

FEBRUARY, 1973

5p

HALSALL PARISH MAGAZINE



Rector: The Rev. Canon W. H. Bullough A.K.C. (Surrogate)
Rural Dean of Ormskirk
The Rectory, Halsall. Tel. 321.

Church Wardens:

MR. R. HEATON, Rector's Warden. MR. H. SARJEANT, People's
Warden.

Organist:

MR. E. CARR, L.L.C.M., 99 New Lane Pace, Banks. Tel. 85650.

Verge:

MRS. E. HUYTON, 28 Gregory Lane, Halsall.

Services at St. Cuthberts

1st SUNDAY IN THE MONTH

9.00 a.m. Holy Communion
10.30 a.m. Mattins and Sermon
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

2nd SUNDAY IN THE MONTH

10.30 a.m. Family Eucharist
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

3rd SUNDAY IN THE MONTH

9.00 a.m. Holy Communion
10.30 a.m. Mattins and Sermon
6.30 p.m. Evensong with Holy Communion

4th SUNDAY IN THE MONTH

9.00 a.m. Holy Communion
10.30 a.m. Sung Eucharist
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

5th SUNDAY IN THE MONTH

9.00 a.m. Holy Communion
10.30 a.m. Mattins with Holy Communion
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon

Holy Baptism: Second Sunday in the month at 3.30 p.m.

Churchings: By appointment

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ALTERATION

on TIME of

EARLY COMMUNION SERVICE

As from 1st February all Early Communion Services will be held at 9 a.m. There will be no further services at 8 a.m.

1st SUNDAY 9 a.m.

2nd SUNDAY (None)

3rd SUNDAY 9 a.m.

4th SUNDAY 9 a.m.

5th SUNDAY 9 a.m.

The Rectory,
Halsall,
Ormskirk L39 8RN
18th January, 1973.

non-existent, for the face of the land and the sky is always changing and in the open air no day is exactly like another, but the despondency of the monotony can overtake any man.

My dear Friends,

The common denominator of all our lives at the present time is "the moan." Wherever we go and whoever we meet, with few exceptions we shall find someone moaning and complaining about "something," moaning has become a disease.

Many of the griefs and trials of life are unavoidable and we have to make the best of them by facing them with courage and patience; but one source of depression depends to a certain degree upon ourselves. Unless we are exceptionally optimistic by nature, we have fits of melancholy which are not due to any serious misfortune but to the apparent lack of interest in our lives.

Among the burdens which common humanity has to carry is the burden of the commonplace. We strike a patch in which nothing important seems to happen, when we go through the routine of existence, tugging at the oar, faithfully perhaps, but quite without enthusiasm and romance. The days to us are stale, flat, and unprofitable.

This kind of unhappiness is perhaps more common in an urban situation but for those of us in Halsall living so close to nature it should be almost

We ought to combat the mood, for it is a danger to our spiritual life and to submit to it is sin. A Christian ought never to be bored. The wonderful power of God's Grace is there to supply all our needs.

In summer many of us go to the seaside to find renewal of body and spirit. However active we may be, there are moments when we desire nothing better than to sit or lie still and watch the tide move in upon the shore, magic moments when the rolling waters hold us fast in a spell. As we gaze, we see the waves thrusting forward to the beach, wave surmounting and succeeding wave, endlessly. So from the boundless ocean fulness of God's grace in Christ we have all received and we now receive and we shall go on receiving wave after wave of grace—the amazing grace. The source from which this grace streams is inexhaustible.

Grace is a lovely and indispensable Christian word because it describes something very wonderful. It is a decisive event in any man's life when he discovers for himself what the word means. What a wealth and world of meaning there is in this word grace! The goodness of God and the power of God and the holiness of God are all in it And to

that we must add the loveliness and the love of God. Grace is the free, unmerited, uncalculating, outflowing and overflowing love of God in Christ meeting and matching our indifference. Grace is the first word in the Christian vocabulary, for Christianity in distinction from all other religions is pre-eminently the religion of grace, with God the great giver and man the humble receiver. This is what makes the Christian message a Gospel, the power of God issuing in salvation for all who believe. For this reason the Christian is essentially a man who lives by the assurance of grace.

This astonishing grace of God comes to us from a source which can never be exhausted, that source is God Himself whose limitless "fullness" has been made available to us in His beloved Son.

In every age Christians bear witness to the fact that when they go to God he never turns them empty away and that however much they may have received, he has still more to give.

Is it possible that our Christian lives are so full of moans and so deficient in power to attract and heal because we do not pause often enough to realize that God's grace is inexhaustible? As a boy in the twenties I recall vividly the days of depression and unemployment. I remember my father reading from the newspaper about a little boy undernourished being taken to a hospital where they gave him a big glass of milk to drink. He had never seen one like that before. He turned to the nurse and asked "How far down may I drink it, miss?" The spectre of insufficient supplies still haunted him. This is the kind of fear we never need to entertain with regard to God's resources. They are always adequate because they are more than adequate.

When we are grappling with a temptation that threatens to squeeze the life out of us, when we are faced with a sudden emergency that almost unmans us, when we have to carry for years a burden we did not deserve or when life tumbles in upon us, crushing our hopes into the ground we can open our ears to hear the assurance given to Paul—"My grace is sufficient for thee."

Here too, lies the way of hope for the Church. She needs constantly to lift her eyes beyond the paralysing bigness of the Christian task and the frailty of her own faith to the God whose energies cannot fail. In an age of revolution, war, and econ-

omic chaos a Church (that's you and me) constrained and made compassionate by grace can tell men everywhere that in God a limitless power to build up the world is available as they repent and return to Him, their heavenly Father.

Because God is a God who gives and goes on giving "grace upon grace," "grace after grace" we must go on receiving again and again. Our openness to God's grace and our utter dependence upon it is vital in every area of the Christian life. We need God's grace for the inner life of the spirit. We are such fickle people that we can tell ourselves that because we prayed yesterday and will pray tomorrow we do not require to pray to day. We need God's grace for our personal relationships—at home, in the Church, in our work and in our leisure. We cannot be good parents, good sons or daughters, good employers or workers, good students or teachers, good union leaders or politicians without grace. It is grace that prevents us from using others for our own ends and enables us to accept people anew each day with a sense of wonder. We need grace if we are to play our part in the world, if we are able to help rather than hurt. The human heart is so perverse that we can make personal faith and the enjoyment of God's gifts a form of self-preoccupation. We can grow callous to the needs of others, shutting our ears to the cries of the hungry, and the dispossessed, avoiding the troublesome, missing the Christ who comes to be served by us in the least of His brothers and sisters. Grace and grace alone can thrust us out from our stagnant backwater of moaning indifference to the wide ocean of human need until our deepest concern is for the salvation of a world and not simply for our own.

We live by grace. And living by grace means coming to God again and again just as we are, presenting ourselves to Him with our sins, our doubts or fears, our disloyalties and our moans, and relying on His willingness to accept us in that condition. The wonder is that He not only accepts us—He unites us, He changes us into the likeness of His Son.

May you all be moved to join us in Worship more frequently and share with us this great gift of God's amazing grace.

God Bless you all,

Your sincere friend,

HERBERT BULLOUGH.

PLOUGHING—in praise of Tractor drivers

For several days a man has been ploughing across the fields behind the Rectory. the drone of the tractor has been heard every day. When I pass that way with Rod he gives me a quick wave and a grin as the heavy ungainly machine trundles past, leaving its shining wake in the brown earth. He looks as if he would like to break off and pass the time of day but that sort of indulgence is not easily fitted into the tight schedules of modern agriculture and pastoralia. He had to stick to his job hour after hour, carving a skilful pattern of turned earth upon the surface of the field.

I suppose a tractor-driver has the loneliest of lives led by anyone in the countryside. He spends his long days isolated in the noisy, smelly cabin, his eyes fixed on the ground, his body incessantly jolted as the tractor forces its path across the field. He has no conversation, no human company, and little sense of contact with the world around him. Sometimes tractor drivers take their dogs with them and no doubt enjoy seeing them frisk around nearby as they methodically plough up the field. One driver I knew had constructed a wooden platform beside his seat, on which his dog could perch when it grew bored with the endless to-ing and fro-ing. Generally, though like my friend down the Runnell, they work away without any sort of companionship.

There have always been the lonely jobs on farms. W. H. Hudson writes somewhere of walking across the Wiltshire downs and suddenly spotting the distant figure of a boy running across the vacant landscape. The boy, he realised was running hard, and for a considerable distance and was so judging his route that it would eventually bring him face to face with the solitary walker. When they finally met, Hudson enquired with anxiety whether some emergency had occurred to explain such exertion. But no: the boy, it turned out, was employed to spend his days scaring birds off the seeded fields, and his only object was to come close, for a change, to another human being. "Just to see you pass," he said.

That was in the early years of this century, yet I imagine today's tractor-drivers even in our more populous countryside are no less isolated in their working hours, even though they may drive home to watch the television when the evening comes. The only company my local friend had, apart from the

the fleeting glimpses of a stroller such as myself, was a large flock of gulls, which hungrily brought up the rear as the tractor droned along, evidently quite undeterred either by the din or by the whiff of diesel fumes which hung in the air. Quite probably though he had long since ceased to notice their presence so inevitable a part of the ploughing scene have these attendant flocks become.

The lapwings or peewits or whaups or whatever name you give to them have certainly known how to take advantage of the plough since time immemorial, and in many parts of England turn up in their hundreds when good pickings are to be had. But the gulls, who nowadays tend to outnumber them on these occasions, are in fact newcomers to the business. It is hard to realize that within living memory they still occupied their ancient place as birds of the sea and coast, seldom if ever, seen inland. I can remember being told as a boy by the farmer near my home that the sight of seagulls away from the coast was a sure sign of hard weather, the gulls being supposed to have retreated temporarily into the shelter of dry land. Today, as is obvious enough, there must be as many gulls who never get their feet wet with salt water as there are others beside the sea.

This change in habit is evidently a twentieth century phenomenon. In 1909 a science master at Eton wrote to the press reporting the presence of seagulls on Agars Plough: "this is the third season," he noted, "that these birds have added a new delight to our surroundings." Other records seem to suggest that the change was beginning around that time. It would be an odd science master today who thought that the sighting of gulls far from the sea merited a letter to the press. Equally, of course, it would be an odd ploughman, who from within his noisy, vibrating cabin, found their presence a "delight" as he burrowed his way across our wintry landscape.

CHARITIES £4m LOST UNDER TAX REFORM

British charities and churches will "lose" more than £4 million income during 1973 as a direct result of the reform of income tax due to come into operation in April. The drop from £16 million to less than 12 million, is in the amount that can be claimed as income tax refunds under covenant agreements.

At present tax rates every pound donated is worth £1.63 to the charity or church, without it costing the donor a penny extra. But in April, the "standard rate" of tax — now 38.75p in the pound — will become only 30p and each £1 covenant will be worth only £1.42. The Church of England alone which receives about £2,348,000 a year in income tax refunds expects that to drop by more than £800,000. The view of the Treasury is that the change in the income tax system will leave more disposable income in the hands of the tax payers. By this is inferred that the tax payer will be able to adjust his covenant accordingly. The big question facing the charities and the churches so adversely effected is — will they?

CALL TO THE NORTH

On Thursday 8th February at 8 p.m. in St. Cuthberts Church there will be an interdenominational meeting. The speaker will be the Revd. Richard Plant of Manchester, and discussion will follow. This meeting is open to all and it is hoped that Roman Catholics and Methodists in Halsall will join us for the meeting. Needless to say I hope as many of our own parishioners as possible will attend.

H.B.

THE HALSALL FESTIVAL

As each week goes by we draw nearer to this great occasion. There is much to be done and many hands make light work. Will you help us? If you are willing to help make the Festival a success please come to a meeting in the school Hall on Monday, February 26th at 8 p.m. This is a public meeting for all interested to ask questions, offer suggestions and get organised to assist in the great event. This is a "call to Halsall" please make a good response.

H.B.

ST. CUTHBERT'S GUILD

On Tuesday 13th February we shall have the pleasure of hearing Mr. A. J. Hoyle of Southport give an illustrated lecture on "The Coastline of Great Britain." I have seen and heard Mr. Hoyle on this subject and I can say quite without reservation that it was one of the finest lectures I have ever attended on the subject. My advice to you is don't miss it. The meeting is open to ALL.

THE FARMER'S MEETING

On Thursday 22 February at 7.30 p.m. we welcome once again Mr. J. A. R. Neild (Agronomist Leeds) who will encourage us again by giving us the know how on getting more 'spuds' to the acre. Members will remember the last visit of Mr. Neild and I am sure will not miss this meeting his subject is "Maximum Ware Potato Yield". Please bring a friend.

H.B.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

- Feb. 4 Mrs. H. Dickinson
- 11 Vacant
- 18 Mrs. Pilling
- 25 Mrs. H. Dean
- Mar. 4 Mrs. W. White
- Apr. 1 The Congregation

SIDESMENS ROTA

- Feb. 4th—B. Heaton, J. Gaskell E.O. P. Saunders, T. Grimshaw.
- 11th—P. Attwood, H. Rimmer H.S. E. Blackhurst, J. Rimmer.
- 18th—G. Porter, S. Park R.H. J. D. Grimshaw, R. Dutton.
- 25th—E. Grimshaw, D. Sephton J.H. J. F. Smith, D. Dean.
- Mar. 4th—T. Swift, T. Hunter E.O. P. Aynsley, R. Gaskell.

SERVERS ROTA

- Feb. 4 9.00 a.m. Michael Lewis
- 11 10.30 a.m. David Stopforth & Malcolm Serjeant
- 18 8.00 a.m. Raymond Juba
- 18 6.30 p.m. Keith Stopforth
- 25 8.00 a.m. Jim Heaton
- 25 10.30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw & Barry Gaskell
- Mar. 4 9.00 a.m. Derek Culshaw

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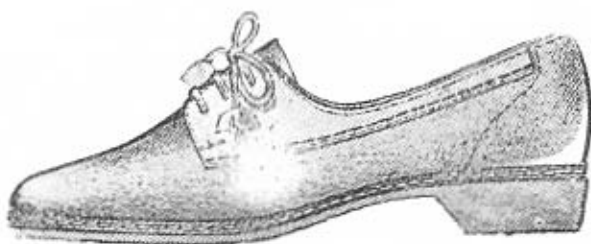
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