

THE PARISH WEEKEND AT HILDENBOROUGH HALL

SYNOPSIS OF INTRODUCTORY TALK by the Rev. Gordon Mayo, Warden of Lee Abbey International Students' Club, London.

Mr. Mayo's work among multi-racial and multi-religioned students made him particularly aware of the tremendous revolution taking place in the Church as a whole. The rapid social change experienced in this country is common to the whole world and what is happening in the world cannot be isolated from the Church because its members are involved in world affairs.

In introducing the weekend theme "Roots and Fruits" Mr. Mayo reminded us that a tree has branches that extend outwards and upwards to the same proportion as the extent of its roots which both anchor and sustain it, hence a tree's outward growth and life depends on what goes on beneath the surface. It was easy to find analogies between our spiritual growth and the growth of a tree. A tree cannot live without water and water is often used in the Scriptures as an analogy of Life—the Holy Spirit. Sunlight is also needed, and again Jesus said "I am the Light of the world." Thus, for existence and well-being we need not only the Life but the Light of God—for individual as well as corporate growth. The fruit brought to fulness by the sunlight grows on the tree as the sap rises from the roots, and the purpose of the weekend was to consider the development of the single and corporate life in relation to the Christian Church.

We live in an age more concerned with the present than perhaps ever before and one which has very little concept of, or concern for, history or the future. The Christian Church, in the proclamation of its Gospel must be aware that, when it lays claim to the historical fact of Christ's life 1900 years ago and its pre-history, this has very little relevance to modern man. (Mr. Mayo's own observations in his relations with his students bore this out). Why are we ourselves interested in the development of spiritual life? Are we merely concerned with the whole concept of spiritual growth and development because we think it will do us good, and we want to improve our status with God? Do we want to feel more content, more integrated, more whole? Real wholeness is the essential soundness and completeness that comes from a right relationship with God, other people and oneself. Why are we here? Answer much more complicated than we first realise.

The Bible shows us that basic temptations of Man are the same in every age. This is what makes the Bible so important—it is a true reflection and representation of what Man is and how Man behaves or should behave in his relationships with God and his fellow man. People tend to hug their relationships with God to themselves instead of giving of what they are aware they have received. Mr. Mayo said he thought that Christians were often the most selfish people in the world, merely concerned with their own feelings. They often go to church to satisfy themselves and are often petty, taking offence at trifles—they didn't like the hymn, the sermon, the Vicar didn't greet them or visit them. Some priests in despair often wondered why they had ever become priests! Basic attitudes and institutions *must* be changed. It is no good going out and pressing people to come to church when what we are inviting them to come to on the face of it, are buildings 100 years old in style and comfort, services designed in a different world of 300 years ago, having no consideration for the particular needs and understanding of varying age groups and couched in language often

incomprehensible and unacceptable to the listeners. Congregations are often living, and thinking, a way of life 50 years behind the times and are often too self-satisfied and selfish to take the trouble to consider the points of view of others or even to be friendly and tolerant. They cling to the old ways whereas if God were to allow all institutions to be destroyed and all worship forbidden He would yet survive in the same way that Christ stood by and let Himself be put to death (at another time when existing institutions were obstructing rather than helping God's purposes) knowing that He would rise again from death and live for ever.

We must recognise and accept the revolution within the Church—this move to set aside the old order of things with its strangled, exclusive and, often, barren institutions in order that the Life and Love of God may be set free in the world instead of being imprisoned as in a coffin!

SESSION I. ROOTS (Bible ref. Psalm 1, v. 1-3). Our active part in the proceedings started with a succinct and helpful description by Mrs. Brunt of the biological needs and functions of the roots and branches of a tree to help us clarify the analogies we were going to make. We were asked what our anchors and anchorages in life were, and whether they were adequate? (The points brought out in all the sessions by the various groups and expounded by the "scribes" can be summed up only very briefly). In general Roots were found to be: God ("except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build"); family, forebears, parents, partners and children (the point was made here that it shows psychological immaturity to cling to the protection of the family circle and to go no further than shelter behind one's religion); habit, environment, friends and teachers, property investments, insurances and, in exceptional cases, individuals could be Christian anchorages (Mr. Forrow was mentioned here). A ship rather than a tree was considered by one group as a more appropriate analogy for these times of rapid change, there being often the need, especially during adolescence, to weigh anchor and seek new anchorages. Good anchors acquired early in life will help in times of trouble and personal inadequacy or when doubts assail. A ship must always have a rudder and what better rudder than the teachings of Christ? Interest in work, family and home was not considered adequate in itself—a real fruitful belief in God was. To be a Christian can be considered in an ascending order of adequacy: belief in mere forms of words; belief in God through personal experience and relationship; personal relationship with God, Christ's Church and the world. The desirable anchorage of common worship could be in conflict with the need for change and the need for anchorages—"something changeless in a world of rapid change." A lack of anchorage or belief in anything leads to purposeless drifting, even in extreme cases to despair and suicide.

SESSION II. ROOTS (ii) (Bible ref. Luke 13, 6-9). We went on to consider what is the necessary manure, fertilisers, and the digging around needed in the busy modern world, and how they can be obtained. A growing relationship with God was considered basic, kept alive, nourished and fertilised by prayer, Bible reading, meditation and discussion—i.e. daily spiritual renewal. The difficulties were realised and a habit should be formed if time is to be made for the taking in of Water and Light in daily renewal. Spirituality unaccompanied by fruitfulness was likened to an incorrectly nourished potato plant which could produce masses of showy, absolutely useless, even harmful.

foliage but no potatoes! The digging around stops the roots from getting stifled and cluttered, the soil from getting stale and lets in contact with the outside world in the form of fertilisers. Love, fellowship, friendship are great fertilisers, as are service to others, humility, tolerance, lack of malice, perseverance and a really sincere desire to be a good Christian. Effort is necessary, patience and the will to work. Success in effort is a great fertiliser not to be gained without the initial effort. Pruning and weeding are necessary to cut out all that is superfluous, repetitive or barren. Correct priorities accomplished greater productivity. Mediaeval forms of worship had lost much of their power to fertilise the new growth. A right balance between solitude and fellowship was very important. *(To be continued)* M.O.

LIFE IN SARAWAK

The Rev. D. Johnson, Vicar at Sibü, at Wayside, September 13.

Sarawak (the accent on the second 'a') is a country about the size of England and with its neighbour Sabah (N. Borneo) lies within the Federation of Malasia, sharing a common border with Indonesian Kalimantan. Ninety per cent. of the country is entirely undeveloped jungle; muddy, swamp, hot and always damp. There are a few small towns and many little villages with their rice fields, small pepper gardens and rubber plantations. Travelling is still mostly done by river, although swamps are being filled and roads are beginning to be laid down. As to wild-life, there are few leopards, large numbers of monkeys, the famous orang-utang (now protected), many crocodiles, scorpions and snakes—the water variety being particularly lethal. The population is polyglot—the ubiquitous Chinese who are traders living mainly in the towns, Malays and Land and Sea Dyaks.

In Sarawak the Church has devoted its main resources, not to medicine, but to education and has built over 70 primary schools—some admittedly rather primitive, and about 10 Grammar schools. The Government is now building good schools but even so the majority of children get no education. Teaching, because of the language problem, is mainly English.

Mr. Johnson was at first attached to the Cathedral of Kuching, a fine modern building erected in 1956, taking the place of an older one which was painstakingly dismantled and erected elsewhere as a parish church. Services are held regularly in three languages, English, Chinese in various dialects, and Sea Dyak. Kuching is the administrative capital and is a pleasant looking town with mingled Chinese and Western-type architecture.

In 1965 the Johnsons moved to Sibü, the commercial capital. Most Christians in this area are either Methodist or R.C., indeed in roughly 25,000 square miles there are only 700 Anglicans. The people are mainly Sea Dyaks, their long-houses, perched up on stilts, often accommodating a whole village of about 20 families, although there is now a growing tendency to build individual dwellings. The excellent slides gave us a vivid insight into what a priest's life in Sarawak must be like; the primitive lives of the people; the journeys for days on end by river steamer or small power boat along lunge-bordered rivers and streams, negotiating the all-pervading mud to bring the Christian message to superstition-riddled natives. We saw a church built rather precariously of Nippa palm, and learned that this primitive building

was the pride of an entire district—not many villages being so fortunate. Mr. Johnson had asked his Bishop if he could bring a priest back with him from England to help with the work, but the Bishop had been forced to say “no.” In spite of the great need, resources are already strained to their utmost.

This interesting and very informative evening presented an undeniable challenge and as we go to press we hear that it has been taken up and details of a project to raise some money, if only for another Nippa palm church, will appear soon.

M.O.

LAUREL DENE FETE

The Fete held in aid of Matron's Amenities Fund at Laurel Dene was very well attended by the parish and sterling work was done by James's. Bottle and cake stalls were organised by the ladies and gentlemen of the parish, our Cubs and Scouts also raised a goodly sum by their sideshows. The young people of the parish ran a very successful hot-dog stall, as well as helping in the morning and evening with the erection and dismantling of stalls. A new innovation this year was a creche run by members of St. James's church with equipment kindly loaned by nursery schools in the parish. Fortunately the weather was kind and rumour has it that the total reached by the last fete has been exceeded.

R.G.

THE MOTHERS' UNION

On September 7, we held a service in church to mark the opening of the 1967/8 session. The Vicar conducted the service and as the subject of his sermon took the story of Queen Esther, who turned out to be the right person in the right place at the right time, this could well be the aim of our M.U. members.

October 4 — Branch meeting, this will take the form of a Working Bee when we finish off items for the Overseas Sale, and accept contributions for the various stalls.

The Jumble Sale on October 14 will be held in the Parish Hall as usual, and we shall be glad to receive anything saleable. Please contact any committee member to arrange for collection, if necessary.

October 28 — the Overseas Sale to be held in the Hall, admission will be by ticket (draw for lucky number), or at the door. Stalls will include: Lucky Dip bran tub; home-made cakes; soft toys; dolls' clothes, etc.; needlework; knitted goods; White Elephant and jewellery; plants; mystery parcel; Christmas stall — cards, decorations, presents, etc.; toilet requisites; grocery and foodstuffs; raffles. **Come and do your Christmas shopping early and support a good cause at the same time.** Profits will go to the Mothers' Union Overseas Fund.

J.B.

MEMORIALS

In response to the expressed wishes of many parishioners the P.C.C. is to set up funds to create memorials to the memory of Miss Lush, (one time deputy organist at the church) much of whose life has been told about in this magazine; and Mr. Stephen Forrow who gave 15 years of sterling service to the church as secretary of the Church Council.

Contributions should be made to the following named:—

Memorial to Miss Lush Mrs. Lucas, 34, Wolsey Road.
Memorial to Mr. S. Forrow Mr. L. Rockliffe, 40, Gloucester Road,
Teddington.

If this presents any difficulty to you no doubt the Vicar or Mr. G. I. Robinson (36, St. James's Road—Treasurer) would pass on your donation.

Various suggestions have been put forward as to what form the memorials should take—the purchase of the proposed Remembrance Book for the Garden of Remembrance; a worthy credence table to stand at the side of the altar (the present one only being a makeshift one); initiate an organ memorial fund; a system of sound amplification for the church; of course the money raised must govern the ultimate decision.

Although a rose garden at Homestead (the old people's home) was being made in his memory it was decided that there should be a memorial to Mr. Forrow in the church which he loyally attended as often as he could despite his disability.

We hope that those who wish to join in both or either of these tributes will send their contributions as soon as possible—now is a good time!—a closing date will have to be given in a later issue of this magazine. D.W.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- Oct. 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, followed by entertainment by the Drama Group, in the Parish Hall (Tickets 5/., including drinks).
- .. 8.—CONTINUATION OF HARVEST FESTIVAL: Sunday Services and Schools as usual. Young People's SPONSORED WALK to Leatherhead, in support of Save the Children Fund (postponed from Sept. 24).
- .. 10.—6.00 p.m. Wel-Care Conference (Mary Sumner House).
- .. 11.—8.15 p.m. Emergency Help: Talk by Dr. M. James, of the Old People's Clinic, Teddington (in the crypt of the church of St. Francis).
- .. 13.—11.00 a.m. Editorial Board (52, Park Road).
- .. 14.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union and Young Wives' Group: Jumble Sale (H).
- .. 16.—8.00 p.m. Hampton Council of Churches: Annual General Meeting (Methodist Church).
- .. 17.—8.00 p.m. Wel-Care Annual General Meeting: "Modern Teenage Problems." Speaker: Mrs. Margaret Bramall (St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham); 8.00 p.m. Stewardship Committee (106, Park Road).
- .. 18.—St. Luke: 9.00 a.m. Holy Communion: 8.00 p.m. Demonstration of methods of artificial respiration (W).
- .. 23.—8.00 p.m. Parochial Church Council (W).
- .. 25.—8.00 p.m. Young Wives' Group: Autumn Flowers and Foliage (W).
- .. 26.—CLOTHING DRIVE in support of 'War on Want,' sponsored by the Hampton Council of Churches (depots at each church open from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.—local depots

Wayside and the Congregational Church Hall. Please bring clothing with at least 6 months of good wear left, and shoes with flat heels).

- .. 26.—10.30 a.m. Mayor's Coffee Morning — for all who feel they may be interested in becoming foster parents (The Salon, York House) 8.00 p.m. Old People's Welfare Committee: Annual General Meeting (W).
- .. 28.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union OVERSEAS SALE (H).
- .. 29.—6.40 p.m. COMBINED SERVICE for young and old, sponsored by both junior and senior sections of the Hampton Council of Churches, at All Saints' Church, Hampton (N.B. No evening service here, but there will be cars at St. James's from 6.10 to 6.30 p.m. to transport members of the congregation to All Saints', and they will also be available to bring them back after the service).
- Nov. 1.—All Saints' Day: 7.15 a.m. Holy Communion: 8.40 a.m. Holy Communion in St. Anne's Chapel, L.E.H.S.
- .. 4.—6.15 p.m. ANNUAL PARISH BONFIRE AND FIREWORKS PARTY at Laurel Dene (Admission by ticket only 3/-. this includes hot refreshments. No parking in the grounds. All children must be accompanied by adults).

PARISH BREAKFAST HELPERS

- Oct. 1.—Rosalind and Clare Brunt.
- .. 8.—Mrs. Edmonds and Mrs. Harries.
- .. 15.—Miss Western and Mrs. Milns.
- .. 22.—Mrs. Brooks, Mrs. Heaford and Mrs. Taylor.
- .. 29.—Miss McIlwraith and Mrs. Stuart.
- Nov. 5.—Mrs. Leatherdale and Mrs. Orton.

Members of the Young People's Fellowship will be available on most Sundays to help with the washing up.

BAPTISM

- On August 27:
Katherine Louise Glasspool, 15, Bushy Park Gardens.

MARRIAGE

- On August 26:
Robert Henry French to Christine Janet Mackinnon.

BURIALS & CREMATIONS

- On August 23:
Maud Kathleen Christie, 20, Seymour Road, aged 73 years.
- On September 1:
Annie Emma Hill, 11, School Road, aged 72 years (at S.W. Middlesex Crematorium).
- On September 6:
Marion Elizabeth Job, Larkside, West End Lane, Esher, aged 81 years (interment of ashes in family grave).