

THE REDISCOVERY OF A LOST STRUCTURE

The parish meeting on June 27 was a very lively and stimulating affair, and so much interest was aroused that we feel sure it will not just rest with talk and discussion, but be followed up with definite lines of action in the near future. Other parishes are also becoming interested, and Mr. Cranswick is anxious to help in training and the formation of groups if by arrangement with the Bishop some base of operations may be found. Here is a brief summary of some of the points put forward by him:

The Problem

The present structure in most parishes ensures that all roads of enquiry focus on or are referred to the parish priest (nearly everything, from inquiries about baptism or marriage to personal problems of many kinds is 'by appointment with the vicar'). The laity thus evade their responsibility in ministry and mission, and the priest pulls out his hair or has a nervous breakdown because he has far too much to do, far too much is expected of him. When the parish gets into a mission-situation the pressure even increases, because more and more people are brought along to the priest, and it becomes more than he can bear.

Reviving the Methods of the Early Church

The priest ought not to try to cope by himself: involvement of trained lay-people is needed. There should be a small welcoming team of the faithful, sensitive to the human needs around them, who concentrate on the problem of making contact with enquirers and people vaguely seeking a more meaningful life. They will bring them in, not to the full Christian community, but a microcosm of it, an intimate caring environment in which their faith can begin to develop and grow. This stage may last a long time. The priest helps the welcoming-team to do their job, but they bear the full weight. This structure went on until the fifth century, and has reappeared in modern times in the diocese of Lyons.

In small, outward-looking contact groups, the priest gets alongside laity as never before, shoulder to shoulder. The confidence of lay-people increases as they open up and become more and more articulate, and find themselves able to give help to others in times of crisis. The priest is still in the centre, but in the background. He is no longer saying to people 'Come and help me with my job' but he is animating and encouraging from behind the lay people to do their job.

Some Practical Points

The training and contact groups throw up people ready to give more specialised service to inquirers. Each inquirer needs two people to look after him — a sponsor and a coach. The

sponsor is a friend on a 'like to like' basis, in the same income-bracket and of similar tastes—golf, or a pint in the local. He will stick to him through thick and thin until he fuses into the Christian community and comes out on the other side in service and witness. The coach does a similar job as in the world of athletics: helping him to realise his full potential, to grow in faith and personality, and live the Christian life. There will also be welcoming-families into which the sponsor can introduce a man, and where he will see at first-hand what a Christian marriage and home are really like. (Or it may be the other way round — he will first be introduced to a welcoming-family, and when they know him well they will select the right sponsor and coach for him.) After a longer or shorter period in smaller fellowships and house-groups and training by his coach, he will be introduced to the worshipping community at the Parish Eucharist, admitted as a catechumen and in due course enter on the final stage of preparation for baptism.

NEW NAMES . . . AND OLD

You will have noticed that some new names have appeared in the standing matter under the head 'Church Officers', and some old familiar ones are no longer there. Mr. Brooks, after being secretary of the Social Committee since its founding in its present form nearly ten years ago, and filling this office with all its hard work and heavy demands most efficiently, has now relinquished this post (he has been succeeded by Colonel Ford, the former chairman) to concentrate on his secretaryship of the Properties Committee and the ever-increasing and time-consuming effort which this involves. As Colonel Ford is outside the parish, Mr. Leatherdale is acting as local representative and information officer: he is the man to approach about dates, tickets, future events, etc.

Mr. Peel, after managing the business and financial affairs of this magazine very conscientiously for a long spell, has now asked to be relieved, and we have found an excellent replacement in Mr. Mills. There will now be an effective husband-and-wife team at work, for Mrs. Mills has for years done splendid service as advertisement negotiator, and she will continue to act in this capacity. Mrs. Mills has also been in charge of church flower-arranging for fifteen years or more, and supervised many other things in connection with the interior of the church as well—such as seeing that the altar-linen is always clean and spotless (and here we are very grateful also to Mrs. Moses, who now does most of the laundry-work most expertly in her own home) and that the liturgical colours are changed according to the season of the Church's year. She now feels that she must give all this up in order to concentrate on her large and expanding sphere of service to the elderly. We are very grateful to her for all the time and skill and devotion she has lavished in this

important background-work. Mrs. Bridges, a skilled arranger of flowers, has kindly offered to continue this side of Mrs. Mills' service, but she would like a small committee to help spread the load, and to hear from individuals and groups within the Church who would undertake to prepare the flowers on a rota basis—say once every two months. Mrs. Thompson, who has been Mrs. Mills' right hand for many years, and with her husband the generous supplier of many plants and flowers from the family-firm's nurseries, will continue to give her valued support, and also the weekly brass-cleaning which she does so well.

SAINT JAMES'S DAY . . . AND THE HOLIDAYS

We hope again to make the day of our Patronal Festival a very happy occasion for young and old: special features include afternoon tea on the Vicarage lawn, and a service in church at 6.0 p.m. devised to ensure maximum congregational participation, with rousing hymns and choruses, and a striking modern play presented by members of the YPF.

On the two following Sundays, the promise of holiday help for Communion by a neighbouring parish cannot now be honoured, as it has lost its curate, and so we may have to have another form of service at 9.30 a.m. instead of the Parish Communion on one or both these Sundays, but with the usual light refreshments at Wayside afterwards in any case.

SAINT JAMES'S NURSERY SCHOOL

This continues to flourish and meet a real need in the Parish Hall in School Road. Every morning from Monday to Friday between 9.15 and 12.15, about thirty children between the ages of three and five romp and play and learn. Under the careful guidance of Mrs. Hales and her assistants they become a happy, sociable community, able to bridge the gap between home and school. A waiting-list is kept, but as an unexpectedly high number will be leaving to attend a local Infants' School, a few places will be available in September. Contact 977 1636 or the School.

THE CHURCHYARD (I)

In the May issue, we gave advance notice of a "Mass Attack Week," having as its aim a complete clearance of the churchyard (which we had, in fact, achieved in earlier years)—and appealed for help.

In terms of numbers, the result was frankly disappointing; with one notable exception, the total number of helpers over the whole week was less than twenty, which included many children. (The exception was the YPF who came in force for one evening, making contributions which varied from a few doggedly working down to the couple whose efforts and interests were confined solely to each other.)

In terms of achievement, however, things were very much

better, particularly as heavy rain not only prevented work on three evenings, but made the job of cutting thereafter infinitely harder. Even so, nearly the whole area was cleared, and disappointment at missing the target was tempered by appreciation of the really effective, and in some cases quite lengthy help given by such a relatively small band. To all of these, our warm thanks. To those who couldn't make it, or were put off by the weather—we missed you. an we hope for your help next time?

J.W.G.

THE CHURCHYARD (2)

As one who was unable to contribute more than part of a Saturday morning to the churchyard clearing, I think it appropriate to pay tribute to the three stalwarts who spent virtually the whole of their spare time for the week working long and hard to make up for the lack of support. Between them they must have contributed well over half the total achieved, which, as can be seen by all, was very substantial and very worth while. To them go our sincere thanks and the hope that they will inspire a greater response from us all next time.

H.E.S.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

We set out during the early evening of June 19 to go to the 'fun and games' as advertised in the thought-provoking posters around the parish, and were quite sure nobody would take the risk and hold them, as arranged, on the Vicarage lawn, since the weather had all day been very showery and overcast. However, much to our surprise we found everybody had collected at the Vicarage and were already well established with a number of simple, entertaining and sometimes original games, such as skittles, clock golf and aerial darts amongst others, and with no price to pay everybody seemed very keen to beat each champion at his game.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, the event was not crowded, and this for us anyway had its advantages since there were rarely any queues for the games spaced round the lawn, also for those of us who needed sustenance between rounds, there were some tasty barbecued sausages, with rolls and trimmings at cost price.

The evening passed far too quickly and we enjoyed ourselves more than we expected—then the prize-giving—which, since all six of the winners were male, and there were an equal number of 'male' and "female" presents, three men took home dainty scarves!

The Social Committee should again be thanked for the organisation of every aspect of the evening including the weather, all going towards making an extremely entertaining event.

C.R.

Thank you.—The Social Committee would like to thank the

gallant people who stepped in and helped at the last moment to make this event a success, as the committee itself was very depleted—owing to holidays, illness and business trips to America!

THE MOTHERS' UNION

We were fortunate to have a really warm day for our Garden Meeting on Tuesday, June 22; the committee-members served, and provided a delicious tea—the kind that made us all forget about diet sheets! Mrs. Weir, of Hampton Methodist Church, displayed the gaily coloured crocheted and knitted covers she makes for Home and Overseas work, and has kindly offered to provide one for any person known to us who might be glad of such a warm blanket. Also on display were knitted articles, crochet work, and some beautiful embroidery done by our own members. Mrs. Millicent Woodruff, newly appointed Diocesan Literature Chairman, came from Fulham and gave an interesting talk about the literature which is published by M.U. Much interest was shown in the books and pamphlets she displayed, Mrs. Childs volunteered to act as the Branch Literature Representative, so we should be kept up to date with this now; Mrs. Childs has been co-opted to the Committee in consequence.

Mrs. Bellingham is arranging for us to visit Old Alresford where Mary Sumner started this great movement ninety-five years ago; a coach will leave the Church at 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 14 returning about tea-time. Fare 55p. We shall take a picnic lunch, coffee can be obtained at Alresford. On the return journey arrangements have been made for a guided tour of Winchester Cathedral. Please get in touch with Mrs. Bellingham (979 3737) for more details. A deposit must be made when booking, and in the event of anyone cancelling this will be retained. In the past we have "made a loss" because people have not come after promising to do so.

Best wishes for a happy holiday. Incidentally my husband wishes to thank all those who signed the very appropriate card, and contributed to the intriguing and acceptable parcel; we were both very touched by your kindness.

I.V.R.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

July

- 19 8.15 p.m. Properties Committee (18 St. James's Road).
- 20 8.00 p.m. Tuesday Club: Social Evening (W); Meditation Group (Vicarage).
- 22 8.00 p.m. Social Committee (72 Ormond Drive).

- 26 HARVEST FESTIVAL.
30 (Or Oct. 1) HARVEST SUPPER & ENTERTAINMENT.

BAPTISMS

- May
24 Darren Elliott Francis, 75 High Street.
Guy Nicholas Garrett, 8 Links View Road.
- June
13 Robin Mark Smith, 115 Burton's Road (at the Parish Communion).
27 Malcolm John Lawrence, 81 Longford Close.
Hannah Belle Scott, 27 Bishop's Grove.

MARRIAGES

- June
12 David William Knapper to Brenda Margaret Deeks.
26 Raymond James Draper to Gillian Howard.

BURIALS

- May
20 Beatrice Violet Martin, 29 Myrtle Road, aged 71 years.
- June
10 Kathleen Mary Elizabeth Jennings, 45a Burton's Road, aged 89 years.
25 Stanley William Howe, 63 Rectory Grove, aged 63 years (at Twickenham Cemetery).
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- 25 ST. JAMES'S DAY: PATRONAL FESTIVAL. Sunday arrangements as usual, except that at 6.00 p.m. (not 6.30) there will be a special form of FAMILY SERVICE, including a short play, and this will be preceded by TEA in the Vicarage garden from 4.45 p.m. onwards.
26 10.30 a.m. Editorial Board (63 Park Road).
27 8.00 p.m. Committee of the Hampton Council of Churches (Congregational Church Hall).

August

- 1 & 8 On these two Sundays, the only services will be at 9.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.; the latter will be Evensong as usual, but the morning one will most likely be a special form of Family Service, and will be followed by Parish Breakfast at Wayside.
- 24 Saint Bartholomew's Day: It is hoped that there may be Holy Communion at 10.00 a.m. (check from notice on South door).
29 5.15 p.m. Members of YPF lead service at Laurel Dene.

September

- 5 5.15 p.m. Senior members of St. James's lead service at Laurel Dene.
12 Sunday Schools reopen after summer break.
14 9.30 a.m. Mothers' Union outing to Old Alresford; 7.00 p.m. Junior Confirmation Group resumes meetings (Vestry).