our own young people joined with those of the Congregational Church to sing "Carols by Candlelight" very delightfully—and incidentally to raise over £9 for the Hong Kong Student Aid Project. We were very sorry that Seymour Harris, who had played a big part in this and other Christmas preparations, had to be whisked away on Christmas Eve to have his appendix out, and we were pleasantly surprised to have him back with us for the postponed Festival of Lessons and Carols on the Epiphany.

AN IMPRESSIVE OCCASION

Little has been said about an earlier event—the Pageant in November—which had its impressive presentation on Saturday the 24th, after weeks of preparation. A brief description of some of its aspects is given on a later page. One striking feature which underlay the whole enterprise was the willingness with which nearly 100 people, including 15 from this parish, spent 12 hours at St. Mary's Hall on this Saturday, perhaps to appear on the stage for less than 2 minutes in each of the two performances, or not even to be seen at all. All this in addition to hours of rehearsal and getting things ready in the separate parishes. But the final result showed that all this time, trouble and effort, which to some seemed to be out of all proportion, was indeed worth-while. The large audiences, as well as those who took part, were given an inspiring vision of the cumulative effect of

Christianity on the life of the world down the centuries. There were several modern and even contemporary scenes, and we should have liked to include one depicting our own Hannah Stanton in South Africa, but there was the difficulty of writing something that in the short time available would have given a true impression of her work and witness, and then—whom could we have found to play her part? We had a long letter from her at Christmas, describing her experiences in Uganda. There is no room for it in the magazine this month, but we hope to include at least some extracts from it in March.

A TERRIBLE NEED

The hunger of others, while we enjoy so many good things, is bound to be never far away from our thoughts and prayers. Many of us had empty plates at our Christmas dinner-tables, on which contributions poured from all those gathered round. The money thus given is still being brought to church and offered at the altar, but we hope by the time you read this to have sent a second cheque, representing the total received, to Inter-Church Aid. The next occasion on which we shall all be asked to give to the full will be during Christian Aid Week, May 13th—18th. The amount received during this nation-wide effort goes on increasing year by year—last year it was £200,000 more than in 1961, and reached the figure of £560,000. But even £1,000,000 would be but a drop in the enormous bucket that is required. The Bishop of Carlisle suggests that the Governments of the leading nations should undertake this work and undertake it together. Why should not our own Government take the lead, and put an item in this year's Budget of £100,000,000 for this purpose? (This no doubt would mean an increase in income tax, but why should we not press for this when the end in view is so good?) This might inspire other Governments to follow suit, and the idealistic younger people of their countries, so often frustrated because of the lack of a worthy cause to serve which would make demands upon them, might find a uniting, creative purpose in using this money for the development of schemes that would abolish poverty and want.

The Bishop's vision is a splendid

one, but until it is realised we must go on making the best use of the resources at our disposal. This year the Hampton Council of Churches want to make Christian Aid Week locally a bigger and more challenging success than ever, and we want to begin to recruit volunteers who are willing to take part in house-to-house collections *now*. They will be invited to meetings of preparation, at which there will be speakers and films making clear the great need, so that they can answer the doorstep objectors and give solid information to those who ask why they should give. This year also we want to cover every street and house, a feat which has hitherto been beyond our strength. So please let me, or any member of the P.C.C., have your offer of help as soon as possible, and then as matters progress we will let you know the team you are in, the dates of preparatory meetings, and other details.

THE PRINTED WORD

As we sent off our cheques at Christmas to the various good causes and agencies which we support we added a new one to our list—

AROUND THE SPIRE

being notes and news about
people, activities & organisation

THE MOTHERS' UNION

It was a great disappointment that our Carol Service had to be cancelled again. If we are to have a continuance of these severe winters, as has been foretold, it looks as if we shall need to choose a date later in the year, and learn some of the lesser known, but very lovely carols which are suitable for all seasons of the Church's year.

On Tuesday, 19th February, the film, "Woman in a Dressing Gown" is to be shown in St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham, at 8 p.m. On the two following nights it will be shown at St. Alban's Hall, Teddington, and at Bishop Perrin's School, Whitton, respectively. This is another Deanery effort for Christian Family Year, and we want it to be well supported. It is not intended solely for Mothers' Union members, their husbands and friends, we want to reach out to a wider circle. Make it known, Bring your friends and neighbours. Admission is free.

We note that "Peradventure's" first number (incidentally a very good effort) thinks that Christian Family

S.P.C.K. (the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge). We had been stirred by a small booklet sent to us a few days before, and knew that we must make some response. We do not realise how forces hostile to, or suspicious of, much of what we stand for are spending millions on literature and pouring it by the ton into India, Asia, Africa. There it is swooped upon by people avid for anything to read, and the false ideas take root and begin to spread. Communism, for instance, realising that the pen is mightier than the sword, spends £500,000,000 a year in this way; sects like Jehovah's Witnesses distribute free literature all over the world. The battle for men's minds is on, and in this the Christian Church, which has so much to give that men are crying out for, is losing everywhere for lack of effort and money. The S.P.C.K. is one of the groups which is doing something in this urgent matter, sending as much good Christian literature as it can overseas. We had to do something to help. We must do much more this year. The time is short, desperately short.

Year has had little impact in Hampton Hill. It is a pity that the serious-minded members of our Y.P.F. have come to this conclusion, but there is still time to make them change their opinion. It is true that in the main we have not been able to get any big ideas started, but individual members have been working quietly towards the fulfilment of C.F.Y. ideals.

To counteract "the seemingly monolithic Communism devoted to the Gospel of St. Marx" (see January's Spire) is a very big task, but we could make a beginning if we tried to Strengthen, Safeguard, and Promote Christian Family Life. How can we do this? Let us, awaken in all mothers (and fathers too) a sense of their great responsibility in the training of their boys and girls—the Fathers and Mothers of the future! Then let us make our homes, homes of peace and love, and ourselves faithful wives and loving Mothers. If we start from our own households and work outwards we shall have gone far towards bringing "Peace on Earth."

The Queen and the Duke of

Edinburgh will attend a "Thanksgiving for Marriage" Service at St. Paul's Cathedral, on 22nd May—the final function of Christian Family Year. Only a few of the many thousands of M.U. members will be able to be present then, but could we not do something similar in this parish? There must be many besides our Branch members who have cause to give thanks for their marriage.

I.V.R.

THE YOUNG WIVES' GROUP

It was with regret that we cancelled the Children's Party on January 4th, but the bad state of the roads and difficulty over the heating at the Parish Hall made it necessary to do so. We tried to inform all ticket holders, and if anyone was missed, please accept our apologies. Whether to hold the party at a later date will be considered at our next committee meeting.

Harking back to the past; to the A.G.M. in November in fact, it would seem that the Group is running satisfactorily. Or perhaps I should say there was no criticism from the meeting. Retiring Committee members were thanked for the good work they had done, and new officers were elected. Irene Hodges takes over as Secretary, Vera Snelling as Catering Assistant. Mrs. P. Alderton was also elected, but afterwards found she was unable to serve. A late withdrawal by a nominee caused the committee to be two members under strength, but Margaret Pyatt has been co-opted and she is acting as Registrar. Ann Robins is doing a double job as Vice-Chairman and Treasurer, whilst Heather Severn has taken on the job of Entertainments Officer. June Manns carries on as Catering Officer, and Mollie Saunders continues as Chairman.

Our next meeting on January 30th, is at 7.45 p.m. at Wayside, when an illustrated talk on, "Water Holidays" will be given by a Member of the Peter Lawrence Organisation. I understand this includes boating and camping holidays for young people, on canals and rivers in this country. Any reader who is interested is invited to join us at this meeting.

May I remind you of our visit to the Food & Cookery Centre Ltd., on Wednesday, 6th February, 1963, for a demonstration on "Short Cuts to High Teas and Suppers." The cost will be 3/- each for the transport, and the coach will leave St. James's Road at 6.15 p.m. There are still some

seats available, and anyone wishing to come along should phone Molesey 4938.

On Thursday, 14th February, 1963, there will be a joint M.U. and Y.W.G. meeting at 7.45 p.m. at Wayside when the British Lighting Council's speaker will talk about, "Lighting in the Home." M.S.

BEETLE DRIVE

Last year this proved so popular that the Social Committee have decided to hold another one on Saturday, February 16th, at 7.45 p.m., at Wayside. Tickets, which will include light refreshments, are available from Committee members at 1/- each.

BARNARDO HOUSE TO HOUSE COLLECTION

Mrs. Molly Ford reports that the amount collected recently was £45-17-0. She gives her thanks to all who collected and to all who subscribed.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- Feb. 2.—Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas). The end of the forty days of Christmas; 9 a.m. Holy Communion.
- Feb. 6.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union. Speaker: Mrs. Cockram, "Peace" (W).
- Feb. 7.—8 p.m. Church Council (W).
- Feb. 10.—Septuagesima.
- Feb. 12.—Matter for March issue of magazine due in.
- Feb. 13.—8 p.m. Prayer and Study Group (V).
- Feb. 14.—11 a.m. Editorial Board (Vicarage).
- Feb. 16.—7.45 p.m. Beetle Drive (W).
- Feb. 18.—8 p.m. Ruridecanal Conference: Canon B. C. Pawley speaks about the Vatican Council (St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham).
- Feb. 25.—St. Matthias. 9 a.m. Holy Communion.
- Feb. 27.—Ash Wednesday. 7.15 a.m. and 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion; 8 p.m. Prayer and Study Group (V); 8 p.m. Young Wives' Group (W).
- Mar. 6.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union: Service in church followed by Annual General Meeting (W).
- Mar. 8.—8 p.m. Church Council (W).
- Mar. 20.—8 p.m. Annual Parochial Church Meeting (Hall). All whose names are on the Electoral Roll are urged to attend. If your name is not on the Roll, and it is entitled to be—see that it gets there! Ask for a form, fill it in, and return before the end of February. (There

will be forms in church every Sunday this month).

The Prayer and Study Group will meet in the Vestry at 8 p.m. on every Wednesday in Lent, and members of the congregation who do not normally attend will be welcome during this special period.

The Adult Confirmation Group meets as arranged—normally every other Thursday at 8 p.m. in the Vestry.

The weekday Junior Confirmation Group should have been formed by the time this issue appears, and meetings arranged to suit the convenience of members.

Note the date for magazine copy to be sent in. The routine is now working well, with everybody's co-operation. Did you notice that the January issue was actually published before Christmas for the first time for many years? Thanks to speedy work on the part of deliverers, many homes already had it through their letter-boxes on the evening of December 21st.

BAPTISMS

Dec. 23.—Julia Renée Payne and John Harvey Payne, 5, Arundel Close.

BURIALS

Oct. 30.—Thomas Perry, Beveree, formerly of 179, Oxbridge Road, aged 91 years (at Hampton).

Nov. 17.—Florence Emily Stevens, 58, Ladywood Road, Tolworth, aged 73 years.

Nov. 27.—Henry Osborne Barter, 41 (now 51) St. James' Road, aged 90 years.

Nov. 29.—Ernest Snaith Duval, Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral, 28, St. James' Avenue, aged 83 years.

Jan. 2.—John Deeks, 66, Laurel Road. Aged 71 years.

MARRIAGES

Oct. 20.—John Alfred Kemp to Elzann Pinkstone.

„ 29.—Anthony Charles Frederick Evans to Anneliese Katharina Schnabel.

Jan. 12.—Arwyn Talbot to Joan Margaret Virgo.

ALTAR FLOWERS

We have had quite a satisfactory year—people have been very generous in giving flowers, and money for flowers. Thank you all very much.

May I explain the arrangement? Funerals, weddings and christenings—if you desire extra flowers and are willing to supply them, I will willingly arrange them, although I prefer you to arrange them and will help you with the vases.

We have a number people who like to arrange a vase of flowers on a particular date in memory of a loved one. If you would like to do this put your name on the list on the Church door.

If anyone, especially those with flowers in their garden, will arrange just one vase for the festivals it will help to brighten our Church considerably
L.M.

FROM BEYOND THE SPIRE

“SET MY PEOPLE FREE”

A pageant, organised by the Rural Deanery of Hampton, and in which many members of the Parish Churches of Hampton, Hampton Wick, Twickenham and St. James's Church, Hampton Hill, took part, was presented to “full houses” in St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham, on Saturday, November 24th, 1962. It was much appreciated and enjoyed by all who saw it, and it stirred one's emotions to a high degree.

The whole pageant was highly acclaimed for its impressive settings and good acting, and the producers of such a big religious enterprise are to be congratulated on its presentation, as also the actors who carried through their parts with such fervour

and pathos as to bring clearly before our eyes the reality of the growth of the Christian Church throughout the world.

The Prologue, “The Creation,” was very moving, and sequence three, “The New Deliverer,” was most beautiful and brought home to us the message of Christmas and of our Salvation. Among all the many interesting sequences which followed, “Women in the Mission Field” was indeed revealing.

The expressive reading and clear enunciation of the Narrators and of the Chorus made a fitting background to a wonderful pageant. May God bless all those responsible for it, and for the work of the S.P.G. and C.M.S.
C.M.