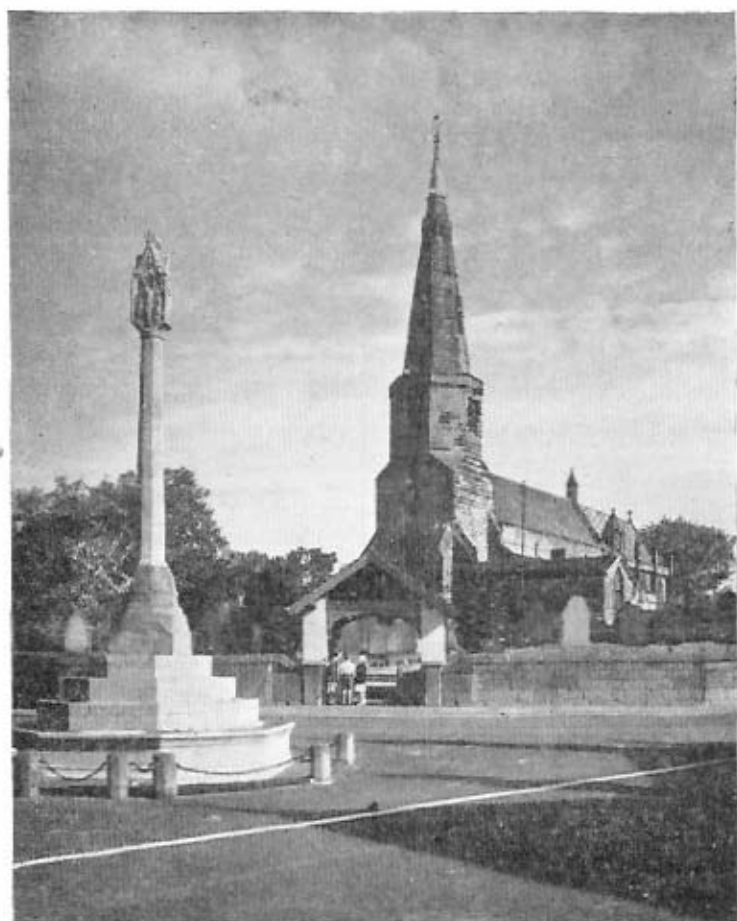


SEPTEMBER 1961

Price - Fourpence

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4th August, 1961.

My dear friends,

Congratulations on a wonderful effort in the face of great difficulties on Saturday, 15th July. The event was enjoyed by a very large number of our parishioners and friends and the willing service given by so many ensured its success. The amount raised was £259 10s. 1d. and further donations of £1 10s. have been handed in making a final total of **£261 0s. 1d.** Thank you one and all for your help and service.

At the present time a glorious summer is fading into autumn. Fields and woods, hills and valleys, ripple and undulate like a colourful garment as far as the eye can see, burning in the mid-day sun, ablaze at sunset, pale as an illusion in the misty twilight.

The beauty and mystery of the world! There is magic everywhere!

Familiar scenes, and natural objects, become to us like old friends. Trees along the road, or in our gardens! Roses and perennials which greet us year by year! We feel kinship with them, and in this sense of kinship lies a clue to a deeper understanding of the natural world.

"Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment."

Beauty and order the wizardry of movement and colour; the pageantry of the seasons, are the deliberate handiwork of the Divine Artist.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork."

Our kinship is not simply with trees and flowers, fields and hills, but with God the father of all. We see in them the glory of God—we recognize his signature. Those flowers bear the touch of our Father, and also of our Friend, and Brother who bade us consider the lilies of the field, who stilled the tempest, and changed water into wine by the power which is His as co-partner in the creating of all things.

He moves through His world.

"O what an arch of stars now spans
These fields, by night no longer man's!
Their ancient Master is abroad,
Walking beneath the moonlight cold,
His presence is the stillness; He
Fills the earth with wonder, and mystery."

"Thou deckest thyself with light as it
were with a garment."

So must man clothe himself with light in the works of his own hands—in what he creates. Order, beauty, variety, yet harmony must be found in the kingdom of men. All that is shoddy and ugly; make-shift and cheap, must be avoided. As Plato said, "The world is God's epistle to mankind." Sir Thomas Brown reiterated the same idea in the 17th century: "There are two books from whence I collect my Divinity—besides that written one of God, another of his servant, Nature—that universal and public manuscript that lies open unto the eyes of all." Here we get our sense of direction for all personal, civic, and national progress. We must observe the ways of God in His handiwork, and emulate them in our own works.

We have seen again fields of wheat, each stalk sprung from a single grain bearing fifty to a hundred grains. We have seen trees laden with fruit, and the earth is still rich with manifold root crops. And this harvest of field, and orchard, and woodland, is only one aspect of a process that fills the world—indeed the universe. How prolific—for example, are so many living creatures (I forget how many eggs a herring roe contains).

Science probing into outer space finds the universe strewn with stars, and star-systems beyond the power of man to comprehend. Whether we turn to the small or great; the near or far, we meet the same characteristics—prodigality—profusion; as if time and space formed a boundless womb teeming with an infinite variety of existences and living creatures.

"Thou openest thine hand, and fillest all things living with plenteousness."

Generosity to the point of prodigality, by One whose nature it is to be generous! We see this principle manifested in the works of Christ on earth, who came to reveal to man the nature of God. In the feeding of the five thousand, twelve baskets left over and above what was needed! Water changed into wine of superlative quality, so much so that the governor of the feast said to the bridegroom: "Thou hast left the good wine until now!" Everywhere we see exemplified this profusion, this prodigal generosity, and never more so than in the harvest.

Here again is the direction for our own living. Generosity unlimited! As Christ himself admonishes us in a few vivid words to give "good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over."

God bless you all.

Your sincere friend,

HERBERT BULLOUGH.

* A GREAT NEW RELIGIOUS FILM *

"SHADOW OF THE BOOMERANG"

will be screened in the
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SYNOPSIS

The story revolves around an American brother and sister situation with starring roles by Georgia Lee and Dick Jones.

The Americans go to Australia to manage an American-owned Cattle Station, their arrival timed with Graham Team Australian Crusades. The brother is resentful of the intrusion which the Crusade makes on the life and routine at the Station; his sister on the other hand is far more outgoing and is intrigued by the lives of Australians who have embraced the Christian life. A key conflict in the story development concerns the American boy's prejudice against aboriginals, one of whom is his best stock boy. Raised in a Mission School in the Outback, the Aborigine in demonstrating the Christian reaction to his employer's prejudice merely irritates the American that much more.

Spectacular scenes of Mr. Graham's Melbourne and Sydney Crusades are uniquely intercut with scenes of a land-line relay meeting in the Interior where the principals of the story feel the impact of the preached Word.

Replete with songs, Australian Stock whip-cracking, the atmosphere of the Flying Doctor, and the limitless scope of Australian scenic exteriors, all combine with the outstanding American and Australian cast to make "SHADOW OF THE BOOMERANG" one of the most effective instruments for film evangelism yet produced.

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Running time 95 mins.

THE RIGHT USE OF SUNDAY

In the French Revolution, Voltaire cynically said, "If we would destroy this Christianity we must first kill the Sunday."

In our land today, for thousands, Sunday is not a day for honouring God, but for "their own ways and pleasure and words." Neglect of spiritual exercises and instruction must mean gradual spiritual paralysis, forgetfulness of God, and drift towards secularism. One has said, "Christianity will

live or die by the religious use or abuse of Sunday." It is certainly crucial. Why not amend Voltaire's remark? If we would save Christianity we must first revive the Sunday.

Some of our teachers have pedantically pointed out that Sunday is not the seventh day of the week, but the first, and, moreover, is the day of the Sun. Hence the impression is forming that the Fourth Commandment does not really bind Christians.

BUT IS SUNDAY OBSERVANCE MERE JUDAISM?

Long before the establishment of the Jewish religion, or even the foundation of that nation a day of rest, the seventh in the week, had been divinely indicated and consecrated. (Gen. ii. 1, 2.) Recovered tablets shew that a Sabbath was customary in Mesopotamia long before Moses or even Abram. Moses in his legislation did not originate the day; he accepted it while God on Sinai commanded it, and made a Covenant with the people wherein one of their duties was the religious observance of the seventh day. It was enforced with promises and threats. (Lev. xxvi. etc.) The breach of the Covenant brought ruin, and when Judah and Israel were crashing, God sent messengers by whom He said that the downfall had been caused in part by desecration of the sabbaths, and that restoration to happiness depended upon their reconsecration. (Isa. lvi. 1-8; lviii. 13, 14; Ezek. xx. 20-24; Jer. xvii. 19-27; Neh. xiii. 15-22). These things were written for our admonition.

The Son of God came not to destroy but to fulfill. On another Mount He taught that the old Moral Law was more strictly binding on His followers, because of underlying principles, the spirit beneath the letter. (S. Matt. v. 17-37.) Taking away neither the privilege nor the obligation of the sabbath, He called Himself "the Lord of the Sabbath." A change was made in the day, the first instead of seventh, perhaps on His own instruction, surely in His honour; it seems soon to have become pre-eminently the day for united worship, and was called the Lord's Day. In the following century there are abundant proofs that the Lord's Day was essentially the Sabbath of the Christians. The Bible reveals

SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW TESTAMENT SUNDAYS

(a) Acts xx. 7. "We were gathered together," i.e., for public worship, which embraced (1) Church-going, (2) Confession of Sin, (3) Bearing witness to Jesus. "To break bread," i.e. (4) Holy Communion. "Paul preached," i.e., (5) Teaching and Learning Christian Faith and Practice.



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Food Facts

THERE has been, it seems, a revolution in the last few years—a revolution in our eating habits. At least, that is what one of the women's magazines was saying a little while ago, and giving some pretty interesting facts, too. For one thing, our expenditure on food has just about doubled. And the food we buy comes to us in different forms and often is different in nature from what it was even ten years ago. This is the day of the supermarket; this is the day of the pre-packaged food; this is the day when

TOPIC FOR THE MONTH

you can buy a complete meal, complete with all the trimmings, pop it in the oven, warm it up, and eat it. This is the day when peas are gathered by machinery day and night by vast machines in the fields of eastern England in the picking season, tinned, and presented to us thereafter as garden peas at any time of the year. This is the time when bread can become a mass-produced chemical paste, conveniently provided pre-wrapped and pre-sliced. This is the time when you can even buy carrots grown to a convenient standardized shape.

And so on—it is all very interesting. Maybe it is all very gratifying. Cer-

tainly, it is good to know that there are people about who can afford to spend twice as much on food as they were doing ten years ago. But there is another side to the picture. This is the side which ought to sting the conscience and exercise the mind. While we spend twice as much on food as ten years ago; while we buy our pre-packaged foods, a high proportion of the rest of the world's population is below the starvation limit. This constant factor of semi-starvation should be always remembered. It is the reason for the war on want

which some statesmen of the West have been trying to declare for a long time now. It is the one great and tragic inequality of the world we live in—this appalling difference between the standards of nutrition in one part of it and the other.

A doubled household budget on the food in the West combined with starvation in the streets of Hong Kong and many another part of the world's surface makes an explosive mixture. The explosion might go off some time. The forces working for World Communism hope that it will. The duty of Christians here is clear: it is to stir the conscience of the age they live in on

THE SIGN

*Not ashamed to confess the
faith of Christ crucified*

No. 681

VOL. 57

SEPTEMBER 1961

- 1 F. Giles, Ab., c. 720.
- 3 S. Fourteenth after Trinity.
- 7 Th. Evurtius, B., c. 340.
- 8 F. Nativity of the B.V.M.
- 10 S. Fifteenth after Trinity.
- 13 W. Cyprian, B.M., 258 (or 26th September).
- 14 Th. Holy Cross Day.
- 16 S. Ninian, B., c. 430.
- 17 S. Sixteenth after Trinity. Lambert, B.M., 709.
- 19 Tu. Theodore, Abp., 690.
- 21 Th. St. Matthew, A.E.M.
- 24 S. Seventeenth after Trinity.
- 29 F. St. Michael and All Angels.
- 30 S. Jerome, P.D., 420.

Days of fasting, or abstinence:

Fridays, 1, 8, 15, 22, 29;

Wednesday, 20;

Ember Days, 20, 22, 23.

this issue. And, of course, the necessary preliminary is to have the issue alive in our own consciences. For out of the aroused consciences of many action may well follow. Lacking it, in years to come, the harvest which we now so comfortably and customarily celebrate each autumn may change into another kind of harvest—that of the grapes of wrath. SIGNET

No Time—for What?

WHAT is this life if, full of care,
we have no time for praise
and prayer?

No time at dawn to kneel and pray
for guidance through the coming day.

No time, when duties crowd, to ask
the needed strength for every task.

No time at noon amid the throng,
to breathe a silent grateful song.

No time to sit beside the brook
and read a chapter from the Book.

No time when evening comes to bring
our 'Thank you, God, for everything.'

No time to look up in his face
and ask forgiveness and more grace.

A poor life this if, dull and clod,
we have no time to walk with God.

*Roderic Dunkerley
(after W. H. Davies)*

Valiant for Truth

By Rosamund Essex



HELEN MARGIOLA

SHE is a little old woman with a story.

I saw her sitting in the sun. She was small and old, wrinkled and shabby. Her head was done up in a black cotton cloth, grown green at the top where the sun had scorched it. A man's jacket was worn over a variety of odd clothing held together by string. A black apron covered a rough skirt falling nearly to her feet. These were wrapped in bits of cloth.

She was a person of no importance, you would say. But she is a heroine of her people and, as I see it, a Valiant-for-Truth in the Church of God. Her name is Helen Margiola, born in 1882.

This is her story. She and her relations are Greeks. Before the Communist régime was established, her family migrated from Greece to Yugoslavia. They were shepherds and they settled down happily and prosperously. They increased their herds and they were accepted with friendliness by those among whom they lived.

Then the Iron Curtain fell with a bang and it trapped the Margiolas behind it. They lost their property;

they lost their herds; they lost their freedom: and they all but lost heart as well. They would have done so had it not been for Helen.

She was, by then, head of the family. Her husband had died under the harsh conditions of their life. She, little and frail as she was, rose like a seasoned leader to her high calling: and that was to keep her people pure in their following of God and lead them back out of oppression to their own country when the time should be ripe. 'I will take you all home again if it is the last thing that I do,' she said.

But that was not to be for years to come. The group of Greeks were living under forced labour. They were already working twelve hours a day as farm peons. They tried to go to church on Sunday but it was forbidden—'For,' they were told, 'there

are extra jobs for you on Sunday. You will be employed on public works.' If anyone was ill and did not complete his task, he was held to be a saboteur of the 'splendid work of the State'; and there was always the danger of prison.

A Strong Tower

During all that troublous time, Helen Margiola helped, supported and encouraged the men and women of her group by her work and example. She brought them together regularly for prayer. 'For,' she said, 'we must not forget to pray and to give thanks in distress as well as in prosperity.' She prevented her group from being contaminated by Communist ideas and atheism.

When the time came, four years later, she led her group over the border and back to Macedonia in Greece. They came with nothing except the clothing they wore and the blankets they carried. When they reached Macedonia after an icy trail across the mountains, they found—nothing: no village, no town, no houses, no shelter. There was just a

wide, green plain. So they set to, and they made houses for themselves of mud, dried in the sun, and they thatched them roughly with reeds.

Each hut was tiny in construction: one room nine feet by nine feet housed each family of the group: and they lived for years in these hovels till they were discovered by Christian workers. Some material help was given, but the need was for decent brick houses. And now you will find some of them already in construction.

Under the Bed

When I visited the mud village, there were whole families of seven or eight persons living in the tiny rooms. Some slept on a bed which took up most of the space, some by the bed and some under the bed.

But Helen Margiola? She and her son Christos and her son's wife and the grandchildren are gloriously rehoused in one of the bungalows which the World Council of Churches has just built in Greece. They have come home at last after the long journey from banishment, religious oppression, wanderings over the mountains, homelessness on the plain, squalor in the mud. The new houses are of three rooms, of two rooms and of one room. They have a kitchen, they have sanitation, they have a shed for a horse, or ox and cart.

You should see, as I saw, the faces of joy that met us from those new homes where a stove kept the inhabitants warm and a roof kept them dry. Only those who have slept huddled together under dripping bits of reed can really know what that means.

Why have I written all this? Just as a story? Well, it could be that. But there is something about this Mrs. Valiant-for-Truth that set me thinking. Are the women of to-day really Mrs. Valiants-for-Truth in the conditions in which they live? Or do they just slip easily into the conventions of the day even if they are sub-standard from a Christian point of view? Are Christian women something to look to, in firmness of faith, in straight-forward devotion and reliability in principles? I just ask.

A Task Completed

Now Helen sits in the sun. She does not head the group any more. Her leadership is completed and she has handed on her post to her son. He is leader now. As I see it, she has proved what the faith of an uneducated shabby peasant woman can do against the whole atheistic régime. It gives one heart.

A New Look at the Old Testament

By William Neil

9. HOW TO READ THE 'WISDOM' BOOKS

THE slightly odd name of the 'Wisdom Literature' is given to three of the Old Testament books—Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. On the face of it there does not seem to be much in common between them. Job is probably best described as a lyrical drama, dealing with the problem of innocent suffering. Proverbs is a collection of maxims and aphorisms, specially designed for the instruction of the young. Ecclesiastes is the reflections of a rather self-centred dilettante who eventually finds peace of mind in a kind of sceptical acceptance of things as they are.

The common factor in all three—as, indeed, also in the two other comparable books in the Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom—is that they are all the work of a distinctive group of writers known as Wisdom Scribes, who flourished in Israel after prophecy had died out. It was within the last few centuries of the Old Testament period, when the heyday of Israel as a nation was over, and when the little community was restricted to a few square miles centred on Jerusalem, that these Wisdom Scribes—sometimes known as the Humanists of Israel—made their distinctive contribution to the Bible.

Unlike the prophets they were not nationalists. Israel and Zion did not bulk largely in their thoughts. Their chief study was mankind, his conduct, habits and vagaries, and above all his relationship with the universe in which he has to live. Job and Ecclesiastes are books to be read through. Proverbs is a book to be dipped into. All of them, however, are rewarding, although in the case of Job anyone unfamiliar with the contents is recommended to read Moffatt's translation.

It is worth noticing that the book of Job is a poetic drama in three acts with a prologue and an epilogue in prose. The prologue introduces us to this saintly man, Job, who, with the consent of the Almighty, is to have his faith tested by being visited with one disaster after another and being harried to the point of death. The three acts consist of three cycles of speeches made by his three friends, to each of which Job replies, and in which they try to persuade him that if these sufferings have come upon him he must be guilty of some frightful crime.

A Test of Character

Job stoutly protests his innocence throughout. Notice how his friends begin with silent sympathy, then try

reasoning with him, and end by accusing him of being an utter scoundrel. They are so tied to the orthodox view of the time that suffering is a punishment for sin, that they are prepared to invent crimes that they know very well Job has not committed.

The purpose of the book is to explode the idea that human suffering has any simple solution. It suggests that suffering is, in fact, a test of character, that the full answer to the problem of evil is beyond us because we only see 'through a glass, darkly' as St. Paul later confirmed. It suggests, too, that, when like Job we accept the fact that the world is in God's hands, however little we understand of his ways, the eternal rebel that is in us all finds peace at last.

The Secret of Wisdom

Ecclesiastes is a much shorter and easier book to read. It has nothing to do with Solomon, nor for that matter has Proverbs. Solomon's name is attached to both books probably because he introduced the Wisdom Scribes from Egypt into Israel. Ecclesiastes is a book that expresses the moods of a man who has tried to find happiness in learning and in pleasure but confesses failure in the end.

Yet Ecclesiastes is well aware that, despite the enigmas of life, to fear God and keep his commandments is the secret of true wisdom. His philosophy is inadequate. It has neither hope nor altruism, merely a grim determination to hold on despite all odds. Yet its place in the Bible suggests that God encourages us to dispense with rose-tinted spectacles.

The book of Proverbs is a mixture of some very commonplace observations and some very wonderful insights. Yet again it reminds us that the Bible lays weight on the humdrum virtues of everyday life—honesty, kindness and friendship. Some people object that the book of Proverbs is too calculating, that it encourages us to be good because it pays.

A Moral Universe

But is this altogether wrong? If we believe that the universe is a moral universe, the wise man will want to adjust his life in such a way that it conforms with reality and the purpose behind everything. In this sense, to fly in the teeth of the laws of justice, honesty, charity and so on, cannot possibly pay in the long run, whether we think of individuals, societies or civilization.



Then Job said, Shall vain words have an end?—Job 16, 3

BEN-HUR

A Tale of the Christ, retold by John Lasingham

PART 9. THE GLADIATORS

AFTER the great triumph of the chariot race Ben-Hur returned to the Orchard of Palms with Sheik Ilderim.

The gratitude of the good sheik to Ben-Hur was boundless. Eagerly he pressed upon him all manner of rewards. But Ben-Hur would have none of it. It was enough for him, he told the sheik, that he had triumphed over his enemy. They were in the midst of this friendly argument when two messengers arrived: one was Malluch, servant of Simonides, the other a young boy. The tidings which Malluch brought were brief and to the point. Messala lay upon his death-bed. And he, together with the other Romans who had wagered so heavily upon his victory, were refusing to pay, and the issue was to be decided by the Consul. It was clear, however, Malluch reported, that Messala would have ultimately to meet his debts for otherwise he would be dishonoured. Yet even when he did meet his debts he would be ruined. A fierce joy flooded through Ben-Hur as he contemplated the extent of his triumph.

Malluch having departed, the other messenger was brought in. His message also was brief. It was that Iras, the daughter of Balthazar, wished to see Ben-Hur and to congratulate him on his victory. She suggested as a place of meeting the Palace of Idernee, within the city of Antioch, where she had taken up residence. Seeing no harm in so gracious an invitation, Ben-Hur consented to go. Yet the action nearly cost him his life.

He went alone. And when he arrived at the Palace he found it, strangely enough, deserted. It was a place of much splendour with every sign of Roman luxury about it. Yet everywhere he moved through the silent rooms there seemed to be a sinister threat in the air—a threat to which, so great was his lassitude of mood after the tensions of the race, he was at first indifferent. The only movement which he was able to detect when, after passing through a maze of passages, he came to an inner room, was the quiet opening and then closing of the last door through which he had passed.

He waited a long time; but no sound came. And then, moved to do so by a growing apprehension, he tried the door. It was locked; for the first time since he had arrived at the Palace a consciousness of danger thrilled through him. He was trapped! He was trapped in some perilous situation behind which it was not difficult to

suspect the vengeful hand of Messala. Time passed in that silent house, and then he heard the sound of footsteps approaching. At the sound, Ben-Hur hid himself behind a pillar. As he watched, two men entered the luxurious room, and at the sight of them

Ben-Hur's reply was to give a challenge that instantly appealed to the ferocious man he was dealing with. The challenge was that he, Ben-Hur, should first fight single-handed with the younger of the two, and so prove as true his statement that he had once been a pupil of Thord the Northman. The younger gladiator had no hesitation and, under the gleaming eyes of the other, the two faced each other.

The contest which followed was brief and cruel and soon over. With deadly and expert force Ben-Hur, aided by his immense strength, a strength learnt in the galleys—over-

*Simonides and Esther*

Ben-Hur had no further doubts left. Both were brutal and dangerous in appearance; both were very tall, one stout, the other lean, and both were in the short tunics which betokened the gladiator. What was more, he actually recognized one—the larger of the two. It was a notorious champion boxer whom he had seen crowned in the circus at Rome in former times. The younger one, black eyed and black haired, was equally formidable. They were professional killers.

Calmly, willing now to face whatever would betide, Ben-Hur undid the sash around his waist and stood forth in his under tunic, folding his arms.

The two men seemed startled at his sudden appearance; but the larger of the two gladiators soon recovered and smiled evilly.

'You are Thord, the Northman,' said Ben-Hur, coolly. 'I knew you in Rome when I was the son of Quintus Arrius. I was your pupil. And now I take it that you have come here to kill me.'

'That is true,' was the blunt response.

powered his adversary and struck him with the edge of his hand beneath the ear. The man fell to the ground without a cry, and lay still.

As he looked down upon the body, Ben-Hur was struck by a strange thing: the dead man bore a curious resemblance to himself. It was that fact which led him to make his next move—a move which led to his escape from the deadly situation in which the treachery of Iras had placed him.

'Thord,' he said to the gladiator, 'how much did Messala give you for undertaking to kill me?'

The reply was that Messala had offered a thousand sesterii.

'Then,' said Ben-Hur, 'I will give you ten thousand, provided that I may put on this man's tunic and at the same time dress him in these clothes which I am now wearing, and then you and I will go away together, leaving him here. It will appear that I have indeed met my death; I will seem to have vanished from the scene and you in addition will be able to draw your reward from Messala.'

So it was decided. Leaving the silent house with the corpse upon the floor of the inner room, Ben-Hur and Thord the Northman severally vanished into the town.

That very night, after telling Simonides all that had taken place, Ben-Hur took leave of the good man and of his daughter and set out for Jerusalem, to seek his mother and his sister.

A month later, in Jerusalem itself, there was some excitement in the Tower of Antonia, the fortress in which the Roman authorities were accustomed to keep their prisoners. Behind the excitement lay a great event which had recently taken place. Valerius Gratus—he who had been in office when Ben-Hur was sent to the galleys and his mother and sister spirited away—was replaced by another Roman official named Pontius Pilate. He was indeed an evil man, yet he was also a man of orderly mind, and one of his first acts was to order an inspection of all prisons in Judea and a return of the names of the persons held within them. This was the action which led to the excitement within the Tower of Antonia on this day a month after Ben-Hur had left Simonides.

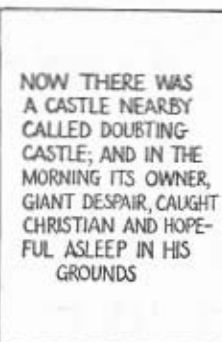
The disturbance was caused by a discovery made by the chief jailer of the Tower of Antonia that there was a mistake in the records of the prisoners held within the place. The mistake, he reported to the Tribune in command, had come about in this way. He had been told that, in one cell far below the foundations, there were certain political prisoners whose door was on no account to be opened. Food was to be left for the three men who were said to be there, but no communication was to be had with them. And yet, when under the new order he had gone to check on the cell, he had found but one old man, filthy and half blind through long incarceration in the darkness. Yet the strange thing was that this old man seemed to have consumed over the years the food supplied for three. Where, then, were the other two? The jailer had found the answer—and a terrible one it was—when, on the entreaties of the old man who at first he had wished to release, he had entered the cell only to discover that there was a further one beyond. And when he had called into the darkness through the aperture in the wall which led to it and asked who was there, a woman's voice had replied in answer to the question 'Who are you?' with the retort: 'A woman of Israel entombed here with her daughter. Help us quickly, or we die!'

The Tribune to whom this was reported was greatly disturbed. He made an instant decision. 'Let us rescue the women,' he announced, springing to his feet. 'Send workmen with tools, for we will need to pierce the wall.'

Thus the first step was taken towards the discovery of a truth which was destined to break the heart of Ben-Hur.

To be continued

The Pilgrim's Progress



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.

Doubting Castle



QUESTION PAGE

4168. Could you please explain why the Psalms in the Prayer Book are different from those in the Bible?

In 1534 the clergy asked Henry VIII that the whole Bible might be translated into English. The work was completed in 1535 by Miles Coverdale, later Bishop of Exeter, and it is his version of the Psalms that appears in the Prayer Book. The translation in the Bible was made in the reign of James I, but as so many people had learned the old translation of the Psalms by heart it was kept in the Prayer Book for use in church services.

4169. Is it necessary for a Godparent to be a confirmed member of the Church of England, and to be over twenty-one?

Canon Law requires that Godparents shall be communicants, that is to say, that they shall have been confirmed, but there is no minimum age.

4170. Why, with such a shortage of vicars, is the educational standard so high?

If the Church is to do its work effectively it is essential that it should be well served by the clergy, and in spite of the manpower problem which faced the Church at the end of the last war it was decided that the highest possible standards should be maintained. The wisdom of this policy is now becoming evident, as more and more men are offering themselves for training every year.

4171. When should churches fly the St. George's Flag, and when the Union Jack?

The St. George's Flag was the banner

Question of the Month

4167. I had to divorce my first husband, and now I have re-married, but I have been told I cannot take Communion now. Is this correct?

The Church of England has a rule that persons who have re-married after divorce may not be admitted to Holy Communion until the Bishop's permission has been given. The approach to the Bishop should normally be made through the local vicar or rector.

It is sometimes stated that divorced persons cannot be admitted to Holy Communion in the Church of England. This is not correct. As stated above, the matter is reserved for the Bishop's decision, and Archbishop Fisher has stated clearly that where there are children of a second marriage, it is most important that when they come to proper age their parents should be able to communicate with them.

of the Crusaders, and from the time of Richard the First it was adopted as the National Flag of England, used by Church as well as by State. At the present time the flag which should be flown officially by the Church of England, on the authority of the Earl Marshal, is

the St. George's Flag with the Arms of the Diocese in the first quarter. The Union Jack is the flag of the British Government and should not be flown on churches except those, such as Garrison Churches, which are Government property.

4172. What is the difference between an assistant bishop of a diocese and a Suffragan Bishop?

A Suffragan Bishop is an assistant bishop appointed to help the Bishop of the Diocese. The first Suffragan Bishop in England was appointed in A.D. 1240, and in 1534 an Act of Parliament named twenty-six places from which Bishops Suffragan might take their titles. Sometimes a retired bishop is nominated as assistant bishop of the Diocese without being given a specific title, and he is not then known as a Suffragan.

4173. When we confess our sins to God, why do we have to tell him what we have done, when he must know already?

Our Lord tells us that the relationship between God and man is that between a father and his children. When a boy throws a ball through a window his father will expect him to own up and say he is sorry, even though he may have seen what happened and know perfectly well who was the culprit. We confess our sins, not to tell God what he knows already, but to express our sorrow, or penitence, for them.

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

STERILIZING things from a sick room—or the baby's bottle and teat—can be done in the high heat of a pressure cooker, which destroys bacteria in about fifteen minutes. Left in the cooker till needed, the things remain germ-free there.

When buying a pressure cooker, points to study are ease of cleaning and of use. Some have rims and elaborate lids which are potential dirt-traps. Some are simpler than others to manipulate: notice how much effort is needed to fix the lid in place, compare the types of regulator on the top of each different make, and check whether the pan will be fairly easy to lift and pour from. Prices of spares, such as rubber gaskets, vary quite a lot.

The most important question of all, however, is safety—not a thing the shopper can judge. But any cooker with the British Standard mark can be depended on, for this means that the design has been put through severe tests: six times normal pressure is applied, the regulator and the double safety device checked, and so on.

Shrinking Fabrics

Another thing the shopper can hardly judge is how much a fabric will

shrink—especially when used for garments that must get a lot of vigorous washing: overalls and boiler suits, for instance. Unfortunately, even the words 'pre-shrunk,' and even the patent shrink-resist processes that are advertised, do not mean a fabric will never shrink any more.

Tests done by SHOPPER'S GUIDE showed that after fifty washes a drill boiler-suit, marked as pre-shrunk, was 8 per cent shorter! This was in spite of careful hand-ironing, which can help to prevent shrinkage by stretching the cloth a little as it is pressed. At seams particularly special attention is worth while. Another way to keep shrinkage to a minimum is not to use a tumble-drier—but these are standard equipment in ordinary laundries.

Meanwhile, it seems wise with drill and denim overalls to buy a size two to three inches too big—and try them on first; for some sizes vary only in width, and length differs very little.

New Sinks

The greatest virtue of plastic sinks is perhaps their light weight—which makes them easy for even an amateur to install practically anywhere.

But they are not so resistant to

scratches and chips as enamel or fire-clay sinks, and must be treated rather tenderly. There are two types at present—acrylic (or Perspex) ones, and glass fibre ones—and so far the acrylics are the better buy. Glass fibre ones may be well made, but too many are produced by backroom firms with limited experience, and the material is often badly cured. This means that hot water ultimately makes them deteriorate, and then they distort and crack.

When SHOPPER'S GUIDE tested several makes of both types, big variations were found. The big enemies are hot pans and anything likely to scratch.

What you Write On

Here is a glossary of the various kinds of writing paper you can choose from:

Laid means a paper with a fine lined appearance when held up to the light. This used always to be achieved by laying the pulp to drain on a wire grid, but it is now often imitated by machine rollers. In **Wove** the pulp is drained on a close wire mesh—or pressed by machine, in the case of most modern imitations. **Deckle-edge**, too, is often imitated by a machine that cuts the edges, but the original effect was peculiar to hand-made papers. **Linen finish**, which looks—as the words suggest—rather like a woven fabric, is achieved by passing the paper through embossed rollers.

HOME AND GARDEN

1. MY GARDEN IN SEPTEMBER

By Dr. W. E. Shewell-Cooper

PEOPLE are getting more interested in growing deliciously-scented violets in frames. Now is the time to plant Princess of Wales about ten inches square in the Eclipse No Soil compost which, when pressed down, must be made to run parallel to the light above. Don't put on the glass until frosts occur. If you don't know where to get good plants write to me, but please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

Pick the apples as they are ready; this means when the stalks part easily from the spurs. Lift them in the palm of your hand; don't grip them with your fingers for this causes bruising. Use a smooth bucket to pick them into and not a ribbed basket for the ribs bruise also.

Pot up the bulbs as they come from the seedsmen; put them in the dark for eight or nine weeks before bringing them indoors. They do best out of doors on a path or concrete yard covered deeply with sand or ashes. If you must use a cupboard don't be curious and keep opening the door, but water them from time to time when it is dark.

Harvest your main-crop potatoes before the end of the month. If the

haulm gets badly blighted cut it off and put it on the compost heap, sprinkled well with fish manure. The disease will then be killed and the tops will rot down. Leave the tubers in the sun for a few hours after lifting so as to ensure that the skin sets before storing.



The right height for hyacinth bulbs

Sow the Unwin's Reliance onion seed about the 10th of the month in rows 15 in. apart, but do not thin the seedlings out to 6 in. apart until the spring. The thinnings can then be used as spring onions in a salad. Cut back the tops of the late peas by 2 in. with a pair of shears and the pods will swell better.

The old-fashioned Crown Imperials are coming into fashion again; plant

the bulbs 3 in. deep and 9 in. apart. A group of five or six proves most striking.

2. PARKIN

By Hazel Macleod

THIS recipe was given to my mother many years ago by a Yorkshire woman—it is, in fact, a modernized version of an old recipe.

The original cake contained a good deal more oatmeal, but I think most of you will prefer the proportions suggested here:

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. flour, 6 oz. medium oatmeal, 1 teaspoonful ground ginger, 1 teaspoonful bicarbonate of soda, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoonful mixed spice, 4 oz. brown sugar, 3 good tablespoonfuls syrup, 2 good tablespoonfuls black treacle, 4 oz. butter, margarine or cooking fat, 1 large egg, a little milk to mix.

Line the base of your tin with greased paper and grease the sides well. Sieve the flour, spices and soda, and add the oatmeal and sugar. Beat the egg. Melt the butter, treacle and syrup together, but do not overheat. Add to the dry ingredients, then beat in the egg. A little milk will probably be needed to make a very soft dropping consistency—it should be rather like a stiff batter.

Bake $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours in a slow oven—mine usually takes $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours at No. 3, in a tin $9\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 8 in. A deeper cake will take a little longer.

Richard Tatlock's Puzzles

17. SEPTEMBER MEDLEY (open to all)

Below are ten words, all drawn from the Epistle to the Philippians. The letters are given in alphabetical order in each word.

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

Give the words, with the letters rearranged in the proper order.

Discover the chapter and verse or verses in Philippians where these words appear.

Study the words and verses, and 'think around them,' and discover, if you can, the 'pattern' which they

follow. The pattern is quite distinct, but a little juggling may be necessary before it appears.

Two book tokens for half a guinea for the best entries examined.

18. WEDGEWORDS (age limit 13)

It is some time since we had a Wedgeword. This is what to do. Choose a word, and then make a wedge by using the letters of the word to be the first letters of other words of increasing length. The first letter does not count; the second letter will start a word of two letters; the third of three; and so on.

Examples:

1. A	2. A
NO	BE
GET	BUT
EASY	ABLE
REACH	

Notice that the leader-word in No. 1 is *anger* and that the other words increase in size.

This month I want you to make a *wedgeword*. The leader-word can be any length, above three letters. The leader-word can come from anywhere. The other words must all come from the *Venite* and the *Te Deum*, at Morning Prayer, in the Prayer Book.

Credit will be given for long leader-words and neatness and age will be taken into consideration. Don't forget your name, age and address.

Three 5s. book tokens will be awarded for the best entries.

Entries for both puzzles should be addressed to The Puzzle Editor, THE SIGN, 28 Margaret Street, London, W.1. Closing date: September 15th.

June winners:

No. 11. Miss E. Armstrong (Silloth), J. Elphinstone-Fyfe (Chalfont St. Peter).

No. 12. Mary McCann (Broadstairs), Susan Holroyd (Accrington), Colin Taylor (Leeds).



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"	5	6½ in.	£1 8s. 6d.
"	12	6½ in.	£4 4s. 0d.
Ceramic	5	4½ in.	£1 5s. 6d.
"	12	4½ in.	£3 15s. 0d.
"	5	6½ in.	£1 17s. 6d.
"	12	6½ in.	£6 10s. 0d.
Plaster	5	5 in.	£3 5s. 0d.
"	13	5 in.	£7 10s. 0d.
"	5	12 in.	£12 10s. 0d.
"	12	12 in.	£27 0s. 0d.

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(b) 1 Cor. xvi. 2. "The collection for the saints," i.e., (6) Almsgiving, which involves Practical Care for others.

(c) Rev. i. 10. "In the Spirit," i.e., a day for (7) things spiritual and devotional, meditation, prayer and waiting upon God.

To conclude: We do not rest the observance of Sunday solely on the Fourth Commandment in a repellent Sabbatarianism. Neither dare we delete that Command from the Ten. It contains God-given principles. At the same time we learn from Jesus and these New Testament examples. Not forgetting "the liberty which is in Christ," yet still admitting the authority of the Church, her loyal children in a perplexed question will gladly find guidance in her ruling, viz., to keep Sunday "according to God's holy will and pleasure . . . that is, in hearing the Word of God read and taught; in private and public prayer; in acknowledging their offences to God and amendment of the same; in reconciling themselves charitably to their neighbours where displeasure hath been; in oftentimes receiving the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ; in visiting of the poor and sick using all godly and sober conversation." (Canon 13.) Here are seven positive precepts.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF MONEY

From the earliest days in the history of the people of Israel—God's chosen people—a definite obligation was assigned to each one to bear a proportion of God's service in accordance with his means. These payments were to be made at regular intervals.

That is the origin of Tithes—the rendering to God, for His service, of a tenth of one's possessions.

When the Christian Church began to take some form of organisation, the same principle was enunciated by the Apostle, St. Paul (1 Cor. xvi.) :—

- (a) "Upon the first day of the week,"
that is **regularly**;
- (b) "let every one of you lay by him in store,"
that is **individually**;
- (c) "as God hath prospered him,"
that is **proportionately**.

And the standard of giving was the Tithe or Tenth

* * *

From the time of St. Augustine (A.D. 597) the Church of England has spoken in the same definite voice. To communicate at Easter and pay his Church Dues to the Parson or his Deputies is the minimum obligation she lays upon every one of her members.

These **Church Dues**, or Duty Money Payments, were to be the tenth of every member's income, and were to be paid at first in weekly, and then from 1548, in quarterly instalments, when it was ordered

that "all offerings due to the Parson, Vicar, etc., were to be paid on the four General Offering Days of Christmas, Easter, Midsummer and Michaelmas, and in default thereof to pay for the said offerings at the Easter then following."

This **Duty Money** was in no way to be confused with the **Charity Alms** for the poor and other pious uses which the Churchman might give in addition in the Collections at the Offertory at Holy Communion, as set out in the Rubric.

OUR FAILURE

The falling-off of the payment of these Personal tithes was due to a number of causes which cannot be explained here, but it became necessary at a later date to impose a Compulsory Church Rate on every householder, and even this became difficult to collect, so that in 1868 it was abolished, and the Vestry was empowered to levy a voluntary rate.

This gradual departure from Scriptural and Prayer Book principles opened the way to the chaotic schemes of supporting the Church's activities that abound today.

The failure of regular income made it necessary to devise ways of finance quite contrary to the ideals of both the Jewish and the Christian Church. The idea of **dues** to the Lord and His work was abandoned, and each came to give what he liked, and when he liked.

This departure from the old way of Church Finance has been tried for over 90 years and has been found wanting.

To maintain and extend the work of Church both in the Parish, in the Diocese, in the Home Mission-field and in the Overseas Mission-field by Church collections—casual subscriptions and donations, Pew Rents, Bazaars and Sales of Work, Whist Drives, Entertainments and the like, is too uncertain a means of supporting our Lord's work.

THE DUTY OF WITNESS

As Christian Disciples we cannot escape from our responsibility in this matter.

Our Lord's last recorded words before His Ascension were: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts i. 8, 9.

To us the same command comes nineteen hundred years later, for we too have received power in order that we may witness to Him **both in**

Jerusalem	The Parish,
and in all		
Judaea	The Diocese,
and in		
Samaria	The Home Mission-
		field,

and unto the

Uttermost parts . . . **The Overseas Mission-field.**

We cannot all in **person** bear our witness in these four fields of service, but we can by **proxy**. We can provide the wherewithal to enable others to do this for us, those who are specially called for particular parts of Christian Work. Only thus can every Churchman have his share in **every** piece of work for Christ at home and abroad. In this way he can in truth be teaching children at home, preaching the Gospel in China, and healing the sick in Africa.

THE STANDARD OF OUR GIVING

How much then ought we to pay, and how, and when?

First. HOW MUCH? We should stand by the Bible principles, which have been incorporated in the Rubrics of our Prayer Book. We should provide the equivalent of our Duty Money Payment of the Tithe—2s. in the £ of our income. **That is the standard of giving required of us:** one tenth of our income after the deduction of our rates and taxes.

Second. HOW? By regularly paid contributions through the "Church Finance Scheme."

Third. WHEN? Weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly. Let each decide for himself. There should be no more collections in Church for items covered by the Budget, except those that are for definite almsgiving objects, such as Hospitals, Missions, Easter Offerings, etc. There should therefore be no further need for weekly Church Collections, except the collection at the Offertory at the Communion Service.

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

If Church Councils will consider and approve this System of Church Finance, and will work to get a "Parochial Church Dues' Fund" set up in every Parish of the Diocese, it is believed that the income of the Church will be increased to such an extent that its witness in our generation can be discharged. Buildings and equipment will be provided, and the "body" will be so perfected that it will be all the more capable of responding to the Will of Him who is the Head of the Church.

SIDESMEN'S ROTA

- Sept. 3—10-30 a.m. R. Gaskell, H. Baldwin.
6-30 p.m. W. Leadbetter, J. Balmer.
" 10—10-30 a.m. J. Cheetham, E. Battersby.
6-30 p.m. W. Jenkinson, T. Sismey.
" 17—10-30 a.m. R. Heaton, T. Swift.
6-30 p.m. J. Serjeant, J. Banks.
" 24—10-30 a.m. H. Prescott, H. Gaskell.
6-30 p.m. R. Lewis, R. Dutton.
Oct. 1—10-30 a.m. E. Grimshaw, R. Brett.
6-30 p.m. C. Aindow, T. Forshaw.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

- Sept. 3—Mrs. Crook.
" 10—Mrs. Taylor.
" 17—Miss Wilson.
" 24—Mrs. Blundell.
Oct. 1—Miss Mawdesley and Mrs. Parker.
" 8—The Congregation (Harvest).

SERVERS' ROTA

- Sept. 3— 8-0 a.m. Anthony Grimshaw.
11-30 a.m. Peter Balmer.
" 10— 8-0 a.m. John Davies
10-30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, John Gaskell.
" 17— 8-0 a.m. Peter Balmer.
11-30 a.m. Arthur Gilbert.
" 24— 8-0 a.m. John Gaskell.
10-30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, John Davies.
Oct. 1— 8.0 a.m. Arthur Gilbert.
11-30 a.m. Peter Balmer.
" 8— 8.0 a.m. Peter Balmer.
11-30 a.m. John Gaskell.

THE AGRICULTURAL DISCUSSION GROUP COMPETITION

There is to be a competition open to all who are interested for the production of the best samples under each of the following sections:—

Men's Section

- 1—Red varieties of potatoes.
- 2—White varieties of potatoes.
- 3—Biscuit wheats.
- 4—Bread wheats.
- 5—Oats.
- 6—A selection of garden produce.

Ladies' Section

- 7—Jam.
- 8—Cakes.
- 9—Bread.

The prizes will be given at the harvest supper on Friday 13th, following judging during the previous evening. Mr. and Mrs. H. Dean have kindly offered to act as Secretaries for this competition and all entries must be handed to them by 5 p.m. on Thursday, 12th October.

THE MOTHERS' UNION AND YOUNG WIVES

The opening of a new Session with a Service in Church on Tuesday, 5th September, at 7-30 p.m. should see our Church well filled. The preacher will be The Rev. R. H. Percival, (Vicar of St. Peter's, Birkdale).

On 28th September, at 7-30 p.m. in the School Hall, Messrs. Findus Foods Ltd., are to give a demonstration with short talk and film. All are welcome. Admission is 1s.6d. Please bring your friends.

BURIAL OF THE DEAD

"In sure and certain hope"

- Aug. 9th—Elizabeth Jane Blundell, age 82 years, 25, Linaker Drive, Halsall.
Aug 11th—Ellen Ann Park, age 74 years, 2, Station Road, Barton.

PURCHASE OF NEW HYMN BOOKS AND PRAYER BOOKS FOR CONGREGATIONAL USE

The sum of £50 is required for the purchase of hymn and prayer books for congregational use. There will be a whist drive at Edge Farm, Burscough, on Tuesday, 19th September at 2-30 p.m. Transport will be provided from Halsall. Please let us know if you wish to be present. The proceeds of the effort will be handed to the Treasurer towards the above requirements.

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