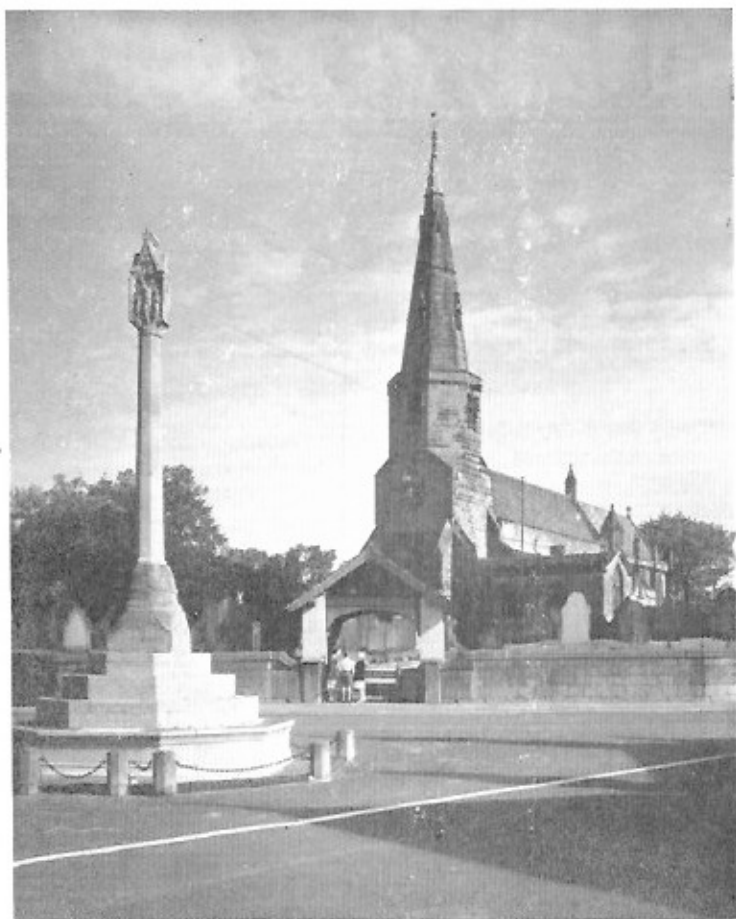


MAY 1960

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# Halsall Parish Magazine



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Halsall,  
20 April, 1960.

My dear Friends,

What a wonderful Easter we have had! How beautiful our Church looked and how grateful we all are to those who gave donations amounting to £10/8/- for the purchase of flowers (19 families) and to those who provided flowers themselves and came to arrange them. A deep love of the Church was shown in the way the decoration was undertaken, and great joy was evident all around at its beauty. The Easter services were good but congregations to me were disappointing—but then—I may be expecting too much. The number of Communicants was well down (about 80) on the previous year, but the collections which were for Church expenses increased by a few pounds. The evening congregation was perhaps the most disappointing of all. I cannot end this retrospect without saying a word about the excellent singing of the Choir at the Easter services. Our thanks are due to Mr. Wood for this. The singing of the Easter carols was much enjoyed by all.

As I write, the sun is shining, and there is an air of spring everywhere. These days are most welcome, and we look forward with hope to summer days—may we not be disappointed! In our parish life the seasons have their effect. Choir outings; men's outings; Mothers' Union outings; garden parties and the like; introduce an element of spring and summer into our programme. Our Church services seem to catch something from the seasons. This, of course, is easily accountable. Easter, the festival of the Resurrection, coincides with the spring of the year, the season of resurrection to new life in the natural world. For five weeks after Easter Day this is the theme of our services. (Easter itself is derived from the festivals of Eostre, a Saxon spring goddess). The Ascension and Whitsuntide continue the theme. Christ ascended into the perfect life of the Kingdom of God, and the Holy Spirit brought new life into the disciples. There is an air of elation in the theme of the Church Calendar at this time which accords with the natural world. Indeed, it is the wonder of the Calendar that through the cycle of the year there is such unity of nature, and the age-long experience of our race.

And so as we wish each other Merry Christmas, and Happy Easter, may I wish you all a healthy, enjoyable, invigorating and refreshing summer, and may none of us forget to thank God, and worship Him for the grandeur of life—especially in our Church services together.

I am delighted to note an improvement in the attendances at the Sunday morning service at 10.30 a.m.

Your sincere friend,  
W. HERBERT BULLOUGH.

### ROGATION-TIDE

The Rogation Days in the Church Calendar are the three days preceding Ascension Day. Nowadays we name the Sunday which begins the week Rogation Sunday. Like so many of our Church practices, this one is a Christian rite superimposed upon an ancient pagan ritual. Long before the Christian era, in lands where the ancient Greek and Roman culture had been established—that is in all Europe—religious ceremonies had been enacted in the early spring in honour of the return of Persephone (goddess of vegetation) from the Underworld, and also in worship of her mother Demeter (the Roman name—Ceres, goddess of the corn, from which we get the term cereal).

Sometime in April in the old days these festivals took place, amongst the agricultural population. In the early morning people washed in a clear stream, and put on clean white clothes. Ploughs, and other implements, were put away speckless; oxen were set free after being well-fed, and garlands of spring flowers were draped around their heads. In the farm houses tables were laden with food and wine. After these preparations, at the time appointed, in each locality a procession formed headed by a priest leading a white lamb. The procession made a circuit of the fields, and at a fixed point the lamb was sacrificed to the gods, with prayers that the young crops might come to a rich harvest. The procession then returned, and the rest of the day, or days, was devoted to feasting and dancing.

Long after Christianity had supplanted the old pagan religions, people continued to keep the old customs, they were rooted in the social life of peoples. Although they had ceased to worship Persephone and Demeter, the habits of centuries died hard, or even refused to die at all. ("Easter," for example, is derived from the name of a Saxon spring goddess named "Eostre").

About the year 460 A.D., there was widespread famine in certain parts of France, and the situation was made worse by the last eruptions of the volcanoes of Auvergne.

Mammertus, Bishop of Vienne, called upon the people of his diocese to join in a common act of prayer to God on behalf of the growing crops, and fixed the three days preceding Ascension Day to be used for this purpose. He thereby gave Christian significance to rites which had been enacted

from time immemorial. The processions round the fields were now accompanied by prayers to the Christian God for the growth of the crops. In 501 A.D., these days were appointed to be observed throughout the Western Church. The word "rogation" is from the Latin, and in this context means "a formal request." It is the formal, or common prayer, or request to God by the Christian Church that God will continue to bring the crops to a rich harvest.

It is good that in this technical and industrial age the Church continues to remind mankind that ultimately we depend upon God for all life's necessities.

Rogationtide services will be held on Sunday, 22nd May. A special form of service will be used at Mattins. It is hoped that as many of the farmers will attend as possible. During the afternoon services will be held at many of the farms. A meeting of farmers on Wednesday, 18th May, at the Scarisbrick Arms Hotel at 8 p.m. has been arranged to discuss these services. All farmers interested are invited to attend. I look forward to a very enjoyable meeting.

H.B.

### THE DAY SCHOOL FESTIVAL

On Sunday, 29th May, the Day School Festival Service will be held at 10-30 a.m. Mattins will be said at 10 a.m. and the service at 10-30 will be entirely in the hands of the children. They will sing, recite, read, collect and in fact do everything. We all look forward very much to having the children in Church and it is hoped that all parents will do their utmost to come to Church on this occasion.

H.B.

### WORLD REFUGEE YEAR

The Parochial Church Council has unanimously agreed to the following arrangements being made.

On Sunday, May 29th, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., gifts for the Parochial contribution to the Parish Council Appeal may be brought to Church and will be received by the Rector who will be in Church ALL DAY. It is hoped that every parishioner will make a gift representing a real sacrifice. Let us not assume that because we bought a ticket for a whist drive and enjoyed playing whist or dominoes that we have done all that we should have done on behalf of these unfortunate millions we are endeavouring to help. Will you please consider carefully **YOUR GIFT** and bring it to Church any time on Sunday, May 29th. The gifts for World Refugee Year on this Sunday are quite separate from Church collections. The collections, as usual, will be for Church expenses.

H.B.

### YOUNG WIVES NOTES

A meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 10th, at 2-30 p.m. at the home of Mrs. Mary Sergeant: the speaker will be Miss Drinkwater, Matron of the Promenade Hospital, Southport.

M.G. (Sec.)

### THE LIGHTER SIDE

#### Balmy

Nothing is funnier to me than the shudders that the idea of country life gives to some townies. I have just heard of a country-bred girl who was chatting to a Cockney and lamenting about being in the town in spring. She was going on about the blue sky, the birds singing, the primroses in bloom, and the pussy-willows, when she was cut short with, "Cor, you must be a religious addict."

#### Ill Chosen

I am never greatly uplifted or cheered on my way by Wayside Pulpits, but I have just seen a picture of one that must have raised a few unintentional smiles. Next to a large notice: "Site for Methodist Church" is the Wayside Pulpit message: "Don't worry — it may never happen."

#### Just Wondered

A priest called at a house in the parish to make contact before a funeral. He met the two grown-up sons of the departed father. After a little conversation one of them said, "Have you come from the Co-op?"

(All the above are reprinted from "Squirrel Nutkin" of "The Church Times.")

Take care of the pence and some day you'll be using the pounds to pay your income tax!

#### Criminology

A correspondent writing to the Church Times sent a newspaper cutting which reported that two young Natives stole from a car a quantity of sausages and a brief case containing lectures on criminology. They used the lectures for a fire on which to fry the sausages.

### NEVER RIGHT

The Parsons' heads are in the clouds!

There really is a dearth  
Of sermons that are practical  
And bring us down to earth.  
They prate about theology  
And dull dogmatic stuff,  
With mystical embellishments  
And other-worldly bluff.  
They rave about the love of God  
To us who toil and labour;  
Why can't they give some good advice  
On how to love your neighbour.  
The Vicar hearing this complaint  
Which touched him on the raw,



The Bishop's final word to the candidates

Church Albums

## What Would You Do?

THE picture on this page was taken after an English Confirmation. The picture on page 35 is of something very different: a Communist youth ceremony in East Germany. What is the link between the two? The article by Miss Essex on a later page gives the answer.

Meanwhile, there is a challenging question for us to face. What would you do if, when the time came for your son or daughter to be confirmed, you had to make a choice between Confirmation as understood by the Church, and a non-religious substitute offered by the Government?

Fortunately for us, that is not a question which we have to face. But it is a question very much in the minds of many of our fellow-Christians in Eastern Germany. The government there is waging war upon the Church, and the sector where the fighting is most bitter is that where young people are concerned. One weapon employed is the substitution of Christian ceremonies such as baptism, Confirmation and marriage by State-sponsored alternatives. Communist officials are supplied with the forms of service for such occasions.

At a time when East-West tension shows some signs of lessening, it is sad to have to record these facts. But facts they are. What is more, the provision of alternatives for the Church's teaching

is accompanied by active persecution of those who accept it. Teachers and public servants who are at the same time Christians find the dice loaded against them when it comes to advancement in their professions.

What would you do—what would we do—if we in our Church life here at home were faced with similar challenges? Would we be prepared to see our sons and daughters go forward to Confirmation knowing full well that the chances are it would prejudice their careers later on? It must be very hard to resist this

### TOPIC FOR THE MONTH

## THE SIGN

*Not ashamed to confess Christ crucified*

No. 665

VOL. 56

MAY 1960

1 S. SS. Philip and James,  
AA.MM.

Second after Easter.

2 M. Athanasius, B.D., 373.

3 Tu. Invention of the Cross.

4 W. Monnica, Matron, 387.

6 F. St. John E., ante Port. Lat.

8 S. Third after Easter.

15 S. Fourth after Easter.

19 Th. Dunstan, Abp., 988.

22 S. Fifth after Easter.

(Rogation Sunday.)

25 W. Aldhelm, B., 709.

26 Th. Ascension Day.

27 F. Ven. Bede, P.D., 735.

29 S. Sunday after Ascension.

*Days of fasting, or abstinence:*

Fridays, 6, 13, 20, 27.

Rogation Days, 23, 24, 25.

new kind of persecution. It lacks the drama of the stake and the rack of olden times, but it is no less daunting, and certainly requires every bit as much courage to face. Only strong leadership and quiet devotion can be expected to stand against it. Fortunately, there are signs that neither is lacking in Eastern Germany. The Evangelical and the Roman Church are equal sufferers, and surely the needs of both at this time should find a place in the prayers of all Christian people.

SIGNET

## ROGATIONTIDE HYMN

Tune: as for Hymn A. & M. 224. (A. & M. Revised 289.)

LORD, speak to us through nature,  
Thine own created world,  
That we may hear thy message,  
And see thy truth unfurled.

We watch thy patient seed-time,  
Thy sunshine and thy rain,  
The glowing corn of harvest,  
The sheaves of ripened grain.

Grant we may grow in goodness—  
Be thou our light and guide,  
So may we love and serve thee,  
From dawn till eventide.

Be with us in the Springtime,  
When life is full and free,  
Be with us in the Summer,  
In our maturity.

Be with us on our journey,  
As we are growing old,  
That like the leaves in Autumn,  
Our lives may turn to gold.

So may we pass through Winter,  
With happy bells that ring,  
And pray that we may blossom  
In thine Eternal Spring.

Violet Buchanan



## The Impulsive Man

... to-day I must abide at thy house.—ST. LUKE 19. 5

IT happened at Jericho, that junction point of many routes near a ford over the Jordan where Jews from all over the world congregated on their way up to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.

This year the excitement ran perhaps unusually high, for there had been for some time a rumour about that a new prophet was coming who, by his own power, would at last bring in the kingdom of God. The new prophet was Jesus of Nazareth, and it was he who, with his band of disciples, was entering Jericho from eastwards over the river. News of his coming had travelled fast, so that by the time he had reached the city itself a great crowd had gathered. And then this strange thing happened. The throng which was accompanying Jesus checked; there was a sudden roar of laughter; and those who looked ahead to find the cause of it saw the extraordinary sight of a little fat man up a tree.

### A Figure of Fun

There he was, a portly, over-dressed little figure with a sweating face agog with curiosity. It was Zacchaeus, a chief inspector of taxes in the locality. Not for nothing was he regarded with derision, for in his case the contempt with which the tax-collector was generally regarded was added to by the fact that he was in some measure also a figure of fun. It was much in character that he should without a thought make himself ridiculous by climbing one of the many fig-mulberry trees which lined the road. The question which no one paused to ask was why he had done so; what impulse had made him so anxious to see Jesus.

It could scarcely be that he shared the fervour of the rest of the crowd who saw in Jesus at that time the new leader of Israel who would lead them to triumph over their oppressors. Zacchaeus, in the tortuous manner of his kind, was for that matter allied with the oppressors: their downfall could scarcely be to his advantage. Clearly, it was something else; perhaps the knowledge, or even instinct, that this new prophet was a friend of the outcast and of the despised; perhaps even the knowledge that another who had himself been a publican, a certain Levi,

or Matthew, as some called him, had already been mysteriously called into the service of Jesus, had left all to follow him, and at that moment, as Zacchaeus sat in his tree waiting for



the procession to pass by, was already among his company.

Whatever the reason, Zacchaeus, holding himself upon one of the wide branches of the tree, waited with excitement for Jesus to pass by. He did not expect more to happen; it did not occur to him that more could happen. All he humbly asked was just a sight of Jesus. And then, when Zacchaeus was actually looking down upon the heads of the disciples, Jesus paused. He looked up, and his eyes met those of the man in the tree. 'Zacchaeus,' he said, 'make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.'

He could scarcely have said anything more utterly surprising. A murmur began among the crowd, growing, passing over and through it like an

angry wave. Astonishment and indignation were mingled. That Jesus should take note of Zacchaeus at all was surprising enough; that he should so far demean himself as to seek to enter the household of so despicable a creature was quite enough to arouse indignation. Yet Jesus took no heed of anyone except the man in the tree, upon whom his gaze stayed unwaveringly. And, strangely enough, the little man himself seemed to change. His whole expression altered. It was as though he ceased to be ridiculous and contemptible. Indeed, as he clambered down from the tree, he became invested with a curious kind of dignity. There was silence all around as he came forward, gravely saluted Jesus, and said, clearly and strongly: 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor.'

### Restitution

The words were distinctly heard, and carried with them an implication which all around instantly recognized. For they meant that the tax-gatherer was stating that he was prepared to make restitution for robbery, in the form as laid down by ancient law in the Book of Exodus. There, at that moment, in the very midst of his fellow citizens, this man who had so often squeezed them hard was seeking to clear himself of all the mendacities of his past. The face of Zacchaeus worked with emotion as he added: 'If I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold.'

A smile lit up the face of Jesus. Laying his hands upon the little man's shoulders and towering above him, he said in a ringing voice, 'To-day is salvation come to this house.' And with that he turned to the crowd with the words which completed the rehabilitation of Zacchaeus: 'He is also a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.'

The words struck home to Zacchaeus himself. But also they had a wider application; for they contained the truth about that kingdom which Jesus came to proclaim and which, because it was thought of by so many as an earthly kingdom, was widely misunderstood then, as now.

### World Refugee Year

WORLD Refugee Year ends on May 31st, which means—to adapt a well-known slogan—there are thirty-one more giving days in Refugee Year. Europe, the Middle East, Hong Kong, the Far East;

in all these areas war has left hunger, sickness, illiteracy, fear. The Church has taken a lead in preparing schemes of lasting benefit to refugees. Have you made your contribution—yet?



## As I See It...

By Rosamund Essex

I HAVE been in Berlin, and while I was there I slipped through the 'hole' in the Iron Curtain. You will remember that Berlin is in two halves. In West Berlin the people live under Western laws; in East Berlin under Soviet rule. You can go from one side to the other by the Underground railway, and if you are a foreigner (as I was) you will not have any trouble either going or coming back.

### A Desolate Cathedral

Everywhere I looked I saw battle-scarred houses and bullet-pocked walls. The Cathedral stood desolate, its steps cracked, its floor rotten and sunken, its statues armless and legless, its masonry standing out like jagged teeth against the sky. Nobody can go to the Cathedral for services now. You can attend services in a few churches. But, as I soon learnt, 'it is better for you if you don't.'

The Communists do not actually forbid churchgoing. But if you are known to be a practising Christian, in the long run it will be the worse for you. If there are flats or houses vacant, you will not get one. If there

are people to be dismissed at your factory, you, as a Christian, will find yourself at the top of the list for dismissal.

### Concentrating on Children

But still the people go to church. The Communists could not understand it. Now they believe that if only they can imitate some of the Church's festivals and ceremonies, they can trick the people out of their churchgoing. And they have concentrated on the children.

They began with the babies. Many infants had been baptized secretly. If only there were some Communist substitute, perhaps parents would be satisfied, thought the authorities. So to-day there is a ceremony of State 'naming' of the child. Parents are brought to the town hall. Their babies are dressed in a special white robe. They are solemnly named. The parents listen to a speech which welcomes the infant into Communist arms. Flowers are given all round.

But I found that the matter does not rest there. Communism has also invented a ceremony to take the place of

Church Confirmation. It is called 'Youth Dedication.' Instead of making vows to God, the child is asked to pledge his life to the State. Dressed in the uniform of the Youth Pioneers, the boys and girls solemnly make their promises:

*Communist official:* Are you willing to join with us and devote your whole strength for the great and noble cause of the People's Socialism? Answer me!

*Boys and Girls:* We vow it.

When the children make this vow they know that it means accepting the Communist idea of life and the rejecting of all that Christ taught. Kurt, for example, was a boy of eleven. (It would be dangerous to give Kurt's surname.) His father was a Churchman, and Kurt had been carefully taught the faith. At first he refused the Youth Dedication vows. Every morning the teacher asked in school: 'Have you joined the Pioneers?' Every child separately answered 'Yes.' Kurt would have answered 'No,' if he had been allowed. But he was forced to say, 'Not yet.'

### Educational Penalties

'Can't I make the vows?' he asked his father miserably. 'I wouldn't really mean them, of course. It would just be a sham. Then I could be like all the other boys, and nobody would jeer at me. And I could go to high school! I want to be a teacher!' For unless a boy and girl agree to take the State vows, the State refuses to let them enter for examinations, go to secondary schools or universities, or enter for technical training.

The school worked so pitilessly on Kurt that finally he gave way, and now he cannot be confirmed in church. And who will really blame him? He was only eleven. Later perhaps, like many and many a boy and girl of whom I heard in Berlin, he will come back to church and ask to be received again.

What will the Church do? In her age-long wisdom she will understand. She knows the strain put upon children, who just want to be like everyone else at that impetuous age. She knows the cajolery; the threats; the fears; the heavy burden of decision put upon such childish shoulders. 'Yes,' said a Lutheran pastor to me when I asked him about this. 'Yes,' said a priest whom I also asked, 'after a period of probation, we receive them back. Who knows what temptations they have been through!'

If you ask me . . .

# ABOUT PRAYER

Bishop Bernard Heywood

**T**HERE is a sense in which everybody prays at some time or other. In fact, so deeply is the instinct to call upon a power outside ourselves implanted in human nature that it is extremely unlikely whether anyone has ever gone entirely without exercising it at some time. For prayer is communication with God; it is the way of communication, and without it there is no contact, as there would not be any reality in a human relationship in which the parties never spoke to each other. So prayer is talking to God. It is as simple as that, and as profound.

Of course there are different kinds of prayer. Unfortunately some people—many perhaps—in considering the subject of Prayer, think only of Petition, asking God for things.

## Kinds of Prayer

Certainly Prayer includes Petition, but much besides. Praise, Thanksgiving, Confession of Sins, Listening for God's Voice, and silent Communion rising perhaps to Adoration—all these should find some place in our practice of praying. Petition, too—for the Lord himself said—'Ask and it shall be given you.' And though not the highest form of prayer, this is probably the commonest; and may be the one in respect of which most difficulties arise.

Are all such petitionary prayers answered? Surely. One of our collects says that not only is God 'more ready to hear than we to pray' but also is 'wont to give more than either we desire or deserve.'

## A Challenge

The statement that Petitionary Prayer is always answered is apt to be challenged. 'My mother' (someone says) 'was ill and I prayed for her recovery; but she died. So you see that prayer is not always answered.' And so on.

Yes—but when, for whatever reason, God does not see fit to give us the particular boon that we seek, he gives us something else; for he has promised: 'Ask and it shall be given you.' Some response is pledged.

What parent would give a little child of three years old a carving knife to play with even if the child asked for



Albrecht Dürer

it? For the parent *knows better*. If wise, he or she would give the child something with which he could not harm himself. And we are the 'little children' of our Heavenly Father; who 'knows better.'

In praying we must remember al-

## The Story of the Early Church

**M**ontanism arose  
in protest against  
unspiritual religion.  
but as a result it led  
to many excesses



Bishops try to exorcise Priscilla for they believe her possessed by a devil

ways to pray to God. This sounds obvious; but it is fatally easy to repeat words—as a gramophone could do—and thus to fail in real prayer, which is a speaking from the heart to God himself.

The Church of England Men's Society has a rule of life which begins 'In the power of the Holy Spirit to pray to God every day.'

I was talking to some quite small children on this subject once, and asked them which time they thought the more important for prayers—morning or evening. A lad of very tender years held up his hand. 'Well, what do you think?' At once he replied 'Morning.' 'Why morning?' To which he gave a very sound answer—'Because the day's before you.'

Exactly—at night we hope shortly to be asleep for hours; but in the morning we are going out to meet all the duties and difficulties—the temptations and opportunities—of the coming day. The morning surely might be considered the more important occasion for prayer. And it is not really a question of time. In prayer quality matters more than quantity, as was taught by our Lord.

The Lord's Prayer can be said quite reverently in sixty seconds; and, on days when we may be pressed for time, it is surely possible to secure, at the least, two minutes—for the Lord's Prayer and one or two other prayers—before we go out to the day's work.



Montanus, a Christian convert in Phrygia, claims the gift of prophecy



In Carthage, Tertullian is converted by the constancy of the Christian martyrs



# Animals of the Bible

## 40. The Cat

IN an earlier note in this series I stated that the cat received no mention in the Bible. This is, of course, correct as regards the Canonical books, but there is just one reference to it in the Apocrypha, in Baruch 6. 22: 'upon [the idols'] bodies and heads sit bats, swallows, and birds, and the cats also.' The Greek historian Herodotus used the same word when describing the animals kept by the Egyptians, and we can be fairly sure that it is translated correctly.

The passage quoted suggests that cats lived in the pagan temples, and this may be the main reason why it was ignored by the Hebrew writers. There can be little doubt that the Children of Israel knew the cat while they were in Israel, for it had become domesticated long before that. Cats probably helped to keep down the rats and mice that would have swarmed into the granaries that Joseph was filling with grain against the seven years' famine, and it seems likely that the African wild cat first became associated with humans through hanging around these granaries; the

priests, realizing their value, encouraged them as far as they could, finally making deities of them. So many cats were mummified and stored away in Ancient Egypt that they have been dug out by the ton and used as fertilizer. It has even been suggested that the connection between rats and the terrible bubonic plague, which made the cats even more valuable.



To the Children of Israel, therefore, the cat was an unhealthy memory of Egypt and it was also a reminder of the pagan worship which they must have seen on every side. These would be good enough reasons for its omission, but there is also another important one. It seems that cats were a closely guarded monopoly of the Egyptians and were not exported to other countries until the Romans took them into Europe in the first century B.C. So it was unknown in Palestine until at least about the time of our Lord, and perhaps a good deal later still.

It seems that cats were a closely guarded monopoly of the Egyptians and were not exported to other countries until the Romans took them into Europe in the first century B.C. So it was unknown in Palestine until at least about the time of our Lord, and perhaps a good deal later still.

GEORGE CANSDALE

February winners: No. 3. Mrs. W. Yates (Brighouse), Miss Amy Slater (Eastbourne), The Rev. N. Hillier (Ponsbourne).  
No. 4. Diana Rees (Burghill), Penelope Faulks (S.W.13), Ian Marche (Goring-by-Sea).

## Fighting False Doctrine (2). A.D. 156 to 207



Priscilla and Maximilla, two of his women followers, also claim to be inspired



They lead out a crowd to prepare for the New Jerusalem, but nothing happens



He writes many books in defence of the faith



Later, affected by Montanism, he withdraws from the Church

## PUZZLE COLUMN

By Richard Tatlock

### 9. BISHOP IN HIDING (open to all)

Using an Anglican Calendar (such as Mowbrays' or S.P.C.K. issue) with the saints of the 1662 and 1928 Prayer Books, make a list of the saints whose feasts are kept on:

Jan. 22	Aug. 5 and 28
Feb. 24	Sept. 7
Mar. 18	Oct. 6
Apr. 3 and 25	Nov. 20
June 1	Dec. 6, 17
July 15	and 21

Write down the initial letters of their usual names and add the 21st letter of the alphabet. These letters, arranged to make three words of 8, 2, and 6 letters each, will give the customary name of a certain bishop of particular significance this month.

Clues: Letters 1 and 3 are the same; so are letters 13 and 16; and so are letters 14 and 15. Letter 2 is a vowel and letter 10 a consonant. In the alphabet, letter 9 comes after letter 14.

Give the bishop's name and the name of one saint in your list who lived in the same century, and say why the bishop is of particular significance this month. All on a post card, please. Two book tokens for half a guinea will be awarded.

### 10. FOUR OR MORE (age limit 13)

Using the letters in the square below, make words of four or more letters.

Rules: No letter may be used in any word more often than it appears in the square. E.g. *Ass* is no use because it has two S's and there is only one S in the square. In any case, it has only three letters.

If you use a word, you cannot use its plural as well. E.g. *rule* and *rules*. You may have one or the other, but not both.

Proper names, but not nicknames, are allowed. Foreign words or slang words are not allowed.

Marks: One mark for every 'ordinary' word. Two marks for every word which appears in the Collect, Epistle, or Gospel for Ascension Day.

Put your words into two lists: 'Ordinary' words, and 'Prayer Book' words. By the side of each word in your 'Prayer Book' list, put C, E, or G to show whether it can be found in the Collect, Epistle, or Gospel. Reckon up your own marks and put the number beside your name, age, and address.

Book tokens for 5s. will be awarded for the three best results examined.

Entries for both puzzles should be sent to the Puzzle Editor, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1. Closing date: May 16th.

E	M	U
L	R	A
S	E	J

# QUESTION PAGE

**4084.** Is it always necessary for the bishop at a Confirmation to lay hands on each candidate separately; or can he confirm a large number collectively if he so wishes?

Although our Prayer Book directs that at a Confirmation a bishop shall lay his hands upon the head of every person, this has not been the invariable rule of the Church, and in earlier times the bishop frequently confirmed by raising his hands in blessing on all together. This method was, indeed, commonly used in England as recently as the eighteenth century, when, because transport was difficult and bishops' visits were infrequent, Confirmations of up to one thousand persons at one time were not unknown.

**4085.** I am told that it is possible to take an additional Christian name at Confirmation. Is this correct?

It is possible to take an additional Christian name at Confirmation. The vicar should be asked to inform the bishop before the service and to give him both names, so that he may use them in the Confirmation Prayer. While it is quite in order for a new name to be added in this way, a person's birth certificate cannot be altered, since it is a record of the names given at birth.

**4086.** Our vicar died a year ago, and we are still waiting for the new one. Will you please explain why?

The main reason why your church has been without a vicar for so long is that there are too few clergy. In recent years

the number of candidates who have been accepted for training for the ministry has greatly improved, but the situation is still serious, and at the moment clergy are

## Question of the Month

**4083.** If God is the creator, must we regard him as the first inflictor of pain and suffering on his creatures?

The Scriptures make it plain that so far from God being the first inflictor of pain and suffering, pain and suffering entered into this world because of man's disobedience to God. The Bible is the story of how God has struggled with the evil which man has brought about, and how he has provided the means by which it may be overcome.

declining in number by about a hundred a year. Matters will only be put right when the problem is appreciated more fully by both clergy and laity, and by their working together to solve it in every possible way.

**4087.** We were told on T.V. recently that birds were flying fifty million years ago. Is this not a denial of the story of creation in the Bible?

The Bible is not a scientific textbook,

but a means by which God has revealed himself to man. This revelation has been gradual, the Bible itself having been written over a period which may be as long as a thousand years. The Bible shows us God through the minds of the men by whom it was written, and due allowance must be made for the advance of human knowledge in many directions. The Bible tells us that God is the creator of all things, and this is as true whether birds began to fly about fifty million years ago, as we have good reason to believe they did, or at any other time. Properly understood, the wonderful discoveries of science should tend to increase man's faith in God.

**4088.** In 1 Corinthians 10, 13 St. Paul writes: 'God... will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape.' What does 'above that ye are able' mean?

In 1 Corinthians 10, 12-13 St. Paul gives us both a warning and a promise. 'Above that ye are able' means that no trial can be so overwhelming as to make a fall inevitable. Moreover, we can rely on God to save us from any trial which is beyond our strength; whatever trial comes we can be sure that he will enable us to escape from it by enabling us to bear it.

Questions on the faith and practice of the Church should be sent to Question Page, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1, with a stamped addressed envelope for reply. Each will be answered by post individually; some will be printed on this page. A book token for 5s. will be awarded to the sender of each question published.

## My Garden in May

By W. E. SHEWELL-COOPER, M.B.E.

**R**EMEMBER, the lawn must be fed. Give it some fine Sedge Peat in the form of Humul. If you didn't spike it in the winter, plunge the fork perpendicularly into the lawn every two feet. The aeration is very important. Keep picking flowers regularly to prevent seeding taking place. As the earlier flowering types finish, cut the plants down to within six inches of soil level. Sow the seeds of the Canterbury Bells, Forget-me-nots, Sweet Williams, Hollyhocks, and Sweet Primroses in rows 9 inches apart in the seed bed. As the bulbs finish flowering in the greenhouse, plant them out of doors and they'll bloom again next year.

In the vegetable garden sow the main rows of main-crop beans, Autocrat, for instance. Make a herb garden near the kitchen door for your wife. Buy a complete set of herb seeds from a specialist. I can give you names and addresses if you wish. Plant out the summer cabbages; sow the tiny cabbage called Colewort. Earth up the potatoes. Don't allow cabbage stumps to remain in the ground. Haul them up, bash them up, and rot them down on the compost heap with fish manure. Sow different varieties of lettuces to

give change in the salad bowl. Include Deer's Tongue, Grand Rapids, Iceberg, New York Giant, Tom Thumb, and Osmaston Gem.

Put Sedge Peat down in between the rows of strawberries to keep the berries clean and to provide the perfect mulch during cropping. You will get heavier yields as a result. If the soil is dry, flood the ground before the peat is applied, then those that are troubled with birds will have to protect the bed with netting. By the way, if you like a very late apple, I find that Sturmer Pippin eats very well this month, if stored in an ordinary shed. Keep gathering the flowers regularly if they are needed for the house, and if not, don't forget to remove the flower heads to prevent seeding taking place. Remove the seed heads from the Azaleas and Rhododendrons



Spike the Lawn

when the flowers fade also; they will bloom much better if you do this.

# THE CHRISTIAN HOME

By Anne Proctor

HERE in the south-west, with the banks and hedges thick with flowers, we cannot help being constantly reminded of the prodigal generosity of God in Nature. All through the Gospels there is a call for a like generosity in men. The sins which Jesus most often condemned are the petty sins of meanness, and not just meanness in regard to money, for that may be almost forced on us by our responsibilities, but meanness in our attitude to life and to other people. The virtues which Jesus praised spring from a generous spirit; they are giving virtues, like courage and forgetfulness of self. The Good Samaritan tells us of a man whose real neighbourliness made him forget all racial prejudice to help another. The Prodigal Son tells of a father who would not try to keep his son against his will, and when he came back in rags, forgot his anger, forgot even justifiable resentment, and gave him a welcome. And that welcome is contrasted with the older brother's natural but ungenerous jealousy. In the Christian home we mothers need to watch ourselves lest we fail in these things. We can so easily make even our apparent unselfishness a chain to hold and to bind our children. I have heard mothers keep daughters from marriage or some other vocation by harping on some phrase like 'I sacrificed myself for my children,' or by showing resentment over any new experience they have. We have to live at our own cost, not at the cost of another's good or happiness. We must learn not only to pray, but to act on the words 'to give and not to count the cost.'

## The Fatted Calf

A reader, who has written to me so often over the past few years that I feel that I almost know her, has sent me this comment on the parable of the Prodigal Son. As the Sunday School teacher neared the end of the story she said, 'But amid all the rejoicing there was one to whom the younger son's return did not bring pleasure or gaiety. There was one who did not like the idea of the banquet at all, but who felt resentful and unhappy at the father's words. Now who do you think that was?' There was a pause and then a rather sad voice said, 'I should think it was the fatted calf.'

## Gold Cake

Two readers have sent me almost the same recipe to use up the yolks of eggs after making meringues, or snow cake or queen pudding, which only need the whites. You need either two sandwich tins (8 in.) or one ordinary cake tin,

greased and floured. Then cream together 3 oz. marg. and 10 oz. sugar. Beat thoroughly 4 or 5 egg yolks, and blend these with the creamed fat and sugar. Sift together 7 oz. self-raising



Reading in the Garden

D. E. Tyler

flour, 2 teaspoonfuls of baking powder and  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoonful of salt. Stir this mixture into the fat, etc., alternately with spoonfuls of a mixture of 6 oz. milk,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoonful of lemon extract and  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoonful of vanilla. Pour into the prepared pans and bake about 25 to 30 mins. for sandwich tins, or 35 to 40 mins. for cake tin, in moderate oven (350 deg. F.). (Miss P. B.,

Roehampton, Mrs. J. F., Leatherhead.)

## Fluffy Oat Cake

Cream 8 oz. castor sugar with 4 oz. marg. Add the well-beaten yolks of four eggs, and mix well. Add 4 oz. porridge oats, and then 4 oz. of sieved self-raising flour, a teaspoonful of salt. Blending this into the fat, etc., with 4 tablespoonfuls of milk. Lastly fold in the whites beaten till stiff, alternating again with another 2 oz. flour. Bake in a grease-lined tin in a moderate oven until ready. (Mrs. M. C., Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire.)

## Ladyship Rings

Mix together  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. flour, 3 oz. rice flour, with a pinch of salt. Rub in 2 oz. butter and 3 oz. lard until fine, then add 1 dessertspoonful of milk, adding slowly to make a paste. Roll out and cut into rounds using a fluted cutter. Make a hole in the centre of each half of the round using a thimble. Bake in a slow oven, and when cold place a biscuit with the hole on top of one without, filling the hole with jam. Ice round with vanilla icing. (Mrs. A. S., Blackpool, Lancs.)

## A Bag of Tricks

If tough substances like leather cannot be cut even with the sharpest knife in the house, try heating the knife. This usually does the trick. (Mr. M. B., Leeds.) Rub household soap over bandages worn by injured cat or dog. Once tasted, they will leave the bandages alone. (Mrs. E. M. R., Barwell.) Use old nylons, cut up into small pieces, to stuff cushions. Then the whole cushion can be washed and easily dried. (Mrs. M. P., Cleethorpes.)

# The Man About the House

By VICTOR SUTTON

IN May we have plenty to do. It is a very good time to start to look round the outside of the property. Before you are plenty of long evenings and jobs on the outside of your property (if you own it) can save you many pounds before winter sets in.

Start to look for drips down any of the cement pillars. Just a tinge of green on the cement surface is enough. It does not turn that colour naturally. My first guess here is that a gutter is leaking. On the matter of gutters, these cost a very hefty sum these days. Yet for the very low cost of 7s. a tin of thick, black and very effective preservative can be had. All you do is clean out the gutter well with a stiff hair brush. See that all rough rust scales are off, and a good wire brush will do this. Sandpaper well to get a smooth surface. Then float in the

black bituminous paint. Cracks, gaps and slight breaks will all fill up. Just one thing, watch the weather.

Once again, on the soft and mellowed bricks we may see a slight green shade, sometimes a brown and green. This is the wet getting into the pores of the bricks. Clean over with a wire brush to get this off. To-day, at most 'Do-it-yourself' shops you can get very good liquid and transparent materials with which to remedy this, once and for all. It is mostly the brickwork on the lower part of the house which needs attention. I have tried four types and they are all exceptionally good, but I must say that it pays to read the instructions so that you really do do the job at the right time. I cannot be too insistent on that point, because so many failures I know are due to this failing.





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Dilated on the second great  
 Commandment of the Law.  
 He spoke of Christian fellowship,  
 And social equity ;  
 Of justice and of brotherhood  
 And selfless charity.  
 But still his people criticised  
 (He found it very odd)  
 "Why can't he take the Good Old Book  
 And preach the Love of God ?"

### UNCONFIRMED MARVEL

Oh, Vicar, thank you terribly for asking after  
 Joey ;  
 His progress all the term has been phenomenally  
 showy.  
 The school report was **wonderful**, and even on  
 vacation,  
 He's feverishly busy with unending occupation :  
 He's working on the radio to make it pre-selective,  
 And reading criminology, to be a great detective ;  
 And while his scholarship exam is pending a  
 decision,  
 He's mastering the principles of modern television.  
 He understands the mysteries of synchrony and  
 scanning  
 And here's a little sketch of appartus that he's  
 p'anning.  
 He made a lovely aeroplane with accurate dihedral,  
 And built a perfect replica of Exeter Cathedral ;  
 He's classified a thousand trains, observed on rail-  
 way stations,  
 And catalogued the foreign stamps of ninety-seven  
 nations.  
 He'd join your Confirmation Class but Dad and  
 I have banned it,  
 You see, we feel **he's just a bit too young to  
 understand it.**

### QUESTION AND ANSWER

Is it correct to place flower vases on an 'English'  
 altar ?

For at least the first nine centuries of the Christ-  
 ian era the altar was regarded as the focal point  
 of a church, and nothing was permitted on it  
 that was not absolutely essential for the celebra-  
 tion of Mass. From the ninth century until the  
 Reformation the surroundings of the altar became  
 more ornate. In England it was usual to protect it  
 with posts and curtains, with a small reredos  
 behind, and on the Continent elaborate retables  
 and towering structures with figures, columns, and  
 paintings became common. Even so, nothing  
 except two candlesticks, the Missal, and the altar  
 vessels were normally allowed on the altar itself.

After the Reformation the Roman Church intro-  
 duced tabernacles, and in the smaller churches  
 flower vases for real or artificial flowers also  
 began to be placed on the altar. Flower vases on  
 the altar were introduced in English churches in  
 the last century, following Continental practice,  
 but it is preferable for flowers to be placed near  
 the altar rather than on it.

### THE CHURCH COMMISSIONERS FOR ENGLAND

#### 1. The Church Commissioners and the Clergy

A great deal of popular misconception exists as  
 to what the Church Commissioners **do** ; what they  
 do **not** do ; and what, in the view of some they  
**ought** to do. The purpose of this and the succeed-  
 ing article next month is to remove this miscon-  
 ception and to give the facts to as many people  
 as possible.

#### 2. The Commissioners' Duties

The Commissioners' primary duty is to make  
 better provision for the "cure of souls." Within  
 this phrase, and under Acts of Parliament and  
 Measures of the Church Assembly, are included :

##### 1. Financial Duties

- Additions to the stipends of the clergy.
- The payment of pensions to retired clergy.
- Help in providing the clergy more suitable  
 houses than some of them have at present.
- Help in providing churches, church halls  
 and houses for the clergy in the new hous-  
 ing areas to which the population is shifting.
- Making grants of capital to particular livings  
 to match gifts of lay benefactors.

##### 3. Assets

The Commissioners' capital assets, producing the  
 income from which they carry out their financial  
 duties, comes from various sources. The most  
 important are ancient church endowments, the  
 former possessions of the bishoprics and cathedral  
 chapters, and funds of particular livings of which  
 they are trustees. These assets have accumulated  
 over the years and gifts from the laity are vitally  
 necessary if they are to be materially increased in  
 future. (The value of these assets does, of course,  
 in common with other funds, appreciate or depre-  
 ciate according to the economy of the country).

##### 2. Administrative Duties

Decisions, after considering  
 the views of all concerned, on :

- Uniting parishes, and arranging for two or  
 more to become the responsibility of one  
 clergyman.

- (b) The formation of new parishes.
- (c) The alteration of parish boundaries.
- (d) The demolition, or the appropriation to other uses, of churches which are no longer required for regular services, and where necessary the sale of the sites.

The Commissioners' duties and their powers to make grants do **not** include:

- (a) The upkeep of the fabric of churches and cathedrals (with a few special exceptions), and the running expenses, including lighting and heating.
- (b) The training of the clergy.
- (c) Missionary work, at home and abroad.

Indeed the Commissioners pay for all pensions, and about 6/7ths of stipends, it is probably true to say that they pay only about half of the total annual expenses of the Church of England. The other half comes from the laity.

It is to be emphasised that no part of the Commissioners' income comes from the State by way of grant or in any form, so that no taxpayer or ratepayer is making any contribution unless he does so directly out of his own pocket.

### MOTHERS' UNION

Our next meeting is on May 3rd in the School Hall. The speaker is Mrs. Dilestone of Liverpool.

The Deanery Festival this year is at Maghull on May 30th. There are 32 seats reserved for Halsall Mothers' Union and seven of our ladies have offered to use their cars to take members. Those wishing to go are asked to give their names either to the secretary or any member of the committee as early as possible.

### ALTAR FLOWER ROTA

- May 8th—Mrs. Serjeant, Mrs. Howard.
- May 15th—Mrs. Forshaw.
- May 22nd—Mr. E. Lord.
- May 29th—Mrs. E. Grimshaw.
- June 5th—The Congregation. (Donations please, to the Wardens).

### CONFIRMATION 1960

The Lord Bishop of Liverpool will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation on Whitsunday at 6-30 p.m.

### SIDESMEN'S ROTA

- 10-30 a.m. 6-30 p.m.
- May 8th—H. Prescott, H. Gaskell, R. Lewis, R. Dutton.
- May 15th—E. Grimshaw, R. Brett, C. Aindow, T. Forshaw.
- May 22nd—E. Serjeant, H. Guy, J. Huyton, S. Parks.

May 29th—

The Children.

R. Gaskell, H. Baldwin.

June 5th—

W. Jenkinson, T. Sismey.

J. Cheetham, E. Battersby.

### HOLY MATRIMONY

"Those whom God hath joined."

March 26th—Brian Davies of Green Kettle Farm, Halsall, and Norah Gaskell of Green Kettle Farm, Halsall.

April 16th—James Stanley Prescott of 122 Liverpool Road, Maghull, and Ellen Sephton of White House Farm, Barton.

### BURIAL OF THE DEAD

"In sure and certain Hope."

Apr. 25 Mary Alice Rimmer of Renacre Cottages Renacre Lane, Halsall aged 71.

Apr. 26 Emma Edge, 8 Dawson Road, Burscough aged 74  
John Hardy Pounds, 1 Council Houses, Carr Moss Lane, aged 49

### ALTAR ROTA

8 a.m.

11-30 a.m.

- May 8th—Peter Balmer. Harold Grimshaw.
- May 15th—Alan Hanson. Peter Balmer.
- May 22nd—Norman Jenkinson. Job Grimshaw.
- May 29th—Peter Balmer. Harold Grimshaw.

### CHURCH COLLECTIONS

	F.W.O.			Cash		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Totals carried forward ...	84	19	0	124	9	3
27th March—						
Fourth Sunday in Lent						
8 a.m. ...					18	0
10-30, 2-30 & 6-30 ...	11	4	0	8	2	6
3rd April—						
Fifth Sunday in Lent						
8 a.m. ...					1	5
10-30 a.m. & 6-30 p.m.	7	1	9	7	2	9
10th April—Palm Sunday						
8 a.m. ...					1	13
10-30 a.m. & 6-30 p.m.	7	9	0	8	2	2
17th April—Easter Day						
7 & 8 a.m. ...					15	9
9 a.m. Shirdley Hill ...					2	6
10-30, 2-30 & 6-30 ...	13	18	6	25	19	2
24th April—Low Sunday						
8 a.m. ...					15	6
10-30 a.m. & 6-30 p.m.	6	16	3	7	8	5
Mid-Week Services ...					29	5

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