

THE MOTHERS' UNION CENTENARY

"Do you believe that God works miracles?" The question closed the address given by Bishop Huddleston at the Lady Day Eucharist Service for the M.U. in St. Paul's Cathedral.

It would be difficult for anyone who knows the history of the M.U. not to believe in miracles. A country rector's wife calls the mothers of her husband's parish to meet her in her drawing-room. She is a woman who seems to have been born happy and to have continued that way throughout her long life. You might, of course, think that she had the wherewithal to be happy, good health, a young family and the security of Victorian upper-class life. But she had a deep and long-felt concern and it was about the upbringing of children. In an age when the word 'profession' was scarcely connected with women except in the basest context, she nevertheless thought of motherhood as a 'profession' - one for which there was no adequate preparation. She felt that mothers should unite to help one another and to put Christian ideals - then widely professed - into daily practice. All that happened that first day was that they agreed to pray for one another and to meet again. It was enough. (In fact it wasn't quite the first day: on the first occasion that they came to the Rectory, Mary Sumner was too nervous and to shy to meet her guests and had to ask her husband to send them away!).

In those days the families of the poor were even further impoverished by drunkenness and illiteracy, and it soon became evident that there were many factors that made or marred the happiness of family life and the 'profession of motherhood' was a very complex one. But these women were obedient to the call that had come to them - and yes - God did work miracles through them. This little group of village-women, inspired by the faith of Mary Sumner, became the world-wide Mothers' Union - now with half-a-million members. They continued to pray. Every day they prayed .... fill us with thy Holy Spirit ... make us to hate sin .... make our homes homes of peace and love .....

In her Centenary message just sent to us, the Queen has given her fellow members an inspiration and encouragement. She has said: "The Mothers' Union has throughout its hundred years of experience endeavoured to strengthen the influence of Christianity in the family. This work is more important than ever in today's world, with its new and different pressures. The Society has accepted this challenge and has revised and updated its aims. I am sure it will rise to this new opportunity to share with others the belief of its founder that a nation's future lies in the strength of its family life".

C.H.B.

THE PATTERN OF SUNDAY WORSHIP -3

4. **The pattern in the Middle Ages (ii):** The only service which everyone attended, unless prevented by illness or unavoidable duties (such as the care of very young children - though when possible these would be brought with their parents) in an ordinary parish church was the Mass. There were, of course, abuses and misunderstandings. In some places, for instance, the men would not enter the church at the beginning of the service, but gather round the porch, chatting of this and that, until the bell rang for the consecration, when they would rush inside, to witness the Elevation of the Host, which to them was the great miracle of Christ descending to the altar,

and they felt that having been present for the two or three minutes which to them were the heart of the matter, they had fulfilled their obligation.

But in addition to the office of Matins which preceded the Mass, and was often regarded as a preparation for it, there was an afternoon service which was also regarded as a thanksgiving for the Mass. The Rector and his clerks or choirmen would assemble in the church in the early afternoon, and sing Vespers and Compline - a service which became popularly known as Evensong. Probably more people would turn up for this than had been present at Matins, but not so many as at Mass.

**5. The Aims of the English Reformers:** As well as separating the Church in England from Rome and the control of the Pope, they also worked hard to improve the services, so that they would be less complicated and more easily followed and understood by the ordinary people. At first, it was mainly a matter of translating the traditional Latin services into English, but soon a process of modification and simplification began. The eight monastic offices were condensed into two, Morning Prayer or Matins (the popular name), and Evening Prayer or Evensong. These were intended not just for Sunday worship, but to be used by everybody 'daily throughout the year'. The 150 psalms were divided into 60 portions, so that the whole Psalter would be recited in the course of a month. The Bible was divided into daily lessons, so that the Old Testament would be read through once in the course of a year, and the New Testament twice. This course of daily lessons continued, with slight modifications in 1662 and 1871, for nearly 400 years, and is still permissible today. This was all right if you did as the Reformers hoped, and came to church twice a day every day of the week: but did many do this? In some villages, where most of the people turned out to work on the same farm at the same time, it was possible for them to go to church together at 6.00 a.m. and spend 20 minutes in reciting Matins, and to return on their way home from the fields for Evensong. In college chapels too, daily Matins and Evensong would flourish, as penalties would follow non-attendance. But before long, in most parish churches, the bell would be rung twice daily, but few would respond, and often the minister would recite the office on his own (as he is still under obligation to do, whether in church or privately).

But now the people who came only on Sunday would find that the Bible readings did not continue from where they had left off the previous Sunday, but that several chapters had been missed because of the daily sequence. So in 1922 an alternative Sunday sequence was introduced, followed by a Sunday sequence of psalms, which most churches adopted - but many of us will remember attending a church say on Sunday January 15, when the psalms for Day 15 M or E would be sung. I remember on a choir outing going with the boys into Southwell Minster for a weekday Evensong - but alas! it was on this very 15th day of the month, and the psalm for Day 15 E is 78, which is 73 verses long, and though beautifully sung, it did become something of a strain to stand through it! I don't think many congregations would now revel in it on a Sunday either.

The Reformers intended that on Sundays and Holy Days the main service should be what was described in the first English Prayer Book (1549) as 'The Supper of the Lord, and the Holy Communion, commonly called the Mass'. On these days, Matins (perhaps with Litany) would be regarded as a preparation for this, and Evensong as a thanksgiving for blessings received from participating in it.

(to be continued)

## BOOKS OF THE HOLY LAND - 2

With the help of the Bible and two books - 'Guide to the Holy Land' and 'This is Jerusalem' - the modern pilgrim for his purposes has an adequate literary foundation. Yet apart from these books there are more famous works among which I happily include three volumes of a trilogy by H.V. Morton. The most well-known of these volumes is entitled 'In the steps of the Master', and was written by its author during the period between the world wars when the territory of Palestine was a British mandate. This volume and its contents evoke the more leisurely pace of those days when the Holy Land was for most of the world's inhabitants a truly distant place. The second and third volumes, which are entitled 'In the Steps of St. Paul' and 'Through Lands of the Bible' are descriptive of areas such as Turkey, Egypt and Iraq as well as the Holy Land. All three are rewarding to read and convey both thrilling drama and very accurate detail!

Beautiful photographs with explanatory notes and location maps are included in two volumes which are called a 'Photo-Guide to the Old Testament' by Donald Wiseman, and 'Photo-Guide to the New Testament', by Michael Green. These books are published by Lion Publishing, and are of particular interest to children who appreciate the very fine photographs which number around two hundred as a total of both volumes.

Many more beautiful photographs are included in the trilogy, which is published in collaboration with St. Paul Publications, of Italian works which are entitled 'The Old Testament' 'The Gospel of Jesus' and 'Acts of the Apostles'. These three books include a Biblical text of the Revised Standard Version and introduce Bible reading in an attractive and pictorial form.

So in this brief article the Bible began and ended this survey of literature of the Holy Land! I am sure that my choice of books is not exhaustive but personal. With this in mind I shall be very pleased to discuss the contents of this article.

David Dore

### CHRISTIAN AID WEEK (May 17-22)

"He has sent ME" (the capitals are my own addition) "to announce good news to the poor". These are the first words we shall speak at the combined service for Christian Aid "Hope and Judgment" to be held this year at the United Reformed Church on Sunday, May 16 at 6.45 p.m.

Once more the special week of opportunity has come. How shall we individually announce our message of hope to the hopeless and needy?

Those wonderful words out of last year's service come to mind, "it is when you give of **yourself** that you truly give". Give with your heart and mind, out of your compassion and understanding.

There will be many feet walking many pavements and many hands knocking at many doors. We have the guidance of Christ to clarify our minds as to how we should answer that knocking. (1) "You have my Father's blessing. For when I was hungry you gave me food, when I was

thirsty you gave me drink, when I was a stranger you took me into your home, when naked, you clothed me. When I was ill you came to my help, when in prison you visited me". Then the righteous asked when it was that they had done all these things and got the answer "I tell you this, anything you did for one of my brothers, however humble, you did for me" - and the others received their answer too "anything you did NOT do for one of these you did NOT do for me".

Ask of God what is right for you to give and the answer is a sum of which you will not be proud or humble for -

"There are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with the mindfulness of virtue; they give as in yonder valley the myrtle breathes its fragrance into space. Through the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the earth".  
(2)

M.O.

(1) St. Mat. 25, v. 34 .....

(2) Kahil Gibran, The Prophet. 1923.

## LENT GROUPS

The Bible Reading Fellowship leaflet "What is Man's Future?" may not have provided a very helpful study programme for this years' Lent Study Groups, but it certainly seems to have started people talking: many and various have been the topics touched upon, from artificial insemination of cows to the uses of church buildings!

The compiler of the leaflet may have been aiming at a type of group dynamics, and often this type of slant seemed irrelevant to the groups concerned. In general, however, the groups held the interest of their members. We have yet to learn how the other Churches in the Hampton and Sunbury Council of Churches fared, but at St. James's the four groups seem to have been attended by 36 - 40 people, and to have been enjoyed. A member of one of these groups gives her impression below.

H.M.S.

## A LENT BIBLE STUDY GROUP

"Go along to the Lent Bible Study group if you want to find out more about the Bible" I was told by a member of Y.P.F. This was easier said than done as my only real connection with the parish was through Y.P.F. and I didn't relish the idea of spending my Thursday evenings with a group of highly informed and intellectual Christians. Anyway, after persuading my friend Helen to give me moral support we decided to brave it together. As Thursday drew nearer I was convinced that as soon as we got in the door we would be tied to the chairs and the Bible pushed down our throats but I couldn't have been more wrong. The meeting was very informal with a wide age group and therefore a variation of ideas was put forward. Nobody was pressurised into doing anything they didn't want to and so if you were shy and wanted just to listen you could, or if you liked to get involved in the discussions - heated or otherwise - you were welcome to do so. However, it was not serious all the time and many jokes were told and amusing experiences recounted - not all to do with the subject I might add! We had

coffee afterwards and this allowed us time to socialise individually with other members of the group or to continue the discussions in little groups.

I thoroughly enjoyed all the meetings in our group and I urge anyone who thinks they may like to go to a Lent group next year, to be brave and do so because I am sure they will find it helpful and interesting.

A.C.

## **1ST HAMPTON HILL GUIDES**

At Easter Mrs. Muriel Longhurst, Captain of 1st Hampton Hill Guides, retired after five years with the Company.

Variety is the key-note of the Company's programme. In the past year it has included: cooking on wood fires, hikes, a netball rally, cake-making, a Brownie Party, Church parades, a Jumble Sale, a talk on local history by Mrs. Orton and carol singing and Easter baskets for old people.

Jane Fuller is now taking over the Company. All girls 10-15 years (inclusive), and any older girls who would like to help, are very welcome to come along to see what we are doing, and to join us if they like us!

Any questions? Phone Jane 979 8993

## **THE WELCOME SERVICE! "I CAME ONCE ..... BUT ....."**

The Welcome Service, at 4.30 p.m. on the second Sunday in each month, has now been held for eight successive months.

The services have been conducted by members of the Liturgical Committee, aided by other members of the congregation. They have varied: generally a definite theme is followed through, and the readings, hymns and choruses, short talk etc., are focused on this theme. Some leaders have tried short hymn practises, others have organised dramatic participation by the children in the congregation; processions have at times been included in the service; a more formal evensong type of service has been tried. Several people have commented that this variety is a distinct attraction, but others have felt that the services should follow a more definite pattern.

The leaders of the services have their problems; the services are supposed to be for young and old, but is it possible to satisfy in one service both adults and children? The congregation varies: at times there are many children, at other times, hardly any. On the whole there has been a fairly good attendance, and all have enjoyed the tea and biscuits which follow the service. There has been a definite feeling of friendship in the services and in the social exchanges afterwards, but are newcomers being brought into the church to these Welcome Services?.

The members of the Liturgical Committee would be very glad to receive comments on the services. What comes after the "but" in the "I came once.. but....."?

H.M.S.

## **TROUBLE IN THE CHURCHYARD**

The Architect's quinquennial survey suggested trouble with the rainwater drains as a major cause of dampness in the North wall: trial holes dug before Christmas confirmed that the underground pipes from the whole North side were solidly blocked with the accumulated silt of eighty odd years.

To have them dug out and relaid professionally would have cost some hundreds of pounds which we could ill afford, so the Properties Committee decided to try to do it themselves. Sickness and bitter weather prevented the start originally planned for 31 January, and a new date was fixed: further trial digging meantime by Bill and David established both the need for a new soakaway, and the possibility of clearing some sections of the drain by rodding.

We re-convened on 27 March, and after digging up about half of the drains, we were able to rod the rest clear, and to dig a new soakaway. Two more Saturdays were required to put in new gullies and pipes and thus on 10 April to complete the work and make all tidy again. We were grateful for help from Ron Bridges, Tony Lawrence, Hal Severn and Peter Nunn, and for the loan of Bob Walker's rods.

It was a strenuous, back-breaking job, and a filthy and messy one; with trenches open and mounds of soil around and upon some of the graves for longer than we would have liked.

Sadly, at least one parishioner saw all this as a desecration, and was moved to write anonymous letters of complaint to the Vicar: later, a rash of scribbled protest notices appeared around the churchyard.

We are sorry about this: could the person(s) so offended please perhaps reflect that we who were responsible have also for many years mowed and tended the churchyard: not because those buried there are our relatives, but because we are, as they were, a part of St. James's; and we too, have feelings, and we too, care.

J.W.G.

## **MORE ABOUT THE CHURCHYARD**

As this is written, we have conditions of near drought. By the time you read it, we may have near monsoon rain.

So What?

So either way, the grass in the churchyard will almost certainly be growing faster than we can keep it cut, and once more we shall be hoping for your help in a week's concerted effort to bring it back under control.

This year, we have chosen the week from 19 - 26 June for our "mass attack" and as always, any help you can give, even if it's only an hour, at any time during that week, will be appreciated. (You'll probably notice that we have in fact chosen eight of the longest possible days in the year!)

As usual, we can supply some shears, rakes and barrows, but if you can bring your own, please do - and make sure they are well marked with your name.

## **WEL-CARE**

Helen Taylor and Vera Rockliffe invite you to come and support the work of Welcare at a Coffee Morning and Bring and Buy Sale to be held on Thursday 20 May from 10-30 to 12-30 at 40 Gloucester Road, Teddington. Gifts of Green Shield Stamps and baby clothes will be welcome.

### **'THINGS AIN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE'**

I recently joined the Junior Sunday School. "It's not all holy as it used to be", I was told. I was soon to discover and share the joy of modern teaching for Sunday Schools.

Over the past seven weeks the younger children have been learning about and discovering the meaning of 'Death and New Life'. They have looked at things through the winter with no life, or things that have died. Then they have seen the new life come with the spring. They have thought about birth, and were visited by a baby chick.

The older children have followed a course on 'Escape and Freedom'. We looked at escape stories, e.g. Colditz, The Wooden Horse, Gladys Aylward, etc. We discussed and acted out what escape and freedom means. This led on to the story of the escape of the Israelites from captivity in Egypt... We thought about the Israelites passing to new life through the Red Sea and its significance in understanding our Baptism. We spoke about the passover meal, a thanksgiving, remembering the escape from slavery to freedom. And then we had a Passover Meal at Sunday School with the children taking part. The children learned that this was the same meal that Jesus shared with His disciples on the night before He died. We thought of people who had died for others, finding newspaper reports and stories. Then we thought of what Jesus meant when He said that He died for the forgiveness of our sins., pointing out that He rose again and that we have 'New Life' in the RISEN LORD. We walked along the road to Emmaus with the disciples and shared the joy they found when they realised Jesus had risen.

The children are encouraged to express their feelings and enjoy acting out these events, as we saw at the Easter Day service. these verses from a hymn which some of the children learned sum up the message.

'He gave His life for us, the pledge of salvation,  
He took upon Himself the sins of the nation  
He conquered sin and death; He truly has risen,  
And He will share with us His heavenly vision'.

There is an exhibition of work done by the children during the past term, in the Sunday School corner in church.

D.M.H.

## DEANERY INTERCESSION LIST

This is now being revised for the next six months

May

### SOME DATES TO NOTE

- 9 Instead of Evensong, monthly WELCOME SERVICE at 16.30, followed by refreshments.
- 11 20.00 Prayer Meeting (75 Burton's Road); Tuesday Club - speaker from the Salvation Army (W).
- 12 07.30 Holy Communion; 19.30 Mothers' Union Centenary Festival Service (Holy Trinity, Brompton); 20.00 Stewardship Committee (106 Park Road)
- 15 Grand Treasure Hunt, organised by the Social Committee
- 16-22 CHRISTIAN AID WEEK
- 16 15.15 Christian Aid Service at St. Paul's; instead of Evensong here, UNITED CHRISTIAN AID SERVICE at 18.45 in the United Reformed Church - cars available to offer transport from outside St. James's from 18.20
- 17 10.30 Editorial Board (63 Park Road)
- 19 07.30 Holy Communion; 14.30 Mothers' Union Overseas Meeting and Bring & Buy Sale (Hall)
- 20 10.30 Wel-Care: Coffee Morning (40 Gloucester Road); 20.00 Prayer Meeting (69 St. James's Avenue)
- 22 Scout Group Fête.
- 25 19.30 Mothers' Union: Buffet Supper & Entertainment (York House); 20.00 Tuesday Club - evening of records (w).
- 27 ASCENSION DAY: 08.45 Holy Communion (St. Anne's Chapel, LEHS) 19.45 Parish Communion in church; 20.40 Properties Committee (81 Park Road)

June

- 2 07.30 Holy Communion; 20.00 Organ Recital by David Bell
- 3 20.00 Prayer Meeting (69 St. James's Avenue)
- 5 Annual Stewardship Conference; 20.00 Brother Francis - a play presented by Theatre Roundabout at St. Mary's, Sunbury; Quiet Hour in church in preparation for Whitsun.
- 6 WHITSUNDAY: Sunday arrangements as usual. At 17.15, senior members of congregation lead the service at Laurel Dene
- 7 07.30 Holy Communion: 20.00 Prayer Meeting (75 Burton's Road); Tuesday Club: A.G.M. (W)
- 10 Mothers' Union: Gala River Outing
- 11 SAINT BARNABAS: 07.30 Holy Communion.
- 13 Instead of Evensong, informal WELCOME SERVICE at 16.30; 17.15 members of Y.P.F. lead the service at Laurel Dene.  
**N.B.** Whitsun Offerings - a gift to our Deacon.

### BAPTISMS

- March 28 James Michael Duncan, 15 Taylor Close  
Sophia Ellen Guess, 46 Wordsworth Road  
Helen Mary Roberts, 30 Bushy Park Gardens  
Clare Teresa Sutton, 40 Wordsworth Road  
Matthew Tickner, Flat 1, 121 Uxbridge Road

### MARRIAGE

- April 10 Arthur Brian Heath to Helen Susan Draper