

VICAR'S NOTES

In holiday mood—I write a few hours before going on holiday and my mind goes back to last year, and I wonder whether this year's holiday will be anything like that of Norway—it was indeed “the holiday of a lifetime”: I should like to go there again if possible, many times! It is perhaps the most unspoilt country in Europe and there is so much to see and do.

It was a very ecumenical party we travelled with—about 25 people from some 8 or 9 different denominations in Christian groups—and as the days went by we developed a very real fellowship and community life. One Sunday I was asked to preach in a plain and simple little mission church on the edge of a fiord—and I took as my theme WATER (you meet it everywhere in Norway, or in St. John's Gospel); on another evening we met in the parish room below, sitting round a long table and had Communion together, passing the cup and bread from one to the other.

We also played amongst ourselves as well as prayed—Francis and I met in the finals of the open-air badminton “tournament”—and, cheered on by the biased onlookers, the young 'un beat the old 'un!

We met a number of very interesting Norwegians and we went as deeply as we had time for into Norwegian history and folk-lore. We scrambled up to glaciers and hill-farms: we admired the tenacity of those in lonely homesteads and villages, many of them with no means of contact with the outside world except by water. We enjoyed the thrill and wonder of being transported by chair-lift above glorious sunlit mountain-side

What awaits us this year? We go first to KVESTEN in the Austrian Tirol, and then to OBERAMMERGAU, the home of the famous Passion play. More on the beaten track than last year, but virgin territory so far as I am concerned. Perhaps I shall be able to write about my impressions in a later issue of the magazine.

In September the parish becomes vitally awake again—meetings nearly every night, much happy hustle and bustle—there is indeed much to look forward to—and of course the Parish Weekend comes right in the middle and if you haven't yet booked it may still be possible to squeeze one or two of you in!

PERSONALIA

A number of our young people have done very well at college and university recently, good degrees have been gained, and awards given. But when we say to one of them “I would like to mention that in the magazine” what a reaction we get: “Don't you dare! I'd die of embarrassment!” We had hoped to put in long paragraphs of these achievements—but we haven't dared!

It seems modesty attaches also to many of the newcomers we should like to welcome by name—and we come to safe ground only with those who have left us and to whom we say goodbye with much regret—we think especially at this moment of the members of the Cox, Hammond and West families—all of whom served and helped us in different ways—the last-named especially by their musical ability (father and daughter in the choir together, mother always ready to accompany her husband's clarinet to our great delight). Fortunately our list of leavers is not so great as in many parishes—one Vicar in North London told me recently that his parish is more like a transit camp than anything else, where few people stay longer than two years; another Vicar

says his church normally loses half its communicants every year. We still remain a relatively stable community from which most people move only because of real necessity such as a change of place of work.

THE PRAYER CIRCLE

There are now 23 members who pray regularly in their homes—a number of them at 9 o'clock each morning—for the work of the Church and for those in special need.

Recently someone who had secretly wanted to be a member but had refrained up until now said to me “I thought one could only be a member if one was on the telephone—it would be too much trouble getting messages to me.” Everyone who would like to perform this real service to their fellows should feel free to join. Just tell me and your name will be given to an “intermediary” who will be pleased to keep in touch with you as and when need arises.

Some members have felt they would like to have regular meetings for study and discussion. Even if there are only three or four who perhaps one week in one house and next in another. Again, please would like such meetings it would be well worth while starting—let me know.

For some time now it has been felt that as the Circle is asked to pray for many and varied needs some guidance in prayer would be helpful. To this end our Vicar would like the Circle to meet together with him to talk over some of the difficulties and opportunities of praying for the sick and those in trouble. Members are invited to come to Wayside on September 26 at 8 p.m. when, after a cup of coffee, Mr. Brunt will help us with his guidance and encouragement.

M.O.

THE BIBLE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

PRAYER AND STUDY

“Pray first, so shall your subsequent actions be animated by the Spirit. How shall you pray in faith and not be answered? You have the promise of the Lord. Blessed and peaceful are they that are content to rest in the promise of the Lord and see His work in their everyday lives. The life of a Christian is not cushioned against hardship but the Lord has placed a life-line in every one's reach. It is His gift, freely offered, and only needs grasping and holding.” St. Luke 11, v. 9, 10. “Ask and you *will* receive, seek and you *will* find; knock and the door *will* be opened. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks the door will be opened.”

The Bible Reading Fellowship (are YOU a member?) speaks about our need—“we are to beat on the door with the determination of faith. The consciousness of need underlies our persistence; it must be our *true* need. God is not unwilling to grant our requests but like a true Father, He knows where our true needs lie and He satisfies these rather than the particular wants of the moment.”

Meditation: How much determination is there about MY faith? and MY prayers and study? There must be a *real* hunger for God in my soul before I can cry to Him out of a deep sense of need.

Prayer: Give ear Lord, unto my prayer, and ponder the voice of my humble desires. Teach me Thy ways O Lord, and I will walk in Thy truth.”

M.O.

A CORNISHMAN COMES OUR WAY

London! Teeming city of over eight million human beings! What thirst for knowledge, wealth and power compels one here. Or perhaps it is a broken heart, a restless soul or the pursuit of some lofty sentiment. Or is it more simply the very magnetism of historic buildings, rambling parks, flowing river or even the colossal concrete shells that assault the sky? Whatever purpose there is no easy victory or refuge from the storm. This magnificent city, whirlpool of new experience, knowledge and impressions, makes a few, breaks several, moulds all. Daily it demands its gigantic sacrifice, engulfing hordes of workers, drawing on their talents, draining their vitality. Then finally satisfied it spews them out exhausted to their homes.

Yet it is not all taking for this insatiable hunger for commercial enterprise and artistic talent, the very minds and bodies of its citizens is in turn the "food" for countless visitors and demanding businessmen. This great offering is surely London's unique contribution to the world and one which justifies its claim to be the world's most exciting city. It gives also, almost imperceptibly, to those very people whose talents it devours, as if some new stature comes out of old limitations so ruthlessly exposed. It enables one to look back on all that had gone before and see the futile struggle from without, to look ahead to boundless opportunities for service of a different kind; to share with colleagues the great task ahead. (What a brain to pool their knowledge all in one!). So one comes to learn the "rules," how much more exciting it is to "play the game."

So stranger beware! This monstrous, fascinating city will emphasize your weaknesses, mock your strengths, demand your all. Your living here is no casual visit to the theatre or sporting event, no brief stop on some journey to another place, not even a holiday from which it is unlikely you will return untouched. You will change! Yet brave man or foolish, innocent or not, there is another side, if you can step aside the maddening race, to see. Yet where? The town perhaps, or country, or some happy combination of the two. Is it tree-lined streets you want, a place with easy access to city, Surrey, Twickenham to Kew? A thousand answers to a thousand queries, but will Hampton (or Hampton Hill) do? For if ever sophisticated country and mighty city found common ground it is here, and here you might find peace. So stranger persevere—a relative, a long lost friend; their friends, new friends; St. James'—life amongst the faceless ones!

B.R.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP

The Y.P.F. have been quite busy lately and have been engaged in many and various pursuits four of which have been memorable. Your reporter has been told that there's no need to mention games in the park so the first all star happening was a very thought-provoking lecture with slides given by a missionary priest from Zululand—this was reported on fully in the August Spire. The lecturer spoke of the social and agricultural problems of his region and perhaps it was this that made the Y.P.F. conscious of St. James's own pressing agricultural problem because a number of them turned out, suitably clad and equipped for hard labour, on the three Friday evenings preceding the mass churchyard clearance scheme and so gave the project a good start. Note—a slight social problem arose and if the well-dressed audience, who came to cheer had pitched in as well even more would have been accomplished.

Owing to the drive—literally—of the noble Alan Taylor and Michael Jackson, nine Y.P.F. members were able to enjoy a long weekend camping in Snowdonia. The culinary know-how was supplied by Ruth Mills and Ann Stuart while the male contingent provided the labour force. Snowdon being there, was duly climbed and several harassed members of the party achieved much balm for their slight post A-level neuroses.

It was nice to welcome back members rejoining us just lately from their halls of erudition and the Fellowship sends good wishes and God-speed to those making, we hope, a purely temporary exit.

O.

THE YOUNG WIVES' GROUP

The Coffee Club was started a few weeks ago for mothers with small children, who sometimes find it difficult to attend evening meetings. So now there are morning meetings at 10.30 a.m. on alternate Thursdays in Wayside. There is plenty of carpet space for the children to play while their mothers talk. A few informal talks are arranged on subjects like welfare work both in our district and among refugees, and living conditions in other countries.

This month the meetings are on September 7, 21 and then October 5 at 10.30 a.m. in Wayside. We are always pleased to welcome anyone who would like to join us.

The Young Wives' evening meetings begin on September 27 with a short service in church, followed by an "At home" at Wayside. All members and anyone interested are invited to come along.

K.B.

THE HOLIDAY WE HAD DREAMED ABOUT

I think most of us have thought about the holiday we should like to take ONE DAY—in my case it was a holiday on a really big ship to faraway places, seeing different people, ways of life and of course—sunshine!

An opportunity came in April and it was grabbed, an outer berth cabin booked on the Empress of Britain for a 9 days cruise, calling at Tangier, Gibraltar and Lisbon.

It was a beautifully crisp, sunny day when we set off for Southampton, where we went aboard the "Empress." On a tour of inspection of the ship it seemed enormous and it was easy to get lost—large lounges, dining rooms, cinema, ballroom, reading and writing rooms, facilities for table tennis and an indoor swimming pool (the water's temp. 74°!) and the inevitable juke box. One could immediately don thin dresses as the ship was warm and air conditioned, the temperature seemed even throughout.

Our bunks were exceeding comfortable and we were rocked gently to sleep, one had to get used to this at first, but it really was gentle as the ship was fitted with stabilisers. It was so quiet it was difficult to believe there were 1,000 passengers, and 500 crew, living on this floating hotel.

Taking in snacks starting with an early morning tray, we were fed with sumptuous food seven times a day!

Sunday services were conducted by the Staff Commander and were well attended by all denominations.

By the third day it was quite pleasant to walk on the outer decks and sit and feel warm in the sheltered parts—some more hardy types

sunbathed. The Staff Commander gave a most interesting talk "Sea and Ships" during which he gave statistics, such as the fact that the cost of fuel used worked out at £1 a minute; he amused the children by telling us that the amount of ice cream consumed would be enough to paint the entire outside of the ship; sea water was continually being converted into water for bathing, and other domestic purposes—he likened it to a large kettle which boiled the salt water, the steam of which was condensed into salt-free water. I have forgotten the number of tons of potatoes, flour, etc., consumed on such a trip.

On the fourth day we enjoyed really warm sunshine, a quiet sea, then most people were on the sun deck and deck games in full swing. We docked at Tangier and looking over the side of the ship we saw the natives in what resembled long sackcloth dressing gowns and little fez hats preparing their wares for the tourist trade. We went on an excursion, pursued on our way to the coaches by these people reducing the price of their goods as you went. Around the town the buildings were white, and somehow did not look as solid as they must have been. Our guide was a pleasant native called Mohammed who was very concerned for our safety and conscious perhaps of the shortcomings of his brethren who were likely to pick your pocket, purse or anything else they fancied. He pointed out Barbara Hutton's villa, British and French Embassies, Royal Summer residence of King Hassan II. Generally Tangier looked very poor, the shepherds on the hills like scarecrows (on land which looked far from arable), beautiful handicrafts practised in tiny rooms off dark side streets—little other industry was evident. In the countryside we saw orange and citrus trees, mimosa growing everywhere, laden donkeys with gaily coloured fabrics covering their load, and on the hills camels giving the visitors rides. On our route back to the ship we walked through the Casbah area. In this dubious neighbourhood one felt and saw eyes watching from every window and crevice. We were taken to a cafe to have mint tea—this appeared to be chopped mint with hot water poured over it and heavily sweetened, ugh! One was pestered all the time to give or to buy—bargaining is the order in Tangier.

After dinner on the ship some people were off to night spots to see belly dancers and the like, at high costs—we settled for a quiet evening aboard. At 3 a.m. we sailed for Gibraltar where we dropped anchor at 7 a.m. and visited the Rock by launch, to see the places of interest and of course the Barbary apes who gaily leapt all over car bonnets and delightedly ate your fruit. The Spanish influence is emphasized in the souvenirs, bullfights, flamenco dancing, etc. The people (including the children) were noticeably clean and neatly dressed. It was refreshing to see the Spanish youngsters playing their games in clean streets, whiter than white shirts, dark ties and trousers, hair well brushed. As is well known goods such as transistors, cameras, spirits, were very cheap, and the mechanical goods were mostly Japanese and German.

We docked at Lisbon next day after lunch. Approaching the quay impressive buildings came into view—one a modern monument to the Portuguese navigators, difficult to describe, but the entire paving surrounding it was black and white mosaic, which we were to find predominant in most of the main streets. On the opposite bank of the Tagus River was a great tower with a figure of Christ on top, with hands outstretched as in blessing. We were told that its height

and size might be gauged by the fact that each finger is 6ft. long. At night the figure of Christ alone is floodlit and gives the appearance of being suspended in space. The story is that this building was promised by the Portuguese Roman Catholics provided Portugal did not enter World War II.

After leaving Lisbon we encountered something of a swell for a day or two and there were a few casualties but our family managed to keep on its feet and enjoyed relaxing activities until we were back at Southampton. It is all now a happy memory—but a not-to-be-forgotten one.

D.W.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- Sept. 3.—5.15 p.m. Y.P.F. lead service at Laurel Dene.
.. 7.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union: Service in church followed by tea at Wayside.
.. 8.—8.00 p.m. M.R.I. Group (33, Beech Way).
.. 9.—3.00 p.m. Laurel Dene Fete.
.. 10.—5.15 p.m. St. James's leads service at Laurel Dene.
.. 12.—10.00 a.m. Editorial Board (52, Park Road).
.. 13.—8.00 p.m. OVERSEAS EVENING (W)—"Life in Sarawak" (The Rev. David Johnson).
.. 14.—8.00 p.m. Stewardship Committee (106, Park Road).
.. 15—18: PARISH WEEKEND at Hildenborough Hall.
.. 17.—Services in church uncertain. Many of the congregation will be at Parish Weekend, but we hope to arrange Holy Communion at 8.00 a.m. and Evensong at 6.30 p.m. for those who cannot go; but there will be no Parish Communion or Breakfast on this Sunday.
.. 21.—St. Matthew: 9.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
.. 23 or 24: Hampton Junior Council of Churches: Young people's sponsored walk to Guildford in support of Children's Charities.
.. 25.—8.00 p.m. Ruri-decanal Conference (St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham); 8.00 p.m. Properties Committee (36, St. James's Road).
.. 26.—8.00 p.m. Prayer Circle (W).
.. 27.—7.45 p.m. Young Wives' Group: Service in church followed by 'At Home' in Wayside.
.. 29.—St. Michael. 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion; 8.00 p.m. Parochial Church Council (W).
Oct. 1.—All departments of the Sunday School reopen after summer recess.
.. 5.—HARVEST THANKSGIVING. 7.15 p.m. Service in church (Preacher: The Rev. A. P. Taylor, Vicar of St. Mary's, The Boltons); 8.30 p.m. Supper and Entertainment (H).

BAPTISMS

On July 23:

Alison Janice Bell, 22, Paddock Close, Lewsey Farm, Luton.
Simon Andrew Collins, 53, Wolsey Road.

MARRIAGE

On July 29: David John Atterbury to Barbara Helen Giles.