

A BIG PROBLEM

It certainly is, and it has landed right in the lap of the Church Council. Some members of the Council thought the problem too big for them to decide on their own, and suggested the calling of a parish meeting to which all might come and make their voices heard, and then the decision be taken by majority vote. But in the end the Council felt that they could not rightly shelve their own responsibility: to face problems like this and think them through was one of the things for which they were elected, and they must not shirk it. But they felt it would be a help to know what as many people as possible in the parish thought about it: so please think very carefully and prayerfully about what follows, and then make your views known — either verbally to any member of the Council, or preferably in writing to its Secretary, Miss Wright, 15, School Road, or to the Vicar — if possible before October 23, when the Council will meet again and try to reach a decision.

The background of the problem is simply this: our organ is growing old and wearing out. It may struggle on for some years, or it may die on us at any minute. It has been kept going up to now by various kinds of first-aid treatment, but this is no longer sufficient and a radical operation is needed if its life is to be renewed and prolonged. A highly-recommended firm has given its estimate for the complete rebuild which will alone save the day, re-voicing the mature and valuable pipes which can be used again, and replacing the worn-out parts with modern equipment and the latest electric action. The cost of all this will be at least £5,300, and if the order were given now, the work might be started late in 1969, and completed by the autumn of 1970. The longer we wait, the more danger there is of complete collapse, and more money will have to be spent when the job is finally tackled.

The problem is not mainly financial but moral. To raise the large amount of money required in a short time would not be too easy, but there is little doubt that we could do it if we really wanted to. But the heart of the problem is not one of fund-raising and how we are to set about it. It is fundamentally a moral issue: is it **right** to spend so much money on having a fine organ? Is a fine organ a luxury which we must be prepared to forgo in a world crying out for Christian service, compassion and almsgiving on a tremendous scale? This one immediate practical question raises of course a whole host of deeper issues concerning the place of beauty and art and music in life and worship. Man does not live by bread alone: he needs beauty and many other things as well. But when so many people have not even enough bread, should not those of us who do have enough, and more than enough, sacrifice some of the beauty to which we have grown accustomed that these may be fed?

Here is one point of view, put in the mouth of one person, whereas it actually combines the recently-expressed opinions of several parishioners:

"Beauty of sight and sound is very important to me. I need it in life, I need it in worship. I find that the worship in St. James's has much that is attractive and uplifting about it. It takes place in a setting much improved on the old dingy interior we used to have to put up with. The work of renovation and decoration was, I firmly believe, money well spent, even if it has not resulted in much or even any

increase in the number of the congregation. I would still like to see more done to the furnishings: the pews, for instance, are still pretty drab and depressing! As for the actual offering of worship itself, there is much to commend: it is sincere; there is a simplicity and a homeliness and friendliness in it and around it. But the ceremonial, to my way of thinking, is still lacking somewhat with regard to dignity and beauty. I am one of those who look for and expect dignity and beauty in God's house: I should like to see more beauty of colour and shape in vestment and ornament and furnishing. Perhaps the priest could regularly wear the traditional vestments at the Communion, as the visiting priest did (with the consent of the vicar) during the holiday period—and the servers appareled albs. Aesthetically this simple change would be a great and comparatively inexpensive improvement—and it would greatly foster the spirit of worship for many of us, as well as showing more reverence for God. As well as beauty of ceremonial there is also beauty of ritual to be considered; beauty of language, of words spoken and sung, of music helping our praise of God to well forth. In present circumstances, I do not see how this beauty of rite can be maintained without a good organ and a good organist (such as we are most fortunate in having) to play it. We are not expert enough in plainsong or unaccompanied singing to maintain the beauty of worship without this help. I would urge therefore that we ought to find the money necessary for safeguarding and increasing the beauty of our worship in all its form and variety, without diminishing—but rather increasing—our giving to the Church overseas and to Christian Aid for the relief of the world's hungry."

But here is another point of view, passionate and prophetic, written by one person who again is not alone in the opinions expressed. It takes the form of **an open letter to the Church Council and the parish:**

Our organ is in a state of poor repair. We are told on good authority that ordinary repairs will not suffice, and that only a complete renovation at a cost of well over £5000 would be satisfactory.

The alternatives are: to buy a second-hand organ—a possibility which is being explored; or an electronic organ, an idea which, as yet, we have not fully explored, although we know that musicians may not find it satisfactory, it has no comparable value as an investment, and it may be less reliable.

The choice would seem to be clear—a rueful dipping into our pockets to maintain the furnishings of the church and the traditional beauty of our worship. But before the final decision is made, please give your prayerful consideration to these thoughts also.

Part of our life as Christians is to worship the Lord in the beauty of Holiness. This beauty may sometimes be interpreted as making our worship as beautiful as possible, and all of us need beauty. We need beautiful church music just as we need mountains. But for most of us the latter are not a regular part of our lives, only an occasional refreshment of the soul; the music of King's College Chapel can be a similar refreshment. Therefore is the playing of a fine organ week by week a luxury which we as Christians cannot really afford in a hungry world?

A minister said recently that "all the architectural glories of Christendom are not worth the life of a single child." Is an expensive organ?

When making your decision do not take too much thought for the past. No doubt many deplored the passing of the small church

orchestras. Much as we dislike it, times do change. Nor should we take too much thought for the morrow — as church music changes will the organ be a suitable instrument? So do not regard a rebuilt organ as a treasure to be handed down to future generations. They may not thank you for it. Have we not suffered from many "treasures" handed down by our forebears? Besides, the younger generation have not much built-in reverence for the material assets of the church.

And would a fine organ fill the church with people? I know that many people, myself among them, would miss a good instrument sorely, but the attractiveness of Christianity is not determined by the beauty of its music. It is determined by its beauty of holiness, and holiness, or wholeness, requires a radical reappraisal of our priorities in a world starved of bread and Christ.

Let us not delude ourselves. If we spend £5000+ we shall be spending it on ourselves, and our need for traditional beauty in worship. Can God or we afford it?

PARISH WEEKEND 1969

As you already know, the next Parish Weekend will be held at Hildenborough Hall from May 9 to 11, or morning of May 12. Bookings can now be made at Parish breakfast on Sunday mornings or with Mr. Peel, 34, Burtons Road, Hampton Hill. Please tear out and use the booking form below.

It is hoped that there will be special facilities for children, but this depends on there being enough children for the Trust to open the Children's Centre.

PARISH WEEKEND BOOKING FORM

Name

Address

.....

.....

Please reserve place(s) for adults, children
(under 12) for the Parish Weekend, May 9-11 or morning of May 12,
1969 and I/WE would prefer:—

A room	...	...	£5	15	0
B room	...	...	£4	15	0
C room	...	...	£4	10	0
D room	...	...	£3	0	0

(reserved in the first place
for people under 21).

The prices can only be approximate at present as they depend partly on the numbers attending and partly on whether the Hildenborough Hall Trust has to increase its prices next year.

I ENCLOSE DEPOSIT (10/- per person)

Signed

Date

LEE ABBEY WEEKENDS

There has been a demand for more of the smaller type of training conference weekends. We find that in small gatherings such as these we shall be able to talk freely in a relaxed and open atmosphere. The programme will be designed to give plenty of opportunity for looking together at some of the difficulties and opportunities we are meeting as Christians at work, at home, in our Church Fellowship, and amongst our non-Christian friends. In this way we shall be able to draw on the experience of others. There will also be time for quiet, prayer and worship, bringing some of the refreshment of spirit that others may gain from a Retreat. Each conference will be led by members of the Lee Abbey Community.

- 15—17 Nov. 68. **St. Mary's Abbey, Leiston, Suffolk.** Cost £3-15-0.
6—8 Dec. 68. **St. Gabriel's Retreat and Conf. Centre, Elm Grove, Westgate-on-Sea, Kent.** Cost £3-15-0.
24—26 Jan. 69. **St. Helena's Retreat House, Drayton Green, London, W.13.** Cost £4-0-0.
14—16 Feb. 69. **Winchester Diocesan House, Old Alresford, Hants.** Cost £4-0-0.

- 11—13 April 69. **Worcester Diocesan Retreat and Conf. Centre, The Old House, Crofton, Pershore, Worcs.** Cost £4-0-0.

Details of location, etc., will be sent with booking letter.

The weekends begin with dinner at 7 p.m. on Friday and end with afternoon tea on Sunday.

Accommodation in each centre is mainly in comfortable single rooms, as only a limited number can be taken. Please apply as soon as possible.

Five people from the parish have already said that they would like to go to the second of these, and there may be room for a few more. Others may decide to go to another one. The Vicar has a number of spare application forms.

LAY TRAINING COURSE

A number of people have been asking us to arrange such a course, and as a start a short six weeks' one will be held at Wayside every Monday from October 21 to November 25, starting at 8.00 p.m. By request the main subject is 'Fundamentals of Our Faith.' Fee for course, to cover heating and light refreshments, etc., 2/6.

THE MOTHERS' UNION

I am most grateful to all who helped to make the Cake Stall at Laurel Dene on September 7 such a success, the sum of £13 0s. 4d. was raised. Contributions in cash can still be accepted if you were unable to help at the time!

There are three meetings planned for this month, which all who are interested are invited to attend. On Tuesday, October 15, the Vicar has been asked to conduct the Deanery Quiet Hour from 2.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. in St. James's Church. Do come and experience the renewal obtained from withdrawal from our usual activities for a short time.

Mrs. Cordelia Scott, wife of the Bishop of Sierra Leone (with whose Diocese London is linked, and prayed for from January 11—15 in the M.U. Wave of Prayer) is coming to speak in the new Hall of St. Mary's, Hampton, at 2.30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 29. Mrs. Scott is Diocesan President of Sierra Leone's Mothers' Union and has great interest in many other women's organisations there. Please make this date a

"must" in your diaries.

Miss Kathleen Dines is returning to speak at Wayside on the first Wednesday in November, and will be showing slides to illustrate her talk on her life in Africa.

I.V.R.

REMEMBER — THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER!

The grounds at Laurel Dene have been reorganised this year and consequently our Guy Fawkes celebration will be minus a bonfire. However, the fireworks will be better than ever and, of course, refreshments will be included in the price of the tickets 3/6d, which will be available shortly. THE DATE IS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5.

R.G.

THE SCOUT GROUP

CAMP REPORT

21 boys, 2 Officers and 5 helpers of the Pack held a good Camp at Wanborough Youth House this August.

The boys slept under canvas for 5 nights despite some very showery weather. Activities included hikes, team games, gadget making, cake making, fire lighting, swimming at Guildford Lido, a visit to Guildford Museum, a night hike and Camp fire. The very good Table Tennis equipment was much in demand during the wet evenings while on the Thursday the boys cooked their own Camp stew (which was very appetizing) on open fires in traditional scouting manner.

Over 60 visitors including the Vicar and Mrs. Brunt watched the Camp sports on Wednesday afternoon and were quite impressed with our palatial accommodation.

Thanks to Hathi, Baloo and Bagheera who operated in the "Cook house" a very good and varied menu was provided.

AKELA.

On Saturday, September 7, the Group held a Barbecue on the Camp site. After the cooks had been hidden by volumes of smoke and mounting flames, our newly purchased Barbecue equipment settled down and all was well, as testified by the innumerable sausages and hamburgers sold.

I am very happy to say our Scout Troop has now been re-opened under the leadership of Mr. A. F. Brittain of 23 Cranmer Road. As a temporary measure the Scouts are meeting on a Monday evening, any ex-Scouts or Cub-Scouts wishing to rejoin please come along.

FUTURE EVENTS:

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR—Saturday, November 2—please support this effort.

BONFIRE PARTY—Wednesday, November 6—Camp Site.
G.S.L.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

Advance information has already been received of the CHRISTIAN AID Christmas cards, so if you are one of those who buys cards early — please wait for your opportunity to help this great cause. We propose getting samples of all CHRISTIAN AID cards so that you may see them before placing your orders. More of this later.

D.W.

HAMPTON HILL OLD PEOPLE'S WELFARE COMMITTEE

Everyone at home had felt concern for our party of old persons who went to Brighton for the day on Wednesday, August 7. Remember the weather? A 'washed out' party seemed more than likely but in fact it was one of the jolliest outings of the year. We even saw the

sun and enjoyed Brighton with all its visitors including the race-goers — Brighton Races were on, too! A visit to Wannock Gardens for tea on our return journey completed the day and the travellers were home by 9 p.m.

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone for their support and generosity towards our Violet Day collection. It proved a record year with a total of £80, making a rise of £20 on last year's figures. Every penny will be spent on the old people with the parties, outings and of course, the week's holiday to the sea-side. L.M.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- Oct. 12.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union: Jumble Sale (Hall).
" 13.—5.15 p.m. St. James's leads service at Laurel Dene.
" 15.—2.30 p.m. Quiet Afternoon (St. James's Church); 8.15 p.m. Tuesday Club (W).
" 17.—7.45 p.m. Newcomers' Party—by invitation (Hall).
" 18.—St. Luke's Day: Holy Communion at 9.00 a.m.
" 21.—8.00 p.m. First Meeting of Training Course (W).
" 22.—7.30 p.m. British Council of Churches: 'All Things New after Uppsala?' (Church House, Westminster); 8.00 p.m. Social Committee (4, Ormond Drive).
" 23.—8.00 p.m. Parochial Church Council (W).
" 25.—8.15 p.m. Liturgical Committee (33, Beech Way).
" 26.—8.00 p.m. Human Rights Evening—admission by programme or at door 7/6 (St. Mary's Hall, Hampton).
" 28.—8.00 p.m. Training Course (W).
" 29.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union Deanery Open Meeting: Mrs. Scott of Sierra Leone (St. Mary's Hall, Hampton); 8.15 p.m. Tuesday Club (W).
" 30.—8.00 p.m. Stewardship Committee (106, Park Road).
" 31.—8.00 p.m. Important special meeting of Committee of Hampton Council of Churches (All Saints' Hall).
- Nov. 1.—All Saints' Day: Holy Communion at 9.00 a.m.
" 4.—8.00 p.m. Training Course (W).
" 5.—7.15 p.m. Fireworks Party (Laurel Dene). N.B.—Admission by ticket only.
" 6.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union: Miss Dines (W).
- N.B.—Confirmation Group meets every Tuesday at 7.00 p.m. in the Vestry.

BAPTISMS

On September 22 :

Emma Louise Halliday, 6, Cranmer Road.
Lucy Pandora Huntingford, 13, Longford Close.
Christopher Denzil Roper, 28, Holly Road.

MARRIAGES

On August 31 :

Brian Thomas Ayley to Lorraine Florence Lansley.

On September 21 :

Derek Kenneth Doughty to Linda Christine Bryant.

On September 28 :

James Anthony Farquharson to Susan Margaret Kilby.
Tony Christopher Wenman to Jennifer Susan Wainwright.
Stuart Raymond Heath to Erica Margaret Brewster.