

# MARSTON NEWS

INCORPORATING  
CHURCH & LOCAL NEWS

No. 34

DECEMBER, 1960

Price 4d.

## ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH — OLD MARSTON

**Vicar :** Rev. Paul N. Rimmer, M.A., 11 Elsfield Road, Old Marston.  
Tel. : 47034.

**Churchwardens :** Prof. V. T. Harlow, C.M.G., M.A., D.Litt., Fir Tree House, Old Marston.  
Mr. B. G. Oliver, 13 Jack Straw's Lane, Oxford.

**Verger :**

### SERVICES :

**Sundays :** Holy Communion 8.0 a.m.

Also on First Sunday of the month, 12 noon.

Family Communion : 9.30 a.m. on 3rd Sunday of month.

Children's Church (4—11 yrs.) 10 a.m. (except on 3rd Sunday).

Morning Prayer : 11 a.m.

Pathfinder Girls' Bible Class, 10.15 a.m., Sunday. (Hall).

Sunday School, 3 p.m., in S/M School Hall, and Service in Church, first Sunday in month at 3.15 p.m.

Evensong : 6.30 p.m.

**Saints' Days :** Holy Communion as announced.

**Holy Baptism :** Fourth Sunday of the month at 4 p.m. unless otherwise announced. Notice must be given.

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

### CHURCH ORGANISATIONS AND MEETINGS :

**Intercessions :** All welcome. Thursdays at 7.30 p.m. in Church.

**Discussion Group :** Thursdays at 8 p.m. in Vicarage.

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

**Young Wives' Group :** Alternate Wednesdays in Church Hall, at 7.45 p.m.

**Men's Forum :** Third Tuesday of each month in Vicarage, at 8 p.m.

**Youth Fellowship :** First Sunday, Holy Communion and Breakfast, also Third Sunday after Evensong, and as announced.

**Pathfinders Girls' Club :** Fridays in Hall, 7 p.m.

**Adventurers (Boys 11—13 years) :** Tuesdays in Hall, 6.15—7.45 p.m.

**Brownies :** Fridays, 5.30 p.m. in Hall.

**Cubs :** Mondays, 5.45 p.m. in Hall.

**Scouts :** Thursdays, 7.15 p.m. in Hall.

MARSTON VICARAGE,  
OXFORD.

My Dear Friends.

December is here again—and what a thrilling month its going to be for us all!

First, there are our St. Nicholas-tide celebrations. Do make a special effort to join with us at Holy Communion on our Patronal Festival, December 4th, so that we can deepen our sense of being a "parish family"—and a family out to fight for Christ's cause in this world of disintegrating values.

We are fortunate in being able to have as our Special Preacher at Matins on the 4th, Canon Colin Cuttall, Industrial Missioner to the Diocese of Southwark. He has already spoken to the Men's Forum about his work with the South London Industrial Mission, and we shall look forward to welcoming him to a much wider gathering of the parish when he preaches to us.

On the afternoon of the 4th, we are having a St. Nicholas Day' Toy Service. St. Nicholas is of course the original Father Christmas, and this service is going to give you the opportunity to help Father Christmas to make a lot of children happy, whose stockings would otherwise be empty. We shall also be glad to have gifts of sweets, and the Children's Officer, has asked us if we would especially remember the needs of the older boys and girls, who often get forgotten when Christmas distributions are made. The service is at 3 p.m. and we look forward to seeing you there.

Most of you will have heard by now the great news that Bishop Savage, who was Vicar of Marston from 1952-6, has consented to our request that he should take our Confirmation on December 4th at 6.30 p.m. There will be about thirty candidates being presented, and we shall have a most inspiring service. Please pray for the candidates as they stand and take their vows as responsible and full members of the Church. Pray also for the Bishop who will be taking the service, and come in good time to make sure you have a seat.

Will you please make a note in your diaries about the Parish Party on December 7th. All the various groups of the parish will be taking some part in it, either by arranging a game, or providing some entertainment, and we have booked the Hall of St. Nicholas County Primary School, so that everyone can come along and join us. Tickets are 2/6 each, including refreshments, and we hope that all available sitters-in will be reaped in from miles around so that husbands and wives can come along together.

You can read in our Parish Calendar the times of the Christmas Services, and members of the Electoral Roll will be receiving a Greeting Card with a reminder of the times.

Christmas is such a wonderful time, with its presents, and festivities, and the excitement of the children as they dig deep into their stockings. But it could mean so much more to us all. For the birth of the Christchild so many long years ago, means for us today the possibility of the rebirth of the individual. So many parties and-isms are offering new programmes, new plans. But Christmas comes to us with the wonderful news that, through Jesus Christ, we can all become new people.

Whilst you wait to go up to receive Communion at Christmas listen to what the Holy Spirit says to you—about yourself, and where you can begin to be different. The Light of Christ at Christmastime has shone on Wise Men and Shepherds, and it shines upon all men today, bringing them to the

Place of an Answer for their deepest needs and the needs of a strife-torn world.

"Arise, shine, for Thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon Thee."

Your sincere friend and Vicar,

*Paul R. Remington*

**POUNDS FOR THE ORGAN — ARE ROLLING IN TOO SLOWLY**

What a lot you have to thank God for—a peaceful country—health—children—a roof over your head—food and clothing.

**WHAT ABOUT A CHRISTMAS GIFT TO THE CHURCH  
TO HELP TO PROVIDE A NEW ORGAN?**

You can't afford it?

Then what can you afford? Are they all priorities?

Come along, parishioners of St. Nicholas!

If we really want an organ, we can certainly provide one!

£500 raised. £700 still to raise.

**PARISH CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER, 1960**

- Dec. 1. Thursday. Said Evensong and Intercessions.
- Dec. 4. **ST. NICHOLAS' CHURCH PATRONAL FESTIVAL**  
**2nd Sunday in Advent.**  
8 a.m. and Noon. Holy Communion (Y.F. Breakfast).  
11.0 a.m. Matins. Preacher: Rev. Canon Colin Cuttell, Industrial Missioner to the Diocese of Southwark.  
3.0 p.m. St. Nicholas' Day Children's Gift Service. (Please bring toys and sweets to help other children to have a Happy Christmas).  
6.30 p.m. **CONFIRMATION SERVICE** by the Rt. Rev. Gordon D. Savage, Bishop of Buckingham.
- PLEASE BE SURE TO WORSHIP AND REJOICE WITH US AT CHURCH ON THIS DAY!**
- Dec. 7. **8 p.m. PARISH PARTY at St. Nicholas County Primary School.**  
Tickets 2/6, including refreshments.
- Dec. 8. Thursday, 7.30 p.m. Said Evensong and Intercessions.
- Dec. 11. **3rd Sunday in Advent.**  
8.0 a.m. Holy Communion.  
11.0 a.m. Matins; Professor G. D. Kilpatrick.  
6.30 p.m. Evensong.
- Dec. 14. 7.45 p.m. Mothers' Union and Young Wives: Christmas Anthology and Carols.
- Dec. 15. Thursday. Said Evensong and Intercessions.
- Dec. 18. **4th Sunday in Advent.**  
8.0 a.m. Holy Communion.  
9.30 a.m. **FAMILY COMMUNION** (with hymns and short address. (Come as a family! Young children welcome).  
11.0 a.m. Matins.  
6.30 p.m. Candle and Carol Service.
- Dec. 21. Wednesday. St. Thomas, Apostle and Martyr.  
11.0 a.m. Holy Communion.

- Dec. 24. **CHRISTMAS EVE.**  
11.15 p.m. Holy Communion with hymns and short address.
- Dec. 25. **CHRISTMAS DAY.**  
7 a.m., 8 a.m., and Noon : Holy Communion.  
11.0 a.m. Family Matins.  
4.0 p.m. Said Evensong.
- Dec. 31. **NEW YEAR'S EVE.** 11.15 p.m. Watchnight Service.
- Jan 1. **NEW YEAR'S DAY.** Feast of the Circumcision.  
8.0 a.m. and Noon : Holy Communion.  
11.0 a.m. Matins.  
6.30 p.m. "Ring in the New!" Thoughts and Music for the New Year.

#### HERE AND THERE :

And what a time we have had ! The words of the psalmist have been particularly appropriate :

"I stick fast in the deep mire, where no ground is ;  
I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me."

However the water has drained away (at present !) and we have been a lot more fortunate than many people in the South of England.

It was thrilling to be privileged to attend the consecration of the Ven. Gordon D. Savage, as Bishop Suffragan of Buckingham, in St. Paul's Cathedral on St. Luke's day. The processions were most interesting, and the laying on of hands by over thirty bishops, dressed in their scarlet and white, was most moving. In the same week was the Lee Abbey Thanksgiving Service and Re-Union, also at St. Paul's. A coach was shared by St. Nicholas, Marston, and All Saints, Highfield, and the service, attended by over 4,000 enthusiastic Christians, including some 60 clergy, was most inspiring. Those of us who went to Lee Abbey for our holiday this year were delighted to renew friendships made whilst on holiday.

During the month the Mothers' Union and Young Wives have been getting better acquainted with each other. Mrs. Smith, Diocesan Secretary of the Young Wives spoke to the M.U. on the topic : "Introducing the Young Wives to the Mothers' Union," and Mrs. Carter, Vice-President of the Diocesan Mothers' Union, introduced the Young Wives to the Mothers' Union. The Young Wives also went to Wallingford to see the poignant and moving film : "Woman in a Dressing Gown"—a "must" for all mothers (and fathers).

During St. Luke's Tide we were glad to have the opportunity to welcome the Rev. Dr. Michael Wilson, Chaplain to the Guild of Health. His sermon on "Christian Compassion" was greatly appreciated.

On November 13th there was a record turn-out for the Remembrance Day Service, and the Churchwardens began to look anxious as the last chairs in the aisles were filled. The Master of St. Peter's Hall, the Rev. Julian Thornton Duesberry, preached a challenging sermon, urging us to throw our all into the spiritual fight for our nation's soul. "Bystanders are betrayers" he quoted to us from a play he had recently seen, and the words made us all think about the level of our Christian service.

Elsewhere in the magazine you will find reports of other activities in the parish, but perhaps one ought not to miss this gem from the Scout and Cub Campfire Programme—"You'll never get to Heaven"—led by the Vicar."

#### PARISH PARTY : Wednesday, December 7th, 8 p.m.

Last Year's Party was such a success that we have booked the County Primary School Hall this year—so that everyone can come !

The emphasis is on "Parish," and we shall welcome everyone, whether you come to St. Nicholas' or not.

All the various groups in the parish—Mothers' Union, Men's Forum, Youth Fellowship, Bellringers, etc., will be arranging either a game or some item of entertainment—and we hope to cater for all tastes.

It is doubtful whether we can get the Three Edwardians along, who sang for us so well last year, and who bore such a close resemblance to three Church Officers, but it is certain that there will be others who will be equally able to provide plenty of good fun for everyone. Tickets are 2/6, including refreshments which will be provided by a professional firm, so that all may be free to enter into everything that is going on.

Note the date, and make sure of a ticket!

#### OVERHEARD IN THE PARISH :

"For all the Saints who from their neighbours rest....."

(Version of a well-known hymn, as sung by a 7 year old girl).

#### CAROLS AND HANDBELLS

Come young and old, one and all, to sing the Joyful News of Christmas round the parish!

Here are the nights we shall be going out and (approximately) the areas we hope to cover each evening:

- Dec. 12. Monday. Ouseley Close, Beechey's Avenue, Rippington Drive, Cromwell Close, Fairfax Avenue (lower end).  
Dec. 13. Tuesday. Mortimer Drive, St. Nicholas Avenue, Lewell Avenue, Fairfax Avenue (top end).  
Dec. 15. Thursday. The Link, Salford Road, Cavendish Drive, Haynes Drive, Cotswold and Windsor Crescents.  
Dec. 19. Monday. Raymond Road, Arlington Drive, Gordon Close, Oxford Road (lower end).  
Dec. 20. Tuesday. Oxford Road (top end), Cherwell Drive, Ashlong Rd., Elms Drive.  
Dec. 22. Thursday. The Old Village, North of the Red Lion.

Meeting Point : 7 p.m. Top of Mortimer Drive (Trade Road end).

Bring a torch! Come warmly clad! Stick together! and SING!

#### CONGRATULATIONS :

To Alan Anderson for passing the C.A.C.T.M. Selection Board, and being recommended for training for the Ministry.

To Julian Starmer Smith for passing the Sandhurst Selection Board, and being recommended to train there as an Officer.

#### THANK YOU :

To Mr. Badger, of Headington, who played for us at Church during the absence of Mrs. Garner, and to all who helped with the transport problem.

Mrs. Bangs would like to thank all the kind friends who helped in the House-to-House Collection for Dr. Barnado's Homes during October. The splendid total of £17 was raised.

#### SCOUTS AND CUBS :

The Scouts and Cubs held a Camp Fire and Sing Song on November 4th. In spite of a damp, chilly evening this was well attended by parents and friends who were very appreciative of the various "musical" items and the hot dogs and sups of tea and coffee provided. The object of the evening was not so much to make a big profit as to show Marston what a very lively and flourishing Scout Troop and Cub Pack they have—any profit made will go towards the Scout Hut which it is hoped will be erected on the playground behind the Church Hall. Grateful thanks are due to all

those who worked so hard to make the evening a success and to all who supported this effort. The hut is an urgent need—there is now about enough money in hand for the purchase of an ex-Army hut, but not yet sufficient to provide for its upkeep. The Scouts and Cubs will be making further fund raising efforts in the future and hope for the support of all their friends towards their permanent headquarters.

A. SMITH.

#### THE YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

The Youth Fellowship entered two teams for the Mid-Oxfordshire Area Public Speaking Competition at which they were hosts. There were two teams: Jonathan, Julian, and Nigel Starmer-Smith; and Anne Hawgood, Teresa Hilditch, and John Walker. As hosts we entertained Begbroke Y.C. (two teams), Beckley Y.C., and Oxfordshire Young Farmers. Our first team won, losing only 16 marks from 200, and consequently pass on to the semi-final.

#### BROWNIES :

On Saturday, November 12th, the Brownies held a very successful Jumble Sale which raised over £15. They would like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Brough, Mr. and Mrs. Quarterman, and Mrs. M. Smith for helping at the sale, the parishioners for so willingly providing the jumble, Mrs. Sutton for making the Doll Cake which raised 13/-, Mr. and Mrs. King, and Prof. Hawgood.

The following have gained Golden Bar (Second Class) Badges:—Mary Bridges, Helen Brough, Helen Doman, Elaine Drinkwater, Marlene Farley, Andrea Gardner, Joy Gunstone, Pamela Huckin, Elaine Johnson, Jean Johnson, Christine Mattingley, Gillian Moss, Heather Porter, Gail Quarterman, Heather Smith, Jill Sutton, and Carolyn Tasker.

ANNE HAWGOOD.

#### “ SILENCE ” by Pauline Miles

Silence,  
Like a candle soft and soundless  
Swiftly, suddenly encroaches,  
Round us all it swirls, unnoticed,  
Invisible to us, yet boundless.  
Time — to stand, stare, to listen  
Motionless.  
As this lovely thing from Heaven  
Surrounds us all — with peacefulness.

#### BELLRINGERS :

In the past weeks the St. Nicholas Ringers have visited towers in Oxford and district on outings, and to ring for Weddings and other special occasions. On these occasions some of the ringers have achieved their “firsts.” We congratulate Miss Margaret Cozier and Miss Julia Chandler on ringing their first quarter peals at Marsh Baldon Miss Julia Chandler and Miss Helen Williams on ringing their first quarter Doubles at Stanton St. John; Mr. Andrew Dunkley on ringing his first quarter “inside” at Beckley; Mr. Roy Jones on ringing a peal of Bob Minor at Hinton Waldrist, his first method, and conducting his first peal at Marston; Mr. John Walker on ringing his first peal on a working bell, and Mr. Noel Deam his first peal “inside” both at Marston.

### Oxford Diocesan Guild

A peal of 5,040 Doubles in four methods (April Day, Rev., Canterbury, Grandsire and Plain Bob) in 2 hours 28 minutes.

Treble : John S. Walker (1st in four)  
No. 2 : Alec Gammon  
No. 3 : Noel B. Deam (st in four)  
No. 4 : Edward R. Venn  
Tenor : Roy H. Jones (Conductor)

Rung as a compliment to the Rt. Rev. Gordon D. Savage on his consecration as Bishop of Buckingham.

### IMPORTANT NOTE TO ALL SECRETARIES OF PARISH SOCIETIES :

Matter for inclusion in any month's magazine must reach the Editor, Marston Vicarage, Oxford, NOT LATER than the middle of the month previous to publication.

It is a considerable help if matter is typed. Editor.

### MARSTON SECONDARY SCHOOL

#### PARENT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION :

Old Time Dance. December 9th. 8 p.m. — 11 p.m.

Tickets 3/- each. Double Ticket 5/-.

3rd and 4th Form Pupils : Ticket 2/- Dress Optional.

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Schools break up for Christmas Holiday : December 20th, 1960.

Schools return after Christmas Holiday : January 5th, 1961.

### HOLY BAPTISM

"We receive this child into the family of Christ's flock."

- Sept. 25. Janine Carol, daughter of Joseph Raymund and Florence Betty Baum.  
Oct. 16. Trevor Clive, son of Keith Viner and Kathleen Ann Bennett.  
" 23. Kevin Sydney, son of Gilbert Mc Ewing Gordon and Georgia Mary Fairlie.  
" 23. Douglas Gordon, son of Gilbert Mc Ewing Gordon and Georgia Mary Fairlie.  
" 23. Deborah Kim, daughter of Dennis Henry and Edna Jean Green.  
" 23. Roy, son of James William and Evelyn Mary Holmes.  
" 23. Valerie Ann, daughter of Albert Charles and Joyce Elizabeth Phipps.  
" 23. Karen Lesley, daughter of Lionel and Sylvia Elizabeth Smith.  
" 30. Katherine Jane, daughter of Anthony and Frances Ruby Coster.  
Nov. 13. Timothy Martin, son of Dennis William and Sylvia Mary Pywell.

### IN MEMORIAM

July 25. Amelia Ann Paddon, aged 94 years.

(Mrs. Paddon was born in Old Marston, and although she moved in to St. Barnabas' parish, always continued to take the magazine and subscribe to the Restoration Fund).

Nov. 17. Teresa Kate Atkinson, aged 77 years.

### COLLECTIONS AND COMMUNICANTS

	£	s.	d.	Communicants
October 2nd (Harvest Festival)	30	14	4	70
October 9th	15	0	0	20
October 16th	21	7	11	56
October 23rd	20	1	0	18
October 30th	20	4	11	23

WHICH DO WE KEEP—



## Christmas or Xmas ?



H. A. L. Rice

**A**LTHOUGH not the supreme Christian festival, Christmas is probably the one which makes the most universal appeal. To some people its significance is a religious one—the birth of the Saviour of men. To many it is simply an occasion for junketings and festivities, for giving and receiving of gifts, for the consumption of excessive quantities of food and drink.

Our pagan ancestors, of course, had far more reason than we have to-day for wishing to bring some light and good cheer into the darkest days of winter but though the Church long since took Yuletide under its wing and gave it a Christian significance the old pagan instincts often pull hard and threaten to dominate its observance. A great deal of what goes on on December 25th nowadays marks the keeping of "Xmas" rather than Christmas—X, presumably, indicating the unknown quantity.

Most of us, perhaps, make some kind of compromise between the religious and secular aspects of Christmas, the amount of time and attention we devote to each respectively being in some degree the measure of our faith. But, whether we wish it or not, the majority of us inevitably find ourselves involved to some extent in the worldly activities of what is rather

tiresomely termed "the festive season." The great thing is to keep a sense of proportion about it.

No sane and reasonable person has any desire to take the joy and merriment out of Christmas, as the Puritans tried to do. The Christian religion is the religion of the Incarnation—God coming to earth to live as a man amongst men, and in the process setting the seal of his approval upon all the good and guiltless things in the world of His creation. The lives and occupations of many today are monotonous and uniform; they need all the fun and gaiety they can come by and the Christmas festival is rightly regarded as a suitable time for merry-making.

But do let us insist upon the reason for it all. Let us insist that there is neither purpose nor justification for celebrating Christmas and at the same time ignoring the event which gives it all its meaning. Let us keep, not the empty, meaningless X-mas which knows not why or wherefore, but Christ-mas with all its age-old wonder and gentleness and joy.

So shall Thy birthday morn,  
 Lord Christ, our birthday be;  
 Then greet we all, ourselves new-  
 born,  
 Our King's nativity.



### Overheard in a Stable

"SOMEONE'S coming," whispered the Ox; "what can they want in here so late at night?"

"It's not feed time nor watering time," replied the Ass.

"I know that, you silly Ass," said the Ox; "but they're coming in here all the same."

"Oh, how weary she looks," cried the Ass. "Get up and make room for her, you clumsy Ox." And they scrambled to their feet and moved away.

"I don't see why I should leave my nice warm bed for a stranger to lie on," grumbled the Ox; "I haven't even finished my hay. I was leaving the tastiest bit till the end."

"Ssh—I feel something tremendous is going to happen," whispered the Ass. "Do you think we might get a little nearer and peep?"

"Do you hear anything?"—the

Ox's voice had dropped to a whisper too.

"Yes—oh, yes—a little cry—and all the angels there could possibly be, singing 'Glory to God in the Highest'. What can it mean?"

"And light—and look, he's smiling at us" cried the Ox. "I'm glad I left my nice warm bed, and the nicest part of my hay."

"He has *everything*—all heaven, and all the earth, and the dancing stars and the singing angels; can he want *us* too?" marvelled the Ass.

"He's asking us to come," whispered the Ox. "Let's get nearer to the light. And now that I can see you more clearly", he added, "I don't think you're such a silly Ass after all."

"And now that you're kneeling down, you don't look nearly such a clumsy Ox as I thought," replied the Ass; and their muzzles touched in the soft warm straw as they knelt at the feet of the Babe.

# Children and Carols

NORA ROBINSON

CHILDREN singing carols is one of the traditional aspects of Christmas. How often do we stop to think, however, that if it hadn't been to please children in the first place, many carols would never have been composed at all?

For instance, "Christians, awake," was written by John Byrom, the words being a Christmas gift for his little girl in the year 1749. Byrom was a noted man of letters, and when his daughter Dolly begged him for some verses, he wrote these famous lines to keep her happy. Byrom's friend, John Wainwright, heard Dolly recite "Christians, awake," and set them to music. He arranged for some singer friends of his to sing this carol the next Christmas, outside the house of the Byrom family, and so one of the best-known of all Christmas songs came into being.

In 1848, Mrs. Alexander, whose husband was later to become Primate of All Ireland, despaired of ever getting her younger children to deal properly with their Catechism. So she wrote "Once in Royal David's City," to help them understand the more difficult parts. Thus, another famous carol came into being, and "There is a green hill far away" has a similar history.

"Good King Wenceslaus" we owe to the Revd. John Mason Neale being asked to write a new song for St. Stephen's Day. Hearing a child tell

the story of King Wenceslaus in its Bohemian form, he suddenly realised this was a perfect setting for a carol. He turned the tale into verses, adding a good moral to conform to 19th century requirements, and so came into being a hymn which never seems to lose its popularity.

"Silent Night" was first a German country song, and came into use as a carol quite accidentally. At Oberndorf's St. Nicholas church, on Christmas Eve 1818, the organ suddenly broke down. There were the choir ready to sing, but no music suitable without organ accompaniment. The assistant priest, Joseph Mohr, suddenly thought of a verse he had composed for some child friends, handed a note of it to the acting organist (Gruber), and asked if he could think up a guitar accompaniment. Hurriedly Gruber passed it on to a choir member who had a guitar, two soloists quickly memorized Gruber's suggested melody — and "Silent Night" ("Stille Nacht") was born as a Christmas hymn.

Isaac Watts wrote eight "Moral Songs," published in 1715, as a guide to children's behaviour. His "Lullaby" is still sung as a Christmas carol, and because he often minded babies, is sometimes referred to by experts as "The Baby-Sitters' Carol"!

## BETHLEHEM

On the moonlit hill  
And the sleeping town,  
In the night-time still  
A star looks down.

In a stable small,  
Ere the light of dawn,  
Near the oxen's stall  
A Child is born.

As a Mother bends  
O'er her Infant dear,  
Earth's darkness ends—  
God's Son is here.

JENNIE AUSTERBERRY.

# Children's Corner

PAGES FOR YOUNG READERS

Compiled by P. J. HUNT

## *Good King Wenceslas*

**Y**OU have all heard of Good King Wenceslas, of whom we sing in the carol, but you may not know that he was a real king in Bohemia, the country we know nowadays as Czechoslovakia, in the 10th century. Although he himself was a Christian, his mother was a pagan, and she tried very hard to turn all her children away from religion. She also sent all the clergymen she could find out of the country, for she did not wish to have any Christian ideas spread about.

But in spite of all this, Wenceslas remained faithful to his religion and it made his mother very angry. But, try though she would, she did not manage to make her son give up his religion, and when she died he was still a Christian.

When Wenceslas himself came to the throne, he had to set to work to build up the Christian religion again. He brought back all the priests who had been banished from the country, he restored the churches which had long been out of use, and he built many new ones.

He knew that one of the best ways to spread the Christian religion is by showing in your own life how a

Christian should live and, as the carol says, he lived a good life. He helped the sick and the poor, and he actually did carry logs for poor people. Often he took them at night and left them on the doorsteps of the poor and needy; then he would quickly disappear before the people had time to find out who it was who was being so kind to them.

When you sing the carol "Good King Wenceslas" this Christmas, remember that it is about a king who really tried to live the sort of life that Jesus came into the world to tell us about.

## *Reading the Bible Together*

This month we will read together part of the Christmas story. You will need someone to read the following parts: Narrator, Joseph, Mary, Angel, the Shepherds. Find St. Luke ch. 2.

	verses	
Narrator		1, 2, 3.
Joseph	"	4, 5.
Narrator	"	6.
Mary	"	7.
Narrator	"	8, 9.
Angel	"	10, 11, 12.
Narrator	"	13.
Everybody	"	14.
Shepherds	"	15, 16.
Narrator	"	17, 18.
Mary	"	19.
Shepherds	"	20.

## Look Out for Real Signs of Christmas

You may think this sounds very easy, but if you stop and think for a moment, you will see that it does not just mean looking out for holly and Christmas cards. For weeks now, the shops have been getting ready for Christmas; mother has, no doubt, been making puddings and cakes, and everyone has been buying presents for everyone else. Now although these signs are great fun, and although God loves us to be happy, they are not the



really important signs of Christmas. The real point of Christmas is that we remember that it is the Birthday of Jesus, and unless we remember His Coming into the world, then all the rest of the excitement is meaningless.

So look out for Christmas Cribs—models showing the Baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph and the Shepherds. Perhaps there is one in your church, but you may also see them in shop-windows; you may also see posters up showing the Nativity or the Blessed Virgin Mary. And the best Christmas cards are those which show the first Christmas in some way or other.

## Is your Name Nicholas?

**S**T. NICHOLAS was Bishop of Myra, in Asia Minor. Later he became the patron saint of Russia—and of children. In England no less than 370 churches, including the cathedral church of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, are dedicated to him. Five Popes and two Czars of Russia have been named after him. But the most interesting thing about him, of course, is his connection with Christmas presents!

The genial old gentleman we call Santa Claus is really St. Nicholas. We get the name Santa Claus from the Dutch form of St. Nicholas. Tradition has it that in the town of his birth lived three sisters, who were very poor. No one would think of marrying them, because their parents could not provide them with a dowry, for in those days it was usual for a woman who was being married to bring a gift of money or property to her prospective husband. When St. Nicholas heard about this he came, one midnight, and threw a purse of gold through the open window to provide a dowry for the oldest girl. Later he followed up this midnight visit with two others, for the benefit of the two younger sisters. On the third occasion the father of the girls was keeping watch, and so discovered the identity of their generous helper.

From that story there grew the pleasant practice of filling stockings with presents at Christmas time. And the meaning of the name Nicholas? It is derived from the Greek word for "victory," and means "a conqueror."

REV. G. E. DIGGLE.

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# Church Notes and Views

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### Other Days

THE following inscription on a tablet in Middleton Tyas Church may be of interest:—

"This monument rescues from oblivion the remains of the Reverend John Mawer, D.D., late Vicar of this Parish, who died Novr. 18th, 1763, aged 60; as also of Hannah Mawer, his wife, who died Decr. 22nd, 1766, aged 72.

Buried in this Chancel.

They were persons of eminent worth. The Doctor was descended from the Royal family of Mawer, and was inferior to none of his illustrious ancestors in personal merit, being the greatest linguist this Nation ever produced. He was able to speak twenty-two languages, and particularly excelled in the Eastern Tongues, in which he proposed to his Royal Highness Frederick Prince of Wales, to whom he was firmly attach'd, to propagate the Christian religion in the Abissinian Empire—a great and noble Design; which was frustrated by the Death of that Amiable Prince, to the great mortification of this excellent Person, whose merit, meeting with no reward in this world, will, it's to be hoped, receive it in the next from that Being whom only Justice can influence."

This Dr. Mawer was my great-great-great-great-grandfather.—E. A. WHEBLE (BEXLEY HEATH).

### The "Flower of Findern"

THE story goes that when Sir Geoffrey Finderne returned home from the Crusades, he brought with him a plant from the Holy Land. This flourished and multiplied in his garden and eventually

was to be found in many of the cottage gardens in the village which bears his name. The flower, a short stemmed double narcissus of pure white, blooms in the late spring. Today there are not many plants left, but they still exist in two or three of the village gardens.

A member of the congregation here has just completed, after three years, new falls for the pulpit and reading desk. She has incorporated the flower motif in the embroidery.—C. F. POPPLE (DERBY).



### Another Angel Font

IN a recent issue of *Home Words* I note there is mention of two Angel fonts. I can name another, which is an exact copy of the one in Inverness Cathedral. It is in St. Mary's church, Egremont, Cumberland, and was given by T. Hartley, Esq., late of Armathwaite Hall on Bassenthwaite Lake, when the church was rebuilt.—D. SENTON (SUTTON-ON-SEA, Lincs.).

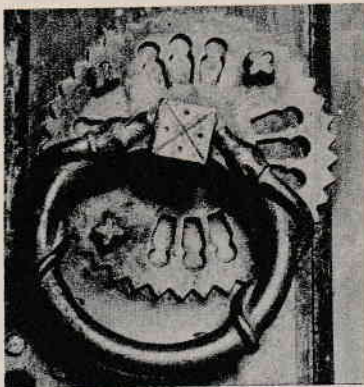
### TO OUR READERS

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.



### **A Church for 1,100 Years**

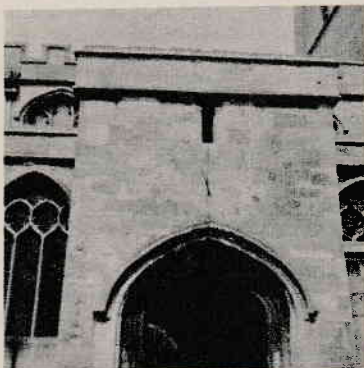
A FEW miles from Canterbury is the lovely village of Barham, dominated by its ancient Church with a gleaming green copper spire. There is evidence that a Church has stood here for over 1,100 years. Some time ago two saucers of the Roman period were found, with the Chi Rho—a Christian symbol—imprinted on them. Finds from Barham of the Bronze-age and the Roman period are to be seen in the Canterbury Museum, and others, of the Saxon period, in the British Museum. The most illustrious Rector was Richard Hooker, author of the volumes called "Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity". The fifth volume, which is the most valued, was written while he was Rector of Barham. He is buried in Bishopsbourne (the Church which he held in plurality with Barham).—DAVID AMBROSE (BASILDON).



### **Closing Rings**

THE mediaeval closing rings found on some churches deserve study. They are sometimes called "Sanctuary Knockers" but this is not correct; it only applies to the one at Durham, its fame enhanced by the dramatic picture by Ralph Hedley of a fugitive claiming sanctuary in the cathedral by clinging to it.

Otherwise they fulfilled the practical task of pulling to the heavy doors of old churches (often having sliding bars of wood to make them secure, before locks became common). Some of these closing rings are very decorative. At Rowlestone, Hereford, a fine Norman church, there is a ring formed of a pair of entwined snakes: it probably dates, like many others, from the 14th century.—M. W. (HEREFORD).



### **The Westbury Sundial**

I ENCLOSE a photograph of the sundial over the doorway of the south porch of the Parish Church of Westbury.

It is one of the largest sundials in the country, and bears the date 1821. It is in good preservation and still tells the time (G.M.T.) correctly.—(MISS) F. C. TOUR (WESTBURY).

# Weekday Pages for Women

CONDUCTED BY  
MARION HURST

## Monday—Washing

After washing and rinsing your dusters in the usual way, sprinkle them with household paraffin. Wring out and hang up to dry. A duster treated in this way will polish and dust in one operation, and if you rub your windows, mirrors, and pictures with a duster treated in this way you will not be troubled with flies.—MRS. JOHNSON (MARSTON, OXFORD).

## Tuesday—Sewing

Face cloths make splendid bibs for baby. After cutting out the neck part, bind with coloured binding. You can buy such pretty face cloths and they are much larger than the usual bibs.—MRS. CARLING (WHITEHAVEN, CUMBERLAND).

## Wednesday—Cooking

If you are making a sponge sandwich, you will find greasing the tin much quicker if you first hold the tin upside down under the hot water tap for a moment. Being thin metal, they are quickly hot, and the fat melts instantly when rubbed on, and also coats the tins more evenly, thus eliminating the risk of the cake sticking to the tin.—MRS. W. M. CLEIGH (HALESOWEN, BIRMINGHAM).

## Thursday—Nursing

Instead of putting a table at the side of the bed—use a dinner wagon. There is ample room on the top tier for the radio, drinks etc. and the other tiers may be used for books, magazines etc. which can easily be reached. Having just returned from five weeks in hospital I know from experience what a boon this is. I keep tablets, writing materials and letters in the little drawers.—MRS. K. M. BURGESS (BRADFORD, YORKS).

## Friday—Household

If you wrap silverware in polythene bags after polishing, you will find that it will not tarnish. This is especially useful for silver which is put away much of the time and only brought out for special occasions.—MRS. K. BUNYAN (CHESHAM BOIS, BUCKS.).

## Saturday—Children

A gay and colourful set of skittles, for children, may be made from empty plastic containers used for liquid detergents. Fill with sand, screw the cap on tightly and seal with sticky tape. All you need to complete the set is a ball.—MRS. D. JONES (WREXHAM, DENBIGHSHIRE).

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

## Icing the Cake

To acquire a smooth, professional looking finish to a cake is one of the main difficulties for a newcomer to the art of cake icing, and the only way to achieve this is to make sure that the cake is perfectly flat before commencing operations.

To do this, first cut off the cake crust perfectly level, and spread a little apricot jam over the top. Mould the prepared almond paste into a ball, roll out into a round flat piece a little larger than the cake top. Next, place the cake UPSIDE DOWN on the almond paste (never the paste on top of the cake), press your hand on top and work with the flat part of a knife round the almond paste, pushing it straight flush with the sides of the cake.

For simple decorations, a cone of greaseproof paper half filled with icing will pipe lettering, small flowers and leaves easily. If you are not sure, try on a small piece of almond paste and then lay it on top of the paste covering.

After a little practice, all sorts of decorations are possible; sometimes the simplest designs are the most effective, but once one gets used to handling the piping bag, one gets keenly interested and adventurous with all sorts of novel designs.

## Christmas Decorations

Lovely and sparkling the "bawbles" for the Tree which are sold in the shops may be, but they are also sometimes very expensive; so why not try your hand at making some at home this Christmas? It can be great fun improvising from all sorts of materials, and the children will love helping to make fairies, coloured bells, angels, stars and lots of other decorative and bright eyecatchers which make your tree 'your-very-own.'

The fairies' and angels' 'bodies' are made from twisted pipe cleaners, and given dresses and wings made from white or coloured paper hankies cut with the gimping scissors. Haloes or crowns may be added, made of silver or gold paper, and wands made from thin rolls of silver paper and fixed to the pipe cleaner arms. Faces, cut from magazines, make a 'glamorous' finish! Stars in all sizes may be cut from thin cardboard and covered

with either silver or Christmassy paper and, sprinkled with gold or silver dust, look pretty and glitter in the light from the candles or small electric lights which are fixed on the branches of the tree. If you are very clever, why not try making some small coloured paper flowers to add to the branches. These may not be particularly Christmassy, but they certainly add gaiety and colour. Small cartons or boxes gaily wrapped and beribboned help to fill up the Tree, and if small inexpensive little presents are put inside with the children's names written on they can all have that little something extra! Dried fir cones, coloured, frosted, or whitened, look lovely hanging from the branches, and if you can thread some bright berries and loop them from the Tree they will add still more touches of brightness which all adds attractiveness to your special Tree.

MARION HURST

Winter's Artistry

Photo: D. E. Tyler





# Angel Gabriel

ANN BUDD

DANNY stared, his blue eyes open wide, at the picture Miss Cullen was pinning on the blackboard. A lovely picture. "The Nativity," Miss Cullen said. Jesus in the manger as a tiny baby; all the angels and the shepherds and Mary and Joseph and that lovely woolly donkey. Danny had always wanted his Dad to buy him a donkey, a cuddly brown one like that one in the picture.

"We are going to act a Nativity play in the Church at the end of term," Miss Cullen announced and the class sat up straight and listened with rapt attention as she explained.

"Everyone is to take part," continued the teacher, starting to choose the characters. Rosalyn, chosen to play Mary, smiled meekly and happily, her eyes cast on the desk as the other girls looked at her. John maintained a non-committal expression on his appointment as Joseph and the two Harris boys and Pete Williams giggled and nudged each other in the ribs at the thought of being Wise Men. Shepherds and assorted travellers were told their parts and all the remaining girls were to be angels. Only Danny was forgotten and his face flushed red and his eyes glazed with degrading tears of disappointment.

But Miss Cullen had not finished:

"You, Daniel," she said, "will be Angel Gabriel."

Two tears crashed to the desk and

Daniel smiled, pleased and delighted.

He looked hard at the picture of Gabriel: long robes, wings, a golden head and glowing halo, and at first did not hear the sniggers behind him from the Harris boys.

But then it was afternoon playtime.

"Ole Dan's an angel," Pete Williams called.

"You gotta be with all the girls," Bill Harris said.

"You ain't 'alf a cissy, Dan," the brother added derisively.

"It must be yer curly 'air, Dan, makes you look like a girl," said someone else. And so it continued.

Danny suddenly felt ashamed. His happiness fled. Miss Cullen had only made him look a cissy. He was proud no longer; instead he felt punished, and he worried throughout the last lesson which was singing and usually his favourite.

On his arrival home he did not mention the play but appeared quiet and pensive and at tea did not show his usual delight in rock buns.

"You feelin' off colour, Danny?" his mother enquired, frowning.

"Nope," he answered, his chin almost resting on the table cloth.

"You need your 'air cut, Danny. Alfred," she turned to his Dad, "you get your clippers out after tea and give him a trim up."

Danny was about to protest but stopped half way, ran his hand through his curls, grinned slyly—and

took a rock bun. No, this was a time when he would welcome a hair-cut.

Perched on two cushions plumped on the highest kitchen chair, he sat perfectly still for once as his father snipped. For once in his life he was almost enjoying a hair-cut.

"If I had a crew cut, Dad," he timidly suggested, "you would not have to cut it so often."

"That's quite a point, son," his Dad agreed, clipping hard. "Sure you really wants a crew cut, Danny?" he asked.

Danny nodded furiously below the clippers, biting his lip. If he lost his curls he might be reprieved.

But Miss Cullen said nothing next day, well not about his stubbly head anyway. She put them through their first rehearsal and Danny imagined that she frowned when she directed him but that was all.

On the following Monday they did not have a rehearsal because Miss Cullen had lost her voice. They had silent reading instead. Danny hoped Miss Cullen's voice would stay away until after the day of the play: if they could not rehearse without it, then how could they do the play?

But two days before the fittings for the costumes Miss Cullen was complete with voice again. So Daniel decided it was his turn. Straight after prayers he went to see Miss Cullen and by means of mouthing words and uttering harsh whispers made it clear to her that he had lost his voice now.

"Very well, Daniel," said Miss Cullen, "go back to your place. We'll manage as best we can. I expect you will soon be better."

Triumphant, he returned and all went well—until the third shepherd spoil everything. Half way through he stepped back and flung out his arms, hitting Danny in the eye—hard. Danny let out a yell in a clear timbre which Miss Cullen did not fail to hear.

Nor did she miss the imprecation Danny cast on the unfortunate shepherd.

She called for silence.

"We'll have your solo now, Daniel," she announced.

"Yes, Miss Cullen," assented Danny in his natural voice, somewhat meekly.

He was disappointed when his eye did not develop a dramatic black and green bruise. He peered into the kitchen mirror, was not satisfied, and so searched out an eye patch he had worn as a pirate at the Bank-holiday carnival and went to school in that. But Miss Cullen did not notice it and his mother made him remove it next day.

The dress rehearsal and costume fittings were agony, and wasted a whole Saturday morning. Danny hoped he might be able to get out of going. He planned errands and spoke of his help being necessary up at the farm, but when your mother's proud of your being Angel Gabriel what can you do about it?

He was forced to stand for hours in a robe reminiscent of his mother's nightgown and when Mrs. Smith, who was doing the sewing, fitted his golden cardboard wings she would keep jabbing him with pins. But the worst of these humiliations was the halo. It felt sippy up there; flop, flop, flopping every time you moved. The elastic that held it was too tight and it cut deep ridges in his forehead—and Pete Williams was giggling again.

They were very busy now. Extra singing and staying late after school almost every day. They had to write out their parts and take them home so that their parents could help them get them right, and so it went on for three whole weeks.

And then they were all ready. The day of the play had come and the class was bursting with nervous excitement.



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They were restless all the morning and Miss Cullen sent them home to dinner early.

Danny felt ill. Very ill. Sick with fright and humiliation. He was going to have to stand in front of all the people in church, a cissy, put with all the girls. He was going to have to sing on his own, wearing a ridiculous flopping halo. Why couldn't he be a shepherd like the other boys? He knew all about sheep, which was more than they did. His Dad was a shepherd.

He toyed with his dinner silently and pushed most of it on to the side of his plate, and when his mother tried to encourage him to eat more it was as much as he could do to keep himself from weeping.

By the time he was scrubbed and ready to return to school it was getting late. But still he could not hurry. He dawdled. When he reached the playground no one was there. He looked wildly around him and saw Pete Williams rushing up the road.

"Cor, you ain't 'alf in fer it," puffed Pete. "We all 'ad to be in church ages and ages ago. I've got to get Miss Cullen's bag." And he disappeared into the school building.

Danny raced down the road and found a group of angels clustered about the vestry door. He rushed in.

"You're late," called one.

"Your Mum's looking for you," chorused two more.

Once inside he halted. There was his mother talking to Miss Cullen.

"Where 'ave you bin, Danny?" his mother anxiously enquired, suddenly catching sight of him.

"Come along, Daniel; you're late!" said Miss Cullen sternly. "Your mother's just brought your halo down. You went without it."

He gathered his costume and prepared to struggle into it, while the two women turned towards each other once more.

"I don't know what's the matter," Miss Cullen said, "but Daniel seems to have been most difficult about the whole affair. He does not appear to want to be in the play."

So she had noticed, thought Danny, overhearing the conversation.

"Very troublesome," the teacher continued, "because I only chose him for one of the character parts because of his fine voice. It is very sweet indeed and he ought to be in the church choir, Mrs. Carter. His voice is very clear and he loves singing, too, so I thought he would be happy with an important part."

Important part. For Daniel the words stuck and very suddenly slipped into place. He felt happy at last and as proud as when the part had first been given to him. He had been chosen because of his voice, he reasoned. It was a beautiful part and especially for him, and he grinned as his mother stooped to fix his splendid wings and glorious halo.

When his cue came he was thrilled to step out into the chancel before all the people—as confident as a seasoned performer and with only a little less majesty than Gabriel himself.



Dick Whittington's Stone at the foot of Highgate Hill, London

# Pantomime People

## I. BROADHEAD

CHRISTMAS and pantomime are inseparable. And every year thousands of boys and girls are taken to the theatres where lavish productions are staged—often on ice—of what are generally regarded as ever-green fairy stories. But are they fairy stories?

Many of the pantomime heroes who strut the stage at this season of the year, including Dick Whittington, Mother Goose, Robin Hood, and the Babes in the Wood, have had counterparts in real life.

Six hundred years ago a young boy began his adventures which are still recalled in pantomime. His name was Richard Whittington. As London's chief citizen he held office as Mayor four times. A memorial stone marks the spot on Highgate Hill where he heard Bow Bells and in the gardens of some nearby almshouses stands a statue showing him in the act of listening.

But what of his cat?

Some authorities say that Dick made his fortune by selling his cat to a King on the Barbary Coast where the royal residence was overrun by hordes of rats. Others claim that it was not an animal but a ship—cat being the nickname given to a vessel which carried coal. Dick Whittington did, in fact, operate such ships and is said to have derived a large income by shipping coal from Newcastle to London long before the advent of railways.

A fine marble sculpture exhibited in Norwich Castle Museum showing two children lying clasped in each other's embrace beneath a tree, reminds us of the sad story of the Babes in the Wood. A villainous Norfolk squire who was the guardian of his dead brother's two children plotted to steal the fortune which they would inherit when they grew up. He decided to murder them and hired two men to take the children into a wood and kill them. Just as depicted in the pantomime, one of the thugs could not bring himself to slay them and while he quarrelled with his accomplice, the children wandered into the wood and became lost. Several days later their bodies were found in Wayland Wood, near Norwich.

About fifty miles to the south is Ipswich, birthplace of Thomas Wolsey who became powerful during the reign of Henry VIII. But Cardinal Wolsey, the great churchman who pandered to his royal master, dropped out of favour and died a bitter and broken man. He is portrayed in pantomime as Old Mother Hubbard's dog, who expected to find a well-stocked larder but found it empty.

Robinson Crusoe was a flesh-and-blood person, too . . . Daniel Defoe, who on April 25th, 1719, published "The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner," based his story on the life of Alexander Selkirk who had been marooned on the lonely island of Juan Fernandez. It is not known why Defoe associated Crusoe with York, for Selkirk was a Scot!

And it was a book which made Mother Goose famous. Some three hundred years ago a real Goose family lived in Boston, Lincs., and at that time owned most of the land there. Mrs. Goose died leaving her husband ten children to look after, so Mr. Goose married again. His second choice was a widow who also had ten children

and it was she who became the Mother Goose of pantomime.

When Mr. Goose died she moved to London and lived with a married daughter whose husband was a printer. It was he who made Mother Goose famous when he published a book of nursery rhymes which she had made up to amuse her large family.

One pantomime character that nobody has yet been able to identify with certainty is Cinderella. But that is not surprising for there are about four hundred versions of the story!

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### BOOK REVIEW

#### PASTOR OF THE NILE

by H. C. JACKSON (S.P.C.K. 16/6)

This book, with a somewhat unalluring title, is a memoir of the late Bishop Llewellyn Gwynne who, from 1900 to 1946, was successively mission priest, Archdeacon and Bishop in the Sudan and Egypt. It is a fascinating story of a great servant of God and a warm-hearted lover of his fellow-men. From his assistant-curate days in Derby, where he played centre-forward for Derby County, through two World Wars (in the first of which he served as Deputy Chaplain-General in France) Gwynne was a man amongst men. In the second World War, when the great Cathedral of All Saints in Cairo was packed Sunday after Sunday with Servicemen and women from all over the Commonwealth, his name was a household one throughout the Middle East. Thousands who served in that theatre of war have treasured memories of his goodness, humour, kindness and courage. He lived to be 94 and up to within two days of his death in 1957 he rose every morning at 5.30 a.m. to spend the early hours of the day in prayer and meditation.

This book, adorned with the names of the great ones with whom Gwynne was in constant contact in his work—Lord Cromer, Sir Reginald Wingate, Earl Kitchener in the early days; Haig, Wavell, Montgomery in the two World Wars—is a splendid tribute to a man greatly beloved, to whom an Egyptian officer once said, "I am glad you have come, for when the British are religious they are the best people in the world, but when they are not religious they are the very devil!"

H. A. L. R.



**HOUSING and NURSING** accommodation is now provided by the Pensions Board for over **450 aged people of the parsonage.**

**PENSIONS** are being paid to over **1,300 CLERGY WIDOWS** & dependants who would otherwise have insufficient on which to live.

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**W. H. OATLEY, O.B.E., F.C.A.**

**THE SECRETARY & TREASURER, THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PENSIONS BOARD,  
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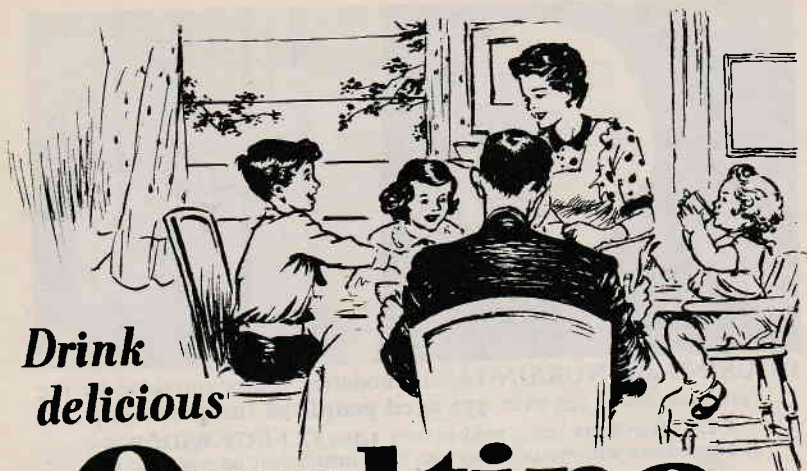
used the amenities of the Flying Angel Club at Walvis Bay S.W. Africa alone in the first six months of this year—**BUT** in more than 80 other ports throughout the world seamen of all races and nations have continued to be offered the Church's ministry of worship, instruction and fellowship, through The Missions to Seamen.

*This Ministry particularly needs your help at Christmas time.*

*General Secretary:*

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Published by HOME WORDS PRINTING & PUBLISHING CO., LTD., 11, Ludgate Square, E.C.4, and printed by HARRISON & SONS, LTD., London. Advert enquiries to CHANSITOR PUBLICATIONS, 37, Chancery Lane, W.C.2

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