

No. 20

OCTOBER, 1959

Price 4d.

MARSTON NEWS

INCORPORATING
CHURCH & LOCAL NEWS



B.T. & H.A.

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.
Pathfinder Bible Classes—
Boys and Girls : 10.15 a.m., Church Hall.
Evening Prayer 6.30 p.m.

Saints' Days. Holy Communion as announced.

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.

Discussion Group. All welcome. Thursdays at 8 p.m.

Mothers' Union. Fourth Tuesday of each month in the Church
Hall at 2.45 p.m.

Young Wives. Alternate Wednesdays in the Church Hall at
at 7.45 p.m.

Pathfinders. Each Friday (Girls) in the Church Hall at 5.30
p.m. onwards.

Tuesdays (Boys) in the Church Hall at 6.30 p.m.

Cubs. Wednesdays in the Church Hall at 6 p.m.

Scouts. Thursdays in the Church Hall at 7.15 p.m.

* * * *

Vicar : Rev. Paul N. Rimmer, M.A., 11 Elsfield Rd., Old Marston.
Phone . 47034.

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

Secretary of P.C.C. : Mrs. Harlow.

Vergers : Mrs. Brain, Cranmer, Elsfield Road, Old Marston.

The Vicar would be grateful for notification of any parishioners
who are sick, or who would like a personal call.

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 everlasting strength." (Isaiah 26, vv. 3, 4).

* * * *

MARSTON VICARAGE,
OXFORD.

My Dear Friends,

By the time you have received this you will have received the election manifestos of the various candidates for election. **Do be sure to use your vote and encourage your friends to do the same.** As Christians we have a duty to go to the poll, and vote in the way which we believe is right.

After all the main question is not that of **Left and Right**, but of **Right and Wrong**, and we should vote for the candidate whom we believe will stand for what is Christian and right and true.

I am told that a church in Oxford is inviting the candidates for election to a special service to pray for God's blessing on the election. We of the electorate must also make this election a matter of prayer so that we may have a sound government, composed of men and women of strong moral calibre, unafraid to speak out for what is true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report. Then Britain will begin to realise her God-given destiny to be the Peacemaker amongst men, and Bridge builder between nations.

With sincere good wishes,



A prayer for the coming election :

Almighty God, the source of all wisdom : Direct, we beseech Thee, the minds of those now called to elect fit persons to serve in the High Court of Parliament ; that they may have regard to Thy glory and the welfare of Thy people : and on those whom they shall choose, bestow, of Thy goodness, the spirit of wisdom and true religion ; for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Sunday, October 4th.

- 8.15 a.m. and noon. Holy Communion.
- 11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.
- 3.00 p.m. Children's Gift Service.
- 6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.

"Come, ye thankful people, come!"

Harvest Home Supper

We hope to have a Harvest Home Supper in the Church Hall on October 6th (Tuesday) at 7.30 p.m. Because of the limited amount of room, admission will be by ticket, and will be restricted to adult members of the electoral roll. Details will be announced later at the Church services.

Pram Service.

There will be a Pram Service on October 6th, at 2.30 p.m., in Church. Bring your babies and prams to church! Mothers will be out in time to meet their children from St. Nicholas' County Primary School.

Boy Scouts.

Our Troop (43rd Oxford) camped in superb weather at Ditchling, near Brighton, under the leadership of our Scoutmaster, Mr. Roy James, A.S.M. Mr. Ivor Brough and Senior Scout Ken Cox.

Sunbathing, swimming, and a midnight hike were all part of the varied programme, and on the Sunday the Troop attended Church Parade at St. Margaret's, Ditchling, where the present Vicar is the Rev. Howard Rose, who was Assistant Priest many years ago at Old Marston. Outings were made to Haywards Heath, Brighton, and Burgess Hill, and some Scouts from here were welcomed as guests at a Scout Sing-Song on the last night of camp.

Any boys wishing to join the Troop are asked to contact the Scoutmaster, Mr. Roy Jones, or to come along to the Church Hall any Thursday evening at 7.15 p.m.

"Nine Tailors"

If you've read this novel by Dorothy Sayers, then you will certainly know what "a campanologist" is!

Bellringing is becoming increasingly popular, especially amongst young people, and if you would like to learn the art of Change Ringing, you are invited to come along to Church on Friday evenings at 7.45 p.m. and introduce yourself to Mr. Roy Jones, the Captain. We welcome new Ringers and would-be Ringers.

Marston Market

A big Thank-you to all who have helped in selling and buying and providing at the Marston Market, and a special word of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Haynes for the use of their barn, and to Mrs. Kensington for organising this year's market. We shall have a **Bumper Harvest Market** on Saturday the 10th October from 10.15 a.m.—11 a.m.

St. Nicholas County Primary School.

The Autumn Term opened on September 9th with a much larger number on roll than was anticipated which means that though the extra classrooms now give us places for 400 children, these will be insufficient even for the Summer Term of 1960 and thereafter will be a good deal more inadequate. This is a problem which the School Managers are actively concerned with and to which a solution must be found in the very near future.

Holidays :—Thursday, October 8th, School closed for the General Election. Monday and Tuesday, October 26th and 27th—Half-term. End of term—Friday, December 18th.

We were pleased to welcome Miss Shirley Leonard and Mr. G. Selby as members of the Teaching Staff.

World Refugees :—Miss D. Wright is continuing the collection of wool to make up into blankets—so far we have sent two complete blankets and £5 in cash.

Old Marston County Secondary School.

Summer Term, 1959, was a very long term and its activities were manifold. For many of the leavers there was the County Test of Achievement gained by Bennett, J., Berg, M., Bleay, J., Edens, D., Simmonds, J. and Sumner, E. Four of these are continuing their education either at the School of Technology or at the Northfield Secondary School. During the last year a start was made with Homework for all, it is expected that it will be a normal feature this year.

Two Plays were produced publicly before a full house; they reflected credit on all concerned. It is hoped that Stage Equipment will grow and

BERNARD CROFT *discovers*

The Angels of Blythburgh and Ink-wells in the Choir Stalls



I WAS on my way from Aldeburgh to Norwich. The shortest way of course was to turn left off the Saxmundham-Lowestoft road at Yoxford and so north, via Bungay. But I happened to notice on the map the name Blythburgh, only four miles or so further along, and from there another road turned north, via Beccles, which would serve me just as well. And I had long wanted to see the angels at Blythburgh.

East Anglia is famous for its great churches, its many "wool churches" rivalling those of the Cotswold country; and it would be hard to find a rival to Blythburgh anywhere. Soon I saw it rearing up to my left, a splendid long and high nave and chancel with a fine south aisle, porch and tower. The present building is a fifteenth-century one erected, on the site of a far earlier Saxon church, in the days of Blythburgh's prosperity when it was a fair-sized town with busy quays by the river-side.

This, of course, was before the discovery of America and before the Reformation; in the days when little ships sailed out to the then-known world from such East Coast places, and when people ate fish on Fridays and other fast days. After a fire which demolished most of the old wooden houses of Blythburgh, the sea-faring men and their families moved away and the once considerable

town became the small village it is today. But the great church remains and, nearby, an old inn and one or two half-timbered houses.

The chief glory of the church is the angel roof to the nave. It was this I remembered reading about on the completion of a restoration scheme. Too high overhead for normal methods of Cromwellian destruction, the soldiers of the Commonwealth tried to shoot it down. But mercifully they only succeeded in clipping a few wings and these were restored in 1954 through the generosity of some American businessmen.

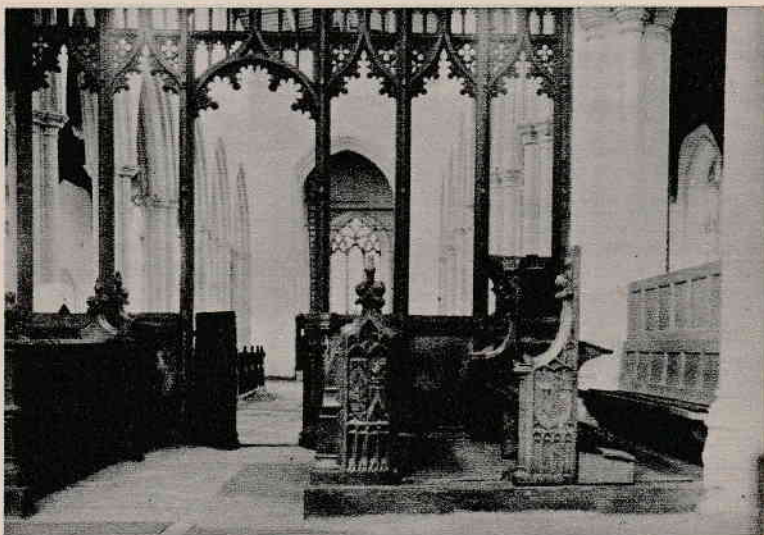
I entered by the little door on the north side and made straight for the middle of the nave, to gaze upwards at the angels until my neck began to ache. No attempt had been made to fake the new work, but the restoration had been done very skilfully. I walked to the west end of the church, for something propped up against the wall had caught my eye. Besides fires, Blythburgh has also in its long history suffered from severe storms. One which occurred on Sunday, August 4th, 1577, in the reign of the first Elizabeth, caused the church steeple to come crashing down, damaging the west end of the roof and breaking the font. The bells in the tower also fell. What I had noticed standing against the wall were some salvaged portions of the mechanism from the tower.

Returning to the east end I examined the wooden screen and went through to the chancel. And it was here I discovered the choir-stalls with ink-wells cut in them. These fine choir-stalls with their richly-decorated ends (and Blythburgh has some fascinating bench-ends to its pews in the north and south aisles) once stood in the chapel near the north door where I had entered, and here a little school was held in the early seventeenth century for the children of the Dutch and Swedish families who had come to Blythburgh to work on the dykes. The ink-wells dated back to this little school whose pupils sat in these same seats! One of them even carved his name there—"Dirck Lowensen van Stockholm," with the date, A.D. 1665; boys don't change much as the centuries go by!

Before leaving the church to continue on my way to Norwich, I examined "Jack o' the Clock"—a quaint figure now standing to one side of the chancel. He originally

stood under the tower at the west end and struck the hours on a bell with his axe. I also admired the Jacobean pulpit and the fine lectern, rising from a piece of bog oak which may have been in the old Saxon building. On the linen cover provided for the Bible a robin has been worked as a memorial of that which nested in the lectern about the year 1880. Fifty years later another robin did the same thing!

But Blythburgh church is full of good things and my time that day was short. I am resolved to return there one day and take a longer and closer look at some of its treasures—not least those bench-ends, the font which suffered in the great storm of 1577 (when a man of more than 40 years and a boy of 15 were struck dead whilst the minister was reading the second lesson), and a First Edition of the Authorised Version of the Bible which had the curious, and serious, misprint of "Judas" for "Jesus" in verse 36 of the 26th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel.



EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNT

Religion in Russia To-day

The Revd. Mark Tweedy, C.R.

MANY people imagine that the Church is dead in Russia; that the bitter persecutions which followed the Revolution succeeded in their aim of liquidating all organized Christianity. At one time it looked indeed as if that was going to happen. The organized measures taken against the Orthodox Church (to which the vast majority of Russian Christians belong), and against all who practised religion in any form, were so relentless that it might have been said that only a miracle could have preserved Christianity in the Soviet Union. But the word *miracle* used in this sense is only another word for God's grace: and the grace of God was indeed poured out on the Christians of Russia in their sore trials.

There can never be any adequate account of how the Russian Church fared in the early days of the Revolution, nor in the subsequent Stalin Terror before the war. Many of course gave up their faith: but many others practised it in secret. A deep process of purification evidently took place. Then came the war. Somewhat to their surprise, the Soviet rulers discovered that the Red Army numbered among its best soldiers in the rank and file, men who still professed the Christian religion. Before long the Government, ever opportunist, made it possible for the Church to function once more officially in public. A Patriarch was elected, churches were restored and redecorated as far as the faithful could afford the cost, and soon after the war some of the seminaries for

training ordinands were reopened. No longer were measures taken against people who believed and practised their religion. Indeed the official order was, and still is, to refrain from offending religious susceptibilities.

What has been the Russian Church's reply to all this? Simply to accept the situation in which the Christians found themselves as permitted by God. In accepting the limitation of preaching and teaching within the church walls only—never forgetting the unseen work, which has always gone on in Russia, of the old grandmothers at home—the Church is merely abiding by the law of the land, which does not permit of freedom of speech in the Western sense. The Church and its leaders have accepted the situation, and left it in the hands of the God in whom they believe as passionately and sincerely as their rulers disbelieve.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." What fruit has the Church in Russia to show so far, as the result of its novel and precarious position in an officially atheist land? On an estimate, which has been checked as far as it can be, there are not less than 20 million believing and practising members of the Orthodox Church in Russia today. That is a sizable number, when we consider that out of the total population of 200 million about one quarter are children, who are not taken into account in the figure above; about 25 million are officially Muslims or Jews; and there are several million adherents of other Christian churches than the

(Continued on page 154)

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Norwich—City of Churches

LESLIE W. KING

★—————★

NORWICH, throughout its long and varied history, has always been renowned for its numerous parish churches. As many as twenty-five existed at the time of Edward the Confessor, and by the thirteenth century the number had been more than doubled. About forty churches may be found there today, many of them ancient buildings of pre-Reformation date.

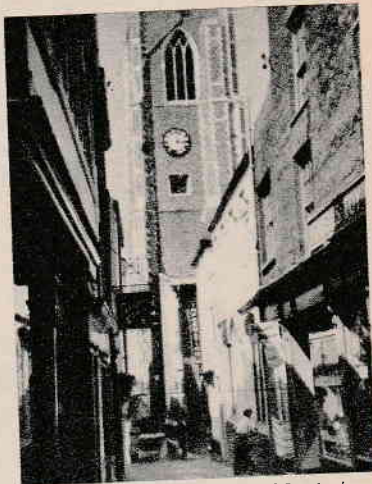
Some of these churches are splendid examples of medieval workmanship. In fact the leading Norwich parish church, St. Peter Mancroft, is regarded by many as being one of the finest of its kind in England. It is certainly an inspiring place of worship, with beautiful glass and graceful architecture forming a splendid setting for its many treasures. Notable, too, are St. Andrew and St. Stephen, both fine churches with interesting interiors.

Space does not permit a full description of all the ancient Norwich churches. But special mention must be made of St. John Maddermarket, with its unique collection of memorial brasses, and of St. Helen, which, though still serving its parish as a place of worship, is partly converted into wards for the old people of the Great Hospital.

Neither must we overlook St. Michael-at-Pleas, so named by reason of the ecclesiastical court once held

there. This church was until recently famous for its reredos of fourteenth-century panel paintings, but these treasures are now to be found in the cathedral, where they have been transferred on "permanent loan" in the hope that kinder atmospheric conditions will assist in their preservation.

Although nearly all the older places of worship in Norwich were completed during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, traces of much earlier work remain in St. Etheldreda,



Church of St. Andrew

St. Martin-at-Palace, and St. Mary Coslany. The black flint peculiar to the district predominates as a building material, but St. Augustine has the odd distinction of a red brick tower, added during the seventeenth century after the original had collapsed.

Many of the medieval churches suffered damage during the war-time air-raids. Three of them—St. Julian, St. Michael-at-Thorn, and St. Paul—were destroyed completely, although the former, well-known through its association with the

fourteenth-century mystic, Mother Juliana, has since been rebuilt and rededicated.

Outstanding among the modern places of worship in Norwich is the Roman Catholic church of St. John the Baptist, built between 1884 and 1910 on the site of the old city prison. This imposing edifice of grey stone follows the Early English style of architecture.

Needless to say, so many churches

in so small an area can be as much of a liability as an asset. Norwich, like most cities, is expanding rapidly, and as the population moves away from the more central parishes so a number of churches inevitably become redundant.

The city authorities have found answers to some of the problems set by these disused churches. St. Peter Hungate, a lovely little building that Norwich could ill afford to lose, was converted into a museum of ecclesiastical art as long ago as 1933. In more recent years, St. George Colegate has become a centre for the performance of sacred music and drama, while SS. Simon and Jude has been repaired and turned into a headquarters for the local Boy Scouts' Association.

Unfortunately, there is another side to the picture. The tiny church of St. Edmund, once harbouring what was reputed to be a relic of the martyr's shirt, is now used as a warehouse for a nearby factory. It remains to be seen whether such places of worship can be preserved in some way or another—and whether future generations will also be able to acclaim Norwich as a city of churches.



The Cathedral at Night

NORWICH CATHEDRAL by Moonlight

Poetic pile of hand-wrought masonry
Massive, yet airy-light,
She elevates her spire of majesty
Unto the star-strewn height.
A fragile ghost of silvern tracery
She gleams in the wan light.
Reflecting hints of mock-substantiality
Into the depths of night.
Pockets of shadow whisper mystery,
They crouch so soft, so still;
What anecdotes long lost to history

Those storeyed stones might tell!
But from forgotten ages—wistfully,
With dedicating spell—
She still must muse each moment,
modestly
Standing supreme, until
Her Mission permeates each anxious
mind
And love supernal fuses human-
kind.

J.R.C.M.

❖

Church Notes and Views

❖

Survival of the wave

THE church dedicated to St. Brynach at Cwm Yr Eglwys on the northern shore of the Dinas promontory near Newport, Pembrokeshire, was washed away by a tidal wave on the night of Tuesday, 25th October, 1859.

All that remains is the west wall with porch and bell-turret standing within the churchyard. 1959 will mark the centenary of the loss of this church and if funds permit it is intended to effect repairs, improvements, and to publish a history of the church.—ERIC L. KING (WORCESTER).

"As a fruitful vine"

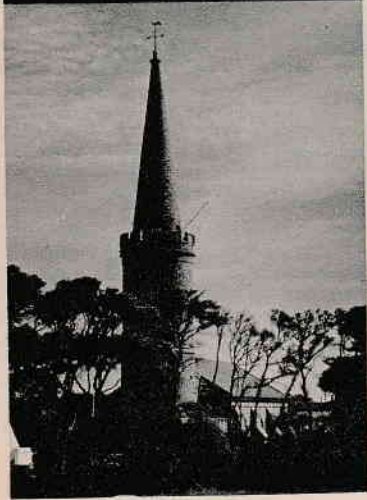
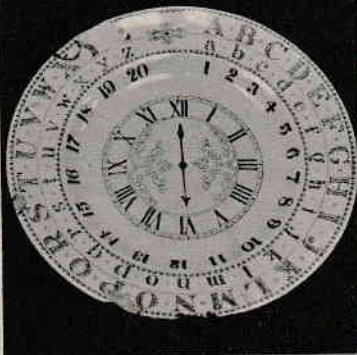
Thomas Fuller, in "The Worthies of England", mentions a remarkable woman of his time—Mary Honeywood, née Waters. At her death in 1620 she left 367 descendants—16 children, 114 grandchildren, 228 great-grandchildren and 9 great-great-grandchildren. A monument in Coggleshall church (Essex), taken from Markshall church nearby, at its demolition, recalls what must surely be a record for one person's descendants.

FRANK THOMAS (RAYLEIGH)

TO OUR READERS

We offer five shillings for every photograph with notes which we print on this page, and half-a-crown for every paragraph without a photograph which we consider of sufficient general interest for publication. Entries should be sent to: The Editor, 11 Ludgate Square, London, E.C.4. Unsuitable contributions can only be returned when accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope.





Cotswold Norman

ANY traveller through the Cotswolds should be warned not to miss a visit to Guiting Power Church. It lies at the south end of the village, nestling amongst trees and barns—not on the high road. It is a lovely Norman church, with a typical entrance, as shown in the accompanying photograph.

Originally, it consisted merely of a Norman nave. A chancel was added in the 12th or 13th century and the splendid roof in the 15th century. In the last century transepts were added, and the church is now in the form of a cross. The priest's door still remains, and the whole building bears the testimony of careful preservation.—ROLAND MORLEY (LEICESTER).

Nursery plate

THIS charming nursery plate measures eight inches across. Round the outer rim is the alphabet in capital letters; inside this are the small letters. Then come numbers up to twenty, while the centre is occupied by a clock face, giving the time as 6 o'clock. The ground is white with the letters and figures in blue.—G. PENNETHORNE (LINDFIELD).

A curious bequest

A CURIOUS bequest is found in connection with St. Mary's Church, Bridgnorth, Shropshire. In 1763, Paul Bridgen by will gave £10 to the parish for the purchase of a pew, or part of a pew, the rent of which, amounting to 5s., was to be given to the minister for preaching a sermon on Good Friday, and also 1s. to the clerk for tolling the bell on the said day. Such a bequest illustrates the extent to which church sittings were regarded as private property in the eighteenth century.—REV. G. S. HEWINS (CLEOBURY MORTIMER, SALOP).

Torteval Church

THIS Guernsey church is regarded by many people as being architecturally ugly. Built in 1818, it replaces an earlier church which was allowed to fall into ruin. It will be recognized that the lower half is similar to a lighthouse or Martello tower, while the conical upper half is attractive and quite unique.—A. HOLT (MANCHESTER).

Weekday Pages for Women

Conducted by
MARION HURST

Monday—Washing and Cleaning

If you have a nylon petticoat which has lost its stiffness after washing, soak it for about half-an-hour in a solution of sugar in very hot water. Use one tablespoonful of sugar to one and a half pints of water. Drip dry and do not iron. This will restore it to its former stiffness.—MISS J. M. CARR (age 12) (SHEFFIELD, 9).

To wash a man's cap. Make a good lather with soap flakes and dip the cap in the water. Scrub well with a nylon scrubber and then, after rinsing, squeeze out as much of the water as possible. Insert a plate (of the same size as the cap) inside the crown, and dry as quickly as can be. The cap will come up like new.—MRS. E. GILKINSON (POMEROY, CO. TYRONE).

Tuesday—Sewing

When threading tape or elastic, I find it much quicker to push the bodkin backwards through the hem and ease the material over it. There is then no risk of its coming out of the 'eye' half-way through, as sometimes happens the other way.—MRS. B. F. SCAMMELL (MAYFIELD).

Wednesday—Nursing

Hand Lotion for the colder weather.—Take equal quantities of lemon juice, Eau-de-Cologne, glycerine and water. Shake well together. This recipe is invaluable in winter and is not sticky.—MISS A. REASON (ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL, NORTHAMPTON).

A good handcream for chapped hands. Equal parts of glycerine and methylated spirits. Mix well and add a drop of perfume. Rub well into the hands.—MARION HURST.

Thursday—Cooking

When an odd moment presents itself,

I browse through some of my cookery books—find some interesting new things to cook, add the ingredients not in stock to my grocery list, and then list the new items on the back leaf of my cook book with the page numbers for reference. Then, when wishing to prepare a new dish, I have all the ingredients, a fore-knowledge of the recipe and page number to refer to and can get on without delay. Then, being idealistic, I leave a space by the side of the entry in my cook book for remarks about the result. The family usually provide these!—MRS. G. SELLERS (EAST GRINSTEAD).

Friday—Household

Don't throw away that cracked teapot. Keep a ball of string inside it, and let the end come through the spout. You will always know just where your ball of string is and it will neither tangle nor become unwound.—MRS. M. PARKIN (NOTTINGHAM).

When packing parcels, first soak the string in water for a short time. Shake off the surplus moisture, then tie the parcel in the usual way. When the string dries the parcel will be found to be tightly secured.—MRS. J. MATHEAS (MALVERN).

Saturday—Children

This tip may be useful to mothers who, like myself, knit their children's woollies. When buying wool, I also get a reel of nylon sewing thread of the same colour. This I knit in to the elbows of all jerseys and cardigans, and find it strengthens them considerably.—MRS. R. C. CASTLE (BATTERSEA, S.W.8).

Helpful hints

Hot plate marks can be obliterated from polished table tops by smearing on a mixture of three parts boiled linseed oil to one part turpentine. Leave on for a short time, then polish in the usual way.

Make the most of your flowers while they are expensive by placing the vase or bowl in front of a mirror. This gives a double splash of colour for the room.

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



Photo by M. Sisson

Near Grasmere

RECIPE CORNER

Friar's Omelette

4 sour cooking apples, 2 oz. white bread-crumbs, 2 oz. of sugar, 1 oz. butter or margarine, 1 egg, half of a lemon.

Peel, core and slice the apples. Stew them with the sugar, butter, grated rind and juice of the lemon until tender, then stir in the well beaten egg. Put half of the breadcrumbs at the bottom of a buttered pie dish, pour in the apple mixture, and cover with the remainder of the breadcrumbs. Add a few bits of butter on the top and bake in a moderate oven for 15 minutes.

Vegetable Soup

Ideal for a supper dish.

3 pints of cold water, 1 head of lettuce, quarter of a white-hearted cabbage, 1 carrot, 1 turnip, 1 onion, 2 leeks, half of a head of celery, 1 small cauliflower, 4 oz. butter or margarine. Salt and pepper to taste.

Cut the flower of the cauliflower into small pieces and put them aside. Cut the tender part of the stalk into small pieces. Prepare the rest of the vegetables

and shred them finely. Melt the butter in a large stew pan, put the shredded vegetables and the stalks of the cauliflower and cook without browning for 20 minutes. Add to them the water, salt and pepper and cook gently until tender (about one hour). Twenty minutes before serving, put in the sprays of cauliflower. Serve very hot with thin slices of dry toast.

LILY OF THE FIELD

Anemone, are you the flower
That stood upon the hill
That distant day near Galilee
And grows there even still?
Anemone of sparkling hue
With petals cupped and tender,
Are you the flower Our Saviour chose
To illustrate God's splendour?
Are you that lily of the field
That neither toils nor spins,
And yet by God's abundant grace
Majestic glory wins?

JUDY KNIGHT

This Month's Thought

A little thing is a little thing, but faithfulness in little things is a big thing.

RELIGION IN RUSSIA TO-DAY

(Continued from page 147)

Orthodox. The official membership of the Communist Party in the U.S.S.R. stands at about 7 million. No doubt there are others, not yet of the *elite*, who are keen and rigid atheists. However, all available evidence goes to show that the young Russian of today, though outwardly conforming, is thoroughly bored with all the Party claptrap, and in particular that the anti-religious campaign awakens no interest at all. The serious propagation of atheism simply leaves youth cold. The very propagandists themselves have been forced to admit in official State publications that there has recently been a considerable religious revival and that many young people are seen frequenting the churches. Nor are these young believers in any way out of step with their age. To the despair, no doubt, of officials who proclaim that the existence of the Church is a hindrance to the progress of Science, modern Russian Christians are eager to hail the great scientific and engineer-

ing achievements of their countrymen. And, like almost all Russians today, one of their greatest longings is for the release of travel restrictions so that they can visit other lands.

Foreign travel is not easily allowed for Russians at present. But last summer a small group of priests from the men's religious communities in the Church of England accepted an invitation from the Church of Russia to visit monasteries, convents, seminaries, and parish churches in Moscow, Kiev, Odessa and Leningrad. During a fortnight's stay there was not time to see more than a very little of the whole. Yet what we saw convinced us unshakably that the followers of Christ in that great and vast country are numerous, many of them youthful, and possessed of much goodwill towards their fellow Christians.

Reception of Church of England delegates by the Patriarchs of Moscow and Kiev during last year's visit to the Soviet Union. The author of this article was a member of the party.





The Steps

by C. G. SLADE



SHIMMERING in the mid-summer heat, the village seemed to be asleep as I descended the side of the steep coombe in which it lay. Its friendly cottages, gay with homely flowers, lined each side of the street that curved gently round to the church that was my destination. I passed through the lychet gateway into the churchyard, wondering how much of beauty and interest I should find within. Sitting just inside the south porch was an old man, who spoke to me in the warm, West Country accents.

"Good afternoon," he said. "Be careful of the steps just inside the door. They are very steep and dangerous, if you don't know about them."

I returned his greeting, with thanks for the advice, and passed on through the open door into the church. Despite his warning, in the comparative darkness of the interior I nearly had a nasty fall, for immediately inside were three steep steps downwards to the floor of the aisle. The church was very old and of great historical interest, but I moved into a pew to pay my respects before walking round. As I arose, I noticed that an elderly lady was arranging flowers in a large vase beside the pulpit. Indeed, on looking round, there were quite an unusual number of flowers displayed, and I hazarded a guess that all had been placed there by those same hands.

She turned and smiled at me as I approached.

"What beautiful gladioli," I remarked.

"Yes," she replied, "they are at their best now, and make quite a good display. They are all from my own garden, and it's just a little thing I do for the church. I like to bring the flowers in and try them in different places to see where they fit best."

She walked round with me, pointing out the items of interest, a memorial here, or a piscina there. She knew all the local lore, and told me many a story about the old church that otherwise I should never have learned. Finally she sat down beside me.

"And there's one more story I must tell you," she said. "Unless you are in a hurry to catch the bus."

I replied that I was in no hurry, and that I intended walking back over the moors. In any case, I should be glad to hear her tale.

"It's about Tom Francis and Jennifer Wayne," she began, "who seemed to have really been born for each other. He was the son of a farmer, and her parents kept the village store. They were pretty much the same age, and even as babies they seemed happiest when together. Their families were the best of friends, and when the children were only about five years old it began to be said that there would be an excellent match one day.

"But when she was about seven Jennifer's eyes began to trouble her, and it soon became evident that something was seriously wrong.



Kilmersdon, Somerset

Specialists were consulted and she was even taken all the way to London for examination, but nothing could be done. There was some pressure on the optic nerve, they said, but they could not clearly understand the cause. Nowadays they would probably be able to put it right, but this was a long time ago and all their efforts were in vain. The children's friendship became tinged with sadness, and at first Tom used to help his little companion to school, holding her hand, and steering her past ruts and puddles along the road. But her schooldays soon came to an end, and by the age of ten Jennifer was totally blind.

"She bore her trouble as bravely as she could, and Tom always stayed loyally beside her. His father was organist and they used to sit here together, listening to him practising. Although Jennifer could no longer see the beauties of the hills and valleys, she could hear and enjoy the music,

for which her affliction had, perhaps, increased her perception, and she developed quite a strong passion for it. With this incentive, Tom asked his father to have him taught to play, and after a few years it was difficult to say which was the better organist.

"But time was passing, and the two young people were growing up. Despite her blindness, Tom had no thoughts for anybody but Jennifer and their childhood friendship steadily ripened into a great love. She liked most of all to sit in the church while he played the organ, and nearly all his leisure time was spent in this way. In due course Tom succeeded his father as organist, and this ancient church has never had a better. At about the same time he became a partner in the farm, and then thought it was time to speak to Jennifer.

"One afternoon, when he had finished playing to her, he came and sat beside her, in this very seat, and

spoke quietly.

"Jennifer, we have been friends for a good many years; do you think you care enough to become my wife?"

"For a moment she did not answer, then, burying her face in her hands, burst into tears.

"Tom, dear," she replied, after some minutes, 'you know I love you truly, and that there is nobody else in the world for me, but you must realise that we cannot be married. At some future time you will have to take over the full responsibility of your large farm, and how could you manage to carry it with a wife such as I would be? A farmer's wife must be able to do many things which for me would be quite impossible, and it would be a dreadful handicap for you, having to help me over every obstacle.'

"Despite all Tom's protests and appeals, that is where the matter rested. He said that she was able to find her way about the village, that she knew the farm well enough, and would soon get used to moving around it. Besides, it would be no handicap at all for him to help her; he had always done so, and hoped to go on. There could be nobody else in life for him, and if they could not wed he would remain single. She took his hand and told him that he must find a more suitable wife, but that she would always remain his very sincere friend.

"Tom did not give up easily, and often during the following months did he ask her again; but Jennifer was quite firm about it, and, after a time, seeing how distressing it was for her, he mentioned it no more. How often in those days did they pray together for guidance. Never before did the old words: 'Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord', have so profound a meaning.

"She still loved to sit and hear him play the organ, but one afternoon

she said she had a headache and would go out into the air for a little while. Tom, who was wrestling with a very difficult passage, listened to her assurance that she felt 'quite all right' and let her go. He continued playing for some time, and then rose to leave the church. With a dreadful feeling of foreboding he noticed Jennifer lying crumpled across the steps to the south porch. He rushed across, only to find that she was quite unconscious.

"He made frantic efforts to arouse her, but without success. Then he laid her gently in the porch and hurried for the doctor. They carried her home and it was only after some days of anxiety that she revived. Even then, she was quite delirious. The doctors said it was a haemorrhage of the brain and that her condition was very serious indeed. Poor, broken-hearted Tom spent hours by her bedside, appealing to her to get well again. Sometimes she knew him and sometimes she did not, but always his soft voice seemed to soothe her. Her parents and her friends in the village did her every kindness they could think of, but it was always to Tom that she would respond the best and would sleep the most peacefully if he were there to hold her hand.

"It was after one of these restful sleeps that Jennifer awoke and turned over towards where he sat.

"Why, Tom," she exclaimed, you've grown into such a handsome man! And Mother, you have altered too. It's been so long since I was able to see you.'

"They were all completely astounded and at first thought she was still delirious, but at last began to realise the wonderful thing that had happened. There was no doubt whatever that Jennifer's sight had been restored. The doctors said that the haemorrhage must have removed the paralysing pressure from

her optic nerve and thus enabled her eyes to function again; but Tom and Jennifer remembered their long and earnest prayers in the chancel of the old church."

The old lady paused for a moment, to give her spectacles a brisk rub.

"Her recovery was a slow business," she continued, "and it was almost a year before she was really about again. Her sight improved, but she was never able to see very clearly without glasses and never again did Tom allow her to go up or down those steps without his arm to support her. Except just once, that is, when she came in on her father's arm to meet him at the altar. They had intended it to be a quiet affair, but the church was crowded with all the folk from the village and from many places around, for their story had appealed to all their kindly hearts.

"Now I really must go, for my

husband is waiting," she said. "There is an interesting brass that I forgot to show you; you'll find it in the chancel, under the red mat."

I thanked her for her kindness in showing me the church, and said it was apparent how much she loved it. Then, "When did all this happen?" I asked. "Was it very long ago, or are they both still here?"

"They still live in the village, and have a grown up family. They celebrated their golden wedding last week."

She rose and made her way towards the door. Then I saw the old man get up from his seat and walk slowly down the steps to meet her. He took hold of her arm and firmly guided her until she was safely up the steps and in the porch. Then, with a feeling akin to tears, I watched Tom and Jennifer go out together into the sunlight.

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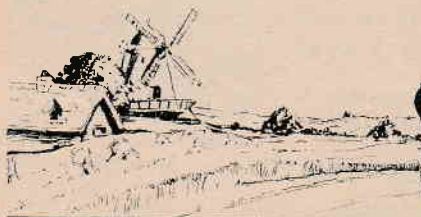
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October 1959

that a local Adult group might arise to benefit the Community and the School. Visits were made to Wells Cathedral, Cheddar Caves, County Dairies and local Art Galleries.

There were two important Athletic Events—our School Sports and the visit of seven other Secondary Schools for the Area Sports. Enthusiasm for Cricket was at an all time high, and Old Marston will undoubtedly be a power in the future. The winners of the School Tennis Tournament were Susan Perkin and Mr. J. V. Benwell. 70 children entered for Swimming Tests at Long Bridges; the long distance and disorganization was compensated for by the real life saving carried out by M. Rawlings and M. Parker.

A prominent item at the Royal Show were the Oak Gates made by Mr. Benwell, other exhibits included tools made by the boys and the Stephenson Screen for accurate weather recording. Some of the Senior Girls under Miss Jones demonstrated the making of some special cookery items with eggs.

Teacher Parent activity continued and thanks to the money raised Hall Curtains have now been provided by the Authorities. There is a full winter programme planned including 22nd September—Bingo; 3rd October—Rummage Sale; 17th November—Films ("France is a Garden" and "Twilight Forest"); 11th December—Old Time/Modern Dance.

The School was sorry to lose Mrs. E. E. Leask, but is pleased to welcome Mrs. M. Jones and Miss J. E. Gauss.

Old Marston Evening Institute.

After its encouraging start last winter, an expanded and varied programme is planned. Proposed Classes include Woodwork, Metalwork, Dressmaking, Tailoring, Pottery, Basketwork, Old Time Dancing, Drama, Ladies Keep Fit, Cookery, Motor Cycle Maintenance, English, Choral Society, Practical Mathematics, French for your Holidays, Wine Making.

Enrolment is on the evening of Monday, 5th October. Late entries may be accepted.

Baptism (1).

(Beginning a short series on this important sacrament).

What does it mean to have my child baptized?

Baptism is a public service in which your child is received and welcomed into the congregation of Christ's Church.

Just as water cleanses our bodies outwardly, so your baby is baptized with water in the Name of the Holy Trinity to symbolize the inward cleansing from what the church calls Original Sin, i.e. those sinful tendencies with which we are born.

Why do we baptize Infants when they obviously cannot appreciate the meaning of the sacrament?

This service is based directly on our Lord's last command: "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The early disciples were Jews whose children were included into the blessings of the Old Covenant through the sacred rite of circumcision eight days after birth. It would have been unthinkable to a Jew that his children should be excluded from the blessings of the New Covenant established by Christ, especially when he remembered Christ's love of little children and his longing to bless them. The reference to the baptism of "households" in the New Testament would certainly include infants.

As it is, the Church appoints godparents as trustees of the children's spiritual life. Their function is a most important one:

"See that he be taught the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments..... and, all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his souls health. See that he be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and Christian life. See that he be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him."

There is a great deal to be said for the parents acting, as indeed they may as godparents to their own children. The saying is true: "The Family that prays together stays together."

PARISH CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER

- Oct. 1. Thursday : 8 p.m.—Miss Bagnall on the Guild of Health. (Vicarage).
- " 4. 19th Sunday after Trinity. HARVEST FESTIVAL.
8.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.
3.0 p.m. Children's Gift Service.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
- " 6. Tuesday : 2.30 p.m.—Pram Service in Church.
Harvest Home Supper, 7.30 p.m. (Admission by ticket only).
- " 8. ELECTION DAY.
- " 11. 20th Sunday after Trinity.
8.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
- " 14. 7.45 p.m. Young Wives Group. Discussion Evening.
- " 15. Sister Joan Bing OMSE to speak at Vicarage.
- " 18. 21st Sunday after Trinity. St. Luke's Day. (Prayers for Medical Work).
8.15 a.m. Holy Communion.
11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
- " 22. Discussion Group at Vicarage.
- " 25. 22nd Sunday after Trinity.
8.15 a.m. and Noon. Holy Communion.
11.0 a.m. Morning Prayer.
6.30 p.m. Evening Prayer.
- " 27. Tuesday : 2.45 p.m.—Mrs. Milner—"The Book of Common Prayer."
- " 28. Wednesday. S. Simon and S. Jude, A.A. and M.M.
10.30 a.m. Holy Communion.
7.30 p.m. Young Wives Group. Mrs. Barnsley—"Books."
- " 29. Thursday : Bible Discussion Group at Vicarage.

BAPTISMS

- "Received into the fellowship of Christ's Church"
- Aug. 23. Karen Ann, daughter of Philip and Muriel Hosier.
Myra Elizabeth, daughter of William and Phyllis Kewen.
Julie Mary, daughter of Kenneth and Delia Phipps.

MARRIAGES.

- "Those whom God hath joined let no man put asunder"
- Sept. 12. Robert Eugene Barnes and Brenda Cook.
- " 19. John Robert Kemp and Brenda Lucy May Spencer.
David Bond and Valerie Farquhar.

P.S. The Baby Clinic will be closed on the day of the General Election.

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Choir. Choirmaster : Mrs. E. M. Garner, "Barn Gates," 31 Oxford Road.

Cubs. Leader : Mr. Morse.

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. P. Clay, Above Mead, Barton Lane, Headington.

LOCAL.

Allotment Assn. Sec. : Mr. R. Bowen, 129 Oxford Road.

Choral Society. Sec. : Mr. L. E. Hodgkins, 59 Copse Lane.

Cricket Club. Sec. : Mr. R. D. Skates, 31 Mill Lane.

Parish Council. Chairman : Mr. Rumbold, 8 Beechey's Avenue.

Teacher-Parent Assoc. St. Nicholas County Primary School.
Sec. : Mrs. M. Smith, 4 Windsor Crescent.

Teacher-Parent Assoc. Old Marston S/M School.
Sec. : Mr. L. Maund, 4 Ashlong Road.

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