

VICAR'S NOTES

Whither Religion? — Religion constantly makes news. Great interest is shown in its advance or decline. Articles frequently appear in the press on such subjects as: Is Britain still a Christian Country? — or to put it another way — How heathen is Britain? A number of articles and news-items from various quarters recently read agree that religion in this country — at least so far as its outward expression is concerned — is now in a state of decline, and to some extent one's own observations and experiences bear this out. For instance, we are told that attendance at all forms of religious worship is now only two-thirds what it was seven years ago. In the Church of England in the last four years there has been a sharp fall in the number of confirmation candidates and of children in Sunday School. All the Free Churches have suffered disquieting falls in membership. And so one can go on with the depressing statistics. Some see in this a steady drift to a state of post-Christian heathenism, and point to those spheres where percentages are rapidly rising — crime and juvenile delinquency, violence, various forms of immorality and dishonesty, racial antagonism, drunkenness, drug-taking, deaths on the road, and so on.

And yet there are still only a few—two per cent—who definitely label themselves as atheists: and despite the attempts of militant secularist and humanist societies to arouse feeling against all forms of religious instruction in schools, an overwhelming majority of the population — ninety per cent. — want the present arrangements for this to continue.

Will it stop the rot? — Many are pinning their hopes for a breakthrough to better things on Dr. Billy Graham's Crusade here in London next June, for which widespread and detailed preparations are now being made. An appeal goes out for people to help in many kinds of ways—and some of you who read this may feel moved to respond. Others have reservations and doubts, and remind us of the dangers which attend all attempts at mass evangelism. So we must make up our own minds about the matter, after getting the information we need, and prayerfully assessing it.

There is a paper in church for those to sign who would like to receive the monthly Crusade bulletin free of charge. There is a new film — "The Restless Ones". This had its London premiere at the Scala Theatre in September, and it will be shown at York House on Tuesday, November 2, at 7.45 p.m. The Church Council has applied for 40 tickets — we may not of course be allocated so many because of the demand — at 1/6 each, and those who wish to go should ask for one immediately. This film deals mainly with Billy Graham's approach to young people, but it should give us good insight into the general methods and principles of his campaigns.

There are many restless ones amongst us, many bored ones, many who find life lacking something, or not worthwhile and without any meaning; many who seek after God and do not find Him, and many who need to be given courage before they can even begin to seek — and if Dr. Billy Graham can address the Gospel to their situation, then we should support him up to the hilt.

Thanks: To Mrs. Milns, for her splendid gift of skilfully-embroidered red coverings for the altar, first used on the occasion of our Patronal Festival — and for undertaking to look after and repair

all of our church's embroidery. Also to the staff of St. Mary's for coming to our help—in the true spirit of M.R.I.—during my holiday, and so making it possible for most services to continue as usual.

PARISH WEEKEND

In the August issue of the magazine brief mention was made of the decision to hold a Parish Weekend at the London Diocesan Conference Centre at Stoke Poges. The weekend will commence with supper on Friday, January 21, and finish with tea on Sunday, January 23.

A small party of us visited the House recently, and it really is a most attractive place, set amongst very pleasant gardens. The layout of the House is ideal for an informal and comfortable gathering.

The House will sleep about 28 people mainly in rooms accommodating 4 or 6 people, with curtains between and around the beds.

The purpose of the weekend is two-fold:

Firstly to bring about a deepening of our Christian fellowship and experience through discussions and study groups, and generally being together for a weekend.

Secondly to see what practical steps we can take to introduce the principles of "No small change" and Stewardship into our parish life.

We hope to achieve this by frank discussions in small and larger groups, and by studying what Our Lord said about these things. Everyone will be encouraged to take an active part and there will be a minimum of formal speeches and an emphasis on discussion.

Our Friday evening session will be led by the Archdeacon of London, the Ven. M. G. Sullivan, M.A., who will set the pace by describing what "No small change" means in practice, and how the rest of the Anglican world is implementing this new challenge. We feel very honoured that the Archdeacon will be able to come and talk to us on this important topic as we all know what a busy life he leads.

This weekend will be organised by the laity of the parish and its success depends upon effective support. People of all ages (over 16) are welcome—unfortunately no facilities exist for children—and the cost should be about £2-10-0 per person. Please complete the Reservation Slip below and send it with 10/- deposit per person to Mrs. Dawn Harris, 33, Beech Way, Twickenham (Twickenham Green 6468).

A.T.

Cut along here

PARISH WEEKEND

To: Mrs. Dawn Harris,
33, Beech Way,
Twickenham, Middlesex.

Please reserve places for the Parish Weekend—
January 21-23, 1966.

I enclose deposit of (10/- per person).

Name

Address

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YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP

The Y.P.F. with, unfortunately, diminished numbers continued to meet on Sunday evenings throughout August. We had an interesting discussion with the Vicar on the subject of "Christianity and Healing," and as a Guest Speaker, Mr. Taylor did an informative Bible Study on Jude. Although at the time when I am writing this we have not yet had our joint meeting with the Congregational Church's Y.P.F., we hope the event will be a great success and will strengthen the bond between the two churches.

We are looking forward to many interesting talks and speakers during the next two months and, also, a variety of social activities — in particular a barbecue. This will be held, weather permitting, on Saturday, October 30, with thanks to Mrs. Cooper for letting us use her garden for the occasion. Another important event will be the A.G.M. on Friday, November 19th, at Wayside to which all members are invited.

We would again like to say how pleased we are to welcome any young people in the parish to our meetings on Sunday evenings at 8 p.m. at Wayside.

- Oct. 3 An allegory: John Ch. 10, Ch. 15 (Ann Harper).
- „ 10 Temptation and anger (T. Atkinson). ...
- „ 17 Prayer book topic (Seymour Harris).
- „ 24 Bible Study I. Peter as a person.
- „ 31 Story of a martyr. (Richard Melville).
- Nov. 7 Bible Study II. Matthew as a person.
- „ 14 Guest speaker.
- „ 21 Bible study III. Luke as a person.
- „ 28 Beyond the Gospels (Raymond Draper).

L.Y.

FEED THE MINDS

As many of you know the Hampton Council of Churches has been running a stall outside Milton Hall throughout the Summer in aid of the Feed the Minds campaign. This is now drawing to a close having raised over £35. I would therefore like to thank all those many people who have helped me man the stall and those who have given me eggs, garden produce, jam, cakes, clothes and sundry other items to sell.

Our next effort will be a Jumble and Second-hand clothing sale on Wednesday, October 13, at Percy Road Methodist Church Hall from 2.30 p.m. — 5 p.m. If anyone has any good second-hand clothes that are too good for jumble we are prepared to sell them on a 50-50 basis, i.e., the Campaign gets half the money and the donor the other half. Anything for the Sale may be brought to the Hall between 10.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. on the day, or if you would like it collected beforehand please telephone Molesey 7042.

Also in connection with the Campaign Teddington Baptist Church are holding an exhibition from October 14 to 16 which will open at 9 a.m. and close at 10 p.m. Refreshments will be available. Perhaps it would be possible for the Young Wives' and Mothers' Union members to get up a party to visit the exhibition on Friday, October 15, in the afternoon when the Hampton Council of Churches will be providing and serving the tea.

H.T.

AUTUMN ITEMS (ONE)

The attack on the weeds in the churchyard on Saturday, September 11, seemed at first to be doomed to failure. In addition to heavy rain throughout the morning, both our churchyard guardians were unable to attend, Roy Brooks being called suddenly to Wales, and Dennis Leatherdale being even more suddenly laid low by illness. However, the day brightened and a total of some twenty-five volunteers worked through the afternoon to such good purpose that we were able to venture into the hitherto unexplored territory between the church and Park Road (unearthing two nests of wild bees and an aged toad in the process).

The increasingly "cared for" appearance of the churchyard, and the size of the areas cleared by this necessarily limited effort, underlines the improvement made by steady work (largely by the Guardians) over the last three years: and highlights the need for a continuing programme by small working parties.

There are at present no plans for further mass attacks this year, but Mr. Leatherdale will be very glad of help even for only an hour or so on fine Saturdays during the next two months.

AUTUMN ITEMS (TWO)

It would be easy, and very true, to describe the Autumn Fayre held at Laurel Dene on September 18, as similar to, and (despite the weather) quite as successful as any of the numerous fetes and garden parties previously held in those lovely grounds.

Certainly it was a financial success, though the actual amount raised is not known at the time of going to press.

But that is not all. The significant difference about this function was the way in which Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Roman Catholics, Salvationists and many others worked in complete harmony to achieve this result. We should be grateful to Matron for showing us a lead here. Grateful thanks also to all who so generously gave of bottles, cakes, time and effort to ensure that St. James's contribution was a worthy one.

AUTUMN ITEMS (THREE)

The Harvest Supper will be held in the Hall at 8.30 p.m., on Thursday, October 7, following Evensong at 7.15 p.m. As usual, admission will be **BY TICKET ONLY**, price 5/- each from the Social Committee members; and, also as usual, the supper will be followed by a short entertainment.

AUTUMN ITEMS (FOUR)

The Bonfire Party will again be held at Laurel Dene this year on Saturday, November 6. Admission will be **BY TICKET ONLY**, price 2/6d. to include suitable refreshments. Tickets will be available later this month: watch for further announcements.

J.G.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Some of us became involved in a discussion recently about one's responsibilities to elderly parents — that is when they become something of a responsibility, which is another way of saying they need **HELP!**

Now this is a very big subject which presents itself, more or less, to most people at some time.

The tendency these days in this country, when our old people need help is to say they must go into a home — and such homes are being provided by local authorities more and more. This is of course a very costly business to one and all.

I wonder how many people have spent any time in these “homes” — they have most facilities, good beds, food, a place to sit in comfort, radio, television and, a most important item, warmth. Many have gardens far more beautiful than the residents have ever known. Not enough can be said in tribute to the staffs of these establishments who do their utmost to take good care of the elderly folk, some of whom are provided with walking aids, etc.

But — and what a big BUT — they have not their loved ones with them — they have been excluded from the family, and from the little bits and pieces of a home of their own. There are of course circumstances which provide no alternative to the parent’s going into a home, but in many cases, especially where there are a number of sons and daughters, there is really room and money enough to provide the care, but not the will, or love enough.

Quite a large percentage of old people become demanding and difficult to live with and we hear that “he or she will see you out” or “he or she will ruin your home life” or “I just could not cope,” etc., etc. If we have a sick child we “cope” somehow, and our mothers before us would have done so too, therefore it seems very sad that so many give up the struggle so readily. I believe that in doing good we are given the strength, but of course this “doing good” must be done willingly and happily otherwise all will fail in the attempt.

I can hear some saying “It is all very well to talk but” and that is very true too.

As I said at the beginning this is a very big subject so your views might be sent in to the Editor.

It is interesting to reflect that very few Jewish homes are required for their elderly as they are usually held in great respect and only “put away” when their physical or mental state makes it inevitable. Also in many continental countries the grandparents, or great-grandparents, remain the head of the family in the home until they die, and no big decisions are taken without their approval. I believe it is true to say that, in proportion to population, there are more old people in homes in this country than anywhere in the world.

D.W.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- Oct. 2.—2.30 p.m. Scout Group Jumble Sale (Hall).
- „ 3.—5.15 p.m. St. James’s arranges Service at Laurel Dene.
- „ 5 & 6.—Mothers’ Union Overseas Sale (11.0 a.m. — 5.0 p.m.) at Church House, Westminster.
- „ 5.—8.0 p.m. Youth Club Management Committee (Vestry).
- „ 6.—2.30 p.m. Mothers’ Union Meeting (W).
- „ 7.—7.15 p.m. Harvest Festival Evensong; 8.30 p.m. Harvest Supper and Entertainment (Hall).
- „ 10.—Continuation of Harvest Thanksgiving: Sunday Services as usual, with addition of a special one for children and parents at 11.0 a.m.

- „ 11.—Our Mothers' Union Branch, visits Mary Sumner House, Westminster (time to be announced); 8.0 p.m. M.R.I. "No Small Change" Group (Vicarage).
- „ 13.—Jumble and Clothing Sale (2.30 — 5.0 p.m.) in aid of "Feed the Minds" (Hampton Methodist Hall).
- „ 14.—9.0 a.m.-10.0 p.m., "Feed the Minds" Exhibition (Teddington Baptist Church).
- „ 14.—8.0 p.m. Adult Confirmation Group (Vestry).
- „ 16.—2.30 p.m. Jumble Sale arranged by the Mothers' Union and Young Wives' Group (Hall).
- „ 17.—8.15 p.m. Meeting sponsored by the Hampton Council of Churches' Drama Group for all interested in helping to present a Nativity Play this Christmas (All Saints' Church Hall).
- „ 18.—St. Luke: 9.0 a.m. Holy Communion; 8.0 p.m. Hampton Council of Churches — Annual General Meeting (All Saints' Hall, Hampton).
- „ 19.—8.0 p.m. Church Council (W).
- „ 22.—8.0 p.m. B.-P. Guild sponsors an Entertainment presented by the Police Concert Party in aid of various charities (Hall).
- „ 25.—8.0 p.m. R.D. Conference: The Bishop of Reading speaks on "The Lighter Side of Church Music;" senior choir members warmly invited to attend (St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham).
- „ 27.—8.0 p.m. Young Wives' Group (W).
- „ 28.—St. Simon and St. Jude: 9.0 a.m. Holy Communion.
- „ 30.—7.30 p.m. Young People's Fellowship: Barbecue (Connaught Road).
- „ 31.—5.15 p.m. St. James's arranges Service at Laurel Dene.
- Nov. 1.—All Saints' Day: 7.15 & 9.0 a.m. Holy Communion; 8.0 p.m. Hampton Council of Churches' Prayer & Discussion Group: "Prayer" (Hampton Methodist Church).
- „ 2.—7.45 p.m. New Billy Graham film "The Restless Ones": tickets 1/6 from members of the Church Council (York House, Twickenham).
- „ 6.—6.0 p.m. Bonfire Party (Laurel Dene).

BAPTISMS

- Aug. 29.—Bradley John Bentman, 36, Westbank Road.
- „ 29.—Nicholas David Harding, 1, Myrtle Road.
- „ 29.—John Victor Hill, 324, Hanworth Road.

MARRIAGES

- Sept. 11.—Laurence Edward Chase to Shirley Anne Moses.
- „ 11.—Robert Arthur Bishop to Georgina Butcher.
- „ 18.—Brian Christopher Hull to Sylvia Jane Gunns.
- „ 18.—Raymond Charles Dunham to Christina Ann Opificuis.
- „ 18.—Christopher George Gosling to Patricia Saunders.
- „ 18.—John Percival Tollerfield to Jennifer Suzanne Roberts.

BURIALS

- Aug. 19.—John Henry Stewart Gray, 53, Windmill Road, aged 56 years.
- „ 24.—Doris Elizabeth Watford, 43, Wolsey Road, aged 54 years.
- Sept. 17.—James Powney, formerly of 70, Myrtle Road and Laurel Dene, aged 81 years (at Teddington Cemetery).