

VICAR'S NOTES

Christian Aid: By the time that this magazine appears, the claim of Christian Aid will once more be upon us. Some of us will have taken part in the procession of witness through Richmond to the Odeon Cinema — the short march to see “The Long March” — and if we haven't, we can read the book I mentioned last month, written by one who accompanied the film-unit — “The Seeds of Peace,” by Dewi Morgan (Hodder 5/-). Our own church book-stall should be in existence by the middle of May, and you could buy it there. Christian Aid is described by Dewi Morgan as “the nervous system of the Body of Christ” — and thousands who are now vigorously alive would have dragged their way to miserable death without it. Until Governments pour their massive financial resources into this great work of compassion, Christians and men of good-will everywhere must do all, that they can to give it increasing support. The project which we in Hampton and Hampton Hill have underwritten this year will cost at least £600.

MRI The “No small change” course has proved a very good tonic and stimulus, and members of the group are so keen that they are continuing to meet even though the five specified sessions have been completed. The exhibition in the church has attracted much attention, and visitors from other parishes have come to see it. Some of the best discussions we have had here for many years have taken place as a result of this course, and as this is only the beginning of MRI at parish level, we can look forward to many interesting and striking developments in the next decade.

Unbelief: Some people have not liked the “Why I don't believe” series in our inset, and there have been letters about some of the articles in the Church press. But I think that it is good for us to read them, because they express what many intelligent people, amongst them some readers of this magazine and other parishioners who refuse to read it, feel about God and the Church. But what are we who are believers to say to people who think and speak like this? Have we any answer to give?

It seems obvious that many of the statements in these articles articulate deep-seated feelings not amenable to reason or argument — they could be changed perhaps only by further experience, which may include some form of direct experience of God (there have in recent years been a considerable number of sudden conversions straight from agnosticism, unmediated by any known human agency. It seems that they can be ascribed only to the direct action of the Holy Spirit). Or the experience of God may be indirect, mediated through an experience of joy or suffering, or perhaps an encounter with one of those personalities who require God to account for them, who seem to be transparent to God. Till such an experience comes to them, argument is often of little avail.

But some statements can and should be answered. Unbelievers often make much of the Church's opposition to any kind of progress or reform — and some of the examples they quote should make us feel

penitent and ashamed. But in others there is no truth at all. For instance, I have often seen it stated that "the Church opposed the use of chloroform," but there is no evidence for this whatsoever. Actually the objections came almost entirely from medical men themselves, who tried to enforce their contentions by an appeal to Scripture — but no leading theologian in any Church gave them any support at all. "Good Anglican bishops saw no wrong in starving children, and women working in the mines," says Dee Wells. This again is a most unfair generalisation, though it is widely believed (biased Whig historians hostile on principle to the Church are largely responsible for these false views). Modern historians have established quite clearly that the Church's failure at the time of the Industrial Revolution was far from being as complete as we have been led to suppose. The Church's part in the effort to secure factory legislation was an honourable one. Churchmen were leaders of the movement to limit the working hours of children, and Bishops in the House of Lords consistently supported them. With regard to the specific instance of the employment of women and girls in the mines, here the Bishops certainly did appear in a more unfavourable light; when the bill of 1842 to prohibit this came before the Lords, it had a very sticky time, and most of the Bishops adopted the cowardly course of being absent from the debates. But of the few who did have the courage to attend, at least two spoke in favour of the bill. Thank God that most of our Bishops to-day are like those brave few of former years!

The crux, though, of these unbelievers' *cri de coeur* is the problem of the existence of evil rather than the faults and failings of the Church. This too, like them, we have constantly to wrestle with — but the Church by the power of its inner life should be able to demonstrate that even if there is no neat intellectual solution, there is a dynamic way through, a way of victory. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, your faith."

Confirmation: I should be glad if all junior candidates (say under 18) for Confirmation — except those already in the Sunday morning group — could come to Evensong on Sunday, May 16, and stay behind for a short time afterwards, so that arrangements can be made about classes. I have already received the names of a number of adults who are interested, but I am sure there must be more, and I should like to have them as soon as possible: then in due course I shall notify them about the starting of this group — to which no age-limit of any kind is attached.

Thanks: To Mr. J. W. Gostling and his firm, who have given us the beautiful moveable nave altar and rails which we use every Sunday at our Parish Communion. We had asked Mr. Gostling if he would kindly have this done for us as a business proposition, and his craftsmen got to work and did an excellent job. We have been waiting for the account to come in, but have now heard that it is to be a gift, and all question of payment has been set aside. We are indeed grateful.

Thanks also to those who decorated the church so effectively and skilfully at Easter, and those who gave so generously for my Easter Offering.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual Vestry meeting was held on Wednesday, April 7, 1965, at the Parish Hall, and was followed by the 46th Annual General Meeting.

The Vicar opened the meeting with prayers and then presided at both meetings. After the Minutes of the last Vestry meeting were read, the Vicar said that, over the years, the business of the Vestry Meeting had shrunk until all that remained was to "dispose of the Churchwardens." He thanked Messrs. Robinson and Rockliffe for the hard work they had done during the last year and they were unanimously re-elected.

The Annual General Meeting followed and the Vicar reported a net increase of 5 names on the Electoral Roll.

Miss Stanley read the Minutes of the last A.G.M. and followed with the Secretary's Report. She said this had been an important year which included the Centenary of St. James's Church, the introduction of Parish Communion, the end of one Stewardship Campaign and the beginning of another. Much work had been done to the Church and Wayside buildings and to the Churchyard, and the publication of "The Birth and Growth of Hampton Hill" had made a fitting end to a progressive year.

In his Treasurer's Report Mr. Robinson said there had been a drop in receipts this year but expenses are watched very carefully. Copies of the Balance Sheet were distributed amongst those present and the report was formally adopted. Reports of the Magazine, Charities and Wayside accounts were read and adopted and Messrs. Smith, Wigginton and Salisbury were thanked for their work on these accounts; also thanks were expressed to Mr. Roy Brooks for auditing the accounts at short notice.

Mr. Robinson also thanked Mr. Hal Severn for his valuable work as Assistant Treasurer.

Mr. Rockliffe, giving a report on Christian Stewardship, said that the new Diocesan Campaign had made a promising start, and the Vicar proposed a vote of thanks to Messrs. Rockliffe and Robinson for their work as Stewardship Recorder and Treasurer respectively.

Reporting on the Church Fabric Mr. Rockliffe said that the roof repairs, re-wiring and decoration had been completed, and the boiler was now being replaced. He paid tribute to the efficient way that the properties Committee and the Churchyard Wardens had worked in the past year. Grateful thanks were expressed to the Mothers' Union for the hassocks they had made and presented to the Church, and for the new choir surplices.

Mr. A. Taylor told us that "No small Change" had been a most interesting and challenging course of study and discussion, but it could have been even more effective if a larger number had attended.

The following were proposed, seconded and elected to the new Parochial Church Council: Mesdames C. Brunt, D. Childs, M. Ford, R. Gostling, M. Leatherdale, L. Mills, Milns, M. Orton, V. Rockliffe and M. Saunders; Messrs. Bridges, R. Brooks, J. Ford, J. Gostling, D. Leatherdale, Peel, R. Salisbury, H. Severn and D. Wadlow. The representatives to the Ruri-Decanal Conference are Miss P. M. Stanley, Mrs. Taylor, Messrs. S. D. Harris, L. Melville and A. R. Taylor.

It was agreed that the members of the P.C.C. should continue to act as Sidesmen, assisted by those members of the Church who are prepared to serve. The Vicar brought the meeting to a close with the Grace at 10.20 p.m.

This was a friendly meeting although not without some argument. During a break in the proceedings Mrs. Warwick and her helpers served tea, coffee and biscuits for which we thank them.

The new P.C.C. will meet at Wayside at 8 p.m., on Friday, May 7, 1965. M.S.

THE YOUNG WIVES' GROUP

There were two meetings in March, the first was another welcome visit from Mrs. Stevens who gave us many suggestions for our own and our children's reading. Young children love repetition and detail whilst the older ones appreciate a well-told story, so poetry was high on the list, and Ladybird books and some paper-backs were recommended as good value for money. Titles suggested covered a wide range and as we are all at times housebound in books we may still meet interesting and inspiring people.

The second meeting was a discussion evening and we divided into groups and expressed opinions on a wide range of subjects. When results were compared we discovered:

- (1) That we liked the freedom of shopping in the Supermarket, but liked the delivery service offered by the small grocer.
- (2) That it was thought that television was advantageous, not detrimental to modern life.
- (3) That Family Planning methods should not be available to unmarried girls.
- (4) That we thought a Young Wives' Group should include some interesting talks, but should give plenty of time for social activities.

Next meetings: Wednesday, May 12, "Friendship" (Mrs. Brown) at Wayside. Wednesday, May 26, Demonstration — Dressmaking by Vilene Ltd.

THE CHURCHYARD

The wardens are grateful to all those maintaining graves in the Churchyard, which is thereby enhanced in appearance.

A determined effort is to be made on Saturday, May 29, to effect a clearance of long grass and weeds before the Whitsun Festival and anyone having an hour or two to spare on that day will be welcome.

Morning coffee and afternoon tea will be provided.

It is recommended that anyone bringing their own implements, and this is advised, should clearly mark same to prevent confusion at the end of the day.

D.L.

FEED THE MINDS

As a joint venture to raise money for the "Feed the Minds" Campaign, the Hampton Council of Churches will be holding a series of activities throughout the Summer. The first of these will be a Morning Market to be held every Saturday morning from 10.30 a.m. — 12 noon from May 29 onwards outside Milton Hall, Milton Road, Hampton. It is hoped to arrange a rota of volunteers to man the stall from the different Churches and anyone who would like to help in this is asked to get in touch with Mrs. Taylor, 2, Hartland Road, Mol. 7042.

If anyone making jam, marmalade, pickles or similar items would like to donate a jar or two they will be very welcome, and later on, when the stall is going, vegetables, flowers and homemade cakes will be much appreciated.

H.T.

THE MOTHERS' UNION

On April 7 we were pleased to welcome Mrs. Scott Joynt, who spoke to the Branch on "Joy for Living," the second talk in a trilogy on "Living." ("Pattern for Living," was given by Mrs. Brown in October last). It was refreshing to hear Mrs. Scott Joynt speak of the joy there can be, and should be, in our approach to religion and our way of life in a Christian world.

Please make a note in your diaries of the following dates:—

MAY 5. On this day we are entertaining a party of homeless families from a L.C.C. hostel. It has been decided to bring the families to Wayside for an early lunch, and then take them to Bushey Park or Hampton Court in the hope that the mothers can relax for an hour or two while their children play under supervision. Offers of food and help would be much appreciated, and should be made through any committee member.

MAY 10. The annual Deanery Party for Mothers' Union and Young Wives' Groups will be held in the Hall at 7.30 p.m. As we are joint hostesses with the Young Wives it is hoped that all members will endeavour to attend in order to ensure that the evening will be an outstanding success.

MAY 12. 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Brown will address the Young Wives' Group on "Friendship." M.U. members are cordially invited to attend.

MAY 20. There will be no Branch meeting, as this is the date of the Deanery Festival to be held at 2.30 p.m., at All Souls, St. Margarets.

JUNE 2. Miss Armitage will speak to us on "Power for Living," the final talk in the trilogy.

J.B.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- May 9—3rd Sunday after Easter: Holy Communion 8.0 a.m.; Matins 8.40 a.m.; Parish Communion 9.30 a.m., followed by Breakfast at Wayside 10.40 a.m.; Evensong 6.30 p.m.; 8.15 p.m., Open-air Service led by Church Youth Groups, to mark the beginning of Christian Aid Week (in forecourt of Methodist Church, Percy Road).
Sunday Schools: Infants 9.45 a.m. (W); Junior and Senior 11.0 a.m. (in church); Rectory 2.30 p.m. (Rectory School).
- .. 10.—11.0 a.m. Editorial Board (52, Park Road); 8.0 p.m. United and Discussion Group (Vestry); 8.0 p.m. Deanery M.U. and Y.W.G. Party (Hall).
- .. 12.—8.0 p.m. Y.W.G. (W) — Discussion on Friendship.
- .. 16.—4th Sunday after Easter: Services and other arrangements as on May 9, with the exception of the open-air service, and the addition of service taken by Y.P.F. at Laurel Dene 5.15 p.m. and Y.P.F. meeting (W) 8.0 p.m.
N.B. Junior Confirmation candidates are asked to attend Evensong.
- .. 23.—Rogation Sunday; Holy Communion 8.0 a.m.; Parish Communion 9.30 a.m.; Breakfast (W) 10.40 a.m.; Matins (Family and Parade Service) 11.0 a.m.; Rectory S.S. 2.30 p.m.; Holy Baptism 4.0 p.m.; Evensong 6.30 p.m.; Y.P.F. 8.0 p.m. (W).
- .. 24.—8.0 p.m. R.D. Conference (St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham).
- .. 26.—8.0 p.m. Hampton Hill Association A.G.M. (School); 8.0 p.m. Y.W.G. — Dressmaking Demonstration (W).
- .. 27.—ASCENSION DAY: Holy Communion 7.15 and 10.0 a.m.; Holy Communion at St. Anne's Chapel, Lady Eleanor Holles School, 8.30 a.m.; Evensong 7.30.; Parochial Church Council 8.15 p.m. (W).
- .. 30.—Sunday after Ascension Day: Services and other arrangements as on May 9 (but no open-air service!).
- June 6.—WHITSUNDAY: Holy Communion 8.0 a.m.; Matins 8.45 a.m.; Parish Communion 9.30 a.m.; Breakfast 10.45 a.m. (W); Services for Children 11.0 a.m.; Holy Communion 12.10 p.m.; Evensong 6.30 p.m.; Y.P.F. 8.0 p.m. (W).

BAPTISMS

- Mar. 28.—Adrian James Bowen, 32, Wolsey Road.
- .. 28.—Lynne Corinne Guest, 10, Longford Close.
- .. 28.—Denise Lesley Ives, 40, Fairlight, Uxbridge Road.
- .. 28.—Paul Robert Lelliott, 14, Burton's Road.
- .. 28.—Keith James Poland, 8, Cross Street.
- Apr. 25.—Diane Elaine Hargrove, 95, Park Road.

MARRIAGE

- Mar. 31.—David Michael Kelly to Yvonne Julie Dumper.

BURIAL

- Apr. 8.—Arthur Burrows, 26, Westbank Road, aged 79 years (at Teddington Cemetery).