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PLANNED GIVING!

Someone remarked the other day, perhaps unkindly, that whenever you see two or three priests gathered together, you can be sure that they are talking about MONEY. Unkind or not, there is more than a grain of truth in the remark. Some may do it because they like it, but most do it because they have to, for the job of raising enough money is a very real one. And it is a job that the Church in this country is only just beginning to tackle in a thoroughgoing way.

UN-PLANNED BEGGING

Consider what has gone on for so long in practically every parish in the country. In order to bridge the yearly widening gap between what was being put into the collection plate and the rising cost of heating, lighting, salaries, repairs, printing, building, Diocesan demands and the crying needs of the Mission Field, every Vicar and P.C.C. were forced to take action. It is perhaps not surprising that this was done in a series of first-aid operations; urgent needs had to be met by immediate efforts. Their variety and ingenuity call for nothing but praise. Bazaars (the East helping out the West!), "Bring and Buys," Concerts, Whist and Beetle and Domino Drives, Miles of Pennies, Raffles, Jumble Sales, Saving Salvage and Silver Paper, and even Football Pools. We know them all so well. But because they are now so familiar the effect in the end has been to present the degrading spectacle of the Church of Christ everlastingly begging and money-raising. Most people have forgotten that the Church exists to GIVE; they half despise it as an organisation which exists to BEG.

The time has come to call a HALT.

OUR EARNEST NEED

But before we begin thinking of a new start, let us ask ourselves what our greatest need is. Here, at St. Cuthbert's, we might well, on the face of it, immediately reply READY CASH. It takes just over £40 a week to keep this Church and Parish going at all. In addition there is still a debt of about £3,000 to pay off on the School Hall. In addition again there is the far more desperate need of the Church Overseas, for Priests, Doctors, Nurses, Church buildings, Hospitals and Schools. We could do worse, you might say, than to go to all our people with a clear statement of our needs.

But I believe that would be to trudge on in the old treadmill which we want to escape. For there is a greater need than money. It is OUR NEED TO GIVE.

POCKETS AS WELL AS PRAYERS

If I, as a Christian, recognise God's claim on my life, for I am His, body and soul, then I must recognise His claim on my possessions as well as my prayers. But it is more than a kind of Divine Income Tax. God not only made me, but He loved me when doing it, and still loves me in spite of everything. We see that in the death of Jesus on the Cross. God so loved the world (that is you and me) that He gave His only Son, to save us from ourselves, from sin, misery, death. He gives to us His Holy Spirit to guide, comfort (strengthen) and inspire us. He gives us His life in Holy Communion. There is no end to His Giving. If I really accept that, then I shall know what it means to WANT TO GIVE BACK. And sometimes the acid test of our response to God's LOVE is what comes from our pocket as well as from our lips.

THE FUTURE

The Church Council is giving a great deal of prayer and thought and discussion to all this. We are convinced that this lesson, OUR NEED TO GIVE IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVE, is what God is calling us to learn in this Parish. We shall have to learn it the hard way, and we shall have to learn much of it on our knees. It will be a kind of a Parish MISSION. It will make 1960 a searching time for us all. But it will make 1960 a year to remember. Great things are going to happen. If you pray hard, and work hard, and think straight, there will not only be money enough to pay our way and money to give away, but many other blessings upon us all. This challenge comes from God to you. Will you help us when we start OUR PLANNED GIVING CAMPAIGN?

WHAT CAN I DO NOW?

Two things. First of all, keep an open mind about all this. Wait until you hear all the facts and the reasons that have led us to embark on this. There will be a lot of rumours; most of them will be exaggerated.

Secondly, please pray for God's guidance and blessing on all of us.

HYMNS (2)

It is very difficult to give an exact definition of a hymn. Perhaps the most famous definition is that by St. Augustine who was rather fond of trying to define things. "Hymns are praises to God with singing; hymns are songs containing praises to God. If there be praise and not be praise of God, it is not a hymn. If there is praise of God and it is not sung, it is not a hymn."

Now it is just possible to quibble with that definition and say that it is too narrow, but at least it bears out something that we tried to say in last month's article about hymns — that the best hymns have as their subject-matter God and his redeeming acts, not us and our ever-changing feelings.

We said last month that words were more important than tunes. That is true; but if we are to follow St. Augustine's definition that a hymn is not a hymn unless it is sung, then it seems that we must, if we are to attempt to cover the subject of hymns at all completely, say a word about hymn tunes.

Let it be said at the outset that it is with some considerable trepidation that the author of these two articles approaches this topic. We all have rather fixed and somewhat strong opinions about this matter, and like St. Paul on one occasion "I speak as a fool," not being in any sense a musician, but perhaps a deficiency in technical knowledge may even help to commend what one has to say.

Whatever our own particular foibles and fancies for hymn tunes may be, I think perhaps we could all agree that for a hymn tune to be a good one it must incorporate the following three points,

1. it must help to express the meaning of the words,
2. it must be simple.
3. it must be 'singable.'

1. If, as we have contended, the words are the really important things, it is obvious that the music we use in Church must be such that it helps us to make sense of what we are singing. If this is not the case, we had far better cut out the music and say the Service rather than use music which distracts our attention. This principle applies to hymn tunes as well as to the rest of 'church' music. A great hymn of praise like "Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven" requires a majestic and stirring tune quite different from the sort of tune suitable for a hymn like "At even ere the sun was set."

2. When the compilers of the English Hymnal were writing the preface to that book, they wrote these words: "The usual argument in favour of bad music is that the fine tunes are doubtless musically correct, but that the people want 'something simple'." Now the expression 'musically correct' has no meaning; the only correct music is that which is beautiful and noble. As for simplicity, what could be simpler than 'St Anne' or 'The Old Hundredth,' and what could be finer? A hymn tune must be simple; it must be such that it is easily picked up by those whose ears are not necessarily musically trained. A con-

gregation cannot sing the same type of music that we hear Cathedral choirs sing, nor should it be expected to do so, but it must be prepared to learn new tunes which are simple and good.

3. It is possible for someone to write a hymn tune which is musically very good, which is simple, and which expresses the words of the hymn, and yet it need not be a good hymn. Something is lacking, and that is 'singability.' This is something which cannot be defined; a hymn tune either has it, or it hasn't. And you can't tell whether it has or not until you actually sing it in a congregation.

You might like to browse through a hymn-book sometimes and make a list of tunes which you think have got this quality of 'singability.' How about starting with A. & M. 604, 753, 555, 724; and if your politics tend towards the extreme left you might include 360 whose tune is called 'Moscow.'

RECTOR'S LETTER

My dear Friends,

From the various comments and criticisms made to me during the past two weeks it is quite clear that our experiment at Evensong on Sunday, 11th September, has aroused much interest and our efforts were appreciated. Many people have expressed their appreciation of our efforts to help them understand the various musical parts of the service and not a few have insisted that the "Morning Congregation" be put through the same drill. This we shall no doubt do in due course. The next evening practice will be on Sunday, October 9th, when we shall concentrate on the "Said" parts of the service. I am grateful to the Organist and the Choir for their co-operation in this important part of our work.

As I write this letter many of the farmers are struggling to cut and "get" the corn, and here am I about to say how much I am looking forward to Harvest Festival — my first — in Halsall. On the face of it it is quite ridiculous to be holding Harvest Festival services when we know full well the Harvest is nowhere near "gathered in." Surely the end of October is a much better time in this country to hold the Harvest Festival. I would appreciate the opinion of farmers on this point so that next year we might be more realistic and not hold ourselves up to ridicule. Nevertheless, Harvest Festival early or late, I wish you all a good Harvest and a satisfactory "conclusion" to the whole matter.

When this magazine reaches you Summer Time will have ended and that puts "paid" to much of our evening work outside in our gardens and fields. We begin to meet more often in the School Hall. I look forward to many enjoyable evenings



Old Wine in New Bottles

EVER heard of a talking book? Maybe not, but such things do exist, and we have one before us now in the form of a disc¹ labelled 'The Story of Jesus, narrated by John Betjeman.'

This is really an extraordinary development, when you come to think of it. For that matter, so is the boom in sales of discs of all sorts which has been a feature of the last few years.

Why exactly this has come about seems a bit of a mystery. Partly, no doubt, it could be a long-term effect of the radio and television habit. There is certainly evidence to show that in some respects television has sent more people to books than ever before. Libraries have, for instance, more than once reported a heavy demand for some book or other, the story of which was being serialized on television. But this would seem to be the exception to the rule that the habit of reading is, among some kinds of people, giving place in popularity to other means of communication.

The whole business opens up fascinating possibilities. After all, reading, by which the eye scans little marks on paper and transfers the message thereof to the brain, is only one means of communication. The essence of communication, at any time, is that the thoughts of one mind shall be transferred to another mind—yours or mine. The means by which they are

transferred is incidental. And though it is quite clear that books and the printed word will always hold pride of place, yet it is surely good that the possibilities of others should be recognized and made good use of as opportunity arises.

From time to time man has tried various kinds of communication. He has scratched his messages on stone; he has written with a stylus on wax; he has written on parchment; he has printed on paper. He has spoken, and sung, and preached

his messages. Of recent years he has recorded his words on magnetic tape or on discs, or he has projected his image on to the end of a television tube. The fact of the matter is that the means of communication, like the means of travel, are, in this age of constant change, expanding rapidly and creating new tastes and fashions as they do so.

There is, therefore, something significant about this particular talking book labelled 'The

TOPIC FOR THE MONTH

THE SIGN

Not ashamed to confess Christ crucified

No. 670

VOL. 56

OCTOBER 1960

- 1 S. Remigius, B., c. 530.
- 2 S. Sixteenth after Trinity.
- 4 Tu. Francis of Assisi, 1226.
- 6 Th. Faith, V.M., c. 304.
- 9 S. Seventeenth after Trinity. Denys, B.M.
- 13 Th. Translation of King Edward the Confessor.
- 16 S. Eighteenth after Trinity.
- 17 M. Etheldreda, Qu. Abbess, 679.
- 18 Tu. St. Luke, E.
- 23 S. Nineteenth after Trinity.
- 25 Tu. Crispin and Crispinian, MM.,
- 26 W. Alfred, K., 899. [303.]
- 28 F. SS. Simon and Jude, AA.MM.
- 30 S. Twentieth after Trinity.

Days of fasting, or abstinence:

Fridays, 7, 14, 21, 28; Thursday, 27; Monday, 31.

Story of Jesus.' There is something impressive and touching about the appearance in this startlingly new form of one of the oldest and certainly the greatest story in the world—the story of Jesus. Down the ages this has been communicated in many forms: spoken in countless tongues; written and printed in many languages. This is the old, imperishable wine of the Gospel of Christ. That here it should be found recorded in yet another way, maybe to meet the test of yet another generation, is surely a further sign of its eternal nature and of its unfading appeal.

SIGNET

A Doctor's Prayer

Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

COL. 4. 14

GIVE me the eyes which shine with warm perception on those whose lives are dark with pain's despair, or those who wait and dread a chill reception, edged in unease upon a surgery chair.

Give me two hands of strong yet gentle feeling, sure in their diagnosis, and of skill that proves their craftsmanship when they are dealing the surgeon strokes which combat mortal ill.

Give me a heart that knows each human being as man or woman—not as a numbered name lost on a list—that in them I'll be seeing the One whose swift compassion healed the lame.

Marjorie Grose

¹ Obtainable, with an illustrated commentary, from Mowbrays or any bookseller at 8s. 6d. (post 6d.).

The Anxious Parent

Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.—ST. MARK 9. 24

PETER, James and John had been on the Mount of the Transfiguration with Jesus. They alone had been witnesses of the marvellous event which had taken place there. The wonder of it kept them silent as they descended again to the place where they had left the other disciples at the foot of the hill.

There had been no other people present with the little group when they had left them. But now, as Peter, James and John, with Jesus, came once again within sight of those whom they had left for a while, they were astonished to see a crowd about them. It was obviously an excited crowd, apparently centred upon a small group deep in argument. This group broke up when Jesus, with his three friends, appeared in the distance coming down the slope. All the crowd made towards them. Among them was a man, pulling along with him by the hand a haggard, wild-looking small boy. Accompanying him were certain of the scribes and the other disciples. All were talking at the top of their voices.

Seeing his disciples thus heavily engaged in some argument, Jesus turned to the crowd and asked: 'What question ye with them?' It was at that point that the man holding the boy by the hand stepped forward. He was a solid, respectable citizen, clearly of some standing in his community. His heavy face at this moment was working with emotion. He gestured towards the boy at his side. 'Master,' he said, 'I brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and whosoever it taketh him, it dasheth him down: and he foameth, and grindeth his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast it out; and they were not able.'

This, then, was the situation. The man was the father of an epileptic child. He had heard of the power of Jesus, and in simple faith he had brought to the followers of Jesus the child whose affliction had for years wrung his heart, and for whom he was ever seeking a cure. His disappointment at the failure of the disciples to heal the boy was tragic. And to those

whom he had brought with him it was a matter of indignation and dispute that the healing they had all looked for on his behalf had not been forthcoming. That was what all the crowd had been arguing about. The disciples



themselves were deeply concerned.

Thus in a moment the atmosphere of holy peace which had lain upon the Lord, and upon Peter and James and John, as they had made their way down from the Mount of Transfiguration, was abruptly changed into this furious disturbance. And in the middle of it all, holding his father's hand, the afflicted child looked around him with large and frightened eyes. Jesus told them to bring the child forward towards him.

Another Attack

Then a grimly disturbing thing happened. The boy immediately had another attack, horrific in its violence, as though the evil spirit which all believed, according to the thinking of the time, to be in possession of him, recoiled in fury at the mere presence of the Christ. The crowd drew off as the wretched child fell to the ground as if at a blow on the head, snatching free

from his father's hand, and foaming in convulsions. The father himself watched him with a stricken face.

When the convulsions had stilled a little, Jesus asked the father: 'How long time is it since this hath come unto him?' Brokenly, the man answered, 'From a child.' The anguish of years was in the simple reply, and he burst out with deep emotion: 'If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us.'

The answer of Jesus was at once puzzled and reassuring. Puzzled, because he never ceased to wonder at men's unbelief. 'If thou canst,' he murmured, repeating the father's phrase. And then, reassuring, he added firmly: 'All things are possible to him who believes.' The father looked from the child at his feet into the face of Jesus. 'I believe,' he cried, loudly and clearly. And then, aware of the inadequacy of his faith, he added the desperate plea: 'Help thou mine unbelief.'

The Need for God

What he had recognized was that he did not believe enough, or strongly enough. Like many people in all ages, his faith had been hedged around by private doubts, he could believe at times when the going was easy, and when nothing much seemed to depend upon it. But when, as now, help for the child he held most dear in all the world depended upon the strength of the faith which he knew to be weak, he could only beg that such strength should be given to him.

(Continued on page 76)

Christmas Toy Competition

Each year we ask our readers to make toys which we send to children in the care of the Church of England Children's Society. Entries should be sent to the Editor of THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1, in time to arrive by the first post on Friday, December 9th. There is a Book Token of two guineas for the first prize and a second and third prize of one guinea and 10s. 6d. Prizes will be sent before the end of the year and results will be announced in THE SIGN in March 1961. We wish all our readers could see some of the delightful animals and dolls and other toys sent in for these competitions, and the delight of the children who receive them, and thereby be encouraged to make this year's entry a record.



As I See It . . .

A Memory of Summer

By Rosamund Essex

ISN'T that Judas Iscariot over there?" asked my companion. We looked across but could not be quite sure. The man had a shock of black hair and a beard. But we could not be certain of the features.

After all, most of the men of the village of Oberammergau, in Germany, had long hair falling to their shoulders, and full beards. They grow their hair a year before the famous Passion Play begins, so that they can take their part properly in the last scenes of Jesus' life on earth.

As you walk about the village streets, you may indeed meet St. Peter (he is old with white, wispy hair) or St. John, the Beloved Disciple, or Joseph of Arimathea—or, come to that, Pontius Pilate or Caiaphas.

The Passion Play of Oberammergau, as you will remember, was begun centuries ago, in 1633, when a terrible plague was sweeping over Europe. The villagers were dying by scores, until the elders of Oberammergau dragged themselves into the little church to promise God that if he would deliver them from their dire distress, the village would perform a play showing forth the Passion of the Lord Jesus every ten years till the end of time. The plague ceased; and ever since, the play has been performed, not at exact ten-year intervals, because of wars and

tyrants, but consistently, all the same. This year, 1960, has been one of the years of its showing.

I waited with 5,200 other spectators to get into the theatre. Believe it or believe it not, it was 7.15 in the morning. The play lasts a whole day, from 8 to 12 and again from 2 till 6.

The vast theatre is enclosed on three sides. One end is open, for the Oberammergau Play is given on a stage that is under the heavens.

As we sat waiting, on that early morning, the sun shone, making the stage a brilliant contrast of gold light and shade. The first scene is preluded by distant shouting, and then, on the stage come the crowds to welcome Jesus on his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. And among them, meek on an ass, sits the Christ.

Never to be Forgotten

He is a figure that I shall never forget. He is dressed simply in a white robe and wine-red over-cloak. Like all the other actors in the play, he is just a village man. His name is Anton Preisinger, and he is the host at one of the village inns. But as he stands on the stage, you forget all that, for with simple sincerity he speaks the Gospel words of the Saviour.

Now he steps from the ass. He approaches the entrance to the temple

where the merchants are scrounging and swindling. 'My house,' he cries, 'shall be called the house of prayer,' and he overturns a case of doves, which fly in a great whirling circle under the covered roof of the theatre and then out into the sunlight and away, homing to their cotes.

So the great story of the Gospel proceeds, while the priests and Pharisees scheme and Judas sinks deeper into temptation. The last scene on the stage before the lunch-time interval portrays the Last Supper, the fearful moments of the agony in Gethsemane, and the betrayal of Judas with a kiss.

Jesus was led away with his hands tied—and in serious mood we went to eat our lunch in the sunny garden of an inn.

How can I tell, in short, of the wonder of the afternoon's scenes? If I say that the choir sang wonderfully, even in the rain (for we had a thunder-storm); that the Old Testament tableaux showing the forerunners of Christ were crystallized in multi-coloured splendour; that the Gospel narrative moved majestically towards Calvary, I should say true. But how convey the awe? Well, it lies, perhaps, in that you see with your own eyes the details of the sufferings of Jesus.

You see him willingly bearing shame, abuse and cruelty. As he sits with a bandage over his eyes among the soldiers, one pushes him off his seat and he falls blindly forward. 'Get up,' they cry. 'You've been King long enough. Your kingdom's through.' And he answers nothing.

The crown of thorns is pressed on his head. ('Dear God,' prayed someone sitting near me in a whisper.) The reed is put into his hand. You see the priests incite the people to demand his death. There are 700 of them on the stage crying 'CRUCIFY!'

Then you see the two thieves on their crosses. The centre cross is still on the ground with the Christ stretched on it. With a heave it is raised. The figures are supported with an invisible band on the crosses; yet the strain must still be terrible. The feet rest on a narrow ledge, the hands are supported by nails bent round them.

So there aloft we watched the Christ as he hangs for twenty minutes, speaking his gracious words of love, sorrow, desolation and final accomplishment.

When the body of the dead Christ was gently lowered from the cross into the arms of his mother, one woman near me was openly weeping and a man was hastily brushing his eyes.

The Barrier of Loneliness

HOW TO HELP THE MENTALLY ILL

By the Rev. G. C. Harding, of the
Church's Council of Healing

THE passing of the Mental Health Act, which came into force early in July, is an important event for the Church. For the first time the care of mental health patients, after they leave hospital, becomes the responsibility of the local authority, which has the power to set up occupational therapy centres, social clubs, or homes for old and young. The modern trend in mental health work is to keep the patient out of hospital if possible. This is often very much better for the patient, but it does add to the burden of things at home. This is where the Church should play its part. There will be many opportunities for Christians to intervene in the care of the sick.

Reaching the Worried Mind

Ideally, parishes should form groups of visitors who will visit patients in their homes or in hospital, and make friends with them. The reward may be small at first, because mentally disturbed people cannot always make very much response. But they are intensely grateful to feel accepted. One of the

hardest things they have to bear is the sense of isolation. One part of the whole problem of mental health could be solved if these barriers of loneliness could be overcome.

That means that as Christians we have to reach them. To do that we have first to lose a great many prejudices and false ideas. We may be dealing with the very worried or very depressed, who are as sane as we are, or we may be coping with people who are decidedly odd, but they are human beings just the same. The important thing is to be one's self, and not to pay too much attention to their ideas or feelings. If we want to know what they are really like or how they are really feeling, we should disregard what they say and see what they do. Actions speak louder than words, and always reveal what is at the back of the patient's mind. They may well be withdrawn and uninterested, and at times intolerably self-centred. Temporarily they have gone back to childhood, and one has to remember that. It does not mean that we need treat them as children. On the contrary, the more we show that we regard them as

responsible people, the more likely they are to respond. They should not as a general rule be cheered up, but encouraged to face their problems. (If you are yourself the sort of person who has found a constructive attitude to life and solved some problems of your own, then you can be a tremendous help.)

The Need for Fellowship

Apart from the obvious and constant need of prayer, which brings with it a deep sense of spiritual privilege, the greatest single need which the local church can meet is the need for fellowship. Convalescents who are feeling their way back into the world are seldom able to face all at once the full impact of a church congregation. What they need is a club, where they can meet others who are in the same kind of situation. They want to be able to play games with others who sometimes suffer from blank patches in the middle of the game and forget what they are doing, or who find the effort of concentration at times too much for them and feel ashamed of themselves in consequence! Such a club, which need not, of course, be entirely devoted to games, can do wonders. A group of churches in a large town might well consider what they can do, especially as they can ask for financial help from the local authority. We have a wonderful opportunity here. Let us grasp it with both hands.

The Anxious Parent

(from page 74)

Jesus then turned towards the child, rigid at his feet. 'Thou dumb and deaf spirit,' he said, 'I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.' There followed instantly a period of further convulsions and then the boy relaxed and became still—so still that those around murmured among themselves that the child was dead. But Jesus took his hand, and the boy came easily to his feet; as he looked wonderingly around, it could be seen that his eyes were clear and his spirit tranquil. Profoundly moved, and everlastingly grateful, his heart as well as his mind full of the marvel of it, the father led his son away back to his home.

Afterwards the disciples wanted to know why it was that they had been unable to heal the child themselves. Jesus said to them only: 'This kind can come out by nothing, save by prayer.'

The Story of the Early Church

*Despite the dangers
and the hardships
involved in being a
Christian, the Church
continued to gain new
members from all classes
of society*



Many slaves are Christians



They greet each other with secret signs



and in times of danger, the catacombs become their place of worship

ANIMALS OF THE BIBLE PUZZLE COLUMN

45. The Gnat

THE word 'gnat' occurs only once in the Bible, in a very well-known comment made by our

Lord to the Pharisees. 'Ye blind guides,' he said, 'which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel' (St. Matt. 23. 24). Gnats are familiar insects in most parts of the world, including even some parts of the Arctic Circle where they swarm in the short, intense summer. The name may sometimes be given to one particular kind of two-winged fly, as in parts of America where it refers to one of the mosquitoes, but it more usually applies to the whole family of these pests, in most of which the female has to have a meal of blood before it can lay any fertile eggs.

Gnats breed in water, so the swampy patches along the Jordan valley no doubt swarmed with these pests at certain seasons. Malaria is carried by one of the blood-sucking mosquitoes, though, of course, this fact was not known until the beginning of this century, and this kind has been found for many centuries in all lands bordering the Mediterranean.

The Authorized Version of this passage contains a slight mis-transla-

tion, usually corrected in later versions, which somewhat conceals the point of our Lord's remark. To strain at is very

different from straining out, which is exactly what the Pharisees used to do. They were so scared of any ceremonial uncleanness which they might incur by swallowing some small insect, that they often drank through a piece of linen or other material stretched over the mouth of their cup.

This may well have been a proverbial saying current at that time, just as we have similar expressions to-day, and it very effectively described the attitude of these men, often described by our Lord as hypocrites, although in other respects they were high-minded and high-principled people. Their fault was an inability to see the wood for the trees—to be blind to the great truths of God through looking too closely at details. They were, in fact, almost the only class of people of whom he was severely critical. **GEORGE CANSDALE**

July winners:

No. 13. J. H. Wright (Macclesfield).

No. 14. Christine Ogden (Oldham), Keith Neale (Pontardawe), Patricia Hayne (Carlisle).

Everyday Christian Life. A.D. 100 to 300



as are also soldiers serving in the army



Sometimes their faith causes Christians to give up their jobs



Many copies of the Scriptures are made



and are distributed far and wide

19. UNFAIR TO THE LAITY

(open to all)

In the pattern of letters below a phrase is hidden. Select a starting-point (the sooner you pick the right one, the better) and then move upwards, downwards, left or right, until words begin to appear. But never move diagonally. And expect difficulties.

E P F O V D O
D R O M E N E
S E I C F A V
A T S O G N F
F R I N E L I
M A S I T R O
S R T F I A I
N A S U B P N

And now, this is why it is unfair to the laity: It's in Latin! But as I never show any favour towards clerical puzzlers, I thought it only fair to 'load the dice' in their direction for once in a while.

But that does not mean that lay puzzlers are not to enter. Do by all means. Perhaps a layman will win.

There is also another point I must mention. The Latin phrase contains 51 letters, so I've added 5 more (all the same) to make the oblong look nice and tidy. So beware of 5 stray letters which could be either 5 E's, F's, I's, N's, or S's.

The solution plus a guess at what prompted me to set this puzzle is all that is required to make you eligible for a one-guinea book token.

20. SENTENCE MAKING

(age limit 13)

When I was at school I used to enjoy those lessons where the master wrote some words on the blackboard and then told us to invent sentences, using one of the words in each sentence in such a way as to make it clear that we knew exactly the meaning of the word.

That's what this month's competition is. Below are seven words—very important words. Three of them are called 'The Theological Virtues,' and four of them 'The Cardinal Virtues.'

I want you to write seven sentences using each different word in a different sentence, and constructing the sentence in such a way that I know that you know the meaning of the word.

You may do anything or ask anyone you like in order to discover the meaning of the words, but the sentences must be your own work.

The Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance and Justice.

The Theological Virtues: Faith, Hope and Charity.

Unlike my old schoolmasters, I shall be giving four five-shilling book tokens as prizes. Neatness and age will be taken into consideration.

Closing date for both puzzles: October 17th. Entries should be addressed to: The Puzzle Editor, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1.

QUESTION PAGE

4112. Why is it that, at nearly every church service, women outnumber men?

It is undoubtedly true that, with some notable exceptions, the number of women attending church services exceeds the number of men. The reasons are by no means simple. One is the popular notion that religion is concerned with the gentler side of life, with love, sympathy and compassion. By nature, men tend to be more aggressive than women, perhaps because in prehistoric days men had to hunt and fight while women looked after the children and the home. Against this must be set the fact that the organization of the Church tends to be exclusively masculine. The basic truth is that it is the duty of both men and women everywhere to worship their Maker.

4113. Will you please explain 'Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him'? This has always puzzled me.

The theme of St. Matthew 5, 21-26 is that it is a Christian's duty to seek reconciliation to those with whom he is at variance. In simple language, if you have a quarrel with anyone, do your best to make it up quickly. The time may come when it is too late to make it up.

4114. Are the words 'Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God' intended as a declaration of pacifism?

The verse 'Give peace in our time, O Lord,' and the response, date from a time

Question of the Month

4111. Are we being hypocritical in saying that England is a Christian country?

What is a Christian country? If it is one governed by a Christian ruler, with an established Christian Church, then England to-day is as Christian as when King Ethelbert was converted by St. Augustine in 597. If it is a country in which the majority attend church every Sunday, then mediaeval England was more Christian than England to-day, although few would wish to return to an economy in which the majority of the population were tied to the land as serfs. It is, perhaps, fair to say that Britain, like other lands, has never been a Christian country in the sense that everyone living in it has conscientiously endeavoured to live a Christian life, although to-day, as in the past, there is a faithful minority which is endeavouring to make it so. Our country has a wonderful Christian heritage, but each generation must be converted afresh.

when war seldom ceased, and they are not so much a declaration of pacifism as a cry of distress in time of war. In these days of hydrogen bombs it is truer than

ever before that only God can save us. It may well be that during the past ten years the possession of atomic weapons by both sides has prevented the cold war from becoming hot, but it will only be by preaching the Gospel in all lands that universal peace will be achieved.

4115. How is it that St. Paul does not appear to have met Jesus while he was on earth, but had to wait until his journey to Damascus to hear his voice?

St. Paul was a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, and it is not known when he first came to Jerusalem to study. All that can be said for certain is that within a few years of the Crucifixion he came in contact with the followers of Jesus, and that as a strict Pharisee he at first intensely opposed their teaching. The first date that can be fixed with any assurance is A.D. 44, when Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to aid the Christian community during a famine. This was some fifteen years after the Crucifixion, and is quite consistent with Paul having arrived in Jerusalem for the first time after the Crucifixion took place.

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.

Our readers may like to know that a third impression of QUERY CORNER, containing three hundred classified questions and answers, is now ready at 4s. post 6d.

My Garden in October

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

OCTOBER must be regarded as the beginning of winter; from now on we gardeners expect serious frosts and we move tender plants under glass. (Northerners often start this work about September 23rd.) Lift all Chrysanthemums growing in pots or in the soil into the greenhouse. Cover the late sowings of French beans with ganwicks or cloches, harvest the late onions carefully, harvest the late potatoes, using those that are damaged right away and clamping the others. Remove the lower yellowing leaves of the Brussels sprouts so as to allow light and air to get to the base of the plants. Earth up the celery, keeping the sides at a steep angle, beating these down well with the back of the spade.

Harvest the late carrots carefully; do not store in too big clamps for fear of overheating. Beetroot when harvested can be stored in much bigger buries. Sow the Borough Wonder lettuce in rows 1 ft. apart and don't thin out the plants until the spring—to 9 in. apart. Plant out the spring cabbages if this was not done in September; try Cotswold Queen. Complete the removal of the summer bedding plants and put the spring flowerers in their position. You have a choice of Wallflowers, Forget-

me-nots, and for later flowering Sweet Williams and Canterbury Bells. Plant Daffodils, Hyacinths and Crocuses, lay new lawns at the end of the month.

There's an excellent creeping grass I can strongly recommend, *Agrostis Z*

103, which you can buy now in 2-in. cardboard pots. Plant these 1 ft. apart and after some time the plants will cover the ground and make a wonderful sward. If you don't know where to get these, write to me. On your present lawn plunge a fork perpendicularly into the soil every 2 ft. for aeration; this sounds extraordinary but it gives wonderful results.



Making a clamp for carrots

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

By Anne Proctor

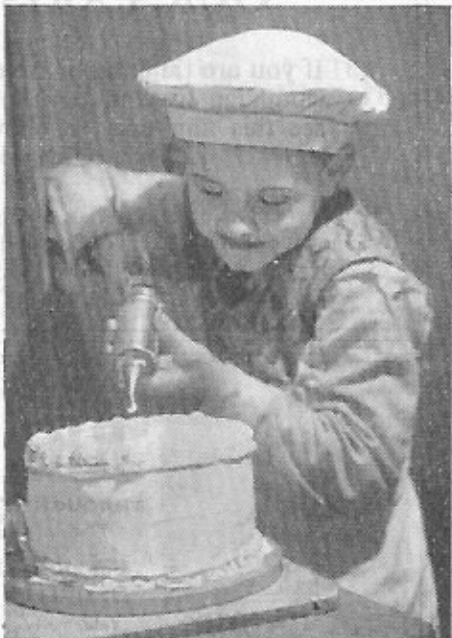
ONE of the Gospels this month contains the answer which Jesus gave to the question, "Which is the great commandment in the Law?" It is the summary of the Ten Commandments which divides them into our duty towards God and our duty towards our neighbour. The answers in the Catechism which enlarge on those duties are memorable paragraphs, though, alas! to-day they are very rarely committed to memory. Perhaps we fathers and mothers need to be reminded from time to time that it is our duty as parents to see that our children learn those duties. We cannot shelve this duty by hoping that they will be taught all they need to know in school; their morals are learnt at home. Quite probably we adults could do with looking at the Catechism again, for they are not intended merely for childish ears, but were designed as words which children would learn, and then store in their memories, so that when they came to man's estate they would have definite guidance as to the choice between right and wrong.

God and our Neighbour

Jesus was answering a question put to him to try to catch him out, by the Pharisees and Sadducees, when he gave his version of our duty towards our neighbour. They were the most religious Jews of his day, and were very unlikely to be tempted to steal or lie or get drunk, but their hearts were full of malice as they spoke to Jesus. In one phrase he showed us on what our conduct should be based: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself.' A right relationship towards our neighbour depends on our right relationship towards God.

In June, Rosamund Essex wrote an article about the low standards of many books to-day. Lately I have been re-reading some of the novels of the last century and have found them interesting not merely because their authors—Dickens, Hardy, Trollope, George Eliot, Meredith and the rest—were first-rate story-tellers. Their characters acknowledge principles of right and wrong, and uphold a framework of conventions and manners. Some of the conventions were ridiculous, some were bad because they were based on snobishness and not on true values, but by and large they were an asset to society. Much of our present-day boredom, beatniks and

banality come from the general slackness which goes by the name of freedom, a slackness which too often simply means that nobody cares what people do, and this quickly breeds



The finishing touches

S. S. Pethybridge

boredom and worse. So if you do not know what to read, let me suggest you try some of the classics.

Mandarin Toast

Cut three slices of bread into strips about one inch wide and two and a half inches long. Dip them into a little milk mixed with a pinch of sugar. Melt 1 oz. lard or cooking fat in a frying pan and fry the bread both sides a golden brown. Drain and arrange some previously-warmed tinned mandarin oranges on top. Serve at once. (Miss K. E., Worthing.)

Tasty Swedes

Grate one large swede into a pan with a very little water, one teaspoonful of vinegar, salt and pepper to taste, and cook slowly for about one hour. Alternatively cook in a casserole in a slow oven. Grated swede, left overnight on a plate with a little brown sugar, was much recommended during the war as a substitute for the vitamins in orange juice for babies. (Mrs. H. M., Ockley, Surrey.)

Danish Pan Bread

Take 8 oz. self-raising flour, 1 teaspoonful salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint milk (sour is best). Sift dry ingredients in a bowl and mix with milk to a very slack dough. Grease a frying pan, make it moderately hot. Put the dough in and spread evenly in the pan. After about ten minutes' cooking you can lift the edge from time to time to see that it is not browning too fast. Then turn over and give the other side ten minutes' cooking too. Then set the table and bring out the butter. This is a Danish version of soda bread and it is delicious; also it is a useful recipe to use when an oven is not available. (Miss S. M. S., Crowborough.)

The Man About the House

By VICTOR SUTTON

MANY of the jobs we do as handymen are simple but we often do not study the job first nearly enough. I have quite recently re-surfaced an area, 18 ft. by 14 ft., on the side of my bungalow. This original surface had been down about eighteen years. It was good solid concrete, cracked, worn, dangerous and stained. I had visions of hacking it up to do the job, but I found now that there is a compound to mix with the ordinary cement and thus allows you to re-surface over any rough area to a depth of as little as half an inch. Make inquiries at the builder's yard, as they often stock it and use it.

When lifting linoleum always roll it up with the pattern facing the outside. By doing this, the ends won't curl up when the lino is relaid.

If you are cutting glass and find the cutter is slightly worn, dip the head of cutter into a little turpentine before scratching the glass. This gives the cutter more 'bite.'

Slamming the front door is not good and this is just caused by the lack of a little oil. Ironmongers stock a special thin lubricating oil these days and this is the best to use. Do not use the one normally used for the lawn-mower. That is heavy and invites the dust and fluff to collect.

I find much confusion in the use of undercoats and priming. You must use priming first on new wood and priming is not an undercoat. Generally speaking, to get a good finish, one priming and two thin undercoats does the job. Watch this point when doing construction jobs in the bathroom or kitchen.



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there and hope that by our efforts the fellowship may be strengthened.

God bless you all.

Your sincere friend,

HERBERT BULLOUGH.

FELLOWSHIP

Of recent years great emphasis has been given to what might be called the business and organisational aspects of Church Life. This seems to be true at all levels—Church Assembly, Dioceses, Deaneries, and Parishes. Above all, perhaps, is the concern with finance. While all this may be necessary, I personally fear that vital and basic New Testament principles may be suffering. Amongst other things the Church is a fellowship of people bound together by a common faith; united in love and worship of God. It is not enough that a parish should succeed in building up a big list of individuals who will subscribe to parish funds. It is possible to achieve this, and for the parish to remain anything but a fellowship; and there is the danger of becoming satisfied so long as a parish finances are sound. It is indeed the responsibility of every Churchman to ask himself "Am I contributing a fair proportion of my income to my Church?" It is also his responsibility to ask himself: "Am I contributing of my love and goodwill unreservedly to the fellowship of the Church?" This question is by far the more fundamental of the two. The Church needs money to carry on its work, but it needs people in fellowship with each other far more. The prior interest is with people for their own sakes, not for their money. Therefore, in all our planning the prior interest in people must be the spur of our deliberations and actions, and our goal a community of people reflecting "The Love of God, the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit."

DIARY OF A CHURCH MOUSE

by JOHN BETJEMAN

(Reprinted from "Poems in the Porch").

Here among long-discarded cassocks,

Damp stools, and half-split open hassocks,

Here where the Vicar never looks

I nibble through old service books.

I lean and alone I spend my days

Behind this Church of England baize.

I share my dark forgotten room

With two oil-lamps and half a broom.

The cleaner never bothers me,

So here I eat my frugal tea.

My bread is sawdust mixed with straw;

My jam is polish for the floor.

Christmas and Easter may be feasts

For congregations and for priests,

And so may Whitsun. All the same

They do not fill my meagre frame.

For me the only feast at all

Is Autumn's Harvest Festival,

When I can satisfy my want

With ears of corn around the font.

I climb the eagle's brazen head

To burrow through a loaf of bread.

I scramble up the pulpit stair

And gnaw the marrows hanging there.

It is enjoyable to taste

These items ere they go to waste,

But how annoying when one finds

That other mice with pagan minds

Come into church my food to share

Who have no proper business there.

Two field mice who have no desire

To be baptized, invade the choir.

A large and most unfriendly rat

Comes in to see what we are at.

He says he thinks there is no God

And yet he comes . . . it's rather odd.

This year he stole a sheaf of wheat

(It screened our special preacher's seat),

And prosperous mice from fields away

Come in to hear the organ play.

And under cover of its notes

Eat through the altar's sheaf of oats.

A Low Church mouse, who thinks that I

Am too papistical, and High,

Yet somehow doesn't think it wrong

To munch through Harvest Evensong.

While I, who starve the whole year through,

Must share my food with rodents who

Except at this time of the year

Not once inside the church appear.

Within the human world I know

Such goings-on could not be so,

For human beings only do

What their religion tells them to.

They read the Bible every day

And always, night and morning, pray.

And just like me, the good church mouse,

Worship each week in God's own house.

But all the same it's strange to me

How very full the church can be

With people I don't see at all

Except at Harvest Festival.

THE MOTHERS' UNION

The next meeting of the Mothers' Union will be held on Tuesday, October 4th. There will be a Service in Church at 2-30 p.m. and the Rector will be the preacher. At a meeting of the Committee held on 15th September last it was unanimously decided to hold the monthly meeting on the first Tuesday in the month at 2-30 p.m. and also to arrange other meetings from time to time to be held in the School Hall in the evenings. The

first of these evening meetings will be held on Tuesday, 22nd Nov., at 7-30 p.m. in the School Hall. We wish to emphasise that all meetings are open to all our womenfolk to attend, there is no one excluded. We hope very much that many more of the womenfolk of Ha'sall will come along and enjoy fellowship with us. At the same meeting the Committee decided to ask Mrs. Bullough to be the Enrolling Member and she has accepted the invitation.

Deanery Autumn Festival will be held in Ormskirk Parish Church, on Monday, October 17th, at 3 p.m. All members wishing to go are asked to give their names to Mrs. Grimshaw or Mrs. Gaskell. It is hoped to take all members by car leaving Halsall Church at 2-15 p.m.

THE YOUNG WIVES

At a meeting of the Young Wives held on Tuesday, September 20th, it was decided that the Young Wives would continue to meet on the 2nd Tuesday in each month at 2-30 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 11th. Will members of the Young Wives Group kindly meet outside church at 2 p.m. when we shall go by cars to St. Cuthbert's Church, North Meols, for a service at 2-30 p.m. which will be followed by tea. On November 8th the meeting will take place at the Rectory at 2-30 p.m.; it is a 'Bazaar Meeting.'

M.G.

EVENING CLASSES

The evening classes in Woodwork and Soft Furnishing commence on Tuesday (Woodwork) and Wednesday (Soft Furnishing), September 27th and 28th, at 7 p.m. in the Schools. I am sure many more people would find these classes both interesting and helpful if they would only "take the plunge."

H.B.

THE CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

There are 63 days left before the Bazaar on Saturday, December 3rd. Time flies!

ALTAR FLOWERS

Sunday, Oct. 2nd—Mrs. Blundell & Mrs. Haslam.
 Sunday, Oct. 9th—Miss Mawdsley & Mrs. Parker
 Sunday, Oct. 16th—Mrs. F. Moorcroft & Mrs. Townsend.
 Sunday, Oct. 23rd—Mrs. W. Halsall.
 Sunday, Oct. 30th—Mrs. T. Rimmer.
 Sunday, Nov. 6th—Mrs. Ainscough.
 Sunday, Nov. 13th—Mrs. Hesketh & Mrs. Winstanley.

ALTAR ROTA

8 a.m.

11-30 a.m.

Oct. 2nd Robert Gaskell. Harold Grimshaw.
 Oct. 9th—Ian Ainscough. Stanley Marshall.
 Oct. 16th—Lewis Hanson. John Davies.
 Oct. 23rd—Arthur Gilbert. Anthony Grimshaw.
 Oct. 30th—Peter Balmer. John Gaskell.
 Nov. 6th—Stanley Marshall. Robert Gaskell.

Will all servers please meet in Church on Tuesday evening, October 11th, at 7 p.m. Important.
 H.B.

SIDESMEN'S ROTA

10-30 a.m.:

Oct. 2nd—E. Grimshaw. R. Brett.
 Oct. 9th—E. Serjeant. H. Guy.
 Oct. 16th—H. Dean. J. Balmer.
 Oct. 23rd—W. Jenkinson. T. Sismey.
 Oct. 30th—J. Serjeant. J. Banks.
 Nov. 6th—R. Lewis. R. Dutton.

6-30 p.m.:

Oct. 2nd—C. Aindow. T. Foreshaw.
 Oct. 9th—J. Huyton. S. Parks.
 Oct. 16th—R. Gaskell. H. Baldwin.
 Oct. 23rd—J. Cheetham. E. Battersby.
 Oct. 30th—H. Serjeant. T. Swift.
 Nov. 6th—H. Prescott. H. Gaskell.

THE CARPET FUND

The total amount contributed to the Chancel and Sanctuary Carpet Fund is now £230. The amount required is £290.

HOLY BAPTISM

"Received into the family of Christ's Church."

Sep. 11th—Alan, son of Thomas and Doreen May Porter, of 17 Renacre Lane, Halsall.
 Sep. 11th—Philip Edward, son of John and Edna Banks, of 56 Gregory Lane, Halsall.
 Sep. 11th—Martin Joseph, son of Joseph and Iris Watson of Burlea, New Cut Lane, Halsall.

A Bournemouth Vicar recently had a new experience. After a service of Holy Baptism the mother of the child turned to him and said "There's no fee in there, Vicar?" On his telling her there was not she turned to her husband and remarked, "I told you so, there's no fee, it's all on the National Health."

BURIAL OF THE DEAD

"In sure and certain hope."

Aug. 29th—Agnes Barnes, age 70 years, Promenade Hospital, Southport.
 Sep. 3rd—Jane Threlfall, age 79 years, Carr Moss Lane, Halsall.
 Sep. 13th—Rebecca Barton, age 76 years, School Lane, Haskayne.

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