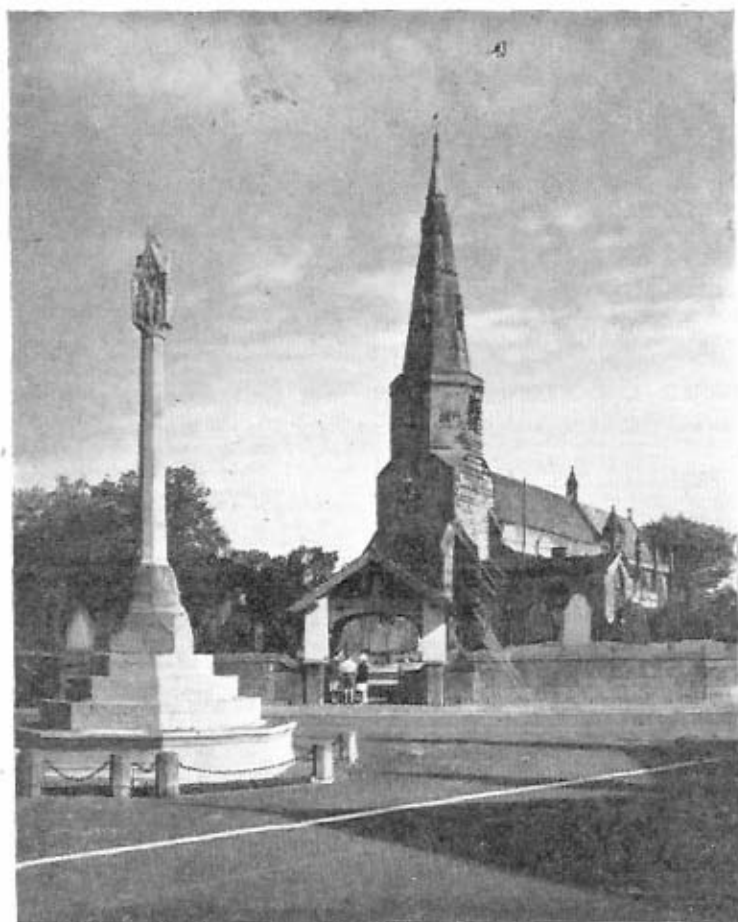


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13th October, 1961.

My Dear friends,

A parishioner questioned me the other evening in this way. "Rector" he said, "how can we get more of our people to come to Church?" He is a regular worshipper and for him Sunday is not Sunday unless he has been to Church. No doubt many of you have asked the same question many times.

There is no cut and dried answer to the problem of how to bring the vast majority of our friends and parishioners into the worshipping community of St. Cuthberts Church. What I suggest to you now is intended to be a contribution to strategy rather than tactics.

One of the wisest of our modern bishops is fond of saying "When you can see clearly what your problem is but not how to tackle it, the best thing to do is to try to answer the question 'What is God doing about it Himself?'" The advantage of starting there is that if we find an answer and then fit our own plans into it, at least we will be working **with** rather than **against** the grain of God's action. It seems to me that we can at least answer the problem in outline.

If it is possible to discover why people are being converted or what sort of reason it is which makes them reconsider their position then we should at least have a starting point from which to take a more positive stock of the problem and a principle to guide the response we make to it. Of course it is true that the causes of most conversions go back for years and are unknown except to God Himself; there were more reasons for St. Paul's conversion than the blinding light on the Damascus road. But that event brought all the others to fruition; it finally pushed him over the edge. Now, if it is possible to find out what kind of event it was which caused any of the individual people who have recently reconsidered their position and made their decision for Christ to do this—what in fact, pushed them over the edge—we might then be in a position to say, this is the way in which God seems to be working. Once we can say that, we know at least the outlines of the path we should be following.

We cannot be dogmatic about the way God is working but there are at least three possibilities. The first is the direct intervention of God in the course of the individual human life. There really seems to be no doubt at all that this is happening on a wider scale than any of us have known for some time, and to the most surprising people, that is, to those who are particularly likely to be surprised by it because they had no reason to expect it, and in fact did not. It would be faithless and even unrealistic to deny these facts, but they are facts which cannot be produced by any kind of organised planning and which, in the form they take are quite unpredictable. Secondly there may be those who, much to their surprise, have

been compelled to respond because they happened to come into contact with some member of our Christian congregation or fellowship who behaved decently to them, and in whom they found the true spirit or quality of Christian fellowship. Expecting to find a rather chilly indifference they found a welcome. Believing that nobody was much interested in them they found a fellowship which wanted to give them all the time and care they needed. The thing which pushes this kind over the edge is first, that they are met simply and solely with friendship which has no other aim than itself, and secondly that having supposed that every Christian congregation is governed by envy, hatred and malice, they find a member of one of which, to their astonishment, the exact opposite is true. Thirdly, I suggest in the case of the young married couples they look at their children and revolt against bringing them up without any vital beliefs. But only too often they have been absent from worship so long and thus have no notion at all how to start. The opportunity presented itself and they resolved to make a new beginning.

If these three points are accepted, they do seem to give us a start. We cannot exactly cause the direct intervention of God in a life, though we can pray for it. But we can await it with expectancy and when it happens, and we see it happen, and the person asks us "Why did this happen to me?" We can learn enough to answer wisely.

The second point gives us a clear principle, it is that the converting power of the Church is in clear proportion to the quality of its fellowship. "See how these Christians love one another is just as much a word of converting power today as it was in the early Church, and this is the word which is likely to speak loudest of all to our new found friends. Therefore anything which our congregation can do to deepen its Christian fellowship, and any care it can give to enrich it, is itself a direct evangelistic act.

Finally, wherever there are young married people with young children their care becomes the first evangelistic responsibility of our church. It may well happen, and in fact it does happen that the parish church cannot discharge all its duties or explore all the paths open to it. Lack of resources and of time mean so often that one must choose between the various evangelistic works one could undertake since to undertake them all at once is to make certain of succeeding in none of them. Here, however, is a clear principle of priority the young parents of young children come first, and no congregation ought to allow anything else to interfere with its discharge of that primary evangelistic duty.

Thus we work with the grain and not against it. What we shall be doing is an enrichment of routine and not a veiled suggestion that only the exceptional and occasional effort is likely to help. Above all, we shall be meeting people in friendship where they actually are and on their own ground; and it is when we come as friends to them and friends of each other

that we bring them what they need most of all, the friendship of Christ.

Such, I suggest are the lines along which we ought to be working with a view to making each Sunday a day like Easter Day or Harvest Festival Sunday.

God Bless you all,

Your sincere friend,

HERBERT BULLOUGH.

* * *

HOW MUCH DO WE CARE?

LOOKING AHEAD

I am sending you this message because I know that you really do care about the world to-day, and about the part your Church has to play.

The strength of our witness can be measured not by whether we keep the Church in good repair, and pay our bills, but by what we give to others; to Missions at home and overseas; to refugees; to any whose need is greater than our own.

Yet so often it is difficult to pay our own bills without a series of special money raising efforts. An urgent repair, or some redecoration, means that large sums have to be raised quickly. Much time and effort are devoted to these special appeals, time which could be spent in visiting the sick, or lonely; effort which could be devoted to training the young, and strengthening our faith.

This is not another of those appeals, it is a sincere and urgent request that each one of us should examine our giving in the knowledge that everything we have is given by God to be used in His way.

Where does the Church come on your budget? At the top; or at the bottom to be given anything which might remain.

If everyone played their part by giving responsibly and regularly, week by week, we could go forward into the future with new confidence and a fresh hope, knowing that our witness would be strengthened (our faith renewed).

WHY SHOULD I GIVE?

A Faith To Live By

Our Christian faith is in constant need of re-strengthening. The modern way of life with its emphasis on material comforts and prosperity cannot build a new world, and it is the realisation of this which gives the Church its opportunity.

We have an example to set. By showing our fellow men that it is only in living up to truly Christian ideals in morality, in service to others, and devotion to God that fresh hope and a brighter future may be found.

Building For The Future

Our Churches need strengthening. Money cannot buy our Christian Faith. But it can help to present

God's word in attractive surroundings. It can provide new buildings, better music, items for the Sunday School and weekday activities.

Money can also help to support those in need—Refugees, Missions, and many others who rely on the Church for strength and support.

To Serve God

Throughout the country there is a great need to strengthen our lay leadership.

If the Church can plan a programme which is interesting and progressive, leadership will be attracted and developed, fellowship provided and invigorated, and those sharing in any scheme will become more devoted.

HOW SHOULD I GIVE?

Prayerfully . . . Responsibly

The Church today needs, more than ever, people who will prayerfully, and responsibly examine what they give.

In biblical days the accepted standard of giving was the tithe, or 10 per cent of one's income. There are still people today for whom the tithe is the accepted standard of their giving.

A tithe is the pinnacle of Christian Giving and it is realized that there are many people who cannot afford 10 per cent. But each one of us should consider what our share is to be. Can we afford 5 per cent (1/- in the pound), or 2½ per cent (6d. in the pound), Remember . . .

There Are Two Kinds Of Giving—

The Token Gift,

which is so small as to be unworthy of the giver.

The Sacrificial Gift,

which involves the giver in some self denial, and is worthy of the giver and the cause.

We want to become a giving Church, a Church which is not just paying its way, but which is playing a vital part in the Mission field. A Church which people turn to naturally for help.

Our future is in your hands, we can go back, we can stay as we are, or we can go forward together.

***"To give and not to count the cost,
save that of knowing that we do Thy
will."***

H.B.

HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICES

SUNDAY, 8th OCTOBER

8-00 a.m.—Parish Communion.

10-30 a.m.—Mattins and Sermon.

Preacher: The Rector.

11-30 a.m.—Holy Communion.



Radio Times Hulton

People Talking

THE picture above goes with the poem on this page. Both of them illustrate what is perhaps the commonest of all human failings—the habit of talking too much without enough thought as to what we are saying. Without a doubt, gossip does a great deal of harm. All of us can easily enough think of examples of it, and which of us in all honesty claim to be innocent in that regard ourselves?

The trouble, of course, is the human tongue, that tricky little member of the human body which is so difficult to control and which can do so much harm. There is nothing new in this. It was a problem in Bible time. So if our picture and our poem each illustrate the other, so also does the letter of James in the New Testament put the whole thing in a nut-shell. The first twelve verses of the third chapter of James say about all there is to say about the tongue, and it is a good idea for all of us to read it from time to time.

Best of all, perhaps, is to read it in the New English Bible. This is how it goes: 'All of us often go wrong; the man who never says a wrong thing is a perfect character, able to bridle his whole being. If we put bits into horses'

mouths to make them obey our will, we can direct their whole body. Or think of ships: large they may be, yet even when driven by strong gales they can be directed by a tiny rudder on whatever course the helmsman chooses. So with the tongue. It is a small member but it can make huge claims. . . .

'What a huge stack of timber can be set ablaze by the tiniest spark! And the tongue is in effect a fire. . . .

Beasts and birds of every kind, creatures that crawl on the ground or swim in the sea, can be subdued, and have been subdued, by mankind; but no man can subdue the tongue. . . . We use it to sing the praises of our Lord and Father, and we use it to invoke curses upon our fellow-men who are made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praises and curses. My brothers, this should not be so. . . .

Incidentally, this poem is the 130th which has been published in THE SIGN during the last ten years or so. We are rather proud of these poems, which come to us from all sorts and conditions of people, and which are a standing reminder of the fact that there are still those—and plenty of them—who feel moved to put their

THE SIGN

Not ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified

No. 682

Vol. 57

OCTOBER 1961

- 1 S. Eighteenth after Trinity.
Remigius, B., c. 530.
- 4 W. Francis of Assisi, 1226.
- 6 F. Faith, V.M., c. 304.
- 8 S. Nineteenth after Trinity.
- 9 M. Denys, B.M.
- 13 F. Translation of King Edward the Confessor.
- 15 S. Twentieth after Trinity.
- 17 Tu. Etheldreda, Qu. Abbess, 679.
- 18 W. St. Luke, E.
- 22 S. Twenty-first after Trinity.
- 25 W. Crispin and Crispinian, MM., 303.
- 26 Th. Alfred, K., 899.
- 28 S. St. Simon and St. Jude, AA.MM.
- 29 S. Twenty-second after Trinity.

Days of fasting, or abstinence:
Fridays, 6, 13, 20, 27; Tuesday, 31.

deepest thoughts into verse, and have the ability to do so. The Editor, whose address is 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1, is always ready to consider poems for publication. Manuscripts should be sent to him with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

SIGNET

TRAITOR AT THE DOOR

The tongue is a little member, and boasts of great things.—JAMES 3. 5

HOWEVER I am armed within, I have a traitor at the door of speech and it can harm me more than any lack of discipline.

Whatever care I take to set a constant watch on thought and will, a rebel tongue betrays me still although I need its talent yet.

Even while I strive to do my part with honour, faith and charity, for all my sworn fidelity a reckless word betrays my heart.

Without God's help I fail, alone cannot be master, cannot serve. Christ through a grace I least deserve offers me strength that was his own, the Spirit's prompting to control my every member and my soul.

D. Murrell Simmons

A New Look at the Old Testament

By William Neil

10. THE FAITH OF ISRAEL

WHEN science and religion were engaged in wordy warfare last century and battles were being waged about a six-day creation, evolution and so on, an attack from within the Church itself seemed to be rocking even more violently the shaky pedestal of verbal infallibility on which the Bible had been unwisely placed by the orthodoxy of the time.

The Evolution of Religion

This further assault came from those scholars who claimed that when placed side by side with other religions there was little to distinguish the religion of Israel from the religions of its neighbours. They adduced evidence to show that the Old Testament contained just as much primitive superstition, black magic and mythology as any other record of the religious beliefs of the ancient world, and concluded that the religion of the patriarchs, kings and, up to a point, of the prophets, might best be regarded as a stage in the evolutionary process from magic to Christianity.

This meant, of course, that there was nothing unique about the Old Testament. Some of it was admittedly on a higher level than the rest, but to claim for it that it was in any way the record

of religious beliefs which were radically different from those of, say, the Egyptians, the Babylonians or the Canaanites—or, for that matter, of the Greeks or the Romans—was to claim too much.

Happily this is a view that is no longer canvassed by serious scholars. The change has come about partly by the increase in our knowledge of the ancient world through archaeological discoveries, partly by a general recognition that the idea of evolutionary development may be true for biology but not necessarily therefore also for theology, and partly by taking a new look at the Old Testament itself.

Old Testament 'Religion'

When we speak of the 'religion' of Israel we must at once admit that many elements of Old Testament thought and practice are not peculiar to the Hebrews but were borrowed from their neighbours or derived from the same common source. The view that the earth is the centre of the universe, the basis of common law, the practice of animal sacrifice, feasts and festivals, as well as many of the unsavoury features of worship which the prophets unequivocally denounced—these are examples of ingredients in Israel's religious heritage which are shared with

other peoples of the ancient Near East.

But when we have said all this we have said really nothing about the 'faith' of Israel which is the glory of the Old Testament, and which is both its unique contribution to the religions of the world, and the foundation of our own Christian faith and practice. Archaeology has shown that when we examine the religions of Israel's neighbours, we find them engaged in worshipping a variety of gods and goddesses, represented by images of wood and stone, at best a motley collection of supermen, at worst a hot-bed of immorality and irresponsibility.

When, on the other hand, we look at the Old Testament faith, the very essence of it is that God is One—invisible, unimaginable, undepictable—austere yet merciful, supremely just yet forgiving, Creator yet Father, remote and awful, yet the Shepherd who cherishes his flock. Where did this majestic conception come from, a conception from which the whole faith of Israel is derived?

Revelation and Response

Clearly it is not just a higher stage in the evolutionary process of religion. This is something radically different from all the rest, a unique faith which can only have come from God's revelation of himself to prophet and psalmist.

It was on this revelation, uniquely given to Israel, that prophet and priest built the distinctive pattern of faith and conduct which is typical of the Old Testament at its best—and let us underline *at its best*, because it is obvious to the most casual reader that not all the insights of the Old Testament are on the same high level.

Failure of a Mission

At its best the Old Testament faith is a conviction that this personal living God, giver of all life, has designed the universe and all that it contains to exist in harmony with itself and with its Maker. Somehow, somewhere, however, things have gone wrong. So the divine plan comes into operation to choose one community out of mankind to be a pilot scheme for the renewal and recreation of the whole universe.

Israel, beginning with Abraham, is to be this community, the people of God, chosen to bring the rest of the world back to its Creator by precept and example. Next month, as we think of Advent, we shall see how Israel was taught to see that, humanly speaking, it could not accomplish its task.



So they read in the book . . . and caused them to understand the reading—NEHEMIAH 8, 8

Publisher Priest

By Rosamund Essex

I HAVE been talking to a very exceptional man, the Rev. Timothy Beaumont, whose name has been creeping into the news of late as something of a new-style publisher of Christian literature. Mr. Beaumont is young, and he has been well provided by fortune with this world's goods. But he is using his wealth for God in a way in which he believes his duty to lie and in which he believes God is calling him.

Mr. Beaumont feels that God is calling him to religious publishing of a particular kind. When he left Hong Kong (where he was ordained) he eventually bought three papers. One of these was the periodical *Time and Tide*, then a purely secular weekly. The other publications were *Prism*, a small, rather intellectual Church magazine, and the *National Christian News*, a lower-brow publication aiming at a wider popular appeal.

Three Prongs

The reason why Mr. Beaumont acquired these three papers was because he had three ends in view, and these ends were determined by certain convictions which he holds. First of all, he believes a secular press is only too ready to mention the Church only for critical reasons—when there is a scandal or a quarrel, or some frequently ill-informed criticism to ventilate. Again, only too often the papers do not trouble to mention the solid work done, the forward movements inaugurated, or any of the faithful work accomplished as well as the successes obtained by the Church. Therefore, a secular paper is needed where Church success can be reported. In fact, this is where *Time and Tide* comes, he feels, into the picture.

In the second place he feels that the Church press in this country does not criticize the Church, but flatters it and is too complacent. Therefore, there is need for criticism, and to provide this need he bought *Prism*.

Last of all he feels that the Church is too tied up with one class of society—the middle class. It hardly touches, so he feels, the industrial population. And this is where the *National Christian News* comes in.

Unusual Pattern

We sat talking in Mr. Beaumont's wide, comfortable, graciously appointed room in Green Street, London. It was too journalistic for words—publications displayed on a side table; Timothy Beaumont sitting in shirt-sleeves; a secretary sorting out papers; another bringing in coffee. 'You've set yourself quite something,' I suggested. 'I have indeed,' he replied soberly. He is, by the way, the nicest, most straightforward, freshest young man imaginable. 'Before I began,' he went on, 'I asked advice from the Head of Westcott House. He most surprisingly gave me the go-ahead, and he is not the type to approve of young men getting out of the usual pattern of the ministry to try and reform the Church of England!'

Mr. Beaumont's task in *Time and Tide* is plain enough. He has a paper which had lost most of its circulation and was about to close. He has taken it, revived it and added a page of news that is purely religious. He wants people who read a weekly to have good news of the Church besides news of politics, social affairs and the

arts; it is an excellent thing to take religion naturally as something of universal interest.

In *Prism* Mr. Beaumont wants to wake churchpeople out of day-dreaming into the dangerous world of to-day. England is a Christian country, but only just, he would remind them. It is a country, now, not for established religion but for missionary work. He longs to get churchpeople out of a groove. So in the columns of *Prism* any question crying to be answered may be thrashed out.

'What questions?' I asked. 'Such as these,' was the answer: 'The State appointment of bishops; the parson's freehold; the House Church; the right of the Church to make her own rules; the revision of Morning and Evening Prayer (to take from them excessive Bible lessons when priest and people already do their own private Bible-reading); whether modern cathedrals are a blessing or a burden; and associated with this, why not abolish vergers, professional choirs, guide books, post-cards and anything that can make a cathedral into a museum rather than a place for worship and prayer?' These are just a few revolutions to start the discussion.

Mr. Beaumont has financial resources, boundless energy—and faith. Will it remove mountains? I hope so indeed, and I wish him very well.



BEN-HUR

A Tale of the Christ, retold by John Lastingham

PART 10. THE LEPERS

WHEN the officer in command at the Tower of Antonia, accompanied by a party of workmen, had broken down the wall which concealed the inner dungeon, a sight so terrible met their eyes, in the light of the flaring torches, that even their hard hearts were moved to pity. Two women crouched before them. It was possible to tell that one was old and the other a mere girl; but they were at the same time so hideously disfigured, covered with a white scalliness, that only the vestiges of humanity were left to them. Something about their dreadful appearance cautioned the officer not to move nearer to them and he directed his party also to keep away. When he inquired who they were, the elder of the two women gave him the answer which she had already called through the aperture in the wall. 'A woman of Israel entombed here with her daughter; help us quickly, or we die.'

The story which she told between sobs was indeed terrible. They had been there in the darkness eight years. What is more, they had been deliberately placed in a cell which was infected with leprosy, and inevitably they had caught the disease. This evil had been done to them by Valerius Gratus, the Procurator and friend of Messala, whose intention it had been not only that they should vanish from sight, but also that they should die slowly from a disease which he knew they would be bound to pick up from their surroundings. This dastardly action had enabled him, indeed, to take for himself the whole estate of the Hurs who, with the son sent to the galleys, and the two women thus imprisoned, had vanished from the world.

Yet somehow throughout the terrible time of their imprisonment the mother and daughter had managed to sustain themselves with an unconquerable hope; believing and trusting in the God of their fathers.

At last the Roman officer gathered himself sufficiently to draw their story from them. He was deeply moved. When he had written notes of their narrative upon his tablets he said: 'Thou shalt have relief, woman. I will send thee food and drink. But mark this,' he added, 'I cannot see thee again. Make preparation, and to-night I will have thee taken to the gate of the town and set free. After that, thou knowest the law. Farewell.'

Soon afterwards slaves came to the cell, bringing water in a basin, and food and garments. These they set down within reach of the tainted

prisoners, and then ran away in terror. Thus it befell that early that night the two women were conducted to the gate, as the officer had promised, and turned into the street. Above them the stars twinkled in the heavens. The mother and the daughter looked at each other, silently and hopelessly wondering what next they were to do.



Notwithstanding their leprosy, Ben-Hur seeks out his mother and sister

Meanwhile, Ben-Hur himself had arrived alone in Jerusalem. Indeed, about the very time when the discovery of the two women in the tower had been made, he had been climbing the eastern face of the Mount of Olives, there to turn and look at the sacred city of his birth. He saw it in all its splendour; but the sight only brought to him the deep sadness and bitterness which came always with the memory of the terrible events which had come upon him there, when, eight years ago, he had been taken off as a prisoner. The question burning within him now was where he should begin his search for his mother and his sister—that quest which filled him with a fierce resolve. And as he thus pondered, in sadness and bitterness of heart, he remembered Amrah, the Egyptian nurse of his childhood, and how she would have remained faithful to the charge which he had laid upon her as his captives had led him off, to stay by the old family home to the last. To that place, therefore, to the home of his childhood, the Palace of the Hurs, he resolved to go.

Thus he came at last to the narrow street in which his boyhood home stood. It was shuttered and ruinous and, rousing him to sudden fury as he looked, there was a notice upon the gate which bore the inscription: 'This

is the property of the Emperor.' He knocked; but there was no reply. He knocked again; but the silence was mocking. It was now night-time, and an August moon was pouring its silver light over the city. In its light, as he stepped back into the street, he could see the parapet above him from which the fatal tile had fallen upon the head of the Roman Procurator on that terrible morning so long ago.

He did not know, as he stood there, deep in thought, that two shadowy figures, two women clinging to each other, had also moved into the silent street and were standing some little

distance away. They also were looking at what had been their home; for the two women were Ben-Hur's mother and Tirzah, his sister.

After a while, Ben-Hur sat himself down upon the steps by the shuttered gate and, overcome with weariness and sadness, fell asleep.

Stealthily, the two women crept nearer to him. And then, in the light of the moon shining upon his pale face, they saw him clearly, and were electrified.

'As the Lord liveth,' the elder of the two women whispered, 'the man is my son—thy brother!'

They would have run to him instantly; but now a terrible thought gripped the mother of Ben-Hur. She could not approach him; neither of them could ever approach; for they were lepers and unclean! Ben-Hur slept on, unconscious of the agony which was tormenting the souls who looked upon him in the moonlight. Nor did he wake as, with breaking hearts, they stole away from him. The next morning they were found by the authorities and driven out of the city with stones, as was the common fate of lepers.

It was Amrah, the faithful nurse, who had indeed been within the shuttered palace of the Hurs, who first recognized Ben-Hur. She found him

on the steps in the street and awakened him from sleep. From him she had his story, to him she offered all the kindness and shelter which were within her power, though it was necessary for Ben-Hur to be secretive in his movements, and not to allow himself to become known to the Roman authorities. But there was nothing Amrah could tell him about his mother and sister at that time.

As it happened, however, within two days, through overhearing one of the jailers from the Tower of Antonia telling in the market-place the story of the discovery of the two women, she had become possessed of the terrible truth. She resolved to tell Ben-Hur nothing; for there was nothing he could do, and she was certain that he would endanger himself by rushing headlong to the two women if ever he heard the facts of their situation.

Even so, she resolved secretly on her own part to find her old mistress and Tirzah and to bring them whatever help she could. She had not long to wait. In the terrible place, honey-combed with dark caves, known as Gehenna, not far from the city walls, the lepers were accustomed by ancient habit to take up their abode. At nightfall they crept into the caves to sleep. By day they came out to wander like lost souls in the valley. To them, as an act of mercy, food and water would be lowered from above, so that they could be sustained in this way without coming into physical contact with the clean.

To the bluff overhanging the doleful valley of the lepers, therefore, Amrah at sunrise one day made her way. There, she found and recognized her old mistress and the girl whom Amrah had known and loved as a child. Their terrible appearance moved her to tears. And from them she learned that they already knew that Ben-Hur was in the city. Even so, held by a deathly resolve, the mother commanded the nurse that she should not on any account tell him anything of them. "The burden will be heavy, O my mistress, and hard to bear," said Amrah, falling upon her face.

"How much harder would it be to see him as we are!" the mother answered. And with that she took the basket of food Amrah had brought and, with her daughter clinging to her arm, withdrew to the caves.

Yet their terrible secret before long became known to Ben-Hur. Malluch, the servant of Simonides, upon his arrival in Jerusalem, went boldly to the Tower of Antonia to inquire for the prisoners. From the Tribune in command he received the story of the two women, and this story he hurried to tell to Ben-Hur.

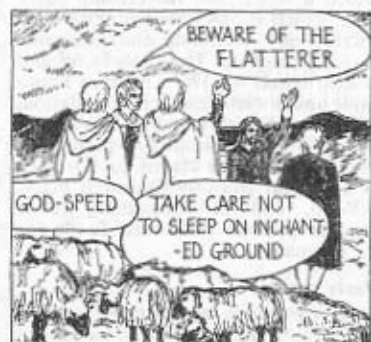
The effect was terrible. It seemed to Ben-Hur that the pain of it was almost too dreadful to be borne. He could

only sit and mutter to himself: 'Lepers, lepers! They—my mother and Tirzah—lepers! How long, how long, O Lord!'

To be continued

This story is from the book by General Lew Wallace, on which Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer have based their motion picture William Wyler's presentation of Ben-Hur. Photographs © by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc., 1961.

The Pilgrim's Progress



QUESTION PAGE

4175. Is there anything in the Bible to support the doctrine of reincarnation on this earth?

There is nothing in the Bible to support what you rightly describe as 'the disheartening and depressing theory of reincarnation.' It is sometimes alleged that in affirming that John the Baptist had fulfilled the prophecy that Elijah should come again before the Messiah, Jesus was supporting the view that John was a reincarnation of Elijah. John may indeed be regarded as fulfilling the prophecy, but solely on the ground that he was both a prophet and the Lord's herald. There is no need to suppose that Elijah was reincarnate in his person.

4176. Am I right in saying there is no such thing as a Vicar's (or Rector's) Warden and a People's Warden and that both are on an equality and both elected by the whole Annual Church Meeting?

Canon 89 of 1604 reads: 'All churchwardens or questmen in every parish shall be chosen by the joint consent of the minister and parishioners, if it may be; but if they cannot agree upon such a choice, then the minister shall choose one and the parishioners the other.' At the same time, it might well be claimed in many parishes that by ancient custom the incumbent had the right of choosing one warden and the parishioners the other; but in any event, this makes little difference since the churchwardens can only act when they have been admitted by the Bishop (or his Archdeacon) at the visitation, and thereafter they have the same legal status.

Question of the Month

4174. Can you please advise me on entering into the ministry? I am only twelve but I have had this call for some time, and as I did not pass the eleven plus examination, I wonder if there will be an opening for me.

If you are called to be a priest, or to take up some other particular work for the Church, there are two things you should do at this stage. The first is to take your parish priest into your confidence, as you will need his help and guidance all the way. The second is to prepare yourself by work and study for whatever duties God may be calling you to undertake. There, again, your priest's advice will be invaluable. It is not essential to qualify for grammar school in order to enter the ministry, but a priest must have the proper intellectual training and this may mean extra hard work later. On the other hand, there are many ways in which God calls men to serve him otherwise than as a priest.

4177. A Christian is a follower of Christ. It is necessary, therefore, to believe that Christ is divine to be a Christian, or can one think of him as a divinely inspired man?

The Church of England, as part of the

greater Church which was founded by Jesus himself, believes Jesus to be both God and man. This belief is set down plainly in the Nicene Creed: 'I believe in... one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds... who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from Heaven... and was made man.' This expression of the Church's belief is one of the utmost importance, for if Jesus is regarded merely as a divinely inspired man the gospel loses nearly all its point, and a career which ended in public execution must be counted a failure. The resurrection led Thomas and the disciples to the only possible conclusion, that Jesus Christ was Lord and God.

4178. In what century and in what part of Britain was Christianity first introduced?

Christianity was first introduced into Britain by Roman soldiers or traders at the end of the second or beginning of the third century, it is not known precisely where. St. Alban, the first British martyr, is traditionally associated with the persecution under Diocletian in A.D. 305. He was a native of Verulamium (now St. Albans, in Hertfordshire). Three British bishops attended the Council of Arles in A.D. 314; and a small church, excavated at Silchester, probably dates from the fourth century. Medieval legend associates the coming of Christianity with the ancient monastery at Glastonbury.

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.

HOUSEWIVES' CHOICE

By Elizabeth Gundry

CHANGES in our eating habits creep up almost unnoticed. For instance, ready-made soups are playing a rapidly increasing part in the diet of many people. In recent years, the spread of packet soups in particular has been considerable. Unfortunately these soups have very little nutritional value (nor even much energy-giving value, either), although many young people tend to rely on them for a soup-and-bun lunch.

SHOPPER'S GUIDE has published illuminating comparisons of several dozen. Although chicken or some other tempting ingredient may be named (and pictured) on the front, the list of contents printed on the back usually shows that starch in one form or another is the principal ingredient. The food value of the packet soups is often far below even the minimum standard that was laid down for tinned soups—during the days of wartime shortage!

Tinned soups, SHOPPER'S GUIDE concluded, are likely to be far better value than packet ones.

Advertising under scrutiny

Dr. Fisher, while still Archbishop,

was one of many eminent Churchmen who gave encouragement to a new organization with the aim of promoting truth in advertising. It is called the Advertising Inquiry Council, and its purpose is to look after the ordinary shopper's interests by exposing misleading claims or exaggerations. It also concerns itself with advertising's effects on society as a whole, which, since nearly £500 million is spent on advertisements, can be considerable. For instance, the Council has published a report on 'Advertising Alcohol,' which shows how youngsters are increasingly becoming the deliberate target in this field. This costs 7s. 6d. and is distributed by The Christian Economic and Social Research Foundation, 12 Caxton Street, London, S.W.1.

AIC's own monthly periodical, about advertising claims and trends, is £1 a year from 49 Cresswell Place, S.W.10, and in subscribing to it readers provide AIC with funds for its campaign.

Party perils

As party-time approaches, a word of warning about dangers lurking in

some of the flouncy dresses which teenagers like.

Over 50,000 people go to hospital with serious burns caused in the home: many are in the plastic surgeons' hands for years. A lot of these accidents happen when a full dress brushes by a fire, for many flimsy materials are highly inflammable.

The answer is to use nylon or Terylene provided that they have not had a stiffening resin applied to them, for many resins are liable to flare (the few that don't cannot be distinguished from the rest, alas! unless the manufacturer has labelled the garment as being flare-free). Even adding a flock decoration to nylon makes it unsafe. Fine cottons, silks and rayons are to be avoided: where nylon or Terylene would only melt, they can be enveloped in flame within seconds. Terylene/cotton mixtures are almost as bad.

For Sheer Hard Wear

When SHOPPER'S GUIDE tested twenty brands of small boys' shorts, it came to the conclusion that for sheer hard wear Terylene/wool cloths came out best—in a worsted weave. (Flannel gives a soft warm feel, but worsted is more sturdy.) For little more than 30s. there were brands that did almost as well as others costing over £2.

HOME AND GARDEN

1. MY GARDEN IN OCTOBER

By Dr. W. E. Shewell-Cooper

THE leaves may be starting to fall thick and fast and you will have a job keeping the garden tidy. When sweeping up leaves think how important they are for the compost heap, so collect all you can and sprinkle them with fish manure or dried poultry manure. Cut back the leaves of the bearded irises by about half and hoe lightly among the plants. Spray the bed afterwards with Captain to control and prevent the leaf spot disease. Prune the berberis shrubs that have flowered early in the season, and take cuttings of the rambler roses if you wish to increase them.

Remove the decaying foliage from the base of the chrysanthemum plants in the greenhouse and dust them thoroughly with a fine sulphur dust. Sow a row of Trocadero lettuce 1 foot apart if you live in the south. Plant out a late batch of spring cabbage allowing 1 foot between the rows and 9 inches between the plants. The lower leaves of the Brussels sprouts are turning yellow—remove these and put them on the compost heap. Evening primroses, foxgloves, Sweet Williams and Canterbury Bells can all be planted about

the second week of October. Give them plenty of room and they will do well.

Apply a special type of sedge peat known as Humul over the lawn with the idea of giving organic matter to plants that have given up their leaves in the form of grass mowings all through the summer. Do not roll the lawn when the ground is wet. Plunge a fork in perpendicularly every 2 feet to aerate it. If you have had trouble with Fire Blight in your tulips in the past, try planting the bulbs 6 inches deep this year. If you layered your carnations in the late summer the



Now is the time to dig in compost

plants should now be ready for putting out into their permanent positions.

2. IRON IN THE DIET

By Hazel Macleod

EVERYONE needs iron in the diet to make and replace red blood. Foods rich in iron are liver, heart, dried fruit, sardines, cocoa, black treacle, flour and bread—liver is a very good source, so try to serve it once a week. Here is a useful change from fried liver.

Stuffed Liver

$\frac{3}{4}$ lb. ox liver, 1 onion, 3-4 rashers of bacon, $\frac{1}{2}$ pt. breadcrumbs (not dried), pepper, salt, 1 tablespoonful chopped parsley, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful chopped mixed herbs.

Skin and slice the liver into pieces about $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch thick. Chop the onion very finely and mix with the breadcrumbs, herbs and seasoning. Put the slices of liver in a casserole or other oven-proof dish and spread with the crumbs. Arrange the slices of bacon on the top. Pour in sufficient water (dissolve a meat cube in it if you like) or vegetable boilings just to cover the liver but not the crumbs.

Bake in a moderate oven for about three-quarters of an hour. If the bacon seems in danger of crisping too quickly, cover the dish with a greased paper.

19. CATHERINE WHEEL (open to all)

From the letters in the pattern make words of three or more letters according to the following rules.

In any one word you make:

1. The middle letter must be used, but only once.

2. Of the outer letters, a maximum of two may be used twice, at your discretion, but not necessarily.

3. The remaining outer letters may then only be used once each.

To put it another way, every word you make must contain an L and the other letters must come from the outer circle, but you must not repeat more than two of them.

When you have made all the words you can, turn to this month's puzzle epistle, the Epistle to the Galatians. Now make a list of all those words

you have made which occur in the Epistle, giving the chapter and verse reference in each case. Discard the remaining words.

Two book tokens for 10s. 6d. will be awarded for the best answers. Credit will be given for long words.



20. SORT THEM OUT (age limit 13)

Below are three lists:

Ten proper names:

Alexander, Ananias, Cornelius, Deborah, Demetrius, Epaphras, Lydia, Naaman, Nicodemus, and Vashti.

Ten occupations or descriptions:

Captain, Centurion, Copper-smith, High Priest, Nurse, Pharisee, Prisoner, Purple-seller, Queen and Silver-smith.

Ten Bible chapters: Genesis 35; 2 Kings 5; Esther 1; John 3; Acts 10; 16, 19, 23; 2 Timothy 4; and Philemon.

By referring to the Bible, sort out the three lists and set them out in three columns, so that on each line the proper name, the occupation and the Bible chapter are put together as they should be.

Example: Paul—Apostle—Titus 1.

Three book tokens for 5s. for the three best answers (neatness counts). Closing date for both puzzles: October 16th. Entries, please, to: The Puzzle Editor, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1.

July winners:

No. 13. Miss K. Dendy (Sanderstead), Mr. W. K. Webb (Winchester).

No. 14. Carol Tomlin (N.W.9), Heather Mainwaring (Hereford), Jennifer Davies (Norwich).

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Children's Gift Service.

Preacher: Rev. A. Thompson (Vicar of Holy Trinity, Formby).

6-30 p.m.—Evensong and Sermon.

Preacher Canon H. Perkins, (Vicar of Mossley Hill).

We shall be grateful for assistance in the decoration of the Church on Saturday morning 7th October.

THE MOTHERS' UNION

On Tuesday, 3rd October we invite you all to join us in the School at 7-30 p.m. when a new film will be shown.

"The Shadow of The Boomerang." Admission will be 2/- for adults and children 1/-. This is a great film—do not miss it!

THE YOUNG WIVES GROUP

On Friday, 6th October there will be a Whist Drive and Domino Drive in the School at 7-15 p.m. followed by a Dance at 9-45 p.m. This is the Young Wives Bazaar Effort.

HARVEST SUPPER

A Grand Harvest Supper and Social will be held on Friday, 13th October. The event will be opened by The Squire and his Lady at 7-30 p.m. During the evening Mr. Jack Hargreaves of the Farmers Weekly will present the awards to the farmers who scored the highest number of points in the various sections of their competition.

Men's Section:

Prizes given by:

1. Potatoes (red varieties)

10 tubers.

Farmer's Weekly.

2. Potatoes (white varieties)

10 tubers.

Farmer's Weekly.

3. Biscuit wheat (1 lb.).

W. & R. Jacob & Co. Ltd.

4. Bread wheat (1 lb.)

John Heaton Ltd.

5. Oats (1 lb.).

W. Wells & Sons Ltd.

6. Selection of Garden Produce

(any four items).

J. L. Clucas Ltd.

Ladies' Section:

Prizes given by:

1. Jam (1 lb.).

Daish's Ltd.

2. Cake Victoria Jam Sponge

(Spillers' recipe).

Spillers' Ltd.

3. Bread 1 lb. loaf or cob.

Rathbone Bros. Ltd.

Tickets for the Harvest Supper are strictly limited and are obtainable from any of the men on the P.C.C. Price 3/-. Admission will be by ticket only.

All entries for any section of the Competition must be handed to Mr. Harold Dean, by noon on Thursday, 12th October.

SPILLERS' CAKE MAKING COMPETITION

SPILLERS' Self-Raising Flour or HOMEPRIDE

Self-Raising Flour.

Rules

1. The Competition is open to all bona fide amateurs. The cakes must be made in accordance with the recipe, and the quantities of the ingredients, where precisely stated, must not be exceeded.
2. A front panel of the Self-Raising Flour bag must be handed in with each Cake before opening of the Show.

VICTORIA JAM SANDWICH

4 oz. Spillers' Self-Raising Flour.

4 oz. Margarine.

4 oz. Castor Sugar.

2 Eggs.

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon Salt.

About 3 tablespoons Milk.

Jam.

Cream the margarine and sugar together and beat in the eggs gradually. Fold in the sieved flour and salt and add sufficient milk to make a soft, dropping consistency. Divide the mixture between two prepared 7-inch sandwich tins and bake in a moderate oven (375 F. Regulo 5) for about 20 minutes. When cool sandwich together with jam.

HALSALL AND DISTRICT FARMERS CLUB

On Thursday, 26th October, a potato Cooking Demonstration will be held in the schools at 7-30 p.m. All are welcome. The Potato Marketing Board will send their publicity representatives and we hope to learn much from them on "Cooking Spuds."

EVENING CLASSES

The evening classes in Woodwork and Soft Furnishing commence on Tuesday (Woodwork) and Wednesday (Soft Furnishing), September 25th and 26th, 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 2nd. Time flies!

BAZAAR EFFORT

On Friday, 27th October, there will be a Whist and Domino Drive and Dance in the School at 7-15 p.m. This is a men's effort. Please support Mr. Dean.

QUARRY MOUNT CHILDREN'S HOME, ORMSKIRK

Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Brett, cordially invite anyone who can spare the time to come to Halsall House, on the evening of Tuesday, 21st November, at 7 p.m. to 9-30 p.m.

Coffee Evening, Bring and Buy Stall; a Beetle Drive for anyone who would like to play. All proceeds to the Children's Home.

Your support would be greatly appreciated.

SERVERS' ROTA

	8-0 a.m.	10-30 or 11-30 a.m.
Oct. 1	Arthur Gilbert	Peter Balmer
8	Peter Balmer	John Gaskell
16	Anthony Grimshaw	John Davies
23	John Davies	Harold Grimshaw and Peter Balmer
30	John Gaskell	Arthur Gilbert

"THEY ARE ALL GONE INTO THE WORLD OF LIGHT"

November 1st is All Saints' Day, when we praise God for the Communion of Saints. We do not think particularly of figures in stained glass windows, but of all Christian people who find fellowship in the Church. In writing to the various churches St. Paul uses the word to apply to all who are of the Church. "To the saints which are at Ephesus." This does not refer to one or two especially pious people but to all who have joined the fellowship of the Church.

On this day we have in mind the saints who have passed through this world before us, and our fellowship with them. It helps us to enter into the spirit of All Saints'-tide if we think first of our own parish church. If you are a chorister think of the men and boys who weekly sat in those choir stalls. You have much in common with them, and could you meet them you would have much to talk about. And so it applies to us all, clergy, choir-master, wardens, sidesmen, members of the congregation. Think of our counterparts of yesterday—the people who sat in our pew, who counted the collection, who played the organ, who conducted the service. "They are all gone into the world of light." Most of them were people like ourselves with good points and bad ones—capable of being a bit awkward at times, capable of being generous; at times selfish, at other times rising above selfishness and putting the fellowship of the Church first. But all of us have one thing in common!—love of our church, pride in the part we played in its life, conscious of the high privilege which is theirs who serve in any way the fellowship of the Church. It is an easy transition to pass from our own parish to the Church spread abroad, and going back through the centuries. Still the same fellowship! Still our counterparts at all times and in all places! There is

added lustre to the fellowship from the presence in it of so many wonderful people—Luke, and John, Peter and Paul, Aidan and Hilda, W. Temple and Mulgrave. There is warmth in it from the presence of so many dear and friendly people whose names are known to few besides ourselves.

Christ assures us that this fellowship is real. We are all united in Him through His Church. The supreme experience of this fellowship is found at Holy Communion. This is the fellowship rite instituted by Christ Himself, and from the beginning until now the principal rite of the Church. In it a whole congregation enters as a body into communion with the company of those who have passed through this world before us in Christ, and also into communion with our contemporaries. Each one of us, in Communion, adds something to the fellowship, and captures something from "the world of light."

These lines by Lionel Johnson apply to members of the fellowship of the saints on earth or in heaven and suggest what we might be ourselves, and look for in others.

*"Each friend possesses, each betrays,
Some secret of the eternal things;
Each one has walked celestial ways
And held celestial communings.
The smiles upon their lips are bright
With beauty from the Face of God;
Their eyes keep something of that Light,
Which knows no pause nor period."*

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

Oct. 1	Miss Mawdsley, Mrs. Parker
8	The Congregation
15	Mrs. F. Moorcroft, Mrs. Townsend
22	Mrs. W. Halsall
29	Mrs. T. Rimmer
Nov. 5	Mrs. Ainscough

SIDESMEN'S ROTA

Oct. 1	E. Grimshaw	R. Brett
	C. Aindow	T. Forshaw
8	E. Serjeant	H. Guy
	M. Porter	S. Parks
15	W. Leadbetter	J. Balmer
	R. Gaskell	H. Baldwin
22	W. Jenkinson	T. Sismey
	J. Cheetham	E. Battersby
29	J. Serjeant	J. Banks
	R. Heaton	T. Swift

HOLY BAPTISM

"Entered into the family of Christ's Church"

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10	David John, son of William Kenneth and Jean Case, 185 Grimshaw Lane, Ormskirk

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