

No. 12

FEBRUARY 1959

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MARSTON NEWS

INCORPORATING
CHURCH & LOCAL NEWS



Home Words

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH — OLD MARSTON

SERVICES.

Sundays. Holy Communion 8.15 a.m.
also on First Sunday of the month 12 Noon,
also on Second Sunday of the month 7.30 p.m.
Morning Prayer 11.0 a.m. (Sunday School during
Sermon).
Sunday School 3.0 p.m. at Old Marston Secondary
School.
Evening Prayer 6.30 p.m.

Saints' Days. Holy Communion 7.30 a.m.

Holy Baptism. Fourth Sunday of the month at 4.0 p.m.
Notice must be given.

Holy Matrimony. Banns to be given in at the Vicarage.

CHURCH ORGANISATIONS & MEETINGS.

Bible Study & Prayers. All welcome—in the Vicarage on
Thursdays at 8.15 p.m.

Mothers' Union. Fourth Tuesday of each month in the Read-
ing Room at 7.45 p.m.

Young Wives. First and Third Wednesdays of each month in
the Reading Room at 7.45 p.m.

Pathfinders. Each Friday in the Reading Room at 6.30 p.m.

Cubs. Each Wednesday in the Reading Room at 5.30 p.m.

Scouts. Each Thursday in the Reading Room at 6.30 p.m.

* * * *

Lady Worker : Miss M. S. Liles, The Flat, 15 Mill Lane.

Churchwardens : Prof. V. T. Harlow, Fir Tree House, Oxford Road.
Mr. B. G. Oliver, 13 Jack Straws Lane, N. Marston

Verger : Mr. W. E. Brain, Cranmer, Elsfeld Road.

MOTTO FOR 1959 :

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee : because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever ; for in the Lord Jehovah is ever-lasting strength." (Isaiah 25, vv. 3, 4).

* * * *

The Flat,
15 Mill Lane,
Marston.

My Dear Friends,

You will be glad to know that the Bishop has appointed Rev. Paul Rimmer, M.A. as our new Vicar, and it is understood that his induction will probably take place in the middle of April.

In the National Newspapers, much is being spoken about a proposed General Election in the not too far distant future. If and when this does occur, we have, as members of this democratic country, a great responsibility to vote for the party whom we feel will rightly govern our nation.

In our Church the Annual Election of Officers will take place shortly after Easter, when any person (in or outside the parish) may vote, who is on the Electoral Roll, for suitably responsible people to conduct and develop the work of Christ's church within and outside the parish. The greater the Electoral Roll, the wider will be the representation on the Church Council. Any person over the age of 17½ years, who either lives in the parish or who has worshipped regularly with us for six months, may be on the Roll, and obtain the necessary Form from the Church, which should be completed as soon as possible, and returned to the Churchwardens. It is vitally important that we as Christians should make the Church's voice heard and felt in this growing community, and it is up to you to see that this is done, by making our Council alive and active.

It has given me great joy to see the number of people increase who give systematically to our Church, by using the Weekly Offering Scheme ; and I know that as we give our "pockets" to God, He guides us how to spend aright. The weekly upkeep of God's House, the lighting, cleaning, fuel, maintenance and Staff, are just a few of the commitments. Then the Church overseas is also supported. If you believe God would have you give in this way, please inform me. As St. Paul says "let us lay aside week by week as God prospers us," and may we prove His blessing as a result.

This letter seems rather to be about every-day matters of business, but surely as God's people we should prove to the world that we are even more efficient than the outsider, because we seek the best for God and nothing less.

Lastly may I remind you about the "Lambeth Conference" Film to be shown on Tuesday, February 17th, at 7.30 p.m., in the County Primary School. This is a most enlightening Film showing the vastness of our Anglican Communion, here and overseas, and our privilege of being part of this Universal Church. Please make this as widely known as possible, and make it as happy an occasion as the parish party was during January.

Please let me know if I can help you at any time.

Your sincere friend,

M. S. LILES (Parish Worker).

CHURCH NEWS

In Memoriam.

John Hamilton Mortimer, who had been Vicar of this Parish for forty-six years, passed peacefully to his rest on Saturday, January 3rd, 1959. His benefactions both to Old and New Marston (which he gave quietly and with as little public notice as possible) were spread over many years and were

munificent. These have conferred lasting benefits on the community ; but he leaves behind him something greater than that—the influence of a loving life devoted completely to the service of his Master. The goodness of such disciples does not die.

Young Wives Group.

Are you a married woman under 40 or with children still at school ? If so a warm welcome awaits you at the Church Hall on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 7.45 p.m. During January an informal "Family Treasures" evening was held ; also a family party for members and their children ; and on the third Wednesday in January the Rev. R. H. P. King of the Church Pastoral-Aid Society gave a most revealing message and films on the Society's work in England. The first meeting in February will be a Travel Talk by Mrs. M. Harlow about Borneo ; and on the 18th, husbands are invited when there will be an "Any Questions" evening.

Holidays !

What a lovely thought, while the snow is lying on the ground ! Many girls and boys from our Bible Classes went to Pathfinder camps last year. We may go to any of these, costing £6 for the fortnight, plus railway fares (reduced for campers):— Weston-Super-Mare, Felixstowe, Burnham, Prestatyn, St. Asaph, Malvern Link, Bembridge, Overstrand. Parents may rest assured that their children will have good food (cooked by trained cooks), good fun, good fellowship, and make many Christian friends at such camps. Many are held in Boarding Schools. There is also a Norfolk Broads Camp at Easter. House parties for teenagers are also arranged by the Young Churchmen's Fellowship at Swanage and Burnham, also Keswick Convention. Finally for the family, may I remind you about Lee Abbey near Lynton, N. Devon, but make early application. For further details please see the Church Porch Notice-board, or Miss Liles, but do not leave it too late, otherwise the camps will be full.

Family News.

At the time of going to press, several members of our parish are in hospital, for long or short periods. May we remember these friends in our prayers, and believe they may know the Presence of the Lord with them moment by moment.

In many roads of our parish at least one or two new babies seem to arrive every week or so : to these new members and their parents we wish them every blessing.

In Lighter Vein !

A countryman travelled up to London, and at the Station he asked the Porter the way to Buckingham Palace. "What do you want to go there for?" queried the Porter. "To give these plums to the Queen." The Porter still seemed puzzled. "Well," said the countryman, "Don't we sing in the National Anthem 'Send her victorias,' so as I had my trees well loaded with them, I picked a basketful and brought them to her myself."

Church Hall.

The Church Hall is now ready for outside bookings ; discretionary powers regarding any application must be reserved to the Marston Church Properties, Ltd.

The Fees are :—

Weddings, etc.—£3/3/- for 4 hours, plus 10/- per hour after (including kitchen and cleaning).

Meetings, etc.—12/6 for 2 hours (Large room).

7/6 for 2 hours (Small room). 5/- extra the Kitchen.

Please approach Miss Liles for any bookings for the Hall.



"First I Learn to Believe"

CATECHISM REFORM

BY THE REV. DR. H. S. O'NEILL,
DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
FOR THE DIOCESE OF DERBY

THE CHURCH CATECHISM which we use today is almost the very same, word for word, as it was when Shakespeare would be taught it nearly four hundred years ago. It appeared in our 1549 Prayer Book as the first part of the "Confirmation" service, and was described (as now) as "An Instruccion to bee learned of eevery childe, before he be brought to be confirmed of the Bushop". In 1604, when the portion on the Sacraments was added, the Catechism was intended to help Confirmation candidates "to render an account of their faith". It is not surprising, therefore, that the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have recently appointed a Commission

of Bishops and clergy to study this ancient Catechism to see whether it is still suitable for the purpose of instructing young Church people, or whether some changes should be made.

So serious a matter may take a long time to settle, for in any question of teaching there are three chief points to be considered: the aim, the matter to be taught and the method of teaching it. The aim will no doubt remain unchanged, for it is to prepare candidates to be convinced and practising members of the Church. The second concern is to see that the complete range of what the Church has to teach is contained in this "instruccion". We may expect that

this will be the special responsibility of the Bishops and Clergy on the Commission, for it is they who have to safeguard the unchangeable truth, no matter how it may have to be expressed and passed on to each succeeding generation.

There is the question, therefore: What should a candidate for Confirmation be expected to know and appreciate? In 1549 the Catechism answered that he should know (i) the necessity of repentance, belief and obedience for all members of Christ; (ii) the summary of the Catholic Faith as contained in the Apostles' Creed, together with a right understanding of the same; (iii) the rules of Christian conduct based on the Ten Commandments; and (iv) why and how to pray. And today, hardly anyone claiming to be a Christian Churchman of any denomination would disagree with any of these four points: the duties and privileges of Church membership, the Church's belief, the Church's code of conduct, and the way of prayer.

But, by 1604 there had developed two main points of view about Church life, especially about the most important thing in religion—I mean about the ways by which we can receive the grace of God with which to carry out obligations of Christian membership. The particular Divine method of imparting grace through sacraments was considered to be of so great importance that the present concluding section on the Sacraments was added to set forth the position of the national Church in this matter.

However, since 1662, when our present Book of Common Prayer was published, there have been important developments in the life of the Church. Perhaps the main differences are (i) the spread of the English national Church into many lands, so that it is no longer purely national, and (ii) the slow, but sure spread of education and

other benefits to all social classes. These two developments are making it more necessary than ever for Church people to understand the international Church's part in individual religion as well as the individual's part in the religion of the international Church. Furthermore, the Christian concern for Society in a nation is something being felt with increasing intensity. Matters such as these may find a place in any revised preparation for Confirmation in the provinces of Canterbury and York.

The greatest change, however, and that which seems inevitable, will probably be in the *methods* of instruction of candidates. Already, in the Archbishops' request to the Commission, it is envisaged that not only may the scope of the Catechism be enlarged, but that its language may be modernised. We have to remember that most of those for whom our Catechism was originally written *could not read*. It was not generally intended as a *reading* reference for young Christians, but as something to be learnt from a teacher's mouth and retained in the memory for future reference. Thus, it could be handed on by word of mouth even among people who could not read sufficiently. That situation no longer exists in England (although it still does in several countries where the Anglican Church prepares some candidates orally only for Confirmation). As far as the Church of England is concerned (i.e., in England only), then, the fact of universal education, and in particular the ability to read, will probably influence the future form of the Catechism for purposes of instruction. Since the Commission have been given permission to consult an Anglican panel of lay people "professionally engaged in the teaching of the Christian religion", it seems obvious that such considerations will be borne in mind.

WHO SWEEPS A ROOM

IN AN OLD BOOK WHICH came my way lately, there is a reference to a certain Thomas Jones, who in the 18th century was Curate of a tiny village in the Midlands with a stipend of £25 a year. The village contained less than fifty houses, and there Thomas Jones laboured for forty-three years. "From that humble base," we read, "he transformed the surrounding community, and threw out influences which affected the nation." He founded Sunday schools, Dame schools, sick clubs and clothing clubs. He wrote devotional books, and with the profits from their sales built six almshouses for aged widows. He founded a society which enabled no less than fifty young men to enter the ministry, and another society which in eighteen years distributed the remarkable sum of £35,000 for the relief of need—a sum equal to at least five times that amount nowadays. And he did all this without ever stirring from the "unpromising hamlet" (as it is described) in which his lot was cast.

The old book from which I cull these particulars describes Thomas Jones as "now almost forgotten." But he deserves to be remembered, for his life affords a wonderful illustration of what devotion and faithfulness can accomplish, even when circumstances and surroundings are most unhelpful and most depressing.

So, too, does the story of the railway porter who was energetically sweeping the platform of a tiny station in a remote part of the country. A passenger watched him with interest and not a little amusement. "Why," he said, "one would think it was the platform of Paddington station." "Well, sir," replied the porter, "it's the same Company!"

George Herbert's famous little poem, "Teach me, my God and King"—which finds a place in most hymn books—has for its theme doing everything as unto God. That is the motive which transforms what otherwise would be drudgery into work of divine dignity. Any commonplace task—even the sweeping of a room, as Herbert says—becomes irradiated with glory when the motive is "as for Thee."

But it is not only the motive that counts. Faithfulness is also a vital factor—day in and day out slogging faithfulness, doing one's very best in all circumstances, and never scamping anything. And that is where the example of a man like Thomas Jones comes in to inspire us all.

It is worth noting that his life was practically contemporaneous with that of John Wesley, and a comparison between the two men is of interest. In one sense they were completely unlike—the renowned evangelist, ranging the length and breadth of the land in his restless endeavour to spread the news of the Gospel, preaching to huge multitudes; and the obscure curate in his remote hamlet, probably never so much as seeing a crowd. But they are alike in this, that both are splendid examples of the sort of life which wins the "Well done" of the Master.

"It's the same Company," said the country porter. Paddington or Slo-cum-on-the-Mud, what does it matter? And it's the same God whom we all may serve, whether we are prominent or obscure, known or unknown, learned or ignorant, rich or poor, whether we have ten talents or only one. Motive and faithfulness: these are the things that matter. If these are as they should be, then "All service ranks the same with God." And all will receive the same reward at His hands.

R.D.W.



Misericord at Ludlow, Shropshire, 15th Century
(Representing the Month of December)

HIDDEN CARVINGS

By J. C. D. SMITH

WHO WOULD DREAM OF looking underneath a seat to find an exquisite piece of wood carving? Well, that is just where we shall find them if we are in the choir stalls of most of our old cathedrals and in many other churches. On the underside of the seats in the choir there are frequently projecting ledges which, in accordance with the spirit of the times, were elaborately decorated. Many readers will probably know already that these are misericords, sometimes called *miserere* seats; i.e. "mercy seats."

In the Middle Ages it was unusual for people to sit during services; indeed seating is much more recent than many people suppose. People were undoubtedly used to discomfort in those days and so to stand during the whole of a service was not particularly inconvenient for most lay people. But it is not difficult for us to understand that it must have been

a hardship for those who belonged to Religious Orders and who, every day of their lives, came into the church to sing or recite the many Offices of the day. The spirit may have been willing but, as we all know, the flesh is very weak, and so it is hardly surprising that this rule of standing was gradually relaxed. One of the first changes was the use of a special type of crutch for the old and sick members of the community. These were called '*reclinatoria*', and indeed they are still used in some Greek churches where, likewise, seats for the congregation are virtually non-existent.

The misericords were a later development. Some of the earliest in this country (mid-13th century) can be seen at Exeter, but they were certainly known before this date. The misericord, or ledge under the seat, enabled the occupant to take some of the weight off his feet, at the

same time allowing him to adopt a standing position.

The vast majority of surviving misericords date back to the period covered by the 13th-16th centuries. There are a few post-Reformation examples but these are rare. The fact that they were made during this "Gothic" period accounts for their elaborate decoration.

Most people will be interested in the actual subjects illustrated in these carvings. They are not always, as might be expected, of a religious nature. The majority, perhaps, have little bearing on the religion of our ancestors. Could it have been that their position was considered not dignified enough for such subjects? The carvers, not unnaturally, showed the things with which they were most familiar. There are birds, animals, fishes, flowers and trees, domestic scenes, fables and nursery rhymes, games, satire and humour. Squabbles between man and wife are common scenes. The fables of Reynard the Fox and Bruin the Bear were also much-loved subjects. The seasons and the months are often represented by some common occurrence of that particular period. Decem-



Choir Seat, Swinbrook, Oxon.

ber or Winter is often represented by a fireside scene, and August by a harvest group. Amusing scenes include things like putting the cart before the horse, which is illustrated on a misericord at Beverley Minster. At Malvern mice are seen hanging a big fat cat.

The more you study the subjects of these misericord carvings the more you will understand the everyday life of the ordinary man and woman of mediaeval England, and you will certainly be well rewarded for your efforts.



Bristol Cathedral, Fox Preaching to Geese



Lord Chesterfield Statue

A Modern Garter Knight

OUTSIDE the church at Holme Lacy, Hereford, there is a modern bronze statue of the late Earl of Chesterfield, figured as a Knight of the Garter, which he was, as well as being a Privy Councillor and G.C.V.O. Among many high offices which he held, one of the first was to be Treasurer of the Household to Queen Victoria in her last years. The Chesterfields lived at Holme Lacy House, now a hospital. The bronze stands facing the River Wye, which flows close by the church.—M.W.

Rectory's Famous Trees

IN the grounds of Burton Overy Rectory, Leicestershire, is an oak tree which was planted by the then Rector at the Restoration, grown from an acorn of the famous Boscobel Oak.

It is a tree of fine proportions, and near it is another tree grown from one of its own acorns to

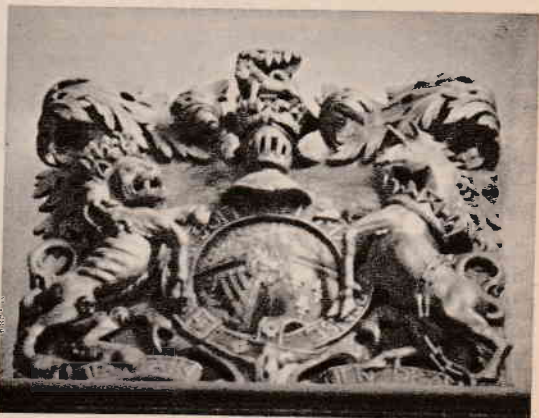
celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.—REVD. G. S. HEWINS.

The Red King

BEFORE the High Altar of Winchester Cathedral is a plain tomb which tradition confirms is of William Rufus. It was opened in 1868, and within was found the broken skeleton of a short thick-set man of middle years, fragments of gold braid of Norman pattern, small turquoise and the ivory head of a wand carved in the shape of a Griffin. More remarkable were some pieces of wood and two small triangular pieces of iron, which, when fitted together, made an iron tipped shaft nearly a yard in length, possibly the arrow that killed the hated Red King while hunting in the New Forest in 1100. He had obviously been buried hastily, the fatal shaft still in his side.—C. G. SLADE.

Unusual Arms

THE Royal Arms displayed in our churches are often well worth a second look, for many of them are most interesting. Those at the church of St. Nicholas at Pevensey in Sussex are certainly unusual, perhaps even unique. They are the arms of William III after the death of Queen Mary and can, therefore, be dated as being between the years 1694 and 1702. The motto of the house of Orange, *Je maintiendrai*, can be seen at their base.—N. M. WOODALL.



Unusual Arms



Photo by G. Pennethorne

Fascination

CAMEOS FROM LIFE

I. MEMORY

"I first met my husband," said the old lady, "when we were teachers in the same Sunday School. For some time we walked home together. When he asked me to marry him I was not certain what to say until he wrote me a beautiful letter. I have it still. The paper is faded and the folds are beginning to tear, but every little while I take it out of my drawer and read it again."

I, who knew her story, looked with admiration on the peaceful face crowned with thick white hair. Forty years before, her husband had died, leaving her alone to rear their six young children. But the smile which lingered round her lips showed me she was not recalling her sorrow, or her grim struggle to provide for her family. She was re-living the happy love affair of her youth. For her, Studdert Kennedy's lines rang true:

God gave His children memory
That in life's garden there might be
June roses in December.

—E.G.B.

Weekday Pages for Women

CONDUCTED BY
MARION HURST

,. If you know of a good hint for our household pages, send it to the Editor, 11, Ludgate Square, E.C.4. We offer six 5s. prizes every month.

Monday's Washing

When washing a permanently pleated skirt, squeeze up and down in lukewarm suds. Rinse well, but do not wring. Cut the foot off an old nylon stocking, and pull it over the skirt. It will then dry quickly and the pleats will be as good as when the skirt was bought.—MRS. N. WALL.

When you get gas tar on your clothes, rub on a little furniture polish until the tar disappears. Then wash the garment in the usual way.—MISS S. GRANTHAM.

Tuesday's Sewing

My bedroom rugs have a fringe at each end. When I shake them, sometimes the loops shake out, so I now stitch the knots at each side with matching cotton. They are now quite safely fixed.—MRS. M. HARDING.

When lining curtains, press-stud the lining to the curtains instead of stitching. This makes it much easier when they have to be cleaned or washed, and the lining is easier to replace.—MISS M. HURST.

When replacing hanging loops on jackets for children, use a piece of fine chain $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. long. This will last better than cloth or tape.—MRS. A. GRIFFITH.

Wednesday's Nursing

Sick Room "Don'ts".—

- Don't—walk about in heavy shoes.
- „ sit on the bed or lean against the footrail.
- „ fidget about or hold whispered conversations.
- „ disturb the patient when sleeping, no matter what the time is.

- Don't—put the bed facing a window. It should be so arranged that the patient can turn away from the light.
- „ allow hairpins in bed; they are dangerous. If hair is long, it should be dressed in two plaits. Remember—a tangle left today will be worse tomorrow.
- „ leave food in the sickroom. Bring little dainty meals regularly, and always take away what is left.
- „ allow visitors in the sickroom after the patient has been settled for the night.—G.B.

Thursday's Cooking

To "stretch" a pint of milk when making custard, why not try out this money saver? To one pint of T.T. milk, add half-a-pint of water (leaving sufficient of the liquid to mix the necessary amount of custard powder and sugar to a creamy consistency). Add two heaped teaspoons of Atora Suet, bring quickly to the boil and make the custard in the usual way. By this method, not only will the deficiency of the fat content be made up by the addition of the suet, but the increased amount will supply the "Oliver Twist" (as in our family) who will invariably ask for more.—Mrs. M. CHORLEY.

Sultana Cake.—1 lb S.R. flour; 8 oz butter; 8 oz granulated sugar; 8 oz sultanas; 4 eggs; 2 tablespoonsful ground almonds; pinch of salt. Cream the butter and sugar and eggs. Sift the flour in and add sultanas. Beat well together. Bake in a moderate oven for 2 hours.—Mrs. Moss.

When making a treacle tart, instead of using bread crumbs or coconut, try corn flakes for a change. Lightly crush the flakes on top of the syrup before cooking. The tart is delicious and there is added food value.—Mrs. V. KENT.

When boiling milk in hot weather, add a small pinch of bicarbonate of soda and the milk will not turn sour.—Miss E. DEEPROSE.

Friday's Household

Never throw away an old plastic mackintosh, for parts of it can be put to good use. If the hood is cut off it will make a useful toilet bag. Pockets can be cut off and used as bags. Cut-out sleeves can be made into a shopping bag for wet days. An apron or tray cloth from the back, and bits left over will make book-marks.—Miss N. POTTER.

Cover any old lampshade frames with muslin or gauze and use for protecting food from flies, etc.—Mrs. CLARIDGE.

Cakes covered with soft icing are difficult to get out of a deep cake tin. Stand the cake on the lid and cover with the tin. There is then no possibility of the sides being spoiled.—Mrs. A. HARGREAVES.

Saturday's Children

When children's wellington boots get wet inside, use a hair dryer, switching alternately hot and cold. It is amazing how quickly the insides get dry with this method.—Mrs. K. BRODIE.

To prevent a child tripping over a long dressing gown, sew a button on to each pocket and make a chain loop at each corner of the hem. The corners can then be buttoned out of the way.—Mrs. WHITEHEAD.



Photo by

Concentration

F. M. Miles

OUR SERIAL STORY

POTTER'S
GREEN PRIDE

BY MOLLIE FIELD

Chapter II

OLD TOM TODD LAY BACK on his pillows, pale and gaunt, his eyes staring deep and dark from their sunken sockets; but a gentle smile played round his mouth as he finished what he was saying.

Timothy Marks got up from the chair where he had been sitting close to the old man, and crossed to the window. It looked over a meadow to the orchard behind the school, the place where soon there might be a fine new building. Tom Todd would not be there to see it, but he wanted to stake his claim in it now.

"The old school meant so much to me, Vicar," the quavering voice continued, and it was so weak that Marks had to go and sit again in the chair in order to hear. "It may not have been a very grand education, though I learned enough to help me to do very nicely in business. But, Vicar, they taught us something that they don't seem to get in a lot of these schools today. They gave us an idea of what life is about, and how to live it. Right from my schooldays I have always remembered it is God's world, and I've always tried to find out what He wanted me to do in it."

"And now you want other children to have the same kind of education?"

"I do, sir. Oh, I've no doubt there are good Christian teachers in all schools; but as I understand it, they haven't the opportunities for positive Christian teaching which they have in

a Church School. I can't bear to think of Potter's Green without one." The old voice grew fainter, and he whispered, "I hope you think I've done right."

"Done right?" Timothy Marks smiled into the old man's eyes. "You are leaving a truly wonderful gift for the village. But one thing bothers me. How about your wife? Can you—can you afford to make such a handsome bequest as a thousand pounds? I should feel very reluctant about accepting it if it meant any hardship for your wife."

Tom Todd chuckled. "Don't you worry about that, sir. She's very comfortably provided for. She knows all about this idea, and she wants me to do it. You see, we've no one to leave our money to, and we know the school needs money now. In five years' time, or whenever my missus passes on, it will be too late. No, she's all right, take it from me. And she's sending for the lawyer to come and add the codicil tomorrow."

It was obvious that the old man was exhausted, so the Vicar prayed with him, then made his departure. On his way home he called in at the school, passing the industrious hum in the classrooms to the headmaster's room at the end of the passage.

Charles Hassall looked up as the Vicar came in, and saw at once that he had good news. "What a wonderful old man!" he exclaimed when he heard what Tom Todd proposed to do. "There's a real, practical Christian if ever there was one. Where did he get his money from? He has been retired since I came here."

"I'm told he used to own the General Stores, and apparently he was known as 'Honest Tom'—he always gave a square deal—in fact he was more than generous to the poor and needy. But at the same time he was a shrewd buyer, and people liked dealing with him. So he prospered, and he must have sold the business

for quite a bit when he retired. He's unpretentious; he has never thrown his money about; he has never had any desire to go on committees or to be a churchwarden, but whenever he has found a practical way of doing good, he has done it."

"I have only heard one criticism of him since I have been here," said Hassall, "and that is, that anyone can take him in. He tends to believe that everyone is as honest as himself. Anyway, bless him! By the way, we talk as if he's at death's door. Is he?"

"It may be a matter of weeks, but not more. It could be any day, but I have known people in his state last for several months. I know one thing, though. The thought of his gift to the new school building is giving him infinite happiness."

There was a knock at the door and a boy of about eleven, with a round face and crinkly hair, responded to the headmaster's invitation to come in.

"Please, sir, Miss Nicholls says could she have the hymns for Wednesday, so's we can practise."

"Now, Vicar, what about it?"

"What do you think, Jimmy?" asked Timothy Marks. "Remember, it's Ash Wednesday."

Jimmy gave the matter careful consideration, standing poised like a stork on one leg. "I like the troops of Midian one," he said at last. "It's exciting. And 'Onward Christian Soldiers'."

"We often have that. Wouldn't you like something else for a change?"

"It's a smashing tune, sir," Jimmy assured the Vicar eagerly.

"Definitely a boy's choice," said the headmaster gravely. "What do you think the girls like to sing?"

"Oh, them!" Jimmy shrugged his shoulders. "They like soppy things, like 'Peace, perfect peace'."

"All right, Jimmy. Go and tell Miss Nicholls what we have chosen."

"I never cease to be staggered at children's taste in hymns," said the

headmaster when Jimmy had gone. "They never choose the ones you think they would like. They don't care if they can't understand the words. They like the feel of them rolling round their tongues, and singable tunes even if they are in deplorable musical taste."

"And why not?" asked the Vicar. "The innocuous, expurgated hymn books this county provides in its schools are very dull, and full of unmemorable hymns. If successive generations love the good old Victorian hymns which you and I deplore, then they must contain something of value. I used not to believe it, but I'm rapidly coming to the conclusion that the greatest value in children's hymn-singing is the taking part with real enjoyment. Theological and musical niceties come later."

As he left the building he could hear across the playground the strains of "Christian, dost thou see them?" sung with relish by forty enthusiastic young voices. At least the words and the rather eerie excitement of the tune will remain with them, thought Marks, and as they grow older the true meaning will become more apparent.

Anne Wiles had settled in very happily at the school. Her class, after watching her closely the first day, had decided she was all right. True, she still had to put up with an occasional, "Miss Andrews didn't do it like that, miss!", but on the whole the children were most cooperative. In fact, her request for pussy willow brought an embarrassment of it, and only this Monday she had received three bunches of aconites and early violets, which it must have been a considerable labour for the children to find.

The staff, too, were friendly and helpful over work, and several had invited her to their homes in and around Chilborough. The headmaster, too, could not have been

kinder. She found that he was popular with the staff because he was prepared to receive other people's ideas with enthusiasm, and had the knack of welding his rather odd mixture of teachers into a happy band. He not only knew his job from A to Z, but he was interested in people as individuals, and above all, he had a sense of humour. He could always dispel a tense moment at a staff meeting with an absurdity which brought a laugh. He did it with the children, too. Passing through the playground in the dinner hour today, Anne had noticed a group of boys smoking surreptitiously behind the woodwork room. She was wondering what to do about it when Charles Hassall, who must have noticed them earlier, came striding round the corner. The boys hastily and unsuccessfully tried to hide their cigarettes. Hassall pretended to look surprised. "Good Heavens, boys!" he exclaimed. "What are you smoking? Cigarettes? But don't you know in this school we always begin with cigars? It's against the rules to smoke anything else when you are a beginner. Here—take one each." And he produced a box of miniature cigars from behind his back. As he handed it round each boy shook his head foolishly, muttering, "No, thank you, sir." Jack Turner turned slightly green at the sight of cigars. "I tried my Dad's last Christmas," he said, and looked away. "Well, don't forget, young men," said the headmaster as

he walked away. "Only cigars may be smoked here!"

Anne laughed as she recalled the incident, and caught her own reflection in the large, oval dressing-table mirror as she did so. Her wavy, dark brown hair made a neat frame for her heart-shaped face; her blue eyes sparkled mischievously back at herself. 'I look as if I enjoy life,' she thought, 'and I don't look solemn enough for a teacher. Mr. Hassall may think me frivolous.'



Photo by

Winter Glory

H.S.B.

She pulled her mouth into a severe line. 'No, that's a caricature. I need to look more dignified.' She tried another expression. 'Firm but gentle—that's what a teacher is supposed to be. But it's no good—I can't help laughing when I'm trying to be dignified, and of course the children know it. Well, Mr. Hassall will have to put up with me as I am. Anyway, we are off duty this evening.'

Anne put the finishing touches to

her make-up, slipped on a warm coat and a scarf over her hair, and then went round to the school house to meet Mr. Hassall. He was taking her to Chilborough to join the Choral Society, of which he was a member.

He was outside his garage when she arrived.

"Sorry not to call round for you," he said. "But, as I told you, I had to wait for a trunk call at seven. Of course it was late, so here I am, about to get the car out, and forestalled by my guest. Please get in."

Anne was a little shy at first. She

felt she ought to keep off 'shop' as a topic of conversation, but she hardly knew what else to talk about. The flirtatious chat which she might have had with a man of her own age hardly seemed suitable with the headmaster. However, he soon put her at ease with the kind of talk which always goes on between choral singers, and with entertaining thumbnail sketches of the people she would meet.

On arrival at the Methodist Hall in Chilborough, Hassall introduced her to the choir's conductor, and to a very charming woman who took her under her wing among the second sopranos. Anne spent a happy evening rehearsing Verdi's *Requiem*. She had belonged to a good London choir while she was at college, and was delighted to let herself be ensnared again by the inexplicable delight of singing great works with a large body of keen amateurs.

Choral singing is a great equaliser, and Anne found that on the way home she forgot she was with the headmaster. He, too, seemed to forget that she was a very junior member of the staff and they talked freely. Almost imperceptibly they switched from music to school, and it was not a far cry from that to the project of the new building.

"Is it indiscreet to ask what is happening about the improvements?" Anne asked. "I do hope the project will not fizzle out from lack of interest."

Charles Hassall chuckled. "Not at all. The Appeal is on the Agenda for the P.C.C. meeting on Friday."

"Yes, but won't they feel that £3000 is too much to find in a small place like this? I would want, personally, to be jolly convinced of the value of Church Schools to embark on raising a sum like that, when you can get it free from the County. It's heresy to you, I suppose, when I say I think that Christian teachers in

State schools are far more important than straining to keep Church Schools up to the necessary standard."

"Heresy it is, my dear girl." Hassall slapped his hands on the steering wheel to emphasise his feelings. "I think the other is of great importance, but if there were no schools in this country with a religious background, where the Faith can be taught in addition to Bible Knowledge, where the teachers can be chosen for their beliefs as well as their qualifications, and where the parish priest is accepted as their spiritual leader, then the country would be much poorer spiritually. The value of a Church School in a village, especially, is inestimable."

"Well, it's not for me to argue on that with the headmaster of such a school," said Anne with a laugh. "I haven't been here long enough to test out my theories. But what about the people here? Do they think it is worth saving their school? Do they realise or appreciate the benefits you say they have had? Enough to empty their pockets for it?"

Hassall let out his breath slowly. "Now you're asking," he said. "I think they'll want to save their school at all costs, but one never knows. I do think, though, that something is about to happen which will encourage many to support the Appeal."

"Really? Is Lord Tomnoddy giving a handsome donation?"

"More touching than that. A dying man is leaving a large bequest which can be used for it. He's no Lord, either. He's a retired shopkeeper. Don't you think it's wonderful?"

"He must believe in Church Schools very much!"

"He does. Now here you are— returned to your doorstep. I will call for you next week, unless we are snowed up. You never know in February."

(To be continued)

AN OUT-OF-THE-WAY
ECCLESIASTICAL GEM.

THE "SHEPHERDS' CHURCH"

BY ERIC L. KING

A FEW MILES FROM THE Welsh border, on a Shropshire hill-top at an altitude of 1300 ft, stands the little church of St. Mary at Bettws-y-Crwyn. A literal translation of the Welsh place-name is 'Prayer-house of the Fleeces', and the congregation in former times consisted largely of shepherds from the surrounding hills.

The church at Bettws-y-Crwyn is first mentioned in the records of Wenlock Abbey in 1276, and the north and south walls of the present building are thought to be part of the church which was standing at this date.

The principal feature of the little church is its fine woodwork, crowned by a splendid roof of the late 15th



Hook outside North Wall
(To hold pole for putting out fires)



19th-Century Bell Turret

or early 16th century. The beautiful oak chancel-screen, with traceried bays and spandrels decked with roses, is of similar date. The two-decker pulpit, the font-cover, and altar rails are all of the Jacobean period. The church possesses a silver chalice of about 1660, with repoussé ornament.

In the mid-19th century, when the church was restored, the chancel was rebuilt and the bell turret and porch were added. The thatched roof was replaced by slates, but two hooks remain on the outside of the north wall; their purpose was to hold a long pole with which to put out fire in the thatch.

The ends of the solid wooden benches upon which the congregation sit are inscribed with the names of various local farms.

The church at Bettws-y-Crwyn, which has for centuries served the spiritual needs of the shepherds of this remote and hilly region, may have been built originally as a shrine beside a nearby well on the ancient road which runs above the church from England into Wales.

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BAPTISMS

"Pray that they may not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified."

- Nov. 20. Robert MacGechan, Arlington Drive.
Nov. 23. Debra Tina Bateman, Raymund Road.
Jonathan Peter Dagley, Oxford Road.
Gordon Edward Hillis, Beechey Avenue.
Eileen Janet Hillis, Beechey Avenue.
John George Price, Ashlong Road.

Baptised, June 4th, in Hospital but publicly received on

- Nov. 23. Keith Alan Roderick, Old Marston Road.
Nov. 27. Anita Jane Garner, Rippington Drive.
Dec. 7. Adrian Hugh Beardsley, Raymund Road.
Dec. 14. Linda Stewart Sargeant, Windsor Crescent.
Dec. 25. Caroline Anne Batten, Arlington Drive
Vanessa Jane Franklin, Haynes Road.

COLLECTIONS (including Weekly Offering Scheme)

September—£50 6s. 4d. October—£60 1s. 4.

November—£64 2s. 11d. December—£73 18s. 11d.

Confirmation Service collection devoted to Ordination Fund : £6 13s. 6d.

Carol Singing (Divided between Churches Aid to Refugees and Church of England Children's Society) : £21 12s. 5d.

PARISH NEWS

Old Marston County Secondary School.

The School's first Prize Giving was held on 16th December. It was very appropriate that the Chairman of the Governors, Professor V. T. Harlow, should give away the Prizes. Winners were : A. Eadle, W. Lawrence, G. Griffiths, I. Barrett, R. Woodward, R. Miles, R. Brown, Russell Ward J. Simmonds, D. Edens, E. Fowler, E. Comley, C. Bowen, R. Pether, S. Tucker, J. Smith, K. Riley, K. Mason, C. Hurst, S. Gammon, A. Quiggin, E. Sumner, G. Frost and M. Hales. Form I A were to be given the Form Trophy when one became available. St. Andrew's House won the House Trophy presented by the Teacher Parent Association. Thanks to the generosity of Professor and Mrs. Harlow an Award, given for service to the School, has been made available for as long as the School shall last. The first winner was Kathleen Mason. In his apt address the Chairman urged the prizewinners and the spectators to care about anything they did "Turn your work into play for only then can you reap full happiness" he said.

After the hectic terms of the past year of initiation, the School looks forward this term to a quieter tempo of consolidation. Among other events are the School Cross Country and the Open Evening. With regard to the latter, the School will be 'Open' from 7 p.m.—8 p.m. on Tuesday, 24th February, not merely to Parents, but anybody who is interested will find a welcome.

St. Nicholas' County Primary School.

Despite the promises of the builders the classrooms were not finished ready for us on January 6th. The two upstairs rooms were usable but the ground floor room and toilet and cloakroom accommodation were far from finished.

The Chairman of the Managers—Profesor E. R. Dodds—in consultation with the Local Education Committee Officials and the Headmaster, agreed that under the circumstances the Reception Class which should have been taken in on January 6th be postponed until Monday, February 2nd. The feelings of all concerned, particularly the teachers, can be imagined, as so much of the activity planned for this term has had to be either postponed or cancelled.

Parish Council.

The problem of the over-loading of the sewer was again brought to the attention both of the Bullingdon R.D.C. and the City Council.

It was noted that specific areas of land in the parish had been specially reserved as areas of the Green Belt and were so to be preserved.

Mrs. R. B. Standing was appointed as delegate to the County Association of Parish Councils at their meeting on January 17th.

It was noted with satisfaction that the ditch from the Cherwell to the main road had been cleared by the Thames Conservancy.

Red Cross Lectures.

If the number warrants a Course of Lectures to be run by the Red Cross, they should start towards the end of February. The Place—the Church Hall, time—Mondays at 7.45 p.m., cost—free, age limit—everybody over 15 years welcome. If you are interested, please leave your name with either Mr. Oliver, Mrs. Smith (4 Windsor Crescent), or Miss Liles, by February 14th if possible.

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday, February 1st. Sexagesima.

8.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer followed by Holy Communion.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.

Wednesday, February 4th.

7.45 p.m. Young Wives' Group in Church Hall.

Thursday, February 5th.

8.0 p.m. Prayer and Bible Study Group at The Flat, 15 Mill Lane

Sunday, February 8th. Quinquagesima.

8.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer followed by Holy Communion.

Tuesday, February 10th. Pancake Day. (Shrove Tuesday).

Wednesday, February 11th. Ash Wednesday.

Thursday, February 12th.

8.0 p.m. Prayer and Bible Group.

Sunday, February 15th. 1st in Lent.

8.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.

Tuesday, February 17th.

7.30 p.m. Lambeth Conference Film in the Primary School.

Wednesday, February 18th.

7.45 p.m. Young Wives' Group in Church Hall.

Thursday, February 19th.

8.0 p.m. Prayer and Bible Group.

Sunday, February 22nd. 2nd in Lent.

8.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.

Tuesday, February 24th.

2.45 p.m. Mothers' Union in Church Hall.

Thursday, February 26th.

8.0 p.m. Prayer and Bible Group.

Future Date to Book :

Thursday, March 12th.

The Passover demonstrated by the Rev. W. H. Medcalfe of the Church Missions to the Jews.

CHURCH & LOCAL CLUBS, SOCIETIES, ETC.

CHURCH.

- Bell Ringers.** Sec. : Mr. A. Gammon, 50 Oxford Road.
- Choir.** Choirmaster : Mrs. E. M. Garner, 49 Rippington Drive.
- Cubs.** Leader : Miss B. Hatton, 32 Ash Grove, Headington.
- Mothers' Union.** Sec. : Mrs. N. E. Green, 60 Oxford Road.
- Parochial Church Council.** Sec. : Mrs. M. Harlow, Fir Tree House, Oxford Road.
- Pathfinders.** Leader : Miss M. Liles, The Flat, 15 Mill Lane.
- Scouts.** Leader : Mr. R. Jones, 118 Oxford Road.
- Young Wives.** Mrs. E. Holmes, 10 Cavendish Drive.

LOCAL.

- Allotment Assn.** Sec. : Mr. R. Bowen, 129 Oxford Road.
- British Legion.** Sec. : Mr. H. Hall, 61 Coniston Avenue, Headington.
- Choral Society.** Sec. : Mr. L. E. Hodgkins, 59 Copse Lane.
- Cricket Club.** Sec. : Mr. R. D. Skates, 31 Mill Lane.
- Cromwell Club.** Leader :
- Parish Council.** Chairman : Mr. L. C. Jennings, 8 Oxford Rd.
- Teacher-Parent Assoc.** St. Nicholas County Primary School.
Sec. : Mrs. M. Smith, 4 Windsor Crescent.
- Women's Institute.** Sec. : Mrs. R. B. Standing, Almonds, Oxford Road.

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